



Berwickshire Coastal Path
Start : Cove
Finish : Berwick Upon Tweed
Distance : 24m miles 39km
Walking Time : 12 hours approx
Terrain : Steps and Rough
Trodden Paths.
Boots Recommended



Cove Harbour

This place is magical, picturesque . It is also steeped in history.

Cove harbour is entered by a 55m tunnel, not seen from the village. It dates from the 1750's and once contained cellars which were used to store fresh salmon and herring, as well as cured and barrelled white fish.

Rich in the 18th century smuggling tales it is approached down a steep pathway from Cove village. At the bottom of the hill dynamite was used to create a dramatic tunnel in the soft sandstone rocks around 1700. There is more high drama in the natural rock formations and the famous hollow rock.

Alternatively, just enjoy pretty fishing boats and the sea views, sit on the quiet beach or explore some of the rock pools beyond the harbour wall.

Cove village and harbour has a long fishing history and due to its hidden nature and tunnels, ideally suited to storing contraband, it has often been associated with smuggling.

Used as a landing place since at least the 17th century, the present harbour dates from 1831 and was built by the Hall family of Dunglass to facilitate the transport of coal mined inland.



St Helens Kirk (Ruin)

Originally known as the church of Ald Camus this ancient ruin was reputedly built in the 12th century by the monks of Coldingham Priory who owned all of this land.

The former name was derived from Ald which means a small stream and Camus which is a bay. Some time after it was built it was dedicated to St Helen, hence the name change.

Located near the Old Cambus Quarry the original buildings probably comprised of both a church and a vicarage. The latter is known as written records note that the Vicar of Ald Camus swore allegiance to King Edward 1st in 1296.

While not much is left (as the kirk was already a ruin in the late 1700's) this is an evocative place to visit.

From Pease Bay follow the Berwickshire Coastal Path across the pedestrian bridge adjacent to the ford and proceed uphill to the first bend in the road. Follow the signposted path off the road, climbing steps up the sea braes and round the path on Pealands Bank.

This sea brae offers exceptional views of the Bay and East Lothian. At low tide the bay south of Pease has impressive rock strata formations.

In the distance you will see the ruins of the 12th Century St Helen's Church. Turn left on emerging to the tarmac road and follow it for a few hundred yards, until met with a sign post for St Helen's and Siccar Point.



Siccar Point

While you can read all about Siccar Point and James Hutton, nothing beats a real life visit.

Not only are the craggy rocks beautiful and dramatic but there is a great sense of occasion of 'walking in the footsteps of James Hutton and realising that these rocks played a fundamental role in discovering how 4.5 billion years ago our planet was formed.

Follow the stone dyke from St Helen's Kirk along the cliff top. You pass through two fields, the dyke discontinues and a fence line leads you to an information board and kissing gate. you have reached Siccar Point; Hutton's unconformity is below.

You are not recommended to proceed down to investigate the geology of the rocks.

If you visited Siccar Point as part of walking the Berwickshire Coastal Path then either retrace your steps back to Pease Bay or continue on to Dowlaw car park where you will see signposts for Fast Castle.



Pease Dean

Pease Dean is an ancient semi-natural woodland, a remnant of the Wild Wood which once covered most of the United Kingdom after the last ice age ended about 10,000 years ago. Such woodland is now extremely scarce and largely restricted to steep valleys like Pease Dean.

A dramatic gorge and a more open valley managed by The Scottish Wildlife Trust. Like a small lost world, it is one of the very few places left in the area where old growth, native woodland can be found.

Shaded, sheltered and damp it also boasts a huge collection of mosses, liverworts, woodland flowers and rare butterflies. Bird life includes woodpeckers, tree creepers, dippers and various tits and finches. You will also see Roe deer and red squirrels.

If you are on foot then from Cockburnspath follow the Southern Upland Way which passes under the A1 and East Coast railway line to the small settlement at Cove. Continue along the cliff tops to Pease Bay where the path runs into Pease Dean

If you are travelling by car head south on the A1 past Torness power station. At the roundabout, take the left exit to Pease Bay. There is a car park on the left. Cross the road and go through a kissing gate. Pease Dean is a short distance further on



Fast Castle

The famous author, Sir Walter Scott, was a true romantic. His high adventure Waverley novels were best sellers in their day. He was captivated by the ruins of Fast Castle, perched right on a high and exposed cliff edge. It was included in the novel Bride of the Lammermuirs but was renamed Wolf's Crag.

A visit to the ruins is a must do experience. Not only will you share Scott's sense of the dramatic but you will also experience the natural drama of this section of the coastline which rises a sheer 170m (530ft) straight out of the sea



St Abbs Head Lighthouse

Due to the dangerous rocks off the Head the lighthouse was built in 1862 by the Stevenson Family who constructed most of Scotland's lighthouses.

Originally it was staffed by 3 full time keepers whose duties included 'keeping the light' and making detailed weather records. However since 1993 it has been fully automated.

In 1876 a fog horn was added: the very first in Scotland. Its booming horn was a charismatic feature of the area on foggy nights. It is no longer operational.



St Abbs Village

Formerly known as Coldingham Shore, this is where the fisherman launched their boats from the beach. Most of them lived at Fisher's Brae in Coldingham.

Every day they carried their baited lines and gear 1.5 miles down the Creel Path. You can still walk this path today between Coldingham and St Abbs.

It was not until the middle of the 18th century that fishermen lived there.

In 1832, when the harbour was built, sixteen fishing families lived there while twenty others were Coldingham based.

At that time about 40 boats operated around Coldingham Shore although the harbour was designed to cater for up to 70 boats.

At the end of the 19th century the village was renamed St Abbs to avoid confusion between it and Coldingham.

Today you can still explore the picturesque buildings and the still working harbour. You can try some fishing yourself and there are charter boats to take you out to try and catch the 'big one'. Find out more at the new St Abbs visitor centre.



Coldingham Bay

This is the perfect local sandy beach. Not only does it have blue flag status, it is easy to access, family friendly, picturesque and a great place to build sand castles while watching the surfers enjoying the waves.

A large free car park, beach cafe, toilets, disabled parking spaces on the beach, and RNLI life guards during the holiday season. Awarded the Keep Scotland Beautiful Award for beach cleanliness.

The Berwickshire Coastal Footpath crosses the bay with St Abbs to the north and Eyemouth to the south.

To the northern end of the beach are the beach huts, some quite historic. At the southern end lies Homeli Knoll, a steep, grassy hillock with wonderful views from the summit.

The waters of the bay provide an ideal habitat for a wide variety of marine life. At low tide there are many rock pools which are well worth exploring for hermit crabs and anemones.



Eyemouth

Eyemouth has been Scotland's largest south-eastern port since 1482 when Berwick upon Tweed was lost to England. In the wars of the mid-16th century Fort Point was fortified twice; by the English in the 1540s, and by the French several years later. Created a Burgh of Barony in 1597, Eyemouth is the largest town in Berwickshire and the river Eye's deep water is still ideal for landing boats.

Gungreen House overlooking the harbour was built by local smuggler and merchant John Nisbet in the 1750s. At this time, smuggling was called Free Trade and this coast was a centre for business. The house now tells its own story as a museum; continued through various walks and smugglers trails, around the local area, from St. Abbs in the north to Berwick-upon-Tweed to the south.

The sights, sounds and smells of one of the busiest ports in Scotland show how important fishing still is to the town. Recent times see increasing use of the harbour for pleasure craft and diving interests. Eyemouth has many interesting buildings that chart a fascinating history including stories of smuggling, shipwrecks and witch-burning. One of the most poignant historical events is the disaster of October 1881, when a great storm wrecked many East Coast vessels and 129 Berwickshire men lost their lives. Eyemouth museum includes a display and tapestry depicting the events

Each summer in July, the town's people crown a local lass the "Herring Queen" which is accompanied by a week of events.



Burnmouth

Burnmouth is known for being the first and last village in Scotland when travelling the A1. Just south of Eyemouth and has an operational harbour.

The village is split over two levels, with homes and holiday cottages both top of the sea cliffs and beneath them.

Travel through the town and down The Brae to find the quaint harbour. It is the only landing for boats between Eyemouth and Berwick



Berwick Upon Tweed

Berwick upon Tweed has changed hands no fewer than fourteen times and although English since 1482, its football team still plays in the Scottish League !! The ramparts provide a popular promenade around the town and were built in their present form in the 16th century in response to the construction of a French fort at Eyemouth.

The Barracks were designed by Nicholas Hawksmoor (more famous for his London churches) and built in 1711-21, making them the oldest in Britain. The Tweed is crossed by Old Berwick Bridge (1611) with its fifteen sandstone arches, the Royal Tweed Bridge (1925) and Robert Stephenson's Royal Border Bridge (1847-50), which carries the main East Coast railway line.

A frequent visitor was L. S. Lowry, famous for his matchstick men. He used to holiday here and as made over thirty sketches and drawings whilst visiting. Today there is the Lowry Trail which takes about 3 hours. Follows the Elizabethan Walls and crosses over to Tweedmouth and Spittal.