

# Welcome to the Tamar Trails

Explore the mines and quays of the Tamar Valley...

Explore the Tamar Trails and journey through the Tamar Valley (on the Devon/Cornwall border), along old mineral tramways and railways, learn about the mining history and enjoy the stunning natural landscapes.

Discover what was once the largest copper mine in Europe, Devon Great Consols, or follow the trails in and around Morwellham Quay - an historic mining port and gateway to the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site.















**TamarValley**  
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

For more information please visit:  
[www.tamarvalley.org.uk](http://www.tamarvalley.org.uk)  
[www.cornish-mining.org.uk](http://www.cornish-mining.org.uk)

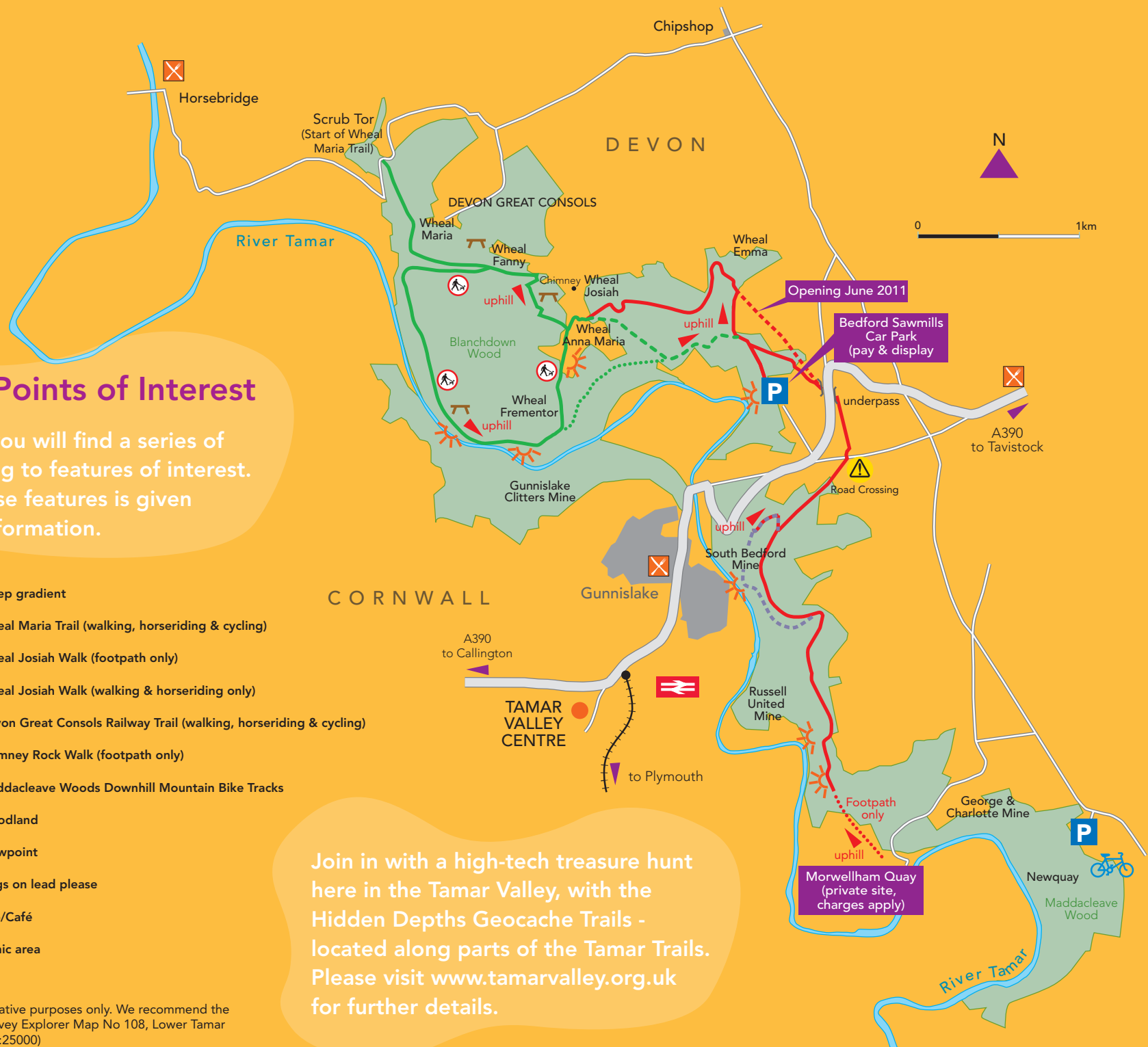
# Tamar Trails - Points of Interest

Along some of the trails you will find a series of numbered markers relating to features of interest. A brief description of these features is given below the general trail information.

-  Steep gradient
-  Wheal Maria Trail (walking, horseriding & cycling)
-  Wheal Josiah Walk (footpath only)
-  Wheal Josiah Walk (walking & horseriding only)
-  Devon Great Consols Railway Trail (walking, horseriding & cycling)
-  Chimney Rock Walk (footpath only)
-  Maddacleave Woods Downhill Mountain Bike Tracks
-  Woodland
-  Viewpoint
-  Dogs on lead please
-  Pub/Café
-  Picnic area

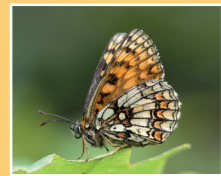
This map is for illustrative purposes only. We recommend the use of Ordnance Survey Explorer Map No 108, Lower Tamar Valley & Plymouth (1:25000)

Join in with a high-tech treasure hunt here in the Tamar Valley, with the Hidden Depths Geocache Trails - located along parts of the Tamar Trails. Please visit [www.tamarvalley.org.uk](http://www.tamarvalley.org.uk) for further details.



# Wheal Maria Trail

This wide trail passes through mixed woodland, revealing spectacular views across the Tamar Valley and mining remains. The trail is a compacted stone track, with some loose stones in parts. It is generally level with steep, challenging sections in parts. It is recommended to complete this circuit in a clockwise direction.



Heath Fritillary



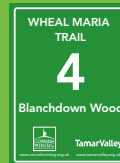
Arsenic calciner

## Trail markers

**1. Wheal Maria.** Discovered in 1844, this mine was part of Devon Great Consols and was named after the Duke of Bedford's wife. It produced copper, lead and arsenic until its closure in 1920.

**2. Wheal Maria.** Rich deposits of copper were found in 'Gard's' shaft just 18 fathoms (36 metres) from the surface. The lode (a vein of mineral ore) was 12 metres in width and stretched eastwards for over three kilometres. Large, arsenic contaminated dumps can be seen in front of you.

**3. Wheal Fanny.** When Wheal Fanny was started in 1845 the mineralised vein was hit at only 3 fathoms (5.5 metres) from the surface. The lode here lies some 200 metres southwards of the other lodes of Devon Great Consols.



Blanchdown wood

**4. Blanchdown Wood.** These woods have had only three owners since records began. Tavistock Abbey originally held the land until the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1540 when it went to the Dukes of Bedford; finally it was purchased from the Dukes in 1959 by the 6th Earl of Bradford.

**5. Wheal Anna Maria.** Part of Devon Great Consols, the mine covered 3.2 hectares and had over 6,850 cubic metres of arsenic flues - the equivalent of approximately 185 double-decker buses! Demand for arsenic increased due to its use in the dyeing, paint and glass industries as well as a pesticide in the cotton fields of the USA. Unlike copper, large amounts of arsenic were refined on site using the 'calcination' process and in total yielded 72,000 tons of arsenic.

**6. Wheal Fremontor.** Again, part of Devon Great Consols. On the river bank opposite are the remains of Gunnislake Clitters. The large opening in front of you is an extensive open stope (this is the space left behind after the ore has been removed). The main output was tungsten and tin.

**7. Blanchdown Wood.** The Earl and his forester, Phil Hutt, developed what is known as the 'Bradford-Hutt Plan' for growing conifers. The woods are divided into sections and then coupes (small areas of forest) 18 metres square, each with trees of different ages. Each year, some are felled and some planted, which allows for continuous cover in the woodland despite commercial felling regularly taking place. Look out for the rare and beautiful Heath Fritillary butterfly, which can be found here and only a few other spots across the UK.



Phil Hutt (right) with former woodsmen

**8. Wheal Josiah.** This was the location of the deepest shaft on Devon Great Consols, sunk at the insistence of the Duke of Bedford who hoped to find tin at greater depths. This, however, proved a costly failure and no tin was found. Nearby, rare Nightjars have made their home on the heathland that emerged after the industrial decline.



Nightjar



# Devon Great Consols Trail

Journey through this working coniferous woodland along parts of the old mineral railway that once linked Devon Great Consols mines with the port of Morwellham. Pass by some of the picnic sites, popular in Victorian times, with dramatic views over the Tamar Valley. The trail is a wide path with a compacted stone surface, that is occasionally muddy after wet weather. The trail is level in parts with some steep sections, which may be challenging.



Tree Surfers is located at the start of the Tamar Trails, near the Bedford Sawmills car park. This complex of ladders, rope bridges, zip wires and walkways gives you the freedom to explore the tree tops close to the Trails. Created by local business, Dartmoor Outdoors, the course is an adrenalin-fuelled complement to the Trails Network.

[www.treesurfers.co.uk](http://www.treesurfers.co.uk)

## Devon Great Consols Mineral Railway Trail

(multiuse, total length of one-way linear route - 6.5km. Approximate time to walk - 3 hours, cycling 1-1.5 hours)

Choose the sections along this linear route that you would like to explore further, and look out for the following points of interest along the way.



**12. Wheal Josiah Railway Tunnel.** You can see here a few feet of remaining tunnel under an archway dump marking the line of the mineral railway which ran from the ore processing plant, around the contour of the hill past the Wheal Emma section and then on down the Tamar Valley to an incline plane for delivering ore to Morwellham Quay.



**13. Wheal Emma.** The easternmost working on the Devon Great Consols site, opened in 1848.



**14. Wheal Emma Railway Bridge.** The remains of a disused railway bridge spanning the railway line can be seen just off the path here.



**15. Bawden's Corner Bridge.**



**20. The Mineral Railway.** Built and paid for by the mine it ran for 7.5 kilometres from Devon Great Consols to Morwellham. The journey time for 8 to 10 wagons from mine to port was 20 minutes.



**21. Morwell Rock.** This slate outcrop is situated high up in Morwell Woods. From the Rock there is a wonderful view over the Tamar Valley down to Gunnislake and into Cornwall.  
**WARNING** - precipitous rock face, keep away from edge.

# Wheal Josiah Walk

Explore mining landscapes on this wide, mainly level path, with moderate inclines in parts. The path has a compacted stone surface offering a less steep walking route to view mining works and to join the Wheal Maria Trail.

## Wheal Josiah Walk

(footpath only, length 3.5 km.

Approximate time to walk

1 1/4 hours)

Starting point,

Bedford Sawmills

Car Park - grid ref:

SX 438 728,

sat nav - PL18 8JE



**9. Wheal Anna Maria Arsenic Tailings.** The red sand tips are waste from the arsenic recovery phase of this mine. In the 1870s a handful of mines in the Tamar Valley mining district were producing over half of the world's arsenic.

**10. Blanchdown Adit.** A good place to see the orange-coloured waters discharging from the Blanchdown Adit, particularly after heavy rains. The water is coloured by ochre, the pigment which usually comes from iron ore in the earth.

Blanchdown Adit



**11. Wheal Anna Maria Copper Tailings.** These are dumps containing the copper slimes (the residue left over after the processing of the copper ore) and date from an earlier phase of the mine's life.

# Chimney Rock Walk

Explore beech, oak and conifer woodland, with sweeping views over the steep sides of the River Tamar. This is a narrow footpath, steep and challenging in places, passing near to a vertical drop. It can be muddy after wet weather and includes short sections of rocky, uneven ground.

## Chimney Rock Walk

(footpath only, length 2 km.

Approximate time to walk 1 hour)

Starting point,

Bedford Sawmills

Car Park - grid ref:

SX 438 728,

sat nav - PL18 8JE



**17. Bedford Leat.** The remains of the leat can be seen on the left-hand side. Built in 1828, it served a 12 metre diameter wheel for pumping, hauling and crushing at Wheal Russell.

**18. Chimney Rock.** Chimney Rock commands wonderful views from its precarious position, perched on the hillside overlooking Gunnislake. **WARNING** - precipitous rock face, keep away from edge.

**19. Wheal Russell.** The mine is a nineteenth century amalgamation of smaller eighteenth century mines, which between 1852 and 1891 produced copper, tin and arsenic.

## Maddacleave Wood Downhill Mountain Bike Trails

Three tracks have been built on the Gawton Mine site on the Devon side of the Tamar. The full-on downhill track named '**Super-Tavi**' has some very difficult sections and, along with the second downhill track '**Egypt**', really requires a downhill bike, body armour, some downhill experience and nerves of steel. The third track, named '**HSD**' (High Speed Descent), is more of a free-ride, cross-country track and can be easily ridden with a cross-country (hard-tail) bike with front suspension and a cross-country helmet. You must be a member of Woodland Riders to use the courses. Day passes or full membership is available.

Call Dartmoor Cycles on **01822 618178** or go to **www.woodlandriders.com**



## What's happening!

There are lots of exciting new projects we're working on at the moment including:

**Maddacleave** - New reception hut for the downhill and cross country trails from the established car park.

**Trails Centre** - New trails, interpretation and education facility at the Gulworthy car park in conjunction with Tree Surfers. There will be toilets, a small cafe and new family friendly facilities complete with a play area for small children.

**Bedford United Trails** - New walking trails created in this beautiful deciduous woodland containing Bedford United mine.

## Tamar Trails Code of Conduct

### Using the Trails

- **Please be courteous** to other users. **Walkers have right of way.**
- Please **keep to designated trails**. The trails pass through sites containing historic mining remains, which have a number of associated hazards including old buildings and structures, contaminated ground and open shafts, as well as areas of nature conservation importance. Do not climb fences or structures or disturb the ground. Do not drink from, or swim in, any open water.
- **Dogs should be kept under close control**. Please **clean up after your dog and use a lead when signs request you to do so**. Refer to trail map.
- Please **supervise children** at all times.
- Please **respect the privacy of adjoining properties & landowners** – there is no public access to any **adjoining land except on signed paths**.
- Please **take litter home** with you.
- **Be aware** that many trails pass through **operational forestry land**, and forestry machinery may be at work during your visit. Take heed of temporary warning notices.
- **No smoking within woodland**. Do not start fires.
- **Be prepared**. Ensure you have the right **equipment and clothing**, and know your ability, and that of others in your group.
- Cyclists, **please keep your speed down**. High speed makes it harder to avoid other users and can cause accidents. Use a bell or shout to warn other users of your approach.  
Try to warn others of your approach. If in doubt, stop.
- **Horse riders, please keep to a walking pace** at all times, except within designated areas where there are no other users.

