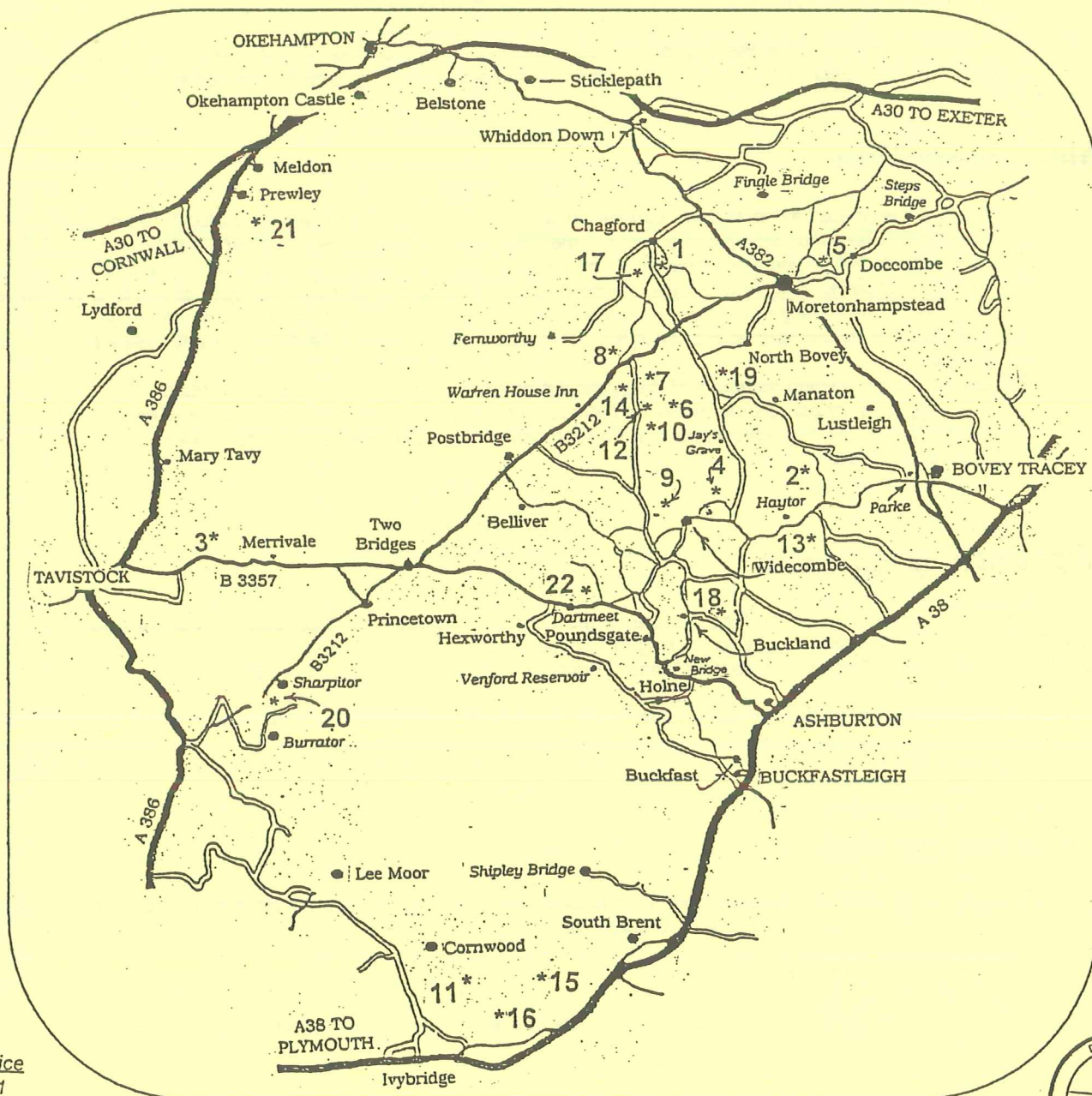
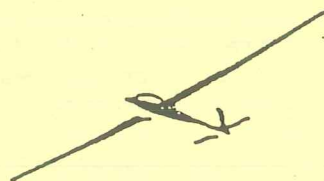




Dartmoor Slope Soaring Club's

Guide To

Dartmoor Soaring Sites



Price
£1



Laws and Byelaws

All land is owned by someone, and their permission is of course normally required for flying models (and for parking, in off-road locations). On the moor, exceptions to this are made on commons and open areas which are designated as Access Land. Here, members of the public are permitted access on foot (and on horseback) for recreation purposes. But if you aren't on Access Land, you should have permission from the landowner!

The designated Access Land is shown on the Ordnance Survey 1 : 25000 Outdoor Leisure map for Dartmoor, edged purple. Access to these open areas is regulated by the National Park Byelaws : **Byelaw 18** deals with kite and model flying, and says:-

- (1) No person shall fly a kite or model glider from the Access Land in such a manner as to give reasonable cause for annoyance to any other person, or in such a manner as is likely to startle or disturb stock on the land.
- (2) No person shall release any power-driven model aircraft for flight, or control the flight of such an aircraft, on or over the Access Land unless he is authorised to do so by the Council.
- (3) For the purpose of this byelaw "model aircraft" means an aircraft which either weighs not more than 5 kilogrammes without its fuel or is for the time being exempted from the provisions of the Air Navigation Order and "power driven" means driven by the combustion of petrol vapour or other combustible substances, or by one or more electric motors.

All sites in this guide are on Access Land.

Regarding vehicular access, "The Dartmoor Visitor" (a Dartmoor National Park publication) summarizes the relevant Byelaw in the following words :-

" Do not drive onto moorland or park more than 15 metres from the road. "

N.B. Please note that the Byelaws prohibit any power flying on the moor. Any abuse of this could jeopardize the rights enjoyed over the years by flyers of slope and thermal soarers. Do NOT fly any form of powered model !!

Vital - Safety Notes

- 1) If you arrive to start flying and you can see another flyer within a mile of you, you **MUST** go and check with them what channel/crystal they are using in their transmitter. It is your responsibility, if they were there first. Failure to do this, if you are on the same channel / crystal number, is likely to result in you destroying their model by shooting it down when you switch on your transmitter – and possibly your own too, once you've launched. This is dangerous to public safety.... and possibly to your own health, if he catches you.
- 2) It is strongly recommended that all flyers fly together, at the top of the hill, or in any alternative agreed position.
- 3) Extreme caution when members of the public are around : if you're about to land, tell them.
- 4) If hang-gliders (or paragliders) arrive let them launch – they don't usually stay long – and keep well clear of them. Neither the hang-glider pilot nor the Club can afford any accidents. With paragliders, discuss who will fly where....and stick to it.

Maps and Map References

The best map, recommended for purchase, is the Ordnance Survey - "Outdoor Leisure Map 28 - Dartmoor" at 1:25000 scale. This shows the access land. Failing this, in the 1 : 50,000 pink series, the moor is covered on two sheets - "Okehampton and North Dartmoor" (Sheet 191) and "Torbay and South Dartmoor" (Sheet 202).

Important Note : The National Grid Reference (NGR) given for each site is for the car parking location - you should be able to find the hill from here !

A Few Reminders

* On the commons, there are agricultural occupiers who have legal rights for grazing livestock. If you meet landowners or occupiers, be polite, friendly and co-operative.

* Take all your rubbish home.

* Never fly unless your insurance is up to date. (Any queries on this – give someone in the Club a ring).

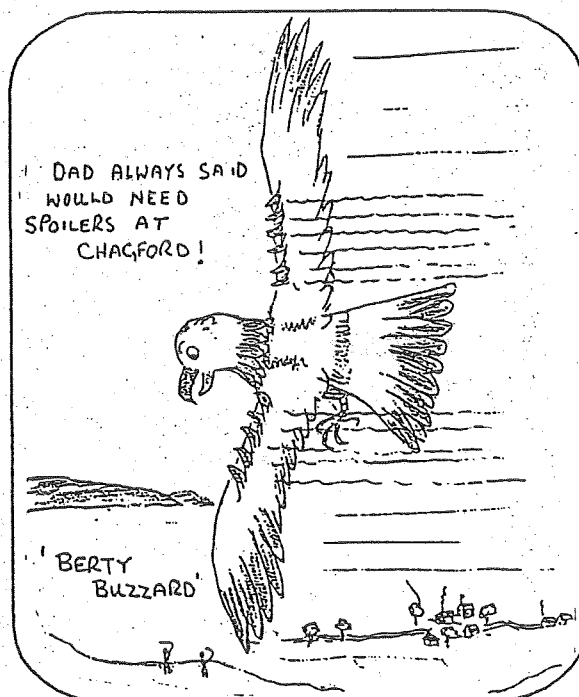
Site No.

(on front cover)

1. Chagford (Nattadon Common)

Map 1 NGR SX 707867

Wind direction : N.W. (not much either side).
Flying: Best lift on Dartmoor, and one of the best sites in the South West. That said, the slope is not very wide.
Ease of landing: Moderately easy : bracken covered gentle slope, unless you walk back to the top of the hill.
Parking and access : Ample parking, with short almost level walk to the launch area.



2. Black Hill

Map 2 NGR SX 763793

Wind direction : N.N.W. to S.E. (best N. to E.)
Flying : Good hill, especially on the northerly side, where flying is from the top. For north east and particularly east winds, flying is from a "shoulder" or slight ridge below the top of the hill.
Ease of landing : On top, landing is easy, but with occasional granite lumps and a cairn to avoid. On lower ridge, landing moderately easy, but remainder of hill behind you prevents a conventional square approach.
Parking and access : Not usually a problem. Park along track on north side. Also limited parking on road to east. Stiff climb to hilltop.

3. Cox Tor.

Map 3 NGR SX 524763

Wind direction : Best N.W. to S.W., especially around west. Will work S. around to N.N.E.
Flying : Not the steepest of hills, but a huge one. The home of the Dartmoor Cross Country, attracting competitors from all over the country on the first weekend in July, this is perhaps best suited to large span models, but superb for all models.
Ease of landing : Fine on top, but plenty of rocks down the slopes.
Parking and access : Ample parking along the road, with a half mile climb to the top, stiffish in places.

4. Chinkwell Tor.

Map 4 NGR SX 731777

Wind direction : S.W. to W.N.W.
Flying : Good.
Ease of landing : Definitely a case of "pick your spot".
Parking and access : There is a car park on the north side of Bonehill Rocks. There is about half a mile of moderate uphill walking to the north side of Chinkwell Tor.

5. Mardon Down.

Map 5 NGR SX 765871

- Wind direction :** Ideal W.S.W. Works W. to S.W.
Flying : Fair lift, but not in the Chagford / Black Hill (north) league. For aerobatics, works better in a good fresh blow as the hill is not as steep.
Ease of landing : Fairly easy. Heather / gorse / bracken cover but with occasional granite lumps.
Parking and access : 2 alternatives : on road-edge to west, with fairly easy climb to launch area, or on south east side, with almost level walk.

6. King Tor.

Map 7 NGR SX 697808

- Wind direction :** N.E. and N.N.E.
Flying : A very good site for larger models. It's a big hill generating plenty of lift for soaring, but should have been designed a bit steeper at the top to improve its aerobatic capabilities.
Ease of landing : Good - mainly low growing heather.
Parking and access : A site for the walking enthusiast. The paths aren't quite as shown on the Ordnance Survey map so your compass might be helpful the first time you visit the site. Parking is along the road-edge at Firth Bridge. On leaving the road, take the left hand of the paths, which very shortly takes you past the ancient hut circle settlement at Grimspound (over to your right). After nearly half a mile from Grimspound in an E.N.E. direction, follow the row of old tree poles heading up to King's Barrow, a small pimple on the hill brow (but not visible until you get fairly close to it). King Tor is just beyond it. Nearly a mile each way and it is often wet : walking boots or wellies recommended unless in a dry spell.

7. Shapley Common.

Map 7 NGR SX 695826

- Wind direction :** N.E.
Flying : Better for large span models unless there is a good blow when suitable for smaller models. Dave Land has used it for both scale models and thermal models and has had excellent flying even in light winds. This is the lazy man's King Tor.
Ease of landing : Excellent, on heather.
Parking and access : From Challacombe Cross on the Mortonhampstead - Two Bridges road, drive 500 metres due south to a pull-in accommodating 3-4 cars. There is just over a ¼ mile of gentle uphill walking to launch area, in an E.N.E. direction.

8. Lakeland (also known as Green Combe).

Map 7 NGR SX 691833

- Wind direction :** N.W. and N.N.W.
Flying : Best to fly at the northern end where the hill shape is most efficient and there is no property hazard, ie to avoid flying near the bungalow.
Ease of landing : Plenty of room all along the ridge, but short sheep-grazed grass makes for fairly hard surface in dry weather, with scattered rocks at south west end.
Parking and access : Nearby parking limited to one small pull-in, possibly 4 - 5 cars. Short level walk to launch area.

9. Widcombe.

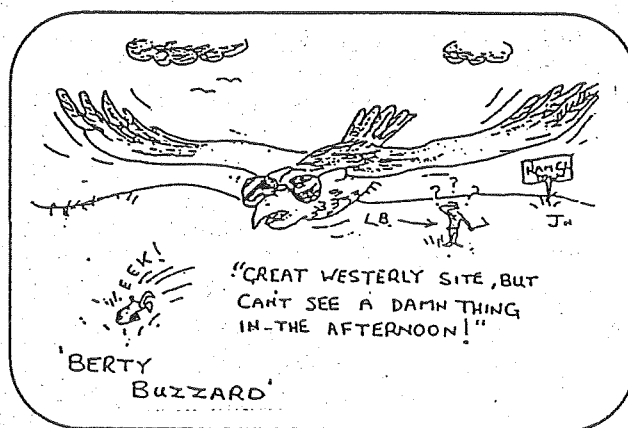
Map 4 NGR SX 708764

- Wind direction :** E/S.E.
Flying : Better for larger span models, unless there is a real good blow for aerobatic models. Lift can be more consistent and reliable than Black Hill for this direction if there is a reasonable breeze.
Ease of landing : Moderately easy all the way along the ridge.
Parking and access : Fairly large car park. The launch point for SE is $\frac{3}{4}$ mile fairly gentle uphill walk but less if wind is E.

10. Hamel Down / Hameldown Tor.

Map 10 NGR SX 696893 (at bottom of stream).

- Wind direction :** Best W./ WSW.
Flying : Good, especially for larger spans.
Ease of landing : Landing on top is excellent.
Parking and access : Limited parking on the road, close to the track to Challacombe Cottages. Even Legs Larry Bowles admits it's an invigorating climb to the top. Access to the climb is about 50 yards north of the Challacombe Cottages track.



11. Hanger Down

Map 6 NGR SX 627577 (by reservoir)

- Wind Direction:** Hanger Down is a thermal site on top, but west for the western end of the site.
Flying: Good for a bungy on top – there's acres of grass. Western slope better suited to smallish models.
Ease of Landing: Excellent on top and moderately easy on slope.
Parking and Access: For top of Hanger Down, go up past Dinnaton Golf Club complex and carry on to end of lane. You can park outside the gate to the Down, but slightly bumpy ride up gravelled track (100 yards) to top of the Down by the underground reservoir.
For western slope, room for about 2 or 3 cars on the bend by Hanger Down Cottages and walk on up the lane, and then up bridlepath to foot of slope.

12. Hookney Tor.

Map 7 NGR SX 697808

- Wind direction :** S.S.W./S.
Flying : At best, only moderate. This unlikely looking site has the wind funnelled up the road valley.
Ease of landing : Hookney Tor is a jumble of large rocks but there is plenty of heather behind.
Parking and access : A fairly short walk from the road-edge parking at Firth Bridge.

13. Haytor Vale.

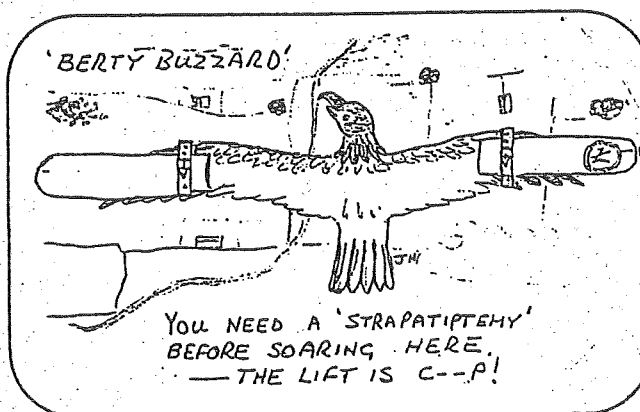
Map 2 NGR SX 759767

Wind direction: S.E.
Flying : Better for larger models.
Ease of landing: Fairly good if you walk back to the flatter area, but very rocky.
Parking and access: Use the large popular car park below Hay Tor; easy access.

14. Birch Tor.

Map 7 NGR SX 681817

Wind direction : W.S.W./W.
Flying : Only suitable for large models due to weak slope lift.
Ease of landing : Large landing area.
Parking and access : Good parking on main road with fairly easy $\frac{1}{4}$ mile to launch area.



15. Eastern Beacon.

Map 8 NGR SX 678592 (?) & 668580

Wind direction : N.E. to S.
Flying : Moderately good slope lift.
Ease of landing : Fair sized landing area.
Parking and access : 2 alternative locations and about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of stiff uphill walk to flying area.

16. Western Beacon.

Map 8 NGR SX 658572

Wind direction : S.E. to S.
Flying : Only good for large models.
Ease of landing : Reasonable sized landing area.
Parking and access : About $\frac{1}{4}$ mile walk to flying area.

17. Meldon Hill

Map 1 NGR SX 698856

Wind Direction: N.N.W to N.
Flying: When the wind is too northerly for Chagford, this is an excellent hill – good clean lift.
Ease of landing: Landing needs to be thought out in advance – along the face of the hill, or between rocks.
Parking and access: Good parking – moderate walk to the slope of about $\frac{1}{3}$ mile.

18. Buckland Beacon (also known as Ten Commandments)

Map 9 NGR SX 735730

Wind direction: W.S.W. to S.S.W.

Flying: A curious site - lift can be excellent, but at other times very mediocre. Stay high for two reasons: front face of slope is 100% rock and also the lift is poor at low level.

Ease of landing: Good if you walk back 50-60 metres behind the Ten Commandments Stone to an area of flat heather.

Parking and access: Park in the lay-by by the cattle grid. There is a flat walk of approximately ½ mile to the launch area - follow the drystone wall.

19. Easdon Tor.

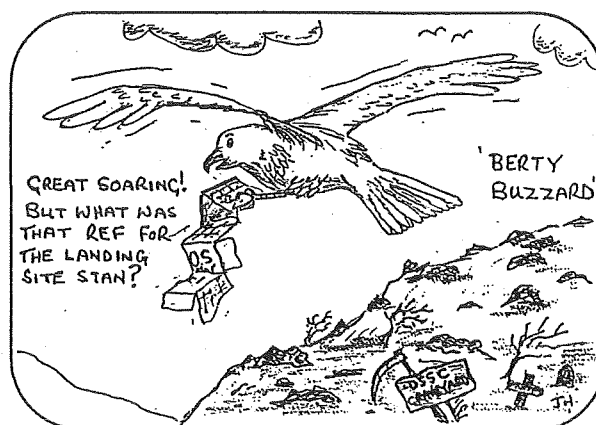
Map 10 NGR SX 733817

Wind direction : N.W. to S.W., but best W.S.W.

Flying : Fairly good hill for lift, including for aerobatics.

Ease of landing : A bit awkward, and potentially hazardous ! It is a Tor , i.e. a girt great granite lump, so you fly in front of it and walk carefully behind it to land on heather.

Parking and access : Access is up a long lane, then park in "field" that can get cut up by car wheels in wet weather. (Has anyone checked with the farmer about parking ?)



20. Peek Hill (near Burrator Reservoir)

Map 11 NGR SX 552701

Wind Direction: W., or S. to S.E.

Flying: Better suited for floaters on west face, any smallish models on S - S-E face.

Ease of Landing: Lots of small rocks around but there are places which are fairly clear to land further back.

Parking and Access: Good parking in the layby on west side, with a short walk to the top.

21. Corn Ridge

Map 12 NGR SX 547910

Wind Direction: N. in bowl or N.W. for main slope.

Flying: A good site for a wide range of models, particularly in reasonable wind.

Excellent for large models in a light breeze. Particularly strong lift in the bowl - in a good blow, it even beats Chagford. (Surely not Roger?!) Good lift also along NW slope.

Note: this site is sometimes used by the Devon School of Paragliding. It is essential to speak to them to ensure their safety - and yours.

Ease of Landing Excellent landing on top of ridge.

Parking and Access: Ample parking by Sourton Waterworks and walk E to second hill in the distance. Long walk but well worth it if conditions are right for bowl. You need to have a full day for this site as there is a stiff climb, so allow an hour.

22. *Yar Tor*

Map 13 NGR SX 682740

Wind Direction: NW to SW.
Flying: Fairly good hill for lift but best suited for floaters and larger models.
Ease of landing: Quite rocky on top but excellent landing on heather behind.
Parking and Access: Plenty of parking along lane to east of the tor, with a short level walk to flying area.



Dartmoor Slope Soaring Club

The Club holds meetings at The Jolly Farmer in Newton Abbot (but check for venue change) on the first Tuesday of every month from September to May inclusive. We generally try to arrange videos of flying, a talk, a demonstration or something of interest. If you would like to come along, give a ring to someone on the contact list below – we'll be very pleased to see you.

Club Competitions The club has a good programme of competitions, generally one a month, from April to October. The emphasis is informality and fun – you do not have to be an ace flyer. Please do come along and have a go...you'll be most welcome.

Contacts Whether you would like to "try out" a Club evening meeting, or meet up with someone to do some flying, or because you're a beginner who would like a bit of friendly guidance, the following Club members are happy to hear from anyone interested

Dave Bastin*	01392 667918
John Harvey	01803 842261
Geoff Lawrence	01392 874218
Stan Yeo*	01626 332287

* = May be able to give tuition to beginners.

(Incidentally, Stan was the founder of the Club, and some of you may know him better as the man behind Phoenix Model Products, selling all sorts of R/C goodies, and these days specialising, in particular, in EPP models).

The Dartmoor Two-Day Cross Country Competition

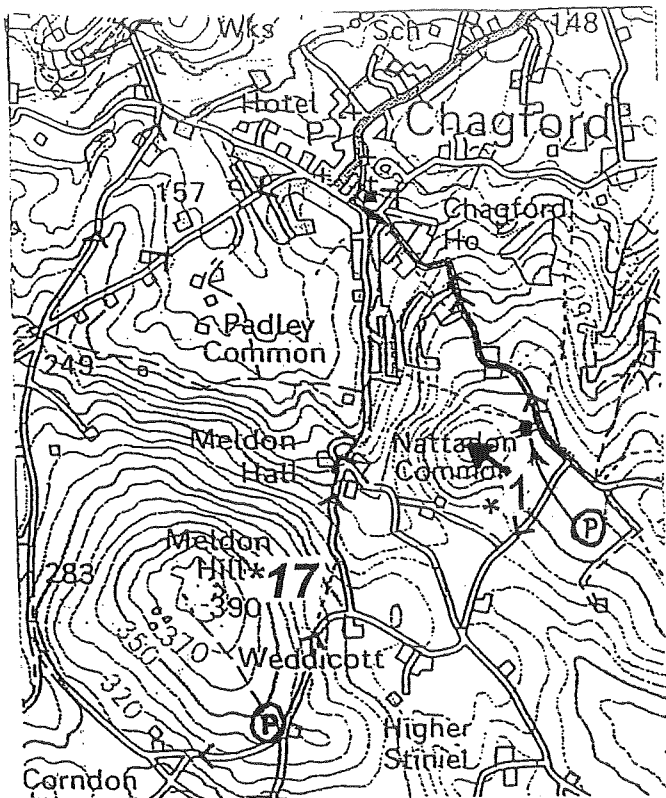
This excellent competition, which has been running for about twenty years, is held on the first weekend in July every year. It is a feast of fine soaring, attracting aficionados from all over the country. It is ably run by the Club's Chris Bowles, whose telephone number is 01803 851658. The venue is usually at Cox Tor (overlooking Tavistock), that is, if the wind has any west in it; otherwise at Black Hill, if the wind is on the east side of the compass. Every glider-guider should make it to this event at least once in their career!

About this Guide

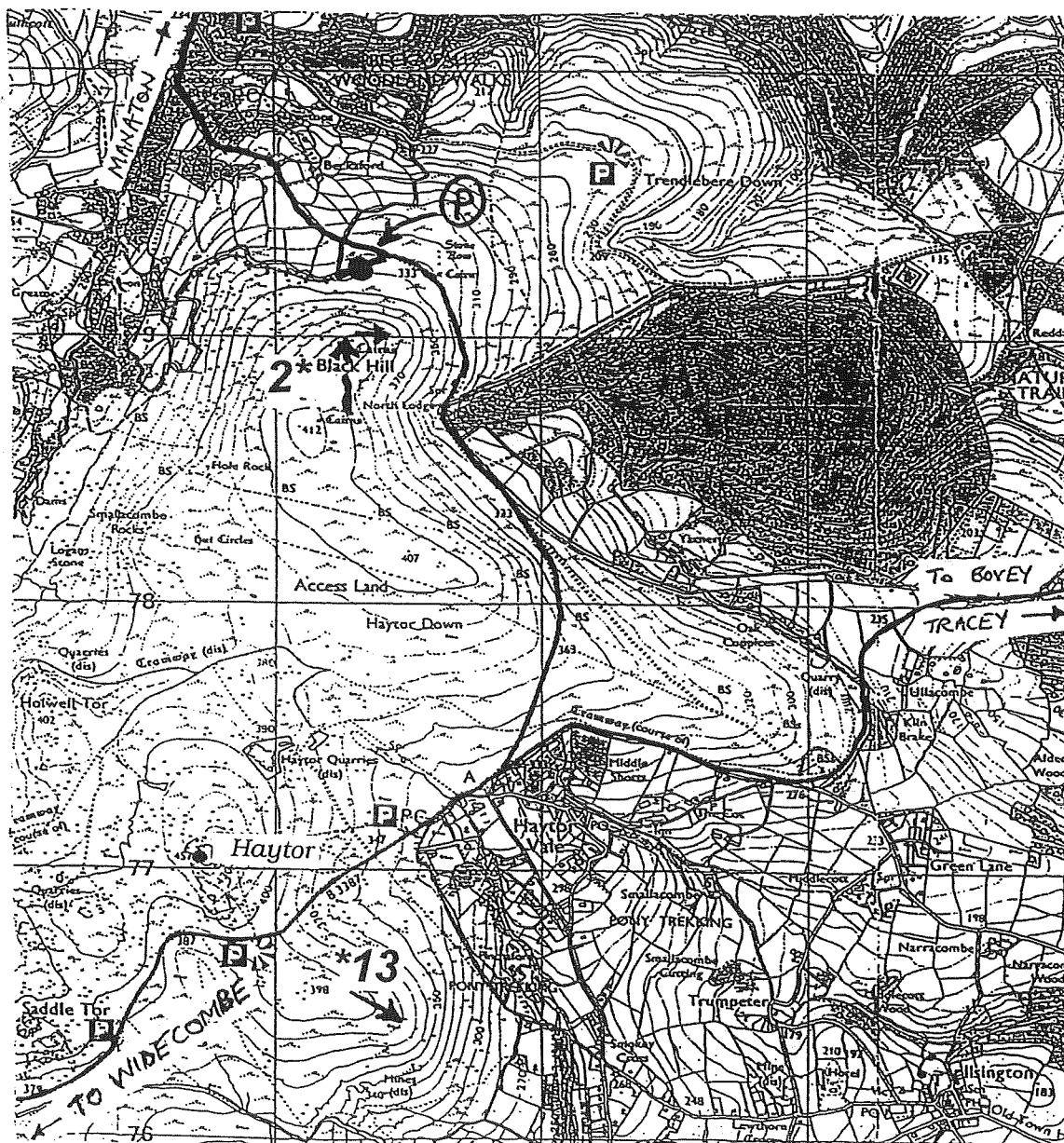
This Sites Guide is a collective effort of Club members. For additional copies, please contact Geoff Lawrence, 11, Greatwood Terrace Topsham, Exeter, EX3 0EB (01392 - 874218).

First produced in 1997.

Revised, with additional sites in 2003.

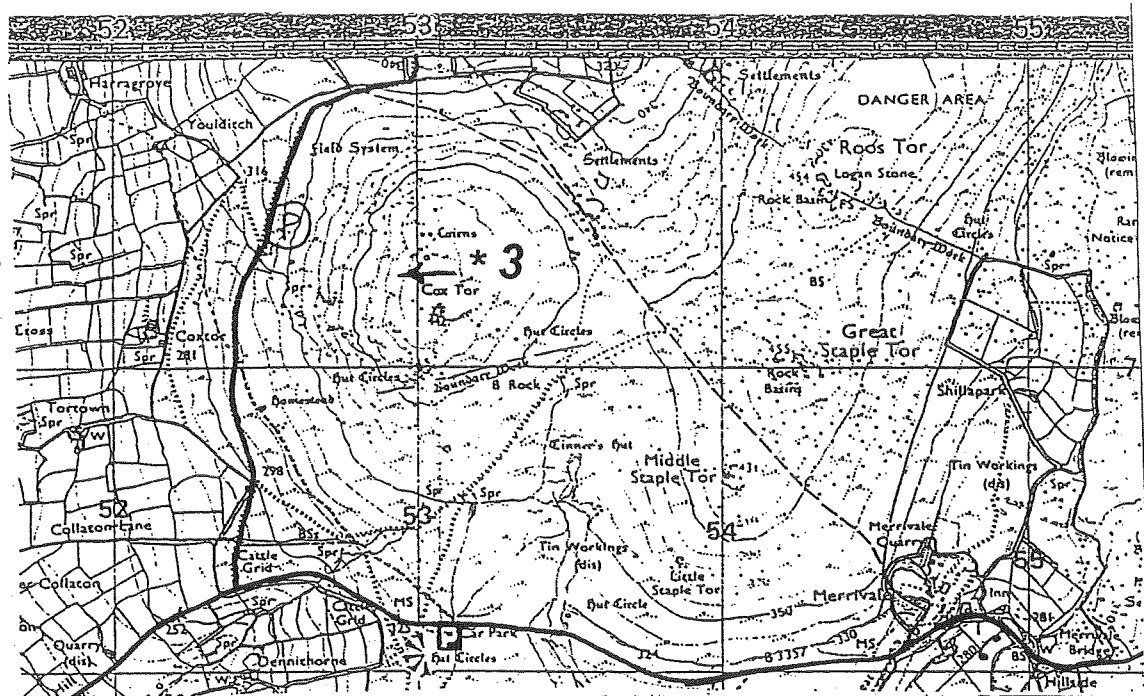
Map 1

Chagford (Nattadon Common)
and Meldon Hill

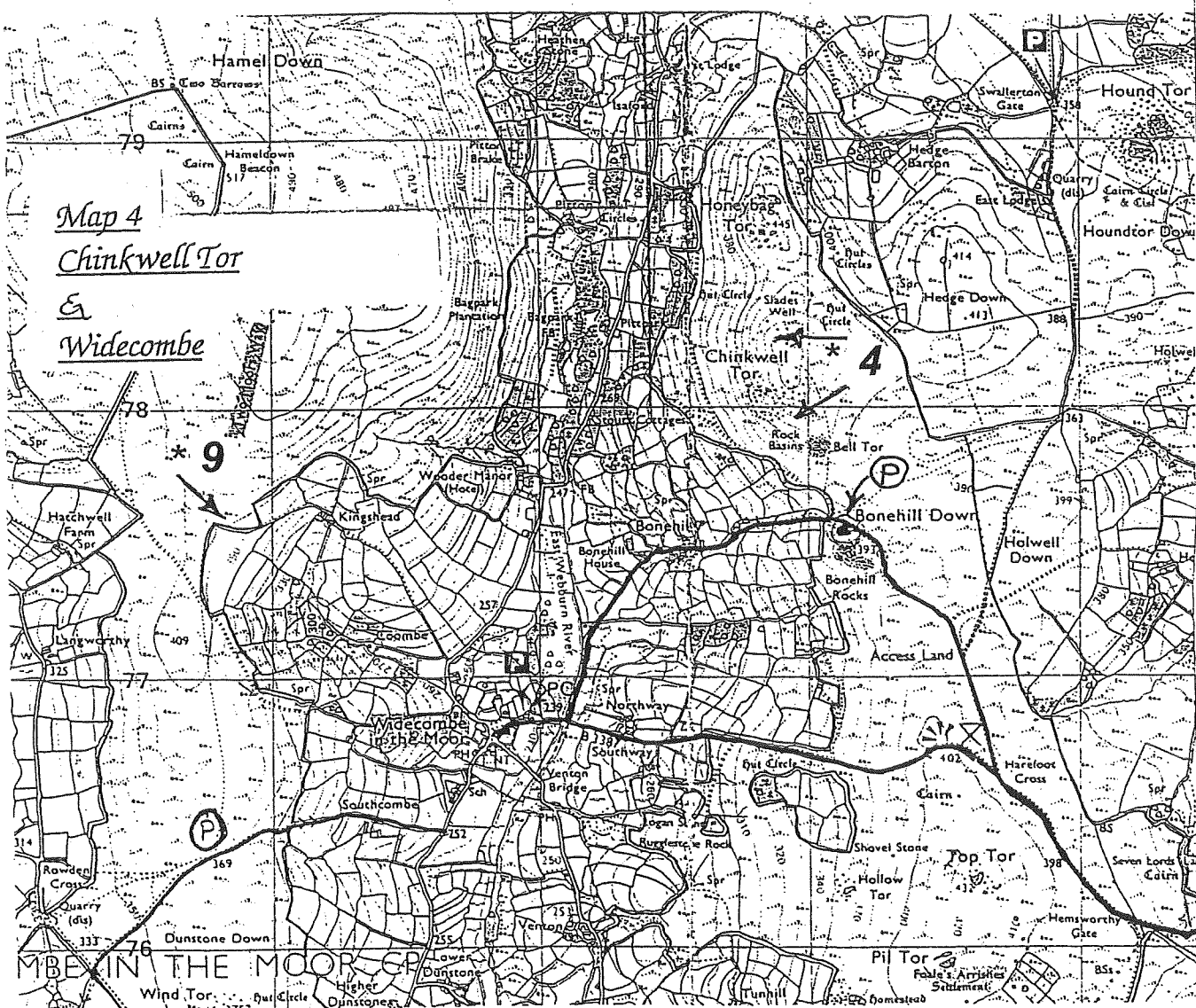
Map 2

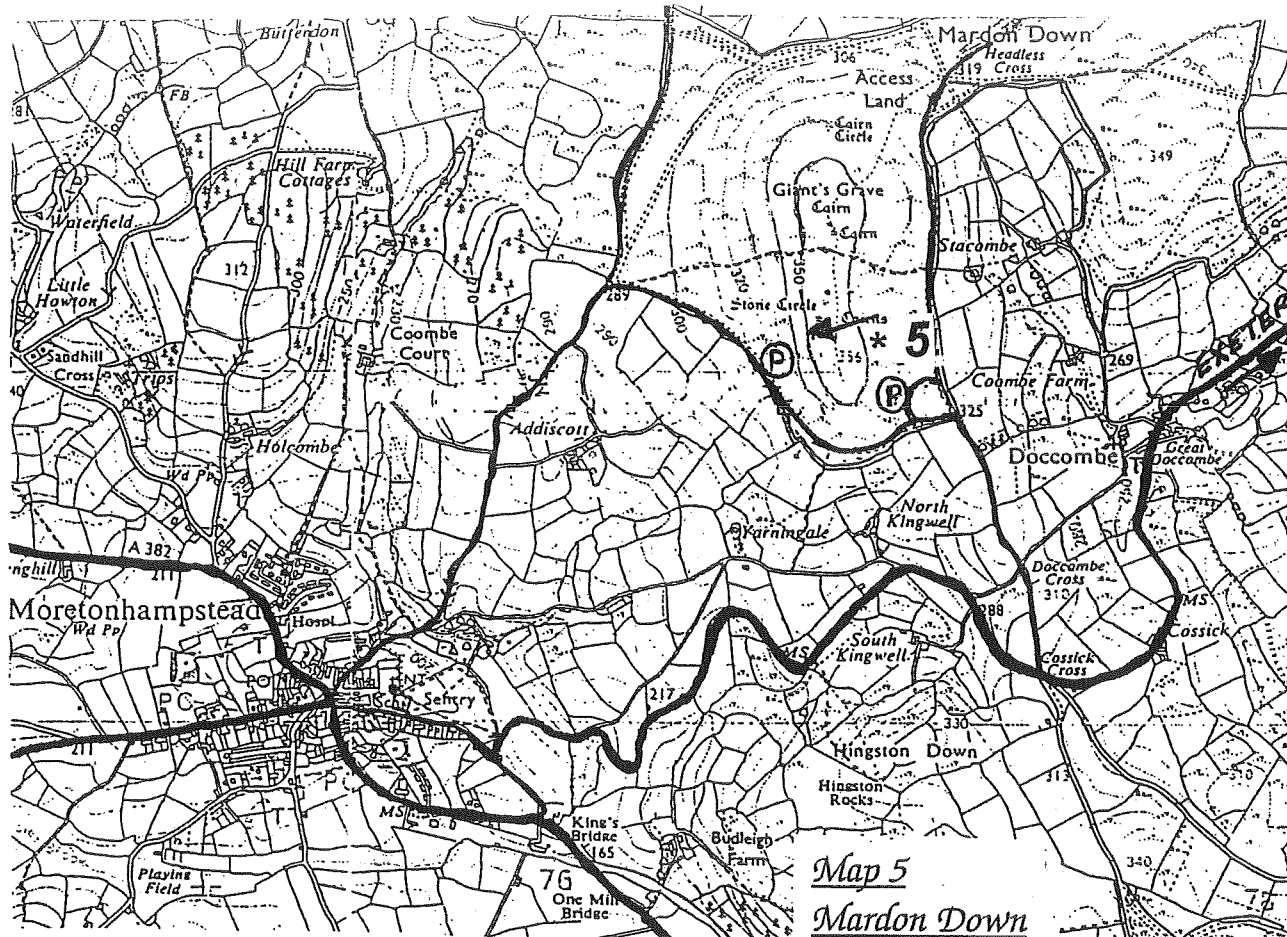
Black Hill
and
Haytor Vale

Map 3
Cox Tor



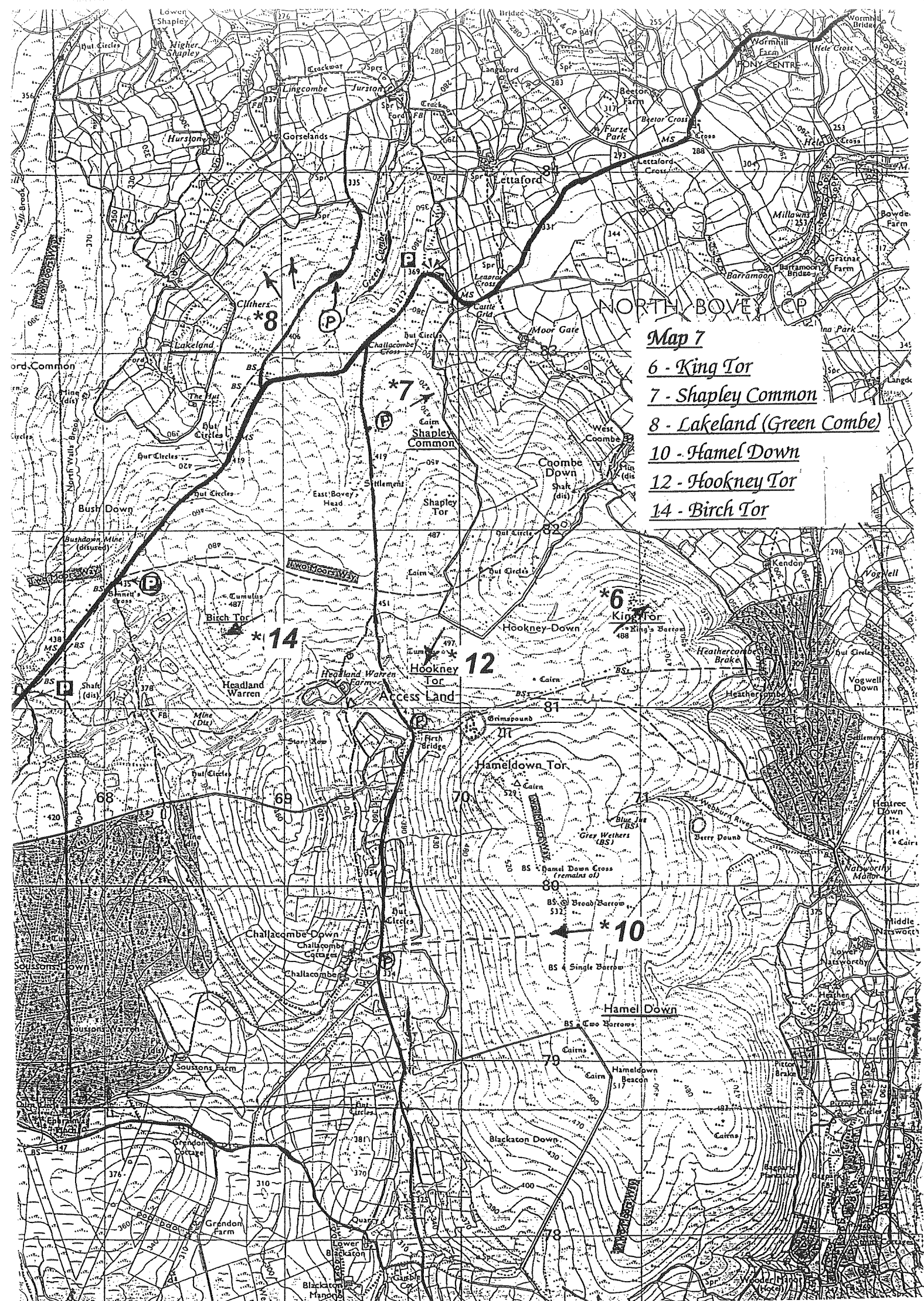
Map 4
Chinkwell Tor
&
Widcombe

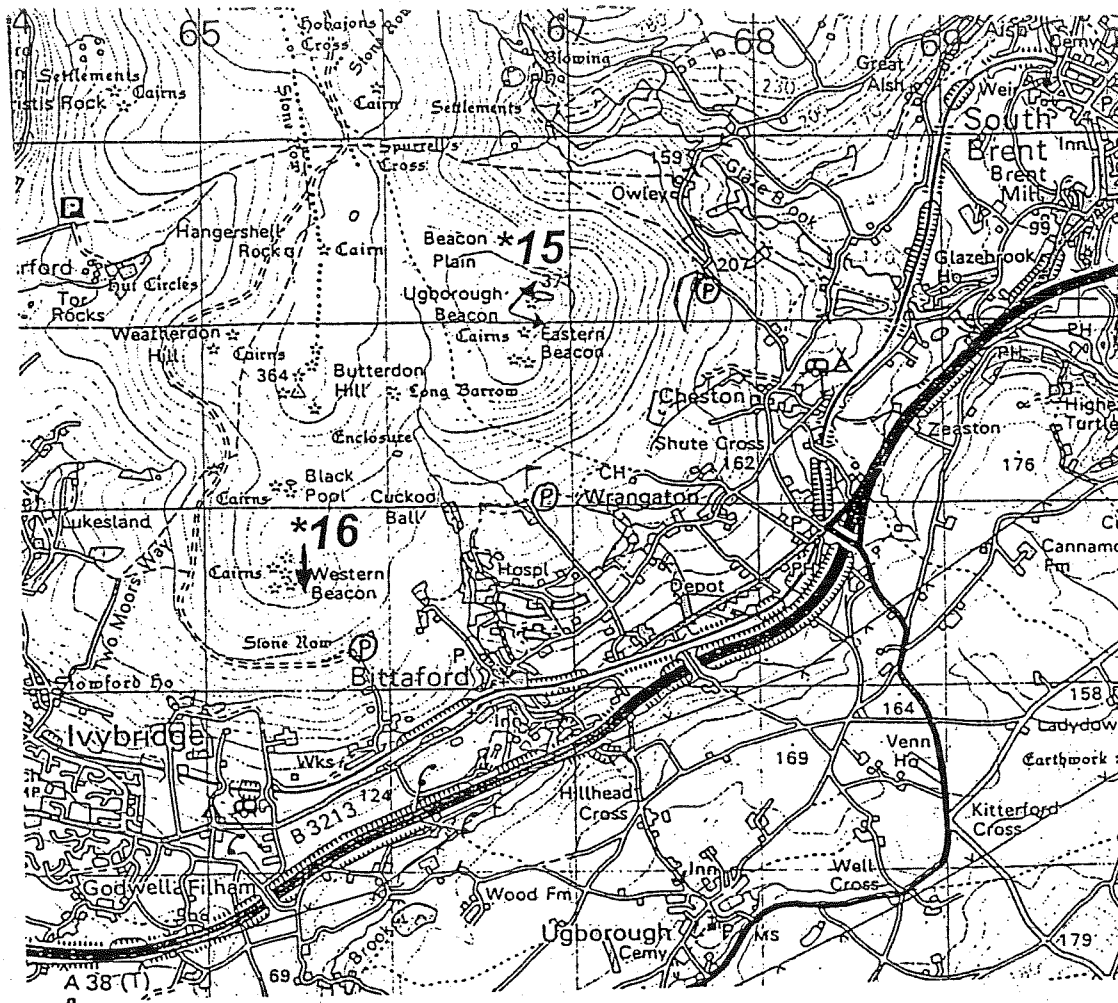




Map 6
Hanger Down

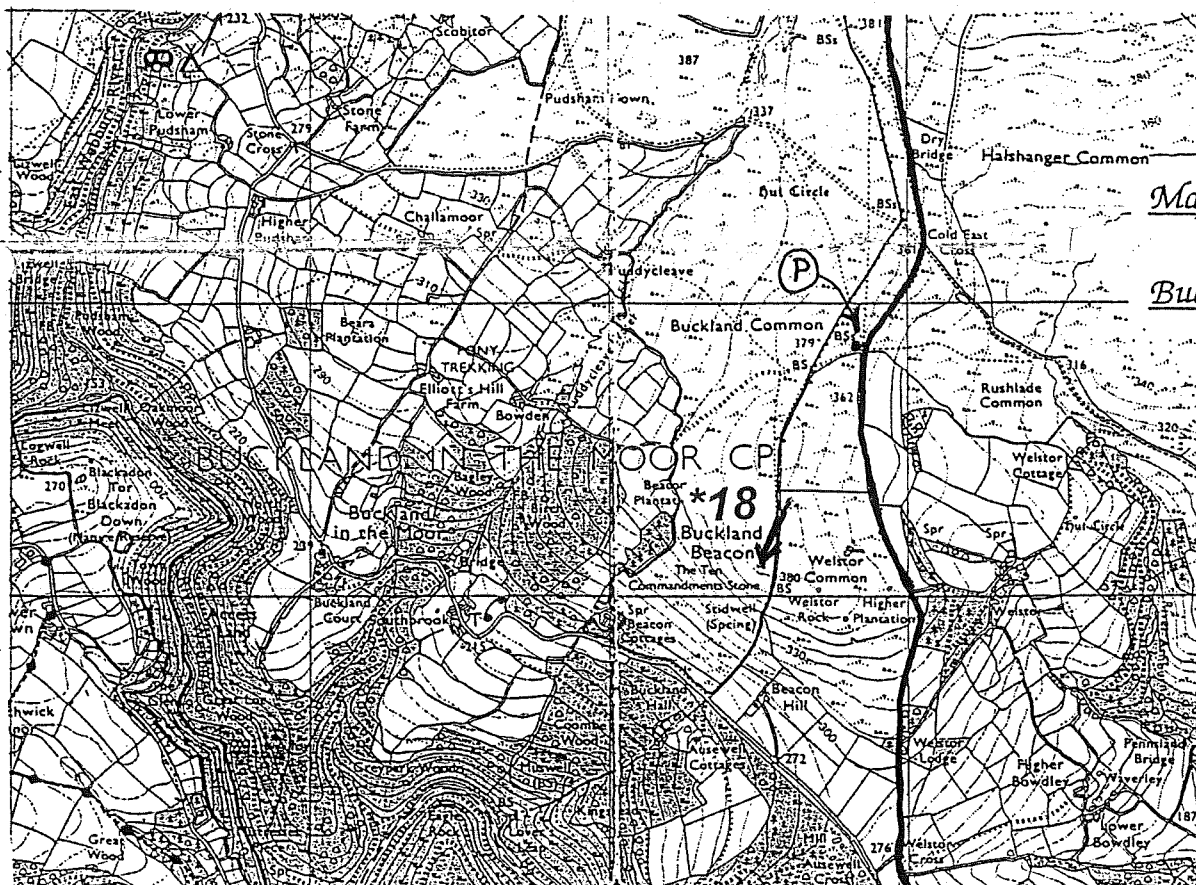






Map 8

Eastern Beacon
and
Western Beacon



Map 9

Buckland Beacon

Map 10
Easdon Tor

