

Little Cromlech Area

This area is located approximately 500m south east of the lifeguard station at Rest Bay. At low to mid tide you can walk around the point and see an array of bouldering opportunities. Start at a wave-cut platform at about level with high tide. The area starts with a distinct corner with a clean south facing wall and overhanging west facing wall. Various problems can be had here from delicate traverses to tuggy overhanging corners and aretes. There is often an extra incentive to succeed with stagnant rock pools waiting patiently to drench those attempting to traverse over them. The Little Cromlech area continues on this platform for another 200m or so. The problems range from easy straight up Diff's to taxing traverses with moves in the region of 5c. The walls are short (about 12') so one can do lots in a short period of time.

Conglomerate Bay Area

At beach level this area is located by walking 100m east from the previous area. It is recognisable by the area of limestone pavement leading up to an attractive sea-facing wall. In the middle of this small bay of rock is a low fin of rock which overhangs at its seaward end. Various problems are to be had on and around this fin from 4c to 6b. The wall itself is about 20 foot high at most. Excellent problems exist here. The sea washes up the lower half of the wall so starts are smooth and delicate. The upper half of the wall (darker rock) provides more positive sharp holds before topping out. Difficulties here range from Diff to 6c. An excellent area!

Permanent Wave Area

Walking about 50m east of the conglomerate bay area there is a wave-washed inlet. The inlet walls make for excellent harder problems with nice soft landings on sand or fine shingle. The waves have left a number of smooth challenging boulder problems where cunning, strong fingers and forearms and long reaches are needed to ascend the 10 to 12 foot walls to the wave cut platform above. Difficulties range from a lay-back crack and arete at about 5c to problems in excess of 6c. An area for super-men!

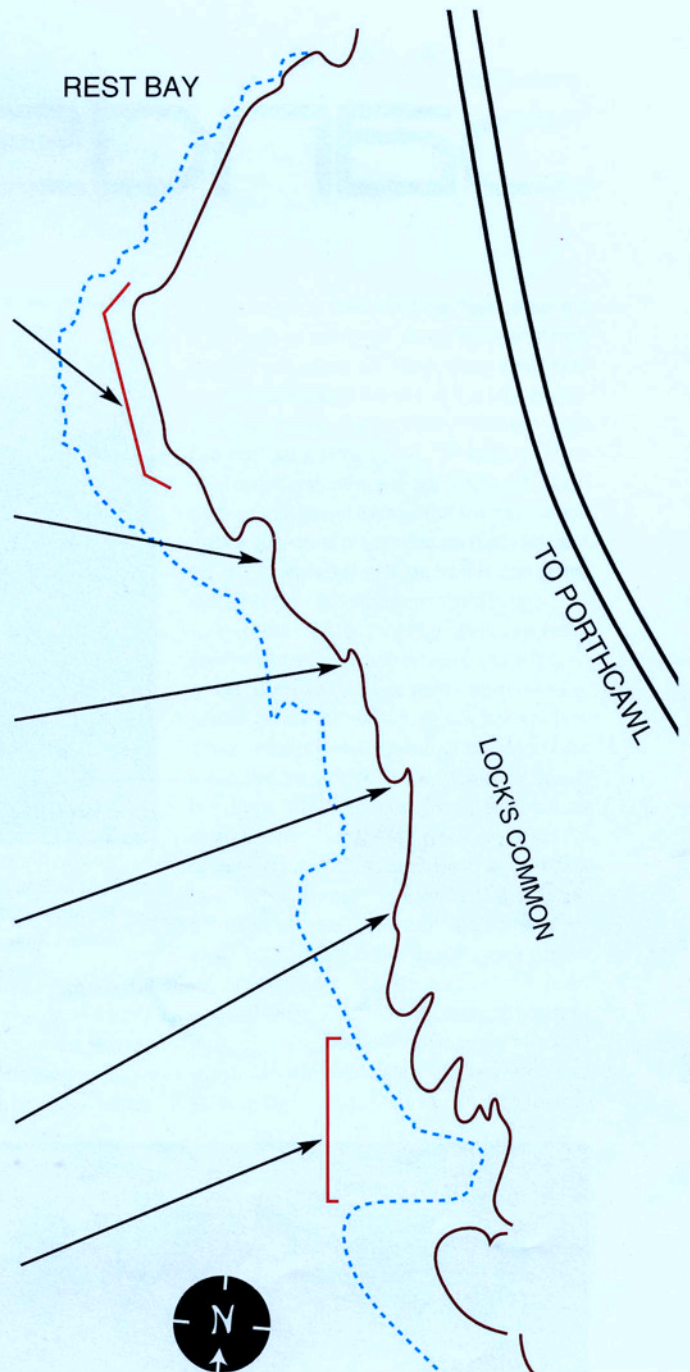
Pseudo Grit Area

A small area located at beach level about 70m east from the previous area. Its main attractions are at the mouth of a smooth inlet. The bouldering here involves the use of smooth rounded holds. Both sides of the inlet are climbed on. One side being smooth and overhanging and the other side being smooth and vertical. The walls are again short (8ft-12ft) with problems ranging from Diff to 6a.

Windy Arete Area

Walking 100m east is an area of slabby walls of about 20 ft that face towards sea. The left hand side of these slabs is a corner and arete called Windy Arete V Diff. Around Windy Arete are pleasant traverses and lines on sharp, well-fractured rock. Climb the corner here and you will top out in a square recess called The Workshop. This area is a small sheltered enclosed pit of rock with problems ranging from 4a to 5c.

Walking further east you will encounter a series of deep trench zawns. In order (from west to east) China Zawn, Death Zawn and then Box Bay Main Face Area. Although bouldering possibilities do exist in this area it is higher and therefore considered more of a climbing area than a bouldering area. But hey, check it out. After all, what's the good of all this bouldering if there isn't a climb at the end of it?



The next areas are not located on the map and are dotted intermittently along the stretch of coast. Reference points to buildings, roads and pubs are given as a guide on how to find them.

The Road To Santiago Area

This area is found by walking west for about 350m from the seaward end of Severn Road. You will come to the point where the common meets rock platforms. As you explore you will come across a boulder-strewn inlet with a slightly overhanging east south east facing wall (about 10 to 12 foot high). This runs out towards the sea for about 20 metres and has wonderfully pumpy traverse lines on it. A few vertical lines add to the interest here. Because this is slightly higher up the shore than some of the previously mentioned inlets the rock is not as smooth and holds are more plentiful and sharper in nature. Problems from Diff to 5c/6a exist here. As you walk around the back of this overhanging area you will come to a vertical series of short walls facing out to sea with the infamous traverse called The Road to Santiago. This route traverses the entire length of this section of bouldering rock and provides some interesting moments at about 5b.

The Trenches

There are, as the name suggests deep wave-cut trenches which again provide bouldering opportunities. Smooth starts and higher sharp rock finishes are a characteristic of this place. To find this area first locate The Seabank Hotel (On West Drive which runs along the sea front!) Walk across the road from the hotel around behind a shelter and hideous statue and stride across a limestone pavement heading for the sea. You should sooner or later come to the point where you will be looking down one of these trenches saying to yourself 'F**k, I almost fell down that Bast**rd thing! Bouldering difficulties range from easy Diff's to 6a/6b.

The Sea Wall

Along the promenade in Porthcawl is a sea wall. A concrete tribute to man's losing battle with the sea. Now, just opposite The Green Man pub and kebab / curry house is a section of sea wall, which has seen some bouldering activity. Although details are sketchy this section of the wall has started to crack and chip (naturally I may add) providing numerous delicate problems in the higher grades. A useful place if the tide is high.