

Medway

2017 the 350th anniversary of the Battle of Medway



Battle of
Medway



1667~2017

Tocht naar
Chatham

medway.gov.uk/BoM

Medway
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Medway takes its name from the magnificent river that flows through it and comprises of five towns – Rochester, Chatham, Gillingham, Rainham and Strood.

In June 2017 Medway will commemorate the 350th anniversary of the Battle of Medway with a spectacular river event and a series of exhibitions and activities.

Rochester has a unique identity with its iconic Norman castle and cathedral, historic buildings and museums, as well as connections with Charles Dickens. Chatham's maritime history includes The Historic Dockyard Chatham, an award winning attraction and the world's most complete dockyard of the age of sail. The Dockyard's defences include Upnor Castle, Fort Amherst, the Great Lines Heritage Park and the Royal Engineers Museum, amongst others. Many of these sites were involved in, or are a result of, the Battle of Medway.

The river itself is home to many marinas and yacht clubs as well as interesting historic vessels and river trips. The wider estuary provides the perfect habitat for thousands of breeding and migrating birds and wildlife. The area hosts more than 30 days of free festivals and events from bustling street festivals and open air concerts, to theatre performances and international sporting events.



*For the news is true,
that the Dutch have
broke the chain and
burned our ships,
and particularly the
Royal Charles;
other particulars I
know not, but most
sad news to be sure.*

Samuel Pepys

This iconic anniversary commemorates one of England's greatest naval disasters when the River Medway was engulfed in flames. In June 1667 the Dutch fleet sailed up the Medway and caught the English unprepared. This daring invasion brought the Second Anglo-Dutch War to an end.

Under Lieutenant Admiral Michiel de Ruyter, the Dutch captured the fort at Sheerness before entering the River Medway to attack the English fleet at Chatham. They broke through the defensive chain and, despite fire from Upnor Castle, towed away the Royal Charles, England's flagship and burned a number of ships. To prevent their capture and block the channel the Royal Navy sank some of its largest ships.

Although the dockyard was spared by the arrival of troops and artillery, the attack was a humiliating defeat for the English. In The Netherlands, the action is also known as the Battle of Chatham, the highpoint of the Dutch Golden Age.

The historic naval battle will be re-told with a major **Medway in Flames** event taking place on 17 June 2017 on and around the River Medway.

Welkom in Medway

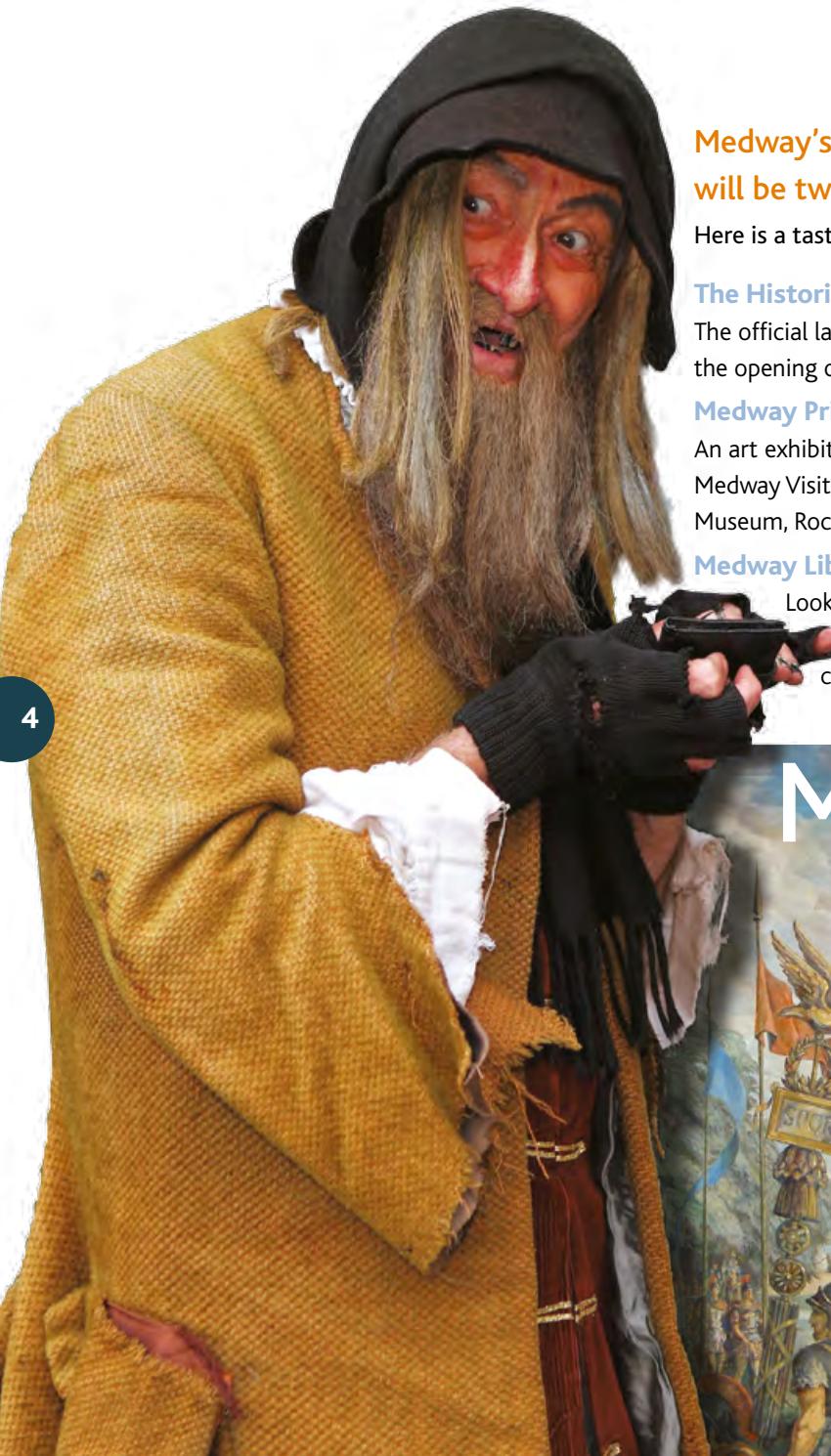
Medway heeft een rijke geschiedenis vol militaire en maritieme tradities en is vernoemd naar de gelijknamige, prachtige rivier, die door de historische steden Rochester, Chatham, Gillingham, Rainham en Strood stroomt.

Medway ligt ongeveer 50 km van London en is gemakkelijk bereikbaar vanaf de Engelse kanaalhavens en Londense vliegvelden.

In juni 2017 vindt in Medway de 350e herdenking van de slag bij Chatham plaats. Deze slag was een van Englands grootste maritieme nederlagen. In Engeland noemt men dit 'Dutch Raid', maar in Nederland staat dit bekend als 'de slag bij Medway' of 'de tocht naar Chatham'. In juni 1667 zeilde de Nederlandse vloot onder leiding van luitenant-admiraal Michiel de Ruyter de rivier de Medway op, vernietigde de Engelse vloot die daar voor anker lag en legde beslag op het Engelse vlaggenschip 'HMS Royal Charles'.

De herdenking van deze slag wordt gevierd met een spectaculaire show op de rivier de Medway en er vinden diverse tentoonstellingen en andere activiteiten plaats.

Deze gids geeft u niet alleen informatie over deze evenementen, maar ook over de geschiedenis van Medway.



Medway's commemoration of the 350th anniversary of the Battle of Medway will be two weeks of exciting and unique events.

Here is a taste of what you can expect to see.

The Historic Dockyard Chatham – 8 June

The official launch to the commemorations* and the opening of the dockyard's new exhibition.

Medway Print Festival – 2 to 27 June

An art exhibition that spreads across the Medway Visitor Information Centre, Guildhall Museum, Rochester Cathedral and other venues.

Medway Libraries – 7 to 17 June

Look out for an exciting programme of events and lectures in our community hubs and libraries.

Medway Sports Festival – 17 June

A varied sporting events programme culminating in a spectacular Amsterdam to Medway Bike Ride.

Dickens Festival – 9 to 11 June

Celebrating the life and work of Charles Dickens. Enjoy street entertainment, parades, readings, competitions and much more.

The Dutch are Coming! 10 and 11 June

Step back in time to 1667 at Upnor Castle with living history events and activities telling the story of the Dutch Raid.

Chatham Maritime – 10 June

A variety of activities and entertainment taking place around Dutch and British warships.

Rochester Cathedral – 17 June

Experience a fascinating guided tour around England's second oldest cathedral.

Medway in Flames – 17 June

Chatham Maritime comes alive with a programme of family entertainment including a fun fair, and food, drink and trade stalls.

A River Pageant will sail past The Historic Dockyard Chatham and Upnor Castle providing a unique opportunity for boat owners, visitors and river users to show off their wonderful vessels. Water activities will take place in Basin 2 including dragon boat racing, rowing displays, fly boarding and jet ski displays. Live English and Dutch folk music, walkabout entertainment and clog dancing performances will run throughout the evening.

Turn to pages 8 and 9 to find out more about the Medway in Flames spectacular river finale.

**Please note, the official civic launch is by invite only.*



More than 30 days of free festivals and events each year



In addition to our exciting programme of events Medway is telling the different stories of the battle at many of our heritage sites, highlights include:

The Historic Dockyard Chatham

the most complete dockyard from the age of sail anywhere in the world

Dock Road, Chatham, ME4 4TZ

01634 823800

thedockyard.co.uk

From 8 June to 3 September 2017 The Historic Dockyard celebrates the 350th anniversary of the seismic events of 1667 by presenting Breaking the Chain, a once in a life time chance to see the Battle of Medway story told through art. The exhibition shows wonderful Dutch and British contemporary art, literature, historic manuscripts and extraordinary objects drawn from collections at The Royal Museum Greenwich, Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, the Dutch National Maritime Museum, the Michiel de Ruyter Foundation and the British Library.

To tell the story of The Historic Dockyard Chatham is to tell of how one nation launched the world's greatest naval power for generations to come. It is also a place that tells the story of one of Britain's greatest naval disasters! A story of Dutch daring that left the Medway in flames, the capture of the English flag ship and a nation licking its wounds. The Historic Dockyard Chatham offers unrivalled access to the ships that shaped the world, and the stories of the people who made them. From 8 June to 3 September you can discover the ingenuity and daring of the people who tried to destroy them!

Upnor Castle

High Street, Upper Upnor, ME2 4XG

01634 718742

visitmedway.org

This attractive turreted fortress, built to protect Queen Elizabeth's warships when anchored in the Medway, is set in a picturesque village, backed by rolling wooded hills on the banks of the River Medway. Its importance matched the growth of the dockyard in Chatham. The castle played an important, but ultimately ineffective role in June 1667, when Admiral De Ruyter sailed his ships up the Medway to attack the dockyard.

To commemorate the Battle of Medway, Upnor Castle will be home to a new and exciting visual display, putting the events of 1667 into context. This interpretation will allow visitors to learn about the daring Dutch masterplan that led to a devastating naval defeat for England, and the resulting programme of ship-building that led to a golden age of British maritime supremacy.



Guildhall Museum

High Street, Rochester, ME1 1PY

01634 332900

visitmedway.org

Built in 1687, the Guildhall is one of the finest 17th century civic buildings in Kent. Colourful and informative displays record more than 250,000 years of Medway history. Visitors can see what life was like during the Napoleonic period by walking through a reconstruction of a Medway prison hulk and learn about the terrible living conditions the prisoners endured. They can learn about the life and works of Charles Dickens, one of England's greatest novelists, in the Dickens' Discovery Rooms.

The Guildhall Museum will present a special exhibition of their collection of historic Dutch prints and maps that are part of this story. They will be displayed alongside the plans of the fortifications built by the English to defend Sheerness and Chatham in the wake of this unprecedented naval disaster. Acclaimed artist Kevin Clarkson has painted a series of meticulously researched images of the Battle (one of which is shown on our front cover), and these will give a vivid recreation of the dramatic events of the day. The exhibition will run from 6 May to 12 November 2017.



Jetstream Tours – River Trips and Water Transport

jetstreamtours.com

Jetstream Tours operates regular boat trips from Rochester Pier, but during the Battle of Medway festival will offer an additional pier stop for Upnor Castle.

This is a great way to get around Medway and a chance to discover the river's strategic fortifications. All cruises offer an informative commentary with a spectacular opportunity to see Upnor Castle and The Historic Dockyard Chatham from the water.

Hop-on hop-off opportunities with local river taxis will also be available along with Jetstream's high speed Jetboat services from Sun Pier.



Medway *in flames*

17 June 2017 • Chatham Maritime

Water screens, digital projection, characters from history, pyrotechnics, special effects and fireworks will bring the Battle of Medway to life.

This spectacular finale will depict the events leading to the raid on the Royal Dockyard at Chatham, Upnor Castle and the ships of the English Royal Navy anchored on the River Medway.

Celebrating 350 years of friendship and co-operation between our two nations since the conclusion of the Anglo-Dutch wars, *Medway in Flames* will be a sensational finale to our festival of cultural, sporting and educational events.

8

9

When visiting Medway don't forget to explore the many other historic sites and family focused attractions we have on offer.

Rochester Cathedral

Founded in 604AD, the cathedral is the second oldest in England. It's been a place of pilgrimage and worship for over 1400 years.
The Precinct, Rochester, ME1 1SX
01634 843366
rochestercathedral.org



Temple Manor

A 13th century house belonging to the Knights Templar to provide lodgings, food and fresh horses for the Knights travelling to and from the crusades.
Knight Road, Strood, ME2 2AH
01634 332901
visitmedway.org

Restoration House

A city mansion where Charles II stayed on the eve of his restoration, and the inspiration for Satis House in Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations*.
Crow Lane, Rochester, ME1 1ER
01634 848520
restorationhouse.co.uk

Six Poor Travellers House

A Tudor-founded charity house that provided board and lodgings for six poor travellers, right up until the Second World War.
High Street, Rochester, ME1 1LX
01634 845609
visitmedway.org

Rochester Castle

Rochester Castle is one of the best preserved and finest examples of Norman architecture in England. Spectacular views of the area can be enjoyed from the castle's keep.
Castle Hill, Rochester, ME1 1SW
01634 332091
visitmedway.org



Fort Amherst

The fort was built in 1756 to protect the Royal Dockyard at Chatham from landward attack. It houses a fascinating network of tunnels and underground chambers.
Dock Road, Chatham, ME4 4UB
01634 847747
fortamherst.com

The Huguenot Museum

The only museum of Huguenot history in Britain, telling the story of Britain's first refugees, the crafts, trades and skills they brought with them.
High Street, Rochester, ME1 1LX
01634 789347
huguenotmuseum.org

The Old Brook Pumping Station

Listed as an ancient monument, the pumping station was incorporated into Chatham's main drainage system from 1929 to 1980.
Solomons Road, Chatham, ME4 4LA
01634 362847
oldbrookpumping.co.uk

Royal Engineers Museum

The museum provides a fascinating insight into Britain's explosive military history and the part our soldier engineers have played in this.
Prince Arthur Road, Gillingham, ME4 4UG
01634 822839
re-museum.co.uk

Copper Rivet Distillery

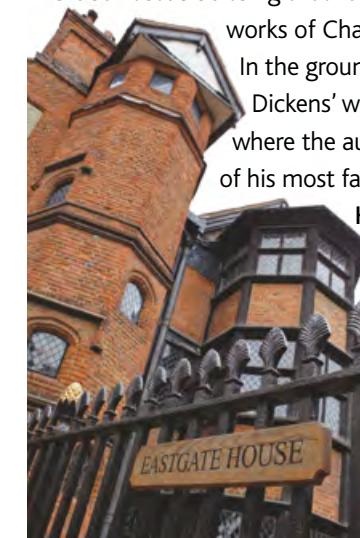
One of the few places in England that you can experience the entire distillation process from grain to glass. Enjoy a range of spirits, experience a botanicals masterclass or distill your own gin.
Leviathan Way, Chatham ME4 4LP
01634 931122
copperrivetdistillery.com



Medway is surrounded by a stunning natural environment and has a wide variety of parks, wetlands and green spaces to explore. With over 75 miles of cycle routes, seven Green Flag parks and stunning coastal paths there is much for those who love the open air to enjoy.
Visit medway.gov.uk/parks to find out more.

Eastgate House and Chalet

A Grade I listed building that featured in the works of Charles Dickens. In the grounds stands Dickens' writing chalet where the author wrote some of his most famous novels.
High Street, Rochester
01634 332900
visitmedway.org



Meet Samuel Squeaks

For our younger visitors we have our very own friendly rat character, *Samuel Squeaks*.

Samuel will be popping up at various locations to help children understand the story of the Battle of Medway. He'll be explaining how he grew up in London during the plague, how he fled the great fire, and how he ended up on board a ship on that fateful day in June 1667. They'll also find out about Samuel's friend - a rather flamboyant Dutch rat called Andries, and how their friendship grew.



Medway has packed diary of events, festivals and concerts for everyone to enjoy including...

Festival of Steam and Transport

The Historic Dockyard, Chatham
16 and 17 April

Full steam ahead for a carnival atmosphere, festival fun and entertainment at this annual Easter event.
thedockyard.co.uk

English Festival

Riverside Country Park, Gillingham
22 April

A celebration of English culture, history and traditional treats with family entertainment throughout the day.
enjoymedway.co.uk

Rochester Sweeps Festival

29 April - 1 May

Recreating this traditional annual festival enjoyed by Victorian chimney sweeps. Festivities include nationally and internationally acclaimed folk bands, parades, stalls and Morris dancing.
enjoymedway.co.uk

Castle Concerts

Rochester Castle Gardens
12 - 15 July

Enjoy performances by international stars over 4 nights in the fabulous and

intimate setting of one of England's most beautiful castles.
enjoymedway.co.uk

Will Adams Festival

Gillingham Park. 9 September

A mix of Japanese culture and traditions at this free festival celebrating the life and work of England's first Samurai.
enjoymedway.co.uk

Salute to the '40s

The Historic Dockyard Chatham
16 and 17 September

Step back in time for two full days of fantastic 40's entertainment at one of 'Britain's Best Vintage Festivals' *Daily Telegraph*.
thedockyard.co.uk

Dickensian Christmas

Rochester. 2-3 December

Start the festive shopping season in Dickensian style with some of Charles Dickens favourite characters that come to life and wander around Rochester's historic high street.
enjoymedway.co.uk

Dickens in Medway

Charles Dickens' long association with Medway area began when the Dickens family moved to a small house in Chatham. Dickens' father, John, was originally a clerk in the Navy Pay Office in Portsmouth Dockyard, and was transferred to Chatham in 1817.

Dickens' most impressionable childhood days were spent in Medway and it was the place where he found inspiration for some of his works greatest characters and settings. Many of the buildings found on Rochester's historic high street carry plaques detailing how the author incorporated them into his novels. Take a gentle stroll around the local graveyards and you will discover where he found names of many of his characters.

Many heritage buildings in Rochester are featured in the works of Dickens. These include the Guildhall Museum, Restoration House, Eastgate House and Gardens, and Six Poor Travellers House. To discover more about Dickens and his association with Medway visit the Guildhall Museum where a dedicated exhibition and informative film is on permanent display. A self-guided walking trail with map is available from the Medway Visitor Information Centre. Or you can join a guided walking tour with members of The City of Rochester Society or Footsteps in Time.

Find out more at visitmedway.org



Getting out on the water is a unique way to experience what makes the Medway estuary one of Britain's most important maritime heritage destinations.

Along the river there is a fascinating array of yacht clubs, marinas and boatyards offering a wide range of mooring facilities. Public pier access is available at Rochester and Sun Pier, Chatham where a variety of river trips operate from. To find out more about how you can use and enjoy our river go to visitmedway.org/battle-of-medway



See page 7 to find out more about the exciting Jetstream speedboat tours of the river.

Useful River Contacts

Maritime and Coastguard Agency
0870 6006505 mcga.gov.uk

Medway and Swale Boating Association
msba.org.uk

Peel Ports Medway (Navigation Services)
01795 663025 medwayports.com

Tidal Information

bbc.co.uk/weather/coast_and_sea/tide_tables

Looking for a place to stay?

Whatever your taste or budget, you'll find accommodation to suit your needs in Medway. Details of many hotels and guest houses can be found at visitmedway.org

Temporary campsites will operate during the Battle of Medway celebrations throughout Medway. For details visitmedway.org/battle-of-medway

A visit to Medway couldn't be easier. We're just 30 miles from London and 40 miles from the Channel ports and Eurotunnel.

By road

When travelling by road, there is easy access from London and the Kent coast on the M2/A2 and M20 motorways, linking with the M25. There are direct links from the A2/M2 to Rochester/Chatham/Gillingham via the A289 Medway Tunnel. If travelling by car, to find out about town centre parking visit medway.gov.uk

Regular National Express coaches run from London Victoria to the area.

For more information visit nationalexpress.com

By rail

Medway has five mainline rail stations – Strood, Rochester, Chatham, Gillingham and Rainham. All have frequent services from London mainline stations. The high-speed train from St. Pancras takes just 35 minutes to reach Medway. Rail travel from Europe to Medway is faster and easier by Eurostar. To plan your rail journeys phone 08457 848950 or visit nationalrail.co.uk

Ebbsfleet International Station is only 20 minutes from Medway. For more information visit eurostar.com

By air

Medway is within an hour's drive of Gatwick, London City and Stansted airports. Heathrow and Luton are just 90 minutes drive. There are excellent road and rail links to all airports.

Public transport (buses)

A majority of bus services in Medway are provided by Arriva, although some services are provided by ASD coaches, Nu-Venture and Chalkwell. For details on bus routes throughout Medway and timetables visit medway.gov.uk/buses

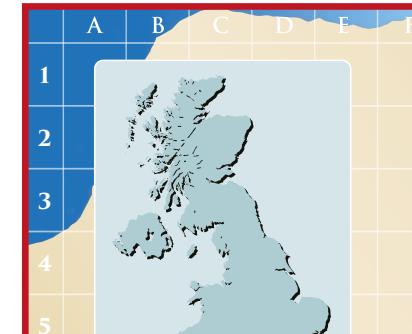
Medway Visitor Information Centre

The ideal first port of call is our centre in the heart of Rochester. Wheelchair accessible and offering a full tourist information service, with gift shop, café, art gallery and public conveniences. Call in to find up to the minute information on all local attractions. If you are looking for a place to stay, the centre can provide advice and assistance.

95 High Street, Rochester, ME1 1LX
01634 338141
visitmedway.org

Places of interest

- 1 Temple Manor
- 2 Rochester Castle
- 3 Guildhall Museum
- 4 Rochester Cathedral
- 5 Huguenot Museum
- 6 Six Poor Travellers' House
- 7 Eastgate House
- 8 Restoration House
- 9 The Central Theatre
- 10 Old Brook Pumping Station
- 11 The Brook Theatre
- 12 Fort Amherst
- 13 The Historic Dockyard Chatham
- 14 Copper Rivet Distillery
- 15 Royal Engineers Museum, Library and Archive
- 16 The Great Lines Heritage Park
- 17 Medway Park
- 18 Ranscombe Farm Reserve
- 19 Diggerland
- 20 Upnor Castle
- 21 Capstone Farm Country Park
- 22 Riverside Country Park and Berengrave Nature Reserve



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All information correct at time of going to press.
Details of specific events are subject to change, for current details please check social media channels.

Photographs courtesy of Simon Kelsey (Praxis Design) and Medway Council.
Front cover painting by Kevin Clarkson from a collection owned by the Guildhall Museum.

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