

Mining Trails

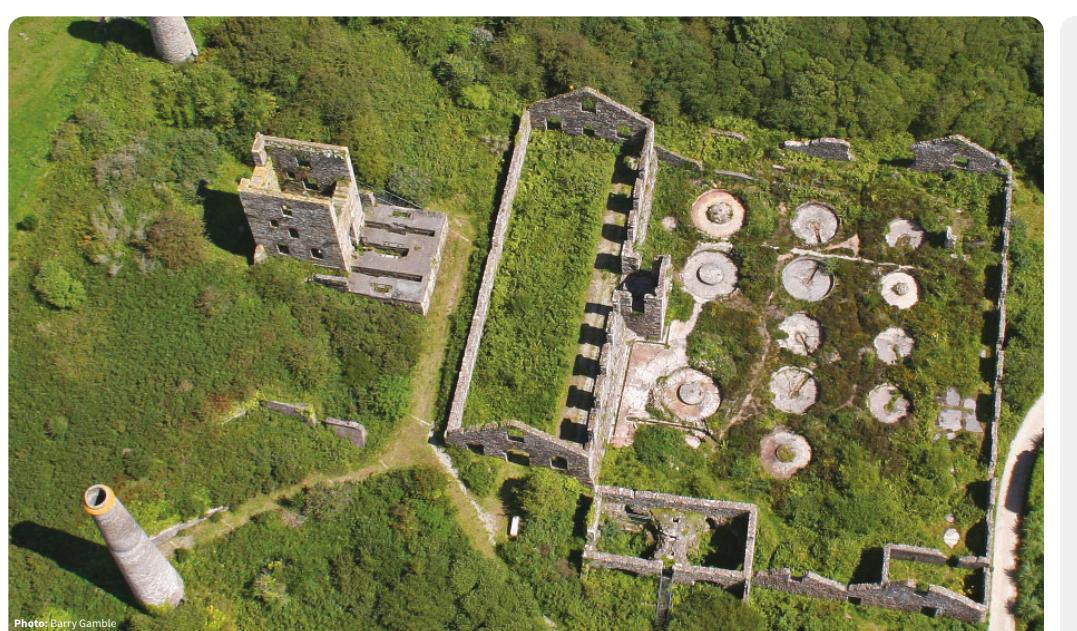


Photo: Barry Gamble



Photo: Barry Gamble

Welcome to the Mining Trails guide

The formerly rich mining area of Cornwall's Central Mining District is home to a 60km-plus network of multi activity trails. Routes such as the Coast to Coast and the Great Flat Lode Trails while being mainly traffic-free, offer improved and safer access to schools, places of work, local facilities, historic settlements and visitor attractions. The network of trails also offers people a unique opportunity to access our internationally important mining heritage.

Much of the trails network closely follows the tramway and railway routes once used to transport ore and vital supplies to and from the area's many tin and copper mines to ports such as Devoran and Portreath.

Whether you are a walker, cyclist or horse-rider, the expanded network offers extensive opportunities to exercise both mind and body. It combines better access to the carefully conserved remains of this unique mining area with spectacular views and exceptional wildlife.

The Mineral Tramways Heritage Project was a £6 million Regeneration Project managed by Cornwall Council. This was funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, SW Regional Development Agency, Objective One, Cornwall Council, and Parish and Town Councils in the project area.

To read more about the mineral tramways search for the "mineral tramways" pages at www.cornwall.gov.uk.

Explore 60km of trails on foot, bike or horseback and discover Cornwall's mining heritage

www.cornishmining.org.uk

FREE



Photo: Ainsley Cocks

Cornwall's Mining Trails Network

The mining trails network centred around Camborne and Redruth offers 37.5 miles (60km) of adventure and discovery for walkers, cyclists and horse riders. Enjoy:

- Days out discovering something new at every turn - varied landscapes, amazing views, exceptional wildlife and remarkable remains of the area's 19th century mining heyday
- Fresh air and outdoor exercise for healthy bodies and minds
- Green, sustainable, traffic-free travel to school or work
- Wheelchair and buggy-friendly access to countryside and historic sites



For more information visit: www.cornwall.gov.uk



If you would like this information in another format or language please contact us at: Cornwall Council, County Hall, Trevevor Road, Truro TR1 3AY Email: customerservices@cornwall.gov.uk www.cornwall.gov.uk Telephone: 0300 1234 10 All content, unless where specified, © Cornwall Council, 2025. Cover photos: Lesley Strong and Creative Design: Design and Marketing, Cornwall Council Dec 25 S948705

The Portreath Branchline Trail

In 1836 the Hayle Railway was constructed to link the engineering works and harbour quays at Hayle with the copper mines around Camborne and Redruth. It had two major branches, the one up to the Tresavean Mine above Lanner and the other down to the port of Portreath. The steam hauled section to Portreath terminated at the top of the hill and was connected to the port by a massive incline.

The Portreath branch continued as a successful freight line until its closure in 1936.

Length of trail: 5.5 miles (8.8km)

Nature of trail: The trail connects Portreath on the north coast with Brea Village and Penhallick Leats, and links with the popular Great Flat Lode Trail. It includes some sections of highway and one main road crossing which is unsuitable for horses.

Where to park: Parking is available at Portreath and there is easy access to the trail from Tehidy East Lodge car park.

Links with: The Coast to Coast Trail, the Tehidy Trail and the Great Flat Lode Trail.

Points of interest: The trail links the coastal village of Portreath with Illogan, passing under the Portreath Incline and using the route of the Portreath Branch Line where possible. Quiet roads and off-highway links extend the trail through to Pool and on to Tuckingmill Valley Park where the trail follows the Red River Valley to Brea.



The Great Flat Lode Trail

In the 1860s, when many copper mines were closing, a 'lode' of tin ore was discovered to the South of Carn Brea in an area that previously worked copper deposits. This lode, over 2 miles long, was also flatter than most, lying at an angle of about 30 degrees instead of the usual 70 degrees from the horizontal - hence its name, the "Great Flat Lode". The tin mines here were some of the most successful in the late 19th Century.

The mines here closed about 1920.

Length of trail: 7.5 miles (12km)

Nature of trail: A circular route with some steep sections. Mostly off-road taking you through a mixture of farmland, heathland and through an area with the largest concentration of Cornish-type engine houses anywhere on earth.

Where to park: South Wheal Frances, Dolcoath Mine or at King Edward Mine Museum (with café and mining exhibition).

Links with: The Portreath Branch Line Trail and the Redruth & Chasewater Railway Trail and on to the rest of the trails network.

Points of interest: The Great Flat Lode Trail follows part of the line of the Basset Mine Tramroad. The remains of Seleggan, Cornwall's last tin smelter, can be visited near Carnkie. Carn Brea, once an ancient fortified hill settlement, can be climbed for superb panoramic views which include the tall steel headframe of South Crofty Mine; the last Cornish tin mine to close in 1998.



What to see and do on the Mining Trails

Use the map to plan your route, inform your travel choices and enjoy what the area has to offer.

On the way you will find historic mining towns and villages set within a fascinating historic landscape. You will also be able to hire bikes, use riding centres and enjoy refreshments in pubs and cafes, many offering quality local produce.

Please play your part to help protect the environment by using public transport systems where possible. Main line trains run to both Camborne and Redruth stations (enquiries 03457 484950) and bus information is available on www.travelinesw.com or at www.transportforcornwall.co.uk

Some mining trails are largely traffic-free and flat, so perfect for walkers who prefer gentle gradients and families with children learning how to ride bikes. Others have steeper sections and offer a more challenging experience.

All are linked to provide a great choice of journey options, including circular detours to special places like the summits of Carn Brea and Carn Marth.

Responsible use of the trails

Please take litter home with you and use public transport where possible. Take extra care at road crossings where traffic is present. Please stay on the paths waymarked with an engine house symbol. Many of the trails are on public bridleways where the unauthorised use of motor vehicles is not permitted.

Be considerate to other trail users and residents. Cyclists - give way to walkers and horses, warn other users of your approach and if in doubt, slow down. Dog owners - take a bag with you, use dog bins and keep your dog under control; which means either on a lead or in sight and able to come to heel when called.

History of the trails

The mining trails were created by the Mineral Tramways Heritage Project and, where possible, follow the routes of Cornwall's historic tramroads and railways. These were constructed to transport ore and essential supplies from and to the mines and lace their way through one of the world's greatest concentrations of historic mine buildings. Please see the website of the Mining Villages Regeneration Group for more information on these and the other trails available: cornwalltrails.net

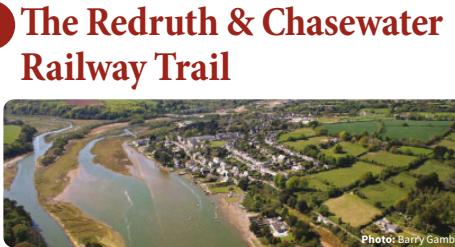


Photo: Barry Gamble

The Redruth & Chasewater Railway was the first in Cornwall to use wrought-iron rails and wagons with flanged wheels when it opened in 1826. Initially horse drawn, the railway conveyed wagons from mines around Gwennap and Redruth to the port of Devoran. The line was successful and in 1854 it was converted for steam locomotives. The decline in Cornish mining fortunes eventually led to its closure in 1915.

Length of trail: 7.7 miles (12.4km)

Nature of trail: It is mostly level and off road, and occasionally crosses the public highway.

Where to park: Limited parking is available near Twelveheads, at Seleggan near Carnkie and at the Buller Hill section near Lanner Hill.

Links with: The Great Flat Lode Trail, the Tresavean Trail and the Coast to Coast Trail.

Points of interest: The Redruth & Chasewater Railway Trail branches off from the Coast to Coast Trail at Twelveheads and follows a route of contrasting scenery (woodland and moorland) with spectacular views across Cornwall. Following as closely as possible the original railway route the trail bypasses the villages of Carharrack and Lanner. Gwennap Pit is close by and Carn Marth can be accessed from the trail. The trail then continues to the west of Lanner before connecting in to the Great Flat Lode Trail and Tresavean Trail at Buller Hill.

The National Cycle Network and other trails

Active Travel Maps

These maps provide sustainable travel info for nearby towns including walking, cycling and public transport information together in one place. www.cornwall.gov.uk/activetravel



Photo: Emma Parkman

The Coast to Coast Trail

The northern section of the trail follows the route of the first tramroad, or plateway, in Cornwall, which opened in 1812 to link the lucrative Gwennap mines with the north coast port at Portreath. The southern section of the trail includes the Gwennap mines themselves and follows the route of the Redruth & Chasewater Railway to Devoran.

Length of trail: 11 miles (17.5km)

Nature of trail: generally level and mostly off-road. There are some busy roads to cross on this trail so please be aware of your surroundings and take care when crossing roads.

Where to park: Portreath Beach Car Park, Carnon Valley Car Park and Devoran or Cornwall Gold and Tolgus Mill.

Links with: The Tolgus Trail, The Redruth & Chasewater Trail and The Portreath Branchline Trail.

Points of interest: This trail now connects the two former mineral ports of Portreath and Devoran, on the north and south coasts respectively, with the historic Gwennap Mining District, once described as ...the richest square mile in the Old World. A loop from this trail takes in the extensive Great Wheal Busy site.

The Tresavean Trail

Opened as part of the Hayle Railway, the Tresavean branch was built to serve Tresavean Copper Mine and originally hauled copper ore and Welsh coal along its entirely horse-drawn section from the top of Buller Hill. A series of granite setts for its 4' 8 1/2" gauge rails can still be seen in places along the former track bed. The line closed in 1936.

Length of trail: 1.1 miles (1.8km)

Nature of trail: Generally level and off-road. There are some busy roads to cross on this trail so please be aware of your surroundings and take care when crossing roads.

Where to park: Lanner village or Buller Hill car park. **Links with:** Easy circular detours on footpaths in to the village centre and back again or join the Redruth & Chasewater Trail and link in to the extended network of trails.

Points of interest: The Tresavean Trail follows the branch line route from the top of Buller Hill, it passes through an area of abundant wildlife and skirts the village of Lanner providing expansive views across the valley to nearby Carn Marth. A recreated section of railway can be viewed close to the remains of Tresavean Mine.

The Tolgus Trail



Photo: Courtesy Sustrans

The trail connects Cornwall Gold and Tolgus Mill with the Coast to Coast Trail, just west of Cambrose and follows the floor of the Portreath Valley where tin lost from the dressing floors of the mines upstream was trapped and re-treated. Prior to this tin was recovered from alluvial gravels below the valley floor and this activity is recorded here from as early as 1602. An 1818 estate plan of the Manor of Tolgus shows many water-powered stream works along the valley.

Length of trail: 0.8 miles (1.2km)

Nature of trail: The trail is level and off road, with one road crossing. It is easy to access from the Coast to Coast Trail.

Where to park: In Portreath or at the Cornwall Gold/ Tolgus Mill site.

Links with: The Coast to Coast Trail.

Points of interest: Experience Tolgus Mill, the 19th century tin mill at Cornwall Gold. Part of this site is also included within a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) due to the presence of rare bryophytes.

The Tehidy Trail

The Tehidy Trail is based on the existing network of tracks and trails through Tehidy Country Park, former home of Sir Francis Basset, Lord de Dunstanville, whose memorial crowns Carn Brea.

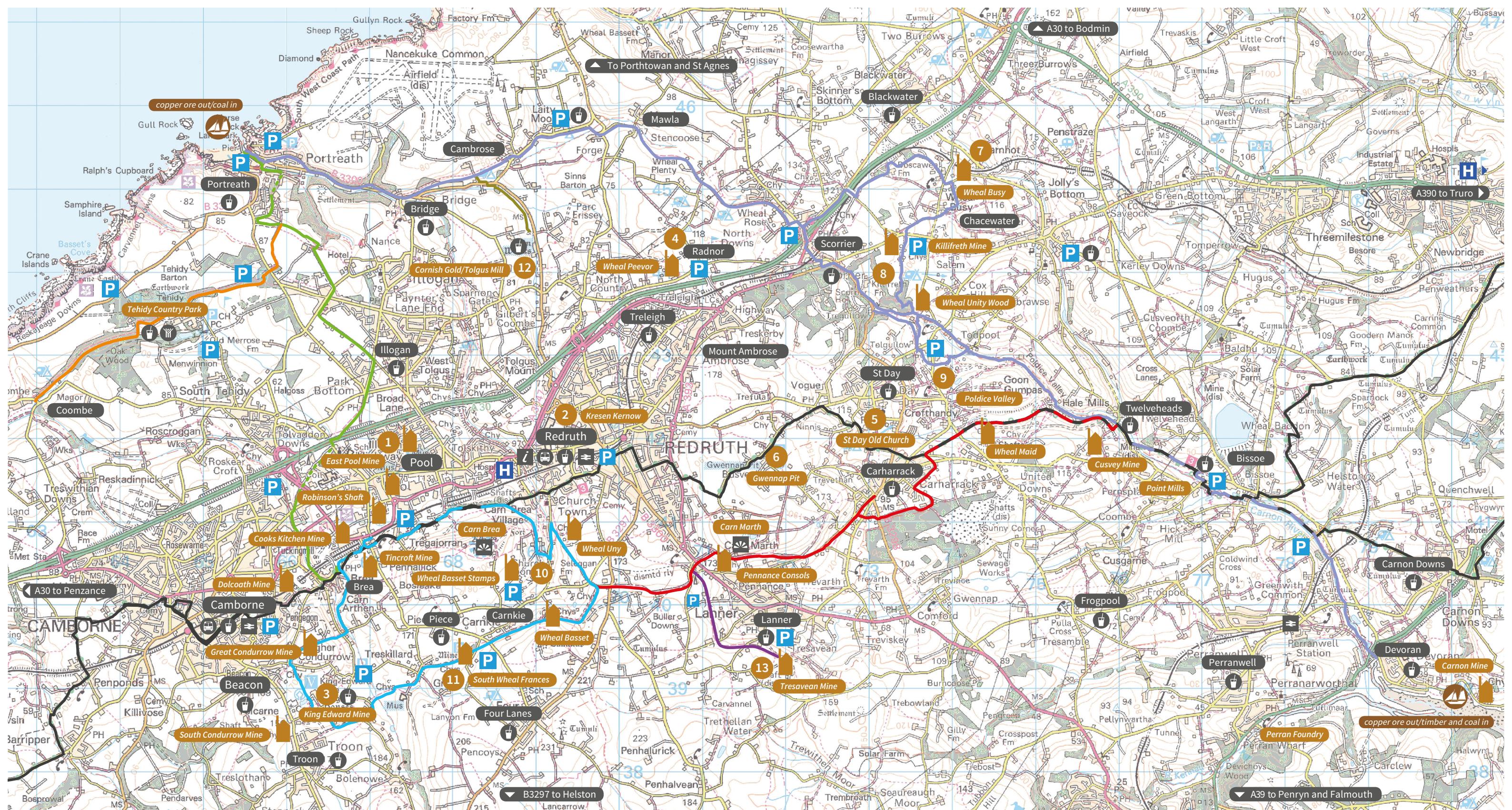
Length of trail: 2.5 miles (4km)

Nature of trail: Some steep sections but otherwise relatively flat.

Where to park: East Lodge Car Park, Tehidy Country Park or in Portreath.

Links in with: The Portreath Branchline Trail and the Coast to Coast Trail.

Points of interest: This multi-use trail through the parkland setting of Tehidy links with the Portreath Branchline Trail and enables users to either visit Portreath and pick up the Coast to Coast Trail or head towards Camborne and link up with the Great Flat Lode Trail.



Mining Trails

For a downloadable map, please scan this QR code



Guide to the trails

- Tehidy Trail
- Portreath Branchline Trail
- Tresavean Trail
- Great Flat Lode Trail
- Great Flat Lode Trail/National Cycle Network
- Redruth & Chasewater Trail
- Redruth & Chasewater Trail/National Cycle Network
- Tolgus Trail
- Coast to Coast Trail
- Coast to Coast Trail/National Cycle Network
- National Cycle Network

Heritage attractions and some notable mining related sites

- 1 East Pool Mine 01209 315027
- 2 Kresen Kernow 01209 614430
- 3 King Edward Mine 01209 614681
- 4 Wheal Peevor mine site and multi-use trail 0300 1234 202
- 5 St Day Old Church
- 6 Gwennap Pit 01209 822770 - Discover Redruth 01209 713606 - Methodist Heritage
- 7 Wheal Busy mine site
- 8 Killifreth Mine
- 9 Poldice Valley
- 10 Wheal Basset Stamps site
- 11 South Wheal Frances mine site
- 12 Cornwall Gold and Tolgus Mill 01209 203280
- 13 Tresavean Mine

For further information, please scan this QR code.



Saints Trails network

A public trail created for cyclists, walkers and horse riders also connects Threemilestone with St Agnes (not shown on the map). Part of the Saints Trails network, this southern route, which is mainly off road, leads into the heart of the St Agnes Mining District – Area A7 of the World Heritage Site. Downloadable copies of the Saints Trails routes are available at www.cornwall.gov.uk – please search 'saints trails'.

Life Cycle Camborne

The new Roskear Route from Camborne (not shown on the map) provides 3.7km of enhanced walking and cycling, connecting key sites and linking with other trails – please see: <https://cambornetowndeal.com/projects>

Key to symbols

- bus station
- refreshments
- country park
- harbour or mooring
- road generally more than 4m
- road generally less than 4m
- information
- parking
- railway station
- hospital

This map is based upon the Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. (100049047) 2025