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**CLASSIC
BOULDERING**

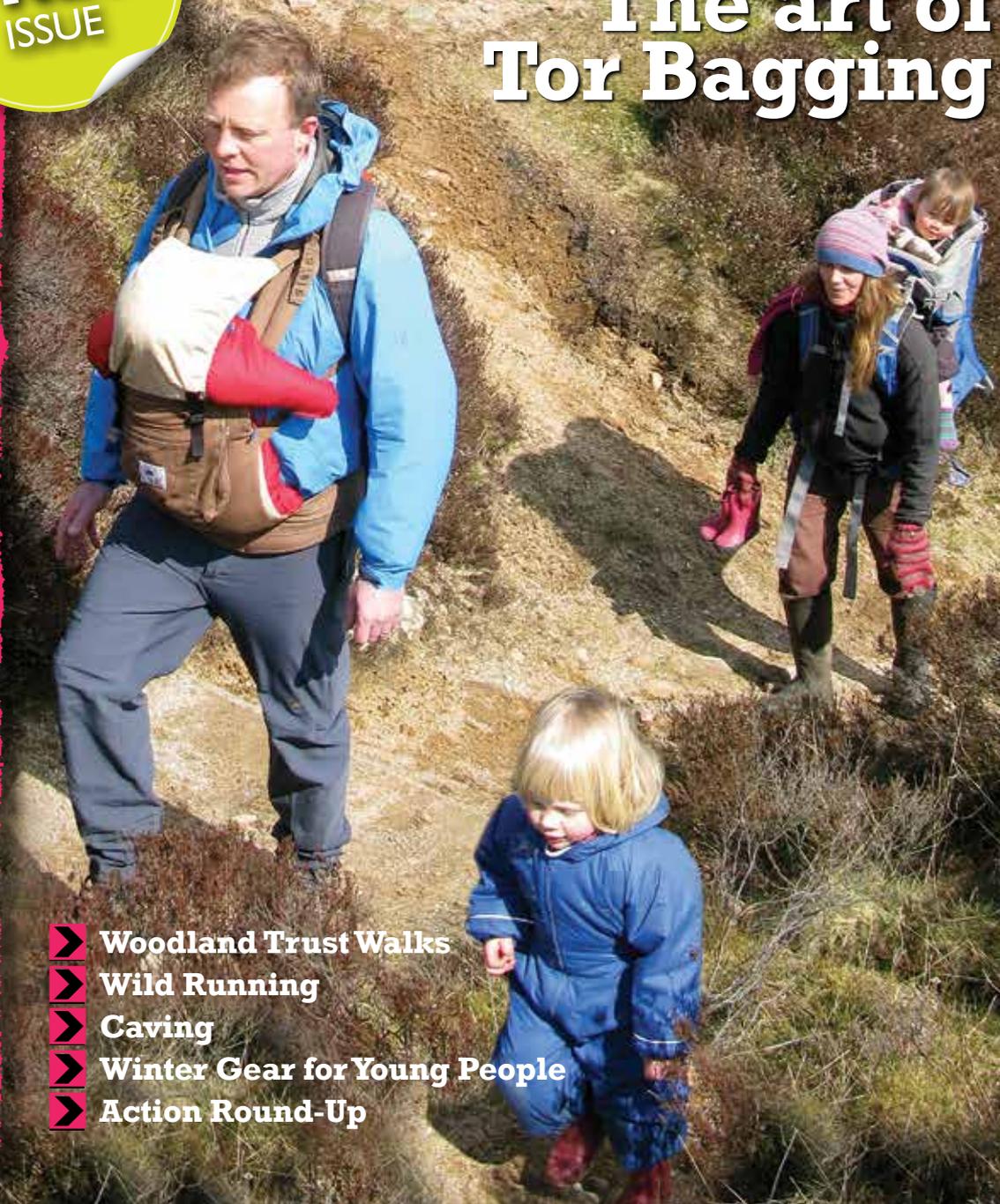


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DARTMOOR

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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 by John Baker



With winter finally taking over from an unusually good summer and autumn it's quite a shock to be back in a season of dark evenings, rain and wind again.

Changes in the season inevitably mean changes in outdoor activities but that doesn't mean they have to be curtailed for the duration of the winter or even restricted to daylight hours only. We've got a whole range of ideas for getting out there whatever the weather.

If you're looking for a more sheltered walk Matt Parkins has lots of suggestions in his round-up of Woodland Trust woodlands open to the public, while Ceri Rees, our Local Hero, inspires people to run whatever the season and will once again be organising his popular

Wild Night Run event in late January. Alternatively if you'd like to try an easier route that gets you out into open moorland on a good day then why not follow in the wheel tracks of the Disabled Ramblers along the Tyrwhitt Trail from Princetown?

Whatever the weather, tors make a great focus point for any walk, Paul Buck is trying to visit all 425 and claims that tor bagging offers so much more than a mere tick list. On the subject of rock, bouldering is this winter's Big Tick. Tom Newberry shares his top ten sites from the well-known to the hard-to-find. In contrast David Guiterman goes underground and explores Pridhamsleigh Cavern where the temperature stays a steady 8 degrees whatever the weather outside. An appealing thought if you don't mind a bit of mud.

If you'd rather stay warm above ground and give something back to the landscape, then why not join one of the groups highlighted in our Active Volunteering feature and have a go at one of the many conservation tasks on offer?

Finally, with the change in the weather comes a change in the editorship of *Active Dartmoor*. I have written for the magazine and worked on it behind the scenes from the beginning so, although I'm delighted to become editor, I'm not about to make any major changes, only to build on the great things that John started. John will remain very much part of the magazine but will be taking more of a back seat now, continuing as our technical expert and writing the occasional feature.

Anna

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NEWS

News from around the Park

Swincombe Bridge (SX 642 725)



PHOTOGRAPH © DNPA

Following the storms and bad weather of February 2014 the footbridge on the Public Bridleway crossing the River Swincombe sustained considerable damage. Inspections by the Dartmoor National Park Ranger Service and Devon County Council bridge engineers deemed the structure unsafe during the summer of 2014 and the bridge was closed. Subsequent inspections have seen deterioration in the structure and it has now been condemned and removed by the DNPA Ranger Service.

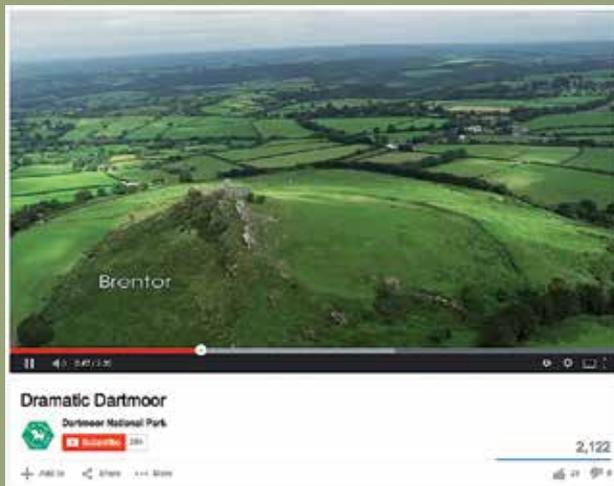
Dartmoor National Park Authority is seeking funding to replace the footbridge as a priority, however it is unlikely to be replaced before early 2015 due to ground and river conditions. Crossing the River Swincombe is still possible when water levels allow using the fording point or the stepping stones with care – the Public Bridleway has not been closed. At times of high rainfall please seek an alternative, legal route across the river.



Visit Dartmoor, sister company to Active Dartmoor Publishing has been awarded the contract to be the official Dartmoor Tourism Organisation. With the winding down of the Dartmoor Partnership, Visit Dartmoor will carry forward the responsibility of promoting Dartmoor as a

superb destination to the rest of the world, with support from DNPA and Duchy of Cornwall. See page 37.

Dramatic Dartmoor – wish you were here?



Fly over the blue waters of Burrator Reservoir and soar over Stallmoor, seeing the longest stone row in the world. Glide up the granite valleys of the River Dart and Tavy and climb over the rugged tors of Haytor Rocks and Leather Tor. Just some of the stunning aerial footage in the new digital postcard from Dartmoor National Park.

Dramatic Dartmoor is the first in a series of digital postcards that Dartmoor National Park Authority are producing to promote the area and inspire people to love and respect this special place.

The stunning Dartmoor aerial footage was taken a couple of years ago and has already been used to promote Dartmoor in other short films. These films have been shared through social media, the National Park website, National Park Visitor Centres, local shows, talks and conferences. The National Park has also worked closely with a number of National TV companies featuring Dartmoor aerial imagery including the BBC's Mystery of the Moor series and ITV's Wild Britain with Ray Mears.

Visit Dartmoor National Park's Youtube channel (www.youtube.com/user/DartmoorNPA) see Dramatic Dartmoor and share the experience.

WINTER OPENING TIMES FOR VISITOR CENTRES

Dartmoor National Park Authority manages Visitor Centres at Princetown, Postbridge and Haytor and also supports Local Information Points throughout the Dartmoor area.

The National Park Visitor Centre at Princetown has been refurbished and features new and exciting exhibitions, displays and discovery zones and the stunning photography exhibition, Ancient Dartmoor.

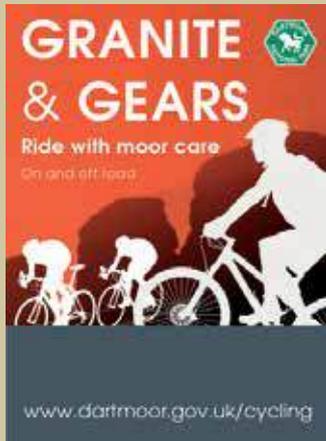
Opening times for the National Park Visitor Centres for the winter period are as follows:

6 November – 1 March 2015
Open Thursday – Sunday (10:30 – 3:30)

2 March - 6 March
Visitor Centres shut for annual maintenance

7 March – 29 March 2015
(Princetown open daily 10-4;
Haytor and Postbridge open Thursday – Sunday 10-4).

Work Starts on Granite and Gears Project



Work on the Granite and Gears Project started in September, following the award of a £1.8 million contract to construct a new bridge across the A38 dual carriageway at Heathfield.

The bridge, for pedestrians, cyclists and horseriders, will link Newton Abbot to Bovey Tracey and will feature a 40-metre main span.

Construction work will be carefully planned to minimise disruption to road users. Some night-time lane closures will be needed to enable the works to be carried out safely, and full night-time closures of the A38 will be required to allow the bridge spans to be lifted in.

The bridge forms part of the Granite and Gears project, led by the County Council and Dartmoor National Park Authority. The project was awarded £4.4 million funding from The Department for Transport's (DfT) Cycling Ambition fund in August 2013 to develop a network of multi-use trails to open up access to the moor. The aim of the project is to encourage a 43% increase in cycling on Dartmoor between 2015 and 2018, bringing an extra £6 million to the local economy and creating the potential for around 100 new jobs.

The project is also supported with an additional £3 million from Local Transport Plan funding, section 106 money and contributions from Devon County Council, Dartmoor National Park Authority, Teignbridge District Council and West Devon Borough Council.

Councillor Stuart Hughes, Devon County Council Cabinet Member for Highway Management, said: "This is a major element of the Granite and Gears project and we are particularly grateful to landowners Sibelco and Imerys for enabling this bridge to be constructed on their land. As with all of our Granite and Gears schemes, this new bridge will play an important part in our cycling strategy. Providing infrastructure to connect communities will enable more people to make local journeys on foot or by bike, encouraging more people to cycle and walk more often.

It will also support the local economy by promoting additional opportunities for recreational walking, cycling and horseriding."

The bridge will be built by contractor SWH Ltd and it is expected to be completed in early Summer 2015.



PHOTOGRAPH © DNPA

Help keep Dartmoor litter-free this winter

Littering and fly-tipping is a year round problem within the National Park. Over the winter, any significant snow event means there is litter from discarded sledges and other debris which is abandoned after the fun is over. During the spring and summer, with the increase in visitor numbers and better weather, there is an increase in litter resulting from picnics, fast food outlets and BBQs. Bonfire fortnight brings its own litter problems during November as well.

To help keep Dartmoor litter-free this winter please:

- 1 Take responsibility for broken sledges or other materials brought to Dartmoor and used for playing in the snow.
- 2 Take litter home or dispose of it responsibly.
- 3 Help to reduce the amount of waste which goes to landfill by recycling as much as possible.
- 4 Do not go sledging in fields or enclosed land without the permission of the landowner.

Whilst the Authority does not have a direct legal responsibility to remove litter (it is not the litter/waste authority), staff and volunteers do undertake litter picking of heavily used sites. This is done as part of Dartmoor National Park Authority's role in the management of visitors. The current cost of disposing of litter collected is around £20,000 per annum. This cost does not include the staff cost in collecting litter, so the real cost to the Authority is much higher. All litter disposed of goes direct to landfill as it cannot be readily separated into recyclables.



Please take your litter home and recycle it.

Dartmoor National Park Authority spends £20,000 disposing of litter annually. What a waste of your money!

- Did you know it takes many years for litter to biodegrade.
- Aluminium cans 10 - 1,000 years
 - Glass 4,000 years
 - Food packaging 6 months - 1,000 years



Don't let Devon go to waste www.dartmoor.gov.uk/litter
Cartoon illustration by Marcus Ryan © DNPA

DARTMOOR BOULDERING

Tom Newberry explains why Dartmoor bouldering trumps some of the best destinations in the UK and shares his top ten classic problems

Dartmoor plays host to a plentiful supply of superb granite bouldering. Over recent years bouldering on Dartmoor has become a popular pastime with traces of chalk now a common sight when out on the moors. The wide variety of settings, from open woodland to moorland, offers thousands of quality blocs across a number of stunning venues. As a local and Dartmoor fan, I would back many a moorland bloc in a top trump battle against any famed UK destination.

Established Areas

The Haytor area is the most established climbing area on the moor; probably due to the easy access, reliable conditions and quantity of blocs. As you approach the boulder capped tors along the winding rural road, your hands begin to sweat and mind race at the sheer number of boulders on offer. Several hundred recorded problems ranging from V0 to V12 make for a class excursion. Saddle Tor, Hound Tor and

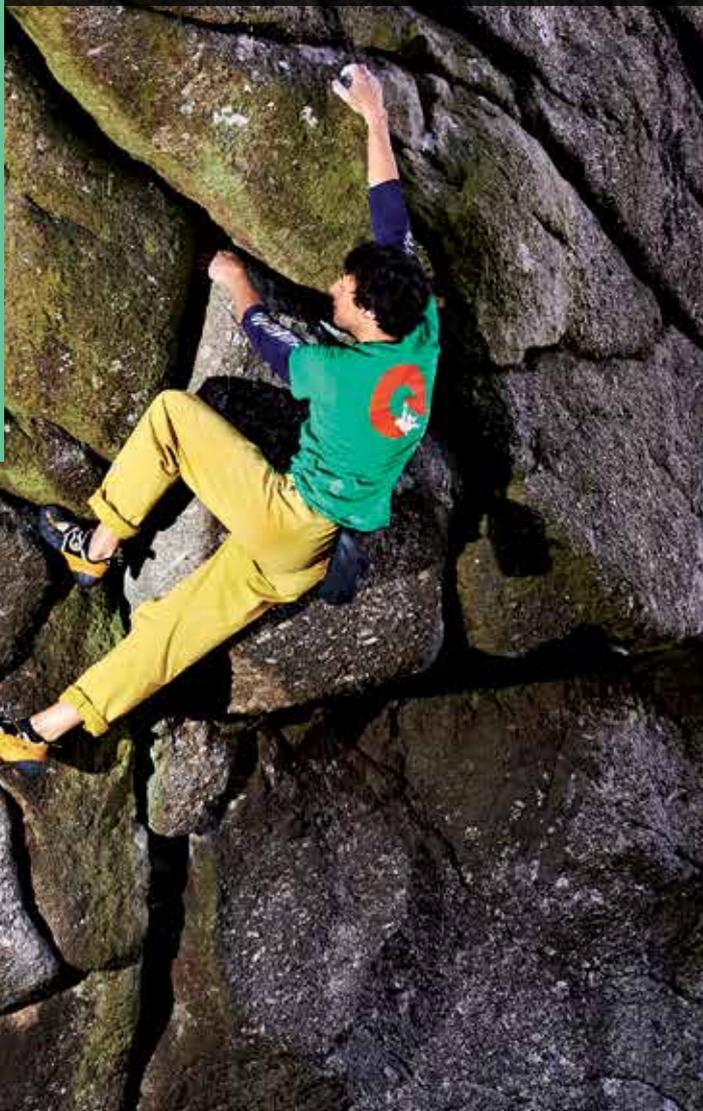
Bonehill are the three main venues, however small less frequented crags such as Smallcombe Rocks, Easdon, Bell Tor and Tunhill are equally brilliant and worth seeking out especially by those who enjoy a bit of exploration.

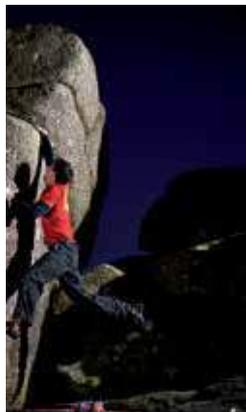
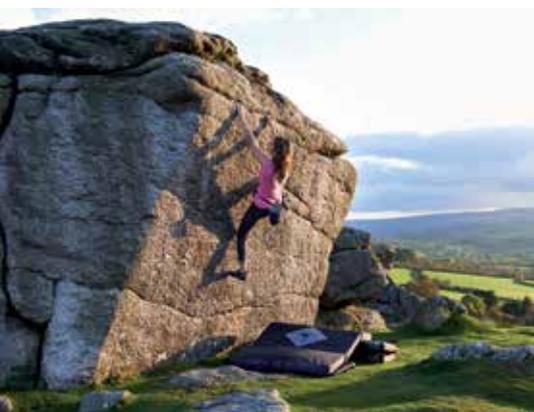
So, where do you start and which of the many lines on offer are the classics? My recommendation for a first port of call would be Bonehill. The approach offers a tame introduction into bouldering on

Dartmoor, being a merciful 30 second walk from the car. Wandering around, it doesn't take long to discover the jumble of rock provides the perfect playground of grooves, overhangs and arêtes. Beta is key for many of the problems and a powerful approach may not necessarily lead to success. Nonetheless, the proud lines of Bonehill are on impeccable rock and most agree should be on ever aspiring boulders' tick list. Yet it must be said the bouldering here does come at a price, Granite isn't merciful and will tear and shred skin at every opportunity, you have been warned!

Neglected Areas

On the eastern fringes of the moor, away from the tourists and cream teas, amongst disorientating and dense woodland, lies one of Devon's best kept secrets. For those not in the know, Bovey Woods is a huge granite bouldering venue offering 1000+ problems! Expect lots of these to be trivial on fairly green rock, however lurking amongst these mediocre problems lies some of the best granite blocs in the UK. Locals managed to keep Bovey Woods out of the limelight by spreading vicious rumours for a decade, whilst they plugged away developing one of the biggest bouldering areas in the country. Bovey's infamous





reputation for being sharp is not as bad as the rumours suggest; it's no sharper than standard moorland granite and most classics are fairly close to paths. That said it doesn't take much to waste a few hours wandering aimlessly in this wood, as local boulderer, Mikey Cleverdon, found out. Whilst on-route to the superb Devon Sent, one of the more hidden gems in the wood, Mikey's dog caught wind of a different scent and ran off into the depths of the woods. Mikey quickly ditched all his possessions in pursuit of the errant hound. Unfortunately, this left Mikey with a three hour hunt for his belongings.

The initial discovery was made in 2001 when local climber, Tom Rainbow, had the most exhilarating dog walk of his life! Rainbow with friends went on to develop five main areas; Shaptor Rock, Bearacleave, Stonelands, Rock Copse and the huge expanse of Lower Shaptor. Each area has its own distinct character, but Bearacleave and Shaptor Rock probably provide the best rock and are good areas to open a Woods apprenticeship. I recommend a quick google search on the area, then engage explorer mode and take a wander through the woods. You will see numerous blocs, and the classics are always clean and often chalked.

More information on all Dartmoor bouldering venues is available on Dave 'King of the Moor' Henderson's excellent website, javu.co.uk. This invaluable source of information on the area hosts inspiring guides, photos and news updates; a sure-fire way to rally up psyche for a trip t'moor.

Tom Newberry, a teacher from Devon, has been responsible for establishing new areas and putting up hard first ascents across the South West including first ascents of some of the hardest problems in the region. Psyched on all aspects of climbing, he has excelled across the disciplines: bouldering V13, redpointing 8c and onsighting E6. Tom is sponsored by Evolv, Metolius and Prana.

TOP TEN CLASSICS

V0/VS Suspension Flake – Hound Tor

The highball flake screams to be climbed as well as merging the boundaries between boulder problem and route. The result...heart in mouth moves near the top; it won't be forgotten quickly.

V1 Mezzotinter – Saddle Tor

Good fun climbing - big moves on big holds with a nervy top out. To the right is Bjon Again V3, equally brilliant but even more spice.

V3 Breadcrumb Trail – Bovey Woods

Worth searching for? Undoubtedly! A perfect problem following a series of metolius like blobs, it yields to a careful, considered and technical approach.

V4 Hanging Flakes – Combeshead

Combeshead is a favourite venue for many despite the walk in. All the problems on this bloc are ace but Hanging Flake is the must do here. Flawless! I bet you will climb it several times.

V5 The Wish – Hound Tor

Crystal crimpin'! Strong fingers will be essential to securing an ascent. The original area test piece is a sought after classic with a superb name. An essential Dartmoor tick!

V6 Rowe's Arête – Black Hill Boulders

This memorable hidden gem in an unbeatable location is arguably the best of its grade on the moor. Once you have sussed the stand you can repeat the experience from sitting at V7.

V7 Slotted Wall – Bovey Woods

This problem hosts the best granite along with one of the coolest moves on Dartmoor. Guarantee for your all-time top 5 list.

V7 Easdon Arete – Easdon

A short drive past Bonehill and Hound Tor leads to another quality boulder off the beaten track. The striking arête is one of the best on the moor. The high quality Easdon crack V5 to the left would also be worth a trip in its own right.

V8 Scoop Arete – Bonehill

A super cool moorland rig that has seen little attention. Balancy, sequencey and technical climbing that may leave you frustrated or elated. A must do for those operating at this level.

V10 Devon Sent – Bovey Woods

This proud line follows the obvious quartz veins up the centre of arguably the best bloc in the South West. Classic hard granite - high, sharp and technical. Remember strength and power are nothing without control! ■

COUNTRYSIDE MOBILITY ON DARTMOOR



If you're inspired by The Disabled Ramblers but do not own a wheelchair or mobility scooter suitable for rougher terrain then Countryside Mobility may be able to help. Recently recognised nationally in the Visit England Awards for Excellence, it is run by the charity Living Options South West and aims to open up the South West's countryside to those with limited mobility through the hire of Trampler all terrain mobility scooters.

Trampers can go up and down slopes, over bumps and tree roots, through shallow puddles, mud and soft ground and are for use by anyone aged 14 or over who has a permanent or temporary condition that affects their ability to walk. With a top speed of four miles an hour they can keep pace with the brisker walking companion.

The scheme is for everyone who wants to enjoy the countryside but can't manage much walking. People don't have to be registered as a disabled person, or have a Blue Badge. Many people have found that the equipment has given them back their freedom, enabling them to enjoy time outdoors alone, with their partner or on a family outing.

To use the Trampers, people simply choose their site and arrange their first visit. On arrival, they join as members of Countryside Mobility which costs £10.00 per year or £2.50 for 4 weeks. Training is provided on how to use a Trampler lasting approximately 10 minutes. They are then given a membership card, which enables them to use a Trampler at any partner site without the need for further training.

Prior to a Trampler being placed at a site, an access audit is completed by Countryside Mobility staff to ensure that the site is suitable and safe for use by Trampers. Each site provides maps and route advice for Trampler users and has a breakdown/recovery system in place if a user has a problem.

Thanks to the scheme, there is now a network of accessible countryside locations across the region (including five in the Dartmoor area) that people can visit independently, knowing they will receive the same high quality experience. Physical improvements are happening at sites as a result of access audits and staff training provided through the scheme. This helps a wider range of disabled people as countryside managers, through contact with more disabled



INFO

visitors, become more “disability aware”.

Countryside Mobility scheme member Rachael Martyn was the first person to make use of the scooter at Lydford Gorge. “Using the scooter was absolutely brilliant!” she said. “Being able to get right down to the bottom of Lydford Gorge with my family and friends is such a wonderful thing - and when you get to the bottom, what a spectacular sight the White Lady waterfall is! I find it difficult to walk and the scheme allows me really to enjoy and appreciate the natural environment, the smells, the beautiful wild flowers and the wonderful countryside. I can’t believe I would have missed out on all of this without Countryside Mobility and am so grateful for the freedom that the scheme has given me.”

Fay Langston is the National Trust’s Visitor Services Officer at Lydford Gorge. “We are really pleased to partner with Countryside Mobility and to be able to welcome more people to Lydford Gorge,” she said. “Previously, the Gorge was almost completely inaccessible to those with limited mobility due to the steep slopes but now the scooter enables people to travel right down to the bottom and back up independently and safely.”

James Maben, Project Manager for Countryside Mobility was equally enthusiastic. “We are always thrilled when any new site comes on board as a partner, or when an existing site adds another of our scooters, as more availability and more locations mean more people can enjoy the South West’s beautiful countryside,” he said. “We hope to see our site list grow and grow.” ■

Trampers can be hired at the following sites in the Dartmoor area:-

DEVON CYCLE HIRE Okehampton, Devon, EX20 4HR

Situated with direct access onto the Granite Way, part of NCR 27, near Sourton Down, offering great opportunities to explore either towards Meldon Viaduct and Okehampton or Lake Viaduct and Lydford.

Tel: 01837 861141

Email: info@devoncyclehire.co.uk
www.devoncyclehire.co.uk

NATIONAL TRUST

Buckland Abbey, Yelverton

Opportunities to explore the historic estate. Pre-booking is essential.

Tel: 01822 856045.

NATIONAL TRUST

Parke, Bovey Tracey

Situated on the Parke Estate on the south eastern edge of the National Park. There are opportunities to follow the old railway line and explore the river paths. Pre-booking is essential.

Tel: 01626 834748

Email: parke@nationaltrust.org.uk

NATIONAL TRUST

Lydford Gorge

There are two Trampler route options at Lydford Gorge. The first winds steeply downhill to the bottom of the gorge and ends at the spectacular Whitelady Waterfall. The second route follows the old railway line through dense woodland to a bird hide. Both options are out and back along the same route. For safety reasons Trampler users must be accompanied.

Tel: 01822 820320

Email: lydfordgorge@nationaltrust.org.uk

PLYMOUTH BIKE HIRE

The Bike Bus where the Trampler can be hired is located at Coypool Park and Ride (PL7 4TB) just off the A38 at the Plympton junction.

Situated on Drake’s Trail, a disused railway line and now popular cycle trail. The trail winds gently through the Plym Valley woodland across a number of historic viaducts with great views across the countryside along the western edge of Dartmoor. The Trampler can currently be used on a 6 mile section between Plymouth and the Shaugh Tunnel (near Clearbrook) but in 2015 extended use may be available. The route is well surfaced with gentle gradients.

Tel: 07577 279 928

www.plymouthbikehire.co.uk

Further Information

www.countryside-mobility.org; tel: 01392 459222

You can also find out more by following them on Twitter @CMSouthWest or Facebook CountrysideMobility.



INFO

To find out more about Wild Running visit:
www.wildrunning.co.uk

CERI REES THE AD INTERVIEW



Former member of the UK Endurance Squad and ex-International athlete, Ceri Rees is an experienced mountain marathon and trail runner who has competed in many prestigious events. After walking across Spain in 2008, he had a reawakening of sorts, quitting his job as a journalist to explore the Andes, before returning to Devon where he set up Wild Running as a social enterprise. *Active Dartmoor* caught up with him to find out what inspires him and what his life is like now.

How did you get into running and why?

I had a great French teacher who set up a cross country team at school, a friend of my dad's used to take us to Gateshead Stadium and let us run round the track and it was the era of Coe and Ovett, who were breaking each other's world records. When I was twelve I took part in the Tyneside Triathlon and trained for it by running over the old slag heaps on the Town Moor, with my dog Hamish.

Did you have any mentors?

When I was growing up, my heroes were Mike Mcleod and Steve Cram. Mike Mcleod was at my running club Elswick Harriers. I'd see him running down Gosforth High Street on my way to school and he looked like he was gliding. He made it look effortless. He also won the Great North Run several times and brought back the Olympic 10,000m Silver Medal to our club.

I sometimes trained with Steve Cram as a teenager, then at uni, I went for runs with Paula Radcliffe, which was inspiring as she had a huge work ethic. At sixteen, I had a coach Stan Long, who was a very positive motivator. Probably my biggest influence though was Kipchoge Keino, the Kenyan Olympic 1500m champion and 5,000m world record holder, who I was lucky enough to live with in Kenya when I was eighteen.

How often do you run and how committed are you to training?

Generally about five or six times a week, depending on my work commitments. These days I run whenever I can and up the tempo if I have a race coming up, which has to fit in around work.

What competitions have you run in and do you still compete?

As a youth I was the National Cross Country and English Schools Cross Country Champion and captained Loughborough University's successful cross country team. I've several England vests and went to the world Cross Country Champs in Brussels but didn't run.

I still compete, mainly out of curiosity and to keep my hand in. This year I ran The Grizzly, The Kielder Marathon, The Keswick Mountain Marathon Festival, The Drogo Ten, with three wins and a second place. I ran in the British Fell Running Champs in Ennerdale this year but ended up giving first aid to a guy who smashed his knee in a fall.

What inspired you to start Wild Running?

I've always enjoyed the flow of running through nature and the prickly awareness it gives your senses. It helps to keep me sharper mentally I think or I'd be forever daydreaming. I have lived in several big cities, including Paris, Madrid and Buenos Aires, and always looked for a park or a green space to run in, as it seemed like the lungs of the city, a breathing space, which brought clarity amid the chaos. I suppose it also helped to provide some structure to my day, as I was working some odd hours when teaching. When I moved to Devon, I wanted to set up a social enterprise which could provide a similar sense of well-being and motivation for others.

What do you hope to achieve with Wild Running?

The aim is to provide a confidence springboard for people who do not know what their physical

capabilities are, especially beyond the city limits. It should also provide a social focus for people such as single mothers or women who don't feel safe running alone. We have a really big problem with inactivity in the UK, which feeds in to people's loss of connection to their environment and is not helped by a risk-averse culture. I would love to reach this audience, which I am hoping to achieve through the night runs, such as the Wild Night Run and the Moonlit Flit, which is a really fun and cool thing to do. We were among the first in these parts to start up mass participation night runs off piste (in natural or wild settings). *Women's Running* magazine has featured our night runs as part of their top five UK ranking.

write some freelance articles for various magazines but I have had to put plans to write a book on hold for now.

What are your future plans for Wild Running?

I want Wild Running to reach a larger audience across the UK through our Wild Running Camps. These really provide a memorable immersion in the environment. These will, I hope, supplement the bespoke running weekends, which already bring people to Dartmoor from all over the UK and beyond. I've had clients from Spain, Portugal, California and France.

We started our wild Running Camps on Dartmoor in the spring and are moving this to Scotland next spring and then hopefully the

Lake District and to Wales.

The Wild Running Camps should also be an educational experience, as they include passionate and engaging speakers who are experts in their field.

What is your favourite place on the moor?

Often it's the last place I've been. I love the soft springy turf around Holwell, looking down onto Becca Brook and Haytor beyond but I also love the ancient woodland around

Lustleigh Cleave. Possibly my favourite dipping spot is in the East Okemont or in Tavy Cleave. I've recently been spending time in south west Dartmoor, where I take a group out through The National Trust. It's pretty special heading out over to Clearbrook from Shaugh Bridge by head torch.

What are your top tips for someone starting to run on the moor?

Start in the spring or summer when the weather is fine or join a group who enjoys doing it all year round like Wild Running! Set yourself realistic targets. Run then walk if needs be and don't forget to look up. Don't listen to your head, listen to your feet. If you plan to go alone, learn to read either a map or the weather, or else take someone who knows the moors. Dartmoor is not a dangerous place but the weather can make it so. ■



PHOTOGRAPHS © CERIE REES

What's your working day like now?

Less structured than I would like perhaps. When you have your own business, regular hours are a fantasy. I used to be a journalist so I'm used to working outside of the normal 9 til 5. I try to fit my runs in around long periods on the laptop, which involves planning one of the five races we are involved in organising, the bespoke guided weekends on the SW Coastpath and Dartmoor, social media promotion of the wild camps and trying to build on the foundations I have started. I often work in cafes rather than spend all of my day in one room.

As Wild Running is not quite fully sustainable all year round, I have to supplement it with some spots of teaching, so I worked as a Director of Studies at a language school in North Devon over the summer and taught English as a foreign language in Torbay. I also



ADVENTURE AND DISCOVER DARTMOOR PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOPS

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ADVENTURE 360 AND ADVENTURE CLYDESDALE



**Malcolm Snelgrove
Photographer**

07973 118237

www.malcolmsnelgrove.com
malcolm@malcolmsnelgrove.com



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ACTIVE ON DARTMOOR Adventure and Discover Dartmoor Photography Workshops will see budding photographers with a taste for the great outdoors empowered by these unique courses set against the backdrop of Dartmoor's wild and dramatic landscape.

Embark on the Active on Dartmoor Adventure Photography courses and expect to develop skills above and beyond standard techniques as you learn how to take breath taking images of up and coming stars of adventure sports as they rock climb, kayak, mountain bike, trail run and wild camp on Dartmoor.

Experienced climbers have the chance to photograph from ropes, while equally stunning shots will be obtained from those who'd rather keep their feet firmly on the ground.

Each day ends with a friendly group chalet style cook up and presentations by the instructors sharing their experiences in the Outdoor Adventure industry. Discuss life out on expedition, photography skills and equipment and what commissioning editors look for in images.

Discover Dartmoor workshops will give you the chance to explore the equestrian world of Dartmoor's breath taking landscape during spring and autumn when the foliage and scenery is at its most stunning.

Visit the home of Adventure Clydesdales, photograph these majestic animals at liberty and riding across the open landscape. Then out photographing Dartmoor ponies in their native environment. Get close to the herds capturing the characters of the ponies.

Count on a wonderful weekend with new photography friendships made during these unique workshops with the distinct Dartmoor landscape as the backdrop.



VOLUNTEERING

There has never been a better time to volunteer on Dartmoor. Here Orlando Rutter the Senior Learning & Outreach Officer and Volunteer Co-ordinator for the National Park Authority talks about how the Authority has increased the opportunities for volunteers to help with a range of tasks.

Dartmoor National Park Authority

Dartmoor National Park Authority has a tradition of working with longer term volunteers using a Voluntary Warden Scheme. Where we had, until recently, been less successful was in responding to “out of the blue” requests. In the last couple of years we have tried to take a more proactive stance.

There are super-keen volunteers out there with loads of skills, plenty of time and a real passion for our protected landscape, our iconic species or our wonderful habitat. For us, responding to these volunteers raised a number of questions – notably: Do we have the capacity to manage, support and mentor these people? Do we have enough volunteer tasks to keep them satisfied?

We thought about how we were responding, or rather, not being able to respond to offers of voluntary help and introduced a web-based scheme. Our starting point was to ask staff what they would like to do but could not hope to tackle due to time constraints – these projects should be the “icing on the cake” – those nice, extra mile add-ons that were important but which the urgency of everyday busy-ness cast aside.

We then developed a very simple template – a little like a job description that would help our staff to be clear about the nature of the task, the time commitment, any necessary skills, any potential physical demands and, importantly, who would “line manage” this volunteer. Once a few of these templates were completed we uploaded them to our website... and volunteers started to roll in.

The scheme has been running for 18 months or so and has helped us undertake a number of projects such as:

- Collecting data from remote location people counters.
- Delivery of school fieldtrips using Volunteer Education Guides.
- Gathering data on town centre usage patterns to inform the policy planning process.
- Taking wildlife photos to build up a stock of images.
- Restoring Bronze-Age cairns.
- Undertaking archaeological monitoring of scheduled and vulnerable sites.

What is important is that many of these “new” opportunities stretch far beyond the traditional work parties undertaking gorse clearance, bracken bashing or path maintenance. Some volunteers have joined us for a short period of time – a task and finish relationship, whilst others have contributed to more than one project.

Much of my time in the early phase of this change was spent writing resources that would help my colleagues with the processes of recruitment, induction, training, mentoring and monitoring. Some of this was the slightly bureaucratic exercise of producing induction checklists, monitoring forms and process flowcharts but also included a revamped “Volunteers Welcome Pack”. This was particularly to help both sides of the volunteer “contract” understand roles and responsibilities. ➔

Is this enough?... searching for the win-win

For some of the volunteers the answer was still “no”. They still had more time than we had tasks, even with the range we could provide, so the next step was to make much more public and visible the relationship we had developed with other volunteering organisations active on Dartmoor. Some of these were the key players, like Natural England and the National Trust, but many were also “home grown” groups based in a specific locality, often with good links to our sector rangers who would help identify and manage tasks. We now provide a clear signposting service to those groups who undertake some of the more traditional habitat management conservation tasks. This has strengthened our relationship with these groups, has increased the volunteer opportunities and we are starting to see some “cross-fertilisation” with some volunteers working for a number of groups on a wide variety of tasks. Perhaps win-win-win!

Make a difference with the Dartmoor Wildlife Hit Squad

There are lots of ways you can make a difference and help Biodiversity thrive across Dartmoor. Whether you have just a few hours to spare or can make a regular commitment, practical conservation volunteering makes a positive difference to the wildlife we cherish. A range of practical conservation activities are available throughout the year through initiatives such as the “Wildlife Hit Squad” which works with local volunteer groups. The Wildlife Hit Squad coordinates various practical habitat management tasks on important sites across Dartmoor, including conservation management agreement sites and National Nature Reserves, working in partnership with Natural England, Devon Wildlife Trust, the Woodland Trust, Dartmoor National Park Authority and Butterfly Conservation. Conservation work is primarily related to threatened fritillary butterflies such



PHOTOGRAPH © DNIPA



fit and feel good. You will meet new people and develop a range of skills. As well as the many health benefits practical conservation is a rewarding way of making a direct contribution to safeguarding some of our rarest wildlife. Volunteering is also becoming an increasingly valuable stepping stone for those wishing to embark on a conservation career.

To find out more about Dartmoor conservation volunteering opportunities contact the Dartmoor National Park Authority Ecology Team: Ecology@dartmoor.gov.uk

PHOTOGRAPH © ADRIAN COLSTON

South West Lakes Trust

South West Lakes Trust is a regional charity undertaking conservation work and providing access and recreational opportunities for all on the inland waters of South West England. We welcome all volunteers with open arms! If you are looking to get involved in conservation, research, estates management, or education then please get in touch. We have eight reservoirs on the moor so hopefully there’s one near you.

We have regular volunteering opportunities at Burrator Reservoir where our Heritage Learning Officer, Emily is busy engaging groups, schools, and individuals. The volunteering is focused on the historic and natural environment and you could find yourself undertaking a variety of tasks from staffing the visitor centre, researching

A Small Pearl Bordered Fritillary photographed this spring at the National Trust’s Hembury Woods property in the Dart Valley. Hembury Woods is one of the best sites for butterflies in the UK. Thanks to the work of the NT Ranger John Wales in conjunction with Professor Jeremy Thomas and Dave Simcox of Oxford University populations of Pearl Bordered, Small Pearl Bordered and High Brown Fritillaries have flourished against a backdrop of huge national declines

as Pearl Bordered Fritillary and Marsh Fritillary. As well as practical tasks some of our partners are able to offer other volunteering opportunities including species surveys and education work. No previous experience is needed as full training and supervision are given on each task day. A reasonable level of fitness is required for habitat conservation as the tasks are physical and the terrain often uneven and wet.

Volunteering is a great way to keep

historic buildings to practical habitat management for wildlife or assisting with environmental education sessions.

If you would like to get involved please contact Emily Cannon on 01822 855700 or heritage@swlakestrust.org.uk. If you would like to learn more about the Burrator Project then please have a look at our website www.swlakestrust.org.uk.

Our other sites on Dartmoor include Fernworthy, Venford, Meldon and the three reservoirs at Kennick, Tottiford and Trenchford. The site wardens are always looking for an extra pair of hands either with the day-to-day running of the site, fishery, or the practical conservation habitat management work.



PHOTOGRAPH © SWLT

If you have a particular interest in a subject, be that history, wildlife, education or simply like getting stuck in with some practical tasks then please don't hesitate to contact us for an informal chat about how we can help each other. We can cater for groups or individuals and the only skills you need to get started are enthusiasm and interest.

We look forward to hearing from you.

For more information please contact our Dartmoor Warden Kit Hancock on 01822 855700 or khancock@swlakestrust.org.uk

Dartmoor Preservation Association

Dartmoor Preservation Association was founded in 1883 to protect Dartmoor, which it does by campaigning, conservation and communication. It has a team of volunteers who work both on the moor and in the office at Princetown.

Practical conservation work is done throughout the year, with some restriction during the bird nesting season. The projects range from cairn restoration, which achieved a national award recently (the Marsh Award for Community Archaeology, 2011), to investigating lost stone rows and circles.

The work is often done in association with Dartmoor National Park Authority, English Heritage and Natural England. Current projects include Bronze Age settlements on Raddick and Leeden Hills, Grimspound, Venford Reservoir medieval farmstead, Stannon stone row, High House Waste (one of three DPA properties) and Dendles medieval farmstead. On Roborough Common, the archaeological features of Plymouth (Drake's) Leat (1591 AD) and Devonport Leat (1803 AD) have been cleared of scrub for walkers to enjoy; this was commissioned by the Commoners' Association. Much of the outdoor work is "rough gardening", cutting scrub, mainly gorse, with a lot of invasive bracken in the summer. Another project, however, actually promotes bracken in a specialised habitat, to encourage rare Fritillary butterflies to breed.

Our volunteers range from students, naval cadets and corporate groups to pensioners who enjoy the free, outdoor "green gym" – they all embody active Dartmoor! New volunteers are always welcome and do not have to be members, so you can try before you buy. The activities are often recorded on the DPA Blog: www.dartmoorpreservation.wordpress.com.

More details can be found on the DPA website at www.dartmoorpreservation.com/events/forthcoming-events.



PHOTOGRAPH © DPA

Dartmoor Pony Heritage Trust

We urgently need volunteers to fill a broad range of roles. We have opportunities for people of all ages, with or without pony skills, but all are rewarding and fun! We need help with organizing and resourcing public access days, as well as our many other activities, which include pony training, pony care, field maintenance, school visits, development courses for young people and training for conservation grazing managers. We run a regular practical conservation programme from



PHOTOGRAPH © DPHT

September to March on our moorland site at Bellever. The DPHT is always looking for new and active people to enhance our team. A range of skills is more important than knowledge of the Dartmoor Pony as full training will be provided - if you have time each week/month which you could dedicate to the Trust.

Poo Pickers - Trust Centre in Bovey Tracey - full training provided and a fancy pair of yellow gloves!!

Bellever Conservation Dates - Volunteers needed September - March each year.

Sat 13th Dec (Xmas trees) 2014,
Sat 17th Jan 2015, Fri 6th Feb 2015,
Sat 14th Feb 2015, Wed 4th Mar 2015,
Sat 14th Mar 2015

Pony Handler and School Group Support Worker - They say never work with children and animals - we are looking for several new people to do just that! We provide full training. You need to be fun loving, compassionate, happy to work as part of a team and over 18 years.

Further information:
Tel: 01626 833234
Email admin@dpht.co.uk.

Sticklepath and Okehampton Conservation Group (StOC)

The group was established in 1991, open to all and with the aim of helping to improve our local environment. We set out to do this by encouraging the commitment of local people who want to learn about and care for the environment in practical ways.

We go out regularly on Fridays to carry out a variety of projects such as footpath and bridleway maintenance, including where necessary the



PHOTOGRAPH © STOC

construction of stiles, gateways, bridges and boardwalks, gorse control and wetland management. Walling, hedging and coppice projects are also undertaken with tuition if necessary.

We work with our local Dartmoor National Park Ranger and also with the Woodland Trust, Butterfly Conservation, Devon Wildlife Trust, National Trust and Parish Councils. New volunteers are always welcome.

Further information:

Mike Watson 01837 840183
 email: libmik@hotmail.co.uk
 Ian Bowkley 01837 840435
 email: ianbowkley@btinternet.com

Tavistock Taskforce

Tavistock Taskforce CIC was formed in 2006 by its Directors, Peter O'Dell and Geri Laithwaite. Our aim is to provide voluntary opportunities for people of all backgrounds and abilities. We cover a wide area of SE Cornwall, West Devon, South Hams, Plymouth and Dartmoor.

We undertake a variety of tasks which include drystone walling, hedgelaying, fencing path maintenance as well as habitat restoration.

We have a regular core of about 20 volunteers who are a very friendly group and would give a warm welcome to new volunteers.



PHOTOGRAPH © TAVISTOCK TASKFORCE

We go out Monday to Thursday leaving our office/workshop in Pixon Lane at 9.30am in our minibus returning about 4.30pm.

If you are interested in trying out a day volunteering please call Pete or Geri on 01822 610071 or 07870 284045.

Tavistock Taskforce CIC, Unit 2, Pixon Trading Centre, Pixon Lane, Tavistock PL19 8DH.

For information on other volunteering opportunities with Dartmoor National Park Authority and other organizations see the volunteering pages at:

www.dartmoor.gov.uk/aboutus/vi-volunteers ■

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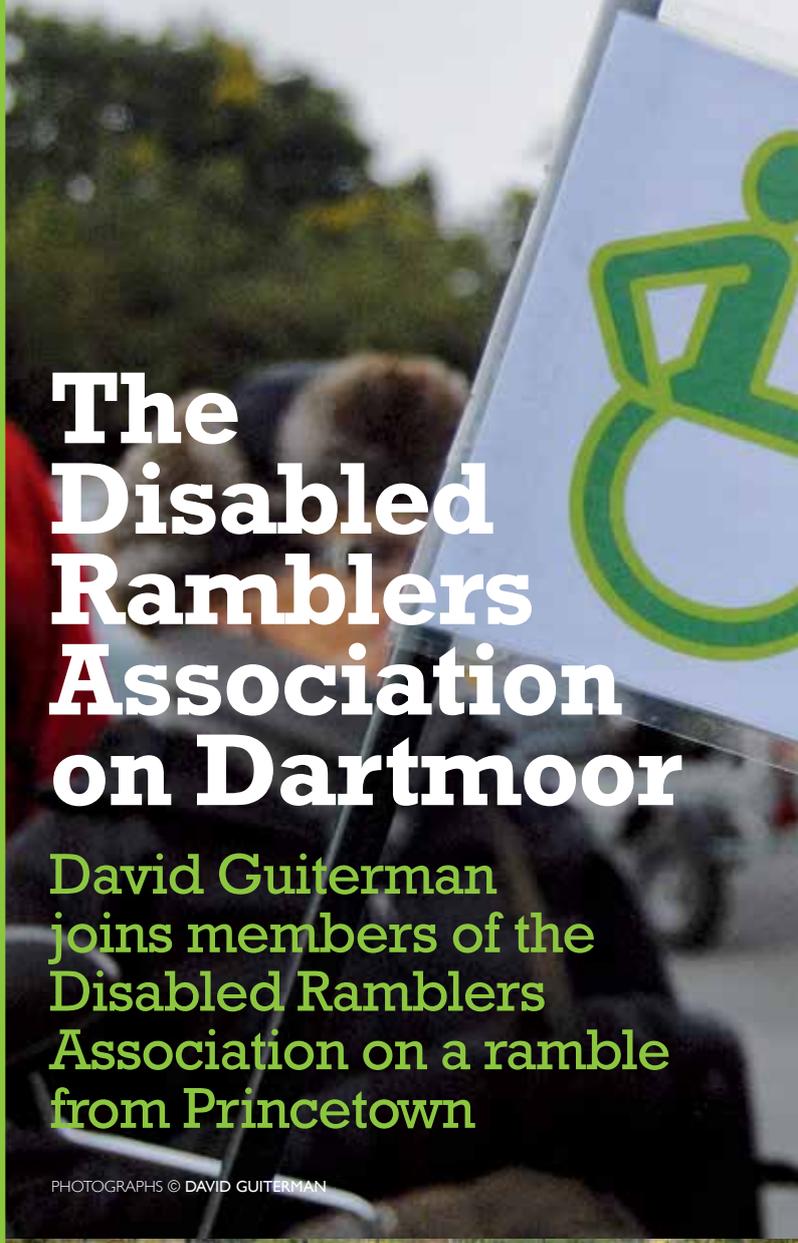
EMAIL US: INFO@DARTROCK.CO.UK
PHONE: 01364 644499



The Disabled Ramblers Association on Dartmoor

David Guiterman joins members of the Disabled Ramblers Association on a ramble from Princetown

PHOTOGRAPHS © DAVID GUITERMAN





Listen to the sound of seventeen motor vehicles starting up in Princetown car park. Listen carefully; hardly anything can be heard. I am with The Disabled Ramblers Association as their guest while they experience the eight mile journey along the trackway of the old railway line that used to run from Yelverton to Princetown. The motors power Trampers, the Land Rover equivalent in the disabled vehicle world.

These go-anywhere vehicles (they do have their limitations) provide access to open country for those who are unable to walk any great distance. Many Trampers are differently equipped to suit the owner. There was even one four-wheel drive wheel chair, a Fieldmaster Trek, with an electric motor powering each wheel to provide greater cross-country ability.

Everyone I met was keen to tell me just how important these rambles are. Many of those on this trip used to be keen walkers and runners. Peter, the Regional Organiser, had fifteen years ago, run in the Lustleigh 10k event that I had experienced recently. One of the Ramblers used to be a mountain guide in the Himalayas. Without the Disabled Ramblers Association and Trampers they would not have been able to enjoy the open air; something so important to all of them.

Everything must be carefully organised. The Association decides on a location for a series of rambles and carefully surveys all routes. A boggy patch of ground, a set of steps or a stile is all it takes to make further progress impossible. Gates have to be carefully designed to be negotiable by Trampers. Many alphas are not suitable. Dartmoor National Park Authority takes access for disabled rambling very seriously and as a result there are a large number of routes possible on the moor.

Dartmoor National Park has much to offer for people of all ages and abilities. A series of Easy-Going Dartmoor routes have been developed by the Authority with help from disability groups to enable access for visitors with limited mobility. Each route provides detailed information on what to expect including gradients, surface type and any path furniture. For more information, visit www.dartmoor.gov.uk/visiting/accessible-dartmoor

Ramble routes are graded into 4 categories using Association criteria. Category 1 rambles are on level routes with nothing rougher than a metalled farm track or forestry road whereas Category 4 involves routes of significantly greater difficulty. Category 4 routes require a high degree of skill and endurance and are only for experienced, adventurous users of very powerful off-road scooters.

The ramble we followed was largely Category 2 with a small rough section which was graded Category 3 and provided a considerable challenge and a high degree of skill in Trampler handling.

Full back-up was provided by a support unit which carried not only a tent with toilet but also equipment to be used for running repairs on any of the Trampers.

We all arrived safely back in the car park after a great day out with spectacular views and convivial company.



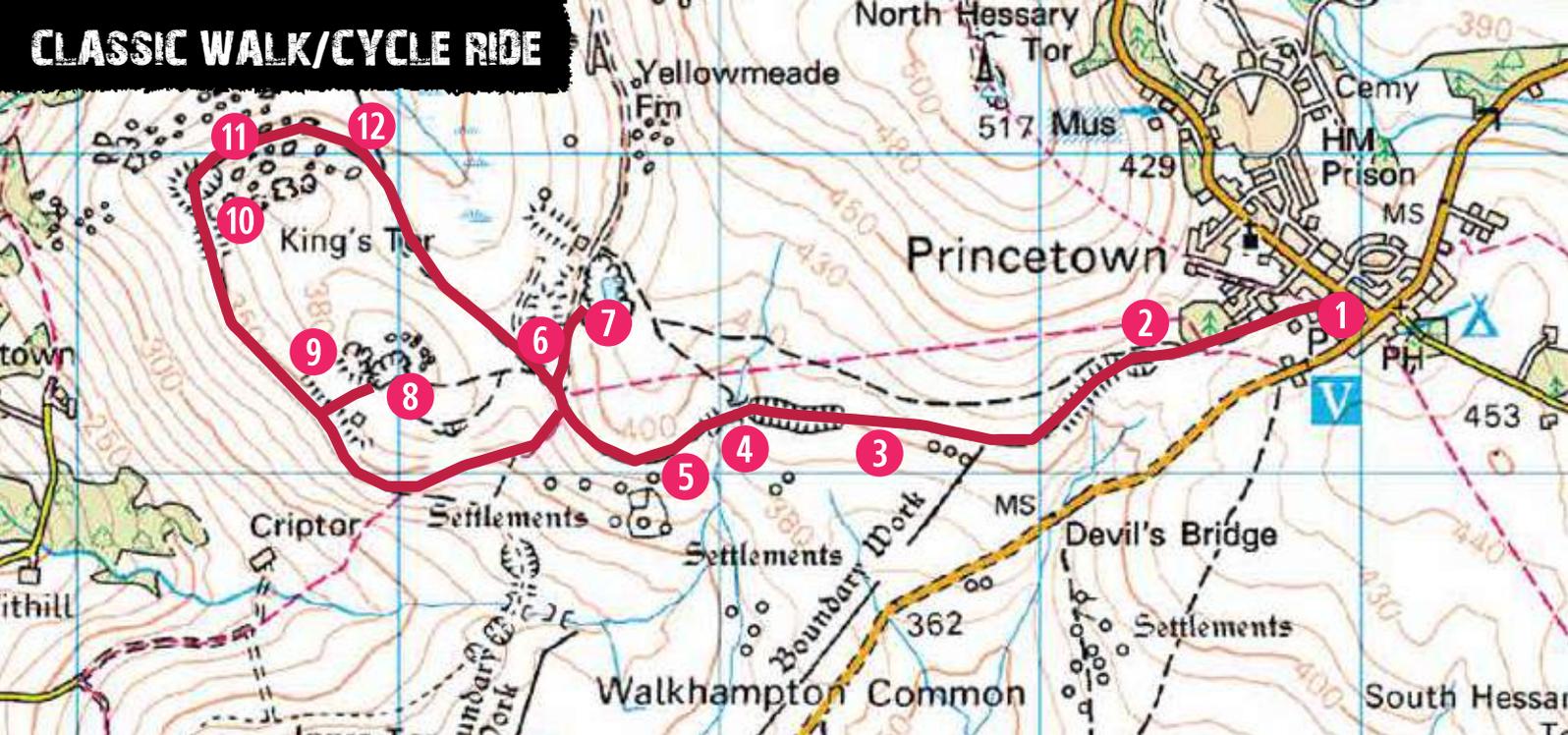
The Disabled Ramblers Association

This national association exists to help mobility-challenged people get back out into the countryside. Able-bodied helpers are welcome to support members and to help with loading scooters and other jobs. They ramble in all weathers and over a variety of terrain.

If you would like to find out more about their activities, please visit their website at: www.disabledramblers.co.uk. For events on and around Dartmoor please contact Peter Flick, the Regional Organiser. Tel: 01837 840670, Email: prflick@dartmoor-it.co.uk

Look out for the national newsletter edited by Ron Lyon who joined us on this ramble. He can be contacted by email: editor@disabledramblers.co.uk. Newsletters can be read at: www.disabledramblers.co.uk/newsletters/

For full details and a map of the route followed please see the Classic Walk/Cycle Ride on page 20. ■



TYRWHITT TRAIL - PRINCETOWN

David Guiterman explores the easy-going route from Princetown followed by **The Disabled Ramblers**

This route follows the original horse-drawn tramway built in 1826 between Yelverton and Foggintor Quarry and then extended to Princetown in 1826 which was replaced by the steam locomotive railway in 1883. It was demolished along with most of the bridges in 1956. The bridges have been restored making this trail an excellent easy-going route onto open moorland and a delightful day out for all.

To reach the start of the route exit the main car park and turn left into Station Road. After about 200 metres, look out for the wooden post pointing towards the disused railway. From here the route leaves the surfaced road and skirts around enclosed land before rejoining the railway.

1 Station building. This is the only structure left over from the once-busy Princetown railway station complete with sidings. If the wind is from the North inhale the malt fumes from the nearby Dartmoor Brewery.



3 Seat. This ingenious seat is made from a couple of granite boulders and an old railway sleeper. It may be the only well-preserved sleeper left on this stretch of line. The seat back is plywood masquerading as slate.



4 Another Granite railway bridge. Here, part of the temporary stream on the north side has been covered over by what looks like old rails. These are certainly not rails salvaged from the railway line but I wonder if they are remains of the old horse-drawn tramway rails. Can anyone help with information on this?



2 Granite railway bridge. There are a number of substantial bridges on this railway. Granite slabs have been used to cover over a seasonal stream providing passage under the bridge for man and beast.



The railway passes through a cutting on top of which are two granite stones bearing the inscription PCWW 1917. These were erected by the Plymouth Corporation Water Works to mark the boundary of the Burrator Reservoir catchment area.

ROUTE INFO

LENGTH: 5 miles (8km)

TIME: Allow at least 2 hours

START/FINISH: Princetown visitor centre car park SX589735

TERRAIN: Mostly disused railway trackbed, part circular, part linear with one steeper section of bridleway that can be avoided by returning the same way. It is suitable for all-terrain wheel chairs. As the trail crosses exposed moorland, do take care to be well-prepared.

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

PUBLIC TRANSPORT: There are regular bus services to Princetown. Please see www.travelinesw.com for further information.

PARKING: There is pay and display car park in the centre of Princetown.

REFRESHMENTS: There are a number of pubs and cafés in Princetown which cater for all tastes but please check accessibility. Lords Café has seating for 200, easy convenient parking, entrance ramps and accessible toilets. Tel: 01822 890407,

email: lordscafe@btconnect.com, www.lordscafeprincetown.org.uk.

NEARBY ATTRACTIONS: Dartmoor National Park Authority Visitor Centre provides insights into many aspects of Dartmoor life. For opening times visit: www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk.

5 Foggintor Deviation. This is one of eight deviations on the Yelverton Dartmoor Railway. When steam locomotives replaced horse-drawn carriages some of the bends were too sharp so the track had to be realigned. The path taken by the old tramway can still be seen.

6 King's Tor Halt. It's not hard to imagine this having been a busy station on the line; you can even see where the platform used to be. It was also a junction for trains going to Foggintor Quarry.

7 Foggintor Quarry. This was the largest granite quarry on Dartmoor and well worthwhile visiting. Some of the granite from here has spent years of indignity at the "hands" of pigeons in Trafalgar Square where it still supports Nelson's statue.



8 Sweltor Quarry. It's worth climbing up to the top for the uninterrupted view right over to Rame Head in Cornwall, past Bodmin Moor and onwards to north Cornwall.



9 Rail trackway into Sweltor Quarry. Most granite on Dartmoor has been worn smooth by the weather. In the old granite quarries lumps of rock waste are distinguished by being angular. However, it is surprising to see beautifully carved granite lying on the ground. These examples were commissioned in 1903 for the London Bridge as corbels for the new flying walkway. These ones presumably were surplus to requirement. By 1962, the bridge was not sound enough to support the increased load of modern traffic, and was sold by the City of London. The stones were numbered and bought by an American oil magnate. They were attached to a concrete framework and now span Lake Havasu; Arizona. The granite for the main 1830s London Bridge came from Haytor Quarry on East Dartmoor.

10 King's Tor Deviation. Another straightening of the bent tramway.

11 Look out just west of north over the B3357 to Merrivale Quarry which closed as late as 1997. This granite was used for retaining river embankments for the Houses of Parliament in 1840.



12 Look to the north where a rectangle of trees marks what is now a car park but at one time was a school for the children of the quarry workers.

Return to Princetown the same way where a warm welcome awaits at one of the cafes. ■



PRIDHAMSLEIGH CAVERN



David Guiterman shares his experience of exploring Pridhamsleigh Cavern near Buckfastleigh



On a lovely day in

September, I was the guest of Robbie and Paula Warke who run the Dart Rock Climbing Centre near Buckfastleigh. A wonderfully friendly atmosphere pervaded the Centre with children arriving for their morning activities and coffee being dispensed by attentive staff. My destiny that day was to spend time crawling and sliding and getting muddy down the most visited and second largest cave in Devon; Pridhamsleigh Cavern. I was also to witness Robbie doing a dive as part of his training for some big dives in France in October. He has been caving and cave diving for over 30 years and has caved worldwide.

Like so many caves in Devon, Pridhamsleigh was discovered accidentally in Victorian times when quarrymen were blasting their way through the limestone rock. Though discovered relatively recently it started forming millions of years ago when the water table was much higher than it is now. Slightly acid water percolating between natural joints in the limestone dissolved the rock

to form a three-dimensional maze of tunnels. The flowing water that had formed the cave system subsequently sank well below the tunnels frequented by most cavers. Only divers can access the lower levels where the water is still developing the cave system.

Reassuringly we were told that, no matter how tight the narrow bits felt, the rocks were not going to move and no earthquakes or other volcanic activity were expected that day. "However," Robbie said ominously. "If the water in the lake at the bottom of the cave system starts bubbling it's best to run for it." Well, it did and I didn't; explanation later.

Pridhamsleigh must be the muddiest cave in Devon. This silty sediment is unusual for limestone caves in containing many fine granite particles originating from the erosion of Dartmoor. This mud won't stay in the cave for long though for it is being removed on the boots and clothing of the thousands who crawl through to experience the unique underground atmosphere. Jon Whiteley from the Devon Cave Rescue Organisation worked with a group of schoolchildren to weigh the mud that came out of the cave and concluded that roughly 30 tons were



PHOTOGRAPHS © DAVID GUTERMAN

cleaned out annually.

Once inside, the warm summer morning and the roar of traffic on the nearby A38 was replaced by a constant temperature of 8°C and silence broken only by the voices of my hosts. I was introduced to the features I was going to encounter; the mud chute, the maze, the maggot crawl and the bottomless pit. It sounded a bit like something out of *Lord of the Rings*.

The next hour was spent crawling, sliding, rolling and walking towards the ultimate destination; the cave-bottom lake. There were tunnels going off in all directions; so many different routes to choose from. It was a great relief to be told where to go. I did ask Robbie if whatever route was taken it would eventually lead back to the surface. "I wouldn't bet on that," came the reply. A guide is essential until the route is familiar.

My guide was Wendy Sampson who runs the Rock Centre at Finlake Leisure Park. "If you put your hand here and your foot in this hole you will avoid falling into the bottomless pit," she said. This and other useful tips on techniques to avoid getting into trouble helped me arrive safely at the lake

to watch Robbie kitting up in diving gear. I had had trouble getting myself around, under and through the various obstacles and that was without carrying full diving gear and other equipment.

The first divers to venture into the lake in the early 1970s hit bottom at about 25 metres and were astounded, on swimming through an underwater arch, to encounter an underwater cavern of totally unexpected dimensions and beauty. Peter Glanvill, a veteran caver and photographer wrote: "If drained this chamber would be something like 40 metres high, 40 metres long and about 25 metres wide. However it is filled with water to a depth of 34 metres. The size of the void has allowed suspended sediment to settle creating astonishingly good visibility and above water are some of the most spectacular mineral formations in Devon. The lake is still being explored and mapped by Devon cavers."

Robbie's return from the spectacular dive was heralded by a glow in the water from his lamp and an eruption of bubbles. No volcanic eruption involved and no need for a quick escape; just a well-organised return to a summer's day. ■

SAFETY

SAFETY IN CAVES

Jon Whiteley's rules for safe caving:

1. When exploring an unfamiliar cave system, always be accompanied by an experienced guide.
2. It is important to tell someone where you're going and what time you're expected back.
3. This person must know exactly what to do if you fail to reappear at the appointed hour.

CAVE DIVING SAFETY

Cave divers operate on the rule of thirds. On the outward journey, the diver breathes from the first bottle until one third of its contents is exhausted and then transfers to the second until it too is down to 2/3 full. At that point the diver should then turn around and come back. The return journey uses a further third from each of the bottles leaving one third in each for emergencies. By the time divers have stirred up the sediment they can often see very little of the way back. They are always guided by permanent lines; certainly in this cave. Divers never clip themselves onto the lines. If they came to knot they may become irrevocably jammed. "It's often like driving a car from clear air into a thick fog," said Robbie. "Whilst one may start the dive in clear water with many metres visibility this can change very quickly, divers must be able to return safely entirely by feel."

Cave diving is definitely not something to be undertaken by sports divers; it takes a lot of training to be able to do it safely.

FURTHER INFO

Thinking of going caving?

Pridhamsleigh Cavern is popular with groups of all abilities. It is always best to start by going with an organised group whether from an outdoor centre or a caving club, there is a wide range of choices. Experienced instructors will tailor the route to suit the group. Accidents are very rare and there is always the Devon Cave Rescue Organisation (dial 999 and ask for cave rescue) on hand if anything goes seriously wrong.

OUTDOOR CENTRES

The Dart Rock Climbing Centre run by Robbie and Paula Warke.

Tel: 01364 644499
Email: info@dartrock.co.uk
www.dartrock.co.uk

The Rock Centre Finlake Leisure Park run by Wendy Samson

Tel: 01626 852137
Email: info@finlake.co.uk
www.rockcentre.co.uk

The Dartmoor Centres

Tel: 01364 631500
Email: ldp-dartmoorcentres@babcockinternational.com
www.dartmoorcentres.co.uk

OTHER CAVES IN DEVON INCLUDE:-

Bakers Pit/Reads Cave (Buckfastleigh)

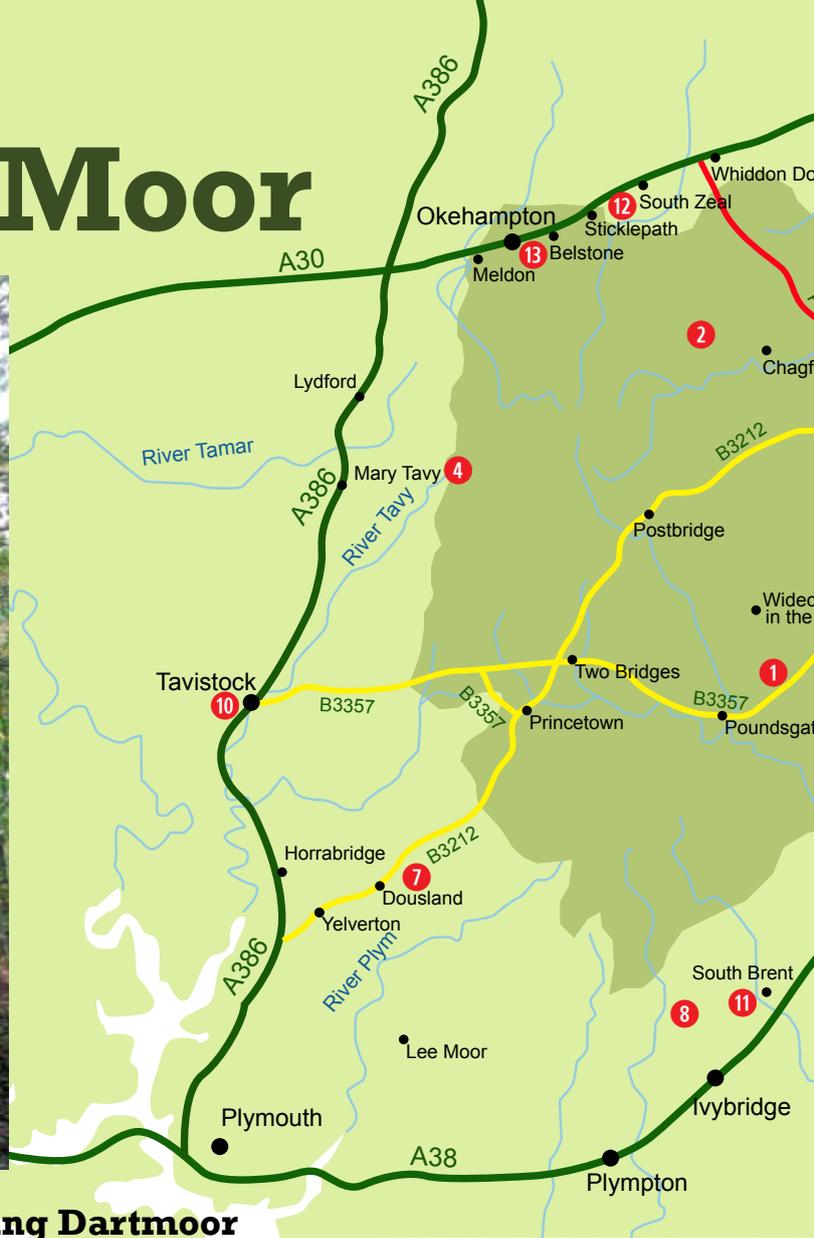
Afton Red Rift (near Totnes)

Radford cave (Plymouth)

Pixie's Hole (Chudleigh)

Clifford's Cave (Chudleigh)

Trust in the Moor



Matt Parkins shares his love of exploring Dartmoor woodlands and offers a round-up of Woodland Trust sites in the area that are open to the public

Do you have a favourite wild place? Where the view stirs the imagination or where the squeaks, rustles and smells give you hints about what's going on around you? Maybe the atmosphere relaxes your mind. These places might draw you back again and again. I have many of these special spots around Dartmoor and, depending on my mood, I might want to be on top of a granite tor, facing into the wind and staring out to the distant coast, or perhaps I'll sit by a moorland stream. The therapeutic sounds of the tumbling water soothe me as the sun makes rainbows where the droplets bounce off boulders. I peer into the brown depths to look for trout but get distracted by life in miniature; insects skating on the surface or dazzling neon

dragonflies, damselfly, chasers and darters. I like to take my insect identification book in my pack wherever I go.

The high moor is always dramatic but, more and more, I find myself walking, sitting and contemplating life in the woodlands around Dartmoor. In contrast to the exposed wide open spaces, a mixed deciduous woodland offers protection, and not just for me. I'm never alone in the woods with birds, mammals and insects foraging, calling and going into battle to protect their little piece of territory. It's exciting; just sit still and enjoy the free show.

I'm surprised how many pockets of woodland are available; open for access. The Woodland Trust manages a number of these and my local one is Tramlines Wood. Just a short stroll from my door I can immerse myself in calm or go for

a family adventure; with a clean river bubbling by, an open glade welcomes you in. What a break from a busy life.

Another real favourite is Blackaton Copse near Gidleigh. It's magical and ancient atmosphere takes you on a trip back into the mists of time. You can be at peace on the bench by the stream or on hands and knees among the crispy leaves admiring the beautiful detail, colours and textures of autumn fungus. A bit further south you can find Pullabrook Wood and Hisley Wood along the Bovey valley. From day to day and season to season these woods change character and reveal new interest. Try visiting Pullabrook in early summer and you'll probably find some fabulous butterflies in the wildflower glades.

Climb up through Hisley Wood in the winter and you can delve into the past. The medieval



PHOTOGRAPHS © MATT PARKINS

packhorse bridge takes you up to the ruins of a farmstead, nestling in the trees and unoccupied for nearly a hundred years. Keep on going through twisted oaks along Lustleigh Cleave and a sparkling frosty view opens up from Raven's Tor; it's worth the wait. The air might be cold but your body will be glowing warm after the steady climb.



WOODLAND TRUST

Woods in the Dartmoor Area



Matt Parkins is self-employed as Raven Quest; an adventurous Dartmoor inhabitant with an inquisitive spirit. He works in woodland management and teaches environmental education to community groups, school children and adults. His passion for the woodlands and wide open spaces of the moor is spread by writing about the interesting stories he finds where people and wildlife meet.



If you have a Woodland Trust site near your home, go there; get to know it and its inhabitants. It's free, but you can become a member and find out more, then get involved in protecting your little piece of territory. If you're a visitor to Dartmoor, find a site to go to for a good day out. From Littlewood in the west and Penstave Copse in the south, the

largest wood of them all is Fingle with miles of tracks to explore and, if you're lucky, you could even get to meet the wild otters of the river Teign.

Woodlands can activate your heart and soul and the minds and bodies of children too. There's a lot to do and see and it's your choice. Maybe you'll find a new favourite place.

1 Grey Park Wood - Ashburton

Grid ref: SX72172715
16 ha (37.46 acres)



This pretty wood, famed for lichens, is dominated by oak high forest dating back to the early 1800s. Ruddy cleave Water, a fast-flowing stream which descends through massive granite boulders, creates an impressive feature.

2 Blackaton Copse - Gidleigh

Grid ref: SX678886
4.86 ha (12.01 acres)



A small, rocky woodland on the uplands of Dartmoor, this ancient woodland has lichen communities alongside oak and birch trees. The Blackaton Brook is important for spawning trout and salmon and old stone field boundaries traverse the site.

3 Bovey Valley Woods - Lustleigh

Grid ref: SX778803
86.19 ha (212.98 acres)



Walk among ancient woodland and explore a wealth of wildlife, at this large collection of woods on the edge of the National Park.

4 Creason Wood - Horndon

Grid ref: SX529800
6.37 ha (15.74 acres)



This wood lies on a steep slope of the banks of the River Tavy. Getting into the wood is not easy but once access has been achieved (via a ladder) it will repay a visit particularly for people with a nature conservation

interest. The limited access to manage the wood means that it is regenerating itself naturally and offers a 'wild' experience compared with walking on the nearby open moor.

5 Shaptor Woods - Bovey Tracey

Grid ref: SX811805
78.58 ha (194.18 acres)



This is a large expanse of woodland made up of a series of semi-natural ancient woodland sites. There are two public rights of way and a permissive path leading onto Shaptor Rocks where the visitor can enjoy magnificent views across the local landscape.

6 Fingle Woods - Drewsteignton

Grid ref: SX762895
169.65 ha (419.21 acres)



Fingle Wood runs from the Drogo Estate Woodlands at Fingle Bridge east to Clifford Bridge. The woodland is continuous on the southern side of the steep Teign Valley extending to some 10km of accessible woodland.

7 Littlewood - Dousland

Grid ref: SX538684
0.32 ha (0.79 acres)



A small linear wood that is well used by local people and appreciated for its amenity value. It provides a safe walking route along the road as there is no footpath. The local community has a keen interest in the wood and looking after it.



WOODLAND TRUST

8 Hall Farm Estate - Harford

Grid ref: SX629601
102.66 ha (253.68 acres)



This wood sits alongside a working farm and consists of several individual woods that join together to form a wonderful mixed environment. There is a mixture of ancient broadleaf trees, conifers and some recently replanted areas but it is gradually being planted with more native trees. A good place to see traditional Devon hedge banks.

9 Higher Knowle Wood - Lustleigh

Grid ref: SX792808
10.15 ha (25.08 acres)



This prominent ancient semi-natural woodland is conspicuous from much of the local area. Set on a small hill the wood slopes west downhill from a plateau. The eastern section of wood along the public footpath is well used by local people.

10 Crowndale Wood - Tavistock

Grid ref: SX474730
1.05 ha (2.59 acres)



Crowndale Wood is a popular local attraction, which is bordered on one side by the towpath to Drake's Leat.

11 Penstave Copse - Aish, South Brent

Grid ref: SX691611
8.56 ha (21.15 acres)



Comprising mature oak, ash, hazel coppice and alder; this site is popular with local dormice.

12 Dishcombe Wood - South Tawton

Grid ref: SX661931
1.82 ha (4.5 acres)



This is a small wood on the northern fringe of the National Park. There is a circular path through the wood and some springs forming a stream. The wood is situated just outside the village of South Zeal along the road towards Whiddon Down.

13 Tramlines Wood - Okehampton

Grid ref: SX596945
5.69 ha (14.06 acres)



Tramlines is a long, linear wood with a river on the northern boundary, likely to have had its origins in a 12th Century Deer Park. Public access is via a public bridleway running through the site from Station Road along the old tramway.

14 Westcott Wood - Moretonhampstead

Grid ref: SX785871
5.72 ha (14.13 acres)



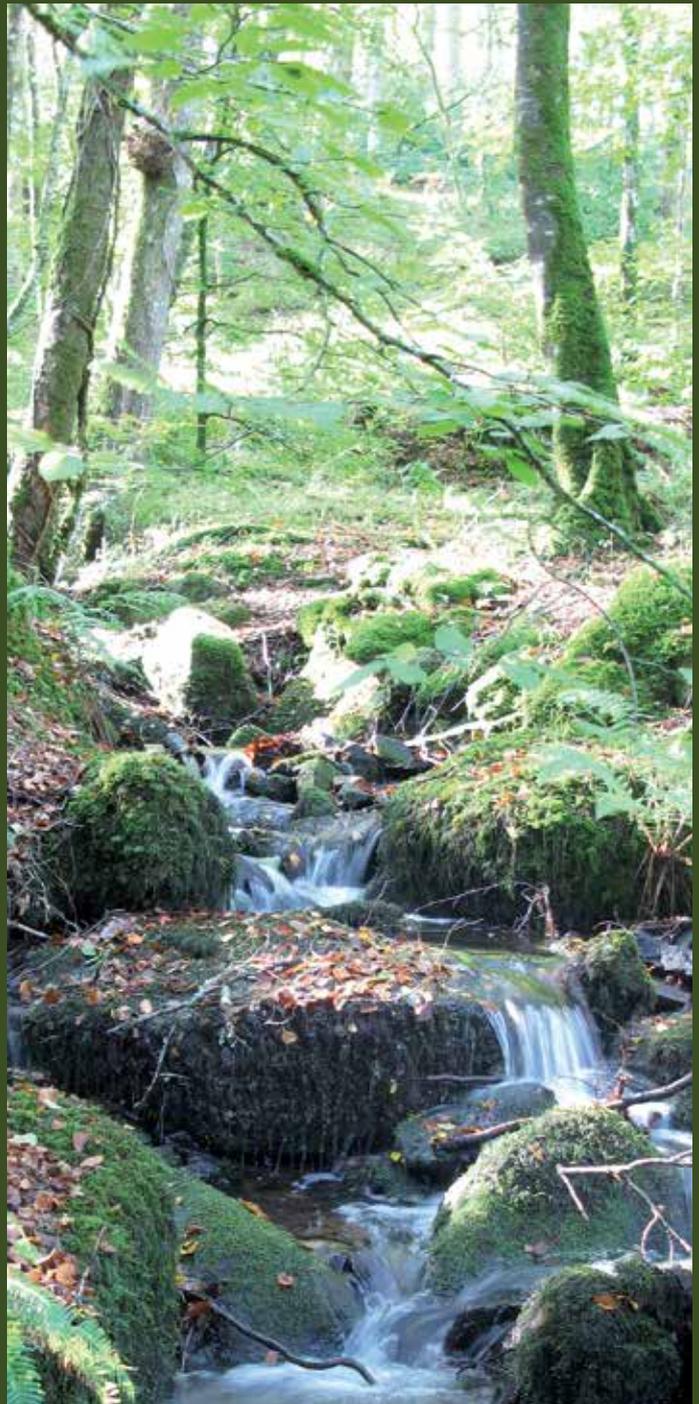
Part of the Teign Valley Ancient Woodland complex, this is a popular wood among local people. It rises quite steeply up from the road so you will need to be quite fit to explore it.

15 East Wrey Cleave - Lustleigh

Grid ref: SX784828
23.5 ha (58.07 acres)



East Wrey Cleave is noticeable for its clusters of conifers in a predominantly broadleaf area. This shady wood is home to some elusive wildlife, from dormice and wood ants to many species of bird nesting in the larch trees.



PHOTOGRAPH © MATT PARKINS

- Good views
- Autumn colour
- Ancient woodland – more than 400 years old
- Free parking less than 500m away
- Bluebells
- Moorland
- Spring colour
- Local parking difficult
- Well worth a visit
- Ancient trees on site
- Special wildlife interest
- Free car parking at site

INFO

There are many more sites around Dartmoor and Devon. You can find them easily at www.woodlandtrust.org.uk.

What you can do if your friends are Clydesdale horses!

At Adventure Clydesdale we use our horses for trail riding on Dartmoor. We ride out with the horses on trails of 2 hours to multiple days.

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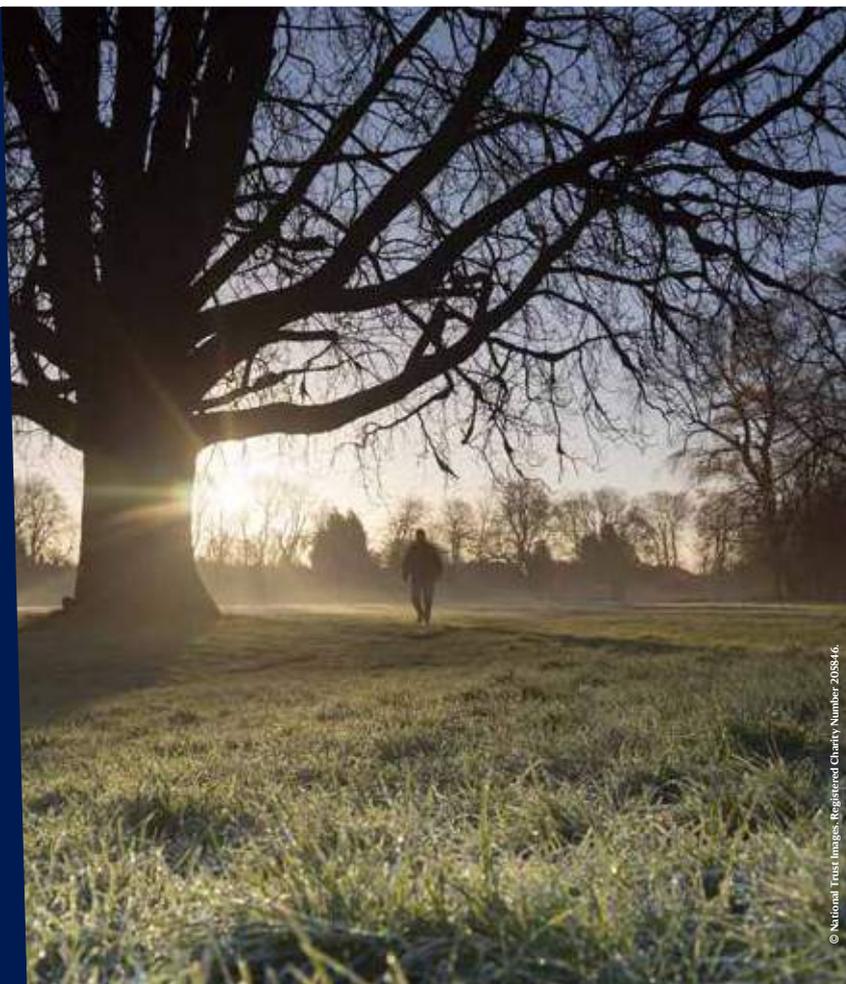
winter walks

Parke and Lydford Gorge

Enjoy an invigorating walk at Parke followed by a warming lunch at Home Farm cafe (open daily). Walk down to the Whitelady waterfall at Lydford Gorge before climbing back up to the tea-rooms for a hot drink (open weekends).

nationaltrust.org.uk/parke
nationaltrust.org.uk/lydford-gorge

National Trust



Perfect village
tea room

A lovely surprise!
Great location on Two
Moors Way

Holne Community Tea Rooms

David Guiterman discovers the truth behind the reviews

So where is this little gem, so universally praised on Tripadvisor?

The village of Holne nestles on the southern slopes of the National Park three miles north east of Buckfastleigh at Grid ref SX707696. It boasts a church, a pub, a village Hall, 270 souls and the eponymous Holne Tea Rooms.

Open the door and you find yourself in what, at first sight, looks like a small village convenience store. A second glance reveals its true nature; an area packed with a whole range of locally-sourced specialist foods. Fresh warm bread greets you from the end of the centre aisle. An artisan baker brings it daily from Buckfastleigh. For anyone thinking of gathering ingredients for a sumptuous picnic lunch on the moor, this bread can be partnered with a range of specialist cheeses, salmon, a West Country pasty, a jar of Buckfast honey, and any number of other delights to make walking a good excuse to enjoy lunch.

Just inside the door to the left is a huge basket of Jenny's free range eggs from "not just happy but ecstatic hens."

Jenny's eggs are combined with an interesting array of specialist flours, Sue's milk and other local ingredients to craft a delightful selection of mouth-watering cakes and scones; baked on the premises by Simon, the chef/manager.

Whether you are walking or cycling, dry or soaking wet, or even if you have muddy boots and a couple of dogs you're still welcome in the tea rooms. For those who will never feel happy without being in contact with the outside world there is even free WiFi available. What more could you wish for? Wondering what to do on the moor? The Tea Rooms are also an official Dartmoor National Park Information Point, everything you need is there to plan your activity.

How about an all-day breakfast? Think about having hot soup and fresh-baked bread. Consider a slice or two of mouth-watering cakes, yes, the cakes baked with Jenny's free range eggs. Be tempted by home-made scones spread lavishly with Sue's local cream and a pot

A real gem
worth a visit

Our favourite tea
room - and we know
them all!



of Devon jam. Choose from any of seventeen specialist teas or a cup of organic Fair Trade coffee. All this and more, served by friendly village volunteers. This tea shop is a truly whole community enterprise.

There has been a tea shop somewhere in Holne for the last hundred years or so. However, it was only in 2011 that a crisis galvanized the villagers to form an Industrial Provident Society; a non-profitmaking co-operative run by members of the village each of whom has invested £10. The village as a whole was so keen to ensure the continuation of the tea shop that they stumped up £85,000 between them to help buy the premises.

From the moment you enter to the time you reluctantly leave, you are effectively welcomed by the whole village. Go there once and you won't be able to resist returning time and time again.

The shop and tea rooms are officially open from 11:00 till 17:00 every day. Even if you turn up an hour early, Simon will make you feel welcome. ■





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Brimpts Farm

Anna Baness visits Brimpts Farm and discovers what makes it an exemplar of farm diversification



A farmer's best friends



Expeditioning stop over

PHOTOGRAPHS © BRIMPTS FARM



Tools of the trade

It was one of the wettest days for months when I visited Brimpts Farm to catch up with Andy Bradford and find out more about the diversification of his family farm, but despite the weather and having had a busy working weekend Andy's enthusiasm for the different enterprises was clearly evident.

Set amid 700 acres of improved grassland, plantation and newtake running down to the East Dart River close to Dartmeet, Brimpts has the outward appearance of many traditional Dartmoor hill farms. Cattle graze in the fields and granite barns nestle around the house. However, look a little closer and you'll see that the barns have windows and are surrounded by immaculate gravel, there's a wooden climbing tower at the end of one of the fields and you might even catch sight of the head of a Clydesdale horse looking over one of the hedges, all hints of the different enterprises run by Andy, his wife Gabrielle and daughter Jo.

The business is broadly split into three with Andy running the more traditional farming and forestry side while Gabrielle oversees the tearoom and the barn business which offers accommodation and conference facilities for a diverse range of people from corporate management training groups, to schools and even individual walkers seeking B&B.

It hasn't always been this way. As a young man Andy was poised to make the farm more commercial and develop a dairy herd, however, a few years of driving around the country delivering stock to different farms for a neighbouring business opened his eyes to other opportunities, whilst plans to increase silage production at home did not come to fruition.

The tearoom, which opened in 1975, was the first business to bring visitors to the farm and Andy suggests that the other aspects of the business have all developed organically from this. Although successful the tearoom was very seasonal. "We wanted to keep the staff on year round and offer more secure long-term employment so we developed the accommodation side and in-house catering for guests," he says. A plan that certainly seems to have worked as the farm now employs five full-time members of staff and provides work for two or three part-time seasonal members as well.



Cream tea anyone?

The barn business has been running for nineteen years and now caters for a wide range of visitors but the farm also offers B&B in the farmhouse and newly converted farm cottage, riverside camping for organised groups, including schools and Duke of Edinburgh Award teams, and the latest departure – camping pods.

With so many groups visiting with different needs it clearly takes some juggling to ensure that the Budhists on a silent retreat are not disturbed by school groups or corporate managers learning to ride the Clydesdale horses. "We could do lots of things here but we have to make sure that everything fits together," Andy says. He is also keen to stress the importance of ensuring that all aspects of their work also fit the Dartmoor environment.

There is clearly a strong seasonality to the bookings, which helps to ensure that everyone enjoys their time at Brimpts. From mid May until the end of July the focus is very much on school groups who book out the barns and take part in climbing,



Happy campers



Excellent conference facilities

caving and bouldering in the local area. Some of the same schools return in the autumn for geography trips, which include visits to a local hydroelectric plant and learning about the renewable energy on the farm. September and October are popular months with walking groups whilst retreat groups also tend to visit during the shoulder months when it's quieter.

Around these bookings trainers from other companies come in and use the facilities as their own to provide training for corporate and other groups, whilst during the peak season the Bradford's offer self-catering through Helpful Holidays.

Working in collaboration with other local businesses

is obviously something that Andy is proud of and keen to see continue and groups from the neighbouring Dartmoor Centres and from Spirit of Adventure use the farm for different activities. He also manages the Dartmoor Woodfuel Co-operative, a venture that grew out of his need to cut fuel costs and carbon emissions.

A keen traveller since his early delivering days, Andy is always on the lookout for inspiration on his trips and in 2005 he visited a woodfuel co-operative in Switzerland. In 2008 with the support of Dartmoor National Park Authority he installed his own woodfuel boiler and later worked with other Dartmoor residents to set up the required

supply chain. The Dartmoor Woodfuel Co-operative now has 40 members, supplies 20 boilers and produces 7000 cubic metres of fuel per annum. It also works with woodland owners helping to manage woodlands "from sapling to firebox" with the added bonus of improving woodland access in some cases. Andy estimates that he has cut the farm heating bill by two thirds and saves 80 tonnes of carbon emissions each year.

The two most recent additions to the business are the Clydesdale horses, an enterprise run by Tim Ancrum and Eileen Ware using buildings and land on the farm and the camping pods being developed by daughter Jo using local timber. Both fit well with existing enterprises and offer something new to visitors.

Andy is keen to develop programmes where visitors can work with the Clydesdales on the farm carrying out routine jobs such as logging that would have been carried out by horses in the not so distant past. While the idea for the Expeditioning, a network of camping pods on farms around the moor, which people can walk or ride between, came out of a school trip to Nepal that Andy went on with his

daughter. He describes it as one up from a tent but not glamping. "Comfortable," he says with a smile. "Something that can also be started in a small way to introduce young farmers to tourism. It's a work in progress."

This phrase seems to sum up the Brimpts Farm ethos as well, as doing different things on the farm has given the family different interests such as travel which in turn fuel new ideas for the business as it continues to evolve. ■

ANDY'S TOP PLACE TO VISIT

Yar Tor – walk to the top of this tor above Dartmeet to watch the sun set.

GABRIELLE'S TOP ACTIVITY

Walking through the Teign Valley from Castle Drogo listening to the stags roar.

MORE INFO

Contact:
0845 0345968 (free phone)

Email:
info@brimptsfarm.co.uk

Location:
Dartmeet, Dartmoor, Devon, PL20 6SG.

The art of TOR BAGGING

Paul Buck explains why tor bagging isn't just about tick lists and targets

PHOTOGRAPHS © PAUL BUCK

Earlier this year, I happened upon a review for an illustrated book called *Dartmoor's Tors and Rocks* by Ken Ringwood. Intrigued, the next time I was at the visitor centre in Princetown, I picked up a copy. Looking back, I wouldn't feel it was too strong a statement to make when I say that it was a defining moment in my relationship with the National Park. Apart from walking the Perambulation of 1240 route back in 2007, Dartmoor had been my primary location for navigation training and I notched up many quality hill days for my Walking Group Leader Award (now known as Hill and Moorland Leader). Since I passed, back in 2009, my rambling and wild camping exploits had become a succession of enjoyable but repetitive forays into familiar areas. Something changed when I read the book; the concept of tor bagging resonated with me and my route planning became more goal driven; I was hooked.



Paul Buck is a qualified Walking Group Leader, keen backpacker and Social Hiker, who loves to walk for fun and for good causes. Currently visiting all the tors on Dartmoor with a blog dedicated to that challenge at www.moorlandwalks.co.uk and another that follows his adventures further afield at www.walking4charity.co.uk.



A tor has quite a few definitions, but the one I subscribe to is that it is either a high rock or pile of rocks on the side or top of a hill.

How many tors there are on Dartmoor is open to debate, but Ken Ringwood's tor bagging "bible" includes significant rocks and he lists 365, effectively one to visit for every day of the year.

I had seen a few lists posted on websites and considered it before, but saw it as a huge undertaking for someone who lives over 200 miles away, and a little fanciful to think I could manage it. Ken's book made me realise it is an achievable pursuit.

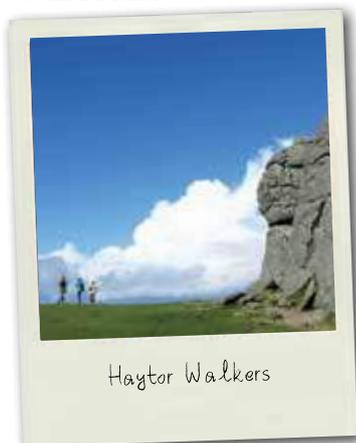
Some of the locations can be visited easily using nearby car parks, but part of the purpose, for me, is to further encourage me to get out on the moor, discovering them as part of day walks, or overnight wild camping trips.

My mind made up, I mentioned my intentions on my blog www.moorlandwalks.co.uk and social media

So what exactly is tor bagging? I should explain. There are, it seems, an infinite number of tick lists related to hiking. Whether it be setting out to climb every Munro in Scotland, stand upon the Wainwrights of the Lake District, visit all the summits of Wales above 3000 feet, or walk the National Trails of the UK, there is something for everybody. Add to that, my current preoccupation; visiting all the tors of Dartmoor.



and Phil Sorrell, creator of a walking website called Social Hiking, expressed an interest in adding the information to the site. The concept of this marvellous website is simple. It provides a forum where, with the aid of various different tracking devices, hikers can literally share their adventure on a live map, and interact with the viewer through tweets, photos and audio.



Haytor Walkers

From here, the beginnings of a bagging list for Social Hikers was formed. Taking data compiled from various sources including old guide books, maps, Geonames, The Database of British and Irish Hills, and, of course, Ken Ringwood's book, a comprehensive list of around 425 is now available.

www.shareyouradventure.com/features/baglist/1/tors-rocks-of-dartmoor

As we diligently tick off each tor, there have had to be a few adjustments to the odd grid reference, tweaks that will likely continue until one of us has completed the list. For me, a highlight



Leather Tor

of our efforts is that we have sparked an interest in Dartmoor amongst hikers more accustomed to the mountainous areas in the north, and they are keen to experience the National Park. Lured by the thrill of another list of peaks to tick off, no doubt!

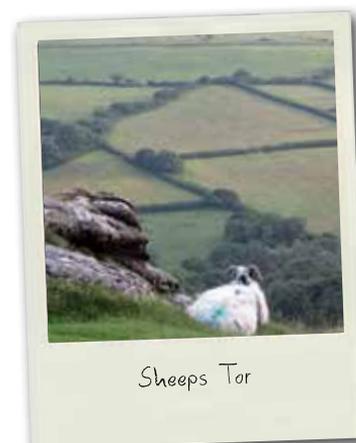
What I have also learnt from tor bagging this year is that whilst it is the goal that draws you in, it isn't all about tick lists and targets; the process slows your pace, encourages you to explore, introduces you to a greater awareness of the environment, and strengthens the passion you have for the place you are walking in.

I am now discovering new places on the moor, venturing into areas I never contemplated and constantly being surprised by the variety and beauty of Dartmoor. For me, I'm finding that rarely visited, hidden gems, such as Little Combe Tor, are as big a thrill to visit as the more well-known giants on the open moor. If every tor bagging walk had a buried treasure such as that, I would be more than happy. If you are a regular walker in this part of the world, taking up tor bagging is one of the most rewarding things you can do.

It is not just a summer pursuit. Whilst the days are shorter and the number of tors visited is lower, gone are the battles through shoulder high bracken and other foliage to reach some of the hidden waypoints. Properly prepared,

the moor isn't as formidable, in the winter, as people think, either. There are definite advantages and pleasures to walking on a frozen Dartmoor. The going underfoot can be significantly easier. Take the route from the Whitehorse Hill cist to Hangingstone Hill; on a mild day if you take the as the "crow flies" option, instead of the peat pass, you'll be spending a lot of time leaping over mires and finding yourself up to your ankles or, occasionally, knees, in the boggy terrain. On a frozen moor, with the right precautions, it is a refreshingly straightforward route, if a little slippery in places.

So, I will continue my quest with as much enthusiasm throughout the colder months. I have already visited quite a few of the tors, some of them on numerous occasions, and I am sure that my tor count, currently at 167 of the 425 listed on www.shareyouradventure.com, would be greater had I recorded them with a gps. No matter, it is not a chore to revisit these "old friends". ■



Sheeps Tor

Winter Gear for Young People

James McDowall from Kountry Kit in Tavistock recommends some great items for young people this winter



Deuter kids rucksacks, from £26

For those a little older, Deuter makes great lightweight rucksacks for kids with plenty of room for going out for the day or going on holiday, great colours, simple designs and really robust.



Seal Skinz Gloves and Mitts, from £15

Don't worry, not actually made from sealskins, the brand Seal Skinz are one of the best quality and most reliable gloves you can buy. A UK company that makes items with the UK weather in mind; which means very waterproof, with just enough padding for all activities. If you do want to use them in much colder conditions you can add around 3-5 degrees warmth with a small liner glove as an inner. These are great for all ages from toddler to adult with plenty of sizes in between.



Children's Buff, £12.50 - £21

A must for the winter for any age, toddler, junior or adult. Used as a neck scarf, hat, facemask, balaclava, and headband. If you haven't seen the video check out youtube or the buff wear web site for the full demonstration. The perfect gift any time of year.



Bridgedale Junior Trekker Socks, £8.49

The must have for any activity, the Bridgedale trekker socks are padded, soft, comfortable and make a huge difference to the fit and feel of any shoes. Who wouldn't want cozy comfortable toes?

Littlelife rucksacks, from £16.99

These little rucksacks give your toddlers independence to carry their own crayons and toys. With designs including bumble bees, turtles, lady birds and many more, they are easy to spot and have a safety strap for parents to hold on to when the children find their running legs.



Grisport Walking Boots, £29.99

The Children's Grisport walking boots aren't only soft, supportive and great quality, they are also made in Italy. A super waterproof leather boot that is lightweight and has great padding throughout. Perfect for walking the dog, wet days out in town or after a tough day on the ski slopes.



Junior Icebreaker base layers, from £35

Wool is such a great natural product and a super insulator but it can be itchy against the skin. Icebreaker products have, however, been treated to make them nice and soft like silk with a natural enzyme wash which is recycled into drinking water after, thus producing a fabulous soft finish with no itch, in an environmentally friendly way.





Vango Wilderness Junior Sleeping Bag, £25

Soft touch fabrics, warm, tapered shape at the bottom, good quality at an affordable price. A small internal pocket for storing valuables when camping like a torch or a midnight snack, ideal for camping out on the moors or a sleepover with friends at home.

Sprayway Hawk waterproof jacket, £45

Lightweight but strong, a fixed hood so it can't be lost, great colour range and breathable. The perfect outdoor or everyday jacket. Good colours for school or brighter colours to stand out a little more and interactive zip inside the main zip to attach a fleece to make this a winter jacket also.

Deuter Baby Carriers, from £180

There are many baby carriers on the market and of course your first concern is the comfort of your child, it certainly was mine also but why should you sacrifice your comfort? The Deuter I would recommend as the padding is super for the carrier and passenger. For the passenger the seat is soft and fully adjustable to get the right height, padded around the shoulders and a great headrest on some of the higher end models that would put a Formula 1 car seat to shame. Safe but washable also. For the carrier an adjustable back system so whoever wants to carry the precious cargo can with a simple tried and tested Velcro adjustment used on the trekking range of sacks. With extra space for storage, sunshades and rain covers there is no stopping you getting out.



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



The UK's First DWS Competition



In late August, Exeter's canal basin played host to a climbing competition with a splash! The two day event was a first for the UK; a stunning

artificial wall was built and floated on a barge into the centre of the canal where climbers from across the UK and beyond were challenged to complete three climbs of increasing difficulty or face a cold plunge into the water below. Standing at just over 7 metres high and 12 metres wide the wall was an impressive feat of architecture designed by Entre-Prises UK. The event was made possible, and hosted, by Exeter's Quay Climbing Centre – fortunate enough to be one of the only climbing walls in close proximity to a deep water canal basin.

With the South West increasingly gaining a reputation for some of the best DWS in the country and with a piqued interest in the novel idea of an artificial DWS competition (seen only before in the US, Spain and Finland) the event attracted many of the UK's best climbers. A strong field of over 200 athletes competed over 2 days watched by crowds which numbered well over a 1,000 at the event's peak on Sunday afternoon as supporters and curious locals alike jostled for space on the quayside to watch the visually spectacular climbing taking place and even more spectacular falls!

The male event was won by DMM sponsored athlete Liam Hasley, the women's by the reigning UK bouldering champion Michaela Tracey, competing for Scarpa. The junior events were won by La Sportiva's Jim Pope and Bristol climber, Hannah Slaney. South West climbers performed well across all events with local names such as Mikey Cleverdon, Chris Cubitt, Tom Newberry, Alex Waterhouse and Rhoslyn Frugniet representing the Quay at the event.

The event was supported by leading names in the climbing industry including La Sportiva, DMM International, Tenaya, Snap Mats, RAB and 5.10 as well as local, independent companies like Dewestone, A Mind for Adventure, Taunton Leisure, AS Watersports, Haven Banks Outdoor Education Centre, Dry Robe, Climbskin, Really Good First Aid and Dartmoor Search and Rescue.



PHOTOGRAPHS © SIMON FOWLER, MARK JEFFORD AND PAUL OAKLEY

Harford Bridge Park by the River Tavy

Harford Bridge Park is a long-established family owned and operated holiday park set in Dartmoor National Park beside the River Tavy. It offers riverside and other spacious level camping pitches as well as self-catering caravan holiday homes, lodges and a special Shepherd's Hut for "comfortable camping". The high quality self-catering accommodation is available all year and all units are centrally heated with double glazing. Camping and touring pitches available from March to November.

The park has an abundance of grass, trees, shrubs and hedging. Dogs are welcome and a separate dog exercise field is provided so they can be let off the lead. The park is a Visit England four star graded holiday park with modern facilities that include a heated toilet block with showers and hot water included.

For 2015 renewed amenity buildings will provide three family bathrooms and facilities for the disabled, plus a new launderette and indoor washing-up facilities with freezer etc.

We have all the services to meet the needs of campers, motor homers and touring caravans with electric hook ups, serviced and unserviced pitches as well as hardstands. Also a games room with table tennis and a separate TV room. Children's play area with new equipment. Tennis court (free). Fly fishing (by licence). WiFi over site (charged).

The park is ideally situated for visiting Dartmoor, touring Devon, Cornwall and the Tamar Valley and for visiting beaches on the north or south coast or just relaxing. It is just 2 ½ miles from the bustling market town of Tavistock, the birthplace of Sir Francis Drake and part of the Tamar Valley mining world heritage site. The park is close to a bus route, cycle route and not far from the A386 Tavistock to Okehampton road.

Harford Bridge Park has a mining heritage but is now mature parkland. A classic granite moorland bridge features on the

river. With 16.5 acres, the park provides 125 touring pitches well spaced on a level grassy meadow with some shade from trees; 52 pitches have 16A electrical hook-ups and 11 have multi-services, five with hardstanding.



Ideally located just 2½ miles from Tavistock within Dartmoor National Park

- A selection of quality self-catering holiday accommodation (caravans, lodges and a cottage) available all year round
- A special Shepherd's Hut
- 125 traditional grass camping and caravan pitches beside the River Tavy, hardstands also available
- Near A386 Tavistock – Okehampton road on National Cycle Route 27
- Quality graded by VisitEngland as a 4 star holiday park, AA 4 pennants graded camping and touring site
- David Bellamy Gold Award for Conservation (17 years)
- Dog friendly, cyclist friendly and walker friendly park
- 12 acres of meadow and parkland with spacious level camping and caravan pitches on grass or hard-standings



Harford Bridge Holiday Park Peter Tavy Tavistock PL19 9LS
E: stay@harfordbridge.co.uk T: 01822 810 349

Visit Dartmoor™

Dartmoor is open for business

Visit Dartmoor is the new official Dartmoor Tourism Organisation

We are a not-for-profit company and our mission is to promote Dartmoor to the wider world and to support all the businesses who are associated with us by advertising on the Visit Dartmoor website.

Organising two Dartmoor Business Showcase Events each year, running four seasonal promotional campaigns, attending all the Dartmoor shows and events with a large trade stand and visiting at least one of the major international travel/tourism events in London or Birmingham each year are just a start!

An informal meet and greet evening is being held at the National Park Visitor Centre, Princetown on Tues 9th Dec from 6pm. Everyone is welcome to come along and talk to us. Representatives from Dartmoor National Park Authority, Duchy of Cornwall, Dartmoor Partnership Board and local authorities will also be on hand to respond to questions.

We offer a competitive rate card with a choice of three packages, please follow this link www.actedartmoor.com/visit_dartmoor_welcome.pdf to see this and find out more about what we can do for you. If you would like to join us on this new and exciting adventure, please email jenny@visitdartmoor.com



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We love hearing about how races were run and won, presentations and awards that have been given and received, adventures that have been completed. Anything in the *Active Dartmoor* world that is of interest to our readers in fact. If you have an item that you would like us to include, just let us know! jenny@activedartmoor.com

Mud Run at the River Dart Country Park
David Guiterman takes on the muddy challenge



Weeks of fine weather suggested that this year's Mud Run would lack that muddy vital ingredient. It was not to be that easy!

After a gentle musical warm-up, runners were faced with a fiendish array of obstacles whose names alone were enough to daunt all but the most determined. Ahead lay the Snake Slides, the Mini Assault Course, the Pirate Ship and Balance Beams to name but a few horrors.



It was no good trying to dodge the obstacles for everywhere there were friendly marshals suggesting what might happen if you didn't go the right way. Even where there were no marshals, strategically placed red tape gave the same message. There was no escaping.

The organisers were so thoughtful. They made sure that although the first part of the event covered everyone in mud, the second with its Deep Water Wade and Pirate Ship washed it off again.

I talked to some of the runners about their experience. Comments ranged from "fantastic" to "horrendous". My own view; "an event not to be missed by anyone who loves fun-running".

This year's event raised over £2,000 for The Rowcroft Hospice. Some teams raised money for other good causes including £570 for the Ronald McDonald House Charity. Mark White carried "The Baton" around the 10km; visit www.thebaton.co.uk/ for more details.



Make a date for next year's Mud Run on 27th September 2015, River Dart Country Park. Enter as an individual or team. The event is organised by Mud and Sweat - www.mudandsweat.com.



Bovey Beauty

Matt Parkins reports on this popular annual race on the south east side of the National Park



Summer's over and a change in season is in full flow. The sun's soft light flickers like an old projector behind the trees, illuminating bright shining yellows and warm glowing russets. The sky is blue and the Bovey Valley air is pure. It's a perfect autumn day. Leaves cover the ground but more are falling; after a cool night they are ready to drop and fill the gaps in the soft woodland carpet.

It's an ideal day for a run! But not for me though. I'm here to help the Woodland Trust and Natural England to marshal the annual Bovey Beauty 10 mile race. The route takes in some of the most rugged areas of the East Dartmoor National Nature Reserve, climbing through the woods of the Bovey Valley before passing the lichen covered trees of Lustleigh Cleave to Hunter's Tor where, at the head of the valley, the runners will turn for home.

My task is to take up a position in one of the most beautiful parts of the country and wait to guide a group of energetic athletes round a series of turns and send them on their way through a challenging, boulder strewn woodland. It's a tough job so I wait, listening to bird song. They're calling to establish territory; a different type of competition. While the athletes are doing this for fun, the wildlife is planning for winter, anxious to survive. A peacock butterfly is looking for a roost. A nuthatch inspects a twisted oak and two hornets are scanning a stone wall for a winter home.

It won't be long now. At the checkpoint I'm expecting the first competitors soon while I enjoy the sounds of the river bubbling over boulders behind me. A face appears in a gateway; the leaders are making good time – running



PHOTOGRAPH © GUY SHAYLER



PHOTOGRAPHS © MATT PARKINS

smoothly. Second place is just seconds behind; he's smiling. Is it a fun run? It looks that way. More runners pass me in all colours and club vests. Okehampton – not far from home. Stroud – they've come a long way. Ilkley?

The Bovey Beauty's reputation has spread to Yorkshire. I show them where to continue their tough cross country trial and, after making sure they are all safely on their way, I quickly collect the "BB" signs and arrows before making a rendezvous with fellow marshals, then back to Pullabrook Woods where it all began. We're just in time to see the leaders once more. One hour and 22 minutes later they're looking happy to be back and pleased with their efforts, having tackled over 560 metres of climbs. More runners return and the atmosphere builds, creating camaraderie between competitors and lots of congratulations are exchanged as they discuss their endeavors. No.67 crosses the line and shouts out "what a great route – terrific race!"

Now it's time for a bottle of water and a chocolate bar to recharge energy. All the runners have returned and the Dartmoor Rescue Team is on hand to ensure all are present and correct. They stand together, wet shoes and muddy legs seem to be part of the attraction, and all talk of coming back next year.

If you feel like an autumn run and you'd like to join them in the Dartmoor landscape over a challenging terrain contact the Woodland Trust by emailing Dave Rickwood at DavidRickwood@woodlandtrust.org.uk. It's a real Bovey Beauty. ■

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WHAT'S ON

A guide to what's happening on Dartmoor over the next few months

Follow Active
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There's a range of activities and events on and around Dartmoor for all age groups over the coming months. We've included a taster to get you going, but don't forget that the following organisations also run regular walks and activities:

Horrabridge Walk & Talk

Every Tuesday and alternate Wednesdays
Ruth Pain - Walk co-ordinator
Tel: 01822 853333

Ivybridge Walk and Talk

Every Tuesday and Thursday
Andy Sloper - Active Devon
Tel: 01392 263674
Email: active@devon.gov.uk

Moretonhampstead Walk and Talk

Every Tuesday
Andy Sloper - Active Devon
Tel: 01392 263674
Email: active@devon.gov.uk

Okehampton Walk and Talk

Every Tuesday, Wednesday & Sunday
Andy Sloper - Active Devon
Tel: 01392 263674
Email: active@devon.gov.uk

Tavistock Walk and Talk

Every Tuesday & Thursday
Andy Sloper - Active Devon
Tel: 01392 263674
Email: active@devon.gov.uk

Wildlife Hit Squad

Every Sunday at East Dartmoor NNR
10:00 - 16:00
Tel: 01626 832330
Email: linda.corkerton@naturalengland.org.uk

Wildlife Hit Squad Wednesday Group

Every Wednesday at Devon Wildlife Trust Bovey Heathfield Reserve
Tel: 01626 832330
Email: linda.corkerton@naturalengland.org.uk

NOVEMBER PICKS

Saturday 22

Parke Run

www.parkrun.org.uk/parke/

Saturday 22 - Sunday 23

Spirit of Adventure Hill Skills Course

www.spirit-of-adventure.com



Saturday 22 - Sunday 23

Adventure Okehampton 2014 - Canoeing for Improvers (BCU 3 Star)

Tel: 01837 53916



Sunday 23

Moorland Guides Moretonhampstead's High and Lows

Tel: 01837 54727
Email: paul.dartmoor@virgin.net

Sunday 30

Dartmoor Runners Warren House

www.dartmoorrunners.co.uk



DECEMBER PICKS

Saturday 6

Poor Visibility & Night Navigation Course

www.compassworks.co.uk

Sunday 14

Dartmoor Runners Belstone/Meldon Xmas score event & bash

www.dartmoorrunners.co.uk

Sunday 21

Free Spirit over 50's Walk

www.spirit-of-adventure.com

Tel: 07845 176870

Email: simondell1958@yahoo.co.uk

Saturday 27 - Sunday 4 Jan

Castle Drogo Wind down and warm up Children's winter trail

Tel: 01647 433306

Email: castledrogo@nationaltrust.org.uk

Sunday 28

Moorland Guides Sittaford and Waterfall

Tel: 01837 54727 Email: paul.dartmoor@virgin.net

JANUARY PICKS

Saturday 3

Parke Run

www.parkrun.org.uk/parke/

Sunday 25

The Turkey Burner - Mountain Bike Navigation Event

www.mudandsweat.com

Saturday 31

Wild Night Run

www.wildrunning.co.uk



If you have an event that you would like to publicise in *Active Dartmoor* please email jenny@activedartmoor.com

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



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The largest dedicated indoor wall in the South West offers something for all abilities, from beginners to experienced climbers, with two great boulder caves for bouldering fanatics. Whatever the weather you can experience some of the thrill of the outdoors indoors at the Quay, or just enjoy the view of the action from our Workshop Cafe!

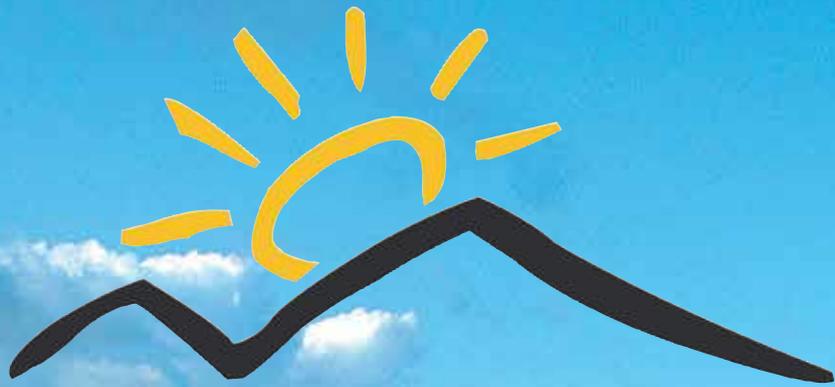
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