

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

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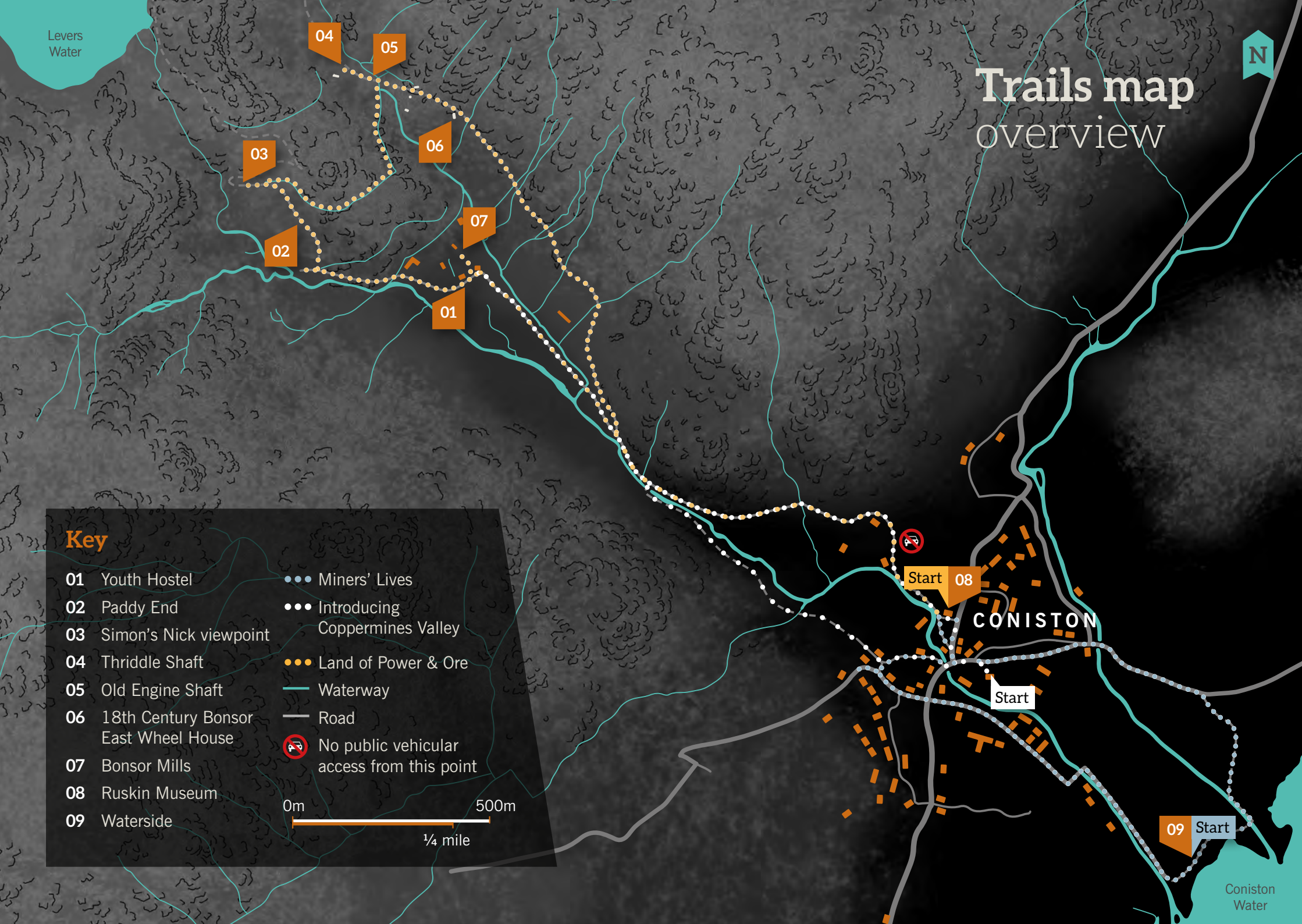
# Trails map overview

## 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

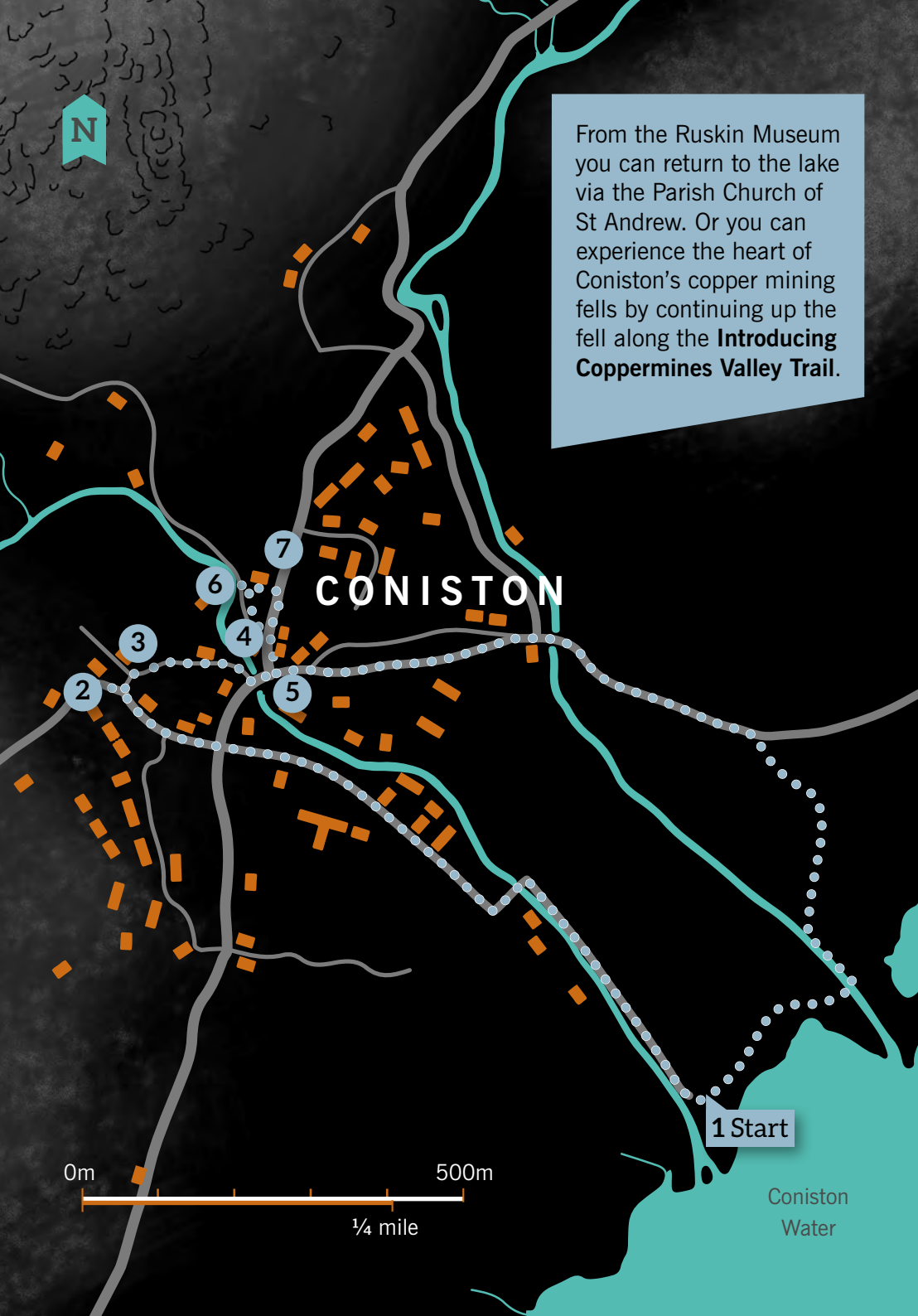
- Miners' Lives
- Introducing Coppermines Valley
- Land of Power & Ore
- Waterway
- Road
- ⊘ No public vehicular access from this point

0m  500m  
 ¼ mile



CONISTON

Coniston Water



From the Ruskin Museum you can return to the lake via the Parish Church of St Andrew. Or you can experience the heart of Coniston's copper mining fells by continuing up the fell along the **Introducing Coppermines Valley Trail**.

## Miners' Lives ●●●

<b>Start:</b>	Boating Centre on Coniston Water
<b>Distance:</b>	1.25 mile (2km)
<b>Time:</b>	1 hour
<b>Ramblers Grade:</b>	Easy
<b>Disabled Rambler's Grade:</b>	Category 2+ (see back page)

**1 Boating Centre Coniston Water** was the shipping route for copper ore until steam trains replaced sail in 1859.

**2 Railway Platform** This station was built in 1859 to speed copper ore from Coniston's flourishing mines. If you stood on the platform during its heyday, you would be beside a large steam locomotive. With its boiler fired up with coal, it is ready to haul wagons of ore to Barrow Port or Ulverston Station. The line also brought visitors to Coniston, and helped turn the valley into a tourist destination.

**3 Dixon Ground and the Sun** The buildings behind the Sun show how Coniston looked in the 1700s before the village grew with the Victorian mining boom. Dixon Ground was one of 17 farms in 1645. The current farmhouse was built in 1762. By 1851 three farming families and 12 households of miners lived here. The Sun was rebuilt in the late 1800s to cater for tourists.

*Please respect the privacy of the residents.*

**4 Black Bull** The four-hundred-year-old Black Bull has been a coaching inn, manorial court and miners' haunt.

**5 Miners and Managers** Look for the tall, grey gravestone of James Stephens and family between the church and road. James was a miner from Cornwall, his wife Elizabeth was from Staffordshire. All his sons were Coniston copper miners too. They lived in Forge Cottages, next on our trail.

**6 Forge Cottages** Mining families lived in these cottages from at least 1756. During the mid-1800s, 134 people lived here in cramped conditions, including 54 working in copper mining and 71 children. This massive housing problem forced the mine company to build more cottages in the village.

*Please respect the privacy of the residents.*

**7 Mechanics Institute and The Ruskin Museum** Next to the Ruskin Museum is the Mechanics Institute, opened in 1878 with an assembly room, library and reading room for the benefit of Coniston's workers. John Ruskin presented the Institute with a large mineral collection when it opened. The museum began as the Institute's 1901 extension. Be sure to go inside to see copper miners' tools. You'll also find out more about the copper mines, including how copper ore and the rocks formed.

## 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](http://disabledramblers.co.uk)

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Funding raised by  
**The National Lottery**  
and awarded by the Heritage Lottery Fund



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