

FAQS and Code of Conduct for use under the Tamar Trails heading on the Tamar Valley AONB and Tamar Trails websites:

Tamar Trails – FAQs

What are the Tamar Trails?

The Tamar Trails are 25km of new and improved trails which have been created as part of the Tamar Valley Mining Heritage Project. They open up parts of the Tamar Valley that were previously not accessible to the public. The Project celebrated and told the story of the Tamar Valley's rich mining heritage, which forms part of the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site (WHS) and is located within the Tamar Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), through a new network of trails and paths. Through the project conservation work has been undertaken within a large area that contains mining remains and important wildlife habitats.

Who owns the Trails?

The trails have been created using existing historic transport routes (e.g. the former Mineral Tramway) wherever possible. Much of the land is still privately owned but negotiations with land-owners have enabled permissive routes to be leased, creating a continuous network of trails.

Who manages the Trails?

The Project was jointly managed by West Devon Borough Council (WDBC) and the Tamar Valley AONB, backed by a partnership of funders including the Heritage Lottery Fund, Objective 2, South West Regional Development Agency, Devon County Council, Devon Rural Renaissance, South West Water and Tavistock Woodlands Estate.

The capital works started in 2007, and ended in early 2013 representing a £7 million investment, which will help sustain this important and beautiful rural area. There is now a Legacy Partnership, led by West Devon Borough Council, who is responsible for the leases on the Trails network. It has contracted with the Tamar Community Trust to monitor and maintain the trails and associated infrastructure. Much of this work is now carried out by volunteers and the car parking fees collected are used to maintain the trails.

Where are the Trails?

The trails start at the Tamar Trails Centre car park, Gulworthy, located just off the A390 between Gunnislake and Tavistock. Devon Great Consols is the most northerly point of the trails, which then travel south along the River Tamar through Bedford and Russell Mines, down to Morwellham Quay, which is a privately owned "pay on entry" tourist facility and museum. Beyond that is the Downhill Mountain Biking Course run by the Gawton Gravity Hub (for use by annual or day members only). They run a club and events and have daily membership for those wanting a more challenging biking experience. For more details visit www.gawtongravityhub.com

What is the Tamar Trails Centre?

The Tamar Trails Centre is run by Tamar Adventures Ltd, in partnership with the Borough Council and the AONB. A great starting point for exploring the Tamar Trails, here you can gather all the information you may need to make the most of your time on the Trails.

You can hire a bike or trumper from the Centre and will soon be able to view the bat and badger webcams.

After your walk or ride, the Centre offers a good range of locally sourced food and drink at its Beech Café.

Tamar Adventures also run Tree Surfers, which has a programme of a wide range of recreational activities for all ages, including a high ropes course, zip-wires, kayaking and cycle hire. For more details visit www.tamartrails.co.uk and www.treesurfers.co.uk

If you're looking for an inspirational setting for your meeting or team building event, please ask to see the meeting room at the Centre, which is available to hire at a competitive rate.

Who can use the Trails?

All the trails are way-marked and most of the trails are multi-use for walkers and cyclists, with some also available for horse-riding and wheelchairs (see below).

Where can I park? Is this suitable for horse-boxes and trailers?

The main car parks are at the Tamar Trails Centre and at Maddacleave (for the Gawton Gravity Hub) where the daily rate is £2 or £1 for up to two hours. Blue badge holders can park for free.

Horse boxes are permitted to park at the Tamar Trails Car Park for a fee of £4

Local resident permits are available. To qualify for the resident permit you need to live in the parishes of Bere Ferrers, Gulworthy, Sydenham Damerel or Calstock. The resident permits cost £25 per year and run from 1 April until 31 March. This allows free parking at Bedford Sawmills car park. Permit charges will be reduced to £12.50 for applications received after 30 September. Download the form here - [Parking Permit Form 2012](#)

Do I need a mountain bike to ride on the Trails?

It is recommended. While the trails are well surfaced, they are not suitable for road specific tyres, and the experience is likely to be more enjoyable with an off-road specific bike. Specialist bikes are advised to be used for the downhill tracks at Gawton Gravity Hub (**for use by annual or day members only**).

Bikes are available to hire from the Tamar Trails Centre.

Are there any areas I can't ride?

Trails users are advised to stick to the main waymarked trails. Forestry tracks without waymarking should not be used.

There are two Downhill Mountain Biking Course areas within the Tamar Trails area. To use these trails you must be a member of the Gawton Gravity Hub, or have purchased a day membership from the club. For more details visit www.gawtongravityhub.com. The Downhill Mountain Bike Course areas are clearly signed (in the Wheal Anna Maria and Maddacleave Woods areas), and Tamar Trails users should respect these signs and should not attempt to ride any of the Downhill courses.

Is there a speed limit?

No, but it is not a race track and is used by a wide range of users (including some elderly and frail persons), so please follow the code of conduct. Mobility buggies are allowed but must not exceed 4mph, i.e. a brisk walking pace.

Are the Trails suitable for wheelchairs and pushchairs?

Yes, many of the trails are suitable for wheelchairs and pushchairs, although it should be noted that some trails have significant gradients (please note the Wheal Anna Maria Car Park which provides easier disabled access to the Devon Great Consols area). There is also a tramper for hire at the Tamar Valley Centre – for further information, see <http://www.tamarvalley.org.uk/explore/access/tramper/>

Can I ride a motorcycle / quad bike on the Trails?

No, motorcycles, quad-bikes and any other type of motorised activity (except trampers and mobility buggies) are not allowed on any part of the Trails.

Can I hold a sponsored walk / orienteering event on the Trails?

If you wish to hold a charity or other activity event, please seek permission in advance from either the Tamar Community Trust or WDBC. This will not be unreasonably withheld, especially for smaller events. Organisers should provide a copy of a risk assessment in advance outlining the basic requirement that participants and bystanders are kept safe and no damage will be done, and ensure adequate public liability insurance cover for the event is in place. Further information is available here:

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20111015000635/http://www.bobw.co.uk/default.aspx?page=planning%20an%20event>

Can we use the trails for dog-scooting / cycling?

A single dog with scooter or cycle would not normally present a problem, provided consideration is given to other user's enjoyment and speeds are not excessive. Dog sledding or mushing usually takes place in snow conditions, so opportunities will be very limited!

Are there any activities that I can join in with along the Tamar Trails?

Many activities are organised throughout the year along and around the Tamar Trails. Keep a check on www.tamartrails.co.uk where events are added regularly.

I want to know more about the wildlife that I could spot. Where can I find out more?

The Tamar Trails Centre is soon to have two live webcams, to view bats and badgers up close.

You might like to join in with a guided walk. Many are arranged throughout the year. Visit www.tamartrails.co.uk and www.tamarvalley.org.uk for more information.

Code of Conduct for Trail Users

Be aware that there are many users on the Trails including people walking, running, cycling, scootering, walking dogs, in mobility scooters, wheelchairs or pushing buggies or pushchairs. There may even be horses on some paths too!

Everyone needs to take responsibility for their actions and be polite and considerate. Our advice includes the following:

General:

Be aware of other people on the path - try and let them pass if they are progressing quicker than you.

Consider the environment - and don't disturb or damage the flora or fauna.

Please take your litter home with you – and do not light fires or barbecues. Dispose of lit cigarettes carefully.

Respect land owners privacy - and do not trespass on to private land

Be aware of Downhill Mountain Bike Course Area signage – These are clearly signposted - Downhill Bike riders may cross the main Trails at speed.

Word of Warning - Part of the mining heritage includes large contaminated arsenic spoil tips. Although, arsenic is no longer mined here, the element can still poison anyone who touches or consumes it – even by accident. One of the reasons for carrying out the project works was to provide safe and controlled public access to sensitive areas.

For pedestrians:

Listen for cycle bells – this is not an order for you to get out of the way but to make you aware that the cyclist is looking for a safe opportunity to pass; allow them to do so when safe. It is advisable not to wear headphones.

Be considerate to cyclists – remember that cyclists need room to stop and brake as well as to pass.

For cyclists:

Let people know you are coming – ring your bell when approaching from behind or say a friendly 'Hello'. Be aware that some users may have a sight or hearing impediment so may not clearly see or hear you.

Pass slowly, give people space – slow down when approaching pedestrians and only pass when it is safe to do so. Extra care should be taken when passing children, less able people or dogs.

Be patient and courteous – a smile and thank you works wonders.

Ride at a sensible speed - cycle at a speed that is appropriate to the conditions e.g. when the path is busy with people and dogs, a slower speed will be needed.

For dog-walkers:

Keep your dog under your control and within sight – they do not necessarily have to be on leads, although this is strongly advised in busy areas and when cyclists are approaching.

Always clear up after your dog - dog mess on the trails can spoil a visit for everyone and poses a serious health risk, particularly to children.

Do not allow your dog to chase or worry, wildlife, other dogs or people – dog should not be allowed on adjacent farmland and remember some people are very wary of dogs.

For horse-riders:

Ride only where you are allowed – and not on paths designated as footpaths.

Be prepared – with the right equipment, clothing and helmet.

Ride at a sensible speed – especially when other users are around; no trotting, cantering or galloping.

Be aware and considerate of others - horses are huge and skittish, compared to a toddler on a bike

Useful Contact details:

West Devon Borough Council: 01822 813600

Tamar Community Trust: 07909 692615

Tamar Valley AONB: 01822 835030

Tamar Trails Centre: 01822 833409

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