



Melrose

Melrose Abbey

Melrose Abbey was founded in 1136 by King David I. It was built by a colony of Cistercian monks. Although this was one of Scotland's wealthiest monasteries, it suffered badly in the wars that ravished much of the Borders in the medieval period. The magnificent rebuilding of the church in the late 14th and early 15th centuries was a result of damage caused by the English in 1385. The 16th century Commendator's House is now a museum and the Chapter House contains the burial casket of a heart, thought to be that of King Robert I "The Bruce". Robert the Bruce was a renowned Scottish patriot, who brought nationhood to Scotland in the 14th century. He had sponsored the rebuilding of the abbey after an English attack in 1322.

In the care of Historic Scotland.
Admission Charge.

The town of Melrose sits at the foot of the Eildon Hills. The town is steeped in history, and at its centre is the magnificent ruin of Melrose Abbey. The River Tweed, famous for its salmon fishing, flows just outside the town, and to the east is the site of Trimontium, a major roman fort. A fine exhibition describing this site can be found at the Ormiston Institute in Melrose Square. Melrose Rugby Club, which was founded in 1877, hosted the original seven-a-side rugby tournament. Melrose is an excellent town to explore and relax in, perhaps before starting this section of the Borders Abbeys Way.



Along the way Melrose to Kelso

Newstead

The village was the home of the masons who built Melrose Abbey in the early 12th century and Priorswalk was their route between Newstead and the abbey.

Rhymer's Stone

Thomas the Rhymer or Thomas of Ercildoune lived sometime between 1220 and 1297. He was thought to have the gift of prophecy and many of his predictions came true over the years. His Stone marks the reputed site of the Eildon Tree, from where he is believed to have delivered his prophecies.

Newtown St Boswells

Despite its name, a community was recorded at Newtown as long ago as 1529. The village used to be a major centre for milling the area's grain and the monks of Melrose Abbey used to bring their cereal to be ground here. When the railway came, the village became a centre for communication and livestock markets were started. 'The Mart' is still a major part of village life today.

Newtown Glen

The deciduous woodland of Newtown Glen has been designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest. It supports a wide range of wildlife and has a marvellous array of flowers in the spring.



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1. Mercat Cross, Melrose 2. Priorswalk, near Newstead 3. Rhymer's Stone
4. Newtown Glen 5. River Tweed 6. Eildon Hills and Tweed



Dryburgh Abbey

This abbey was founded by the Premonstratensian Order in about 1150 under the patronage of Hugh de Morville, Constable of Scotland and Lord of Lauderdale. It was part of the abbey building programme approved by King David I. The abbey church was built in the late 12th and early 13th centuries, but has been severely quarried and little survives today.

The best preserved buildings are the east cloister range and include a 16th century Commendator's House inserted into the canons' dormitory. Like all of the Border Abbeys, Dryburgh was devastated on various occasions by English forces, including 1322, 1385, 1544, and 1545. By the 17th century, the building had ceased to function as a working abbey. Much of the current village of Dryburgh was developed by

David Stuart Erskine, the 11th Earl of Buchan. He also rescued the remains of the abbey from a local farmer who was using it as a source of stone. The abbey grounds are the burial place of Sir Walter Scott and Field Marshal Earl Haig.

In the care of Historic Environment Scotland. Admission Charge.

Dryburgh Bridge

The bridge was built in the 20th century, replacing an earlier bridge by Capt. Samuel Brown, to allow Dryburgh villagers to cross the river.

Temple of the Muses

The Temple features a modern statue in a refurbished model of a Greek pavilion, Erected by the Earl of Buchan.

The Wallace Statue

This impressive red sandstone sculpture of William Wallace is found in the woods a few hundred metres off the route. It was erected by the Earl of Buchan, was formally unveiled in 1814 and is the handiwork of John Smith, from Darnick. It was repaired in 1991.

Makerstoun

The village dates back to the 12th century, when King David I granted it to Walter Corbet. Makerstoun Parish Church was built in 1808. Close to the foot of the bell tower is a sundial and pedestal gifted by General Sir Thomas Makdougall Brisbane, once Governor General of New South Wales.

The River Tweed

It is approximately 156km (97 miles) in length and drains about 4000 square kilometres of southern Scotland and northern Northumberland. The Tweed is internationally famous for its fishing and more Atlantic salmon are caught on it than on any other river in the European Union. Much bird life can be seen, including mute swan, oystercatcher, swallow and sand martin.



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1. Dryburgh Bridge 2. Temple of the Muses 3. The Wallace Statue 4. The Eildons from Dryburgh 5. Dryburgh Orchard Gates



Melrose to Kelso

Country lanes, riverside paths, arable farmland, views

Path surfaces - road, tracks, woodland path.

Distance - 29km/ 18 miles approx

Total ascent - 175 metres/ 575 feet approx

Melrose to Clintmains (road end) 10km/ 6 miles

Clintmains (road end) to Kelso 19km/ 12 miles

From Melrose to St Boswells village via Dryburgh Abbey, Clintmains and St Cuthbert's Way 13km/ 8 miles

Melrose to Kelso via Dryburgh

Melrose to Clintmains road end via Newtown St Boswells and Dryburgh Abbey (10km/ 6 miles)

This is easily the shortest section of the Way and offers a range of possibilities.

It is a relatively easy route, which could be completed on the same day as one of the adjoining sections. Alternatively, the section could be combined with spending time exploring Melrose to fill a day. A more attractive and longer option would involve following St Cuthbert's Way between Melrose and Newtown St Boswells. This allows the opportunity to climb through the Eildon Hills and would add 2½ km and around an hour onto the section. St Cuthbert's Way is also fully waymarked with its own distinctive symbol.

Clintmains road end to Kelso

(19km/ 12 miles)

The scenic countryside on the northern side of the River Tweed is explored on this section of the route, using a combination of riverside paths and country lanes and tracks. Most of the section is relatively flat and easy terrain, but it is a long section of the Borders Abbeys Way.

Maps

This part of the route is covered by OS Landranger maps 73 and 74. Melrose to St Boswells via Dryburgh can be found on OS Explorer map 338, while the Newtown St Boswells to Kelso part of the route is on map 339.

Buses

There is a bus service between Melrose and Kelso that also meets the Borders Abbeys Way at Newtown St Boswells and at the main road near Clintmains (service 67).

Other bus routes can also be used between

1. Hawthorn flower 2. Bramble leaf 3. Dog rose flower 4. Blackthorn flower
5. Hawthorn fruit 6. Bramble fruit 7. Dog rose fruit 8. Blackthorn fruit

1.	2.	3.	4.
5.	6.	7.	8.

Melrose and Kelso, or be combined to reach Newtown St Boswells or Clintmains. The journey time between Kelso and Melrose is about 30 minutes.

For timetable details, contact:

Traveline on 0871 200 2233

www.travelinescotland.com, or any Tourist Information Centre in the region.

Car Parking

There are public car parks in Melrose and Kelso town centres. If parking elsewhere along the route, never obstruct roads or gateways. Please do not park in the Historic Environment Scotland car park at Dryburgh except for the duration of your visit to the abbey.

Tourist Information

For information see

www.visitscotland.com

Toilets

There are public toilets at Melrose, Newtown St Boswells, St Boswells and Kelso

Refreshments

There is a selection of shops including bakeries and general stores in Melrose and Kelso. There are also stores in Newtown St Boswells (and St Boswells). There is a range of tearooms, restaurants, hotels and bars in both Melrose and Kelso.

Paths to Health



Short easy walks on this section include

Priorswalk

Follow the route from Melrose Abbey to Newstead village and retrace your steps to return.

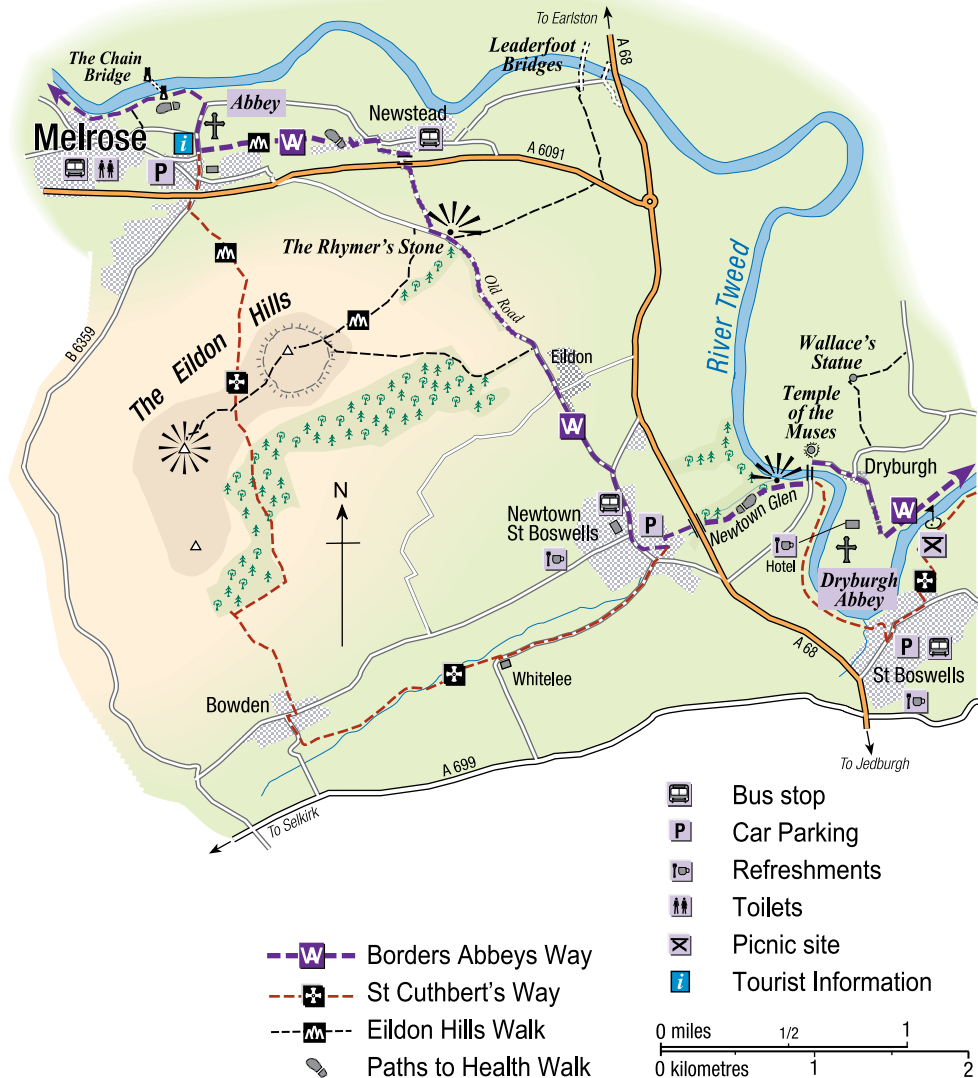
Newtown Glen

Start in the village of Newtown St Boswells and follow the path for about 1km through this ancient woodland. Retrace your steps to return.

The Cobby riverside walk in Kelso (short level grassy path)

The Borders Abbeys Way Melrose to Kelso

Part 1 Melrose Abbey to Newtown St Boswells



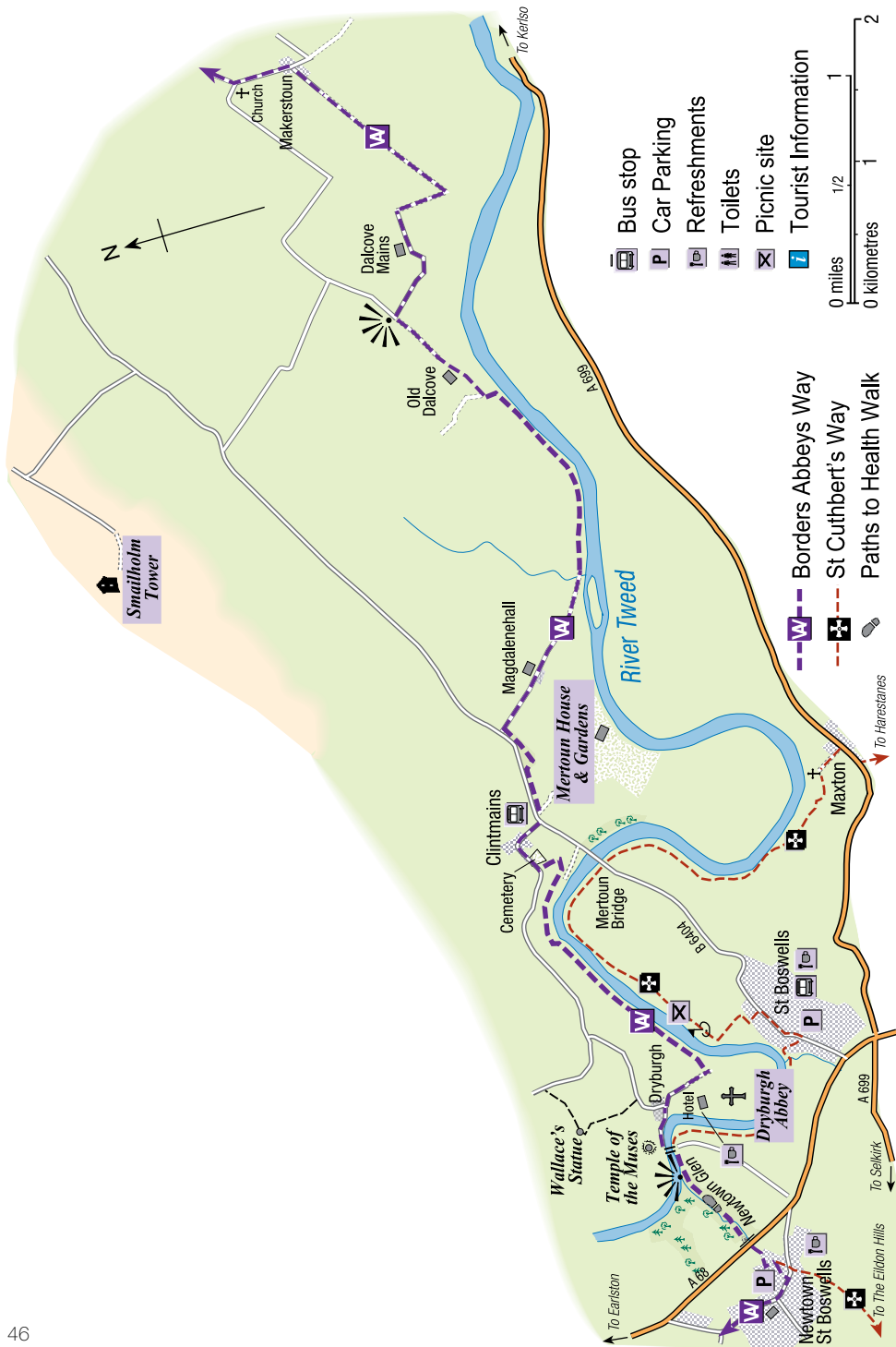
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From **Melrose Abbey**, go up Abbey Street, then turn left onto the path at the end of the railings (Priorswalk). Follow this path, turning left after a bridge, to reach a housing estate. Go straight ahead for about 150 metres, and then turn left along a narrow path in front of a small row of houses. Follow this path for 800 metres until reaching a road. Turn left, then right, up a track at the road junction.

You are now at the edge of **Newstead**. Follow the track under the old railway bridge, through the subway under the bypass and up the slope, with Eildon Hill North to your right. When meeting the road, turn left, passing the site of the Eildon Tree and the **Rhymer's Stone**. Follow the road (the former main road between Melrose and Newtown St Boswells, but now closed to through traffic) for 2km to a junction at **Newtown St Boswells**. Turn right, and using the pavement, follow the road into the village, passing the headquarters of Scottish Borders Council, a 1960s building that dominates the village, on your right. When reaching the Bank of Scotland building, turn left onto Tweedside Road to join St Cuthbert's Way.



North Eildon from Rhymers Stone



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The Borders Abbeys Way Melrose to Kelso

Part 2 Newtown St Boswells to Makerstoun via Dryburgh Abbey

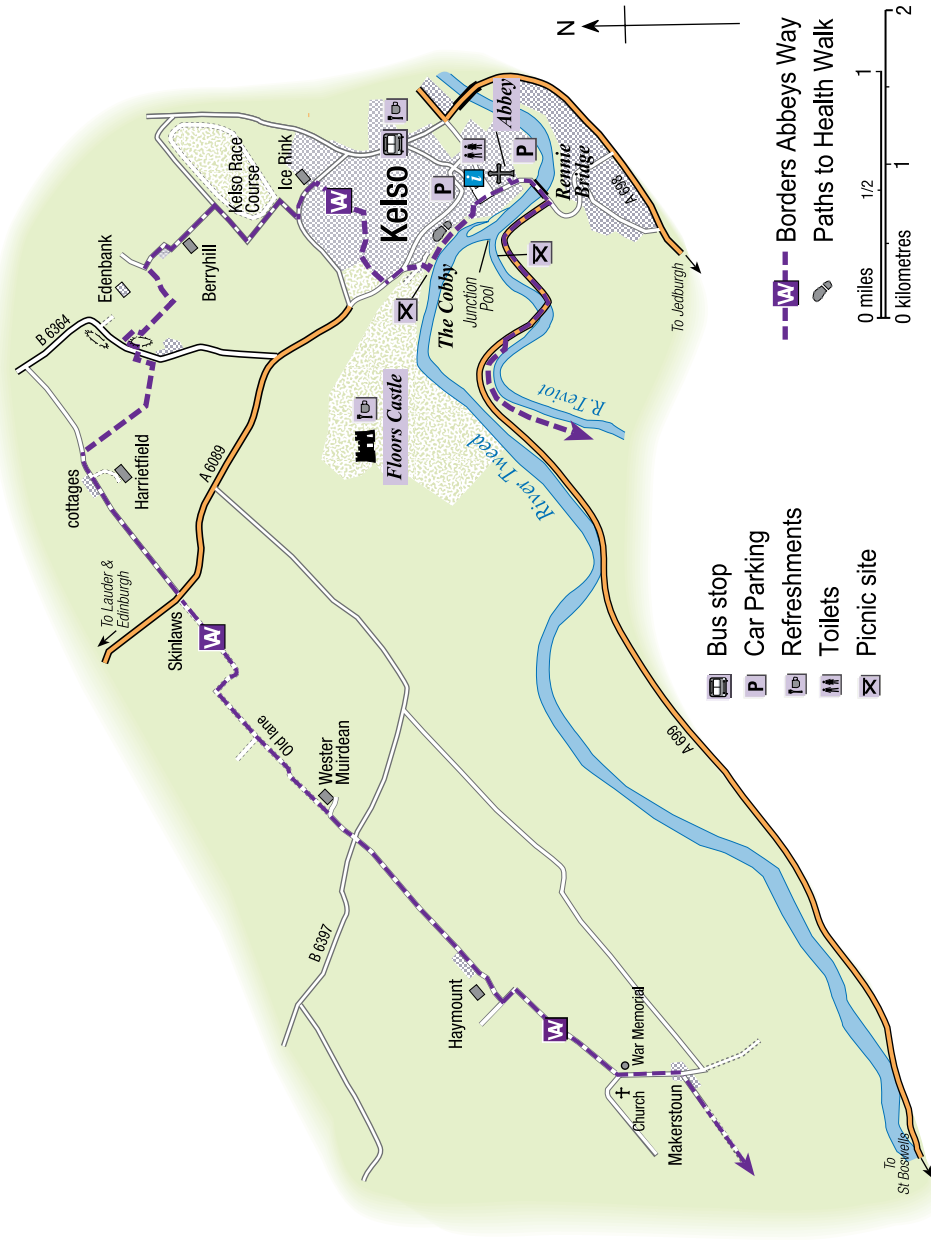
In Newtown St Boswells at Tweedside Road, after 100m turn left between buildings to join St Cuthbert's Way, follow the track, then a path down into **Newtown Glen**. Climb the path to the right and follow it above the River Tweed, with excellent views over the valley. The path drops down to meet a road at **Dryburgh Bridge**. Leaving St Cuthbert's Way, cross the bridge and follow the path, passing the **Temple of the Muses** on your left. Follow the road into the scattered but attractive village of **Dryburgh**, passing a large gateway on your left. This striking gateway was also built by Buchan, in memory of his parents and as the entry to his fourteen acre orchard, the walls of which can still be seen across the fields. At the junction, turn right towards **Dryburgh Abbey**.

From Dryburgh Abbey, follow the track to the left of Dryburgh House Lodge and past the toilets. After 150m turn left and follow a path that comes out alongside the Tweed. Walk along the riverside, and continue with a field on your left. At the end of the field, leave the riverside, walking uphill through a small woodland. Look out for a view of **Mertoun Bridge**. On reaching a field, go along the right-hand edge of the field to a gateway. Follow the track up past Mertoun Cemetery to a road. Turn right and pass carefully along the road, through the hamlet of **Clintmains** to meet a main

road. Across the road is the driveway to **Mertoun House and Gardens**. The Gardens are open to the public at weekends during the summer.

Turn left, then cross the road to go along the road verge. After 300m turn right on an old tarmac road, then left to follow the path through the woodland on your left. At the end of the woodland, turn right along a minor road, pass the farm steading of **Magdalenehall** and continue straight ahead down a track that eventually reaches the bank of the River Tweed. After 1½ km, follow the track away from the riverbank, and then turn right through a gate. Follow the track up through the field, where livestock are often grazing (make sure your dog is under proper control), past **Old Dalcove** to another gate. Old Dalcove is the site of a medieval tower house, which was "brent, rased and caste downe" by the Earl of Hertford in September 1545.

Go through the gate, then straight on up the track. At the road turn right. From this road, good all-round views back to the Tweed, Eildon Hills and towards Smailholm Tower, Peniel Heugh and the Cheviot Hills can be had. At the end of the road, turn right down an old lane. Follow the lane to the left and continue straight on to reach the small settlement of **Makerstoun**.



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The Borders Abbeys Way Melrose to Kelso

Part 3 Makerstoun to Kelso Abbey

At the road junction turn left. From this road, **Makerstoun Church** can be seen to the left. Before the church, turn right at the **war memorial** and pass the former school. Follow this minor road through attractive rolling farmland, turning left, then right, past the farm and cottages of **Haymount**, eventually to meet a main road.

Cross this road carefully and go straight ahead, towards and then past the farm of **Wester Muirdean** (another place that fell victim to the Earl of Hertford), taking the rough old lane ahead as the road bends to the right. This lovely old lane eventually reaches a main road. This spot (**Skinlaws**) was a toll point for the 1799 Whiteburn to Kelso Turnpike. Cross carefully and go straight ahead on a minor road with wide verges, passing **Harrietfield**.

200m after a row of cottages, turn right onto a track between fields, towards the distant Cheviots. When the track meets a road, go straight across, taking care. Go through a gate into a field. Turn left and follow the edge of the field past a large mound and around to another gateway. The mound is known as Kaim Knowes and is a large deposit of material left by retreating glaciers about 12,000 years ago. Go through the gate and follow the left-hand edge of the field to a gate onto an old grassy lane. Turn left to the end of the lane, then right, up a quiet road,

past **Berryhill**, to the edge of **Kelso Racecourse**. The course is the home of Borders horse racing and was opened in 1822. It was also voted as 'Britain's Friendliest Racecourse'. Turn right, then left, around the Racecourse, following the road to a junction. Turn left and follow the pavement for 300m. Just after the golf clubhouse and opposite the **ice rink**, turn right on a tarmac path and straight on through a housing estate.

With the home of Kelso rugby club, Poynder Park, ahead of you, zigzag down the hill. Turn right to follow the path parallel to the road at the bottom. Eventually meet the road with Croft Park on your right and follow it to the main road ahead. Turn left, then right at the next junction. After 100m, turn right, down to the grassy bank of the Tweed.

Turn left along what is known as the **Cobby Riverside Walk**, which is flooded occasionally by the river, with the spire of Kelso North Parish Church to the left. At the end of the Cobby are what remains of the foundations of the water mill that was associated with the abbey. Go up the ramp, then straight ahead into the town centre. Turn right, passing The Square, formerly a large market place and the hub of the town from the Middle Ages, to reach the ruins of **Kelso Abbey** on your left.