

## **Saltire 200km Permanent Ride**

Thank you for entering the Saltire 200km Permanent Ride.

Following the revision of AAA points in 2008 you are free to start at whichever control you wish. The route sheet starts in Musselburgh and crosses the Lammermuir Hills to Duns. It then heads west past Dirrington Great Law and over Lauder Common to Stow before climbing again to Blackhaugh then dropping down to the Tweed Valley. From Innerleithen it's a long gradual climb through the Moorfoot Hills to the Piper's Grave. Once past Heriot it's a fairly flat run through the farmlands of East Lothian with a final climb out of Haddington. You then follow the 'Saltire Trail' to the village of Athelstaneford where there is a Flag Heritage Centre in the grounds of the church if you fancy 5 minutes rest. The final leg from North Berwick follows the coast road and offers a welcome respite from the earlier climbs.

There are long, high and exposed sections on this route with no habitation and very little passing traffic. Please make sure your bike is in good condition and you have the tools and experience to sort any problems. Make sure you have adequate clothing and enough food/ drink. Mobile phone reception can not be relied upon!

### **Controls**

1. Musselburgh - the route sheet assumes you are starting from the Old Town Hall which will be familiar to a lot of you but you are free to start wherever you like in Musselburgh. There are numerous shops, banks, cafes and supermarkets for food, drink and stamps. Parking is freely available although be careful about parking on the High Street as there is a limited stay in some areas.
2. Duns - there are several hotels, shops and banks in the area around the Market Square.
3. Innerleithen - there are a couple of cafés on the High Street. There are several hotels, shops and take-aways for food/ drink and the Co-op opposite Alpine bikes is open early/ late. The next available food and drink is not until Haddington so make sure you have enough to get you there.
4. North Berwick - there are lots of shops, banks and cafes in the High Street.

As well as the places listed above it may be possible to buy food/drink in Gifford, Lauder, Stow, Walkerburn and Haddington.

East Lothian Council use quite a lot of 'old fashioned' cast-iron fingerposts and although these are very picturesque the lettering is very small and difficult to read - I have marked these signposts on the route sheet with an asterisk. There have also been a large number of thefts of road signs in East Lothian in recent years as you will notice by the number of posts you come across with no signs attached! Although the route sheet is hopefully as up to date as possible some road signs may 'disappear' before your ride and conversely the council may install new signs where previously they were missing so I'd advise familiarizing yourself with the stretch from Heriot to Haddington especially before your ride.

There is a ford on the route at ~147km. The surface of the ford itself is very good having recently been relaid but can be very slippery as the many riders who've had unexpected swims will testify. Also, the road leading to the ford is steep and twisty with sometimes a lot of gravel. If you don't fancy the look of the crossing there is a footbridge to the right.

If you have any queries please contact me at [martinfoley@btinternet.com](mailto:martinfoley@btinternet.com)

Martin

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