

• Distance 19km/12 miles • Time 6hrs • Type Coastal

2 NAVIGATION LEVEL 2 **3** FITNESS LEVEL 3



Plan your walk



WHERE: Linear walk along Berwickshire Coastal Path from St Abbs to Burnmouth, via St Abbs Head and Eyemouth.

START: St Abbs harbour (NT919673).

END: Burnmouth (NT954612).

TERRAIN: High cliffs at St Abbs Head and well-signed coastal path from St Abbs to Burnmouth.

MAPS: OS Explorer 346; Landrangers 67 & 75.

GETTING THERE: Perryman's Bus 235 runs between Berwick and St Abbs, via Burnmouth and Eyemouth – a daily and hourly service. Mainline trains stop at Berwick-upon-Tweed (☎ 0871 200 2233, www.traveline.org.uk).

EATING & DRINKING: In St Abbs there's a coffee shop at the National Trust for Scotland Visitor Centre, open April to the end of October, plus the harbour

PHOTOGRAPHY: FIONA BARTLROP



St Abbs Head, which lies along the magnificent Berwickshire Coast, is renowned for its dramatic coastal scenery. The sheer cliffs, offshore stacks and narrow gullies are home to the largest colony of cliff-nesting seabirds on the south-east coast of Scotland, including kittiwakes, guillemots, razorbills, shags, herring gulls, fulmars and puffins. The area is a National Nature Reserve in the care of the National Trust for Scotland. Extending south from St Abbs to Berwick-upon-Tweed is the 24km/15-mile Berwickshire Coastal Path. Though possible to walk it in a day, to have time to enjoy visiting St Abbs Head first – and a look around historic Berwick at the end – it's better to spread it over two days. This route, which combines a short out-and-back walk to St Abbs Head with the first half of the Coast Path to Burnmouth, should hopefully encourage you to continue to Berwick another day.

1. START From the harbour, head up the road past the church and onto a clearly marked path on your R signed for St Abbs Head. Having emerged from the trees onto the open cliffs, you'll find a notice board showing the trails around the St Abbs Head Nature Reserve. Follow the coast path round Starney Bay and past Kirk Hill to the lighthouse (not open to the public). St Abbs Head Lighthouse began service in 1872 and was finally automated in 1993. Climb the small hillock nearby, on top of which there is a directional disc and several information panels. It's a fine viewpoint.

2. Descend the north side of the lighthouse access road and turn L along this down to Pettico Wick. Alternatively you can keep closer to the high cliff edges – home to thousands of screeching seabirds (the nesting season for most of these is between April and late

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café. Eyemouth has a good selection of places to eat and drink; and there's a pub in Burnmouth (The Gull's Nest).

SLEEPING: A good choice of accommodation – hotels, B&Bs & self-catering – is along the coast at St Abbs, Coldingham, Eyemouth and Berwick-upon-Tweed. Contact TICs or see websites (both below).

VISITOR INFORMATION: Eyemouth TIC (seasonal opening) and Kelso TIC (☎ 0870 608 0404, www.visitscottishborders.com); Berwick-upon-Tweed TIC (☎ 01289 301780, www.visitnortheastengland.com).

GUIDEBOOKS: *The Border Country* by Alan Hall (£12.95, Cicerone, ISBN 9781852844592); *Berwick Walks* by Arthur Wood (£4.95, Berwick Ramblers, ISBN 0954533100 – available from Berwick Ramblers, 5 Quay Walls, Berwick-upon-Tweed TD15 1HB, cheques payable to 'Ramblers' Association').

LOCAL RAMBLERS GROUPS: Lothian & Borders Ramblers (☎ 01506 880980, www.lothian-borders-ramblers.org.uk); North Berwick Ramblers (☎ 01620 893657); East Berwickshire Ramblers (☎ 018907 51048).

July) – but this will involve a very steep descent down a grassy gully to Pettico Wick. There are excellent views from here. Pettico Wick marks a line of weakness between two very different types of rock, as described on one of the nearby information panels.



3. Leave the road and turn south to Mire Loch, following the path along its west side. At the end of the loch, turn L and rejoin your outward route to return to St Abbs. From the harbour it is now simply a matter of keeping the sea on your L and following the Coast Path signs. About 1.5km/1 mile from the village is Coldingham Bay, a wide sweep of sand popular with holidaymakers in summer. Approaching Eyemouth the path goes round a caravan park, then drops down to the town and busy fishing port, passing some information panels on the way – one of which describes the great storm of 1881 in which many local men lost their lives.

4. Continue around the harbour – crossed by a footbridge – to join a road on the other side. Follow this road (the current OS Explorer map shows a slightly different route here), then turn L as signed across the golf course back to the coast and go R. There's some fine cliff-top walking now with splendid views all the way to Burnmouth.

5. The Coast Path reaches the road at Burnmouth (the upper part; the lower is at the foot of the cliff) by a phone box and bus stop. You can catch a bus here back to St Abbs.
Route devised by Fiona Bartlrop