

FREE WALKING
GUIDE
DISCOVER
400
YEARS
OF CONISTON'S
COPPER-RICH
MINING HISTORY



MINERS FIRST CAME to Coniston in the 1500s AS THE COPPER veins were opened up.

Copper mining flourished in the 1800s then declined in 1897 when cheaper Chilean imports made it uneconomical.



John Barratt Coniston's Copper Captain

Born in Devon, John Barratt managed mines across Yorkshire and Scotland before coming to Coniston in the early 1800s. He modernised local copper mining and expanded production to its height in the 1870s.

Mine manager John Barratt, taken in 1865.

© Unknown

Where Did All The Ore Go?

Copper ore mined in the 1600s was taken by packhorse to Keswick to be smelted, while during the 1700s it was transported to Cheshire. During the 1800s Coniston Water was used to ship ore south to Greenodd for transfer onto canal barges heading to the coast at Ulverston. It was sold and shipped to copper smelting plants in St Helens and Swansea. Boats gave way to trains when the railway came to Coniston in 1859.

Coniston Copper Trails

Follow in the footsteps of Coniston's miners with these three linked trails. Discover copper-plated stories of miners, their feats of engineering and the myths they left behind.

Miners' memories linger in Coniston's streets and on the nearby fells. You can explore the places they lived and worked, played – and died.

The trails are of different lengths and terrain:

Miners' Lives is a short walk around Coniston village and focuses on social history, transport and how mining changed the village.

Introducing Coppermines Valley takes you to the centre of the copper industry and the Heritage Centre at the edge of the fells.

Land of Power and Ore takes you further onto the fells to come closer to the mines, engine houses and inclines.

You can mix and match different parts of any of the routes depending on where you start and how long you have.

Levers Water

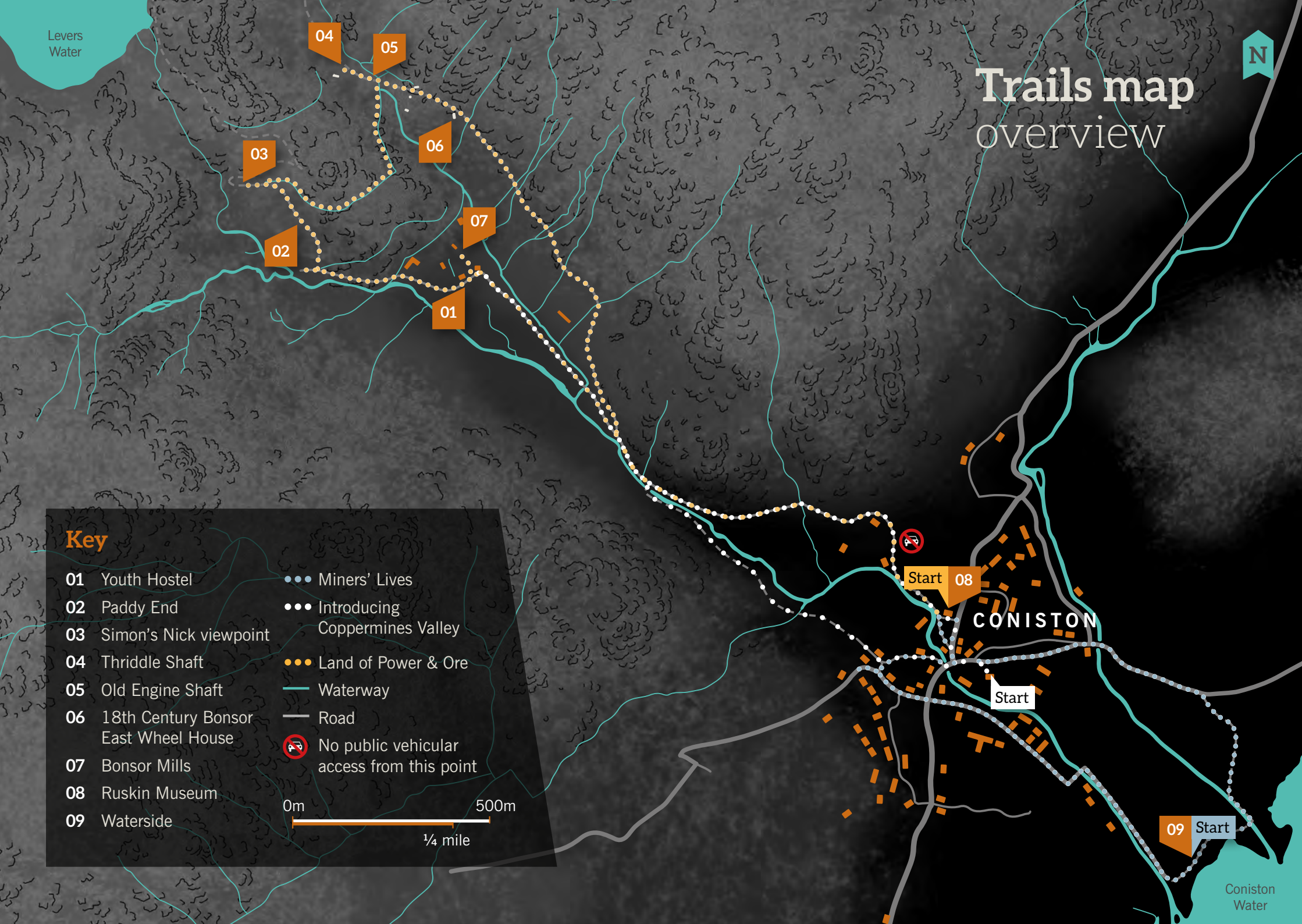


Trails map overview

Key

- 01** Youth Hostel
 - 02** Paddy End
 - 03** Simon's Nick viewpoint
 - 04** Thriddle Shaft
 - 05** Old Engine Shaft
 - 06** 18th Century Bonsor East Wheel House
 - 07** Bonsor Mills
 - 08** Ruskin Museum
 - 09** Waterside
- Miners' Lives
 - Introducing Coppermines Valley
 - Land of Power & Ore
 - Waterway
 - Road
 - No public vehicular access from this point

0m 500m
 ¼ mile



CONISTON

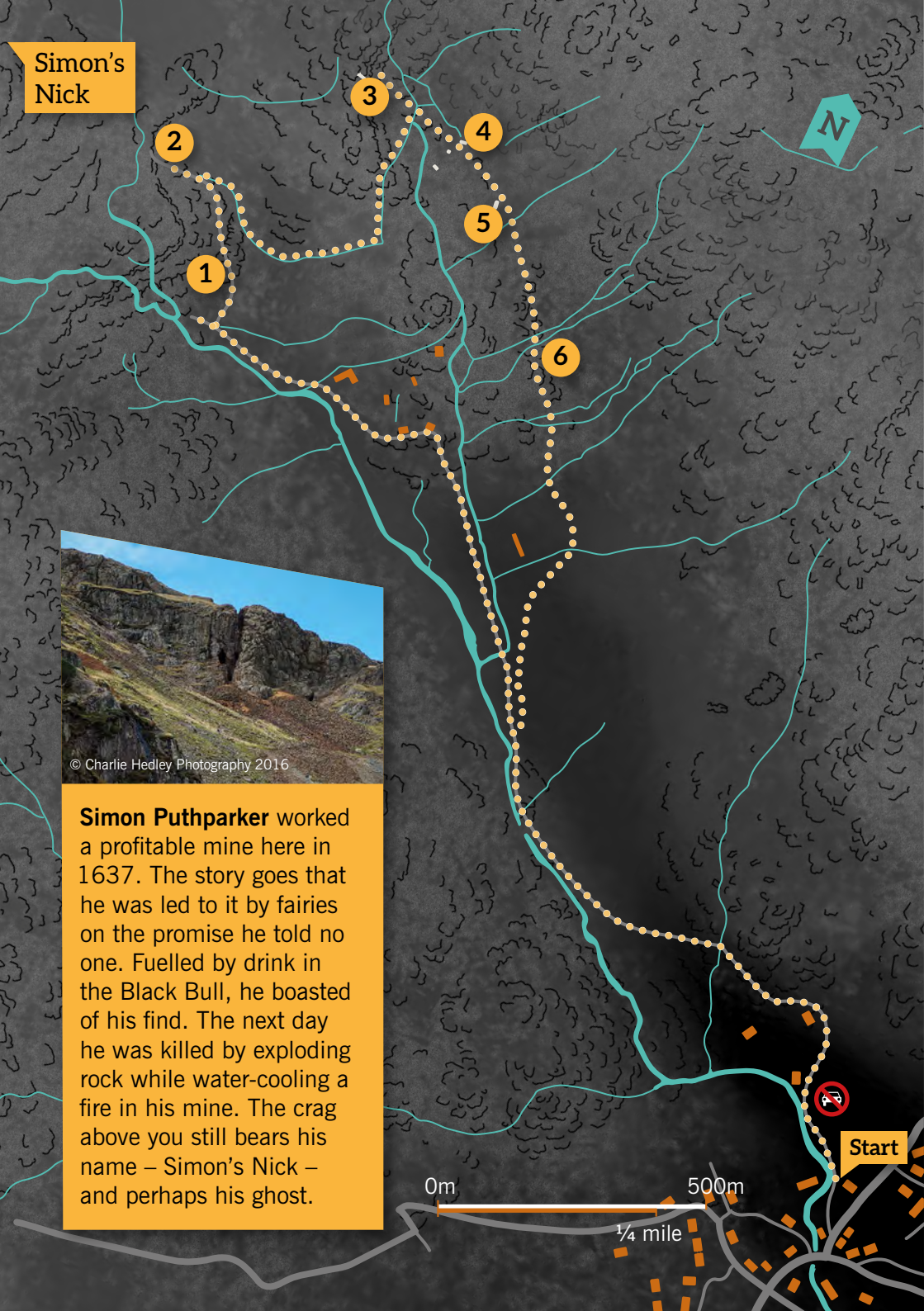
Start 08

Start

Start 09

Coniston Water

Simon's Nick



© Charlie Hedley Photography 2016

Simon Puthparker worked a profitable mine here in 1637. The story goes that he was led to it by fairies on the promise he told no one. Fuelled by drink in the Black Bull, he boasted of his find. The next day he was killed by exploding rock while water-cooling a fire in his mine. The crag above you still bears his name – Simon's Nick – and perhaps his ghost.

Land of Power and Ore ●●●

Start:	The Ruskin Museum
Distance:	3.5 miles (5.5km)
Time:	3.25 hours
Ramblers Grade:	Strenuous
Disabled Rambler's Grade:	Not accessible (see back page)

- 1 Paddy End Find** out about Paddy End Mill on the information panel.
- 2 Simon's Nick Viewpoint** From here you can see the deep cleft in the hillside called Simon's Nick. It marks where Coniston's miners first started to hack their way underground on the high crags around Levers Water over 400 years ago – when Queen Elizabeth I was on the throne. Miners worked by candlelight to remove just enough rock to squeeze along the emptied veins. Some set fires underground to speed things up. They would throw water and vinegar on the embers to crack the superheated rock.

- 3 Thriddle Incline and Shaft** Find out all about Engineman Thomas Millican and his tragic end on the information panel.

- 4 Old Engine House and Bonsor Mine Entrance** This tower held the wooden channel that brought fast-flowing water from the fells to turn a massive waterwheel. If you stood here in 1870 you would hear water thundering down the channel. The waterwheel creaked as it drove water pumps to drain deep Bonsor Mine and hauled clanking trains of tubs heavy with ore. The wheel was controlled by an engineman who worked the flow of water to stop and start, slow and speed up the wheel as needed.

- 5 Bonsor East Engine House** Coppermines Valley's first waterwheel for the deep mines turned in this rectangular pit. It lifted out rocks and pumped out water.

- 6 Miners' Marks** Some of the graffiti on this rock was carved by quarrymen working the stone quarries near the copper mines. Can you spot J Mara, 1871? This is a great viewpoint of the whole of Coppermines Valley.

Today it is a lot more tranquil than a normal working day in 1870 when you would see people constantly moving between mine entrances, ore-processing factories and waterwheels. Gunpowder blasts from deep inside the mines shake the ground. Waterwheels constantly creak and groan as they turn under the force of fast-flowing water to power mine pumps, winding chains and the factories. What can you hear today?



© The Ruskin Museum - Knap Collection

A fragile environment

Mines are dangerous places with hidden shafts and drops, and should never be entered. Take care on the fells and please keep to the paths.

Though it has survived hundreds of years, the site can be easily damaged. The site is legally protected as a Scheduled Monument

and a Site of Special Scientific Interest. The Lake District is recognised as a World Heritage Site with outstanding universal value. Local industries like copper mining have contributed to its unique character. Please help preserve the Lake District's heritage by leaving the site exactly as you find it.

Need to know

These are walking trails. There is no access for vehicles. You'll need walking boots, outdoor clothing and waterproofs. The trail maps are not a substitute for an Ordnance Survey map, so it is recommended you take 'OS Explorer Map OL 6, English Lakes, South West' on to the fells.

The Miner's Lives trail is a Category 2+ Disabled Ramble, best suited to scooters and some power chairs rather than manual wheelchairs because of the short but steep climb to the old station.

The **Introducing Coppermines Valley** trail is mostly a Category 3 Disabled

Ramble, suitable for a powerful, robust off-road power chair. An alternative return route from Stop 3 is not accessible because of the nature of the track. Whilst the surface of the route is good, the long and sometimes steep climb will be beyond the battery capacity of many mobility scooters.

The Land of Power and Ore trail is not accessible because of the nature of the track.

For more information about accessible walks, visit disabledramblers.co.uk

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Rydal
Estate

