

CIRCULAR CYCLE RIDES FROM BERWICK

4. Across the Merse to Duns

The Rides (shown as red lines on the map)

The Main Route (35.7 miles). Follow the Pennine Cycleway (NCN68) out of Berwick and then along country lanes through Hutton, Allanton and Edrom to Duns. Return to Berwick via Whitsome, the Chain Bridge and East Ord.

- (1) **Paxton** a Saxon village with a turbulent past, read all about it on the information board opposite **Cross Inn** (01289 386267)
- (2) **Hutton** Once a self-sufficient community with tradesmen able to satisfy all daily needs. Notice the old pump set in the wall just before you reach the church. Read information board inside church gate; James Small, inventor of the metal plough lived in Hutton. The symbol stones in the churchyard are well worth inspecting.
- (3) **Hutton Hall Barns** Border Eggs is a large rapidly growing business. organic, free-range eggs for sale, some of which are justly termed "gigantic".
- (4) **Broomdykes Farm** a collection of substantial farm buildings. The one with the tall chimney housed a coal-fired steam engine to power a threshing machine.
- (5) **Allanton** the estate village for Blackadder House **Allanton Inn** (01890 818260) serves excellent food.
- (6) **Craigwalls** this complex houses Simpson's grainstore and Greenvale's potato packing and distribution depot. Both grain (frequently barley) and potatoes are crops especially suited to soil and climate of the Eastern Borders.
- (7) **Edrom Arch** at the rear of the church is all that remains of Norman church.
- (8) **De la Bastie Monument** tells a tale of treachery and betrayal.
- (9) **Duns** the **Mercat Cross** marks the twice weekly market once held here under a charter granted by James IV in 1489. Fish shop/delicatessen for picnic food or have lunch at **Hugo's bistro** (01361 884517) and find out who Hugo was.
- (10) **Whitsome** a hill-top village with extensive views of the countryside. **Whitsome Ark** is a modern community centre/post office/shop. **Thistlecockrig** (01890 870370) for fresh fruit, veg, and preserves.
- (11) **Hilton** another hill-top village surrounded once by marshland (Merse means marsh). The old church was abandoned in 1769 as the marshland was drained and the population moved to lower ground.
- (12) **Union Chain Bridge** when opened in 1820 was longest vehicle-carrying iron suspension bridge in world. Up river at **Fishwick** is earliest salmon fishery (C12th). **Chain Bridge Honey Farm** exhibition of everything about bees, honey and honey products. **Vintage Bus Café** - home baked honey-related treats (01289 382362).

There are two possibilities for shorter rides:

Option 1 (16.0 miles), from Hutton go across to Fishwick.

Option 2 (29.0 miles), from just before Craigwalls go across to Whitelaw.

