

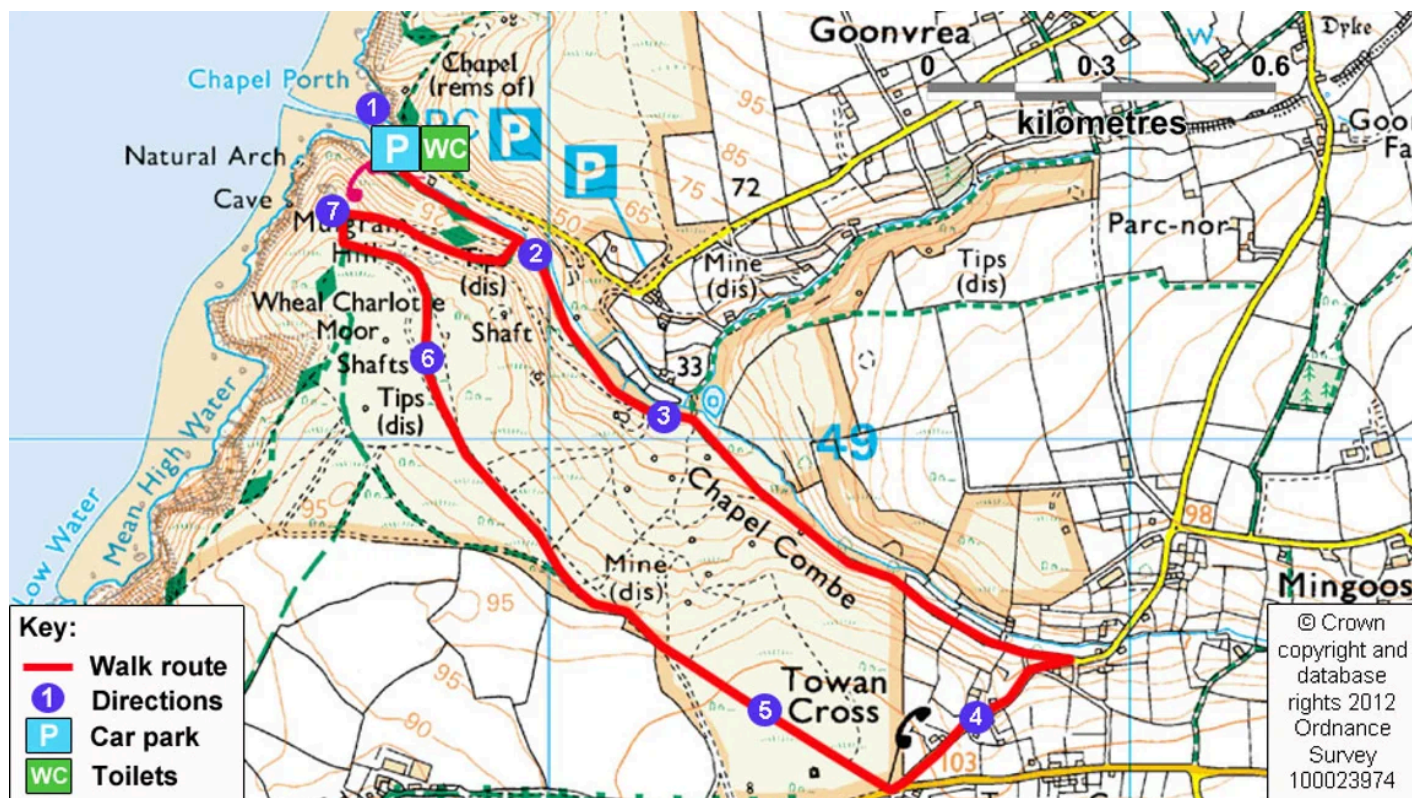
CORNWALL

Chapel Porth to Towan Cross walk

Explore the landscape of the Cornish coast from the secluded Chapel Porth to Towan Cross, and discover its rich history as a thriving mining industry.

! Be careful on the cliffs

Please keep to the paths as the area is pitted with mine shafts. Be aware of dangerous cliff edges and unstable cliffs, and the risk of rock falls.



Information

Address: Chapel Porth, Cornwall

Activity: Walking

Easy: Some narrow paths, rocky underfoot, and steep climbs. Please keep to the paths as the area is pitted with mine shafts. For more information visit the section marked Terrain.

Dog friendly: Dogs welcome under close control.

Full trail: Miles: 2.5 (km: 4)

Duration: 2 hours

Terrain

Some narrow paths, rocky underfoot, and steep climbs, plus a short stretch along a minor road. May be muddy.

Total stages: 7

Start point: National Trust car park at Chapel Porth, grid ref: SW698495

1. Start at the rear of the car park in the southernmost corner, just to the right of the café. Cross over the footbridge behind the café and follow the path inland up Chapel Combe. You may want to visit the beach first, where at low tide you can see the boiler from the wreck of the SS Eltham, a steamer that was smashed up in a gale in 1928.
2. Continue up the valley, keeping to the path. Beneath the gorse and heather the slopes are littered with mine shafts, wheel pits, spoil heaps and the ruins of dressing floors. You'll soon pass the South West Coast Path, heading uphill on your right. As the path curves round the slope, you'll see Charlotte United engine house come into view.
3. As you pass just below Charlotte United, where the path crosses a small bridge, look for orange stains on plants and soil where iron hydroxide has washed down the old channels (adits) that carry water from the flooded mine workings. Follow the path through groves of willow, elder, blackthorn and sycamore.
4. Continue on the path to eventually emerge onto the minor road near the hamlet of Mongoose. Turn right and follow the road to reach the junction opposite the Victory Inn. Turn right at the junction, walk along the verge for 25 metres, then turn right onto the bridleway to Porthtown.
5. Continue along the bridleway with views northward to St Agnes Beacon. The open heath here was once common land, and the area south of the beacon is still known as Goonvrea ('goon' – unenclosed pasture, 'bre' – hill). Where the bridleway joins a wide stony path, turn right and walk towards the distant ruin of Great Wheal Charlotte.
6. Follow the path seawards as it crosses a bare expanse of yellowish mine waste. Even heather can't grow here as the heavy metal content of the soil is too toxic, but look closely and you

might find tiny lichens and mosses amongst the gravel, and the burrows of solitary mining bees. Open and filled-in mineshafts, covered with conical grids known as Clwyd caps, dot the landscape.

7. Continue along the path to reach the summit of Mulgram Hill. Descend from the summit down the wide track towards the car park. Built in 1944 by American troops stationed at St Agnes Head, the track is known locally as the American Road. It once crossed a wooden bridge (now demolished), which connected two earth banks in Chapel Coombe. When you reach the path at the valley bottom, turn left and return to your starting point.

End point: National Trust car park at Chapel Porth, grid ref: SW698495
