Berwickshire Coastal Path
Cockburnspath to Berwick
28½mls/45km

With the second highest cliffs on the east coast of Britain the Borders has one of the most spectacular coastal routes in the UK. The Area is internationally important for sea birds, coastal flora and marine life.
St Abb’s and Eyemouth
NationalNature Reserve
nts.org.uk/stabb's

The Trip

Boats lost
Radiant, Janet, Lass O’Gowerie, Sunshine, Fiery Cross, Enterprise, Margaret & Mary, Velox, Good Intent, Excellent Margaret & Catherine, Robinson, Pearl, Stormy Petrel, Lily of the Valley, Beautiful, Press home, renown, Wave

Bronze Trail Markers
Twelve Bronze Trail Markers, by artist John Bokum, link the four memorial sculptures along the route.
1. Find these markers using your navigation skills or a GPS co-ordinates on map.
2. Take rubbings on good stout loose paper with crayons or coloured pencils. The main (Eyemouth) marker needs a piece of paper of roughly A4 size, the others are smaller.
3. Together they form a patchwork picture or collage, within the framework found on Eyemouth Harbour entrance wall. The collage illustrates aspects of fishing life in 1881: hard-working fishing lads and fisher lasses; the bating of lines; flies under sail; the gear and the craft of it all.

You don’t have to walk the Coastal Path to collect these gifts. Undertake this challenge by car, by foot or by bike. To promote a sense of unexpected gift we have left the location deliberately weak. Good luck and remember to take care near the cliffs!

The 125 Memorial Association
The 125 Memorial Association visits the site on a regular basis to ensure the protection of the area.

EAST COAST FISHING DISASTER

On 28th October 1881, 93 boats with their crews were lost in a hurricane which battered the coastline of Scotland’s east coast. These poignant sculptures have been placed in Eyemouth, Burnmouth, St Abb’s and Cove to depict the exact numbers of those lost. The Deadly Storm left 93 women as widows and 267 children without husbands, fathers and sons leading to many survivors leaving Eyemouth.

The Fishing Disaster in Scotland’s History
A ferocious hurricane devastated the fishing fleet off the east coast taking 189 lives, the worst such disaster in Scottish waters. The entire fleet of 45 boats that went to sea only returned 10.

Today, the site is primarily ENSP, a Wildlife Site of Importance. In 1981 the site was declared as a National Nature Reserve. Within the framework found on Eyemouth, Burnmouth and St Abb’s many species can be seen: gannet, guillemot; razorbill; fulmar; shag, puffin and peregrine, sandpiper and curlew. If you are lucky you may also catch a glimpse of a golden eagle under the cliffs.

There is so much to see we recommend three relaxing days. Strong walkers might manage the route in two days, but three days will give you the time to explore Cove; Cockburnspath; Fast Castle at Berwick. 

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WAYMARKED ROUTE

It may seem unnecessary to provide directions other than saying – walk north or south keeping the sea on your right or left! You will find interesting facts about the history of the landscape inside this leaflet.

Why not view the sculptures and collect Bronze Trail Markers along the way?

You can get this document on tape, in large print, and various other formats by contacting us at the address below. In addition, contact the address below for information on language translations, additional copies, or to arrange for an officer to meet with you to explain any areas of the publication that you would like clarified.

COUNTRYSIDE HERITAGE
Environment and Infrastructure | Scottish Borders Council
| Council Headquarters | Newtown St Boswells |
| MELROSE | TD1 0SA |
| Tel: 01835 824000 | Email: rangers@scottishborders.gov.uk |
Facilities and refreshments
- Burmantofts - The Gulls Nest. The First & Last pub.
- Eyemouth - Choice of many shops, restaurants, cafes and bars.
- Arran - shop, bank, Post Office and pub.
- Coldingham - Shops, toilets, Post Office, garage, pubs
- St Abbs Harbour - Shop, cafes, visitor’s centre, toilets.
- Coldingham Sands - Hotel, toilets, (Beach Café and Beach Guards - summer only)
- Renton Barns on A1 at Grantshouse - toilets and café.

Birdlife and Butterflies
- Spring to summer thousands of birds will be nesting and rearing young. Look out for: kittiwake; guillemot, razorbill; fulmar; shag, puffin and peregrine, waders include: dunlin, oystercatcher, sandpiper and curlew.
- The area is good for butterflies, especially at St Abbs Head. The rare Northern Brown Argus can often be seen near rock rose. Other butterflies you may see include: common blue, wall brown, grayling and the painted lady.
- The six-spot burnet moth is present in July.

Plants
- Thrift is particularly noticeable in May and June, growing in dense mats and giving a wonderful blaze of pink. Gerse adds its bright yellow in the early spring period. The rich variety of flora includes: Spring - primrose, cowslip, meadow saxifrage, scurvy grass, early purple orchid; early Summer - thrift, purple milk vetch, birdsfoot trefoil; mid Summer - ragged robin, meadowsweet, willow herb.

Coastal Geology
- The oldest rocks here are Silurian greywacke which formed on the sea bed some 440 million years ago. Through plate movement these have become intensely folded and faulted, visible no more so than on Siccar Point.
- Siccar Point noted for its geological interest, especially through plate movement, the youngest rocks here are Carboniferous sandstone, grit and coal. The area is good for butterflies, especially at St Abbs Head. The rare Northern Brown Argus can often be seen near rock rose. Other butterflies you may see include common blue, wall brown, grayling and the painted lady.
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THE TRIP
- Can I undertake the route in one trip? Do I walk north or south? Dependant on your home location either may be preferable. You may wish to plan your trip around your accommodation location and undertake the walk on individual days. A frequent bus service allows flexibility for a day out. Dowlaw has no bus service but a taxi may be an option.
- Two days: Strong walkers might manage the route in two days, but there is so much to see we recommend three relaxing days.
- Three days: Take time to enjoy all that the towns and villages along the way have to offer. This option entails tackling the long day, between Cockburnspath and St Abbs in one go, to avoid leaving transport at Dowlaw.
- Four days: Four day trips will require leaving transport at Dowlaw - this is not permitted overnight. This option allows plenty of time to explore Cove; Cockburnspath; Fast Castle at Dowlaw (entry not recommended unguarded cliffs); St Abbs, Coldingham and Eyemouth.

Accommodation
- Information Service - 01835 843170
- Travel - Leave the Car behind!
- An hourly bus is available between Berwick, Burnmouth, St Abbs and Cove to depict the coast numbers of women widowed and their children looking out to sea for their loved ones that never returned. The deadly storm left 93 women widowed and their children looking out to sea for their loved ones that never returned. The deadly storm left 93
Berwickshire Coastal Path
Cockburnspath to Berwick upon Tweed
28½ miles (45.5 kilometres)

Cockburnspath to Dowlaw 7½mls (12km)
Cockburnspath is the terminus of the Southern Upland Way which leads walkers to, or from, Portpatrick, 212 miles (340km) away in Dumfries and Galloway. Recently the village has been connected to the John Muir Way which leads walkers through East Lothian to Musselburgh, on the fringes of Edinburgh.

Pease Bay
This site of Special Scientific Interest is managed by the Scottish Wildlife Trust as a Nature Reserve. Look out for woodpeckers, treecreepers, dippers and various tits and finches. Roe deer and red squirrels have also been known to make this reserve their home.

Siccar Point and St Helen's Church
A revolution in the history of geology came in 1788, when James Hutton, James Hall and John Playfair took a boat to Siccar Point where they found horizontal layers of red sandstone everywhere, steeply pitched sedimentary rocks known as greyswacke. The site confirmed Hutton's theory that the Earth was much older than six thousand years, the age (6000 BC) computed from the Bible by Bishop Usher in 1654. We now know that the Devonian red sandstones were laid down some 345 million years ago in desert conditions and overlay the eroded surface of highly folded Silurian sediments which had formed 80 million years earlier on the bottom of a long-vanished ocean.

Fast Castle
Fast Castle occupies a dramatic, sheer-sided rock jutting out into the sea. Stumps of masonry represent the settlement of the descendents of Colud. The fort is unguarded cliffs and the site is best viewed from the higher ground on the landward side. Sir Walter Scott once more popular than Gretna Green because of the marriage house.

Dowlaw to St Abbs 6½mls (10km)

Fast Castle
Fast Castle occupies a dramatic, sheer-sided rock jutting out into the sea. Stumps of masonry represent the final stage of a castle which was visited by Mary Queen of Scots in 1564 and captured by an English force in 1570. Entry is not recommended due to the unguarded cliffs and the site is best viewed from the higher ground on the landward side. Sir Walter Scott later set part of his novel, Bride of Lammermuir here, calling it Weel's Craig.

Admiralty Distance Poles
Two sets of poles over a measured mile enabled trade and has recently undergone a major refurbishment.

Eymouth to Berwick upon Tweed 11mls (17km)
The small harbour at Burnmouth (3mls (6km)) was improved in 1879 and 1959 to serve the shoreline fishing communities of Partnall, Cowdrait and Ross who shipped out their catches through upper Burnmouth, which is on the Great North Road and main line railway. Partan is the local name for a crab.

Berwick upon Tweed
Berwick has changed hands no fewer than fourteen times and although English since 1482, its football team still plays in the Scottish League! The ramparts provide a popular promenades around the town and were built in their present form in the 16th century in response to the construction of a French fort at Eymouth. The Barracks were designed by Nicholas Hawksmoor (more famous for his London churches) and built in 1711-21, making them the oldest in Britain. The Tweed is crossed by Old Berwick Bridge (1611) with its fifteen sandstone arches, the Royal Tweed Bridge (1923) and Robert Stephenson's Royal Border Bridge (1847-50), which carries the main east Coast railway line. Photographers Survey Licence AR13023423.