



Scottish Borders Council would like to thank VisitScotland and Scottish Enterprise for their assistance in this project.

Acknowledgements

For further information on the Scottish Borders visit: www.visitscotishborders.com
For accommodation bookings tel: 0845 22 55 121 (booking fee will apply)
VisitScotland Borders Information Service Tel: 01835 863170 or e-mail: bordersinfo@visitScotland.com

Accommodation / Information:



This is a 55 mile (88km) cycle ride around the central Borders, passing some of the key historical attractions in the area. It takes you mainly on quiet undulating roads and, although short stretches are on main roads and a few steep but fairly short hills are unavoidable, there are wonderful views of the countryside surrounding the Tweed and Teviot rivers to enjoy.

The route is described as starting from Melrose and travelling in a clockwise direction. It is divided into three easily manageable stages for cyclists of all capabilities. It is also recommended that cyclists take OS Landranger maps 73 and 74 to get the most out of the route.

4 Abbays Cycle Route

Jedburgh to Melrose 19m/30km

Go down Jedburgh High Street into Bridge Street, across the Jed Water and follow signs along the Riverside Walk to the gate. Cross the A68 (take care) on to a minor road which climbs through woods above the river and continue on gentle gradients to a 'T' junction at Jedfoot with the A698 and turn right on to the main road. Pass Mounthooly golf range (cafe) and after 1 mile turn left on the B6400 to Nisbet. Cross the River Teviot and go left at the junction. On the ridge to your right stands the Waterloo Monument on Peniel Heugh erected in memory of the Duke of Wellington where pine trees are said to represent French troops, hardwoods the British. Pass Monteviot House (gardens open) and Harestanes Countryside Visitor Centre (visitor facilities from April to October).

At the A68, turn right (with care) and immediately left towards Ancrum (facilities). Follow the B6400 for about 5 miles through open countryside till Bewlie and where the main road bends left, go straight on up a short hill towards Bewlie House. Continue on a track which drops sharply down to a concreted ford with adjacent footbridge over the Ale Water.* Cross the water, continue on the track and join the tarmac road past Cavers Carre up to the 'T' junction at Clarilawburn. Here turn right on the B6359 and follow this road to crossroads with the A699.

* Alternative route to avoid track and footbridge is to continue on the B6400 towards Lilliesleaf then take the B6359 (signposted Melrose) cross over the river at Toftbarns and go right past Clarilawburn to the crossroads.



Go straight across the main road (take care) and start to climb to a summit at Bowdenmoor Reservoir (250m) on the west side of the Eildon Hills. Shortly after, bear left on a narrow lane on a steep and twisting descent through woods, and at the bottom go left again passing under the by-pass. Turn right at the 'T' junction (B6394) and follow High Cross Avenue into Melrose past the Greenyards rugby ground. (Distance 55m / 88km)

Kelso to Jedburgh 20m/33km

Leave Kelso by Bridge Street, and cross the Rennie Bridge completed in 1803. Immediately turn right on the A699. After crossing the River Teviot, the great mound on your left is all that remains of Roxburgh Castle and the ancient Royal Burgh that surrounded it. Take the next left, signposted for Roxburgh and after passing Kersmains farm, turn left and follow the lane down towards the river and into the village. Take a look at the magnificent Teviot Railway Viaduct that crosses the river here. A footbridge has since been added at a lower level to allow access to Heiton and Sunlans. Continue through the village towards Nisbet and after about 1 mile (2.5km) turn left, signposted for Kalemouth.

* Alternatively the route can be shortened by continuing on to Nisbet, missing out the loop south to Jedburgh.

Cross the suspension bridge, turn right on the A698 (cycle lanes) and then left on B6401 towards Morebattle, almost directly opposite the Teviot Water Gardens and Smokery (visitor facilities, gardens and cafe). (Distance 23m / 37km)



After 3 miles (5.5km) turn right on a minor road and start a gradual ascent. Pass Cessford Castle - stronghold of the Kers one of the most active Border reiving families of the C16th and Cessford Farm and continue up the valley before descending to the crossroads at Crailinghall.

Start climbing again up the longest hill on the route, crossing Dere Street the old Roman road which once linked the fort at Trimontium near Melrose, with York, to reach a summit (210m). Admire the views of the Cheviots to the south-east before dropping steeply down through woodland into the Jed Valley and the Border town of Jedburgh. Cross over the main road (take care) and go left up Abbey Bridge End towards the Abbey and the centre of town. (Distance 36m / 58km)

Melrose to Kelso 15m/25km

From Abbey car park, go up into the Square and turn left through West Port to the by-pass. Cross over and take the road to Newtown St Boswells (cycle route).

* Alternative route to Dryburgh Abbey goes along the Annay Road to Newstead via Leaderfoot and Scott's View following the Tweed Cycle Route.

Near the top of the hill is the Rhymers Stone marking the site of the Eildon Tree, where legend says Thomas the Rhymer met the Queen of the Fairies. Continue over the "Bogleie" road through the gated section closed to traffic. At the 'T' junction turn right through Newtown St Boswells (facilities) to reach the A68 and go straight across (take care) on to the minor road passing Tweed Hortians Centre and down to the Suspension Bridge at Dryburgh over the River Tweed.

Note the Temple of the Muses located in the trees at the end of the bridge, which was built by 11th Earl of Buchan in memory of the poet James Thomson. Continue right on the road to the junction and carry straight on past the hotel (facilities) to Dryburgh Abbey. (Distance 4m / 6.5km)



Return to the junction, and bear right up the road, past the footpath to the Wallace monument on your left, to Clintmains joining the Tweed Cycle Route. At the main road (B6404) turn left for 2 miles. Note Smailholm Tower (open to visitors) to your left standing high and isolated on a rocky outcrop where there are magnificent views of the Borders landscape. At the bend in the road turn right (take care) signposted Makerstoun and follow signs along the minor road for 4 miles passing the church and war memorial, before joining the B6397. Turn right and follow the estate walls to the main road (A6089) and go right again to Kelso. Go past the entrance to Floors Castle (open to visitors April to October) into Bowmont Street and follow the signs round the back of the main square heading for the Abbey behind Bridge Street (Distance 15 m / 25km).

Jedburgh

Situated in the valley of the Jed Water, on the edge of the Cheviots, Jedburgh is a true Border town being only 10 miles from the Scottish border and a Royal Burgh for over 800 years. Commanding the town is the magnificent ruin of Jedburgh Abbey. Although roofs and damaged, it retains enough character to make it one of the finest medieval buildings in Scotland, founded by David I in 1138 for Augustinian canons from France. Other visitor attractions are the Castle Gaol on a hill overlooking the town and Mary Queen of Scots House which is now restored as a museum.

Kelso

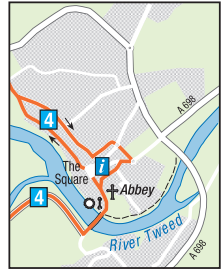
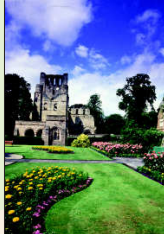
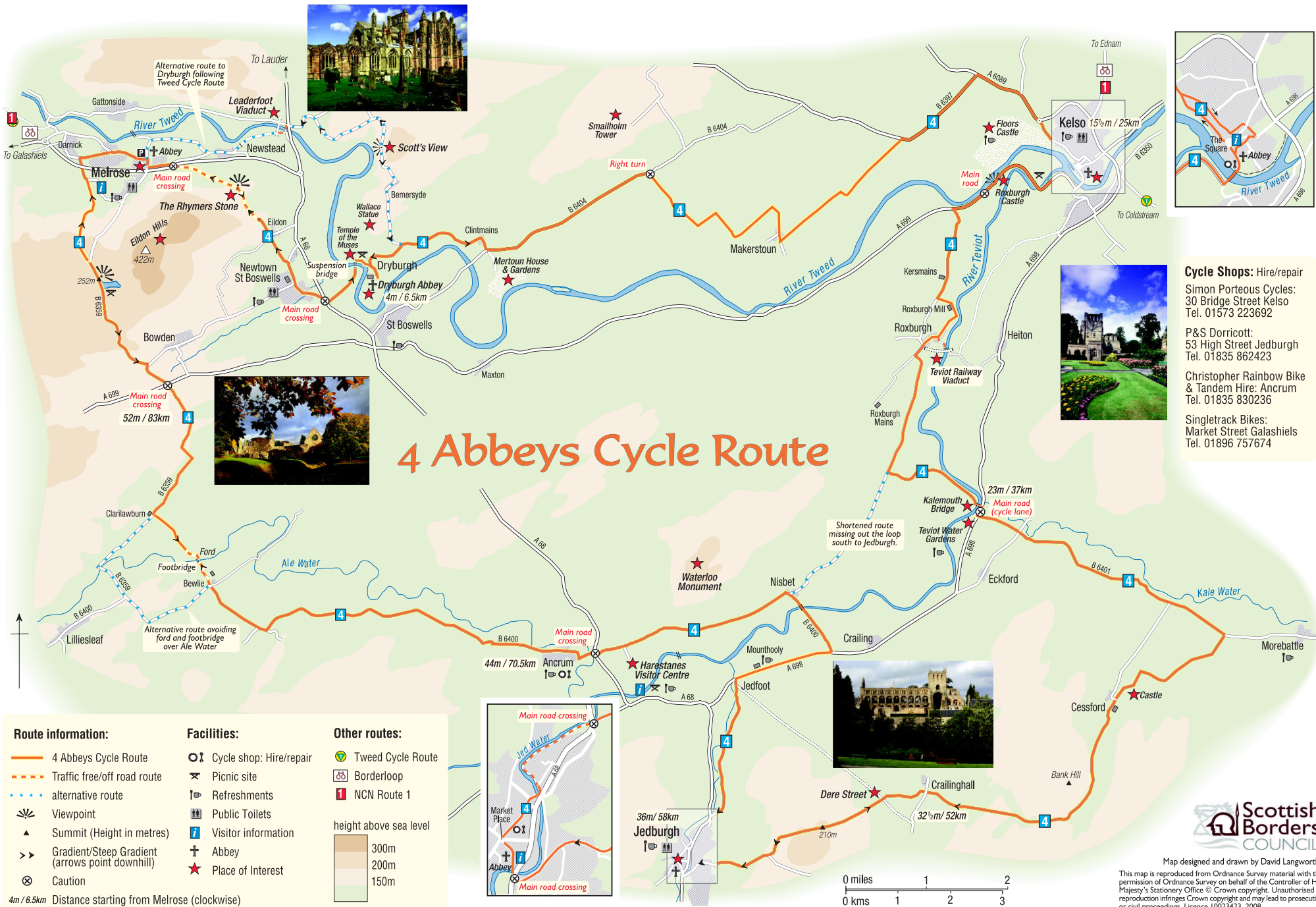
The centre of Kelso, with its large cobbled square originally a cattle market has an attractive 'French' feel to it. Kelso Abbey was the largest of the Border Abbeys, founded in 1128 by the Trinitarians with assistance from David I. The Order had originally set up in Selkirk in 1113 but moved to Kelso to be near the Royal Burgh and Castle at Roxburgh. Unfortunately little remains of the Abbey which was destroyed by the English in 1545. The confluence of the Tweed and Teviot rivers is just to the west of the town and opposite is Floors Castle, home to the Duke of Roxburghe.

Dryburgh

Today Dryburgh and its surroundings including the abbey remains owe much to David Stuart Erskine, the 11th Earl of Buchan. Praemonstratensian monks had begun building Dryburgh Abbey in 1150 and despite frequent attacks and damage by English invaders, the ruins are still remarkably complete. Sir Walter Scott and Field Marshall Earl Haig are buried in the Abbey grounds.

Melrose

The town of Melrose sits at the foot of the Eildon Hills close to the River Tweed. The town is steeped in history, and features the magnificent ruin of Melrose Abbey founded in 1136 for Cistercian monks by King David I. The heart of Robert the Bruce is buried here. Other visitor attractions include Abbotsford House, the former home of Sir Walter Scott to the west of the town and Trimontium, the site of a major Roman fort at Newstead.



4 Abbeys Cycle Route

Route information:

- 4 Abbeys Cycle Route
- Traffic free/off road route
- alternative route
- Viewpoint
- Summit (Height in metres)
- Gradient/Steep Gradient (arrows point downhill)
- Caution

4m / 6.5km Distance starting from Melrose (clockwise)

Facilities:

- Cycle shop: Hire/repair
- Picnic site
- Refreshments
- Public Toilets
- Visitor information
- Abbey
- Place of Interest

Other routes:

- Tweed Cycle Route
 - Borderloop
 - NCN Route 1
- height above sea level
- 300m
 - 200m
 - 150m

Cycle Shops: Hire/repair

Simon Porteous Cycles:
30 Bridge Street Kelso
Tel. 01573 223692

P&S Dorricott:
53 High Street Jedburgh
Tel. 01835 862423

Christopher Rainbow Bike
& Tandem Hire: Ancrum
Tel. 01835 830236

Singletrack Bikes:
Market Street Galashiels
Tel. 01896 757674



Map designed and drawn by David Langworth.

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