

St Cuthbert's Way

Itinerary

Sunday 12th June

Depart Worcester at 10.00am in hired minibus. You will be able to leave your cars at my home address. Arrive at camp late afternoon.

Monday 13th June - Melrose to Harestanes Distance: 24 km (15 miles)

Duration: 6 - 8 hours St. Cuthbert's Way starts at the gates of the magnificent 12th century abbey in the lively Borders town of Melrose. From Melrose, an invigorating climb takes you over the iconic Eildon Hills whose triple peaks are one of the best loved landmarks in the Scottish Borders. There are panoramic views in every direction: Melrose, the Moorfoot and Lammermuir Hills to the north, and the mighty Cheviot range to the south. After dropping back down to the village of Bowden, nestling in the lee of the Eildons, the route wends its way through gentle farmland and woodland to Newtown St Boswells. The next section along the tranquil banks of the River Tweed offers glimpses of Dryburgh Abbey, and takes you into St. Boswells, and then on further down the Tweed past the Crystal Well into the village of Maxton. Walking south from Maxton along Dere Street, you will be following in the footsteps of the Romans who built the original road, now a tree lined grassy track, passing Lady Lilliard's Tomb. If you are feeling energetic you might fancy a quick detour to climb up to the Waterloo Monument.

Tuesday 14th June - Harestanes to Yetholm Distance: 28 km (17.5 miles)

Duration: 6-7 Hours Setting off again from Harestanes, after crossing the Monteviot Suspension Bridge just below Monteviot House, St. Cuthbert's Way meanders along the banks of the River Teviot to Jedfoot, where you rejoin Dere Street. Before Jedburgh the route branches off through woodland, in springtime strewn with bluebells, and then south-east on farm paths and tracks through rich agricultural land to Cessford. Cessford Castle, once the stronghold of the Kers, is directly on route: a great place to explore some of the Border's rich history. The village of Morebattle comes next before climbing via Grubbit Law along the ridge to Wideopen Hill, at 400m the highest point on St. Cuthbert's Way, and half way from Melrose to Holy Island.

Wednesday 15th June - Kirk Yetholm to Wooler Distance: 19.2 km (12 Miles)

Duration: 6-7 Hours The next section of St. Cuthbert's Way coincides with the final stretch of the Pennine Way. Climbing up from Halterburn around Green Humbleton (287m) – the first of many hillforts along St. Cuthbert's Way – you will soon reach the national border between Scotland and England. A short diversion to Eccles Cairn will reward you with your last views of the Borders and the Eildon Hills. At the border you will cross into Northumberland National Park. St. Cuthbert's Way drops back down via Elsdonburn to Hethpool, at the head of the College valley and home of the Collingwood Oaks. Then onwards through woodland and a good track along the Cheviot foothills, heading for Yeavering Bell (361m), Northumberland's largest Iron Age fort. A lovely path leads through the heather over Gains Law down to the small market town of Wooler.

Thursday 16th June - Wooler to Fenwick Distance: 19 km (12 miles)
Duration: 4 hours From Wooler, St Cuthbert's Way takes you over Weetwood Moor, where a short diversion on one of the circular short walks off the long distance route will take you to prehistoric rock carvings. Dropping back down to cross the River Till via the 16th Century Weetwood Bridge, quiet lanes lead to Horton, and onto another section of typically dead-straight Roman road: the Devil's Causeway, which once linked Corbridge and Tweedmouth. Farmland and woodland tracks lead up to St. Cuthbert's Cave, where monks took St. Cuthbert's body in 875AD as they fled from Viking raids on Lindisfarne. Above the cave on the rocky ridge of the Kyoel Hills, the first tantalising views of your final destination come into sight with Holy Island clearly visible above the glittering sands, and Bamburgh Castle just to the south. It's clear to see why this part of the Northumberland coast has been designated an area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. St. Cuthbert's Way joins here with St. Oswald's Way, another long distance route, following an enjoyable track through Shiellow Wood towards the village of Fenwick.

Friday 17th June - Fenwick to Holy Island Distance: 10 km (6 miles)
Duration: 4 hours From Fenwick St. Cuthbert's Way heads to the coast along historic paths and tracks, passing Fenwick Granary, crossing the main east coast railway line and Beal Cast Burn, past World War 2 coastal defences. Having reached the Causeway at low tide you can choose your final approach to Lindisfarne - either taking the Causeway Road across to Holy Island or follow the posts of the historic Pilgrims Path across the sands. These are the safe crossing times for the 17th June 04.00 until 12.05 (Not safe from 12.06 until 16.30) Safe again from 16.30 until 00.20(Sat.) We would aim to cross the causeway during the course of the morning and return to the mainland late afternoon, giving us time to explore Lindisfarne.

Saturday 18th June – Strike camp and set off on the long journey home, arriving in Worcester late afternoon.