



St. Cuthbert's Way is one of the most beautiful, varied and enjoyable long distance walking routes in Britain. The route links Melrose in the Scottish Borders, where St. Cuthbert started his religious life in 650AD, with Holy Island off the Northumberland Coast, his eventual resting place and his original pilgrimage shrine. Although inspired by St. Cuthbert, this is far more than a pilgrimage route.

Spanning the border between Scotland and England, St. Cuthbert's Way offers

- ◆ an ever changing variety of scenery and spectacular views;
- ◆ a unique and truly memorable finish along a causeway exposed only at low tide;
- ◆ something of interest for everyone, including a wealth of historical and cultural interest;
- ◆ a route which can easily be completed in 4-6 days without requiring a lot of training or high fitness levels;
- ◆ a range of baggage transfer services;
- ◆ accommodation along the route to suit individual budget and taste;
- ◆ ready-made packages which can be booked with one button or phone call, where somebody else makes all the arrangements for you.

Starting at Melrose in the Scottish Borders, St. Cuthbert's Way will take you through some of the Scottish Borders' most beautiful scenery – between the triple peaks of the heathery Eildon Hills; along the tranquil banks of the River Tweed and tracks which the Romans once marched; past castles and cornfields, through woods strewn with bluebells as you wend through Reivers' country to Yetholm, former home of the last Queen of the Gypsies. The climb up from Yetholm to the border between Scotland and England is worth the effort for the spectacular all-round views from the top!

Beyond the border the route crosses into Northumberland National Park. A grassy path leads on over the foothills of the Cheviots via Hethpool to Wooler, passing numerous hill forts and prehistoric remains along the way, with occasional glimpses of the North Sea sparkling on the horizon. Wooler provides a welcome overnight stop with plenty of accommodation and eating options, before continuing over Weetwood Moor, dropping down to cross the River Till and then on to St. Cuthbert's Cave – a perfect picnic spot. Above the cave on the Kyo Hills, Holy Island comes into view, beckoning you across the causeway or Pilgrim's Path over the sands to the end of the route.

Following St. Cuthbert's Way

St. Cuthbert's Way is clearly signed and waymarked in both directions with the St. Cuthbert's cross symbol, and should be easy to follow with a map. The long distance route is covered by Ordnance Survey Explorer maps OL16, 338 and 340. Harveys (www.harveymaps.co.uk) also produce a St. Cuthbert's Way map. Detailed guide books for St. Cuthbert's Way, including sectional maps, are published by Birlinn (www.birlinn.co.uk) and Rucksack Reader (www.ruscacs.com). All maps and guides should be readily available from Visitor Information Centres in Melrose, Harestanes, Jedburgh, Wooler and Berwick-upon-Tweed, or via the internet. The official guidebook is available from www.stcuthbertsway.info.

Short walks off St. Cuthbert's Way

24 short walks based on St. Cuthbert's Way ranging in length from 1-8 miles have been developed to complement the long distance route and showcase some of the best sections. A detailed guide of these short walks is available from www.stcuthbertsway.info or from Visitor Information Centres.

Linking routes

For those looking for more of a challenge or a longer walk, St. Cuthbert's Way links directly to the following other long distance routes:

- ◆ Northern end of the Pennine Way at Yetholm;
- ◆ Southern Upland Way at Melrose;
- ◆ Northumberland Coastal Path (linking to Berwickshire Coastal Path) and St. Oswald's Way near St. Cuthbert's Cave

Who is the route for?

St. Cuthbert's Way is suitable for people of all ages and abilities, ranging from keen walkers to those who have never tackled a long distance walk before. Flat and low level sections are interspersed by uphill climbs, paths along hill ridges, and downhill descents. Some choose to get fit along the way, but most people will enjoy the route far more if they have done at least some walking before they set off to establish a basic level of fitness and wear their boots in! Various stiles, steps and uneven ground along the route may limit accessibility for walkers with restricted mobility, and also restrict suitability for multi-use. In England only those sections of the route which use recognised bridleways are suitable for equestrian or cycle use.

Further information

Further information about St. Cuthbert's Way including links to websites for companies offering packaged trips, baggage transfer and other services is available from www.stcuthbertsway.info. General information is available from www.visitscottishborders.com, www.northumberland.gov.uk; and from Visitor Information Centres at Melrose (tel. 01835 851370), Harestanes (01835 830306), Wooler (01668 282123) and Berwick-upon-Tweed (01289 330733).

Merchandise

St. Cuthbert's Way t-shirts and pin badges, are available from www.stcuthbertsway.info or from Visitor Information Centres.

Official completion certificates for St. Cuthbert's Way are available from Countryside and Access Team, Scottish Borders Council, Newtown St. Boswells TD6 OSA (tel. 01835 826509).

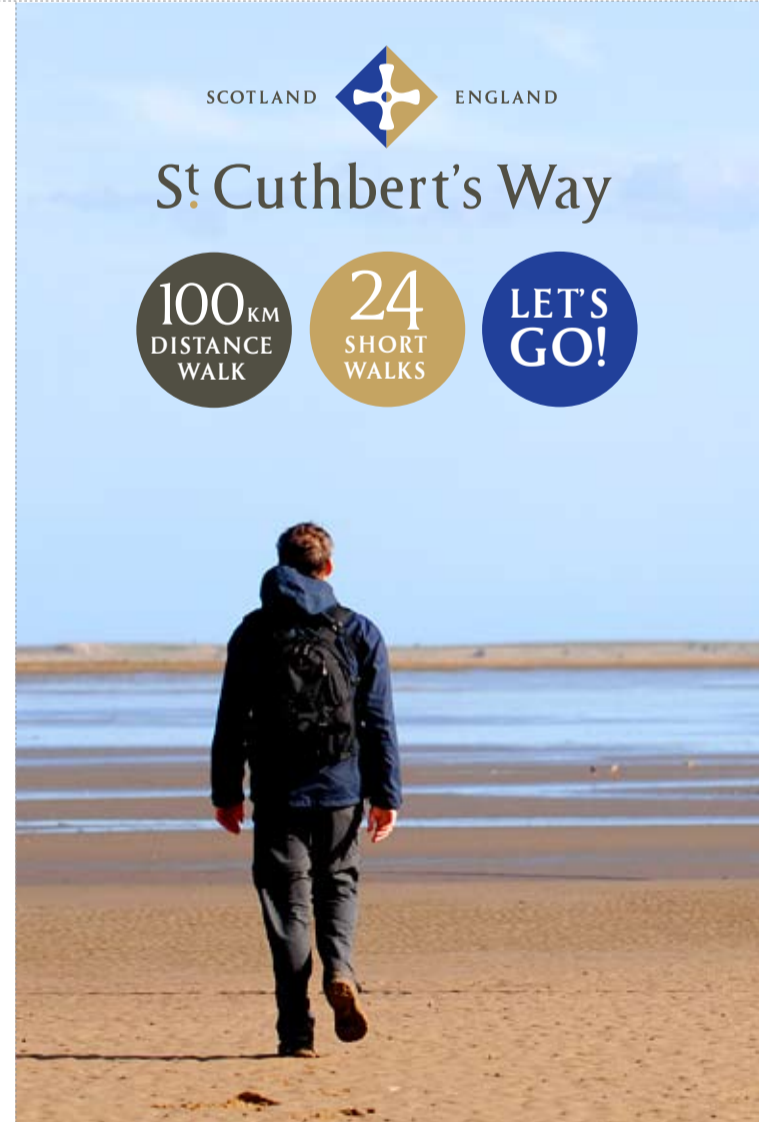
Management of St. Cuthbert's Way

St. Cuthbert's Way was officially opened in summer 1996. The route was developed as a partnership between public agencies from both England and Scotland, and is now managed by a steering group involving representatives from Scottish Borders Council, Northumberland County Council, Northumberland National Park Authority, Northumberland Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Ron Shaw, the originator of the route. Comments on the route are always welcome, and should be sent to Countryside and Access Team, Scottish Borders Council, Newtown St. Boswells TD6 OSA.

Walking responsibly

The Scottish Outdoor Access Code (www.outdooraccess-scotland.com) applies in Scotland, and the Countryside Code (www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk) applies in England. Both codes outline a commonsense approach to enjoying the countryside.

- ◆ Be safe – plan ahead and follow any signs.
- ◆ Leave gates and property as you find them.
- ◆ Take your litter home, or dispose of it appropriately at the next village or town.
- ◆ Keep dogs under close control, preferably on a short lead.
- ◆ Consider others enjoying the countryside, and those who own or make their living from the land.



A historic and cultural journey through the Scottish Borders and Northumberland





Planning your walk

It is up to you whether you walk the whole of St. Cuthbert's Way in one go, or whether you walk it in sections over a longer period. Either way, how long it takes will depend on how fit you are, how much time you have, and how much you wish to explore along the way. More experienced walkers usually complete the route in four or five days, but others may prefer to take their time and enjoy walking the route more leisurely over six days or more.

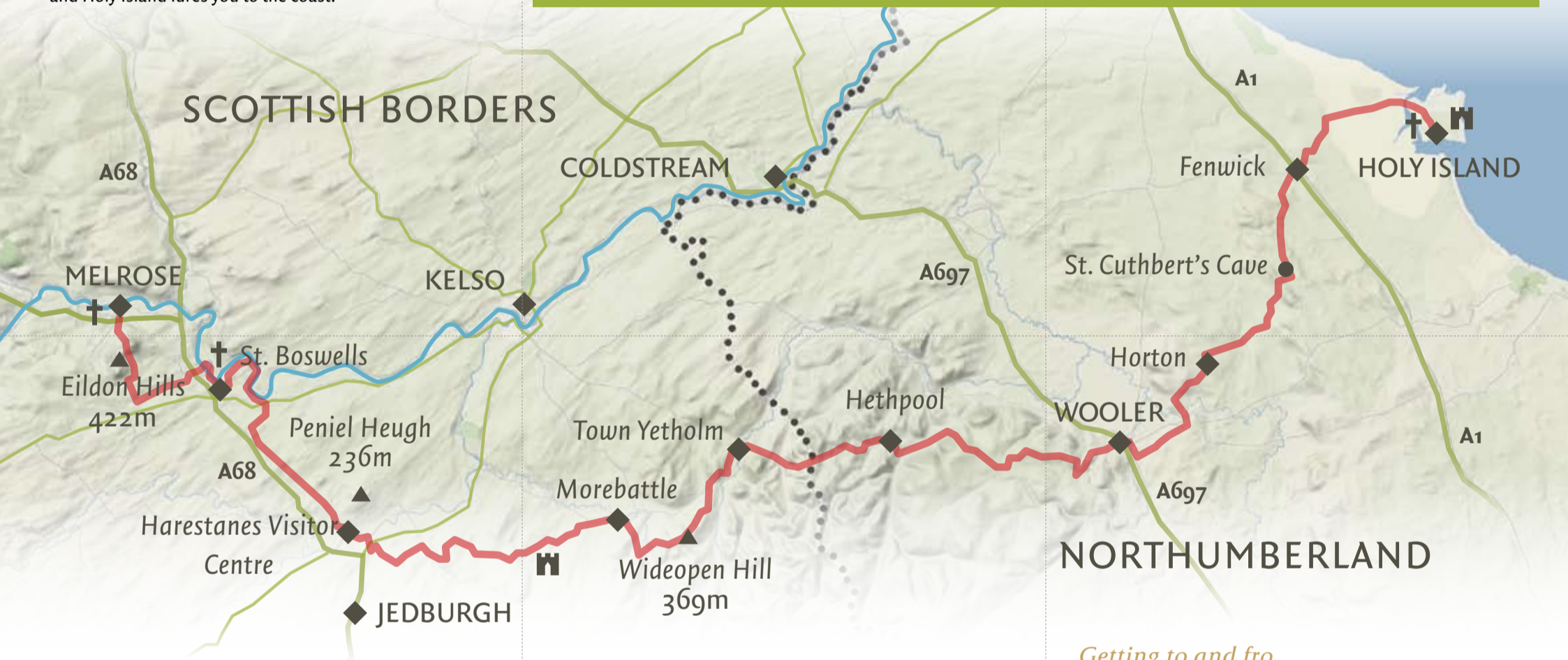
For further information on suggested stages, see www.stcuthbertsway.info.

Parts of St. Cuthbert's Way offer a wonderful feeling of being far from the madding crowds, but you are never more than a few hours' walk from good food and accommodation. Even so, you will need to make sure you take suitable footwear, warm and waterproof clothing, food and drink.

Most people walk St. Cuthbert's Way from west to east, which chronologically fits in with St. Cuthbert's life, but more importantly means the wind is usually behind you, and Holy Island lures you to the coast.

Accommodation and refreshments

Overnight accommodation is available at numerous places on or near St. Cuthbert's Way, including Melrose, Bowden, Newtown St. Boswells, St. Boswells, Ancrum, Jedburgh, Crailing, Morebattle, Town Yetholm, Kirk Yetholm, Wooler, Lowick, Fenwick, Beal and Holy Island. In addition to these towns and villages, refreshments are also available from April to October at Harestanes Visitor Centre. For further details see www.stcuthbertsway.info. Please note that camping in England is restricted to established campsites, and is strictly prohibited on Holy Island.



Getting to and fro

Both the start and finish of St. Cuthbert's Way are readily accessible by public transport, or by car. Regular buses run between Edinburgh, Kelso, Berwick-upon-Tweed and the start of St. Cuthbert's Way at Melrose. At the end of the route buses connect Holy Island with Newcastle and Berwick-upon-Tweed. Trains from Berwick-upon-Tweed take only 50 minutes to Edinburgh, or just over 4 hours to London. The cross-country rail route makes Berwick-upon-Tweed easily accessible from the Midlands and south-west England. Newcastle International and Edinburgh are the nearest airports. Local bus services run between Melrose, St. Boswells, Jedburgh, Morebattle, Yetholm and Kelso, and between Fenwick and Belford. For further information on all public transport contact Traveline on 0871 200 2233 or see www.traveline.com.

Some accommodation providers along the route offer transport to and from rail and bus stations, or will ferry you to and fro each day if you prefer to stay at the same place every night. Several private taxi services also cover the route and are only too happy to transport you and/or your baggage to and fro along the route, back to where you left your car, or to a bus or rail station. For further details see www.stcuthbertsway.info.

Holy Island Crossing

The final section of St. Cuthbert's Way across the shimmering sands to Holy Island is one of the unique attractions of the route, and a final challenge for walkers: Holy Island is cut off from the mainland twice a day at high tide. Both the Lindisfarne causeway and Pilgrims' Path across the sands are safe and used daily by hundreds of people, but you need to plan your crossing carefully to cross at low tide. Safe crossing times are posted at either end of the causeway and are widely available from visitor information centres, or from www.holyisland.northumberland.gov.uk.

