

THE BORDERS ABBEYS WAY

S.E. SCOTLAND

9th -16th JUNE 2022

The trail holiday for 2022 will be a scenic circular trail in the Scottish Borders, linking the ruined abbeys of Melrose, Dryburgh, Kelso and Jedburgh and through the grounds of Abbotsford House, the former home of Sir Walter Scott. The official trail measures 68 miles but we will add some extra miles to result in 70 miles over 6 days of walking. I have already had the pleasure of walking half the trail and found the route well waymarked on a good mix of surfaces.



The trip will be excellent value for money as I will directly book the accommodation and baggage transfer and avoid agent's fees. The holiday will consist of seven nights ensuite B&B accommodation in a mix of hotels and guesthouses, six days walking and transfer of your main case(≤20kg) to the next accommodation.

There is a possibility that we will have to cancel/postpone the trip if government guidance changes and I intend to book accommodation that permits free cancellation if a weeks notice is given, most of the accommodation offers this option. Booking of the travel and luggage transfer can be delayed until spring to minimise any potential cancellation charges.

DAILY WALK STAGES

Each daily walk will be 10-13 miles, fairly flat and on a good mix of surfaces, riverside paths, forestry paths, across farmland and hillsides and some road sections.

STAGE	LENGTH(miles)	ASCENT(metres)
Melrose to St Boswells (overnight at Kelso)	9.7	405
Clintmains to Kelso	11.7	201

Kelso to Jedburgh	12.8	352
Jedburgh to Hawick	13.0	542
Hawick to Selkirk	12.4	557
Selkirk to Melrose	10.5	399
Melrose to Melrose	70.1	2456

Most descriptions of the trail show an 18 mile section between Melrose and Kelso. We will split this section at St Boswells and use a bus to reach Kelso and then return the next day to walk from Clintmains to Kelso. This will give two sections of 10 miles and 12 miles respectively.

TRAVEL

The most likely option is to fly from Belfast International to Edinburgh and then the train from Edinburgh city centre to Tweedbank which is just beside Melrose and the reverse for our return journey. Easyjet currently charge £110 for these flights including a hold case. The return train fare between Edinburgh and Tweedbank is £23 and the airport tram return fare is £9, a total of £150 approximately for travel.

COSTS/CANCELLATION

Most guesthouses and hotels on the route will only request payment on departure and will typically charge £45 to £50 per person for B&B sharing a twin or double room. Accommodation costs will therefore be about £315 per person sharing or £480 for a single room.

Luggage transfer costs depend on the group size but will be about £45 per person for a group of 5-6 people. Bags must not weigh more than 20kgs, if your bag does weigh above 15kgs then I suggest that you are bringing too much! Transport costs will be £150 for the plane and train plus the bus or tram transfer from Edinburgh airport to the city centre train station.

Most of the guesthouses and hotels serving the route do not require deposits to secure a booking but a couple of possible options may require a non-refundable deposit of £10 per person. The baggage transfer company will require a non-refundable 25% deposit (£12pp), full payment on arrival. I am therefore requesting a deposit from you of £80 per person and some or all of this deposit may be forfeited if you subsequently cancel and your cancellation means that the individual costs of others are increased (e.g. a single supplement becomes due) or cancellation charges arise. Accommodation charges will be payable each day on the trip to the proprietors and I will check which form of payment they accept and notify you beforehand.

The total cost of accommodation(7 nights on a B&B basis), luggage transfer and travel will be about £510 per person sharing or £675 for a single room.

WHAT TO DO

If you want to discuss the trip please contact me by phone or e-mail. Further information can be found at the following websites <http://www.bordersabbeysway.com/> , which is the semi-official website or <https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/borders/borders-abbeysway.shtml> for a detailed description. A guide to the trail can also be downloaded as six PDF files from the Scottish Borders site using this link <https://walkscottishborders.com/route/borders-abbeysway/> .

If you want to join the holiday then please send me a deposit cheque for £80 (payable to John Holmes, dated 7 December 2021) by 7 December to my home address(see below). Please include your name and contact details(name and title, postal and e-mail addresses and phone numbers), and indicate if you are willing to share a room or would prefer a single room. I will then book the accommodation and pay any required deposits by card but will only cash your cheques once the bookings are confirmed. Please contact me by 7th December or sooner if you are interested, several of the destinations offer a limited number of rooms and I do not expect to be able to cater for more than eight walkers.

John Holmes

Address - *****

Tel - 028 ***** or 07*****

E-mail – *****