

Snailbeach Mine

In front of this is the grilled **Engine Shaft** (34) which was the main shaft of the mine and was 1,300ft deep. This is open under the grille and leads to the end of Day Level. Please do NOT throw stones down here as they may injure visitors below. To the side of the shaft is the Balance Bob Pit.

On the other side of the shaft is the **Winding Engine House** (35) which contained a horizontal steam winder. Next to it is the Boiler House, with openings at the rear leading to the flue.

Follow the track for a short distance past the Boiler House and walk up some steps on the right to a grille over a brick arched tunnel.

This is the **Main Flue** (36) which connected the Chimney above to the Smelting Works.

Go back to the Boiler House and turn right down a footpath.

To the left is the grilled entrance of the **Inspection Pit Tunnel** (37) which gave access to underneath the large pumping engine. Leading down on the right was an **Inclined Railway** (38) up which trucks of coal for the boilers were pulled using a Steam Winch.

Follow the footpath down the hill and, at the path junctions, turn right, right again and then left. This will bring you back to George's Shaft. Follow the steps down to the road, turn left down to the T-junction and turn right. Just before the bridge over the old railway, go through the gate on the right.

On the left are some **Circular Buddles** (39) that were used to separate small particles of lead ore from waste material. Behind these is a cutting of the Snailbeach District Railway.

The Smelting Works were situated 1 mile away to the north-west but these are on private land and cannot be visited without permission. Ore was taken there via a loop from the SDR line.

Go back along the road past the car park to a track down to the right. Where it bends right, look for a grilled entrance on the right.

This is **Scott Level** (40) which may have been a trial working as it does not connect with the main workings, despite being almost 1,000 yards long.

*This is the end of the **BLUE ROUTE** so retrace your steps to the car park.*

We hope you enjoyed your walk around the site, whichever route you chose. The Visitor Centre is open on Sundays and Bank Holidays during Summer and it is an opportunity then to see inside the buildings if they were locked during this visit. You can also go on a guided underground tour into Day Level. More details are on the website below.

<http://snailbeachmine.org.uk>

Shropshire Mines Trust 2011

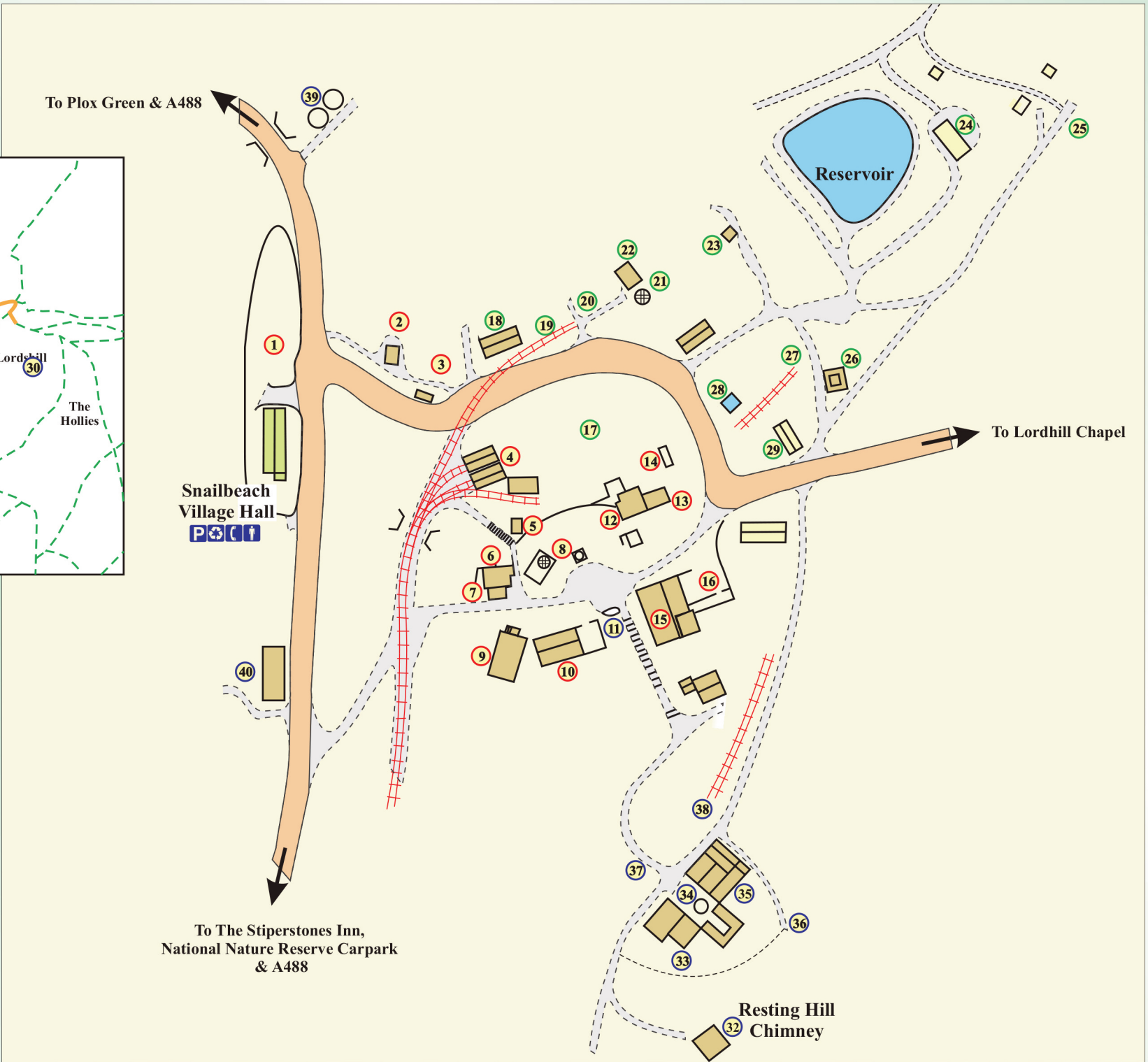
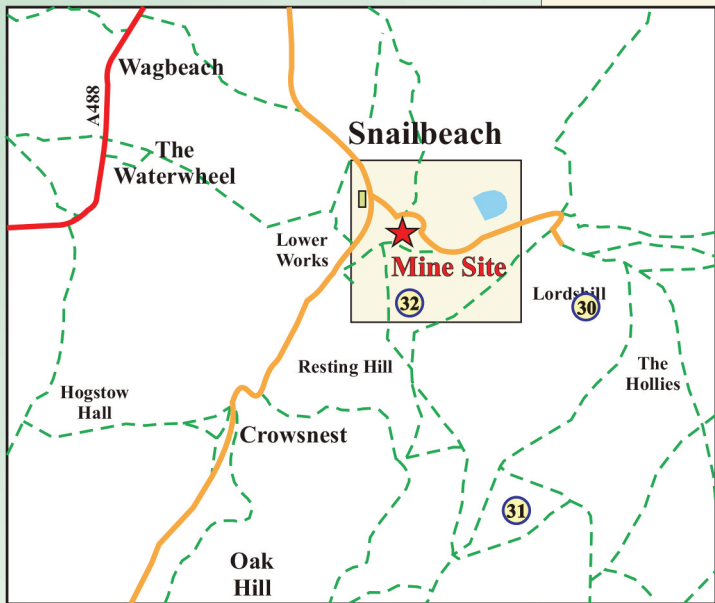


Miner's Trail

There are 3 routes depending on the time you have and your ability. The **Red Route** is shortest and takes you around the main area only. The **Green Route** follows the Red Route but then continues to include more of the site, mostly on the level. The **Blue Route** follows the Green Route before continuing to include all of the site. It is the longest and involves climbing and descending a steep hill, taking about 2 hours and being 3 miles long.

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RED ROUTE

Park in the Village Hall car park (SJ373022).

This area used to be **Grey's Works** ① where Barite was crushed and made ready for selling.

Cross the road and through the small wooden kissing gate. Walk up the hill along the path.

On the left are the remains of **Halvans Engine House** ②. This worked crushing machinery of the Halvans Company during 1911-1930s and the cylinder foundations and flywheel pit are inside. Behind this there used to be huge white waste tips but these have now been grassed over.

Carry on up the path. Where it flattens out, look for a rocky area ③ on the left.

Here you can see examples of rocks and minerals of the area. You are allowed to take small samples only for your personal collection.

Go through a kissing gate and cross the road. Turn right along a track next to a fence.

Here you can see the rails of the narrow gauge Snailbeach District Railway (SDR), which opened in 1877 and ran from the mine to the main line at Pontesbury. It took lead ore to customers and brought back coal for the boilers.

Turn left in front of the building with big doors.

This is the **Locomotive Shed** ④ which used to house several steam locomotives. If it is open, you can see a full-scale replica of a SDR truck.

Go up the steps.

On the left is the **Mine Office** ⑤ which had a small assay laboratory at the rear. On the right is the **Blacksmith's Shop** ⑥ which contains a forge and bellows. It has been built next to a very old **Pumping Engine House** ⑦ dating from 1790. In front is the capped **George's Shaft** ⑧ which was 750ft deep. All of the depths in the mine were measured in yards below this point, so the bottom of the shaft was at the 250 Yard Level. The wooden headgear was rebuilt in 1999 and it was here that 7 men died in 1895 when the cage wire broke (see display board).

Across from the shaft is the **Engine House** ⑨ for a horizontal steam winder installed in 1872. To the right and behind is a small **Reservoir** that fed the boilers. To the left is the **Visitor Centre** ⑩, which used to be where miners dried their work clothes over steam pipes and some miners slept upstairs during the week.

Further left still is the grilled entrance to **Day Level** ⑪ that was driven in 1848 to intersect Engine Shaft further up the hill. Trips are available into this level so you can see how the miners worked. At the far end of the level, ore was unloaded from large iron buckets called kibbles in the shaft and pushed in trucks straight out to the **Crusher House** ⑫ on the other side of the track.

Next to this was the **Carpenter's Shop** ⑬ and behind that you can see the grilled over **Saw Pit** ⑭ for hand sawing large timbers.

Back on the other side of the track is the large **Compressor House** ⑮. This contained machinery to supply compressed air for rock drills and ventilation from 1881. To the left is its **Boiler House and Chimney** ⑯.

This is the end of the RED ROUTE and you can retrace your steps to the car park.

GREEN ROUTE

Go back down the steps and turn right along the railway track leading to the concrete platform. Climb the steps at the end of the rails.

You are now standing on the remains of the **Dressing Floor** ⑰. On the right leaning against the wall you can see a **Grizzly**, used to separate larger pieces of rock. On the concrete platform are two **Shaking Tables**, devices used to sieve out ore. There was a shute near here, leading down to a **Tunnel** under the road, to take dressed ore to where it was stored in the **Ore House** ⑱. The grilled entrance to the tunnel is in the courtyard below. Note the **Railway Lines** ⑲ which connected the SDR to other parts of the mine.

Follow the railway lines through the trees to a track and follow the path opposite.

In the **Ore Processing Area** ⑳, the concrete base of a steam engine and an old saw bench can still be seen. The **Jiggers** and **Classifier** that used to be here have been rebuilt and are located elsewhere.

Black Tom Shaft ㉑ was 120ft deep to the 40 Yard Level but has now been capped. It was sunk before the 1820s and was worked for Barite and Galena up to 1928. The **Winding Engine Shed** ㉒ originally contained a small steam engine that was later replaced by an oil engine. If you look inside you can see rope wear on the windows.

Go back to the track and turn left, then left again at the road. Turn left along a track in front of some houses to a track junction.

The small building to the left was the **Valve House** (23) that controlled the flow of water to smaller reservoirs lower down. Further on is the **Main Reservoir** which fed several smaller ones for boilers and ore processing.

Go past a barrier and follow the track next to the reservoir to the green corrugated iron building, where you climb the steps.

This is the **Upper Works** (24) which dates from the 1930s and was used to crush and process the Barite and Galena mined in Perkins Level. Underground mining ceased in 1955 but the tips were re-worked until the 1970s.

Follow the footpath through the trees to a track and turn right along this to a junction. Turn right here and follow the track until it becomes a footpath. Carry on along the path and up the steps at the end onto the track.

On the other side of the track is the grilled entrance to **Perkins Level** (25). This was used early in the 20th Century to mine Barite and Galena when the price of lead fell and pumping stopped. As Barite was found at shallow levels it did not matter that most of the mine was flooded.

With your back to the entrance, turn left along the track and follow it (keeping left at junctions) until you see a double walled building down on the right. Turn right here.

The double walled building was the **Explosives Magazine** (26) that was built in 1863. The two walls allowed one-way traffic of miners going to collect explosives and fuses.

A few yards further on, go down some steps on the left.

This was a **Railway Track** (27) that connected to the incline taking coal up to the engine houses on Resting Hill above. At the end is **Hewitt's Pool** (28) which was a subsidiary reservoir that fed the dressing floor.

Go back along the railway track and turn right past the Magazine. Turn right at the track junction and, when you reach the road, look for a building down on the right.

This is the **Candle House** (29) where tallow candles were produced and stored. Miners had to buy these from the mine company.

This is the end of the GREEN ROUTE. Follow the road down the hill and it will lead you back down to the car park.

BLUE ROUTE

At the Candle House, turn left and follow the road up the hill. Follow the road around two bends until it comes to a gate. Just past here you can see a circular walled structure on the left.

This is **Chapel Shaft** (30) which was sunk by the Earl of Tankerville who hoped to cash in on the rich lead deposits found by his neighbour. Unfortunately for him, the rock was Stiperstones

Quartzite and completely barren of lead! Next to the shaft are the remains of a Winding Engine House and across the road up the hill is a small chimney that was connected to it via a flue.

Follow the road for a short distance to where a track heads off right. Follow this up and around to the right, then straight ahead and pass through a belt of pine trees. Eventually you will come to the remains of four cottages.

This is **Blakemoorgate** (31) where several miners' families lived. Most of the buildings are ruined but two cottages have been recently rebuilt. More information can be found in the restored cattle byre.

Follow the track uphill and through a gate, then through another gate. After a short distance, turn right onto a minor track which almost doubles back. Follow the track downhill through two gates, keeping the large corrugated barn on your right. At the brow of the hill you will see a big chimney. Head for this through another gate and follow the footpath down to the chimney.

This is **Resting Hill Chimney** (32) which is connected to a flue that ran from the Smelting Works across the valley and also took smoke from the adjacent boiler houses.

Follow the footpath down to the large building.

This is the **Pumping Engine House** (33) and you can get inside using steps at the rear. It was installed in 1858 and held a 60" engine that worked 6" diameter pump rods in the shaft. Pumping ceased in 1911 and the mine flooded.