

TRAVEL

Seasalter is only a few miles from Faversham, a market town only 48 miles from London. In fact it is here that I pick up a local paper and see that they have written the pros and cons of the local area compared to the city. Many people live here and commute to London because the property prices are so much more affordable, very similar in fact to Hampshire where we live. I spy a lovely little Victorian one bed house in need of refurbishment in one of the pleasant villages for just £90,000. This is indeed a surprise in these days of ridiculous property prices. No doubt very small but still a bargain. The independent trader is very much championed here too and I enjoy mooching around a secondhand bookshop, which is an increasing rarity these days.

At Whitstable, the seaside town, we walk along the harbour where there are arty fishermen's huts that open between March and September and note that artist Michael Richardson has a gallery here. Michael is a *plein air* landscape painter working in oils and watercolours who has exhibited at the Royal Academy of Arts. Whitstable is home to a string of boutiques and visitors come from far and wide to purchase luxury gifts.

It is also easy to visit France from Kent, which is just as well because Michael does this frequently finding it inspirational for his work. "I am going to take four or five painters to quiet places in France so that they can work fairly intensively and uninterrupted for three to four days over this summer," he reveals.

Kent has so much to offer a tourist and we have only really touched the surface but what we saw we liked very much indeed.

Diary:

Tuesday: Arrive

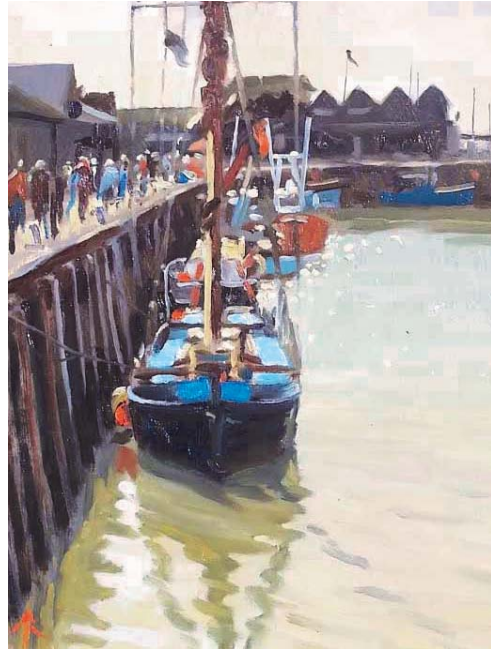
Wednesday: Walk on the windswept beach. Bitterly cold.

Thursday: Lunch at The Oyster Pearl Pub and Restaurant. Whitstable – many independent shops – lively and individual. We see a fisherman returning to the quay with lots of whelks.

Friday: Fly kite on the beach. Faversham

Saturday: Return home.

Call in at two National Trust properties on the way: Knole, which is undergoing a £20m refurbishment. Should be complete in four years time. We walk around some of the 1,000 acres of land and see



Whitstable Harbour by Michael Richardson

deer; here since the 17th century. Then on to Chartwell; Sir Winston Churchill's house, to pay our respects as it is 50 years since he died.

For more information visit:

<http://whitstablecottageholidays.co.uk/>

oystercatchers/

www.theoysterpearlrestaurant.com[http://](http://michaelrichardsonfineart.com/)

michaelrichardsonfineart.com/

Watch the videos at www.travelwriter.biz



Collecting whelks at Whitstable Harbour