

# paths

around Innerleithen & Walkerburn



Our Scottish Borders  
Your destination

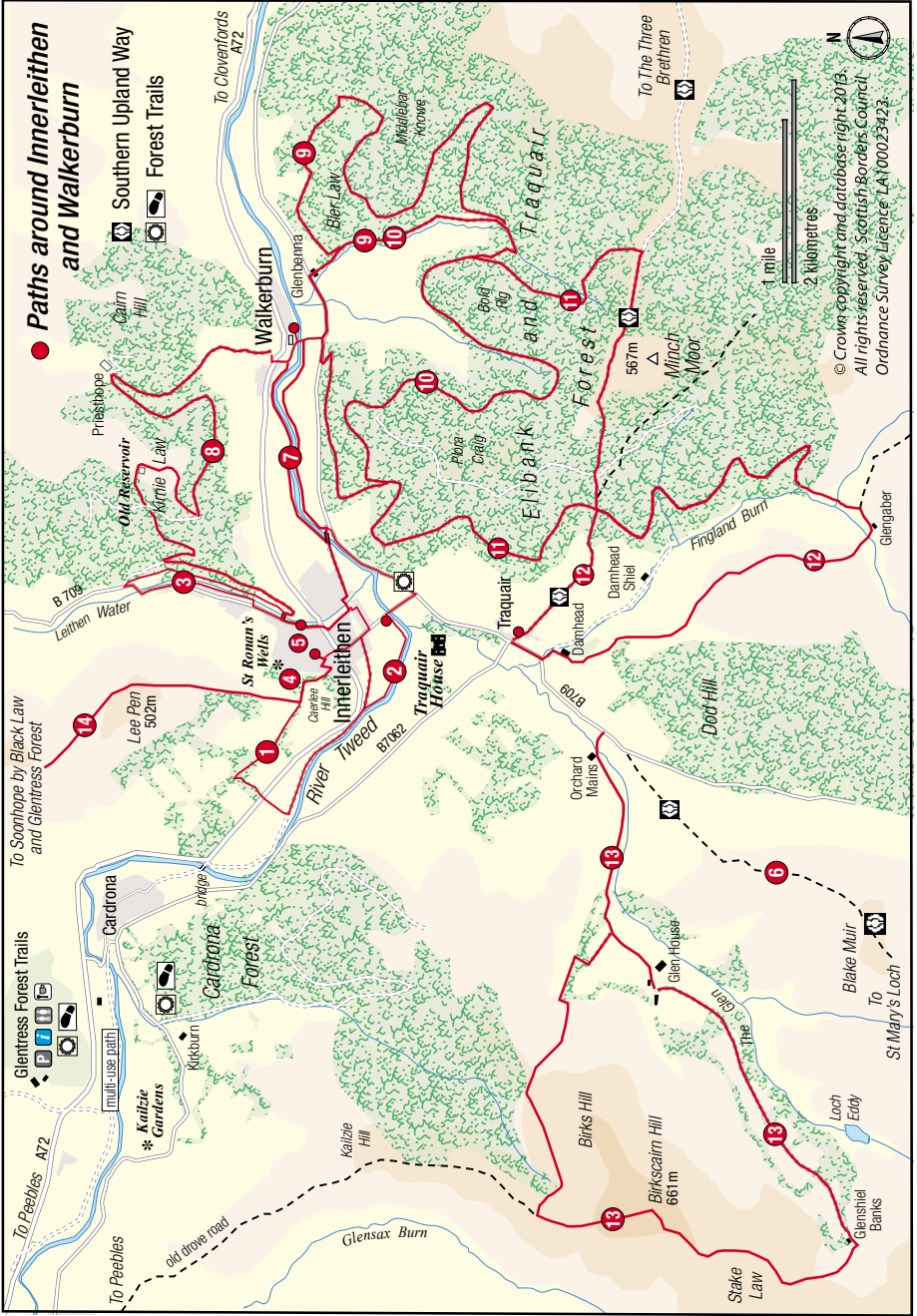
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# ● Paths around Innerleithen and Walkerburn



## Introduction

This booklet includes routes starting from Innerleithen and Walkerburn in East Tweeddale, Scottish Borders. The area is ideal for walking because the towns are surrounded by rolling hills, include areas of extensive woodland and offer gentle walks along the banks of the River Tweed and the Leithen Water. The routes are especially suitable for walkers. Other users may not be able to use all parts of the routes where there are steps or stiles.

The routes described range from short strolls to strenuous hill climbs. Each route has a summary containing distance, estimated time to complete, start and finish points and an indication of the terrain to be expected. The routes include much historical and natural interest which is alluded to in the text. However, further information about Innerleithen and Walkerburn's history and natural resources are available from the VisitScotland Information Centre in Peebles or from local bookshops and other outlets.



*Innerleithen High Street*

## Acknowledgements

The advice, knowledge and support from the local community makes this a more rich publication for both locals and visitors. The co-operation of farmers, landowners and land managers in developing these routes is



*Nicholson's Smiddy in Innerleithen*

gratefully acknowledged. Some of the routes were developed with financial assistance from the European Union under the Tweed Trails project. Today the routes are primarily managed by Scottish Borders Council.

## Innerleithen - past and present

Innerleithen derives its name from its situation near the confluence of **Leithen Water** and the River Tweed. The Leithen was of major importance to the development of the town as a source of power and soft water for the processing of woollen textiles. Innerleithen was also a spa and so water has played a prominent role in the town's industrial and cultural heritage.

The Iron Age forts on **Pirn** and **Caerlee** hills are evidence of settlement in the area since before Roman times, but it was the 12th century before "Inverlethane" entered the annals of recorded history. In 1169 Malcolm IV granted the church at Innerleithen the right of sanctuary as a mark of his gratitude to the villagers who had recovered the drowned body of his son from the River Tweed. At that time **Traquair House**, reputedly the oldest inhabited house in Scotland, was a royal hunting lodge and this is where the king and his court would be staying.

At the close of the 18th century Innerleithen was a small community of crofters, shepherds and weavers in cottages spread randomly between the present day Damside and Leithen Road as far as the Kirklands. At that time the hamlet's "Doo Well" was a mineral spa of considerable reputation.

**St. Ronan's Wells** continues today as a visitor centre and garden, admission is free. (see pp18-21)

In order to promote sport and to entertain the many visitors to Innerleithen in the hey-day of the spa James Hogg and others founded the St. Ronan's Border Club in the 1820s. This led to the inaugural **St. Ronan's Border Games** being held by the side of Leithen in September 1827. With the exception of years of global conflict the games have been held annually since that date, constituting the oldest organised event of this type in Scotland.

The fictional mineral well in Scott's novel had sprung from the ground following an encounter in which St. Ronan had thrust the Devil down into hell. This tale was adapted as a pageant to be acted out by school children in 1901 and was the foundation of the Cleikum Ceremonies which has since been part of the town's annual festival – St. Ronan's Border Games Week. Though there is no direct historical link between him and Innerleithen the St. Ronan associated with the Cleikum Ceremonies had his church or cell on the Isle of Bute, travelled widely and died in AD 737.

Like other Border towns Innerleithen enjoyed its boom years during the rise in the mill industry throughout the mid and late 1800's. Following the decline of the textile industry in the Borders all the mills bar one have been demolished to make way for modern housing. Caerlee Mills

produced high quality cashmere garments up until recent times. Unfortunately at the time of producing the booklet the factory closed for business.

The lively main street has several buildings of historic interest, including Robert Smail's Printing Works run by the National Trust for Scotland and open to visitors (see pp18-21). The shops and cafes are mainly locally owned and, therefore, create an interesting variety for residents and visitors alike. The neighbouring **Forestry Commission Scotland** woodlands and **community woodlands** add to the amenities around the town.



*Walkerburn mill lade*

## Walkerburn - past and present

Walkerburn is named after the burn that flows south from the eastern flanks of Priesthope Burn. It is possible that the 'walker' burn actually referred to a waulker. A waulker was the person who dressed the cloth in the mill.

**Old Caberston**, east of the settlement, was all that existed here up to the 1850's. There are intriguing signs of earlier settlers to the west that include cultivation terraces and **Purveshill Tower**. To the south there are medieval dwelling sites at West Bold.

**Caberston Farm** moved to the Walker Burn around 1850. The change in site was to make use of the water to power a water wheel. Five years later Henry Ballantyne of Galashiels founded the **Tweedvale Mill**. Frederick Thomas 'Eccentric' Pilkington designed and built the village to house the workers and the Ballantyne family.

In 1859 Robert Frier, also of Galashiels, created **Tweedholm Mill**. Walkerburn is one of the last industrial settlements of its type to be created in Scotland. The quality of building that followed demonstrates the wealth that was created. There are sixteen listed buildings and structures in Walkerburn alone.

A French style '**pissoir**' was installed as a public toilet by the main road (A72). The structure is a stall of pierced iron and is listed.

The **information hub** is based at Caberston Café. Many of the walks begin from Alexandra Park, a short walk from the cafe. There are several information boards by the cafe for your interest.

### Access in Scotland

The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 and the Scottish Outdoor Access Code came into effect in February 2005. The Land Reform (Scotland) Act establishes a statutory right of responsible access to land and inland waters for outdoor recreation, crossing land, and some educational and commercial purposes.

The Scottish Outdoor Access Code gives detailed guidance on your responsibilities when exercising access rights and if you are managing land and water. The Act sets out where and when access rights apply. The Code defines how access rights should be exercised responsibly.



### Know the Code before you go... Enjoy Scotland's outdoors - responsibly!

Enjoy Scotland's outdoors! Everyone has the right to be on most land and inland water for recreation, education and for going from place to place providing they act responsibly. These access rights and responsibilities are explained in the Scottish Outdoor Access Code. The key things are:

#### When you're in the outdoors:

- *take personal responsibility for your own actions and act safely;*
- *respect people's privacy and peace of mind;*
- *help land managers and others to work safely and effectively;*
- *care for your environment and take your litter home;*
- *keep your dog under proper control;*
- *take extra care if you're organising an event or running a business.*

#### When you're managing the outdoors:

- *respect access rights;*
- *act reasonably when asking people to avoid land management operations;*
- *work with your local authority and other bodies to help integrate access and land management;*
- *respect rights of way and customary access;*

Find out more by visiting [www.outdooraccess-scotland.com](http://www.outdooraccess-scotland.com) or telephoning your local Scottish Natural Heritage office.

## General Advice

Before setting off on longer walks, always check the weather forecast and prepare yourself accordingly. Remember that weather conditions can change rapidly. Remember that hot weather, causing sunburn and/ or dehydration, can be just as debilitating as rain or snow. Always carry adequate cover for your body in all conditions.



*Hikers checking the map on Windlestraw Law*

On longer hill walks you should always wear or carry good waterproofs, proper walking boots, windproof clothing, and take food and drink with you. These provisions may not be necessary on the shorter, low level walks, but a light waterproof and refreshments are still worth taking, just in case. When out on the hills, a map and compass should be carried to aid navigation.



*Cattle can be curious!*

## Take great care when walking on country roads.

- **Pavements or paths** should be used if provided
- **If there is no pavement or path**, walk on the right-hand side of the road so that you can see oncoming traffic. You should take extra care and be prepared to walk in single file, especially on narrow roads or in poor light, keep close to the side of the road. It may be safer to cross the road well before a sharp right-hand bend so that oncoming traffic has a better chance of seeing you. Cross back after the bend
- **Help other road users to see you.** Wear or carry something light coloured, bright or fluorescent in poor daylight conditions

## Livestock

Many of the routes in this booklet pass through livestock farming areas. Please remember that the farmer's livelihood may depend on the rearing and sale of livestock, and always act responsibly. Dogs can be a particular concern for farmers during lambing time (March – May) and when cows are calving (Spring & Autumn).

- Dogs therefore should not be taken into fields where there are young livestock. This includes all young livestock such as lambs, calves and foals. In more open countryside where lambs are present, keep your dog on a short lead. Disturbance at this time can separate young livestock from their mothers leaving them cold, hungry and exposed to predators.

- Dogs should not be taken into fields of cattle when they have calves, as the cows see a dog as a threat and may attack it. Go into a neighbouring field or onto adjacent land.
- During the bird breeding season (April – June) keep your dog under close control or on a short lead in ground nesting areas.

Without a dog, if you walk quietly through livestock areas, keeping a safe distance from stock and watching them carefully, you should experience little or no difficulty. Please leave gates as you find them and ensure that if you have to open a gate, you close it securely behind you. Thank you for your cooperation, which will help to ensure that these walks are available for those who follow in your footsteps in future years.

### Health Warning!

Germs from animals can cause serious human illness.

Stay safe from diseases when out in the countryside by:

- a. Washing hands with soap & water (or use wet wipes) after visiting the toilet, after activities, touching animals and before handling, cooking and eating food
- b. Taking care to avoid spreading animal faeces on footwear
- c. Avoiding camping or having a picnic on land which has recently been used for grazing animals
- d. Not drinking untreated water from rivers, streams and lochs
- e. Avoiding tick bites, cover legs when walking through long vegetation

Contact the Public Health Department for more information 01896 825560



Example of a forestry operations sign

### Forestry

Seven of the routes in this booklet go through forestry plantations either wholly or partly. At the time of writing there are sections of forestry ready to be felled. You should be prepared to follow any diversions or turn back should you come across forestry operations. DO NOT ignore any signage, it has been installed to ensure the safety of recreational users.





## Toilet Facilities

Public toilets in Innerleithen are beside Victoria Park on Hall Street. Walkerburn has no public toilets. Patrons of Caberston Café may use the toilet in the café.

## Waymarking and Maps

Many routes are way-marked, however an Ordnance Survey Landranger 1:50 000 or Explorer 1:25 000 maps should be used in conjunction with this booklet to help identify the hills and other points of interest.

### Key to map symbols

	promoted route
	other path
	Southern Upland Way
	mountain bike trail
	forest trail
	viewpoint
	caution, take care
	car parking
	bus stop
	cafe
	toilets
	visitor information

## Scottish Borders Festival of Walking

The Scottish Borders Festival of Walking, a week long celebration of walking and the countryside, was the first of its kind in Scotland and has been held annually since 1995. It usually takes place in September and the host town rotates to give a different choice of walks each year.

Visit: [www.borderswalking.com](http://www.borderswalking.com)

## Other Routes

There are various routes promoted for different activities within the area. Information can be gained by visiting the relevant website or contacting Visit Scotland (contact details at rear of booklet). You may also be interested in Paths around Peebles or Paths around Selkirk (there are 12 settlements covered in the 'Paths around' series), for more information visit: [www.scotborders.gov.uk/walking](http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/walking)



Walk It is the Paths to Health Project in the Scottish Borders and aims to encourage people to take up walking as part of a healthier lifestyle. Our walks are usually short and easy though the routes can sometimes involve rough paths and low level gradients. You will find the Walk it logo on routes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7. We have chosen these walks for their length and level gradient.

For information, telephone 01835 826750.



Map of multi-use railway path on pp38-39

## Route 1

### Caerlee and the River Tweed

**Distance:** 5.5km/3½miles

**Time:** 1½ hours

**Start and finish:** Hall Street Car Park, Victoria Park, Innerleithen.

**Terrain:** tarmac pavements, good paths, woodland paths, forestry track. Some sections may be muddy. Boots or strong shoes needed in wet conditions.



A popular route taking in hill, woodland and riverside in one short walk.

- ① Leave the car park and turn right onto St Ronan's Terrace. After 50 metres turn left into St Ronan's Terrace. At the next junction turn right and go through the gate into St Ronan's Wood. Follow the path uphill for approximately 600m.
- ② At a bend in the track, with the mast over to your left, go through the kissing gate in front of you. Follow the well defined path along the field edge and onto the cut through between two plantations.
- ③ After 1km turn left down the track which leads onto the main road. Cross over (take care and watch for traffic) and take the track down to the river bank.

**Howford Crossing** – was a river crossing that had to be accommodated when the railway was created; it was originally called 'the cow ford'. The former railway line, created in 1866 and closed in 1962, has been developed into a multi-use pathway managed by Sustrans and supported by Scottish Borders Council. The route connects Innerleithen and Peebles; (see map of route on pp 38-39).



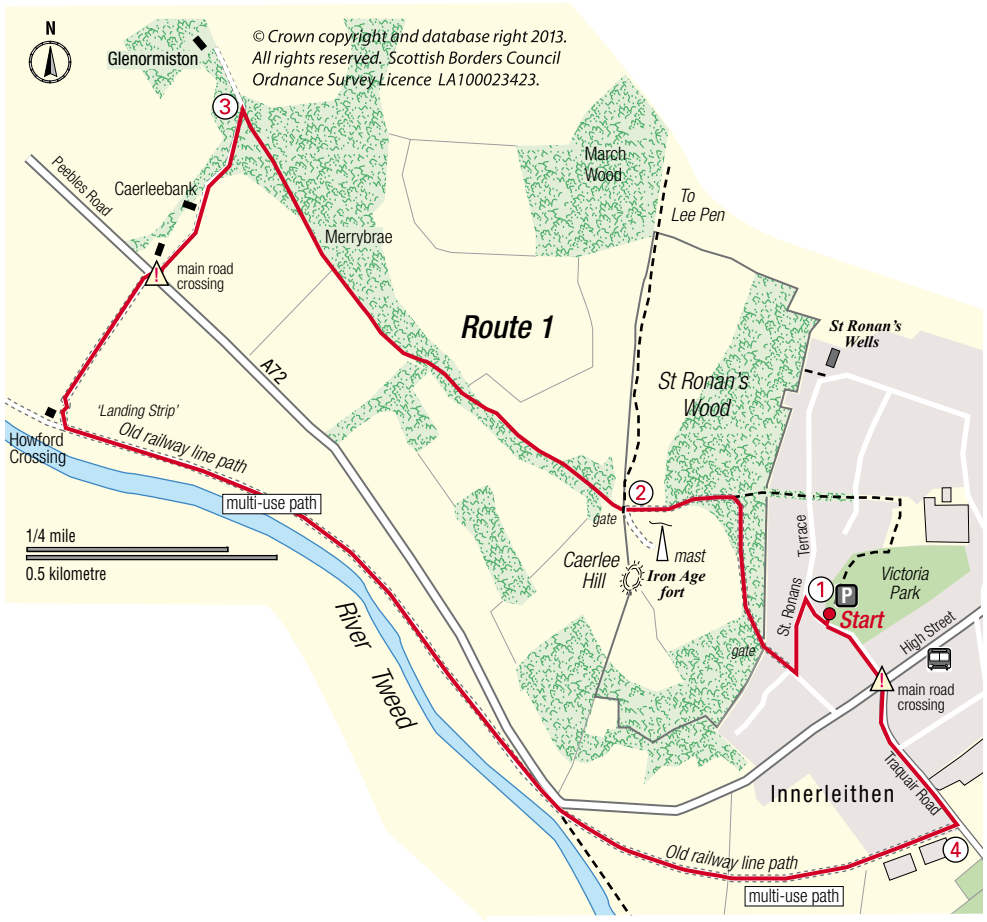
By Caerleebank

Once at the river turn left and you are heading back to town. Follow this route by the river for 2km until you reach Traquair Road. Look out for dippers and heron on the water and in spring and early summer enjoy the abundance of wild flowers including stitchwort, forget-me-not and cranesbill.

- ④ Turn left when you reach the road and this will take you back to the High Street. Cross over the main road and return to your start point.



Horsriding on the multi-use Railway Path



Winter by the River Tweed



Looking down the Tweed Valley from Caerlee Hill

Route2

The Toll House Circular

**Distance:** 5.5km/3½miles

**Time:** 1½ hours

**Start and finish:** Car Park, nr the Toll House, Innerleithen or park considerately on Traquair Road.

**Terrain:** tarmac pavements, good paths, riverside paths. Some sections may be very muddy. Boots or strong shoes needed in wet conditions.



Haughhead Viaduct

A popular short route using riverside paths, some town paths and a country road.

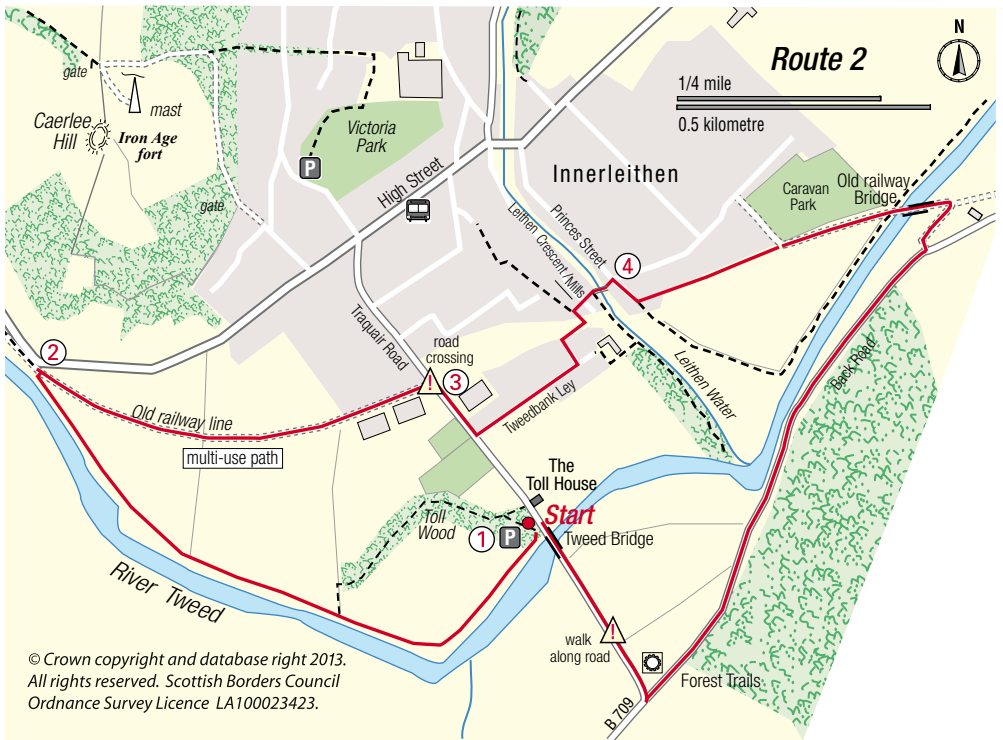
- ① Leave the car park by going down to the river on a well defined path and through a gate. Take a right and follow the river bank for approx 1.5km. Look out for dippers and goosanders on the river. There are interesting alder trees dotted along the riverside, the only native hardwood that grows cones. In spring redpolls will feed in groups on these trees.
- ② Go up onto the multi-use railway path and turn right, this leads back to Traquair Road after 800m.



Innerleithen Railway Station circa.1900

**Innerleithen railway bridge** was part of the infrastructure for the Peebles to Galashiels railway line. The bridge is known as the Haughhead Viaduct and is category B listed. The construction is a combination of stone piers and iron girders and comprises six spans. The bridge has been altered to allow passage for walkers, cyclists and horse-riders; a water main is also carried..

- ③ Cross the road with care and turn right to follow the pavement to Tweedbank Ley. Turn left into this street and near the end of it turn left again. Follow the path round until a long tarmac path is ahead of you. Do not follow this long path, turn right in between houses, cross Leithen Mills and continue onto the small bridge that crosses the Leithen Water. Keep straight on, between sheds, to reach Princes Street.
- ④ Turn right onto Princes Street and after 30m take a left along the back of the houses along a rough and muddy path. After 300m you will meet with the hard cycle path, follow this over the old railway bridge. At the other side go down to your right and follow the path



onto the back road, turn right and follow this until you come to the junction. Turn right onto Traquair Road and head back to Innerleithen and/or your car on the other side of the road bridge.

**The Toll House** was built in 1830. Farmers and other local people formed a Turnpike Trust after 1751. They built new roads and collected tolls from users in order to fund the works. The creation of such trusts across Scotland enabled a whole new system of roads greatly enhancing opportunities for trade and touring (beginning of modern tourism).



Looking to Lee Pen from the back road

Route 3

Pirn Wood and Leithen Water

**Distance:** 4km/2½miles

**Time:** 1 hour

**Start and finish:** Car Park, Leithen Road, Innerleithen

**Terrain:** tarmac pavements, good paths, riverside paths. Some sections may be very muddy. Boots or strong shoes needed in wet conditions.



Walking through Pirn Wood

A popular short route on forest paths and riverside paths.

- ① Turn right out of the car park and take the right turn over the Cuddy Brig.

**Jenny's Well** surfaces opposite the picnic area above the Cuddy Brig and falls into the Leithen. The spring originally provided fresh water for the nearby cottages. The pretty spot was also popular with school children who would stop there for a cool drink. The well is named after Jenny Baptie (d.1915) who sold home-made sweets from her cottage across from the well.

At the other side do not go down the steps to your left, turn left where the finger post is pointing. Follow this forest path, eventually becoming a track, for 1.5km.

- ② Just after passing the golf club house down on your left, turn left down to the road through a field gate. At the road turn left and cross the Leithen Water over the road bridge. After passing the sluice on your left leave the road to take a path towards the riverside.
- ③ After 1km turn right over a little bridge that takes you back onto Leithen Road. Turn left onto the pavement to return to your starting point.

**Leithen House**, beside the Cuddy Brig, is worth stopping to admire as long as consideration is given to the owners. Built in the Regency style in 1828, the wrought iron balconettes and door surround are later additions. The building was formerly known as Marmion House and was built by merchant Robert Boyd with a shop attached; Leithen road is marked as Marmion Place on the first edition map. It was at some time an inn and local folklore maintains that Sir Walter Scott wrote the opening lines of 'Marmion House' within the building.

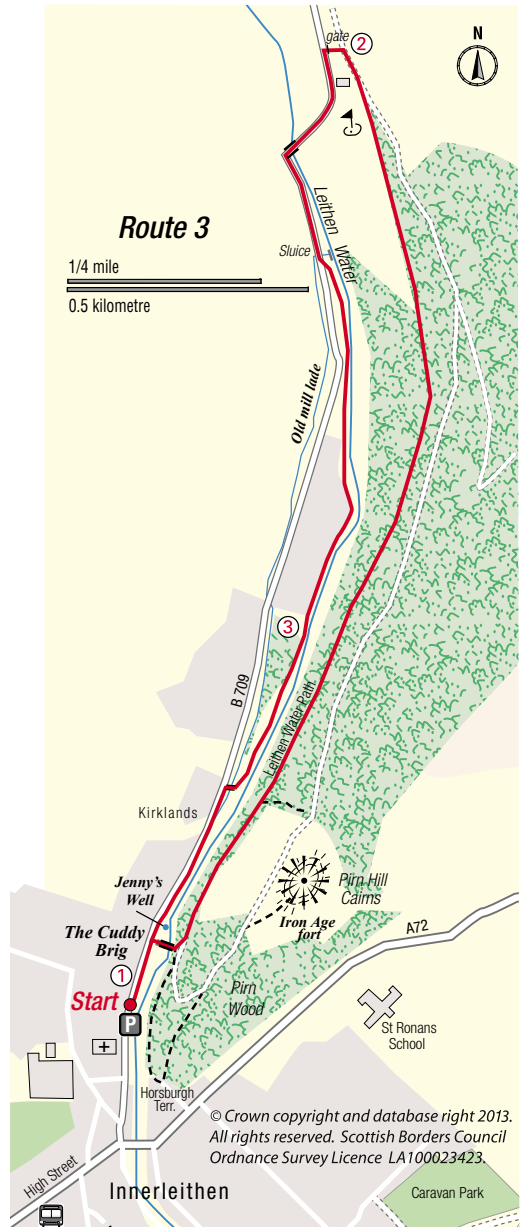


Leithen Water from Cuddy Brig

The area known as **Kirklands** used to house the parish church, manse and glebe. What remains on the land at the present time is the manse (built 1779), a farm and the graveyard. The old cemetery is worth a visit to view the iconography on the gravestones that was fashionable at that time. (The death head – stylised skull – was the most common non-religious symbol used and was either accompanied by crossed bones or wings. The wings symbolise the fleeting time of life on earth or the soul's flight to heaven.) The church was originally built here in the early to mid 1700's and was not demolished until 1859.



Autumn view through to Lee Pen



Route 4

St Ronan's Woodland

**Distance:** 3km/2miles

**Time:** 1 hour

**Start and finish:** Car Park, Victoria Park, Hall St, Innerleithen

**Terrain:** forestry tracks and paths, tarmac pavements. Some sections may be very muddy. Boots or strong shoes needed in wet conditions



We have way-marked a route to help you explore the woodland area and part of Caerlee Hill managed by the Woodland Trust. For a short walk there are some steep climbs and you may wish to only walk the woodland section.

**The Woodland Trust** was established in 1972 as a woodland conservation charity. During that time they have acquired over 1,000 woodland sites covering 20,000 hectares of land. This would be impossible without the 300,000 strong memberships. All the woodlands are free to visit and St Ronan's has a good variety of bird species including nuthatch, great spotted woodpecker and treeceeper. In 2007 the Trust launched their Ancient Tree Hunt, a twelve year project. For more information or to become a member visit [www.woodlandtrust.org.uk](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk)



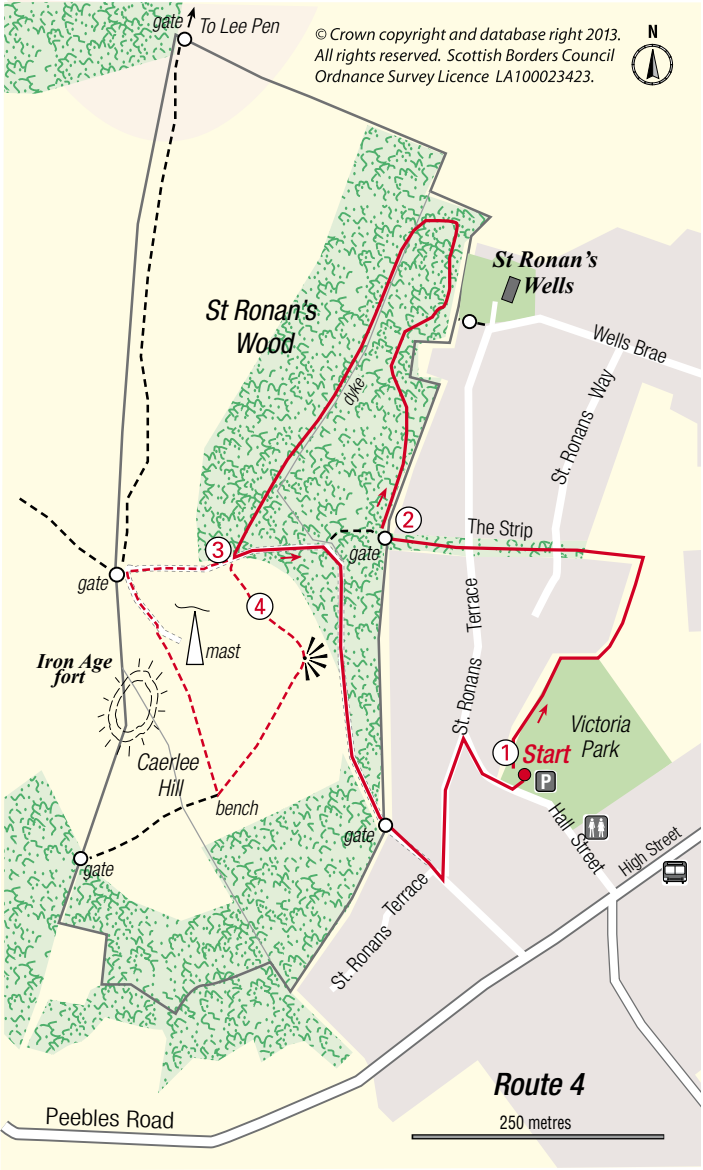
*Inspecting an old beech tree in St Ronan's Wood*



*Looking up at the canopy in St Ronan's Wood*

- ① Go through Victoria Park following the path along the side of the tennis courts. Continue along the path at the other side until you meet the Strip, turn left up this path, cross St Ronan's Way and St Ronan's Terrace and enter St Ronan's Woodland at the top!
- ② Turn right along the back of the gardens to follow the path to the north end of the woodland. Turn left at the end and follow the path heading south, with the dyke on your left.
- ③ When you hit the main track turn left and follow back down to St Ronan's Terrace. Turn left (onto the spur of St Ronan's Terrace) and then right onto Hall Street to your starting point.
- ④ OR 4. Cross over the track and follow the path south for about 350m (contouring the hill), on grass, round the front of the mast. The views down the Tweed Valley from





here are breathtaking. At a bench turn right and pass the mast on the uphill side before joining the main track. At a sharp bend turn right onto the track and return to the start as per point 3 above.

- Various fungi found in St Ronan's Wood
1. Yellow brain fungus
  2. Ascocoryne sarcoides
  3. Inocybe geophylla
  4. Birch polypore

Route 5

Innerleithen History Trail

**Distance:** 3.5km/2miles

**Time:** 1 hour

**Start and finish:** Leithen Road car park, Innerleithen

**Terrain:** Pavement and woodland paths. Some sections in Pirn Wood may be muddy at times. Boots or strong shoes recommended.



Pirn Hill Cairns

**Start** with your back to the car park, turn left on to the foot pavement along Leithen Road; when you reach the High Street turn left to cross Leithen Bridge and on to Horsburgh Terrace on the left. At the top of Horsburgh Terrace, where the tarmac ends, head to the right and follow this path to the Pirn Hill Cairns (an easy climb but steep near the top).

① **Pirn Hill** is the south-western spur of Pirn Craig, locally known as 'Rocky'. This shoulder is crowned by the remains of an iron age hill fort which comprises two rampart lines and several circular houses within the enclosure. This farming community would have been working the land about 2000 years ago. The top is now adorned with an interesting set of seven stone cairns, topped with carved slabs depicting the history of the area.

(Alternative - missing the climb to Pirn Hill Cairns, is to follow the track down to the left at the end of Horsburgh Terrace continue to Cuddy Brig on a more or less level pathway or to stay on Leithen Road turning left onto the Strand for the next section.)

Head back down following the track to the right that turns left to descend to Cuddy

② **Cuddy Brig** is a stone-arch bridge built in 1701 to enable parishioners on the east of the Leithen Water to attend the former church at Kirklands, 0.5km up the road. The bridge is also described as a stipend bridge because it was funded from monies that became available when there was a vacant ministry in the area.

Continue to Leithen Road turning left then right along Strand to Wells Brae. Proceed up to St Ronan's Wells calling in to take the water, view the scenery, the gardens and visitor centre.



Looking at the Leithen Water on Cuddy Brig



**3 St Ronan's Wells** - After the publication of St. Ronan's Well by Sir Walter Scott, Innerleithen became associated with the fictitious "St. Ronan's" in the novel and visitor numbers greatly increased. The Earl of Traquair commissioned an elegant pavilion in 1826 to create more comfortable accommodation for visitors to the spa. The pavilion building now hosts permanent and temporary exhibitions. For more information visit:



*Re-opening of St Ronan's Wells 1896*

On leaving the Wells notice the house below road level **(4)**, formerly called St Ronan's Lodge and built to accommodate those who came to take water at the Wells. Carry on down St Ronan's Terrace to Hall Street. At the main road, cross straight over and head down Traquair Road to the former station **(5)**, noting the more or less intact station buildings and platform.

Continue down Traquair Road then turn left into Tweedbank Ley. At the third cul-de-sac on the left look for the lane at the rear and continue on the lane to Morningside and Waverley Road. Turn right along the High Street to Robert Smails Printing Works (well worth a visit but give yourself at least 90 minutes for this).

**6 Robert Smail's Printing Works** is owned and managed by the National Trust for Scotland. Part of our industrial heritage the property was unchanged for almost 100 years. Although still run as a printers it is also a museum and shop.

Cross the main road again to the War Memorial and gardens on Leithen Road

**7 The Memorial Hall**, built in 1922 to celebrate the survivors from World War I looks over the gardens and war memorial in front. The **gardens** were built on the site of the original Burgh Chambers and have been created to replicate the Leithen Valley. The **War Memorial** is a simple stone with a brass plaque inscribed with the names of the fallen from World War II.

Bear left to Chapel Street and on to Caerlee Mill, noting Bodies Mill the oldest continuous purpose built textile mill in Scotland.



*Smails Printing Works 1905*



*Kirklands Water Wheel*

8 **Caerlee Mill** was erected and equipped between 1788 and 1790 and was believed to be the oldest continually operating custom-built woollen textile processing mill in Scotland up until its recent closure in 2013. Part of this mill complex is the five storey block built by entrepreneur and philanthropist Alexander Brodie, a native of Traquair, to boost employment in the locality. In 1841 Robert Gill bought the mill and by utilising steam allowed the mill to gain commercial success which in turn brought prosperity to Innerleithen.

Proceed along Bond Street, opposite mill gates, to finish back at Leithen Road car park.



*St Ronan's Mill, the wool store*

### Also look out for.....

**The Mill lade** is known locally as the 'dam', this man-made water course starts about a mile and a half north of Innerleithen at the 'cauld'. The cauld is a concrete weir at the southern end of the golf course. The lade runs roughly parallel to the Leithen and both flow into the River Tweed within yards of each other. The lade not only provided power and washing water for the mills but also powered water wheels for a sawmill, printing works and engineering works in Morningside.

**The Runic Cross** was discovered in the foundations of the original parish church at Kirklands when it was demolished in 1871. It is the shaft of a Dark Age cross that remains and it includes intricate carvings similar to prehistoric cup and ring marks. There may have been a church at Kirklands from the 7th century AD. You can view the cross just inside Innerleithen Parish Church on Leithen Road, (times vary, please check the notice board in front of the church).

**Route 6**

**'Scott Land' - Dryhope to Traquair on the Southern Upland Way**

**Distance:** 13km/8miles

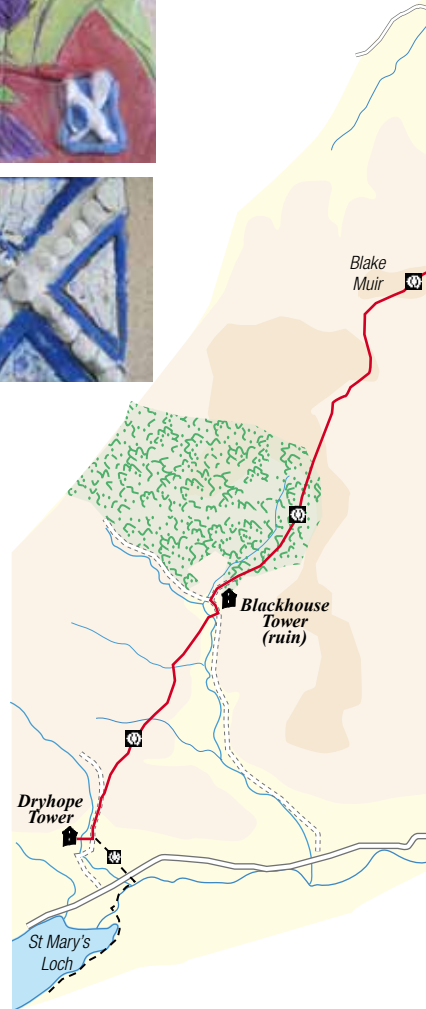
**Time:** 3-4 hours

**Start and finish:** lay-by by Dryhope Farm in Yarrow Valley, Selkirk. Finish in Traquair

**Terrain:** field margins, farm and forestry tracks, open hill and short section on road. Advice from St Ronan's Primary School for your safety: Some sections may be very muddy. Boots or strong shoes needed in wet conditions. Please wear appropriate clothing, take refreshments and any other kit you may need. Let someone know where you are going and what time you are expecting to be back



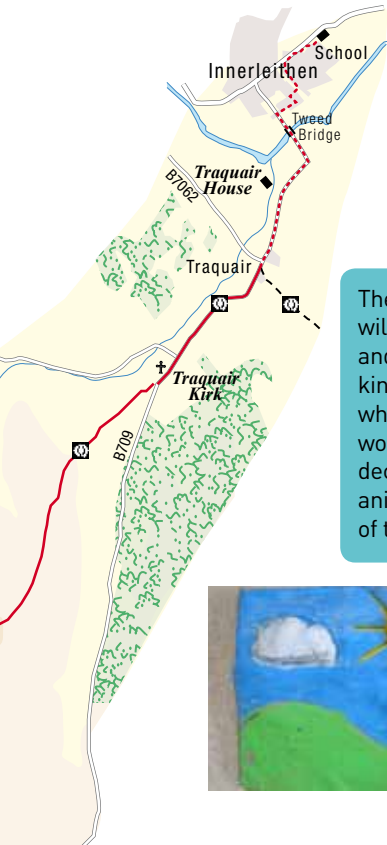
This section of the Southern Upland Way has been researched by a primary 6 class at St Ronan's Primary School. They have created this interpretive journey to add to your enjoyment of the route. The pupils could see how this route demonstrated Sir Walter Scott's love of the Borders countryside.



**Sir Walter Scott** was born in Edinburgh, Midlothian on the 15th of August 1771. His grandmother told him stories of the Borders and since he was young he loved ballads, a passion he carried through his life. He was also inspired by Shakespeare.

He was nicknamed The Wizard of the North because during this time the nickname The Wizard of the North was popularly applied to the mysterious best-selling writer.

His 26 novels were known collectively as The Waverley Novels. Scott built Abbotsford House near the Tweed. He died of a stroke in Melrose, Roxburghshire on the 21st of September 1832.



There are 3 types of **habitat** on the Scott Walk. In the valleys you will walk beside rivers and streams such as the Quair Water and the famous River Tweed. There are dippers, herons and kingfishers to see. Over the hills you will walk through moorland where the heather attracts rabbits, hare and grouse. In the woodlands you pass are both planted pine forests and natural deciduous trees of mainly birch and beech. Here there are animals such as red squirrel and overhead you may hear the call of the buzzard.



**Did you know?** Dryhope was one of the strongest towers in the Borders and was built in around 1535.



**The Border Reivers** were raiders between the Borders of England and Scotland. **Dryhope Tower** was owned by Walt Scott of Harden. He was a famous Reiver and an ancestor of Sir Walter Scott. Walt Scott was married to Mary Scott, the Flower of Yarrow. When she wanted Walt to go out reiving she would put a spur on a plate as a sign. Dryhope Tower was associated with a Border Ballad which Sir Walter Scott recorded in his Minstrelsy of the Scottish Borders.

The Southern Upland Way is a coast to coast long distance path which starts in Portpatrick on the west coast of Scotland. The whole route is 340km (212miles long).

Route 7

Innerleithen and Walkerburn by the River Tweed

**Distance:** 6km/4miles

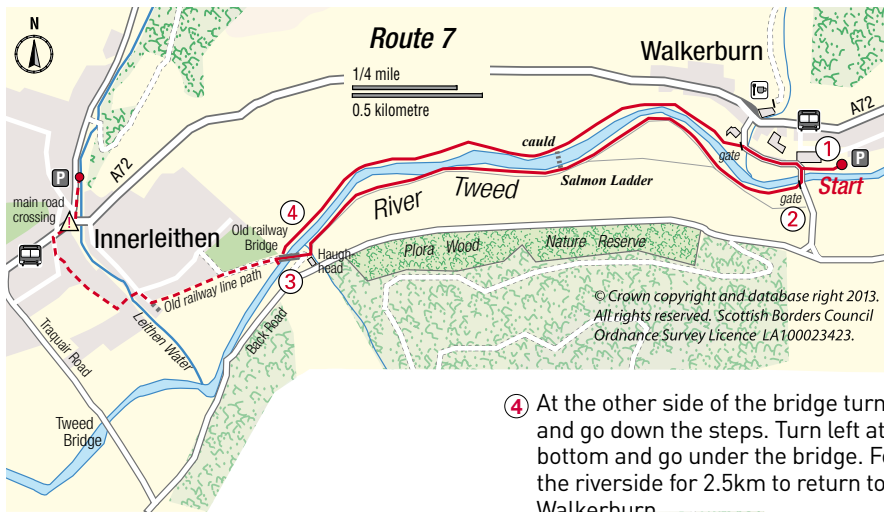
**Time:** 1-2 hours

**Start and finish:** Alexandra Park, Walkerburn or Leithen Road car park, Innerleithen.

**Terrain:** Riverside paths. Some sections may be muddy at times. Boots or strong



Walking on the north bank of the River Tweed



④ At the other side of the bridge turn left and go down the steps. Turn left at the bottom and go under the bridge. Follow the riverside for 2.5km to return to Walkerburn.

- ① Leave the park with the river on your left and turn left to cross the River Tweed by the road bridge.
- ② At the other side turn right and through a field gate. Follow the river side with the river on you right for 2km. This section of the Tweed is popular for fishing and is well maintained by the angling management. Please respect people at their sport.
- ③ Just before you reach the old railway bridge go through a gate on the left and turn right onto the old railway bed. Turn right onto the bridge to cross the Tweed.



The Tweed Bridge in Walkerburn



## Route 8

### Kirnie Law, Priestthope and the River Tweed

**Distance:** 12km/7½miles

**Time:** 4-5 hours

**Start and finish:** car park, Leithen Road, Innerleithen or Alexandra Park, Walkerburn

**Terrain:** Riverside paths. Some sections may be muddy at times. Boots or strong shoes needed in wet conditions.

#### Kirnie Law Hydraulic Scheme

In 1919 a hydro-electric scheme was carried out that was to be the first of its kind in Scotland. Tweedvale and Tweedholm Mills, in Walkerburn, required more energy to run the machines and lights. The initial step was to abandon the breast water wheels and replace them with two low pressure turbines which produced 220hp between them driven by the mill dam; this was double the amount of energy previously produced. However, any excess power ran to waste when the mills stopped manufacturing during the night.

In order to address this inefficiency and produce even more energy Boving & Co, hydraulic engineers from London, designed an unusual system. Melville Dundas and Whitson of Glasgow were contracted to build the infrastructure required. The water was delivered through a high pressure pipe from a ferro-concrete reservoir, 450m high on Kirnie Law, and drove a Pelton turbine in the factory complex. During the night the belts on the turbine would be changed to pump the water back up to the reservoir. The energy being produced was now 450hp.

The ferro-concrete reservoir's interior measures 192 foot squared by 15ft 6in deep and the walls are 8in at the top tapering to 14in at the base. A purpose built funicular railway carried materials up the hill including 400 tons of cement, 100 tons of reinforcing bars and over 3000 tons of aggregate. The tank was capable of holding 3,500,000 gallons of water. If you look at the wall where it was breached for safety reasons you can see some of the remaining letters for Henry Ballantyne, the mill founder. The surge tank (pumping station) downhill controlled the water flow as required.

This is a hill route that also passes largely through a forestry plantation. Forestry tracks can be as disorientating as open hill and moor. Forestry tracks may vary from what your map is showing. Therefore, it is essential that you carry, and know how to use, an OS map and compass. This route may not be signed. Please ensure you are suitably clad for this type of terrain.

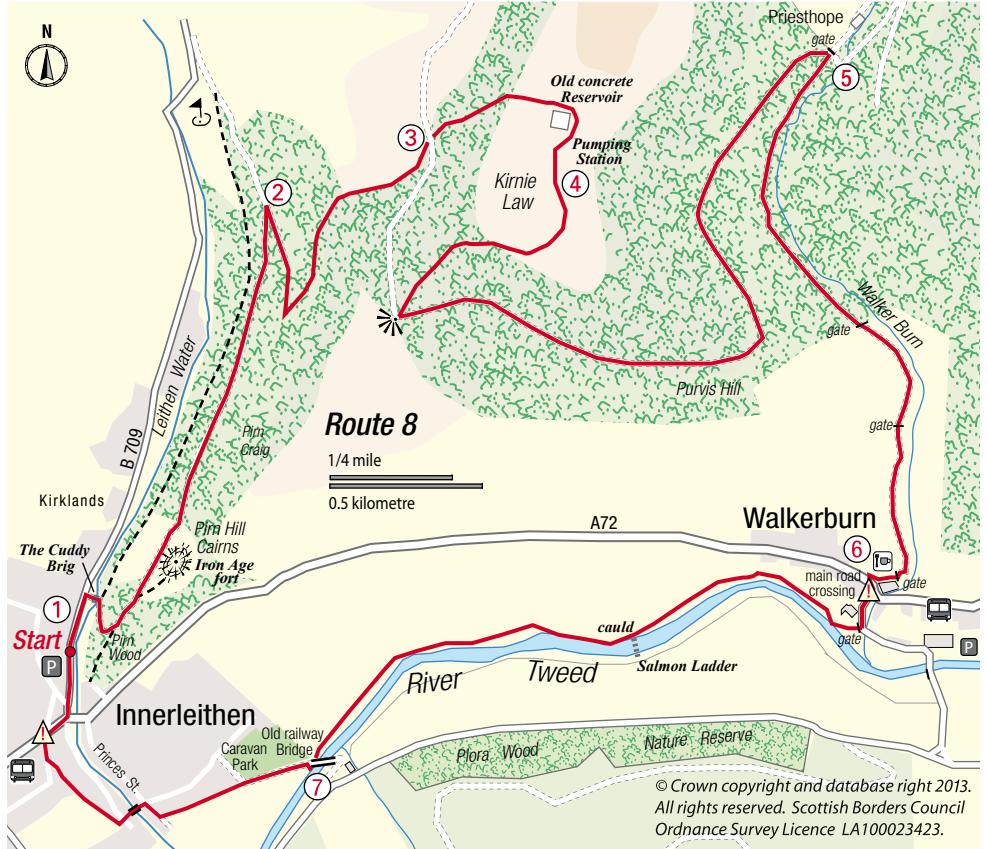


*Pumping Station*



*The opening into the disused water tank*

- ① With the car park and river at your back turn right onto Leithen Road. After 50m turn right between two houses and cross the river over the Cuddy Bridge (see p 18-21). After crossing the bridge turn right and then left and left to follow the higher path along to Pirn Fort. Follow this path north, passing Pirn Fort on your right (see p 18-21), continue for 1km.
- ② Take a sharp right to follow a track uphill, follow this for about 400m. Then take a sharp left following a steeper track uphill, which will steepen more. Keep on this for another 400m until you reach a cross-road of tracks. Cross straight over.
- ③ Follow this track as it heads east towards Kirnie Law. After about 300m you will walk out of the woodland onto an open heather clad hill. You will see ahead of you the first glimpse of the industrial archaeology. Climb up to the concrete structure and turn right when you reach its far end, you will find a breach in the wall here so you can go in and explore.
- ④ With the reservoir on your right head south contouring the summit of Kirnie Law. After about 200m the track forks, take the right fork. Follow this hill track for 700m until you come to a T-junction; there is a great open view at this spot. Turn left on to it and follow it for 2.5km to reach the abandoned steading of Priesthope.
- ⑤ Do not go through the field gate leading to the old building, rather turn sharp right to take the track heading south back down to Walkerburn. The second half of this descent goes through a number of gates. Just before the farm buildings leave the track to go through a pedestrian gate to your right at the corner of the building.
- ⑥ With Caberston Café on your left head out of the parking area and cross the A72 with care. Head straight over to Caberston Road and follow until you reach the primary school on your right. Go through the kissing gate ahead (or the field gate adjacent) and turn right onto the river bank. Follow the riverside for 2.5km.
- ⑦ When you reach the old railway bridge walk underneath it and go up the steps on your right at the other side. Turn left onto the tarmac path and after 600m turn right to reach Princes Street. After a short distance turn left between sheds and cross the Leithen over the footbridge. Cross over Leithen Mills Road and turn right onto the long narrow path leading to Waverley Road. Follow Waverley Road up to the High Street (A72) and cross to the other side with care. Turn right and then left into Leithen Road to return to your starting point.



Approaching the water tank on Kirrie Law



Inside the water tank

## Route 9

### Bier Law Circular

**Distance:** 12km/7½miles

**Time:** 3-4hours

**Start and finish:** Alexandra car park, Park Avenue, Walkerburn

**Terrain:** Forestry tracks and short section on quiet road. Some sections may be muddy at times. Boots or strong shoes recommended.



*Walkerburn Tweed Bridge*

This is a route through a forestry plantation. This route may not be signed. Forestry tracks can be as disorientating as open hill and moor. It is essential that you carry, and know how to use, an OS map and compass. Forestry tracks on the ground may vary from what is showing on your map.

- ① Leave the car park and take the riverside footpath towards Tweed Bridge. Cross the bridge and at the other side veer left to take the back road to Elibank passing West Bold. After a little more than 1km turn right into Glenbenna and pass between the houses and the machinery yard – take care at this point and remember it is a working area.
- ② After 500m there is a track turning sharp left, take this and follow it uphill and as

it bends to the right. Follow this for 2km as it heads east then south-east, enjoy the changing views as you contour round the hill.

- ③ At a junction of tracks keep to the right and then after a short distance turn right onto another track that is heading south. After 500m the track will swing round to the right; keep following it, keeping right at a junction. The track is now contouring around Middlebar Knowe.
- ④ South of the knowe, the track heads south-east above Glenbenna Burn. You are now beginning your descent towards the Bold Burn. When you reach a junction of tracks take a sharp right to head back down to Glenbenna. Finally retrace your steps to your starting point.



*A view of the hills on the north side of the Tweed Valley*



JayJay resting above Bier Law



Walkerburn from Bier Law



Stand of Scot's Pine

## Route 10

### Glenbenna and plora (The Big 'W')

**Distance:** 13km/8miles

**Time:** 3-4hours

**Start and finish:** Alexandra car park,  
Park Avenue, Walkerburn

**Terrain:** Forestry tracks and short section  
on quiet road. Some sections may  
be muddy at times. Boots or strong shoes  
recommended.

This is a route through a forestry plantation. This route may not be signed. Forestry tracks can be as disorientating as open hill and moor. It is essential that you carry, and know how to use, an OS map and compass. Forestry tracks may vary from what your map is showing.

- ① Follow instruction 1 in route 9 and follow this track for just over 2km and at the junction keep to the right.
- ② Go gently uphill in a south-westerly direction for 150m, then take a sharp turn to the right. You will now be heading north, follow this track for 1.5km and continue to follow as it bends round to the left along Bold Rig. At Shiel Craig it is worth stopping to take the view north down to the valley floor and up to the hills.



*Walking round Bold Rig*

- ③ Follow the track as it turns south, stay on it for 1.75km as it bends to the right and heads north. The next section runs parallel with the Plora ridge. Due to sections of clear felling the views over to the Moorfoots are very grand. Keep on this track for 2.5km until you reach a junction.
- ④ At the junction stay to the right and continue on the track until it bends to the left, now heading west. After 1km turn right at a junction to head north again. After 600m follow the track as it bends to the right and heads east.

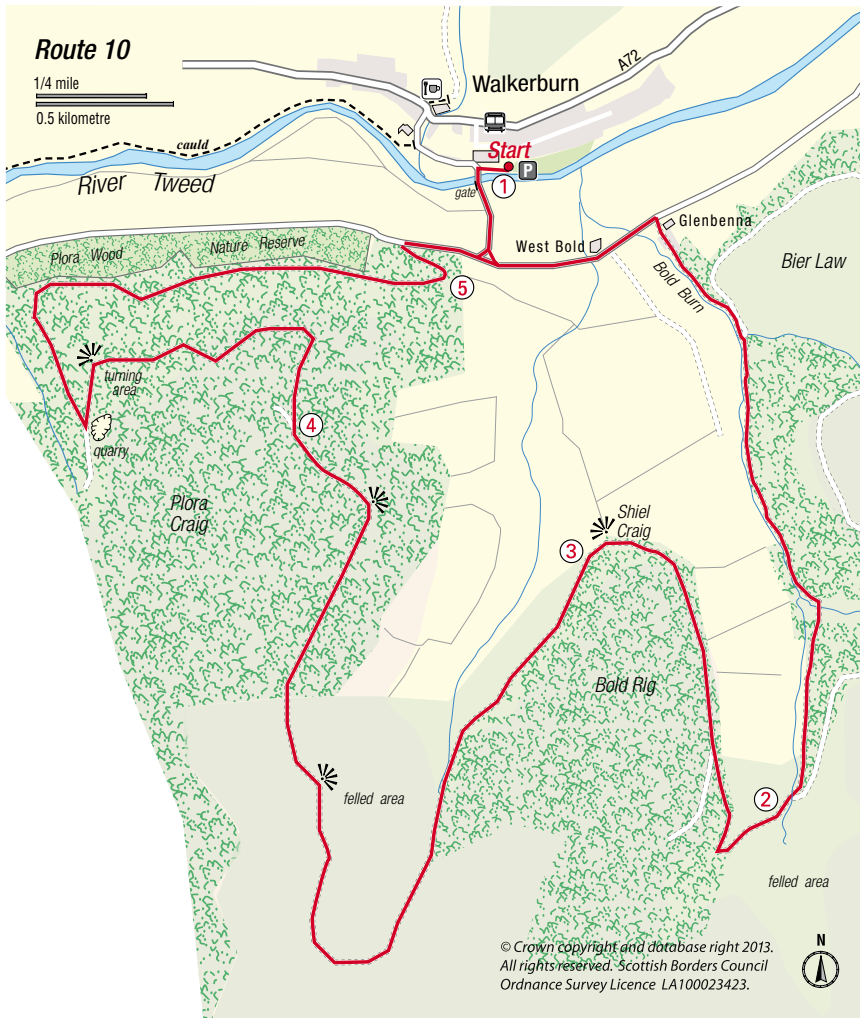
#### Plora Wood

Plora Wood is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI); it is one of only five oak woods over 30 acres in the Scottish Borders. The Woodland Trust acquired the site in 1986. Thinning regimes allow native trees and woodland flora to grow in the increased light levels. The long term plan is that the site will integrate with new native woodland.

This wood grows on a steep sided north-facing slope. If you look down to your left you will get a keen sense of the dramatic topography. Plora Wood is mentioned in Royal grants from the twelfth century and can be seen on the earliest maps. In the First World War a large area of it was felled for firewood. For more information visit: [www.woodlandtrust.org.uk](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk)



*Looking over to the hills north of the Tweed Valley*



A view of the Tweed Valley from Plora

## Route 11

### Around Minch Moor and Plora Craig

**Distance:** 15.5km/9½ miles

**Time:** 4-5hours

**Start and finish:** Alexandra car park, Park Avenue, Walkerburn

**Terrain:** Forestry tracks and short section on quiet road. Some sections may be muddy at times. Boots or strong shoes recommended.

This is a route through a forestry plantation. This route may not be signed. Forestry tracks can be as disorientating as open hill and moor. It is essential that you carry, and know how to use, an OS map and compass. Forestry tracks may vary from what your map is showing.

- ① Follow instruction 1 in route 9 and follow this track for just over 2km and at the junction keep to the right.
- ② At the top of the valley the track crosses the burn, after 100m turn right. After 400m take a sharp left turn heading south. Follow this track uphill for 2.5km until you reach the Southern Upland Way (SUW).
- ③ Turn right onto the SUW and follow this for 800m until there is a sign pointing to the top of the Minch Moor which has a trig point and a cairn. If you wish to sample the magnificent views from here then take a detour to the summit. If not continue on the SUW. You may want to appease the fairies by leaving them a piece of bread at the Cheese Well as you pass. Continue on the SUW for 1.7km.
- ④ Turn right and follow the forestry track downhill (for 6km) to reach Plora Wood. Turn right onto the road then left to head back into Walkerburn.



*Stone marker at Cheese Well*

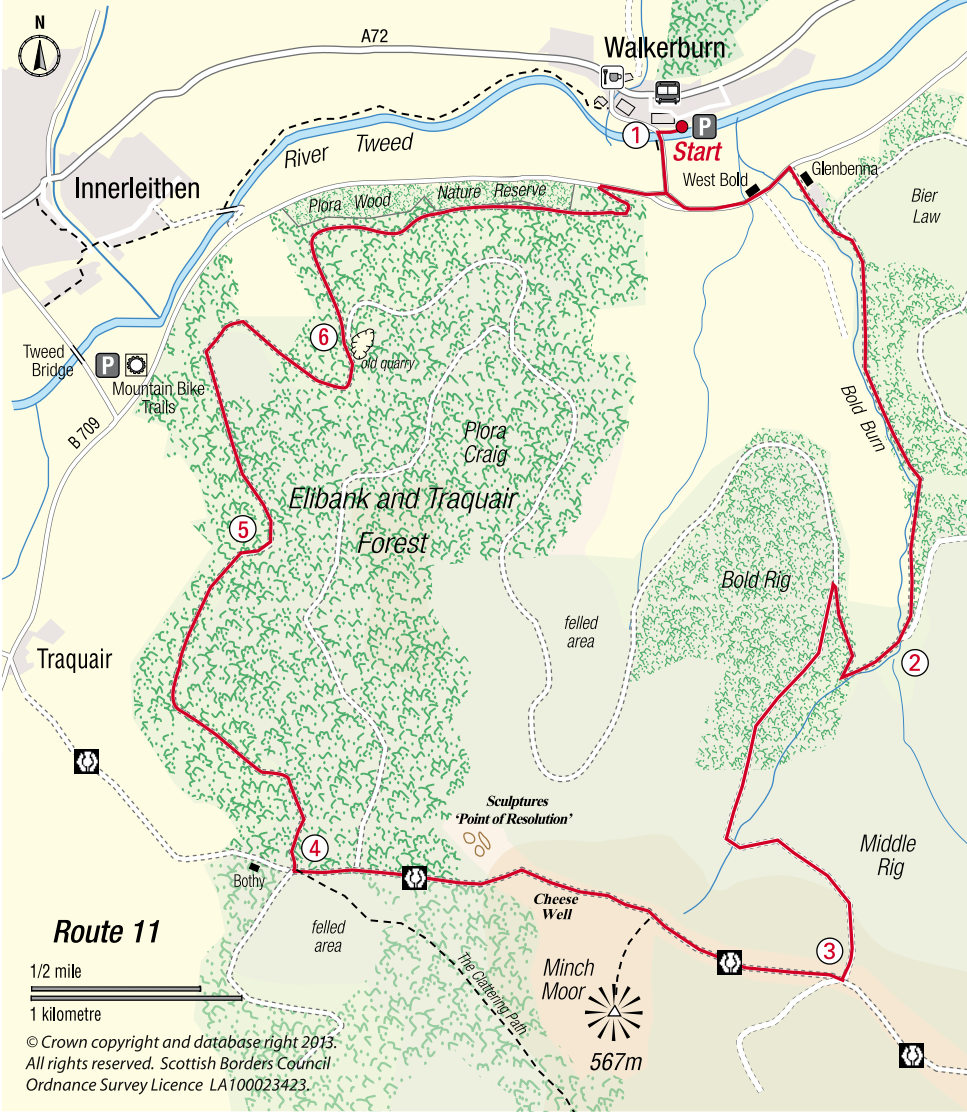


*Charlie Poulson sculpture on Minch Moor*



*Innerleithen from Minch Moor*





**Route 12**

**Traquair and Damhead**

**Distance:** 12km/7½miles

**Time:** 3-4hours

**Start and finish:** Alexandra car park, Park Avenue, Walkerburn

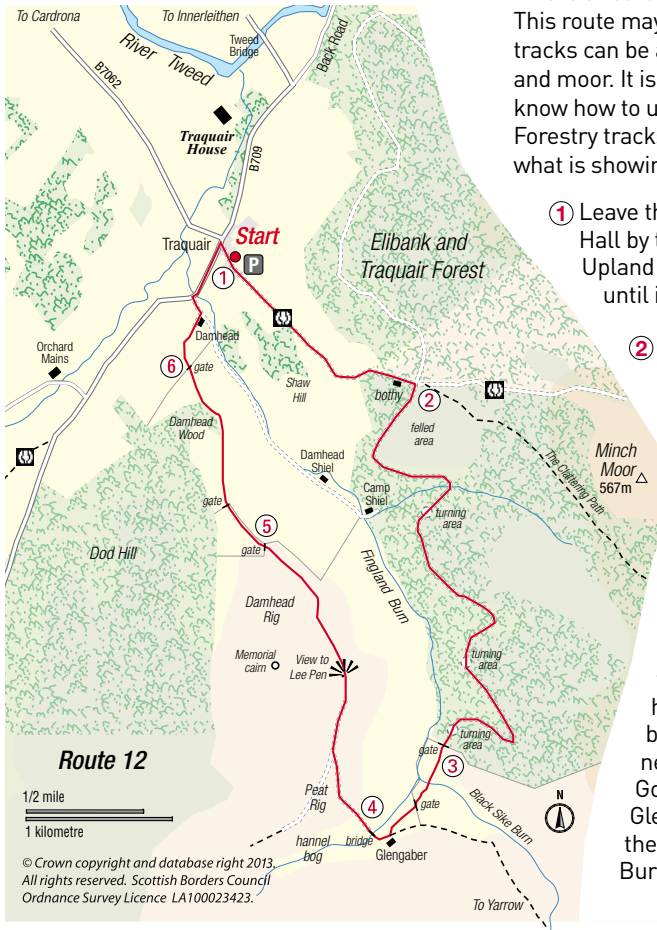
**Terrain:** Forestry tracks and short section on quiet road. Some sections may be muddy at times. Boots or strong shoes recommended.



Lee Penn from the Minch Moor track

This is a route through a forestry plantation. This route may not be signed. Forestry tracks can be as disorientating as open hill and moor. It is essential that you carry, and know how to use, an OS map and compass. Forestry tracks on the ground may vary from what is showing on your map.

- ① Leave the car park at Traquair Village Hall by turning left onto the Southern Upland Way. Follow the SUW for 1.7km until it crosses a forestry road.
- ② Do not cross the road, turn right on to it. Follow the forestry track for 4km to its edge above Black Sike. (Before the forest edge the forestry road comes to a turning circle. Go straight across it, the route continues through a gap in the trees.)
- ③ Go through the gate and follow the rough path along the hill side, crossing Black Sike burn. Keep heading straight on, neither going uphill or downhill. Go through the gate below Glengaber Cottage and head for the footbridge crossing Hannel Burn.



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**Glengaber** is Glenn Gabhar in Gaelic and means glen of the goats. This is used as a house or place name in various places in Scotland. The farm buildings were built before 1893 and possibly as early as 1843, however, the cottage has been renovated in the 1920s or 30s.

- ④ On the other side of the bridge you will start climbing up Peat Rig on a rough track. After 400m the track swings to the right to contour round to Damhead Rig. The views northward from this gently elevated position look out to Lee Pen and the high hills of the Tweed and Leithen Valleys. Follow this track for about 2km.

There is a memorial cairn to **George John Learmont Drysdale** on the hill above Hannel Bog. Drysdale was a Scottish composer born in 1866 in Edinburgh. From 1887 to 1904 he worked and studied in London having failed to gain a place at the Edinburgh Royal College of Music. When he returned to Scotland in 1904 he spent the rest of his short life composing. He died at the age of 42 in June 1909 only one month after his mother died.

- ⑤ Go through two gates and keep on the track to pass Damhead Wood where you will go through another gate. A short distance from here you will pass old stone sheep pens on your left.
- ⑥ Go through the gate and follow the track downhill to reach the farm buildings. Follow the track as it continues past the buildings on your right. Turn left onto the track that leads to the road. Turn right on to the road to return to Traquair Village Hall, your starting point.



*Glengaber cottage*



*Opening of the Drysdale Monument*



*Outdoor art on Minch Moor Track*



## Route 13

### The Glen and Birkscairn Hill

**Distance:** 15.5km/9½miles

**Time:** 4-6hours

**Start and finish:** Traquair Village Hall, Traquair

**Terrain:** Forestry tracks, farm tracks, paths and open hill and hill tracks. Some sections may be muddy at times. Boots or strong shoes recommended

This is a hill route. It is essential that you carry, and know how to use, an OS map and compass. Please ensure you are suitably clad for this type of terrain.

- ① From the hall car park go back down to the main road and turn left. Follow the road for 1.6km until you reach the turn off for the Glen on your right. Turn right into the Glen road and follow round for another 1.6km until you reach the drive for Glen House. Do not turn into the drive, keep to the right and continue to follow the road uphill.
- ② Pass by some cottages and further on some farm buildings. After 1km you will come to a junction, take the right hand fork. You are now on the pleasant track leading to Glenshiel Banks; this section is 3.5km in length. There is an array of hill-scapes to view from this vantage point – in the north-west Glenrath and Hundleshope Heights make up the skyline and in the south the hills of the Yarrow Valley can be seen. The most striking view is the view over to Loch Eddy and the steep and rocky ravine of Glendean Banks.

“Glendean’s Banks are remarkable for their extent and precipitous elevation. They are more than half a mile in length, and from 200 to 300 feet in height, and are a truly tremendous chasm, as denominated by a certain author.” The Statistical Account of Scotland 1791-1799

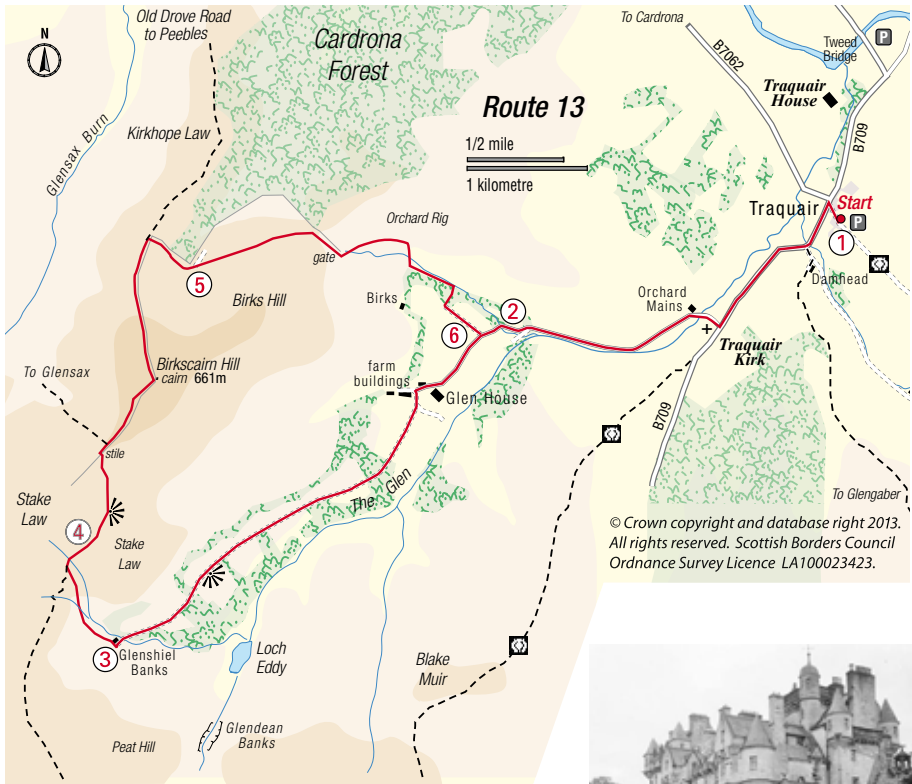


*Glenshiel Banks*

- ③ Glenshiel Banks is a shepherd's cottage sitting on its own between Stake Law (north) and Peat Hill (south). It sits in the subtle domesticity of its own walled pasture ground dotted about with Scots pines, a common manner of setting a small sheltered area for sheep. You leave this enclosure through the field gate ahead of you. Once through the gate head north-west with the burn and woodland edge on your right. Once you reach a fork in the burn cross over the left hand fork just above where they join. Safely across you will now follow the right fork in a northerly direction to reach the drove road that cuts the twin summits of Stake Law.
- ④ You can now follow the drove road north up to Birkscairn Hill's summit (661m/2168ft); this hill is a Donald see p41). Follow the ridge north for 1.25km until you reach a metal pedestrian gate on your right. Go through this gate and head south-east with the forest on your left.



*Banks Burn*



- 5** Do not turn left onto a newer track at the corner of the forest. Stay on the track heading in an easterly direction, contouring Birks Hill. At the next forest corner join a track heading south-east. Go through the gate and turn left, after a short distance crossing a burn; and follow the fence line round to the sheep's stiel. From here go through the gap in the fence and turn right. Cross the burn and climb to the corner of the wood. Turn left and follow the track downhill, at the next gate turn right and follow the track heading south then south-east to reach the road.
- 6** Turn left onto the road and retrace your steps out to the main road and back to Traquair Village Hall's car park.



*Glen House*



*Looking west to Hundleshope Heights*

## Route 14

### Soonhope to Lee Pen

**Distance:** 14km/9miles

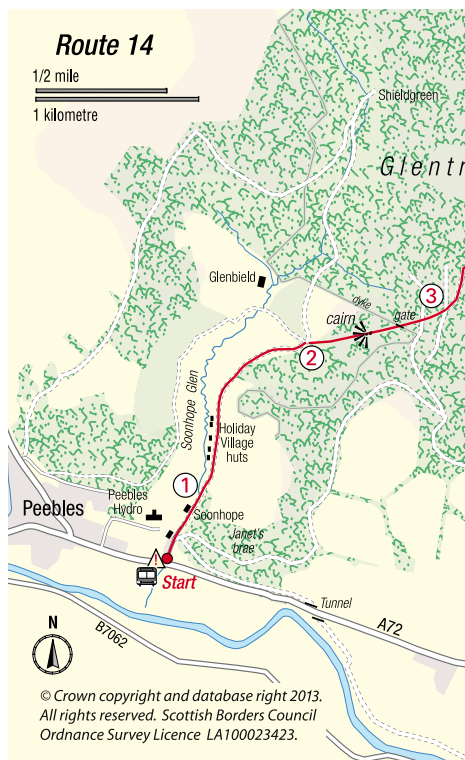
**Time:** 4-6hours

**Start and finish:** park in Innerleithen and take the public bus to start your walk in Peebles. You will be walking back to Innerleithen.

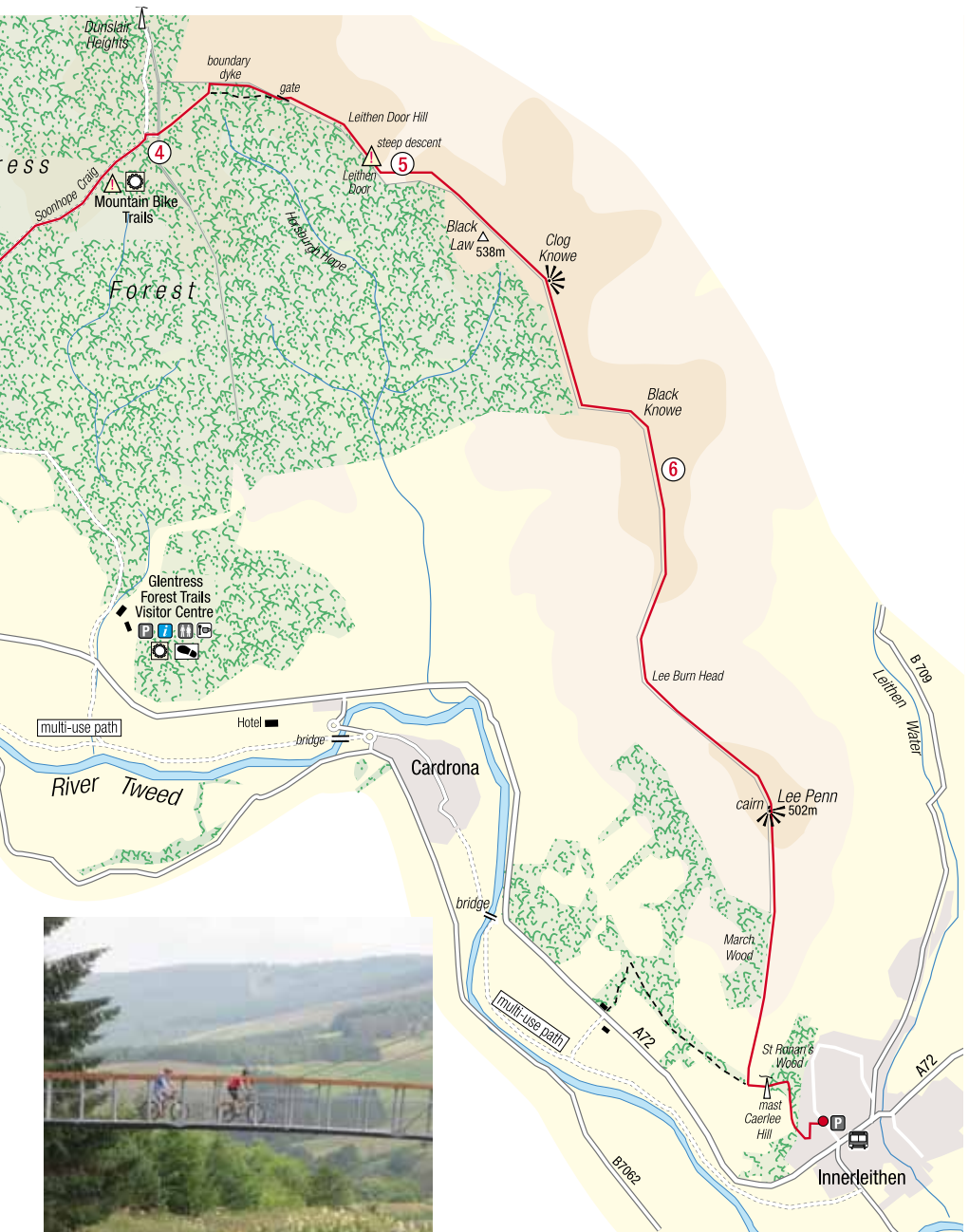
**Terrain:** Forestry tracks, farm tracks, paths and open hill and hill tracks. Some sections may be muddy at times. Boots or strong shoes recommended

This is a hill route that also partly passes through a forestry plantation. Forestry tracks can be as disorientating as open hill and moor. Forestry tracks may vary from what your map is showing. However, it is essential that you carry, and know how to use, an OS map and compass. This route may not be signed. Please ensure you are suitably clad for this type of terrain.

- ① Alight at the bus stop nearest to Peebles Hydro. Cross the road and turn right and then left, follow this road until it runs out at the end of the buildings. Go through the kissing gate (or field gate) and continue forward on the track ahead. Follow this for 1.2km where a you have a choice to go left downhill, straight on or right up a grassy ride.
- ② You want to go onto the grassy ride and follow it steeply uphill in an easterly direction. There is a small cairn on a spur of Kittlegairy Hill that offers a good resting spot with views across the hilly skyline; from the cairn head towards the dry-stane dyke, through a gap in the trees. Turn left and go gently uphill to an acute corner in the dyke and go through the open gate way.



Soonhope Craig



new bridge on multi-use railway path



*A view to Leithen Hopes*

- ③ You will quickly cross-over two tracks, continue uphill on the Soonhope Craig route. Where the hill flattens towards its summit you will find a spot now open to the views around you. After 2km you will reach a track, wall and fence running north-south in front of you.
- ④ Cross over all of these to follow the right of way between trees, when the path swings right take a little path to your left



*Approaching Lee Pen*

out to the boundary wall. Cross over the gate, be careful of the wire above you! Turn right onto the hill to follow the ridge towards Leithen Door Hill, lying south-east of you.

- ⑤ Take care leaving the top of this summit the descent is very steep. Continue to follow this exhilarating ridge for 1.4km over Black Law and onto Clog Knowe. At this point the ridge turns south towards Black Knowe. To your left (north and east) there are expansive views across to the Donalds (see p41) rising high above the Leithen Water including Whitehope Law, Bowbeat and Windlestraw Law.
- ⑥ From Black Knowe you are continuing south on the ridge and Lee Pen, your last summit is 2.5km from here. From Lee Pen's summit go over the ladder stile, continuing in a southerly direction. Go through four fields before reaching the boundary of St Ronan's Woodland, enter and continue downhill to reach the tarmac track that will lead you back down into Innerleithen.



## Donald Hills - our sub-Munro hill list

There are 89 Donalds, 38 of which are found within the Scottish Borders region. On either side of the Leithen Water sit Windlestraw Law and Whitehope, the only two Donald's in east Tweeddale. There are many more near Peebles and some out lying ones including Cauldcleuch Head, south of Hawick. Donalds are hills between 2000 (610m) and 2999 (914m) feet situated south of the Highland fault boundary. The decision as to which ones should be included was governed by a complicated formula. Hills were differentiated from tops by means of a complex algorithm involving 17 'units', where a unit comprises 1/12 of a mile or 50 feet.

On 27th September 1922, at the age of thirty, Percy Donald applied to join the Scottish Mountaineering Club (SMC). At the time he was living in Leamington Terrace in Edinburgh. Donald was fastidious about numerical detail and made the following



*Approaching Windlestraw Law*

observations; he calculated his total mileage at 396, his footage at 89,300 and, rather more recondite, his average cost per hill was 2s 9d and per top 1s 10d.

For more information on suggested routes contact the ranger service: [rangers@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:rangers@scotborders.gov.uk) or telephone: 01835 826750



*Looking down to the Leithen Valley from Whitehope Law*

Every effort has been made to ensure that the information and advice contained in this booklet is correct at the date of publication. However, it is always for you to assess whether completing a route is within your capability, using your common sense and your knowledge of your own state of health and fitness, competence and experience. No liability is accepted by the authors or publishers for any loss, injury or damage, arising out of, or in any way connected with, any person or persons undertaking or attempting to undertake any of the routes described in this booklet, howsoever caused.

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*View from Bold Rig*

## Contact Information

### Visit Scotland Borders

23 High Street  
Peebles, EH45 8AG  
Accommodation Bookings: 0845 22 55 121  
Tel: 01835 863170  
Email: [bordersinfo@visitscotland.com](mailto:bordersinfo@visitscotland.com)  
[www.visitscottishborders.com](http://www.visitscottishborders.com)

### Scottish Borders Tourist Information Centres

Jedburgh, Peebles and Melrose, Kelso,  
Eyemouth, Hawick and Selkirk.  
Opening dates and times vary  
For Information: Tel: 01835 863170

### Scottish Borders Council

[www.scotborders.gov.uk](http://www.scotborders.gov.uk)  
[www.scotborders.gov.uk/walking](http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/walking)

### Scottish Natural Heritage

(Information on Scottish Outdoor  
Access Code)  
Lothian & Borders Area Office  
Tel: 01896 756652  
[www.outdooraccess-scotland.com](http://www.outdooraccess-scotland.com)

### Traveline

(for public transport information)  
Tel: 0871 200 2233  
[www.traveline.org.uk](http://www.traveline.org.uk)

### Tourism web sites

Traquair House and grounds:  
[www.traquair.co.uk](http://www.traquair.co.uk)

Kailzie Gardens and nature viewing  
centre:  
[www.kailziegardens.com](http://www.kailziegardens.com)

### Other websites

About Innerleithen:  
[www.innerleithen.org.uk](http://www.innerleithen.org.uk)  
[www.innerleithengolf.co.uk](http://www.innerleithengolf.co.uk)

### Other websites

About Walkerburn:  
[www.walkerburn.com](http://www.walkerburn.com)  
[www.uppercaberston.com](http://www.uppercaberston.com)  
(fishing)

### Walking, cycling and horse-riding web sites

Information on Tweed Valley Forests:  
[www.forestry.gov.uk/TVFP](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/TVFP)

The Southern Upland Way website is at:  
[www.southernuplandway.gov.uk](http://www.southernuplandway.gov.uk)

Tweed Trails:  
[www.sup.org.uk/TrailRiding](http://www.sup.org.uk/TrailRiding)

For further information on walking in  
Scotland, visit: [www.walkingwild.com](http://www.walkingwild.com)

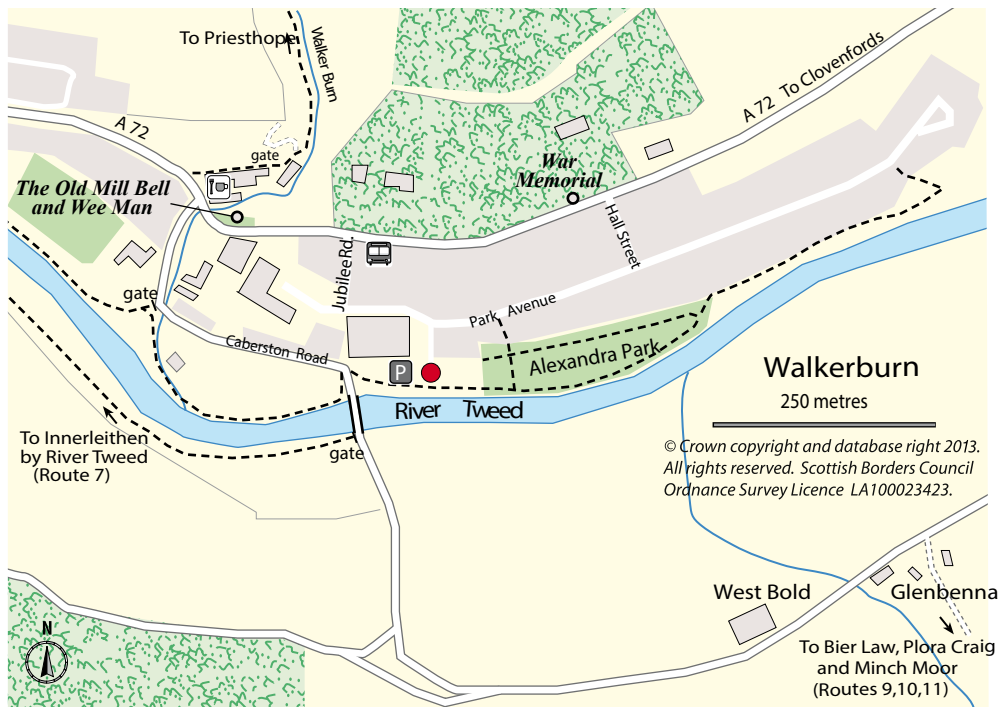
### Mountain Rescue Team - Scottish Borders.

It is considered best practice to alert the MRT to all incidents where a casualty is located on a hill, moor, upland or other countryside, or missing on such ground even if the Ambulance Service has been requested.

To call the MRT to such incidents the following procedure should be followed:

1. Dial 999
2. Ask for Police
3. Tell the Police that you require Mountain Rescue

Tell the Police why and where you require the MRT.



### Alternative format/language

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. Also: if you encounter any problems on any of these routes please contact:

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