paths around Abbotsford

through Sir Walter Scott's designed landscape

Our Scottish Borders
Your destination

ABBOTSFORD
THE HOME OF Sir Walter Scott

£2.00

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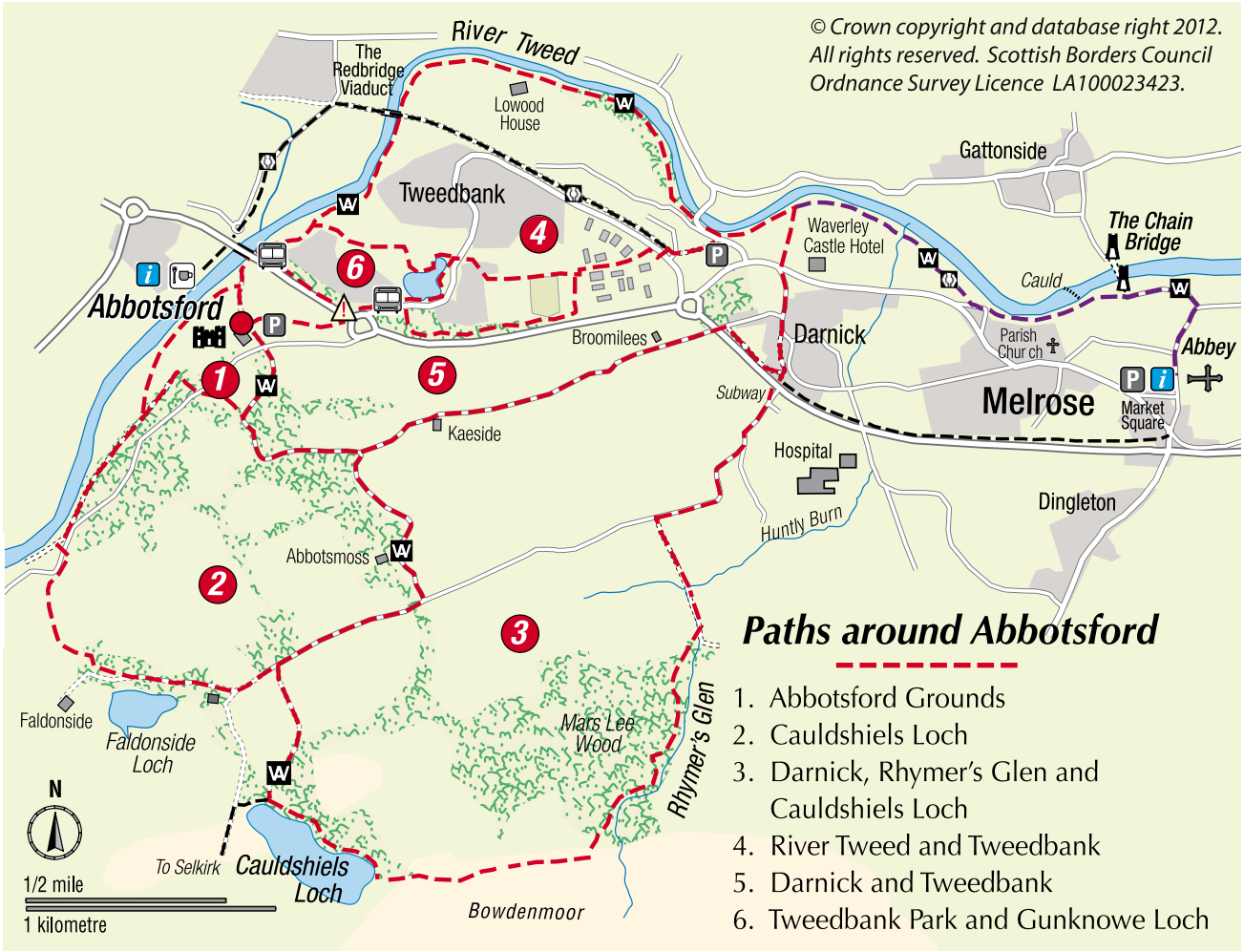
Cauldshiels Loch

Key to all maps

- route
- other path
- Borders Abbeys Way
- Southern Upland Way
- caution, take care
- viewpoint
- visitor information
- car parking
- bus stop
- cafe
- shop
- picnic area
- playpark
- wildlife interest

"Breathes there the man with soul so dead, Who never to himself hath said, This is my own, my native land!" - Scott



Paths around Abbotsford

1. Abbotsford Grounds
2. Cauldshiels Loch
3. Darnick, Rhymer's Glen and Cauldshiels Loch
4. River Tweed and Tweedbank
5. Darnick and Tweedbank
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Introduction

Abbotsford is famous as the home of Sir Walter Scott, but less well known is that the estate is one of the most significant designed landscapes in Scotland. It was designed and laid out by Scott between 1811 and 1825. This booklet describes a series of 6 routes starting from the main car park at Abbotsford. Some of these routes follow the original paths laid out by Scott himself along the riverside and through mixed woodlands which he planted.

This area of rolling countryside is ideal for walking and the routes described in this booklet are especially suitable for walkers. Cyclists and 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 moderate walks. Each route has a summary containing distance, estimated time to complete and an indication of the terrain to be expected.

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.

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.

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

Some of the routes in this booklet pass through fields which may have livestock in them. 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 and water (or use wet wipes) after visiting the toilet, after activities, touching animals and before handling, cooking or eating food
b. taking care to avoid spreading animal faeces on footwear
c. avoiding camping or having a picnic on land which has been recently 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

walkit
walk your way to health & happiness

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 route 1, 4, 5 and 6. We have chosen these walks for their length and gradient. For information telephone 0300 100 1800

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. Further details are available from Visit Scotland.

SCOTTISH OUTDOOR ACCESS CODE

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** or telephoning your local Scottish Natural Heritage office.

Route 1

Abbotsford Grounds

Distance: 1¼ miles/2 kms
Time: 1hour
Terrain: Grassy paths and tracks, ground can be muddy after rain, boots or walking shoes recommended.

1. From the car park follow the path signed for Abbotsford and the visitor centre. Just before the visitor centre, turn right and follow the Borders Abbeys Way (BAW) downhill.

2. Where the BAW turns right continue a few metres on downhill then turn left into the field. (At the time when Scott was alive there were no bridges across the Tweed in this vicinity and the river was wide and shallow enough to ford at this point. This land once belonged to Melrose Abbey and the crossing was called Abbot's Ford from which Scott named his house. The ford is still used in June by horses and riders during the Galashiels Braw Lads Gathering). Follow the path across the field towards the riverside, in summer yellow rattle and meadowsweet flowers can be seen in bloom.

3. Follow the path up onto a low embankment and follow this across the field heading away from the river. Here there are fine views looking across to Abbotsford.

4. Go through the gate into the wood and turn left, look out for nuthatch, treecreeper, great spotted woodpecker and other woodland birds.

River Tweed

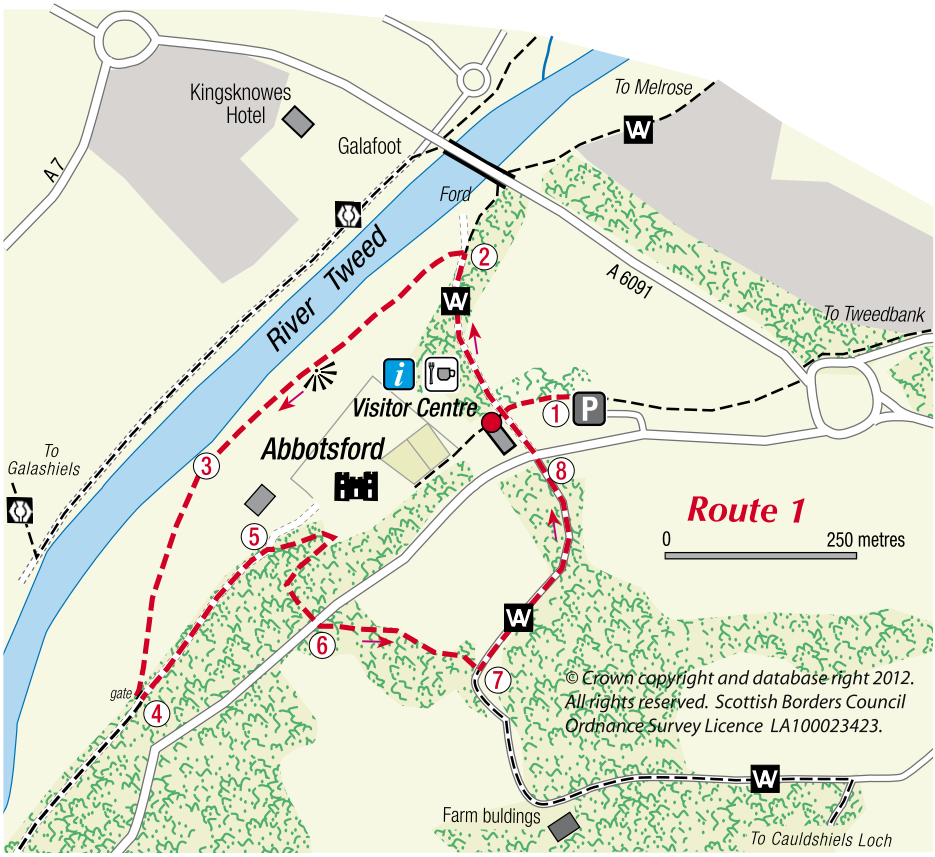
5. At the junction with the drive bear right and go uphill following the drive as it swings round to the right.

6. At the lodge house take care crossing the main road, go straight ahead through a gate into the wood and continue uphill.

7. At the road turn left and head downhill (you are now back on the BAW).

8. Continue straight ahead and cross the road with care, continue downhill for approx 50 metres, the visitor centre is on your left and the car park to the right.

Bumblebee on Russian Comfrey



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Abbotsford from Riverside

Route 2

Cauldshiels Loch

Distance: 4 miles/6½ kms
Time: Allow 2 hours
Terrain: Paths, tracks and minor roads, some stretches can be muddy after rain, moderate gradients in places, boots or walking shoes recommended.

This route goes through much of Scott's former estate lands. Many of the woodlands were designed and planted by Scott, although some of the conifer woodlands have been replanted more recently. Although he was best known for his poems and historical novels, Scott also wrote about landscape design and tree planting and

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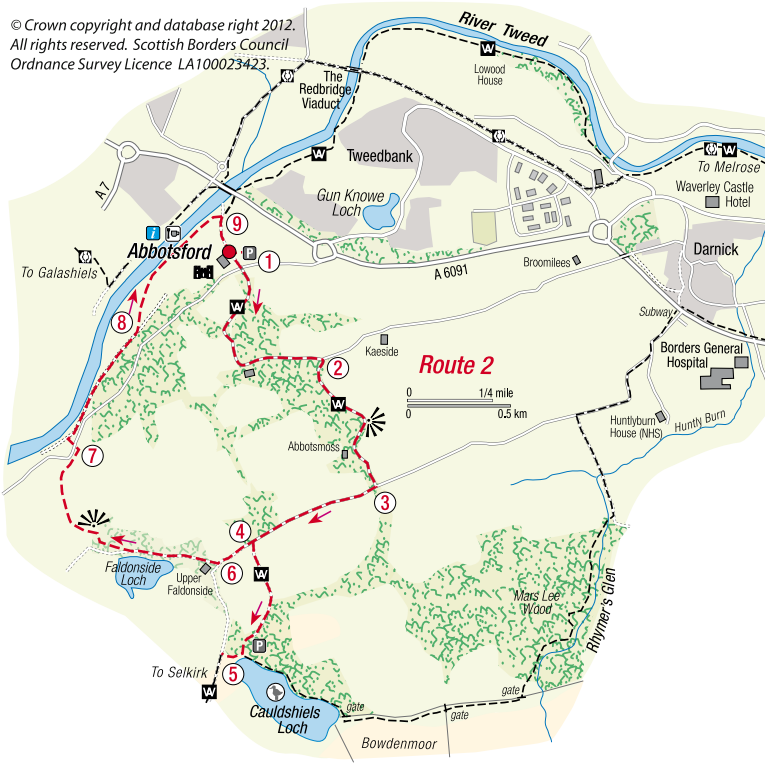

1. From the car park follow the path signed for Abbotsford and the visitor centre. Just before the visitor centre, turn left and follow the Borders Abbeys Way (BAW) uphill, after approximately 50 metres cross the main road with care and continue uphill on the minor road.

2. At the road junction turn right continuing on the BAW.

3. At the road junction turn right continuing on the BAW for another 700 metres.

4. Turn left onto a track and follow this track through the woodland past a small car park and on to Cauldshiels Loch. Reputed to be bottomless, the loch was supposed to be the abode of a water kelpie (a spirit in the form of a horse that drowned its riders). During the winter months, birds such as tufted duck, mallard and goosander can be seen and, in the spring, coot and great crested grebe may breed here. The mature coniferous woodland is

home to roe deer, badger, great spotted woodpecker and the occasional red squirrel.

⑤ Retrace your steps to point ④. At the road turn left.

⑥ Bear right and follow the track downhill through woodland with Faldonside Loch below through the trees on your left, then bear right up a track that leads into a field. Faldonside Loch is categorised as a Site of Special Scientific Interest: it is of local importance as a winter wildfowl roost because of its sheltered location. Follow the path along the left hand edge of the field for 300 metres, then bear right continuing down to the bottom of the field by the road. Walk a short way up beside the wall till you reach a kissing gate on the left. Follow the path through woodland to the road.

⑦ Cross the road with care to a path through woodland down towards the River Tweed and walk with the river on your left for 600 metres. The woodlands here comprise a fine mix of deciduous trees which support many fungi in the autumn.

Eildon Hills

⑧ Go through the second kissing gate you come to on the left and follow the raised bank path towards the river. Follow this path as it continues downstream.

⑨ Go through the gate and turn right and after a few metres the track rejoins the BAW. Continue uphill for approx 250 metres, the visitor centre is on your right and the car park to the left.

Cauldshiels Loch

Route 3

Darnick, Rhymer's Glen and Cauldshiels Loch

Distance: 6½ miles/10 kms
Time: Allow 3 hours
Terrain: Paths, tracks and minor roads, some stretches can be muddy after rain, moderate gradients in places, boots or walking shoes recommended.

Cauldshiels Loch Woodlands

1. From the car park follow the path signed for Abbotsford and the visitor centre. Just before the visitor centre, turn left and follow the Borders Abbeys Way (BAW) uphill, after approximately 50 metres, cross the main road with care and continue uphill on the minor road.

2. At the road junction go straight ahead following the road as it climbs a little before descending past Kaeside, Sunnyside and Broomilees Farms.

3. At Darnick Community Woodlands turn right (signed Ley Road). The woodlands here were planted and are looked after by the local community and are worth exploring following the marked trails.

4. At the bottom of the hill turn right and go through the subway to join a road. Continue on the road past the entrance to Borders General Hospital for about 800 metres, then turn left at a track heading down towards Rhymer's Glen.

5. After 500 metres, turn right at a grassy track beside some woodland. Follow this track up into the woodland and into Rhymer's Glen, once one of the most popular walks from Melrose and a favourite excursion of Sir Walter Scott. At the top of the woodland, continue on the path across old earthworks until reaching a gate. Like the hill fort on nearby Cauldshiels Hill, these earthworks are thought to have been a small, fortified farmstead.

Kaeside

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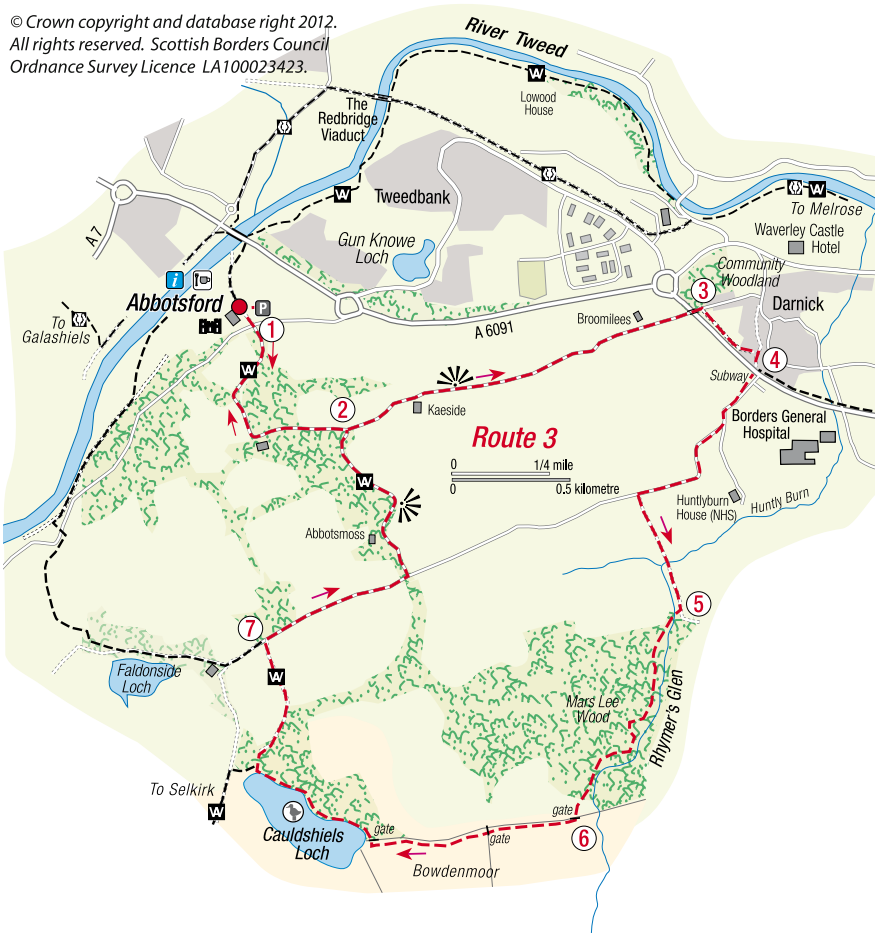


⑥ Go through the gate onto Bowden Moor and turn right walking with the wall on your right to finally reach the edge of Cauldshiels Loch at a gate on your right. The heather moorland has heath spotted orchid in flower in early summer and devil's bit scabious is prominent in late summer. Go through the gate and follow the winding path through the woodland along the water's edge. Near the end of the loch, bear right on a path away from the water and join the BAW. Follow the BAW along a track to meet a road.

⑦ At the road, turn right and continue to follow the BAW. At the first road junction turn left. At the second road junction turn left retracing your steps to the visitor centre and car park.

Route 4

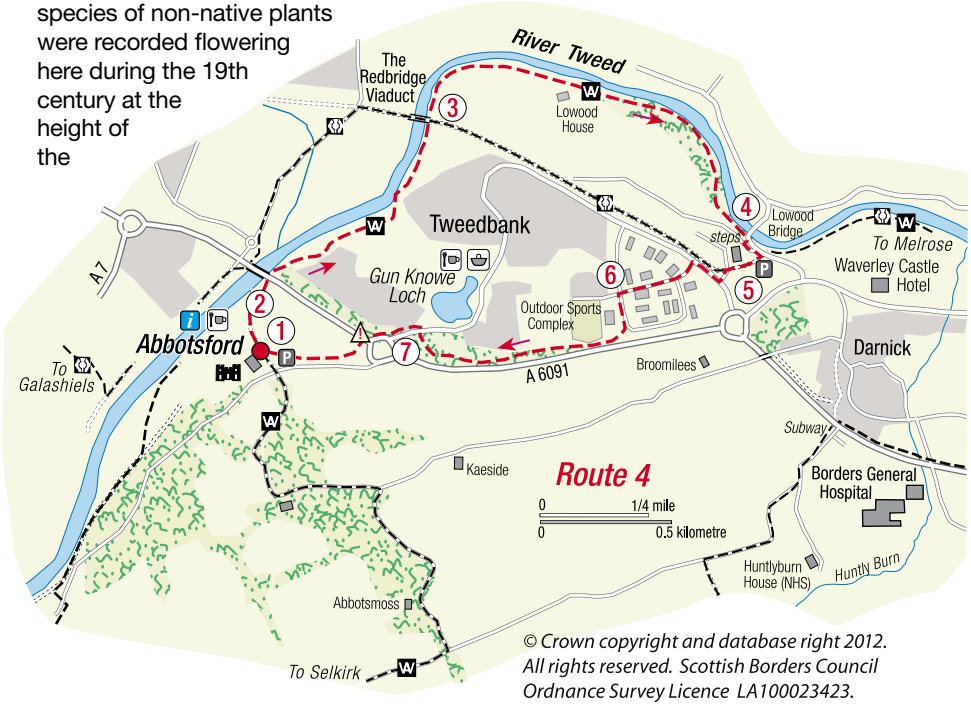
River Tweed and Tweedbank

Distance: 3 miles/5 kms
Time: Allow 1½ hours
Terrain: Paths, and minor roads, some stretches can be muddy after rain, boots or walking shoes recommended.

Tweedbank

1. From the car park follow the path signed for Abbotsford and the visitor centre. Just before the visitor centre, turn right and follow the Borders Abbeys Way (BAW) downhill.

2. Before the river, bear right along a wide track passing under the modern road bridge. Follow the BAW along the river. On the opposite side of the river, where the Gala Water joins the Tweed, over 300 species of non-native plants were recorded flowering here during the 19th century at the height of the woollen industry in Galashiels. This was due to sheep fleeces being brought from all over the world and when these were washed in the mills the seeds of plants were carried down the river and germinated on the river banks. Most have not survived but some species have become invasive and cause problems to our native plant life.



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Borders Abbeys Way at Abbotsford

3. Go under the Redbridge Viaduct and past Lowood House to finally reach the road at Lowood Bridge. Along the riverside look out for heron, oystercatcher, goosander and if you are very lucky otter and kingfisher.

4. Turn right, leaving the BAW and climb a flight of wooden steps at the top turn left and follow the road for a few metres.

5. At the bend in the road turn right and follow the Southern Upland Way along a tarmac path and past a modern office building, which was built to be environmentally-friendly. The green roofing system consists of sedum plants growing in soil. At the road junction, turn left, then right, then left again at the sign for Tweedbank Industrial Estate.

6. At the cross roads, turn left and when the road bends left, cross the grassy area to join the Solway Woodland Trail. Follow this trail through woodland for approximately 1 km.

7. Leave the trail by the steps at the gate, cross the road and turn left. At the roundabout cross the road with care and go straight ahead through a gate and up the slope back to the start point.

Beech Tree

Route 5

Darnick and Tweedbank

Distance: 3¾ miles/6 kms
Time: Allow 2 hours
Terrain: All on tarmac surface except for a short section of grassy path near the river which can be avoided by keeping to the roadside pavement.

1. From the car park follow the path signed for Abbotsford and the visitor centre. Just before the visitor centre, turn left and follow the Borders Abbeys Way uphill, after approximately 50 metres cross the main road with care and continue uphill on the minor road.

2. At the road junction go straight ahead following the road as it climbs a little before descending past Kaeside, Sunnyside and Broomilees Farms.

3. At Darnick Community Woodlands turn right (signed Ley Road).

4. At the bottom of the hill turn left onto Smiths Road and continue straight ahead. Darnick is a traditional Scottish village with winding streets and narrow lanes.

5. Cross the main road with care and head for a pair of metal gates to the left of the driveway to the Waverley Castle Hotel. The hotel was completed in 1871 and is one of the earliest mass concrete buildings in Scotland. Follow the tarmac track, then go straight ahead on a grassy track with a house on the right and through a gate at the end of the track. This area is known as Skirmish Field and was the site, in 1526, of a battle between King James V's supporters and many of the renowned Border families.

   (Alternatively if the ground is wet, cross the road and turn left and follow the pavement round to the right at the next road junction to point 7).

6. Turn left and follow the riverbank path, now the Southern Upland Way (SUW), which eventually meets a road.

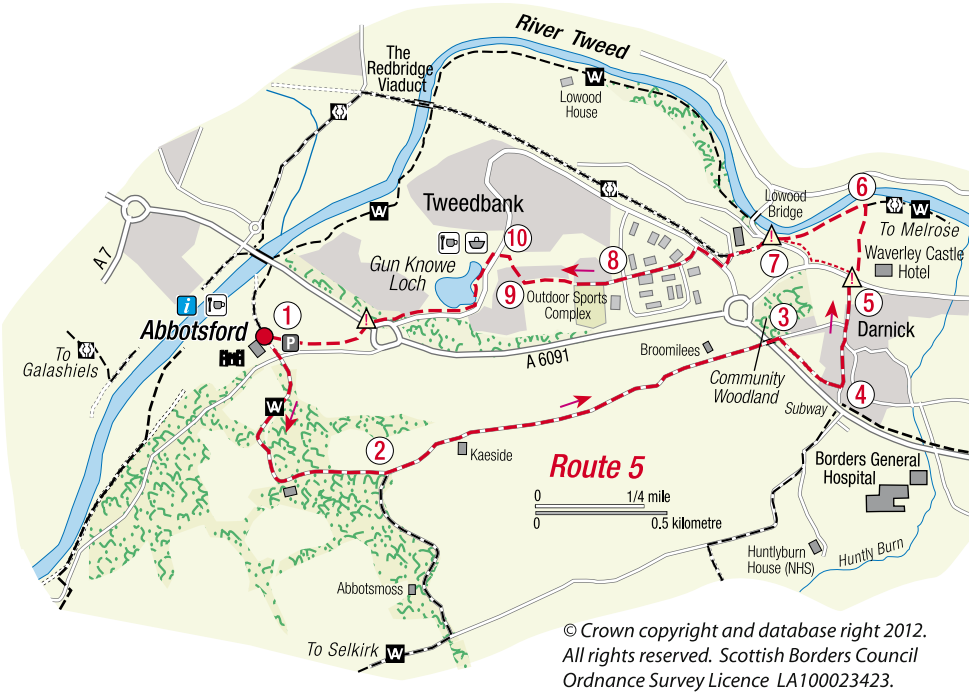
7. Cross the road with care and follow the SUW along a tarmac path and past a modern office building. At the road junction, turn left, then right, then left again at the sign for Tweedbank Industrial Estate.

8. At the crossroads carry on straight ahead keeping to the roadside pavement which then narrows to a lane with sport pitches on the left.

9. Turn right and cross the road. At the bottom of the hill bear left then turn left before the underpass and continue up to the road.

10. Cross the road, turn left then immediately right and follow the path along the side of Gunknowe Loch. The loch has a resident population of swans, geese and ducks. At the end of the loch pick up the roadside pavement again. At the roundabout cross the road with care and go straight ahead through a gate and up the slope back to the start point.

Darnick Community Woodland



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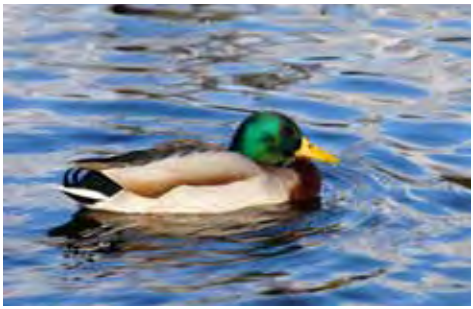
Darnick

Route 6

Tweedbank Park and Gunknowe Loch

Distance: 1½ miles/2½ kms
Time: 1 hour
Terrain: Easy access route all on tarmac surface (alternative return route on a rough track).



Mallard

① From the car park follow the sign for Tweedbank heading away from the visitor centre along the tarmac path down through the grass field towards the main road and roundabout.

② Cross the road with care and bear right keeping to the pavement as it descends gradually towards the loch in Tweedbank (Gunknowe Loch).

③ Beyond the bus shelter bear left and follow the path as it heads towards Gunknowe Loch and continue around the edge of the Loch. The loch is an excellent place to watch the behaviour of gulls, ducks, geese and swans. The mute swans are resident all year round and seem to rely on the public feeding them. Mallard duck are also always present and the black and white male tufted ducks can usually be seen diving for their food.

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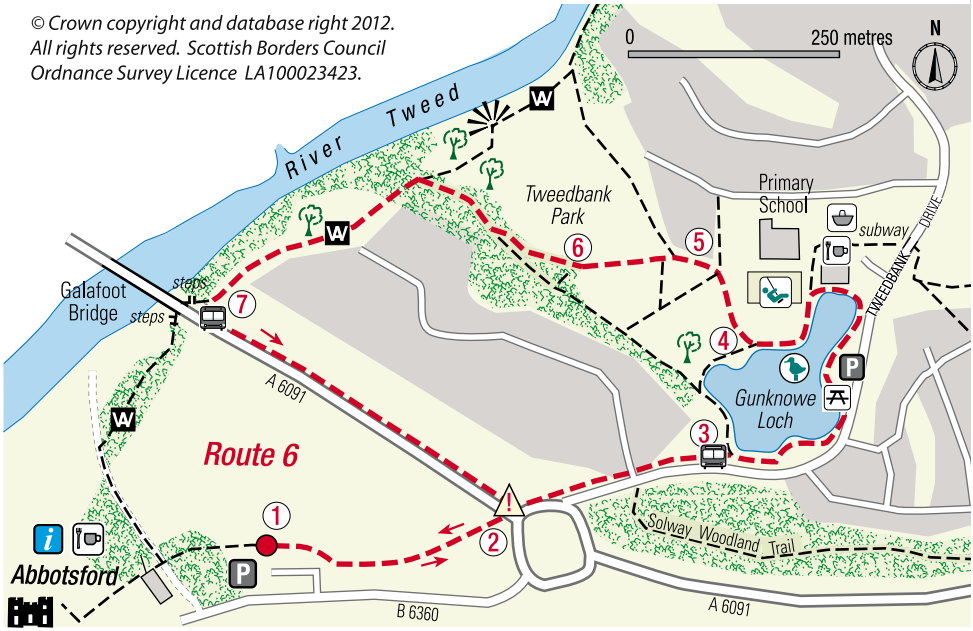


④ At the path junction bear right and continue past the play park.

⑤ At the path crossing turn left and continue along the path ignoring a path leading off to the left. The wooded areas around Tweedbank also attract many different birds such as siskin, long tailed tit and redwing.

⑥ At the path junction bear right, at the next path junction turn right and keep to the path as it turns left following the Borders Abbeys Way (BAW) between the houses and the river.

⑦ Continue along the path to the main road, turn left and follow the pavement alongside the road to the roundabout. Turn right, cross the road again with care and retrace your route to the car park.

Alternatively, 20 metres before the road bear right and follow the BAW under the road bridge on a track as it descends. At the track junction turn left and head uphill towards the visitor centre. At the visitor centre turn left to take you back to the car park. (This alternative route follows a rough track which can be muddy at times).

7-spot Ladybird on Common Ragwort

Gunknowe Loch

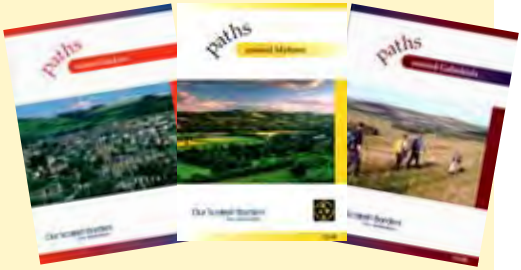
Other Routes

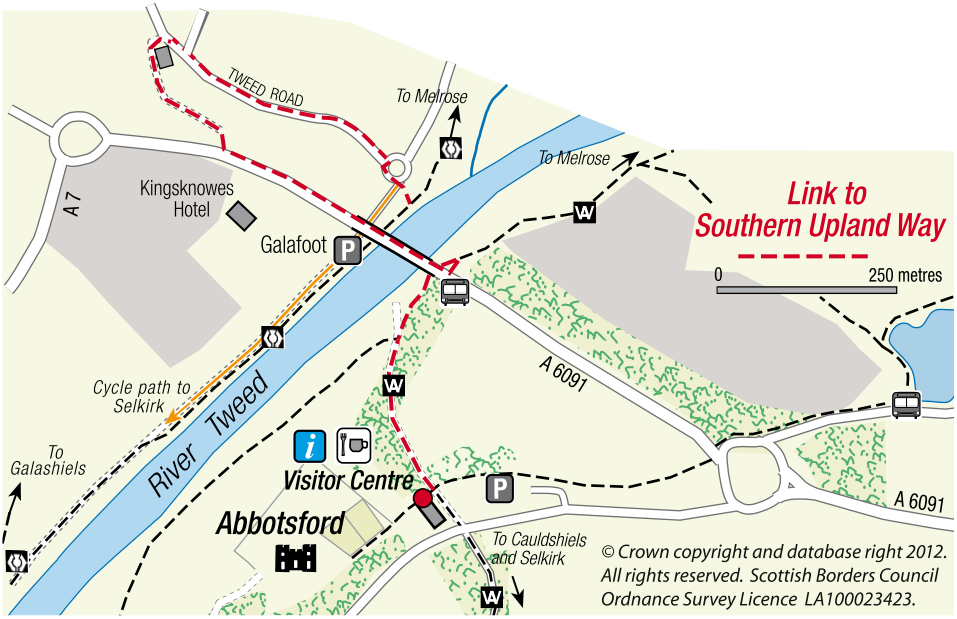
Borders Abbeys Way (BAW). Abbotsford lies adjacent to the BAW. Further information about the route can be found at: www.scotborders.gov.uk/bordersabbeysway

The route can be followed to Selkirk and to Sir Walter Scott's Courtroom. In this building Sir Walter Scott sat as Sheriff, dispensing justice to the town of Selkirk for nearly 30 years, until his death in 1832. This important, historic building dates from 1804 and stands in the bustling Market Place of this historic town, next to a major monument dedicated to Scott. Inside, you can learn the story of his association with the town and browse permanent displays of personal objects that once belonged to the world-famous writer.

Southern Upland Way is easily accessible from Abbotsford, for further information about the route visit www.southernuplandway.gov.uk

This booklet is part of the 'Paths around' series. Look out for Paths Around Melrose, Paths Around Galashiels and Paths Around Selkirk booklets which have a selection of routes based in and around these nearby towns. See www.scotborders.gov.uk/walking





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Acknowledgements
The co-operation of farmers and landowners in developing these routes is gratefully acknowledged.

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Kaeside

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Email: bordersinfo@visitscotland.com
www.visitscottishborders.com

VisitScotland Information Centres in the Scottish Borders
Open all year:
Jedburgh, Peebles and Hawick.
Open April to End October:
Melrose, Selkirk and Kelso. Opening dates and times vary for information phone +44 (1835) 863170

Traveline
(for public transport information)
Tel: 0871 200 2233
www.traveline.org.uk

Scottish Natural Heritage (Information on Scottish Outdoor Access Code)
Lothian & Borders Area Office
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www.outdooraccess-scotland.com

Scottish Borders Council
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www.scotborders.gov.uk

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www.scotborders.gov.uk/museums

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Scottish Borders Council countryside
Website: www.scotborders.gov.uk/walking

For further information on walking in Scotland, visit:
www.scotlandsgreattrails.org.uk/
www.walkingwild.com

Cauldshiels Lochside Path

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.

Alternative format/language

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Scottish Borders COUNCIL

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