

# active

LIVE YOUR LIFE TO THE FULL OUTDOORS

## DARTMOOR



**42 Days of Summer  
School Holiday  
Activities**



**100 Mile Challenge  
Dartmoor Pony  
Heritage Trust**



**Wild Foraging-Pick  
Your Own**



### HEAD FOR THE HILLS!

**Dartmoor Adventures  
& Dartmoor Fun**

**Outdoor activities  
for young and old.**

- Wild Camping
- Dartmoor Ponies
- The Baskerville Tour
- Kayaking the Mighty Dart
- Cycling for everyone

**Visit [www.actedartmoor.co.uk](http://www.actedartmoor.co.uk)**



HOME  
FARM  
CAFÉ



Serving dinner Thursday, Friday  
and Saturday nights

- ◆ 3-course seasonal menu
- ◆ £23.50pp ◆ 7pm for 7.30pm

*“Amazing Food”, “Just Excellent!”,  
“Fantastic Evening Meal”*

... just some of our recent 5/5 reviews on



## At Haytor every weekend!

- ◆ Located at Haytor, serving Langage Farm Ice-Cream, proper coffee, tea, cakes and scones every day.
- ◆ Hot-food at weekends.

OUR TRAILERS ARE AVAILABLE FOR EVENTS  
& FESTIVALS – get in touch for more info!



Home Farm Café Parke, Bovey Tracey TQ13 9JQ ◆ 01626 830016 ◆ info@homefarmcafe.co.uk ◆ www.homefarmcafe.co.uk

*“The best self-catering  
experience we’ve ever had...”*



*“Grown up barn conversions  
for couples...gorgeous”*

Snuggled into the Dartmoor hillside,  
Lurcombe offers a beautiful self-catering experience  
with The Granary Barn & The Mill Cottage



Romantic destination that oozes  
character and charm



Wine, eggs, milk, linen & towels included



Complimentary use of tennis court



Woodland and moorland walks on our doorstep



Close to South Devon’s sandy beaches  
& our restaurant Home Farm Café



Onsite fishing & bird watching



Bickington Haytor Dartmoor Devon TQ12 6LA ◆ 01626 821027 ◆ enquiries@lurcombe.co.uk ◆ www.lurcombe.co.uk

# active DARTMOOR

Active Dartmoor is published by  
Visit Dartmoor Limited,  
Wykeham House, Station Road,  
Okehampton, Devon EX20 1DY  
01837 659224

## PUBLISHERS

Jenny How  
jenny@activedartmoor.co.uk  
Simon Lloyd  
simon@activedartmoor.co.uk  
David Guiterman  
david.guiterman@btinternet.com

## EDITOR

Jenny How  
jenny@activedartmoor.co.uk

## ART DIRECTOR

Simon Lloyd

## ADMINISTRATION

Jenny How  
jenny@activedartmoor.co.uk

## ADVERTISING MANAGER

Jenny How  
jenny@activedartmoor.co.uk  
01837 659224

Copy date for each issue is  
approximately six weeks  
before publication.

The editor is always pleased to consider material for publication. Any transparencies, prints and copy sent by post must be accompanied by an SAE for their return. Material that is on offer elsewhere cannot be accepted. It must be original and not infringe the copyright of others. Authors and contributors must have obtained the copyright holder or archive's permission to use any photographs, drawings or maps etc submitted. We are unable to accept poetry or fiction. The views expressed by contributors to *Active Dartmoor* are not necessarily those of the editor.

**DISCLAIMER** Whilst every effort has been made to ensure that adverts and articles appear correctly, Edgemoor Publishing cannot accept responsibility for any loss or damage caused directly or indirectly by the contents of this publication. The views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of its publisher or editor.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE** No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system (including CDs) or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior permission of the publisher.

*Active Dartmoor* recognises the hazardous nature of Dartmoor and the inherent risks of outdoor activities.

However the magazine and its publishers cannot accept responsibility for the consequences of participating in the activities depicted in this magazine. It is the responsibility of the participant to ensure they are correctly skilled, experienced and equipped to undertake any outdoor adventurous activities.

There is no substitute for instruction by a trained and qualified provider of outdoor activities - *Active Dartmoor* recommends that participants should seek the professional services from the providers listed in this magazine.

Main cover photograph © Malcolm Snelgrove



## All change at *Active Dartmoor*!

First of all, we waved farewell to Anna as Editor, for the last couple of years her dedication, knowledge and passion has inspired us all so we will miss her a lot. We wish Anna and her partner Johnny (our very first editor) all the best for the future, and thank them heartily for the superb article on cycling The Granite Way, it's great to have them still very much involved with the magazine as contributors.

Also...we are extremely happy to now be working collaboratively with Dartmoor National Park on the magazine, we find their input and guidance hugely helpful. Some of you will know that Simon and I also run *Visit Dartmoor*, the Official Dartmoor Tourism Organisation, so this was a very logical step for all of us.

Whatever your reason for visiting the moor, the three Dartmoor National Park Visitor Centres at Princetown, Haytor and Postbridge can be a fantastic place to start your day. Friendly, knowledgeable staff and a huge range of maps, information and leaflets will help you get the most out of your time on Dartmoor, and I can personally highly recommend every single one of them!

It's been a huge amount of fun putting this issue together, we are incredibly lucky to have so many people willing to write quality articles and reports for us on such a wide range of topics, we are grateful to each and every one of them. We hope you enjoy reading the stories and articles, and maybe even get inspired by some of them to try something new yourself!

Have a wonderful time with whatever you decide to do to be Active on Dartmoor!

## CONTENTS

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 4. From the Pony's Mouth<br>News from around the Park      | 30. Navigation<br>Navigating by Ancestors            |
| 6. Big Tick<br>Kayaking the Mighty Dart                    | 32. Walking<br>Wild Swim Walks                       |
| 9. Horse Riding<br>'Seeking Adventure'<br>Learning to Ride | 35. Wild Running<br>Micro Ten Tors                   |
| 10. Family Cycle Ride<br>The Granite Way                   | 36. Dartmoor Ponies<br>In Depth Pony Keeper's report |
| 12. Dartmoor Tours<br>Proper Dartmoor Tours                | 40. Summer Inspiration<br>42 Days on Dartmoor        |
| 14. Climbing<br>Tackling the Dewerstone                    | 42. Classic Walk<br>Two Blondes Bimble at Beardown   |
| 16. Cycling<br>Tour of Britain                             | 44. Access For All<br>Devon Cycle Hire to Lydford    |
| 18. Guided Tour<br>The Baskerville Tour                    | 46. Camping<br>Wild and Free                         |
| 22. Running<br>Dartmoor Trail Running                      | 49. Eating Out<br>Ullacombe Farm                     |
| 25. Food<br>Wild Food Foraging                             | 50. Walking<br>Ullacombe Farm Walk                   |
| 27. Dartmoor Pony Heritage Trust<br>100 Mile Challenge     | 59. What's On  |







# NEWS

News from around the Park

## A Love Letter to Dartmoor - 365 Photographs by Jo Bradford Runs until 17th August



PHOTOGRAPHS © DNPA

By taking her daily photos with a ubiquitous smartphone camera, Jo has highlighted how accessible the beauty of the great outdoors is to any visitor with half an hour on their hands and a phone in their pocket, even when they have their family with them.

*'Dartmoor is the ultimate antidote for an increasingly urban society whose sense of value is continually eroded by endless consumerism. We need to make time to inhale fresh air and experience nature first hand, not only to keep us healthy, but also to ensure that our children learn to love being outdoors. It really matters that we fall in love with nature's sights and sounds, and the feel of rain and sun on our skin. I updated my project daily on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter.'*

Jo sells prints and takes portrait, landscape and editorial commissions through her website:

**[www.greenislandstudios.co.uk](http://www.greenislandstudios.co.uk)**  
Find Jo at **[www.instagram.com/greenislandstudios](https://www.instagram.com/greenislandstudios)**



## Jonathan Scott - The Beauty of Light

**Runs 18th August-5th March 2017**

Jonathan has travelled the world and has had his work featured by the likes of National Geographic, the Discovery Channel, Google, the BBC, ITN and many more. He has a burning passion for the great outdoors and the natural world and this is reflected in his distinct and impactful photographic style. Dartmoor National Park is a unique and magical place which has formed the basis for one of Jonathan's most in-depth projects: Dartmoor - The Beauty of Light. For this he has shot tens of thousands of images and what you see presented in this exhibition are the shots he has painstakingly selected as the pinnacle of what the National Park has to offer.

He has helped many others increase their enjoyment and satisfaction out of this wonderful hobby, so if you are interested in seeing how Jonathan can help take your photography to the next level you can contact him directly to talk through what he can do for you.

Email: **[jonscott82@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:jonscott82@hotmail.co.uk)**  
**[www.dartmoor.gov.uk/visiting/vi-eventsguidedwalks/dartmoor-exhibitions](http://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/visiting/vi-eventsguidedwalks/dartmoor-exhibitions)**

## Summer is the perfect time to Enjoy Dartmoor

Dartmoor National Park's popular Enjoy Dartmoor magazine is a full-colour FREE guide to the National Park, packed with useful information, lots of interesting features and inspiring activity ideas, as well as a list of events and a helpful pull-out map.





Copies are available from Tourist Information Centres and select cafes, pubs, campsites and tourism businesses in and around Dartmoor. But why not call into one of the National Park's award-winning Visitor Centres at Princetown, Postbridge or Haytor to pick up your copy? **The Centres provide a great starting point for your visit to Dartmoor and are open daily, 10am–5pm, during the summer months.**

## Donate for Dartmoor

More extensive information on all of these projects, please visit [www.dartmoor.gov.uk/visiting/donate-for-dartmoor](http://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/visiting/donate-for-dartmoor)

Dartmoor National Park has set up a new scheme called Donate for Dartmoor to raise funds to enable a range of projects across the National Park to go ahead. The public are being asked to help by donating money to an area of work that is close to their heart, so they can choose to contribute to Recreational Dartmoor, Natural Dartmoor or Historic Dartmoor. Here's what's happening in Recreational Dartmoor.

### Recreational Dartmoor

There are miles of footpaths and bridleways across Dartmoor. Help Dartmoor National Park to maintain these popular recreational routes through path repairs, new signage and improved access. Money raised will help the following projects:

#### Nun's Cross Path

After successfully repairing and improving a 3km section of the trail from Princetown to Nun's Cross, the National Park would now like to carry out route improvements and repairs on a 4km section of this popular walking and cycling route from Nun's Cross Farm to Eylesbarrow.

#### Two Moors Way

The Two Moors Way is a long-distance walking route (approx. 100 miles) crossing Dartmoor and Exmoor National Parks. Both the National Parks and Devon County Council are working together on path clearance and installing new signage, gates and stiles at various locations along the route, but there is much still to do.

#### Donate a Gate

Dartmoor National Park has an ambition to remove stiles and replace them with gates across a network of public paths and trails, creating easier access for people with limited mobility and those walking with their dog.



## #2 minute litter pick

The Ranger team at Dartmoor National Park have joined forces with the local charity #2 minute beach clean to bring their very successful global litter campaign inland.

Andrea Roberts, Dartmoor National Park Ranger said: "This is the first time this campaign has been brought 'inland'". Dartmoor National Park Authority currently spends over £20,000 per year disposing of recreational waste. Not only is this rubbish unsightly it is also a hazard to the beautiful wildlife and moorland animals that inhabit the National Park.

Six A frame boards have been built especially for Dartmoor and will be in strategic locations over most weekends and through the school holidays. Litterpickers and bags are provided with the boards.

If you come across one of these boards please get involved, do your bit and post your pictures to Instagram or twitter tagged with #2minutelitterpick & #lovedartmoor.

## Motorhomes and Camper vehicles

Please don't rely on satellite navigation systems to get you to your destination, but use the helpful *Coach Driver and Motorhome Guide* for Dartmoor map which can be found on the National Park website [www.dartmoor.gov.uk](http://www.dartmoor.gov.uk). This will help you plan a safe route.

Sleeping in vehicles at the roadside, or in car parks is not permitted in the National Park. There are many great sites which accept motorhomes and campervans. Please use these for your overnight stay.

## Wild camping

Camping for one or two nights on some of the open land on Dartmoor is perfectly acceptable provided that you choose your spot sensibly. Please note that camping is not permitted on some of the smaller commons including Cadover, Haytor, Holne Moor, Roborough and Spitchwick commons.

Large family frame tents should not be used. Please use a proper campsite if you have a large family frame tent and equipment.

There is an interactive camping map on the National Park website that you can view to see detail of where you can and can't camp on Dartmoor. The areas where you can wild camp are shaded in purple.

For more information see [www.dartmoor.gov.uk](http://www.dartmoor.gov.uk).

**For Moor information**  
Dartmoor National Park Visitor Centres are staffed by knowledgeable local people who are keen to help you make the most of your time on Dartmoor. Centres are open daily throughout the holiday periods and can be found at Princetown, Postbridge and Haytor.





# THE MIGHTY RIVER DART

BY MARK ALLEN

The source of the River Dart is high up on Dartmoor, forming the East and the West Dart. The East flows through Postbridge and the West through Two bridges. From here on down both rivers grow in size as side tributaries join – They join together and become the River Dart at Dartmeet, a beautiful and popular spot for tourists and the Start of the hardest kayaking section – The Upper Dart.

**T**he Upper Dart runs at a variety of flows – But basically, the higher it is the harder and more dangerous it becomes. Due to the large catchment the River Dart is one of the most reliable rivers to kayak in the whole of the UK. The Upper Dart sees lots of carnage and some kayakers end up having to walk out. So experts only.

This section finishes at Newbridge Carpark and is Also the start of the next section down – The Loop.

The Loop is a great section for intermediates and is a very popular trip, with local club, groups of friends and commercial operators. Great value white water, with rapids called Washing machine, Lover's Leap, Triple Steps and Spin Dryer!! Most people finish this trip at The River Dart Country Park – This is convenient as it offers great value for money, parking, food and drinks and a wide variety of accommodation. I would class myself as a local!

Next Up is the Lower and Lower Lower Dart. These sections are idea for beginners. Offering gentle rapids and islands. Care needs to be taken at several weirs – Most people walk around these / Portage. Like all sections on The River Dart – The higher the Flows the harder and more dangerous the river becomes.





**For those wanting to get involved in the sport have a couple of options:**

1. Join a local canoe Club
2. Get some professional coach and guiding

Before venturing out on you own it is essential that you learn a few basics and know how to rescue your buddies.

Kayaking is very dependant on rainfall. We are very lucky because there are online river gauges, webcams, rainfall gauge and lots of local knowledge available on Facebook .

**This is a group I have set up and is very useful:**

[www.facebook.com/groups/kayakingriverdart](https://www.facebook.com/groups/kayakingriverdart)

**Rain Gauge:**

[www.dartcom.co.uk/weather](http://www.dartcom.co.uk/weather)

20mm is perfect!

**River Level:**

<https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/station/3212>

Above 0.58 the river is good to go!!

**Dartcam at River Dart Country Park:**

<http://riverdart.co.uk/kayakers/dartcam> ▶



PHOTOGRAPH © MARK ALLEN





## Access

Access to The River Dart used to be done in seasons but now it is common to see paddlers on all sections of The River Dart when the river level is about 0.58 on the river level gauge. This is better than the previous season arrangement. The river gets very low so people used to scrape on down because it was in season – Now we see a lot less off this.

After Kayaking or for those coming down to The Dart people like to eat, get a beer and some like to stay. Below are my personal recommendations:

## Stay

River Dart Country Park  
Plume of Feathers

## Eat and Drink

River Dart Country Park  
Tavistock Inn  
Dartbridge Inn

## Kit

Kayaks and Paddles at Lee Mill is the best place to go.

## Local Clubs

Paington Canoe Club  
Exeter Canoe Club  
PPCA  
Totnes Canoe Club

## Professional Coaching and guiding

[www.kayakguide.co.uk](http://www.kayakguide.co.uk)  
CRS Adventures  
Gene17 Kayaking

The River Dart Country Park host coaching weekends and various paddler based parties from October till March.

Dartmoor National Park Authority welcomes canoeists to Dartmoor who undertake their recreational activity in a responsible manner and continues to actively work with British Canoeing, riparian owners and fishing associations to facilitate access arrangements.

see - [www.dartmoor.gov.uk/visiting/vi-enjoyingdartmoor/vi-canoeing](http://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/visiting/vi-enjoyingdartmoor/vi-canoeing)

In the last few years I have started an event called: River Clean Up UK and the idea is to kayak sections of rivers that we paddle and collect all rubbish that we find. This event is getting bigger and we cover many rivers in the South West and South Wales. The aim is to make it a national day of River Clean Up action.

[www.facebook.com/rivercleanupuk](http://www.facebook.com/rivercleanupuk)

*White Water kayaking is truly exceptional, give it a go!*





# Seeking Adventure's Learning to Ride

By Seeking Adventure's Belinda Dixon [www.seekingadventure.co.uk](http://www.seekingadventure.co.uk)



**I**t was the kind of day Dartmoor does so well – colour-vivid; sunglasses-bright. Gorse a vibrant yellow against a brilliant blue sky. And we were in the kind of place Dartmoor does so well – away from roads, with a wilderness feel, resounding to only natural sounds: a soft whinny, the clip of horseshoe on stone. So where were we exactly, and why?

At the start of 2016 Seeking Adventure (TV presenter Nicola Hendy and travel writer and broadcaster Belinda Dixon) set out to #Do52; to have and inspire an adventure for each week of 2016. Already our challenge has seen us climb the Dewerstone crag, go wild swimming in a Dartmoor pool; ride mountain-bikes amid pounding Dartmoor rain.

Today is very different. The sun is streaming onto the yard at Babeny Farm Stables, on the fringes of Dartmeet at the end of a gloriously long lane. And we're here to learn, or remember, to ride. Visit Dartmoor has again forged connections between us, the wannabe adventurers, and the activity providers. So we meet Dee Dee and team at Babeny Farm and Malcolm Snelgrove, Dartmoor Ambassador and specialist in horse and outdoor sport photography.

First it's meeting Jess, our capable, cheerful guide, then sorting riding hats and pairing us up with the right horses: for Nicola cheeky Rowan and placid Ellie for me. Next comes going through the basics; how to sit, hold the reigns, nudge the horses on. Then it's off to clip-clop down the lane. Past a rushing stream, through a hamlet with thatched cottages and onto the open moor. And it's here that Babeny's – and Dartmoor's – strength shines through: within minutes of setting out you're in the heart of a wilderness. Far from habitation, with nothing between you and swooping tor tops and overarching sky.

And the pace of this adventure is special. Being on a horse, and being a beginner, requires you to move at slow walking speed. Which is actually quite startling – you're forced to slow down and calm down. To sit and

look around. And when you do, you notice so much that seems new. Sights, sounds and smells seem all the more vivid; you really notice those moss-covered stones, the brilliance of birdsong, the smell of woodsmoke and of cows.

After heading out over Corndon Down we pause at the cross commemorating the loss of WWI soldier, Evelyn Cave-Penney. A chance for us to pat Ellie and Rowan and remind them how well they've done. Then it's off again across more open moor, with plenty of time to ponder what are the colours all around? Tawny? Honey-brown? Russet? All of the above.

Next Jess guides us through the best technique for the climb up to Sharp Tor, to look out over the expanse of the Dart Valley. Then, back into that unbreakable rhythm; where riding on Dartmoor feels both age-old and timeless – in this traditional place you're moving at a traditional pace.

The final furlong brings a batch of well-instructed but only fleetingly achieved trots, then equine and human yard-side goodbyes. In just a few hours we feel really fondly towards Babeny Farm Stables, owner Dee Dee, instructor Jess, photographer Malcolm and horses Ellie and Rowan.

Driving off, we're struck again by the diversity of Dartmoor's adventure offer: mountain biking, climbing, hiking, wild swimming. Thrilling, chilling, testing, resting. And always so much moor to explore. What's next? Dartmoor wild camping, perhaps, and winter white water thrills ... ■



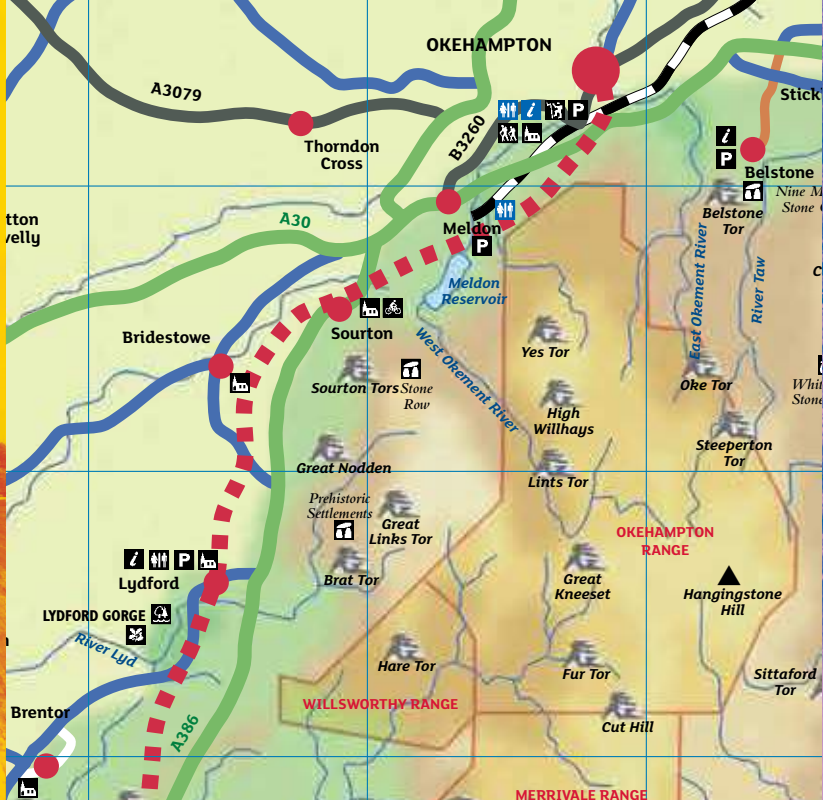
PHOTOGRAPHS © MALCOLM SNELGROVE

**Seeking Adventure aims to #Do52** – to have and inspire an adventure for each week of 2016. Can we do it – could you?! Join in, follow and find out [www.seekingadventure.co.uk](http://www.seekingadventure.co.uk)  
Twitter: @SeekAdv Instagram: \_seekingadventure\_



# THE GRANITE WAY

Between Okehampton & Lydford  
By Anna Baness



PHOTOGRAPHS © ANNA BANESS

## CYCLE FILE

**LENGTH:** 18 miles (29km)  
(there and back).

**TIME:** Depending on the speed and ability of the members of your party – allow at least 4 hours.

**START/FINISH:** Okehampton Station  
SX 592944

**TERRAIN:** Surfaced cycleway and minor roads. Optional off-road section over moorland bridleways.

**MAPS:** OS Explorer OL28 Dartmoor, HARVEY Dartmoor and surrounding area for cyclists.

**PUBLIC TRANSPORT:** There are regular bus services to Okehampton. Please see [www.travelinesw.com](http://www.travelinesw.com) for further information.

**PARKING:** There is free parking at Okehampton Station. The route can also be accessed from Lydford. There is a public car park in the centre of the village.

**REFRESHMENTS:** There is a cafe at Okehampton Station. Refreshments are also available at Devon Cycle Hire and there are inns at Sourton and Lake along the route and in Lydford.

**NEARBY ATTRACTIONS:** There's lots to see in the north Dartmoor area including the Dartmoor Railway, Okehampton Castle, Lydford Castle and Lydford Gorge.

**T**his surfaced cycle route between Okehampton and Lydford skirts the north western edge of the National Park and offers a great day out for all the family. Forming the highest part of the Devon Coast to Coast Cycle Route (NCN 27) between Ifracombe and Plymouth it boasts two viaducts and some stunning views across open moorland and out towards north Devon. On a clear day you can see as far as Exmoor.

Starting at Okehampton Station and running alongside the Dartmoor Railway you might even catch a glimpse of a heritage train on the line between Okehampton and Meldon Quarry.

There is ample free car parking at the start, a station cafe, Youth Hostel and cycle hire centre.

### Okehampton to Meldon Viaduct – 2.5 miles (3.75km)

To access the route follow the minor road opposite the lower car park for a short distance before turning left up the ramp onto the surfaced trail running alongside the railway. Follow this towards Meldon Quarry keeping a look out on your right for glimpses of Okehampton's motte and bailey castle in the valley below. After the castle you will pass under the A30. There is a short steep section here so make sure you're in the right gear! Once on the other side of the dual carriageway the route is fairly flat all the way to Meldon Quarry where you will see a number of different carriages in the sidings in front of the working quarry which provides railway ballast, roadstone and other industrial aggregates.

Meldon is also the home of the famous Meldon Viaduct which was built of steel in 1874 and spans 341 feet (165 metres). From the viaduct there are amazing views down into the valley

below with its complex mix of industrial archaeology including the remains of copper and arsenic mines, eighteenth and nineteenth century quarrying which included limestone and two lime kilns. The naturally occurring aplite in the area even gave rise to a small glass making industry in the 1920s.

### Meldon Viaduct to Lake Viaduct – 3.5 miles (5.25km)

Meldon Dam can be seen on the edge of the moor south west of the Viaduct. The dam was built in 1972 across the West Okement valley and is 660 feet (201 metres) wide and 145 feet (45 metres) high. A few hundred metres beyond the Viaduct it's possible to leave the route and follow a quiet lane to Meldon Reservoir which has a picnic area, toilets and round reservoir walk with beautiful views across open moorland.

From Meldon Viaduct the route passes through a cutting before emerging at the minor road leading to Prewley Water Works. Devon Cycle Hire is located to the north of the route just before you reach the road.

To continue to Lake Viaduct cross the road and follow the traffic free route passing Sourton Tors on your left and Thomas a Becket church at Sourton on your right. This small church is believed to have been built in the 14th century or even earlier and is well worth a visit. According to Legendary Dartmoor the Sourton area used to get so cold in winter that in the 1870s an ice factory was established less than a mile from the church.

After the church you will pass through a short gated section of the route which remains in private ownership and is kept as a nature reserve. Please be sure to close the gates after you.





Shortly afterwards you will arrive at Lake Viaduct which is built of local stone and offers stunning views across open moorland on one side and the farmland of West Devon on the other. From here you can drop down off the route to access the Bearslake Inn and the village of Bridestowe along quiet roads or continue along the traffic-free route to Lydford.

## Lake Viaduct to Lydford – 3 miles (4.8km)

The route now passes through farmland to the next minor road. Go straight across the road and follow the route over Fernworthy Down. There are beautiful views of West Devon from this stretch and a great picnic spot with an old railway shelter if needed!

When you come to the end of the route at Lydford, turn right along the minor road into the village. There is a pub in the centre with toilets and a public car park opposite. Close by are the remains of a 13th century tower on a mound that was built as a prison and became notorious for its harsh punishments. To the south of the mound is an earlier Norman earthwork castle and to the north are Saxon town defences. The whole site is open to the public and managed by English Heritage.

A short distance from the village is Lydford Gorge with its woodland walks and spectacular 98 feet (30 metre) waterfall. Owned and managed by the National Trust, the Gorge can be accessed by continuing

past the Castle and down the hill to reach the first entrance on the right.

To return to Okehampton retrace your route along the Granite Way or include a loop along one of the more challenging brideways below Sourton Tors. ■

## MORE CHALLENGING OPTIONS

There are a number of brideways that run between Meldon and Lake beneath Sourton Tors that offer more challenging options suitable for those on mountain bikes. Use an OS map to plan your route and bear in mind that these routes cross open moorland and are liable to damage in wet weather.



PHOTOGRAPH © INGA PAGE

People visit Dartmoor for lots of reasons – views, exercise, tranquillity, historic sites.... Similarly there are many different kinds of cyclists to be found on the moor. Most visible are sport cyclists participating in or training for road events such as the Dartmoor Classic: there aren't many places in the south of England where you can get such prolonged uphill rides! Then there's the intrepid mountain bikers for whom brideways provide challenging off-road routes. For the less advanced off-road bikers, there's also the old railway line from Princetown (where mountain bikes can be hired) to Burrator, which offers a less hair-raising track with fabulous high moorland views. (Mountain biking is not permitted on footpaths.)

Around the edges of Dartmoor there are disused railway lines which have been turned into cycle paths - traffic free and pretty flat. Recent new additions to this network have made these routes more extensive. As well as the Granite Way between Okehampton and Lydford there's the Drake's Trail between Tavistock and Plymouth. They're excellent for families who want to avoid encounters with traffic. A new trail starting in Newton Abbot goes to the edge of Lustleigh and will eventually continue on to Moretonhampstead.

An option to consider is electric bikes. Having a battery to help with the hills, opens up the whole of Dartmoor to anyone of average fitness. Dartmoor Walks & Rides This Way offers guided e-bike tours that start in a variety of locations around the moor and explore the small quiet lanes that most non-locals never find. The e-bikes provide a comfortable ride and you get to enjoy the scenery up close, with the freedom to stop at any point to admire views or ponies. It's a fantastic way to enjoy the diverse and dramatic Dartmoor landscapes.

So no more excuses: make this the year you start exploring Dartmoor by bike! Inga Page - [www.dartmoorwalksthisway.co.uk](http://www.dartmoorwalksthisway.co.uk)



# Proper Dartmoor Tours

Word & Pictures by David Guiterman

**M**any of us have read books and heard stories set in and around Dartmoor and have dreamt of meeting the characters involved (possibly with the exception of the Hound of the Baskervilles). Others of us have driven through Dartmoor or walked the hills but have not been able to feel part of the local community because we have never lived there. Now it's possible to live the dream; travel the Moor, hear the stories and meet the people.

Charles (Titch) Scott has been a Dartmoor farmer all his life but he has also been, for years, a fencing contractor. This has given him a unique insight into the whole of Dartmoor as he has been responsible, personally, for enclosing quite a lot of it. He claims to know the whole of the Moor and the people who live there like the back of his hand. This is no idle boast as I found out when my wife and I put him to the test during a 60 mile tour of Dartmoor along little-used back-roads and across open country in his luxury six-seater long-wheelbase Land Rover. The concepts of luxury and Land Rover do not usually sit well together but Titch's vehicle gave us an incredibly smooth ride in two of the six forward-facing, remarkably comfortable seats.



Titch seemed to know everyone we passed and was able to tell us not only who they were but what they did for a living and all about their families. We were passed by a tractor whose driver, we were told, had done the dry stonewalling of a corn dyke the craftsmanship of which we had been admiring earlier. Dartmoor is crisscrossed by dry stone walls some old and some new. Many of them have been constructed by a master craftsman,

Wilf, whom we were taken to meet. Wilf is currently engaged in renovating a remarkable set of Grade 2 listed farm buildings at Yardworthy. He spoke about the techniques involved in dry stonewalling and the reconstruction of the farm buildings. These 13th Century barns include huge stones, some bigger even than the barn doors — unique buildings well worth restoring. Fortunate indeed that Wilf, the farmer, is also a local stone wall specialist, and has built many walls and corn dykes in that area of the moor.

Everywhere we went, Titch regaled us with stories of the folks who live there and the features of the



landscape, both archaeological and agricultural. It was a real eye-opener. There were so many things that we saw, the significance of which, we would never have known about were it not for Titch's extensive knowledge.

Then it was off to a local pub for an excellent lunch. Titch knows all the best places to eat and stay at. Lunch was a very relaxed affair and we enjoyed being immersed in all aspects of Dartmoor life. Titch's Land Rover is well-stocked with books and articles about the places we had seen and many others. He had us both guessing with a series of questions; how big is Dartmoor? How many people live within the National Park boundary? How many tors are there? Titch claims to know all the tors personally, although no one seems to know just how many there are. Crossing's Guide claims there are 170, whilst Ken Ringwood suggests there are enough to visit every day for a whole year.

Would you like to experience a day out with Titch? Now you can. He runs his luxury tours for anyone who would like to feel part of the Dartmoor community for a whole day. He can tailor each tour to suit whatever you want to do. It can include a walk. He can make the tour longer or shorter to order. You just have to ask and he'll do it.

To book a Proper Dartmoor Tour, either visit Titch's website; [www.properdartmoortours.com](http://www.properdartmoortours.com) or give him a call on 01647-231453 or 07970-906-122. Then sit back and enjoy what you will find to have been a unique experience and one to be treasured. ■







**BEARSLAKE**  
DARTMOOR RESTAURANT & INN

Lake Sourton  
Nr Okehampton  
Devon  
EX20 4HQ  
Tel: 01837 861334  
[www.bearslakeinn.com](http://www.bearslakeinn.com)






## THE NEW INN *Restaurant & Bar*

Sampford Courtenay · Okehampton · Devon EX20 2TB

Open all day Tuesday to  
Sunday with an Afternoon  
and Garden Menu and  
serving Sunday Roast all  
day Sunday.



*A Traditional Country Restaurant & Pub...*



Telephone · 01837 82247

[www.newinnsampfordcourtenay.co.uk](http://www.newinnsampfordcourtenay.co.uk)



# Seeking Adventure's Dewerstone Climb

By Seeking Adventure's Belinda Dixon [www.seekingadventure.co.uk](http://www.seekingadventure.co.uk)



PHOTOGRAPHS © MALCOLM SNELGROVE

**I**t's 10am on a bright, impossibly beautiful Dartmoor day. We're hot and breathless having just trekked from Shaugh Prior car park up to the towering Dewerstone crag. As we look up at the jutting rock face we're both excited, nervous, and a little scared - this is our first ever outdoor climb. So how did we get here and why?

At the start of 2016 Seeking Adventure (TV presenter Nicola Hendy and travel writer Belinda Dixon) set out to #Do52; to have and inspire an adventure for each week of 2016. Now well into double figures, our challenge has seen us go mountain-biking in a Dartmoor rainstorm, battle Cornish wind and tide on Stand Up Paddleboards; sea kayak the Jurassic Coast, scale mountains in Snowdonia, go winter wild swimming off Plymouth, surf February waves in Devon and Wales, walk under waterfalls, and begin learning to climb.

Now our latest adventure brings us back to the site of the first: Dartmoor. We're here because of the sheer scope of things you can do in this national park. Horse riding, wildswimming, wildcamping, whitewater kayaking, night-hiking, caving - you can do it all on Dartmoor. And do it in style amid spectacular scenery.

Which brings us, on this brilliantly beautiful day to the Dewerstone and to the foot of the Needle Arete route. If you're a climber, it's classed as a VDdiff, exposed climb of 40m (130ft); not a challenging route.

If you're not it's very, very tall, looks pretty sheer and very hard. Staring up at this wall of granite we're thinking how different this rock is to indoor climbing. Cracks

replace plastic hand grips, moss and crevices replace a synthetic wall. Indoors, your route is shown by multi-coloured trails set by someone else. Here, no one has left clues on the grey rock face - you have to work out your own way.

Luckily we have experts on hand: Justin Nicholas from Climb South West, photographer Malcolm Snelgrove, and Philippa Waddell from Wildhorse Films. And they're the perfect guides. Justin's instruction is clear and calm - helping soothe jittery nerves. He focuses on what we can do, rather than what we can't.

And then we're off. Hands and feet search not for bright plastic but natural crevices. Eyes scan the rock face for a route. At first you simply can't see the holds. Ever-patient, Justin calls out: "just work it out - you'll get there". So you think again and it turns out it is possible and you can do it. With very little style and even less technique - you climbed ugly but you got to the top.

And then standing calmly on the pinnacle you're suddenly aware of the blue sky above, the treetops below and the sound of the river in the valley. You know that with the skill and help of superb guides you've learned so much. That it feels fantastic to learn it outdoors, in a setting as stunning as Dartmoor. That you've discovered one crag, one route - and that there are countless more Dartmoor crags to climb. ■

**Seeking Adventure aims to #Do52 - to have and inspire an adventure for each week of 2016.**

Can we do it - could you?! Join in, follow and find out [www.seekingadventure.co.uk](http://www.seekingadventure.co.uk)

Twitter: @SeekAdv Instagram: \_seekingadventure\_



# DARTMOOR ELECTRIC BICYCLES



Explore hidden Dartmoor, Enjoy stunning scenery  
Exercise without exhaustion....



Bespoke Guided Tours, Bike & Hike Tours,  
Electric Bike Hire....

01364 631292 / 07980632158

dartmoorebikes@gmail.com dartmoorelectricbicycles.co.uk

## 'Free Spirit'

For those with a love for  
the outdoors and adventure !!



50+ and up for adventure, fun ?  
Want to be part of something different?



Contact for more details  
01822 880277

[martin@spirit-of-adventure.com](mailto:martin@spirit-of-adventure.com)



# The Delicious Drake's Trail

SUNDAY 2nd OCTOBER 2016 Dartmoor, Devon

## ... a food fest on the run!

A scenic running/walking trail with local food & drink tastings



[www.deliciousdrakestrail.co.uk](http://www.deliciousdrakestrail.co.uk)



[hello@deliciousdrakestrail.co.uk](mailto:hello@deliciousdrakestrail.co.uk)



a Delicious Trails event in aid of CHICKS charity and sponsored by Atkins Ferrie



TOUR OF  
BRITAIN

9 SEPTEMBER

## BACK ON DARTMOOR

By Andrew Watson Head of Recreation and Access, Dartmoor National Park



MAP DATA © 2016 GOOGLE

Cycling fans are in for a real treat when the Tour of Britain makes a return to Dartmoor National Park on Friday 9 September. After a year's absence from The Tour, the Devon Stage is back for a ninth time in ten years, with what is anticipated to be another challenging stage including the race's only summit finish this year – a six kilometre ascent of Haytor. The Tour of Britain attracts some of the world's top riders and teams including Olympic and World Champions and Tour de France stage winners. The riders will take on the 150km race starting from East Devon's Jurassic Coast at Sidmouth, through the Devon countryside before entering the National Park at Whiddon Down. The route then travels along the A382 through Moretonhampstead and on to Dunsford before returning via Haldon and Chudleigh. From Chudleigh the race continues through the centre of Bovey Tracey before finishing with a gruelling six kilometre climb of Haytor, the only summit finish of this year's Tour.

With over 3,000 metres of climbing and fast descents on Devon's narrow roads, this race promises to be a great spectator stage and one not to miss! This year's stage is almost a repeat of the thrilling stage in 2013 between the two locations, when Haytor became the first ever summit finish of the modern Tour of Britain.

The Devon stage of the Tour of Britain is hosted by Devon County Council and Dartmoor National Park is working closely with the County Council, Teignbridge District Council, local communities and other agencies





PHOTOGRAPH © NICK DORMOR

### FACT FILE

- 120 riders
- 152.7 km stage
- 3,101 metres of climbing
- Broadcast to 120 countries worldwide
- £5.9m additional spend into local economy (2013)
- Haytor was the first summit finish in the UK

### USEFUL WEBSITES

[www.dartmoor.gov.uk](http://www.dartmoor.gov.uk)  
[www.devontourofbritain.co.uk](http://www.devontourofbritain.co.uk)  
[www.visitdartmoor.co.uk](http://www.visitdartmoor.co.uk)

to plan for another successful event this year. Hosting a summit finish at Haytor is not without its challenges, with large crowds expected to return this September to watch up to 120 elite riders race to the summit of Haytor.

Due to the nature of the event, road closures will be in place on the day between Hemsworthy Gate, and Bovey Tracey with no vehicular access for the public to Haytor. Spectators will be able to use dedicated Park and Ride facilities running regularly from Bovey Tracey and Holwell Down.

Dartmoor National Park Authority is advising those wishing to go to Haytor to allow plenty of time for their journey and to either cycle there or use the park and ride facilities. There will be lots of cycling related activities and things to keep spectators occupied during the morning, including a "Promo Zone" with local food and refreshments and local schools competing in a Hill Climb Challenge.

Camping is not permitted anywhere on Haytor and campers are advised to check the Visit Dartmoor website for accommodation providers, including camp sites.

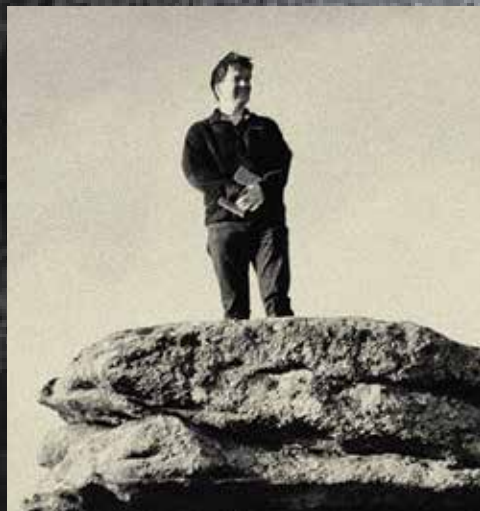
With extensive TV coverage, broadcast to over 120 countries, The Tour of Britain provides a fantastic opportunity to showcase Dartmoor with its stunning landscape and breathtaking views to a worldwide audience. And if serious road cycling isn't your thing, then Dartmoor National Park has everything you could wish for, from traffic free trails including the Granite Way, Drakes Trail, Princetown Railway and Wray Valley Trail, to quiet forest tracks, challenging bridleways and historic rural lanes to enjoy at your own pace. ■



PHOTOGRAPHS © DNPA



# The Baskerville Tour



Written by David Guiterman

I was on the road in South Devon with Alex Graeme, aka, 'Unique Devon Tours'. Life, all around us, was rejoicing on a warm spring day. Suddenly surprised, I asked, "What do you mean some of your clients find Dartmoor so disappointing?"

**T**his tour is all about living the story behind the story of Conan Doyle's spine-chilling detective novel, *"The Hound of the Baskervilles"*. The story portrays a dark, sinister and foreboding aspect of the Moor. This is what many readers have come to expect; hence the disappointment. What a contrast to see bright sun and animals roaming freely at will. Many Americans are amazed to find a national park which is never closed and where wild camping is on the menu. They love smelling the scent of turf and sampling the delights of local food. Their disappointment never lasts long".

Alex has lived all his life in the area. He uses his intimate local knowledge to provide individually-tailored tours.

On his 'Baskervilles Tour' enjoy meeting the spirits of the people and legends that combined to make 'The Hound' one of the greatest detective stories ever written. It has never been out of print since the day it first appeared. It is the most adapted book of all time, having been made into 29 productions for television and cinema. Alex's favourite is the 1939 black and white version with Basil Rathbone. "The black and white captures the bleakness of the landscape more than colour could ever do," Alex explained.

Many visitors are so involved in taking

photographs that they miss much of what's going on around them. However, this is no

problem: Alex is an award-winning photographer and takes top quality shots which he then presents to his clients as part of his service.

The Baskerville tour takes in a number of locations, each of which features in this



chilling drama; included are pubs, cottages, graveyards and churches - one of which is burnt out and haunted.

Alex loves to spring surprises. He had one up his sleeve for me and I received strict instructions not to let the cat out of the bag; join the tour and all will be revealed.

Sometimes Alex is asked to base a tour on the ancestors of a visitor from abroad whose roots are in Dartmoor. Alex researches thoroughly before setting out with his client. He even, on occasions, arranges for them to meet a long lost relative. He does love to surprise.

Clearly, Alex so loves guiding people over Dartmoor (not to mention the rest of Devon and any part of Britain) that I had to ask him how it had all started and why he finds being a tour guide so satisfying.



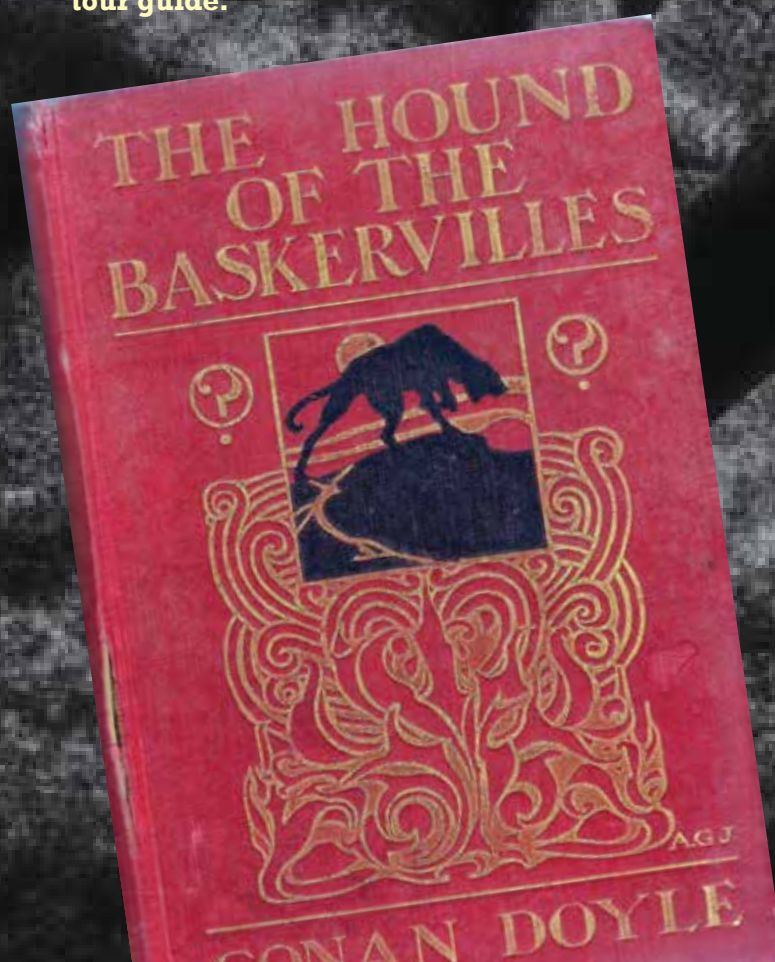
**"I enjoy what I do, in fact I really love what I do; I'm passionate about it. After my wife, children, family and friends, it's probably my other great love. It's an idea that came to me as a 10 year old boy. I so loved showing visitors round my own garden, that a pipe-dream was born. I spent my life trying different things and eventually came back to what my gut instinct told me I should do; which was to become a tour guide.**

**I think it's really about the attributes that I have, that lend themselves so well to me being a tour guide, and I think that's why it just works so well for me. It seems to suit my personality perfectly.**

**I'm also in a privileged position of meeting interesting people from all over the world. I've had guests coming from all corners of the world. So for me that's a really interesting aspect of the role I have. The world is coming to me rather than me having to travel the world (although I still yearn to see more of the world). Meeting all these different nationalities is a really enjoyable aspect of my job.**

**I am also meeting people when they're at their very best. They're on holiday. They're here to have a good time. They may never have been to Devon before. They find it fascinating. They love the lanes, they love the tors, they love the coast, they love the food. So that's really enjoyable to be part of that whole experience and witnessing their appreciation of the area.**

**I've got control over what I do. All of my product has come from me, all of the different tours I do, my branding, my marketing; all of it's come from me. It all belongs to me and I'm very proud of what I have achieved. And if you think about it, what could be better than picking someone up then taking them out for the day around Dartmoor and other places in Devon, to show them beautiful and interesting things, and introducing them to an area that I was brought up in and love. Taking them for nice** ❶





meals, taking them for Devonshire cream teas, showing them how they should eat their cream tea (the common sense way, ie the Devon way - which is to put your cream on first and then your jam, rather than the other way around: the wrong way!).

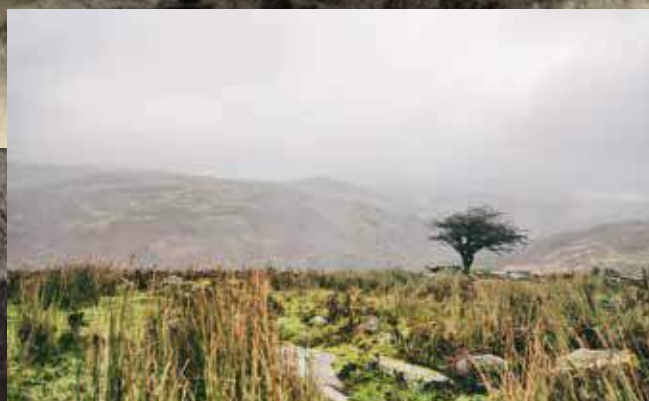
So it's a job that gives me great pleasure and great memories. I've met some really interesting people. I've got some memories that I shall take through to my grave; very fond memories. I have made friends from all over the world and I have to ask what is not to love about it? I love what I do and hopefully that comes across to my guests."

For anyone wanting to engage Alex, he can be contacted on his 'Unique Devon Tours' website: [www.uniquedevontours.com](http://www.uniquedevontours.com)

Or by phone: 07585 928 070 or 01803 812556.  
Or you can e-mail him at: [alex@uniquedevontours.com](mailto:alex@uniquedevontours.com)

Once you've experienced 'unique tour' you may wish to leave an appraisal on trip advisor to join the over 70 reviews, all of which have five stars; how unique is that!

Alex is also an Ambassador for Visit Dartmoor.





# Fox Tor Cafe

Licensed Cafe Off-Licence Bunkhouse

The Fox Tor Café is a licensed cafe and is situated close to the centre of Princetown the heart of Dartmoor. We provide bunkhouse accommodation and have the only off-licence in Princetown. We welcome everyone in our cafe from walkers with dirty boots to businessmen in need of our free WiFi. We also welcome well behaved dogs on a lead! We have an open fire as well as a woodburner!!



Two Bridges Road, Princetown Devon PL20 6QS  
01822 890 238 [foxtorcafe.com](http://foxtorcafe.com)

A photograph of a family (a man, a woman, and two children) sitting at a wooden table outside a large wooden cabin. The cabin has a curved roof and a small porch. The family is smiling and looking at something on the table. The background shows trees and a clear sky.

Five star facilities  
Fantastic peaceful location with great views  
Cottages, Camping, Holiday Homes, Glamping, Pods, Langstone lounge bar with evening meals with a great location on Dartmoor  
Holiday homes For Sale

*Langstone*  
MANOR PARK

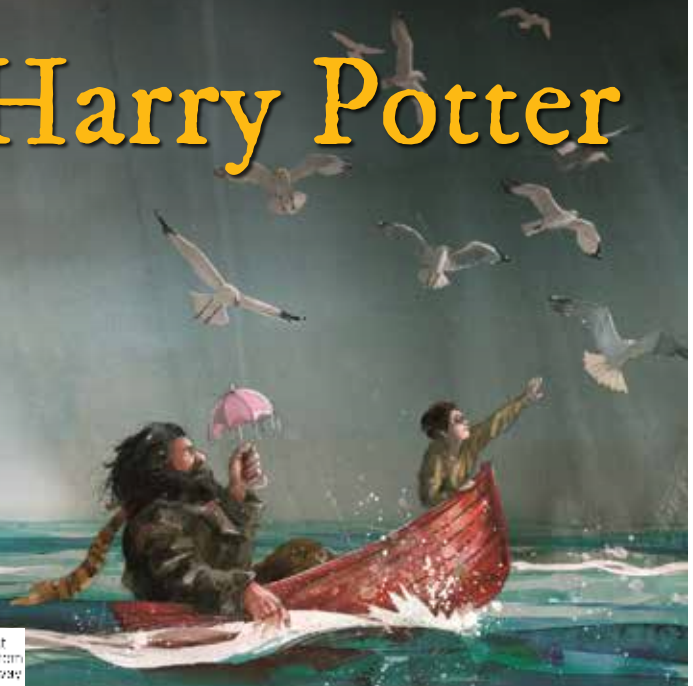
[www.langstone-manor.co.uk](http://www.langstone-manor.co.uk)  
Langstone Manor Holiday Park, Moortown,  
Tavistock, Devon, PL19 9JZ  
Tel/Fax +44 (0) 1822 613371  
email: [jane@langstone-manor.co.uk](mailto:jane@langstone-manor.co.uk)

*A summer of magical events*

# Illustrating Harry Potter

*3 July - 25 September*

Stunning original artwork and a summer of magical events for all ages including the Willow Dragons Maze, Harry Potter's Birthday Picnic, Open Air Cinema, Astronomy, The Magic Express Steam Train, Quidditch Lessons and much more.



[www.discoverhannahs.org/harrypotter](http://www.discoverhannahs.org/harrypotter)

01626 325 800 | Newton Abbot, TQ12 6NQ

An exhibition from Seven Stories, The National Centre for Children's Books | Images © Jim Kay  
Dame Hannah Rogers Trust is a registered charity with number 1148882.

**hannahs**

dame hannah rogers charity





# TRAIL RUNNING

Words & Pictures by Steve Skedgell

**T**rail running has seen an explosion in popularity over recent years and, here in Devon, we are blessed with an extensive network of tracks and trails in areas of outstanding natural beauty. From the rugged granite slopes of Dartmoor, to the undulations and big-sky vistas of the South West Coast Path, we are spoilt for choice as to where we can run.

In April 2015, two infectious enthusiastic trail runners, Mark Brooks and Steve Skedgell, based in Ashburton, South Dartmoor, decided to create something a little different. The idea was to attract and nurture a new wave of runners, a 'trail tribe' of like-minded individuals who just didn't want the tarmac anymore. Together, Mark and Steve, have acquired a vast knowledge of Dartmoor over the years. They are hugely experienced in ultra-distance events, marathon running and mountain marathons are always approachable and willing to share their knowledge and insight into the sport they love.

It all began with Wednesday night runs. The brief was: 'Somewhere on South Dartmoor'. Each Wednesday would be different, somewhere different, with routes ranging from 5 to 8 miles. All abilities were to be welcomed and encouraged. A Facebook page, entitled The Pure Trail Running Group, advertised and publicised its existence and location. It began, flourished and evolved, with between 8 and 18 runners turning up each Wednesday for some serious dirty, muddy fun on the Moor. The group has grown from strength to strength and has gained a substantial social media presence.

Eventually, as a direct result of the overwhelming support and enthusiasm received, a Trail Running Events enterprise was created: [www.puretrail.uk](http://www.puretrail.uk). The realisation that Dartmoor offered so much of what so many runners wanted had been firmly established — open spaces, big skies, wild places and pure trails. The inaugural race — The Dartmoor Volcano arrived in September to enormous



acclaim. Almost 100 runners took part in the challenging 10.25 mile course over some seriously tough terrain with almost 600m of ascent. The race started and finished in the Dartmoor village of Scoriton on a glorious late summer's day.

As Mark effused, "The enthusiasm for the race was palpable. The positivity and encouragement we received after the event was the driving force behind our efforts to create the next Pure Trail race on Dartmoor."

2016 will see Steve and Mark arranging 5 events on Dartmoor, The Hameldown Hammer, The Dartmoor Volcano, an Ultra-marathon-distance North-South crossing of Dartmoor. This is their first evening race. They are currently liaising with landowners to provide a race starting from another idyllic location. Each race provides bespoke medals, t-shirts and trophies concentrating on given quality products in addition to a scenic, Pure Trail running route.

Mark and Steve are planning a series of Trail Running events in 2016, including their first ultra-distance event in the summer. They are also offering Trail Running days and weekends over Dartmoor, with accommodation provided for groups of up to 12. ■

## FURTHER INFORMATION

For more information on future races and locations of Wednesday night runs visit their website [www.puretrail.uk](http://www.puretrail.uk) and Facebook: PureTrail Running.







**Awe-inspiring, stunning and breathtaking are words that are spoken with regularity when people describe Dartmoor.** But professional photographer Malcolm Snelgrove wanted to convey what it's like to experience this magnificent landscape from the back of a horse and while words, he says, can conjure up an image it is pictures that will make a more lasting impression. So he recently teamed up with a Dartmoor riding stables and a leading equestrian clothing company to create photographs that would exhilarate, beguile and tempt people to take up the reins and experience that very special connection with nature only riding horses in an outstanding setting can give.

Malcolm, who is an ambassador for Visit Dartmoor, selected vantage points near Haytor and Saddletor to capture iconic images of four riders that would create a visual impact to both promote Dartmoor as a leading global horse riding location while illustrating the versatility of **Toggi clothing**.

The grey granite tors offered a stark contrast against the vibrant greens of the vegetation that had been freshened by recent rain and the resultant images are breathtaking.



**Malcolm Snelgrove**  
**ACTIVE LIFE PHOTOGRAPHY**

Tel: 07973 118237  
malcolm@malcolmsnelgrove.com  
www.malcolmsnelgrove.com

**Toggi**

**Babeny Farm**  
Stables

Clothing supplied by Toggi,  
Horses supplied by Babeny Stables

*"It was a wonderful day and the weather was just right. The absolute pleasure the riders and horses had being together and riding over the moor is almost palpable in the images and I hope it encourages more people to come to Dartmoor and take up the reins," said Malcolm.*

Dee Dee Sibley, who supplied the horses, is the first female tenant farmer on the Duchy-owned **Babeny Farm** for 750 years. She combines farming a pedigree herd of South Devon's with her trekking and livery business where she is determined to provide riding opportunities for all levels of abilities, including people who might never have sat on a horse before.

*"Riding on Dartmoor is such a unique and incredible experience and spending time in nature on a horse seems to renew your sense of enchantment of life. They are the essence of nature and I don't think there is any better way to reconnect and to be inspired. We're lucky at Babeny to have such wonderful kind horses and we hope that people will feel inspired by Malcolm's stunning photos to visit Dartmoor come and give horse riding a go," said Dee Dee.*





# Wild Food Foraging

## Free Fodder - Pick Your Own

Written by David Guiterman

**O**ur ancestors first began foraging for food on Dartmoor at the start of the Bronze Age. At that time the Moor was not the open expanse of upland that we know today but was largely wooded. It was the woodland glades that provided most of the animal and plant food. The early inhabitants were thoroughly conversant with those plants which were good to eat; those which were just passable, and those which should be avoided at all cost. Their very existence depended on getting it right.

*Garlic Mustard*

Now that we are accustomed to doing most of our foraging at the nearest supermarket, much of this once-vital knowledge has been lost. This is a great shame, as many of the plants flourishing in hedges and woodland edges are good to eat and can provide a varied menu, such as could form an established part of a healthy diet.

I sallied forth for a couple of hours foraging in the great outdoors, with the Wilderness Woman, aka Jacky Pearce. It was an experience which helped restore some of the knowledge recent ancestors so carelessly lost. Jacky introduced me to a wide range of edible and medicinal plants, together with the sometimes strange folklore associated with them. So many plants, I had previously just passed by without a second thought, provide ingredients for a range of tasty recipes. They also gave Jackie the opportunity to show how to take memorable plant photographs. She is keen to pass on not only her intimate knowledge of plants but also her award-winning photographic skills. Jackie says, "Too often photos look flat and don't do justice to the amazing view



*Apple Blossom*

you've just been admiring. By learning a few simple rules, you can take prize-winning photos, just as I have. I really love teaching and seeing people improve. Watching them start to see this world with new eyes is such a rewarding pleasure."

Although it was a sunny day there was a noticeable chill in the air. I was introduced to a patch of stinging nettles; something I usually take care to avoid. Not so Jacky: she was replete with stories, such as the bizarre way the Romans used nettles to keep warm and ward off arthritis. Did you know, for example, that uniforms worn by the Germans in the First World War were found to consist largely of stinging nettle fibres and that nettles provided the khaki camouflage colour that helped to keep the British World War II soldiers hidden from the enemy?



*Forage 3 Cornered Garlic*

PHOTOGRAPHS © www.wildernesswoman.wikicon.com/jacky





*Nettles*



*Ramsons Butterfly*



*Urtica Sting*



*Plantain Flower*

**The young shoots and leaves, once boiled, make a tasty dish; one of Jackie's favourite recipes is nettle pesto.**

### **Nettle Pesto (serves 6)**

**6 cups (125g) fresh nettle**, blanched in boiling water for a minute to neutralise the sting. Drain and chop roughly.

**2 garlic cloves**, finely chopped

**1/3 cup (50g) pine nuts**

**1/2 cup (60g) grated parmesan**

**1/3 cup (80ml) extra virgin olive oil**

**Salt and freshly ground pepper**

Put the all ingredients together and blend until the mixture is smooth, adding the olive oil until you are happy with the consistency. Wild garlic flowers are a marvellous addition on serving.

If you're not going to use it all immediately, put it into a sterilised jar and drizzle a little olive oil over the top before sealing with well-fitting lid. This can be kept for up to a month in the fridge.

Jackie leads parties of from 1 to 35. She charges £15 per person for a two hour session. There are group discounts available. Jackie can be contacted by phoning **07516 269656** or through her website; **[www.wildernesswoman.wix.com/jacky](http://www.wildernesswoman.wix.com/jacky)**

Fascinating as it is, the stinging nettle is far from being the only plant which nourishes Jacky's appetite for investigation and the concocting of wildly tempting recipes. Come on one of Jacky's foraging outings and learn about all the other tasty plants. You will soon be nibbling your way over Dartmoor; why should the sheep, ponies and cattle have all that food to themselves? ■

*Plantain Sun*



# 100 MILE PONY TREK

By Kathy Tipping



**It started on October 16th 2015; Dru Butterfield of the Dartmoor Pony Heritage Trust (DPHT), Paul Rendell (Dartmoor Guide and DPHT Conservation Officer) and Sam Goodwin (Dartmoor Pony and Pack), together with Sam's two pack ponies, Billy and Jasmine set out on a 100 Mile Walk across Dartmoor starting from Lukesland, near Ivybridge. The event aimed to raise awareness of the current problems facing Dartmoor Ponies—their rapidly diminishing number and even their right to exist on the Moor at all.**



**T**he intrepid trekkers were supported for the week-long walk by staff and volunteers from the DPHT, led by Clare Stanton. Clare masterminded the organisation, public receptions, PR, media and fundraising effort. She provided moral support, food and hot drinks at pit stops to ensure the team's morale stayed high even when the going got tough.

This project was the brainchild of Dru Butterfield. It was part of the DPHT tenth anniversary celebrations aimed at raising money for the proposed Dartmoor Pony Conservation Grazing Research Project. It is being financed by the DPHT, in association with Dartmoor Zoo and Plymouth University, through sponsorship and donations from the wider public. The aim is to observe and monitor the effect the ponies have upon grazing the diverse habitats of Dartmoor, how they impact


on other ecosystems vital to the Moor's biodiversity.

Different guest walkers joined the Team each day of the challenge. They helped raise money through sponsorship. Equine Photographer; Malcolm Snelgrove compiled a photographic record of the trek. Philippa Waddell of Wildhorse Films is creating a documentary about this historic team effort. Kathy Tipping, DPHT photographer, diarist and daily Social Media blogger and I completed the team who recorded the event.

Imagine walking from Ivybridge to Bristol but not via easy, flat, way-marked roads. This 100 miles crossed the most difficult terrain that Dartmoor has on offer: Using ancient bridleways and paths, they negotiated steep, slippery, uneven gradients, crossed watercourses and sodden mires. Many of these once-busy tracks have almost been lost through neglect and degeneration.

Imagine the task of navigating through every type of weather that autumn on Dartmoor can contrive. As if this were not enough, they also had to cope with busy traffic when they visited towns.

Paul Rendell and Sam Goodwin meticulously devised the route using ancient pathways to incorporate all four ancient stannary towns on Dartmoor: Ashburton, Chagford, Tavistock and Plympton. In the heyday of Dartmoor's Industrial past, working pack-ponies were an essential part of industry on Dartmoor. They were heavily involved in the transporting tin from where it was mined and smelted on the moor before being taken to be weighed, graded, priced and sold in each of these four major commercial towns.

All participants had undergone months of training for this gruelling trial. This feat of endurance was going to take determination and stamina, requiring all three of the team to work as one, 





PHOTOGRAPHS © KATHY TIPPING & MALCOLM SNELGROVE

with individual strengths serving the good of all. Sam had recreated authentic replicas of the original saddle pack apparatus which he hand-made individually for his ponies. The ponies carried not only the weight of the packs on their backs, but also a weight of responsibility for helping to ensure a permanent home on Dartmoor for all their kind.

It was wonderful to witness the momentum and public interest as the week progressed. Townsfolk flocked to meet the ponies.

Town Mayors and dignitaries proved invaluable by signing the 'Dartmoor Pony Declaration'. The Stannary Towns were represented by Peter Brewer, the Mayor of Ashburton, Gay Hill; Chagford Parish Councillor, Sue Bailey; the Mayor of Tavistock and John Gilding; a Plympton Stannator. Local farmers generously offered overnight pasture and safe grazing. It was so encouraging to see such passionate people who are prepared to come together to make change happen

to benefit these and other ponies.

The history of the pony on Dartmoor was an integral part of this Challenge—ponies have been on Dartmoor since the Bronze age. It was significant that the route took in the ancient settlement of Grimspound, and the famous Merrivale Stones rows. Many of the old clapper and road bridges were included. Pack-ponies would have had to use these to safely cross the Moor when the rivers were in full spate.

Dartmoor is the rightful home of these ponies. The definition of 'home' is 'A place where something flourishes, is most typically

found, or from which it originates': A simple enough word, but one which has an immense significance for the Dartmoor Pony and Dartmoor Landscape. All parties need to put aside their differences, politics and personalities and work together. The only other alternative is inconceivable—that Dartmoor loses its ponies. ■

The walk is over, but the work has just begun to save the Dartmoor Pony. Please help the DPHT to fund the Grazing Research Project. Donations can be made via their website at [www.dpht.co.uk](http://www.dpht.co.uk)



# I walking

## National Trust on Dartmoor

Take a gentle stroll or a more adventurous walk on the open moor. Car parks at Plymbridge, Cadover bridge, Parke, Lydford Gorge, Finch Foundry and Fingle bridge.

01626 834748  
[nationaltrust.org.uk/parke](http://nationaltrust.org.uk/parke)

National Trust



© National Trust Images. Registered Charity Number 205466

A close-up shot of a person's feet wearing blue and black Keen sandals. The sandals are positioned on a dark, wet, and rocky surface. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the rocky terrain and some greenery in the distance.

 **KOUNTRY KIT**  
THE OUTDOOR SHOP

**KEEN FOOTWEAR @ KOUNTRY KIT**

23 West Street - Tavistock - 01822 613089  
[www.kountrykit.com](http://www.kountrykit.com) - [info@kountrykit.com](mailto:info@kountrykit.com)





Yellowmead

PHOTOGRAPH © LAWRENCE CORNELL

# NAVIGATING BY ANCESTORS

WRITTEN BY DAVID GUITERMAN

**A**t one time, Dartmoor was almost covered in woodland. Humans began to arrive, first as hunters and then, from about 5000 years ago, as workers of the land: they moved stones, built walls, erected dwellings and mined minerals. There was no Dartmoor National Park Authority in those days. People did as they pleased and, in the process, altered the landscape so drastically that it has never fully recovered. They had no idea that their activities would later be used to help Dartmoor travellers find their way.

The evidence left by these people has occupied the attention of archaeologists for generations. A selection of ancient features have found their way onto the Ordnance Survey (OS) maps. They can help with navigation but only for those who know what to look for.

A day out on a navigation course with Adrian Partridge, of Hillwise, is a good way to start learning how to interpret the archaeology and to gain a fascinating insight into how people lived. See the Hillwise website for more details at [www.hillwise.co.uk](http://www.hillwise.co.uk)

Recent editions of the OS Explorer maps are digitally produced which enables the inclusion of a mass of small detail to help navigate. One of the least used features of the modern compass, the built in magnifier, comes into its own when using archaeological features as navigation aids. Here are a few examples to get you started.

## Tin-Mining Features

**Blowing-Houses.** These buildings were used to smelt the tin ore. Finding either mortar-stones (see photograph) or mould-stones confirms their identity. Mortar stones were used for crushing tin ore which was then smelted. The resulting liquid tin was then cast in mould-stones to form ingots. Mortar-stones have more or less circular pits, whereas those in mould-stones are usually rectangular.

**Tin-Streaming.** In earlier times tin was extracted from ore found in alluvial deposits. The deposits were worked by a process called tin streaming. Lots of water was required and this was often brought to the site by leats.

The extensive working made a complete mess of the surface and upset the original drainage pattern. Muddled drainage and an odd scattering of hummocks are often signs of tin streaming.

**Lode-Working.** By the 15th century, alluvial tin was becoming scarce and since the demand for tin was as strong as ever, the

direct working of lodes was considered viable despite the greater effort needed in both extraction and refining. "Beamworks" was the name given by the tinners to workings where the lode was followed by digging down from the surface. The massive gullies that resulted remain prominent features of the moor today. The gullies are marked on the map. The depth of a gully can be estimated by counting the number of contour lines it crosses. A locality may feature several such gullies, so pinpointing which one is which can be a useful aid to navigation.

Another method of surface mining involved digging pits at intervals along the lode – this was known as lodeback-working. Pits were dug in pairs down to the lode which was then followed underground between them. A line of pits is evidence of this type of tin mining.

Beware of the much larger mineshafts: these are pits which often have large angular blocks of granite surrounding them and can be dangerous places. Health and safety was not uppermost in the minds of the tin miners. Mineshafts were often capped by the simple expedient of felling a tree over the opening and covering it up with mine waste. Angular blocks of granite usually indicate mining or quarrying activity, as natural stones on the Moor have a smoothed, weathered appearance.



Mortar Stone



**Leats.** These are artificial channels used to carry water to, for example, water-wheels or tin-streaming works. Leats that still carry water are shown by blue lines on the OS map. They can be distinguished from streams because leats follow contour lines whilst streams cross them more or less at right angles. Confusingly, dry leats are shown on the map by black lines. Black lines are also used for any boundary feature. A black line on the map that follows contour lines is probably a dry leat. Maps are not always 100% accurate. Trackways that were mapped in wet weather may be shown as water features! This error was made in the 2007 edition OS map of Dartmoor's Sandy Way.

## Bronze-age features



Hut circle

**Cairns and hut circles.** These are circular Bronze-Age features. Cairns are burial chambers. In general the



Cairn

more important the inhabitant the bigger the cairn. People were buried along with artefacts of sufficient value to attract robbers who dug out the centres of the Cairns to plunder the contents. What remains of most cairns are circular raised areas with depressions in their centres and may be difficult to distinguish from the surrounding ground (see photo). They are useful in pinpointing one's position on what might be an otherwise featureless area of moor. Hut circles are all that remain of bronze-age stone huts occupied by people who, at first, probably cut wood and pastured animals. As more of the land was cleared of trees, pasturing became more important. Hut remains usually consist of a circular rim of stones enclosing a flat depression; so not unlike some cairns. Hut circle centres are usually flatter and it is often possible to distinguish the relict-doorway, seen as a narrow gap flanked by relatively large stones. Doorways were usually placed on the South East to gain as much natural light as possible. On slopes, however, drainage considerations trumped lighting and the doorway was made at the lowest point.

Positions of cairns are shown on the OS map by 5-pointed open stars, whilst hut circles are indicated by open circles. The compass lens comes into its own here.

## Stone Rows

These are single or triple rows of stones set on edge. Nothing is known of their original use. Some have a large 'blocking' stone at one or both ends. Often many of the stones are so well-covered in peat and vegetation that spotting them requires a good eye.

Stone-rows sometimes lead to cairns. On encountering a cairn, it is worth looking out for a leading stone-row.

So enjoy meeting the spirits of our ancestors and make use of their relicts to avoid getting lost. ■



# WALKS ON THE WATERY SIDE

**A new guide to Dartmoor is the first to include swims as well as walks. Here, the authors Sophie Pierce and Matt Newbury share their passion for Dartmoor's little-known aquatic landscape**

PHOTOGRAPH © DAN BOLT



PHOTOGRAPH © SOPHIE PIERCE

Tavy Cleave





PHOTOGRAPH © DAN BOLT

Tavy Cleave

**Hundreds of walking guides to Dartmoor have been written over the years. But for us, they all lack that special something – places to swim. For us, no walk is complete without a dip. In fact this is invariably the point of the walk. We're always in search of the holy grail of a beautiful piece of natural water in which to plunge – and on Dartmoor there are scores of magical swimming spots, from the crystal-clear pools hidden in the river Dart gorge, to the vast open lakes high on the Moor.**

Between us we've been walking and swimming on Dartmoor for around sixty years. It's our back door, our aquatic playground, a place of stunning beauty where we can immerse ourselves in nature and feel free when life gets stressful. You might be wondering though, why the urge to get in the water in the first place? Well, for us, outdoor swimming is joyful, fun and adventurous. When you're in natural water you're connected with the environment in a really intimate way. In the winter, it is cold and invigorating, and in the summer, when temperatures rise, and the sunbeams bounce on and through the water, it is languid and refreshing. You come out feeling so much better than when you went in; it somehow restores you.

Wild swimming is perfectly safe provided you are sensible. Don't try it for the first time in winter. Start in the summer when the water is warmest. Establish your exit point before you get in. Never dive in without checking the depth or for obstacles underwater first. And of course, respect the environment and take all your litter home. Setting off on a walk, in search of a beautiful swimming spot, gives an extra sense of adventure and purpose. We wrote our book because we want to share the joy of these wonderful places, and guide you to some of the most fabulous locations. We had such fun researching it and testing out all the swims, and hope you will enjoy them too. Happy walking and dipping! ■

## MORE INFO

Wild Swimming Walks Dartmoor and South Devon: 28 lake, river and beach days out in the South West by Sophie Pierce & Matt Newbury (£14.99, Wild Things Publishing) is available from all good bookshops.

For 30% off and free P+P visit [www.wildthingspublishing.com](http://www.wildthingspublishing.com) and enter 'Dartmoor' as your coupon code.





# RockinBikes.CO.UK

Rider owned and family run cycle shop on the edge of Dartmoor, stocking the best brands in the business



- Sales, Servicing and Repairs
- Quality Lightweight Kids Bikes
- Friendly Shop Rides
- Cycle Hire and Demos
- Gift Vouchers
- Custom Build Specialists
- Premium Scott E-Bike
- Test Centre
- 0% Finance



Quality Brands, Quality Service and Friendly Expert Knowledge

Harrowbeer Mews, Leg O' Mutton, Yelverton, Devon, PL20 6WE  
01822 258 022 Open 7 days a week. Free parking




swlakestrust

## top 5 things to do at Burrator



- 1 Visit the Burrator Discovery Centre
- 2 Explore the Arboretum
- 3 Find the threshing platform at Longstone
- 4 Evening talks, guided walks or family wildlife sessions
- 5 Get involved! Lots of volunteering opportunities

Have you done them yet?

**The Burrator Discovery Centre is open:**  
**Weekdays:** Every Tues, Wed & Thurs 10am - 4pm  
**Weekends:** Alternate weekend days

[www.swlakestrust.org.uk](http://www.swlakestrust.org.uk)  
 t: 01822 855700



LOTTERY FUNDED



## GREAT COOKS are made in Ashburton

- A leading UK culinary school.
- Over 40 courses for home cooks.
- 4 levels for beginners to advanced.
- 1 day, weekend breaks & diplomas.
- Accommodation available.



[www.AshburtonCookerySchool.co.uk](http://www.AshburtonCookerySchool.co.uk)  
 Old Exeter Road, Ashburton, Devon TQ13 7LG. Tel: 01364 652784.

HkWhite



English fine bone china mugs  
inspired by the British landscape.

[hkwhite.co.uk](http://hkwhite.co.uk)





# MICRO TEN TORS

Words & Pictures by Tobias Mews

**A**ccording to perceived 'adventure wisdom,' there are three types of fun. Type 1 is adrenaline-fuelled cardinal pleasure — both during and afterwards when reminiscing in the pub. It can be found whilst tubing down a crystal clear river, catching an amazing wave, carving up fresh powder on the ski slopes, etc. Type 2, on the other hand, is an adventure that's more often than not, only fun upon reflection. And Type 3 is never fun. Not during, not afterwards. Not even when you look back years later.

Until recently, and perhaps this is thanks to my military past and a number of wet mountain marathons, almost every experience I've had on Dartmoor has been of the Type 2 fun, occasionally dipping into Type 3. So, it was for this reason that I drove into Dartmoor National Park early one morning last December, peering with some trepidation into the ever-familiar fog that Dartmoor is famous for.

Over the course of about two weeks and accompanied by outdoor photographer and filmmaker, Dave MacFarlane, I was visiting all fifteen of Britain's National Parks in what I called, my Great British MINI Adventure. It wasn't enough to just 'visit' them in winter, I wanted us to do a micro adventure in each - something testing yet fun.

Which is why we chose to do a 'Micro Ten Tors Challenge' - a sort of homage to the ever popular challenge undertaken by school children and organised by the Army. Armed with a map, compass, and the company of Olympic Silver Medallist and Modern Pentathlete, Heather Fell, we set off in search of our first Tor.

'How long do think it will take?' Heather asked as we bounded across the boggy ground towards Rippon Tor. The 'Micro Ten Tors' route I'd chosen was about 10 miles in length and entered around Haytor Down. But add in the fog and a bit of faffage time for photographs, I figured it shouldn't take us more than a couple of hours. Perhaps wishful thinking.

As a professional adventure journalist, I have spent an inordinate amount of time outside of my comfort zone for two simple reasons: it makes a better story and I like to push myself to the limits. Luckily, the silver lining in my pain-riddled cloud is



that I'm almost always in a stunning location as I'm a firm believer in the motto, 'If I'm going to suffer, please God let it be somewhere beautiful.' Well, Dartmoor fits the bill perfectly.

I once heard Sir Ranulph Fiennes say that he goes on expeditions in the same way that estate agents sell houses - in order to pay the bills. Although I would never compare myself to 'Britain's greatest living Explorer', I can certainly empathise with him. I enter races and events which I then write about for magazines and newspapers or in my books. It is how I pay the bills. Except, this isn't just a job. It's my passion and I do it with pleasure, even if it's hard.



is what drives the smile on my face. And to be able to share the experience with friends — like the joy in accidentally finding a letterbox or stumbling up to one's waste in a bog — that's what makes it all worthwhile. Perhaps there should be a Type 1.5 category of fun — it's fun whilst doing it and even more fun to talk about afterwards in the pub.

Tobias's book, *50 Races to Run Before You Die*, published by Aurum Press, is out on March 3rd 2016 and available on Amazon or in most good bookshops. You can read more of his work on [www.hardastrails.com](http://www.hardastrails.com) or at [www.tobiasmews.com](http://www.tobiasmews.com) ■

But on this occasion, perhaps my first in Dartmoor, grimace turned to grin, as I bounced between the Tors with Jack Russell-like enthusiasm. It doesn't matter if it's raining, freezing cold or beaming sunshine, the simple act of running



# Dartmoor Pony Herd Management

## In depth report from a Dartmoor Farmer



Dartmoor born and bred, Robyn Petrie-Ritchie began riding ponies at a very early age. She lives on a Dartmoor Hill Farm with her partner Steven Alford and together they will be the sixth generation to take on the family's herd of Dartmoor ponies. Robyn has a first class honours degree in Equine Science and a Research Masters in Biological Sciences. She works as a consultant for organisations such as the Mare and Foal Sanctuary and the Donkey Sanctuary, looking at the management of feral equid populations in the UK and around the world.

### The Ponies on Dartmoor

There has been a great deal of media attention over the past few years focusing on the fate of the unwanted foals from pony herds on Dartmoor. Figures of foals being destroyed on farms have varied, most recently being estimated at around 400-600 each year.

However, many farmers are taking positive, effective steps to retain their traditional herds

and are working hard to reduce their foal 'crop', while producing a small number of high quality traditional Dartmoor ponies. In this article we take a look at the ponies running on Dartmoor, how they are managed and the passion and family heritage which underpins their future.

### A commonly asked question: Are there any true Dartmoor ponies left on the open commons?

Yes! The traditional small, tough, thick coated, plain coloured ponies are ideally suited to the harsh environment.

There are three types of pony running on the open commons today: the registered 'Dartmoor Pony', the true-to-type but unregistered 'Heritage Pony' and the mixed bred 'Hill Pony'.

### The Registered Dartmoor Pony

The registered pony is currently recognised as category two 'Endangered' by the Rare Breeds Survival Trust. The registered pony is still found on Dartmoor and is perfectly suited to the environment which shaped it. The Dartmoor Pony Society (DPS) which represents the Registered Dartmoor Pony evolved out of the Mountain and Moorland section of the National Pony Society in 1925. It was never the intention of the Society to register all ponies on the hills of Dartmoor, but simply to preserve and retain all the hardiness of the traditional types and ensure they became recognised and saleable. Many of the other recognised mountain and moorland breeds in the UK share a similar history, for example: "In 1922 the Fell Pony Society was set up in its present form, not to 'improve' but to 'keep pure the old breed of pony' in the face of cross breeding."<sup>1</sup> In Wales it is accepted that there has been some infusion of Thoroughbred, Eastern and Hackney blood over the years for the Welsh Pony, but the greatest measure of improvement is said to have been brought about by the intelligent and careful selection within the breed itself. Purchasing a recognised breed ensures you have some understanding of their characteristics and can be guaranteed a record of their pedigree. Showing classes specifically for native breeds are also available to registered animals, offering breeders and purchasers the opportunity to show off the best of our local breeds.

The Dartmoor Pony went from category three 'Vulnerable' to category two 'Endangered' on The Rare Breeds Survival Trust List last year.

### Unregistered Ponies on the Moor

Heritage Ponies are unregistered but true-to-type ponies who have been given Heritage Trust List (HTL) status. These ponies are tough, robust and surefooted, thriving in harsh moorland conditions. When inspected and approved by a Dartmoor Pony Society judge as having good conformation and being true-to-type, they can be issued with a Heritage Trust passport. They remain unregistered unless they enter, if approved and meet certain criteria, the Dartmoor Pony Society/Duchy of Cornwall Upgrading Scheme.

Hill Ponies are a mixture of different breeds and have been shaped by market demand. Primarily, breeders have relied upon the live export meat market as an outlet for their Hill Pony stock. This has now come to an end, meaning the unhandled mixed bred pony has a vastly reduced market. Many suggestions have been made to resurrect demand, most recently the proposal that we must eat the ponies to save them. Sadly, this has done little for the profile of the true 'Dartmoor Pony' and has led to a great deal of negative publicity.

### The Bigger Picture

Equine charities up and down the country are full. According to the National Equine Welfare Council (NEWC) the UK remains within the grip of a national equine crisis, meaning there are too many horses in the UK and not enough good homes. Princess Anne suggested that giving a value to unwanted horses through a meat market may reduce the chances of them becoming welfare cases. When questioned further on this topic she did however conclude that this was not a reason to breed any more unwanted ponies! It was simply a suggestion to reduce the likelihood of issues such as abandonment, for those we already have.

Working as a consultant for equine welfare organisations has allowed me the opportunity to understand common themes where feral and semi-feral herds are found. Where uncontrolled breeding takes place, welfare levels decline rapidly. The current Bodmin Moor pony crisis<sup>2</sup> is again highlighting the problems caused by leaving high numbers of stallions out on the commons with no management in place. Nutritional issues, high worm burdens and fighting are rife. There is much talk of allowing a 'natural' balance to be found and allowing these animals to be left to 'roam free'. Sadly this is an uninformed and misleading viewpoint. None of the ponies on Dartmoor are 'wild'. They are all owned and have been selectively bred for many hundreds of years. Quite simply, the recent and lasting change to market requires a change to management.



My recent research focused upon three possible breeding management options available for pony keepers on Dartmoor. Those options were: stallion removal, stallion vasectomy, and female immuno-contraception.

The research was conducted for the completion of a Research Masters at Plymouth University. It was not connected or funded by any third party. It was entirely at my own expense, carried out through a desire to answer questions which were holding back changes to management which could improve welfare.

## Stallion Removal

One of the main findings was that the mares did not leave their lairs\* when stallions were removed. They remained in the areas they had always grazed, suggesting that matriarch mares dictate where the herd resides and the stallion simply keeps them more closely grouped.

*"Despite the popular macho image of the stallion, equine family bands are generally led by mares; stallions have been found to be neither the most dominant nor most aggressive animals in their herd and are generally subordinate to some of the mares in their groups<sup>3</sup>."*

## Mare Immuno-contraception

The idea of using immuno-contraceptive on the mares was primarily so that the stallion could remain on the commons and maintain the lair. However, it was noted that due to the mares no longer 'cycling' after vaccination, the stallions may actually lose interest in them and end up looking for other mares, causing lairage disruption. There is also no guarantee that mares will return to fertility after repeated treatments with the vaccine. *"Reproductive cyclicity in adult mares can be successfully suppressed by immunization against GnRH but the timing of resumption of cyclicity is highly variable<sup>4</sup>."* For breeders of pedigree Rare Breed ponies, maintaining the option of breeding is essential and immuno-contraception is therefore not an option. In areas where ponies are 'un-owned' and breeding in vast numbers, immuno-contraception may be the only and best option. This is not the case on Dartmoor.

## Vasectomising the Stallions

This operation works differently to castration. The stallion maintains all his 'normal' behaviours and continues to herd and cover the mares as well as fending off other stallions. There was some concern that the vasectomised stallion may become very 'run up' (lose condition) due to having to cover the mares repeatedly throughout the breeding season. However, this was found not to be the case. Again, this discovery backs up much other peer reviewed literature on equine behaviour. There are now a number of farmers using vasectomised stallions to run with their herds on the open commons. This technique is proving to be very effective in maintaining normal social behaviours, while reducing the need to cull foals each year.

## The Results Speak For Themselves

Our vasectomised stallion, Caspar, is going into his third year now and we can safely say he has helped us to significantly reduce the number of unwanted foals produced. Our 'entire' Pedigree stallion is kept on the farm and we bring in a small number of mares to him each year, breeding just enough for the small market we know we have. Our mares live out all year round with Caspar fending off the stallions in adjoining herds. Of course we have the occasional unwanted foal but we can manage these far more easily than having an unwanted foal from every mare each year.



Caspar March 2016

## The Hutchings of Yardworthy Farm also run a traditional Registered and Heritage herd of Dartmoor ponies and they vasectomised a stallion six years ago.

*"In late May 2010 our vet, Ulli Arnold, performed his first vasectomy and, I believe, the first on Dartmoor. This was on my fully Registered Dartmoor stallion, Metherall Maelstrom (Maley). I had used him for three seasons and he had proved to be 100% fertile. Immediately before the operation I ran Maley with 2 mares so that I had (hopefully) 2 foals to keep the bloodline. This I managed, with a filly and a colt the following year. Ulli performed the vasectomy on the front lawn of the farm. Recovery was much the same as gelding any other colt. Maley is not the most robust in his confirmation, but I needed to be able to catch and handle him if he had any problems. This was something that had not been done before on Dartmoor, and I was very conscious of being under the watchful eye. I waited 6 weeks before Maley returned to the moor to run with his own mares. At the time I had 10 mares, 8 of which were not in foal. Maley ran and behaved in the usual way any stallion would. This has remained the same over the past 6 years - running with 8-10 mares, ranging in age from 8-21 years. In the 6 years, I have had 5 foals from other stallions (there are up to 4 running on the same common). All the mares are home bred and have spent most of their lives on the same common. I am a firm believer that the mares 'own' their stallion, VASECTOMISED or not!"*



## The Fursdons of Lowertown Farm have also chosen this technique, to limit the number of foals produced from their Registered and Heritage herd.

*"Making the decision to vasectomise our stallion Merribridge Groomsman, affectionately known as Donkey (from the film Shrek), wasn't an easy one as he is such a nice, pedigree pony with a wonderful character. However, back in March 2012 we couldn't ignore the recession which was hitting the equestrian market hard, with equines selling poorly both privately and at auction, made even worse with continual irresponsible breeding all over the UK.*

*After a lot of research we decided that vasectomising our stallion was the only workable option available to us at the time, partly because the other choice which didn't affect the behaviour of the stallion or his herd was a contraceptive injection for the mares which was yet to be trialled and fully licenced in the UK.*

*The vasectomy was originally seen as a short term fix to reduce the number of foals immediately; if we'd had any welfare concerns vasectomy would not have been considered, as our stallion's welfare is paramount.*

*We have been very pleased with the results having a positive impact on our pony herd. With far fewer foals every year, which has been far more manageable for us (the occasional mare gets covered by other fertile stallions on the same patch of common). Our stallion is looking better than ever, as you can see by the photos taken in early March 2016 after a long, very wet and miserable winter. He has maintained his weight throughout the year, if anything often looking a bit too round! The mares appear very content too, also maintaining their weight year-round, which shows that they are very happy to run with a vasectomised stallion."*

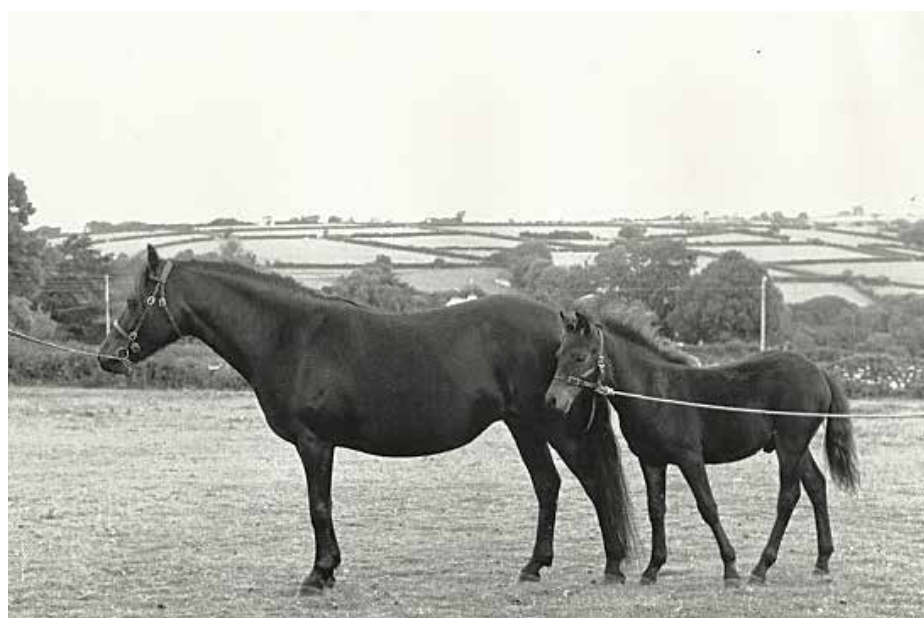






**Famous Dartmoor Pony breeder Elizabeth Newbolt-Young, of Shilstone Rocks Stud at Widecombe, has also used a vasectomised stallion for some years now. Shilstone Rocks Stud produce highly successful ponies for the show ring, which are sought after world-wide and are bred and raised on Dartmoor.**

Shilstone Rocks' vasectomised stallion in great condition (February 2016) running with his herd of pedigree mares.



## Born and Bred

The ponies below are a small selection of our family's Registered Dartmoor ponies, born and bred on the moor, versatile, hardy, and a breed to be proud of.

Left: Champion Dartmoor Mare Shelly Pool.  
Right: Shelly Pool's prizes



## Shelley Pool

Shelley Pool wiped the board in the show ring and returned to the moors to spend many happy years of retirement; she was occasionally taken out of retirement in her twenties to attend fun shows with the youngest members of the family.

Steven Alford was found, aged three, in the farmyard on Timmy Tiptoes, having miraculously managed to clamber onto his back unaided! Timmy taught several generations to ride, was famous on the hunting field and spent many happy years running on the open commons.

Far left: Steven Alford on Timmy Tiptoes  
Above: Shelly Ripple (aged 5) with the author and (below) now in her thirties.

Lovebrook Foxglove is currently winning many prizes in the show ring with her loan home family and will return home to Dartmoor to breed in years to come.



## Our Future and Heritage

Every pony breeder is passionate about the pony 'type' they breed. Sadly, while 'entire' males of mixed breeding remain on the open commons arguments will continue and unwanted mixed bred ponies will continue to fill up sanctuaries or be destroyed each year.

If a stallion- directed breeding management programme could be implemented, every pony keeper could breed to their own market. Bulls and rams are not permitted to run on the commons and we breed different types of sheep and cattle on the open common with little interference between neighbours. We could breed ponies of varying types in just the same way under this form of management.

Despite the negative stories, there are breeders quietly working very hard to retain their traditional herds on the moors for all to enjoy. There seems little reason not to celebrate and promote these wonderful ponies. ■

*"Cross breeding with individual ponies to produce a desired type is a sound practice, but it is quite wrong to turn loose a stallion of different breed among the herds on the hill or moor."*  
Darling 1943

Those wishing to support farmers producing traditional type Dartmoor Ponies on Dartmoor are encouraged to contact the author on the contact details below.

**Robyn Petrie-Ritchie ResM**  
**Middle Week Farm**  
**South Zeal**  
**Okehampton**  
**Devon**  
**EX20 2QB**  
**UK**  
**(01647) 231238**  
**07752 382750**  
**dartmoorponyresearch@gmail.com**  
**www.dartmoorponyresearch.com**

1. Fell Pony Society [online] Available at: [http://www.fellponysociety.org.uk/about\\_breed.htm](http://www.fellponysociety.org.uk/about_breed.htm)
  2. The Bodmin Pony Crisis, highlighted by People4Ponies: <http://people4ponies.blogspot.co.uk/>
  3. Goodwin, D., 2007. The welfare of Horses: Horse Behaviour, Evolution, Domestication and Feralisation. Animal Welfare, 1, pp. 1-18.
  4. Imboden, I., Janett, F., Burgera, D., Crowe, M.A., Hässig, M., Thunb, R., 2006. Influence Of Immunization Against GnRH On Reproductive Cyclicity And Estrous Behavior In The Mare. Theriogenology, 66(8), pp. 1866-1875
  5. Darling, F., 1943. The story of the countryside No 4 The Farmyard. Richard Clay and company Ltd. Bungay, Suffolk.
- \*Lair is pronounced 'leer' on Dartmoor: Ponies, sheep and cattle are 'laired' or 'hefted' to an area where their owners have rights to graze. Livestock moving away from this area could therefore interfere with grazing agreements.



## ADOPT A DARTMOOR PONY

### YOU ARE INVITED TO ADOPT ONE OF OUR DARTMOOR PONIES



By adopting one of our Ponies, you will be helping towards the costs of our charity which provides the general public with education and information on the special heritage of the indigenous Dartmoor Pony, and support for the native Dartmoor Pony herds.

### An Adoption makes an ideal anniversary, birthday or Christmas gift.

For just £20 per year you will receive the following:-

- An adoption certificate
- Details of the 'Heritage' pony you decide to adopt
- A beautiful line drawing
- Full colour postcard of your adopted pony
- Three newsletters a year

Our fundraising goes towards a variety of initiatives and activities intended to preserve the Dartmoor pony on Dartmoor.

Tel: 01626 833234  
**www.dpht.co.uk**

Parke Estate, Bovey Tracey, Devon, TQ13 9JQ Charity no. 1109196

## Lowertown Farm

### Bed and Breakfast Accommodation



Dartmoor Farmhouse Accommodation from £24pppn.

Perfect for walkers, climbers, horse riders and paddlers of the River Dart. Quality local pubs nearby, full traditional English breakfast. Fresh eggs from our chickens and ducks. Guest sitting room with log burner. Great guest reviews. online bookings through our website.



Putting Dartmoor First award • Holiday with your horse!  
Top 10 Farmstay UK Countryfile Magazine  
Top 100 Selected Farms Country Living Magazine  
**www.lowertownfarmdartmoor.co.uk**  
**01364 631034**



# 42 days on Dartmoor - Summer inspiration

The summer school holiday lasts for 42 days, so our lovely colleague Rebecca from Exciting Education came up with the brilliant idea of creating a full calendar of events, one for each day of the summer break! We have had the pleasure of working with her to produce this wonderful page that you can use for inspiration on where to go and what to do throughout the summer.



JULY	<b>Day 1</b> Sat 23 Chagstock Festival	<b>Day 2</b> Sun 24 Meldon Reservoir	<b>Day 3</b> Mon 25 Princetown Visitor centre Prison Museum Railway walk	<b>Day 4</b> Tue 26 Family Rock Day Adventure Okehampton, Bouldering, tors, climbing, weaselling
	<b>Day 5</b> Wed 27 Sheepdog Trials Pennywell Farm	<b>Day 6</b> Thur 28 Loveletters2Dartmoor mobile phone photography course Teenagers Only	<b>Day 7</b> Fri 29 Summertime Nature Make Buckland Abbey 12pm-4pm	<b>Day 8</b> Sat 30 Visit a Tor on Dartmoor
	<b>Day 9</b> Sun 31 Wonderful wild flowers Lydford Gorge, 1pm-4pm	<b>Day 10</b> Mon 1 Burrator Visitor centre and walks	<b>Day 11</b> Tue 2 War Horse Valley Farm 2pm-6pm	<b>Day 12</b> Wed 3 Wildlife Wednesday with Dartmoor National Park, 2pm-4pm
	<b>Day 13</b> Thur 4 Museum of Dartmoor Life Okehampton	<b>Day 14</b> Fri 5 Riding on Dartmoor Cholwell Riding Stables, Mary Tavy	<b>Day 15</b> Sat 6 Miniature Pony Centre Moretonhampstead	<b>Day 16</b> Sun 7 Cycling on the Granite Way Lydford to Okehampton
AUGUST	<b>Day 17</b> Mon 8 Haldon Forest cycling trails, Go Ape Tree Top Adventure	<b>Day 18</b> Tue 9 Okehampton Castle	<b>Day 19</b> Wed 10 Family Felt Buckland Abbey 11am-4pm	<b>Day 20</b> Thur 11 Okehampton Show



AUGUST

SEPTEMBER

**Day 21** Fri 12  
Canoeing and  
Kayaking  
Adventure  
Okehampton

**Day 22** Sat 13  
Spooners  
Family Fun  
Day Yelverton  
07730486529

**Day 23** Sun 14  
Visit Buckfast  
Bee Visit, Buckfast  
Abbey and Butterfly  
and Otter Sanctuary

**Day 24** Mon 15  
Bronze Age  
Exhibition  
National Park Visitor  
Centre, Postbridge

**Day 25** Tue 16  
River of Life  
Picnic, Parke, Bovey  
Tracey, 11am-3pm

**Day 26** Wed 17  
Dingles  
Fairground  
Lifton

**Day 27** Thur 18  
Chagford  
Show

**Day 28** Fri 19  
Resplendent  
Rug Workshop  
Finch Foundry,  
11am-4pm

**Day 29** Sat 20  
South Devon  
Railway  
Harry Potter journey

**Day 30** Sun 21  
Camp at River  
Dart Country  
Park

**Day 31** Mon 22  
Chagford  
Swimming Pool

**Day 32** Tue 23  
Wistman's Wood  
Lead your own shelter  
building, myth making  
and walking day

**Day 33** Wed 24  
House of  
Marbles

**Day 34** Thur 25  
Letter Boxing

**Day 35** Fri 26  
Cycle the  
Drake's Trail

**Day 36** Sat 27  
Bushcraft Day  
at CRS Adventures,  
River Dart Country Park

**Day 37** Sun 28  
Dartmoor Zoo

**Day 38** Mon 29  
Lustleigh  
Village Show  
10am

**Day 39** Tue 30  
Granite Elements,  
Family Fun and  
Art Walk  
Dartmoor Walking  
Festival

**Day 40** Wed 31  
Canonteign  
Falls

**Day 41** Thu 1  
Brentor Church  
and Lydford  
Castle

**Day 42** Fri 2  
A Walk for  
Children  
Dartmoor Walking  
Festival

Type of activity

- Fixed date
- Make your own activity
- Any day over the holidays
- Other fixed dates available

To see more details of any of the 42 days go to [visitdartmoor.co.uk/42days](http://visitdartmoor.co.uk/42days)



# A TWO BLONDES BIMBLE

## Beardown Tors

**Blonde Bimble:** a leisurely walk or journey enjoyed by two giggling Dartmoor ladies.

'They had a great Blonde Bimble over to Beardown Tors; followed by a cream tea at The Two Bridges Hotel.'

### Location

Beardown Tors is a collection of smaller tors making up three separate summits. We Blondes don't think the name has anything to do with Goldilocks and her three companions; but we never take porridge with us just in case. Beardown is well worth a visit for the views alone; it is one of those coveted Dartmoor places that combines the feeling of complete wilderness with relatively easy access. Which is why we have chosen it for our latest Blonde Bimble.

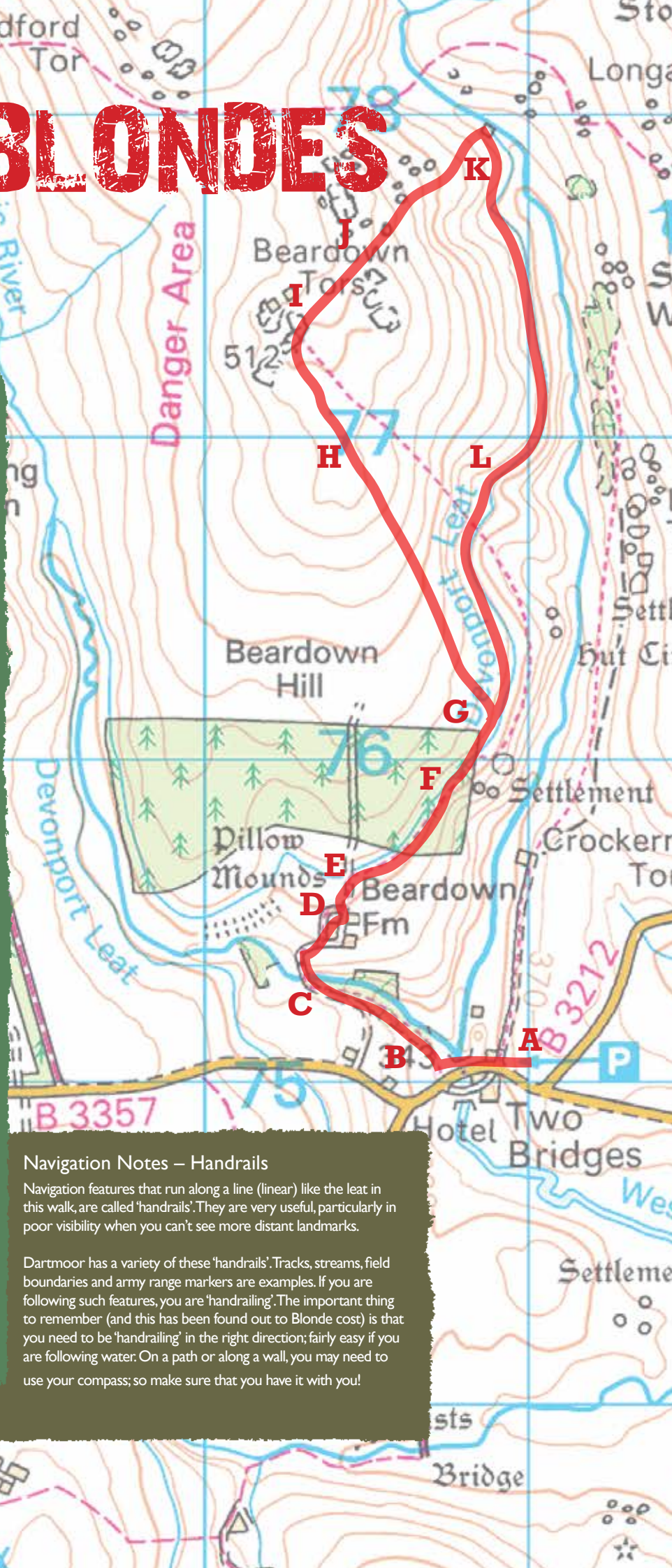
### Warning

Beardown Tors is on the edge of one of Dartmoor's army firing ranges. Tempting though a load of army chaps (and chapesses) might seem; you really don't want to wander in when they are shooting real guns! Check for live firing times here [www.gov.uk/government/publications/dartmoor-fring-programme](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dartmoor-fring-programme)

### Navigation Notes – Handrails

Navigation features that run along a line (linear) like the leat in this walk, are called 'handrails'. They are very useful, particularly in poor visibility when you can't see more distant landmarks.

Dartmoor has a variety of these 'handrails'. Tracks, streams, field boundaries and army range markers are examples. If you are following such features, you are 'handrailing'. The important thing to remember (and this has been found out to Blonde cost) is that you need to be 'handrailing' in the right direction; fairly easy if you are following water. On a path or along a wall, you may need to use your compass; so make sure that you have it with you!





**F**or this walk, park your car in the Two Bridges quarry car park SX 609750. The quarry car park fills up quickly, but if you fancy a cup of coffee or a delicious lunch first, you could park opposite at The Two Bridges Hotel (they won't mind if you ask nicely.) The quarry car park is just behind the bus stop which means that you don't have to bring a car at all if you don't want to.

**A** On leaving the quarry car park, turn right and follow the road over the West Dart bridge for 200 metres. (Blonde note – although there are obviously two bridges at Two Bridges, don't confuse yourself by crossing them both now.)

**B** You will see an entrance to a footpath on your right SX607 749. Walk between the double boundaries for 75 metres. The path then continues for 150 metres across an open field (if you pretend that you are a horse, you will look silly) and into some trees.

**C** Climb the stile SX605 752 (taking care not to be attacked by the rather keen conifer) and continue through the trees; admiring the Cowsic River as it tumbles below you. After a meandering 300 metres, you will meet the track to Beardown Farm SX603 753. (Please note – this path is rocky but fun. See alternative route below).

#### Alternative to A, B and C:

Turn right out of the quarry car park, cross the West Dart bridge and walk up the road for 700 metres (taking care on the bend). Turn right down the track to Beardown Farm SX604 750 and follow it for 400 metres until you meet the path on your right that comes up alongside the Cowsic SX603 753.

**D** Follow the track up towards Beardown Farm. On your left just after you cross the Cowsic, you will see a gate with a tent sign. This marks one of the Beardown Farm wild camping site fields ('wild' as in pretty but no loos!) Continue up the hill for 200 metres, but don't go up the farm drive. Instead turn left.

**E** Ahead of you, you will see a firebreak in a conifer plantation. This leads directly onto the hill below Beardown Tors but your path turns right here and follows the leat.

**F** It is a pretty walk along the leat, between fields and then into the plantation. About 100 metres after you enter the plantation, there is an interesting overflow for the leat SX606 757. If you like contours (trust us, they are good fun) there is an interesting kink in the contour line here to mark the dip in the ground below the overflow. (Go on, you know you want to find it!).

**G** You emerge back into the sunshine (or the mist) after 700 metres. Here the path officially crosses to the other side of the leat; but it's a less steep climb up to Beardown Tors if you follow the leat to the next footbridge SX609 760 and then get your compass out.

We told you to bring your compass! Set it to 333° and walk uphill (sorry) across some wet ground (even more sorry) for 700 metres until you come to a wall.

**H** Find the gate in the wall SX605 767 and go through it. Continue across a flatter area for another 600 metres and you will have reached the most westerly of the three Beardown summits SX605 773.

**I** Beardown Tors can be quite exposed so find yourself a spot out of the wind and take in the views (try to line up your map with what you can see). To the North, you can see Lydford Tor and, beyond that, Devil's Tor (it's okay, the devils are a fair way off) and then up into the wilds of the North Moor. Looking to the East you can see Longaford Tor above Wistman's Wood and the West Dart. Turning your attention to the West, well you can gaze at Holming Beam Bottom and Black Dunghill if you want to, but they don't have quite the same charm!

**J** When you have finished view-gazing and map lining-up, you might want to explore the other Beardown summits. See if you can find the army hut and the fag pole (if the flag is up, be warned, it indicates live firing. Remember you are on the edge of the firing range!)

**K** Next you need to find your way down to the West Dart weir. From the northern Beardown summit, set a bearing of 58° and walk down the hill towards the river – 450 metres. This weir SX608 779 is the most northerly point of the Devonport Leat which was built in the 1790's. It took water from the West Dart, the Cowsic and the Blackbrook rivers all the way down to the thirsty dockyard workers at Devonport. It is a fascinating construction. Other sections are well worth walking along.

**L** Follow the leat back along to the plantation, down to Beardown Farm and along the Cowsic to the B3357/3212 and your car. At this point, you might want to take a diversion across the other (much more lovely) bridge in the grounds of the Two Bridges Hotel; if you do, you really should pose for a photo and sample a cream tea! ■

## Family Option

The only section of this walk that is suitable for pushchairs is the track up to Beardown Farm. Children will enjoy the rocky section along and above the Cowsic River but progress may be slow. The climb from the leat up to Beardown Tors is a bit of an effort but youngsters should enjoy walking along the leat to the edge of the plantation. The views, as you emerge from the trees, will satisfy most adults. You could then continue along the leat to the West Dart weir to avoid going up any major hills.



PHOTOGRAPH TWO BLONDES

## FOOT FILE

**LENGTH:** 8 Kilometres Height Gain: 163 Metres.

**TIME:** 3 hours.

**SUITABLE:** A reasonable level of fitness required. Only one main uphill section. Basic navigation skills advantageous for moorland section. Dartmoor weather can change quickly.

**ROAD WALKING:** Please remember that country roads do have vehicles on them (Dartmoor ones often have cows too).

We recommend facing the oncoming traffic (unless you are on a sharp bend) and wearing high visibility gear.

**START/FINISH:** Two Bridges SX 605749

**TERRAIN:** Mixed terrain: a short road section, track, rough/wet moorland, one section is rocky but a detour is possible.

**MAP:** OS Explorer OL28 Dartmoor.

**PUBLIC TRANSPORT:** Train to Plymouth, walk 5 minutes to Pennycomequick station (real place, we promise!), Plymouth Citybus 46 (towards Okehampton) to Yelverton, Target Travel Bus 98 to Two Bridges. Bus travel time – 1 hour. (Please check for travel changes.)

**PARKING:** Two Bridges quarry car park SX 609750 (no charge but parking very limited) OR Two Bridges Hotel opposite if you buy lunch or a cream tea.

**NEARBY ATTRACTIONS:** Wistman's Wood, High Moorland Visitor Centre (Princetown), Dartmoor Prison Museum (Princetown).

### Want to share your favourite walk with readers?

If you have a particular walk that you think other readers would enjoy and have some good images to go with it we'd like to hear from you. Email [jenny@activedartmoor.co.uk](mailto:jenny@activedartmoor.co.uk) with your idea.



All of us at *Active Dartmoor* are keen to encourage people, of all abilities, to enjoy Dartmoor. So when Devon Cycle Hire, offered to tell me how they could accommodate a whole range of disabilities and let me have a bike for the morning, I jumped at the chance.

# Cycling for All

Written by David Guiterman

**T**hey explained that adapting a bike is usually no problem. There are four controls: two breaks and two gear levers, each of which can be positioned to accommodate most disabilities. It is perfectly possible to ride one-handed. Devon Cycle Hire is right next to the Granite way. This was once part of the Southern Region railway and has been converted into an all-weather track for cycles, horses and pedestrians. Unlike many roads, this track has no sign of a pothole anywhere. As the gradients are shallow, it is possible to cycle safely using only one brake — preferably the rear one. For those with more severe difficulties, tandems are available. There is no need either to put any power into pedalling or to steer; just leave all that effort to your partner in front and enjoy the experience and the magnificent views. If you need more extensive modifications to the bike it would be best to contact Devon Cycle Hire beforehand so as to explain your needs.

It was now time to jump aboard a very modern, well-maintained bike and experience the Granite way for myself. At first, I was a little nervous as it was many years ago when I last took to two wheels. Away I went; Whoops! A bit of a wobble and then, steady as she goes. The first section is all downhill so I could take in the wonderful views before having to do any really serious pedalling. Off to the left, the Sun was lighting up Sourton Tors: a series of outcrops composed not of granite, as one might expect on Dartmoor, but of sedimentary rock, heated and hardened by the once-molten granite. Rock like this is so hard that it is quarried at Meldon for road-building and as railway ballast.

Then it was on, effortlessly, downhill to Lake Viaduct and a stop to take in the panoramic views on either side. This granite viaduct was built in 1874 and then widened in 1878 to take an additional line. If you look carefully you can see the join. Lake? So where's the water then? Not a drop to be seen. Visitors soon find that, on Dartmoor, 'Lake' often refers to a very small







stream. This narrow, steep-sided dry valley coming down to Lake Viaduct was once a copper mine. Time to get off and enjoy the view. It was at that point that I realised the significance of not having been on a bike for a long time — time enough for joints to have become stiff. My leg couldn't quite make it over the crossbar and,

ignominiously, the bike and I changed our relative positions. Getting out from underneath, I made a mental note that next time I shall ask for a lady's bike: no crossbar, so no problem.

Onwards and downwards. Looking to the left you can see, just over a mile away, Brat Tor which is easily identified by the large Widgery Cross, erected by William Widgery, the Dartmoor artist, to commemorate Queen Victoria's Jubilee in 1887. You might just be able to make it out in the photograph. This cross is unusual in that it has been made up of a series of granite blocks, as opposed to having been hewn from a single slab of granite.

Having reached the end of the Granite Way, I cycled through the village of Lydford and stood for a while admiring Lydford Castle. Looking at it, I had no cause for concern. Not so for those men living long-ago within the Forest of Dartmoor and who had transgressed. It was here that the Forest Court used to sit and pass judgement on miscreants brought before it. Lydford Castle was subsequently appointed as the prison for felons convicted under the harsh Stannary Laws, by which time, Lydford had gained wide notoriety as the home of the barbaric form of justice known colloquially as Lydford Law, or 'hang first and try after', which was immortalized in a 1644 poem by William Browne of Tavistock.

If found guilty, sentence could only be passed by the 'Court of Justice Seat' which convened once every three years.

Some writers have gone so far as to suggest that, as the eventual sentence was a foregone conclusion, it was expeditious for the Chief Warden to hang the convicted offender without further ado, rather than detain him for up to three years, only for the next sitting of the 'Court of Justice Seat' to determine his inevitable fate.

Having got this close to Lydford Gorge and never having visited it before, now was the time to put that right. I arrived at the National Trust

car park, secured the bike to the bike rack with the lock provided by Devon Cycle Hire and went to talk to the volunteers at the desk. They explained about the short walk to Devil's Cauldron for anyone preferring to avoid the complete circuit. Both walks involve lots of steps, though the short walk is easier to negotiate.

If you arrive by Tramper (a type of cross-country scooter for the disabled) you can access the spectacular White Lady Waterfall by driving round to the South West entrance.

The National Trust has one Tramper that visitors can borrow. It is provided by the Countryside Mobility Scheme. Membership of the scheme is £2.50 for one month or £10 for a year. Members of the scheme are not charged a fee for use of the Tramper but the National Trust does appreciate voluntary donations towards its maintenance.

I then completed the return journey to Devon Cycle Hire, having had a wonderful morning packed with an exhilarating variety of experiences. Go on; give it a go; you won't regret it.

Note: I discovered that, last year, Devon Cycle Hire did have a Tramper they could lend to visitors. Alas, this Countryside Mobility Scheme has finished. However, it is hoped to have another one arrive for the summer. I strongly advise anyone who is tempted to make use of the Tramper to phone Devon Cycle hire (01837 861141) so as to be sure of its availability. ■

To view the cycling code of conduct for Dartmoor visit -  
[www.dartmoor.gov.uk/visiting/vi-enjoyingdartmoor/cycling](http://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/visiting/vi-enjoyingdartmoor/cycling)



PHOTOGRAPHS © DAVID GUTTERMAN



# Wild and Free

Matt Parkins seeks a peaceful night under the stars

**T**he wide open spaces of Dartmoor offer so many experiences that can bring us close to nature. Striding between tors and cycling the stony tracks give us a chance to breathe the air and discover the diverse parts of a treasured landscape but, out there in the vast moor, is one unique way to get that little bit closer. By camping in the wilds of Dartmoor you can, for a night, become part of the Moor itself. If you have a small backpacking tent and keep away from roads and farms, you can set up camp in the most remote places for an idyllic night out. The most beautiful and peaceful end to a day's hiking on the Moor.

After a hot, midsummer day I found a small flat pitch in a secluded valley. The sound of tumbling water seduced me. Hanging in the breeze, a kestrel hovered with precision, its head motionless; not even a twitch. It was searching for its next meal; a magnificent predator at the top of its food chain.

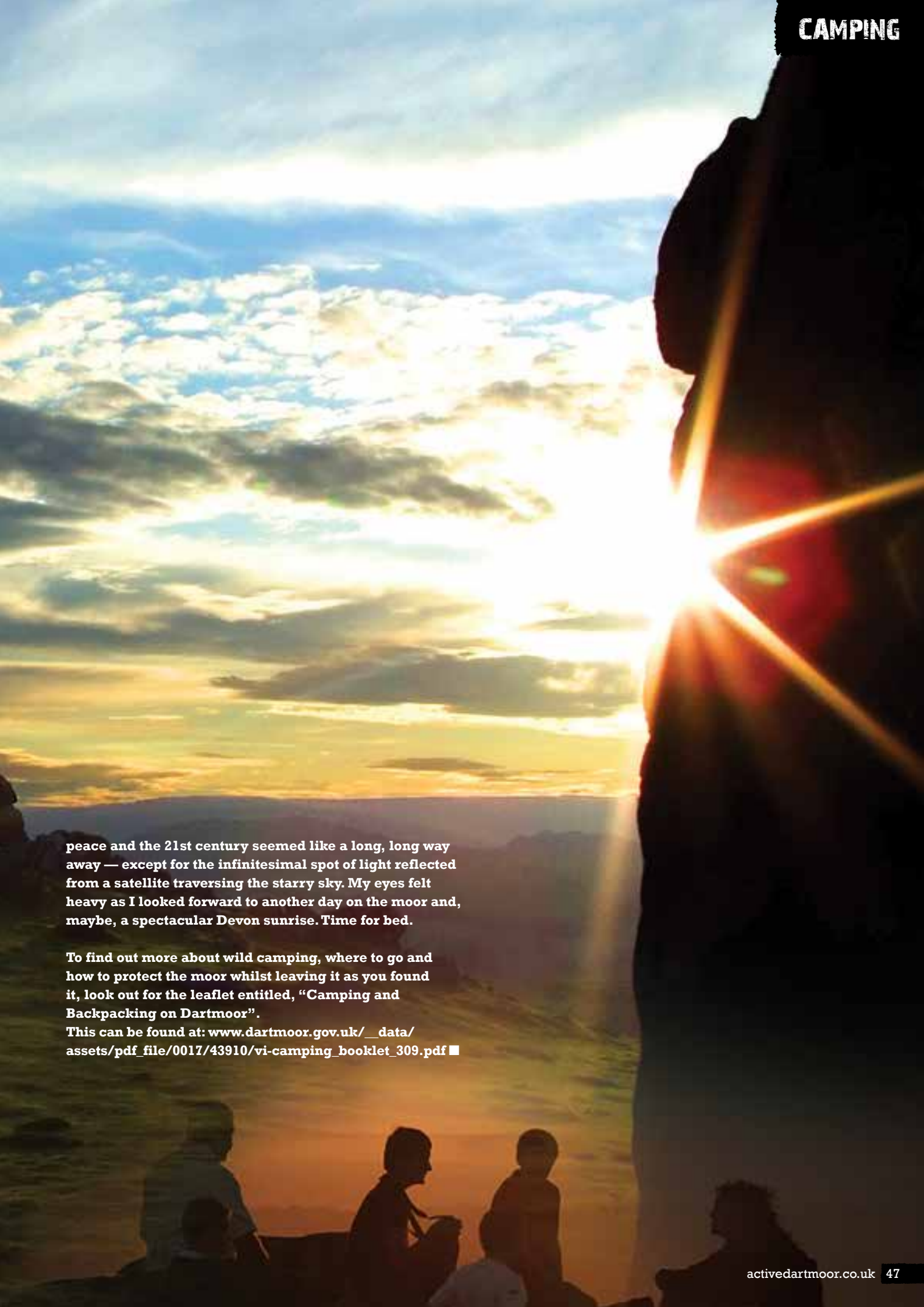
I put the map away and sat on a granite boulder, relieved to remove hot boots and plunge my feet into the bubbling stream. There's no feeling quite like it. It's refreshing, relaxing therapy! No camp fires are allowed in the National Park so, lighting up a small gas stove, it was time for dinner (Stoves must be placed on a stable stone and not directly on the vegetation). The menu choice was a bit limited. "What's in the rucksack?" There's a range of expedition food packs available but, this time, I chose chicken pasta followed by rice pudding with apple. Perhaps not a gourmet meal but you can't beat the wilderness experience to improve the flavour of camp cooking. Waiting for the water to boil and lying back on the ground I had nothing to do but watch a couple of damsel flies sparkling over the stream. Flicking fish tails broke the water's surface where small brown trout darted around in the deeper pools. I'd chosen a camping spot with short grass to avoid disturbing the ground-nesting birds, such as the skylarks and meadow pipits that were energetically defending their territories with all the power their tiny lungs could generate. Summer on Dartmoor has to be one of the best destinations in the world and, during these longer evenings, it's worth every bit of effort to get here.

As time went on, the evening sun brought out the violet ground beetle with its bright flashes of colour along its flanks. I watched it clamber through tussocks to find its favourite food — slugs. If only these spectacular little friends could find their way to my garden!

In the gradually deepening darkness the first few stars began to twinkle. There were no lights, no cars, no houses. It was going to get properly dark. Only silhouettes of the skyline were visible where one ancient and stunted hawthorn stood guard over the valley. With the breeze for company, the grass whispered and the gorse gently rattled. I was enjoying the real sense of







peace and the 21st century seemed like a long, long way away — except for the infinitesimal spot of light reflected from a satellite traversing the starry sky. My eyes felt heavy as I looked forward to another day on the moor and, maybe, a spectacular Devon sunrise. Time for bed.

To find out more about wild camping, where to go and how to protect the moor whilst leaving it as you found it, look out for the leaflet entitled, “Camping and Backpacking on Dartmoor”.

This can be found at: [www.dartmoor.gov.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0017/43910/vi-camping\\_booklet\\_309.pdf](http://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0017/43910/vi-camping_booklet_309.pdf) ■





@claymorestrength  
@claymore\_uk



Claymore  
Strength and  
Conditioning



**- Personal Training -  
- Military Preparation -  
- Boot Camps -**

jamie@claymorestrength.com  
07877772844

www.claymorestrength.com

Ride straight onto **Dartmoor** from...



**Cholwell**

**RIDING STABLES**



**OPEN**  
ALL YEAR -  
7 DAYS A WEEK

We are a family-run stables, providing escorted rides across Dartmoor for any age and ability of rider. Wide selection of horses and ponies to suit everyone!

- Families and groups welcome
- Friendly atmosphere with experienced and helpful staff
- Hats and other equipment provided free of charge

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO BOOK, PLEASE RING.

**01822 810526**



www.cholwellridingstables.co.uk



**CALLING ALL ADVENTURERS!**

**Tel 01837 53916**  
**www.adventureokehampton.com**




Rock Climbing, Kayaking, Mountain Board,  
Abseil, Bushcraft, Day Camps



**ADVENTURE OKEHAMPTON**



**ADVENTURE  
SOUTHWEST**

**COMING SOON TO THE  
ROYAL CORNWALL  
SHOWGROUND  
OCT 28/29 2016**

**The Adventure Starts Here**

**SHOWCASING THE BEST ADVENTURE AND  
OUTDOOR PURSUITS OUR REGION HAS TO OFFER.  
COME AND DISCOVER A RANGE OF ACTIVITIES.  
MEET THE EXPERTS, LEARN SOMETHING NEW  
AND HAVE A GO!!**

**VISIT OUR FOUR ZONES:**  
**ALTITUDE/TRACK AND TRAIL  
WATERSPORTS/LEARNING LIVE**

Free Admission  
www.adventuresouthwest.co.uk

@adventureshowsw   @adventuresouthwestuk





# An ideal family day out

David Guiterman samples the delights on offer at

## Ullacombe Farm

One May day two horseriders were passing Ullacombe Farm on the B3387 between Bovey Tracey and Haytor; observing it was for sale, they thought of their children, Debbie, Stephen, Lucy & Mark. Debbie had worked in hotels and pubs since the age of 18. Lucy came from a finance background and the two sons farmed with in a 3 mile radius of Ullacombe. They all thought it would be perfect for her and her sister Lucy to manage the café & the shop and for their sons to manage the farm and animals. Within a week the family had bought the farm and set about making it the perfect venue for a family day out. Two weeks after a complete make-over, it was open for business.

Debbie's combination of experience and talents ensures that there is a warm welcome for the whole family; pets included. Open the door and be greeted by a tempting array of local speciality food and drinks. Sit down and be warmed by a log fire and made to feel at home by the friendly team for whom nothing is too much trouble.

With so many dishes to tempt the taste buds, most of it reared or grown on this and neighbouring farms, it is a pleasure to take time to choose from the varied menu, sure in the knowledge that whatever the final selection, it will live up to all expectations. For the young ones, it's an educational experience to be able to see exactly where the food comes from.

Once outside, there is so much to do. An imaginative play area will get the smaller family members having great fun (including a small irresistible tractor, which children are encouraged to scramble over)

whilst grown-ups look on taking their ease relaxing in comfortable chairs – just one more example of how the family has thought of everything. Dogs are welcome; just lift the lid of the biscuit box on the wall and treat your pet before going for a farm and woodland walk. Then set off to meet the animals. A range of exotic chickens, ducks and other small animals are ready to intrigue the younger family members. After that, it's time to make friends with the sheep, goats, ponies and most appealing of all, the alpacas with young ones by their side. Even the sheep were so friendly they wanted to play with my young golden retriever.

Are you thinking of arranging a daytime party for friends and family? Ullacombe's large barn awaits with its walls covered in paintings exhibited by local artists and spectacular views out of the windows of the southern slopes of Dartmoor and the South Hams. Debbie and her team will gladly provide a range of food to satisfy every taste.

How many enthusiasts have tried to go tobogganing on the southern slopes of Haytor only to find the road snowbound? No problem; The family has just the field for the job. In no time everyone will be sliding down for free in the knowledge that a soft bouncy landing awaits at the bottom. Back in the cafe, local venison will be on the menu and that oh-so-welcome log fire to add warmth to a wonderful winter's day out. ■

**For anyone feeling adventurous, there is a whole range of local walks to work up an appetite. I have written about one of my favourites on the next page.**



PHOTOGRAPHS © KATHY TIPPING



# ULLACOMBE FARM WALK

Written by David Guiterman

## FOOT FILE

**Distance:** 6 miles. **Equipment needed:** OS Explorer map OL28, and a compass. A hand-held GPS would be helpful, especially for navigating through Yarner Wood.

I have given 6-figure grid references and compass bearings where these are helpful. For those who prefer not to use a map and compass, try using the set of landmark photos. The photos follow the lettering on the map. Follow each in turn to complete the walk.

**Caution;** do not rely on the photos unless the visibility is good.

**PARKING:** Haytor Visitor Centre [www.dartmoor.gov.uk/visiting/vi-planningyourvisit/vi-infocentres/vi-haytorinfocentre](http://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/visiting/vi-planningyourvisit/vi-infocentres/vi-haytorinfocentre)

If you could do only one walk on Dartmoor, this has to be the one; within the three hours it takes to cover these 6 miles it's an unforgettably fulfilling experience. There is an all-granite railway - even granite points! Additional charm is lent by disused quarries and sheltered lily ponds, complete with frogbit. If that were not enough, go on to savour a 21st-century clapper bridge, offering an optional Tarzan experience. Take in the expansive Dartmoor views over heather and gorse moor to distant tors. Then go on to enjoy a carpet of bluebells (best in May) followed by an ancient woodland, hiding the most easterly of the Dartmoor copper mines. Using up all that energy provides the appetite to do justice to a meal of home-made locally-sourced produce served in the friendly and relaxing environment of the Ullacombe farm shop (see previous page of this issue).

The best place to leave your vehicle is the car park beside Dartmoor National Park Visitor Centre below Haytor. Make a point of calling in, they have a superb range of maps, books and information leaflets, plus extremely knowledgeable staff!

Begin this walk by taking the Haytor Vale to Manaton road (767774). Walk along the road north-eastwards for about 200m until you come to the start of the Templer way. This granite railway was built by George Templer, at his own expense, to take granite from his quarries along the 10 mile trip to the Stover canal. Why granite rails and not the more usual cast-iron version? Haytor granite is particularly hard and gave practically no trouble, whereas cast-iron rails had a habit of breaking thus causing considerable inconvenience. As the wagons had plain wheels without flanges,

they could be manoeuvred at the terminals without the need for sidings.

Follow the Templer Way **A** towards the spoil tips of Haytor Quarry, just to the north-east of the main mass of this famous tor. You then come to a set of granite points (SX761777). Note the clever arrangement of granite rails to allow wagons either to carry straight on or to go around to Haytor quarry. The small hole in one of the granite rails held a pole that was used to direct the wagons in the right direction.

Despite the changes in contour, the railway track gradient is either steadily uphill or level: a tribute to the original builders. Follow the left-hand granite track to the entrance of the quarry. The public path into the quarry skirts around the South East of the original entrance. Go through the pedestrian gate at

the top, remembering to obey the instructions to shut it. Then follow the path into the quarry itself.

George Templer, being aware that Tyrwhitt was making money hand over fist with his Foggintor and Swelltor quarries (see issue 9 page 21) decided to open his own quarry at Haytor. This was a good decision as the granite from this quarry is one of the hardest in Britain. Take time to admire the enormous size of the granite blocks in the cliff. This allowed, in 1919, the Devon war memorial in Exeter to be fashioned from a single block of granite: this was the last product of Haytor quarry and was transported by road, using a traction engine. It took twice as long to do this journey as it would have done had the granite railway been used. It seems even then it was quicker by rail.

The path inside the quarry will take you around the ponds



PHOTOGRAPH © MALCOLM SNEELGROVE



and over the stile at the far end. At this point, you can either divert to the left and take the path to the Haytor itself or carry on to Holwell Tor quarry. Haytor is probably the most famous of all the Dartmoor tors and has more aliases than Smith and Jones.

If you do divert to Haytor, you will need to retrace your steps to the stile. About 30m northwest from this stile you come to a confusing branching of trackways. At 759775 take the path going off at 330°. There are lots of tracks, many of which are not marked on the ordnance survey map. As long as you head towards the northeast edge of Holwell Tor (286°) you won't go far wrong **B**. At the



cross roads (758776) turn left (260°). At the T-junction (757775) turn right on a path that goes off at 347°. Now, you will meet the main railway (757777) with its granite stones, from which point you descend the hill at 290° into Holwell quarry. That was easy wasn't it?

At the entrance to the quarry are the remains of the quarrymen's accommodation block. It was better to sleep overnight at the quarry, rather than braving the exposed moorland journey home and back each day.

Look across the valley towards Hound Tor (bearing 320°) from mid till late May and you will be rewarded by a wonderful carpet of bluebells.

Continue on the path through the quarry until you can go no further; at which point (750777) you take what looks like an improbable route down a steep slope to the right.

Just follow the path straight down and into the wood **C**. The



bearing is approximately 295°.

You are now beside Becka Brook with its flat grassy glades; a perfect place to picnic next to the granite clapper bridge (747778) put there in 2014 by the National Park: it's too recent to be shown on the OS map. Here, somebody has kindly made a rope swing providing an alternative method of crossing; use it at your own risk.

Follow the path up at right angles to the brook. Pass through a gate to a footpath signposted Hound Tor and Bonehill Down. At the next junction, head for the signposted Hound Tor Down to your right. Follow the path to Greater Rocks **D**.



Climb up between the two main bosses up over the top. Once on the North side you can divert to the popular Hound Tor. Otherwise you turn right just above Greater rocks and go eastwards through a gateway, at 749787, signposted Leighon and Heytor Down.

Follow the path down to Becka Brook which you cross by a bridge (752787). Follow the path at right angles to the brook up the far valley side. Once out in the open, at 754786, you will be confronted by a bewildering choice of paths, only one of which goes off at 120°: that one is yours. Aim to join the ridge that connects Smallacombe Rocks with Leighon Tor **E**. Turn



left on the ridge and walk to Leighon Tor. The path is not clearly defined but as it is easy-going there's no problem. Leighon Tor is not named on the ordnance survey

map but it is the only pile of rocks at 760786. Now the fun really starts. You are aiming to enter Yarnar Wood by the North Lodge **F**. There is no direct path - only a



few animal tracks - so just set off on the bearing of 80°. Keep going and pick your own way. Look out for a shallow dry valley where there is a reasonable path which is clearly used by horses. If you reach the cairn **G** go further to your left.



Good luck. You will now be on the Haytor Vale to Manaton Road. Just to the southeast of North Lodge is the entrance to Yarnar wood. This is one of the ancient Dartmoor Woodlands but unlike the others its oak trees are tall, straight and useful for timber. There are many paths through the wood, and it is where it's useful to have a handheld GPS to check on location.

Use the ordnance survey map to follow the paths keeping towards the southern edge of the wood. Shortly before leaving the wood **H** (781782) look down to

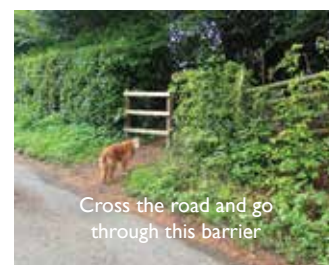


the left to see the remains of the Yarrow (also known as Yarnar) copper mine, the most easterly of the South Dartmoor copper mines.

At the top of the wood, rejoin the Templer Way. Turn right through a kissing gate **I**, cross



over the road, turn left and then immediately right through a barrier **J**. Follow the path beside a post-



and-wire fence. At 780779 you come to a large block-built animal enclosure. Head down and to the left along a farm track with a hedge on your left **K** and a field fence to



the right until you meet the B3387, Bovey Tracey to Widecombe road. Cross over and onto the Ullacombe Farm drive. You've made it! Now to enjoy the memory of a wonderful walk whilst experiencing the farm shop and cafe's mouth-watering temptations.

Your leisurely trip back to the car follows the farm path through the children's entertainment area and onto the farm woodland walk which goes along the North-East edge of the farm woodland and up to a gate leading out onto the B3387. Cross over the road, scramble up the bank and keep going till you hit the Templer Way. Turn left and follow it to the Haytor Vale to Manaton road. Turn right to reach the car park where you started from. ■



# And now..... a word from our advertisers

## Lee Byre has it all



This stunning barn conversion opened as a family run guest house in May 2016 and is quickly becoming a firm favourite. Located 10 minutes from Tavistock and 10 minutes from Dartmoor National Park it provides easy access to both town and moor as well as a remote location that allows guests to truly escape.

Lee Byre offers bed and breakfast or full board accommodation with guided walks into Dartmoor. Unwind and relax in the beautiful settings of Lee Byre, whilst you enjoy the wide range of homemade produce and peaceful surrounds.

**Guided walks** from Lee Byre are an inexpensive way to explore Dartmoor and its surrounding area. Trips include transport and a packed lunch and are carefully organised to showcase Dartmoor's secrets and show you a different side to this beautiful landscape, where legends are plenty, the history is colourful and scenery is spectacular.



**Good food** is a passion at Lee Byre. Whether it's the full Devonshire breakfast, the filling packed lunches or the delicious evening meals prepared by the chef, the aim is to please and satisfy with the food. The meals are designed to highlight access to outstanding local produce as well as a wide array of homemade foods, including the home farmed honey.

**Luxurious and inviting bedrooms** have been closely and carefully designed to maximise comfort and relaxation. In each room you can enjoy quality in the king-size beds, superior Egyptian cotton sheets and powerful showers, as well as a high standard of finish. Beyond the rooms there is a beautiful setting for breakfast and evening meals, as well as an attractive garden in which to relax and unwind.

The Barnes family has walked, explored and lived on Dartmoor for over 30 years. Let them show you something exceptional. See advert on opposite page.

## Lowertown Farm

Lowertown Farm, 93 acres of working farm, sits nestled in a valley in the heart of Dartmoor, where a peaceful walk can take you from the top of Blackator to the banks of the River Dart through gorgeous wooded paths and winding country lanes.


When Luke & Hannah Fursdon opened a B&B in their 500 year old farmhouse in 2009, these were just some of things they were excited to share with guests. A passion for activities as diverse as horseback riding and kayaking as well as pride in their farm, animals and knowledge of the area make them ideal hosts.

Last year, Lowertown began serving its very own farm reared bacon & sausages as part of its hearty & traditional full English breakfast, complete with farm fresh eggs. Guests often enjoy a farm tour where they meet the chickens who help produce their breakfast!



Another highlight is meeting the many happy horses enjoying retirement at the livery run by Hannah as part of the farm. Ideal location for an active or horsey holiday, with guest horse accommodation available. Or just come relax and enjoy the dawn chorus and a book by the fire with a warm cup of tea. See advert on page 39.





## Devon Cycling Holidays

*The premier cycling holiday specialists in the South West*

Take your time on an Exe Estuary Trail mini tour - Ideal for families.

Explore with our 3 day Devon Coast to Coast - 105 miles - It's our most popular route

Challenge yourself to Dartmoor in a day - Conquer that Hill Demon!

Tel: 01392 271426 or  
[info@devoncyclingholidays.co.uk](mailto:info@devoncyclingholidays.co.uk)  
 See our website for the latest tour updates :  
[www.devoncyclingholidays.co.uk](http://www.devoncyclingholidays.co.uk)



## dartmoor business network

**Dartmoor Business Network has been established to connect local businesses on Dartmoor with businesses in the surrounding cities and towns.**

The group meets every other first Wednesday of the month from **8.00 – 9.30am at the Miniature Pony Centre on Dartmoor.**  
 Each meeting includes 2 guest speakers.

**Cost is just £5 per person to attend and this includes refreshments**

This networking group is led by Jo Butler, Bovey Castle, Claire Doyle, Claire Doyle Marketing and Jen and Simon from Visit Dartmoor, Official Tourism Organisation for Dartmoor. The group is also heavily supported by @Dartmoorhour on Twitter.





To register to attend or to find out more please email  
[jo.butler@edenhotelcollection.com](mailto:jo.butler@edenhotelcollection.com)  
 or visit the website  
[dartmoorbusinessnetwork.co.uk](http://dartmoorbusinessnetwork.co.uk)

 Follow us on twitter to keep in touch @DartmoorDBN  
 and on Facebook at Dartmoor Business Networking. 



# Feel inspired

Walk. Eat. Sleep. at Lee Byre  
 and explore Dartmoor National Park



We are a new guest house on the edge of Dartmoor, offering barn accommodation and guided walks. For more information visit [www.leebyre.com](http://www.leebyre.com)





# 2016 Dartmoor Walking Festival

## Saturday 27th August to Sunday 4th September



The Dartmoor Walking Festival runs from Saturday 27th August until Sunday 4th September 2016 inclusive and will cover all areas of Dartmoor. It's open to people of all ages and abilities so everyone will find something they can enjoy doing.

The programme will include climbing, Nordic Walking, cycling, ranger led walks and archaeological events. Making use of the local cycle trails will also mean that those who use mobility scooters and 'Trampers' can also come along and enjoy what Dartmoor has to offer.



Dartmoor Search and Rescue Team will be present during the week - if you have ever wondered what they do out in the dark when searching for missing walkers, you can find out by joining them on an evening exercise.

Sunday 4th September is fundraising day for the British Heart Foundation, in support of their 25th annual Moor Walk, with a celebratory event at Princetown.

You will find a full list of the events at <https://moorlandguides.co.uk/dwf/>



## Visit Dartmoor®

The Official Tourism Organisation

Want to have some fantastic, pro-active support and marketing for your business or charity?

**Visit Dartmoor is the the Official Tourism Organisation for Dartmoor National Park** and surrounding areas, and we are well known for going the extra mile for our member businesses.

As an integral part of the Visit Devon-England-Britain chain we are always keen to be involved with national and international campaigns to promote Dartmoor and it's surrounding areas as a superb destination.

**Always available, always ready to listen**, and we put the needs of the businesses we work with at the top of our priority list.

**AND....we are a Graphic Design business!** Creating affordable, user friendly websites and inspirational brochures, leaflets, logos and signs.

**Give us a call, drop us a line, come and see us in our office!**

For more information about what we do and what it may cost you, see [www.visitdartmoor.co.uk/information/advertise-with-us](http://www.visitdartmoor.co.uk/information/advertise-with-us)



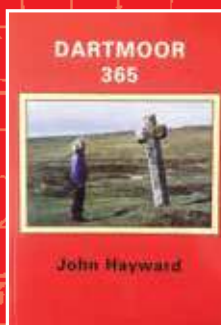
[visitdartmoor.co.uk](http://visitdartmoor.co.uk)

jenny@visitdartmoor.co.uk | 01837 659224

Supported by



Back in 1990, John Hayward, a lifelong fan of the moor, noticed that the Dartmoor National Park was exactly 365 square miles in size. He set off on a mission to visit every one of them and made notes and sketches about what he found within them. This became 'Dartmoor 365', a fascinating book of history, folklore, and items of interest.



Anthony Francis-Jones bought the book and although he'd spent a lot of time training Ten Tors teams and camping on the moor, he quickly realised how much he had missed by not stopping to look more carefully at his surroundings.

He became hooked, and subsequently created the Facebook Group Dartmoor 365, which now has over 2000 members, who take photos and add grid references for others to enjoy.

The book is available at all DNP shops as well as many local bookshops and Internet sources.



[www.facebook.com/groups/296555273885240](https://www.facebook.com/groups/296555273885240)



## The Delicious Drake's Trail – a winning combination of scenic trails, and delicious local food and drink!



The “wonderfully bonkers” Delicious Drake's Trail event returns this autumn, combining food, fun and fancy dress. Starting in Tavistock, participants will run/jog/walk their way around a way-marked trail enjoying 11.5 miles of scenic moorland, farmland, country lanes and trails. Along the way they'll be treated to a mouth-watering variety of locally produced food and drink tasters including beers and ciders, savouries and sweets. Food and drink stops are being hosted by local pubs, hotels, cafés and pop-up caterers. Spectators are heartily encouraged, with plenty of opportunities to support the runners at the many fabulous venues en route. With a 'Sporting legends' Olympic inspired fancy dress theme, participants should be easy enough to spot! The gastronomic tour will finish at the Moorland Garden Hotel, Yelverton who are hosting a food festival with plenty to try and buy while waiting to cheer the runners across the finish line. The Delicious Drake's Trail takes place on Sunday 2 October in aid of CHICKS charity. To enter go to: [deliciousdrakestrail.co.uk](http://deliciousdrakestrail.co.uk)

The Moorland Garden Hotel is holding a food festival with FREE entry on Sunday 2nd October 2016 from 12noon until 4.00pm as part of the end celebrations for the Delicious drakes trail and we are inviting Devon and Cornwall producers to be part of our produce market. There will be a hog roast and cream teas available in the garden. A three course Sunday Lunch will also be available in The Wildflower Restaurant at £22.95 per person, for which pre booking is essential on 01822 852245. See advert on page 15.



Delicious Trails

## Langstone Manor



The feeling of peace and tranquility descends over you before you even reach Langstone Manor. The picturesque leafy lanes with a brook running alongside, wild ponies grazing beside the road and hedgerows crammed with wild flowers lead you to our simply beautiful holiday park.

Once you arrive, we have a mixture of grass and hardstanding pitches (40 pitches) with hook-up if required. All are suitable for tents, campervans, touring caravans, motorhomes and trailer tents. Or how about enjoying the fun of a Camping Pod!

The Park is in the David Bellamy Conservation scheme and the facilities were awarded special recognition for the environmental methods we have used. For our young visitors we have a brand new playground surrounded by grass and picnic benches. Please note that bikes cannot be ridden on the park, but there are plenty of quiet lanes and cycleways nearby.

You will be literally minutes from the open moor, perfect for exploring on foot, or by bike if you want to leave the car behind. There are several superb riding stables on Dartmoor, why not enjoy seeing Dartmoor from the back of a well trained horse, with an expert guide looking after you.

There is truly something on offer for everyone when you base yourself at Langstone Manor Park! See advert on page 21.

## Adventure Southwest

Adventure Southwest is a brand new free admission show for 2016. Showcasing the best adventure and outdoor pursuits the Southwest has to offer, all under one roof. Adventure Southwest is taking place at Royal Cornwall Showground on 28th – 29th October 2016 to coincide with autumn half term and be a great day out for all the family. Come and explore our Altitude, Track and Trail, Watersports and Learning Live zones. The show is packed full of exhibitors, experts and opportunities to 'have a go'. Our Learning Live zone features an exciting range of speakers and things to inspire everyone from novice to pro.

Whether you are interesting in trying something new, want to speak to likeminded enthusiasts or want to find out more about the activities on offer then this is the show for you. With lots of have a go activities, come along and plan your next adventure. Follow up on Facebook and Twitter or visit our website for all the latest news and exciting updates. See advert on page 48.





## Claymore Strength and Conditioning



My name is Jamie Turpin, I created Claymore Strength and Conditioning in May 2015. After a career as a Royal Marines Commando and then a Private Security Officer, I turned my hand to becoming a Personal Trainer. The services I offer are 1-to-1 personal training, military preparation, boot camps, obstacle course race training and, when the weather improves, pram fit classes.

With 8 years experience in the Royal Marines I served 4 tours of Afghanistan, completed arctic, jungle and parachute training, competed for the Royal Marines and Royal Navy in Taekwondo as a black belt and spent 3 years in the Special Forces Support Group. After that I became a Private Security team leader and transported clients of a large oil company around the oilfields of Basra, Iraq before completing my Level 3 Personal Training course. I currently train in weightlifting, running, gymnastics, climbing, rugby and windsurfing, including experience in mixed martial arts, skiing and snowboarding, football and badminton. All of which have given me the ability and understanding to train clients for specific goals. Whether you need to lose weight for an event, get fit for a race or competition, or just want to be stronger to deal with life in general, get in touch to discuss training options.

For further information check out the website at [www.claymorestrength.com](http://www.claymorestrength.com) See advert on page 48.

## Burrator Horse Drawn Carriages



Come and take a tour around Plymouth's main reservoir with Burrator Horse Drawn Carriages. Pick up is at 11am and 2pm on Tues, Weds & Thurs from the Quarry Car Park. The team consists of Fairfax Luxmoore: Owner. Adrian Bird: Driver. Julie Vivian: Groom and co-driver.

Follow us on Facebook (Burrator Horse Drawn Carriage

Tours) where the latest information is constantly updated. Self catering accommodation is also available in Plymouth at [www.plymouth-self-catering.co.uk](http://www.plymouth-self-catering.co.uk)

The route goes clockwise round the lake past South West Lakes Trust Visitor Centre (01822 855700) Much information about the area is available at the centre including interactive maps showing details of the thirteen abandoned farms that thrived in this beautiful valley before it was flooded. At Norsworthy bridge the tour passes much evidence of the intensive tin mining that supplemented the incomes of many of the local farmers. On past the Arboretum with its Nature Reserve, the ruins of Langstone Manor and through gates to access Sheepstor dam, before returning to the car park. Warm waterproof clothing is recommended. We reserve the right to adjust times or even cancel tours if necessary due to unforeseen circumstances. Should this be necessary a full refund will be offered.

For enquiries and bookings please telephone 01752 318087 or 07966 256984. See advert on opposite page.

## Toad Hall Cottages



Dartmoor is an iconic destination- full of intrigue and mystery. It is both remote, yet relaxing at the same time, really allowing visitors to get away from it all and going "off grid".

There is so much on offer on Dartmoor itself not just for those that want to hide away and relax. It has become a true destination for those wanting a little adventure in their lives. From kayaking on the fast flowing network of rivers that dissect the national park, to climbing some of the rocky tors and summits that rise in numerous places to cycling or simply walking the breath-taking park. After a day of activity and exercise, you will want to head home to some creature comforts and Toad Hall Cottages has a number of cottages to do just this, spread across this magnificent national park. Chose from large houses attached to farms (Neadon Cottage pictured) or a cosy granite Coach House in Princetown. For those wanting some more modern comfort, or to stay in a group, Haytor Barns are three properties with clear views across to magnificent Haytor, the perfect place to return home to and rest those weary limbs (pictured). With over 600 properties across the South West, we're sure to have the perfect base for you to explore stunning Dartmoor.

Visit [www.toadhallcottages.co.uk](http://www.toadhallcottages.co.uk) for more information or call 01548 20 20 20 for a free brochure. See advert on opposite page.



—BURRATOR—  
HORSE DRAWN  
CARRIAGE TOURS



\*  
Carriage Ride Tours of Burrator are £12 per Tour for adults and £6 for children under 5. The rides start from the Quarry.  
The tour is 3.5 miles and crosses Sheepstor Dam after lake-side woodland areas with wild ponies and then across Burrator Dam and past the Discovery Centre and takes approx 1 hour.  
Max 12 persons. Discount for charities. Tours start at the Quarry Car Park.  
\*

Directions and leaflets available at the  
Burrator Inn Princetown Road Dousland PL20 6NP  
Bookings and enquiries **07966 256984**  
**Fairfaxluxmoore@gmail.com**

Babeny Farm  
Stables



Fall in love with Dartmoor and our horses, whilst experiencing stunning scenery and creating memories.  
A warm welcome awaits both novice and experienced riders.  
1 & 2 hr hacks including pub rides

Book NOW to avoid disappointment



01364 631296



Poundgate Newton Abbot Dartmoor TQ13 7PS  
[www.babenystables.co.uk](http://www.babenystables.co.uk) [info@babenyfarm.co.uk](mailto:info@babenyfarm.co.uk)

Find your ideal  
Dartmoor cottage...



Toad Hall Cottages has over 600 coastal, waterside and rural holiday cottages throughout the South West. Your memorable West Country holiday starts here...

Call us or visit our website 01548 202020 | [toadhallcottages.co.uk](http://toadhallcottages.co.uk)





Specialising in exciting, unusual and natural yarns from around the world



Find us in the heart of beautiful Bovey Tracey


26 Fore Street 01626 836203  
Bovey Tracey info@spinayarndevon.co.uk  
TQ13 9AD www.spinayarndevon.co.uk

# Heavy Horse Riding



Short and Long Trail Rides on Dartmoor

 [www.adventureclydesdale.com](http://www.adventureclydesdale.com)  
Call - 01364 631683



## FREELANCE DARTMOOR MOUNTAIN LEADER

DARTMOOR GUIDED WALKS  
DARTMOOR NAVIGATION COURSES  
WILDERNESS CAMPING  
NNAS TRAINING & ASSESSMENTS  
SKILLS TRAINING FOR BACKPACKING  
COMMERCIAL WALK LEADING

Tel: 01803 812280  
enquiries@hillwise.co.uk  
www.hillwise.co.uk



part of your landscape  
Your Local Dartmoor Supplier



- Oil Tank Cleaning • Lubricants • Coal
- Heating Oil and Tractor Diesel
- Oil Tank Replacement and Installation

Moorlands House, North Road,  
Okehampton, EX20 1BQ  
01837 55700  
www.moorlandfuels.co.uk



## Devon Cycle Hire

Family cycle hire since 2006  
Our aim is to provide a high quality service & a bike to match!

**BOOK ONLINE**

**New For 2016**  
We have a new purpose built hire centre & bike shop.  
A new Pit-Stop Cafe... Selling locally made sweet eats.  
Sited on The Granite Way, between two historic viaducts.  
The only hire centre with direct Granite Way trail access.  
Spectacular views of Dartmoor. Book bikes online ..... [devoncyclehire.co.uk](http://devoncyclehire.co.uk)  
Call in for a cuppa & check out our new bike shop!

 **tripadvisor**  
Take a look  
1 min off A30  
EX20 4HR  
Sourton Down  
01837 861141

# August 18th Chagford Show 2016

[www.chagfordshow.co.uk](http://www.chagfordshow.co.uk) • Mill End Chagford TQ13 8JN  
[www.chagfordshow.com](http://www.chagfordshow.com) Tel. 07511778641

## This Year's Main Ring Attraction Dartmoor Hawking Display



**A Great Family Fun Day Out**  
Horse, Pony, Sheep and Cattle Classes  
Grande Parade of Prize Winning Horses  
Parade of Mid Devon Foxhounds  
Parade of Vintage Tractors and Cars  
200 Trade Stands  
Pets Corner  
Local Food Hall  
Horticultural Marquee  
Dog Show and much much more!

**Adults £8.00  
Child £3.00  
Under 5 Free**

**Gates Open @ 8.30am**

**Free Mini Bus from Chagford & Moretonhampstead  
Free On Site Parking**

**Traditional Dolphin Marching Band**  
Plus a display from the Dartmoor Hill Pony Team, and an appearance from The Sheep Roadshow






# 109th Okehampton Show

Okehampton Show, Stoney Park Showground, Okehampton – just off the A30.  
**Thursday 11th August**








**A traditional agricultural show on the edge of Dartmoor – fun for all the family, all day entertainment.**

01837 659965 info@okehamptonshow.co.uk  
[www.okehamptonshow.co.uk](http://www.okehamptonshow.co.uk)



# WHAT'S ON

Follow Active  
Dartmoor on:



All through the year there are events, shows, exhibitions, guided walks, sporting events, celebrations and educational days held all over and around Dartmoor.

Whether you are looking for a country show, an art exhibition, or a day out learning about archaeological and historical sites, there is something for everyone.

The most comprehensive list is undoubtedly on the Visit Dartmoor website at

**[www.visitdartmoor.co.uk/whats-on](http://www.visitdartmoor.co.uk/whats-on)**

Dartmoor National Park also has a calendar of events at

**[www.dartmoor.gov.uk/visiting/vi-eventsguidedwalks](http://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/visiting/vi-eventsguidedwalks)**

You can also check out our page on the Dartmoor Hub at

**[www.hubcast.co.uk/dartmoor](http://www.hubcast.co.uk/dartmoor)**

*Have fun!!*

If you have an event that you would like to publicise in *Active Dartmoor* please email [jenny@activedartmoor.co.uk](mailto:jenny@activedartmoor.co.uk)

Thinking of organising an event on Dartmoor? Please contact the Dartmoor National Park Access and Recreation team on 01626 832093

## WIDECOMBE FAIR 2016

Celebrate Dartmoor Life!


**Tuesday  
September  
13th**

From 9am until late

[www.WIDECOMBEFAIR.com](http://www.WIDECOMBEFAIR.com)

Plus FOLK AT THE FAIR in the Beer Tent.  
Live bands, non-stop, 10am until midnight.

Follow us on:



## The Lustleigh Village Show

**BANK HOLIDAY  
MONDAY  
AUGUST 29th**

**Traditional country show**

Horse Show      Dog Show  
10k run      Stalls      Games  
Music      Food and drink

[www.thelustleighshow.com](http://www.thelustleighshow.com)

LustleighShow ShowLustleigh







# CLIMBING FUN!

Enjoy an action packed adventure at the  
South West's largest indoor climbing centre



Quay climbing centre

Taster sessions, holiday clubs  
and party fun at our vast indoor  
7-14 metre climbing walls.



Take the **adventure outdoors**  
with half and full day **Dartmoor**  
**rock climbing** taster sessions.

Fun for ages 7 and upwards.  
Call **01392 426 850** for details.



# clip'n climb

AT THE QUAY



Exciting challenges full of variety for even the  
youngest climbers, aged 4 and upwards

Book Clip 'n' Climb sessions at  
**clipnclimbexeter.co.uk**

The Quay Climbing Centre, Haven Road, Exeter, EX2 8AX  
**www.quayclimbingcentre.co.uk - Tel. 01392 426 850**  
**www.clipnclimbexeter.co.uk - Tel. 01392 422 559**