

ROUTE STATS

Strenuousness	●●●●●
Navigation	●●●●●
Technicality	●●●●●



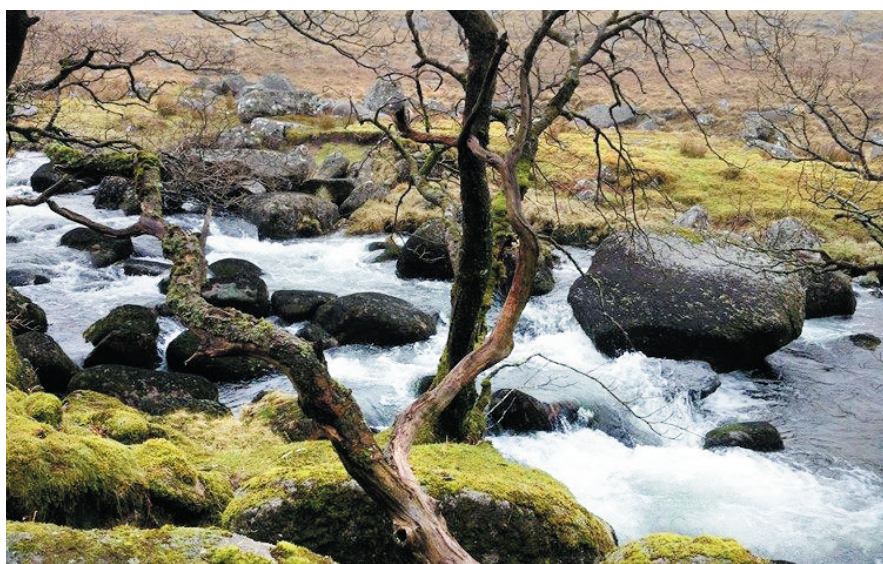
Homerton Hill in north-west Dartmoor, viewed from Black Tor.

ADAM BURTON / ALAMY

Cranmere Pool

Regarded as the remotest part of Dartmoor and the source of the West Okement and East Dart rivers, **Ben James** takes you deep into wildest Devon!

Dartmoor is as remote as it is wild, and you often don't have to go far to find the beauty it contains. With its massive tors and rivers cutting through them, it is an inspiring place. Cranmere Pool is regarded as the remotest part of Dartmoor, and is the birth place of the tradition of letterboxing – a



kind of early form of geocaching. This route, starting from the north side of Dartmoor, has plenty of scenery to absorb,

taking you along the West Okement River and through the ancient oak woodland of Black Tor Copse. The letter box still stands

parking here is a bonus – with another plus being that it has access straight onto the moor.

there today and sits by the pool from which it gets its name. The route is a very straightforward out and back, with worn trails for most of the way, but your navigation skills will be tested when nearing your final destination!

Our route starts at the very easy to find Meldon Reservoir car park. Free

Dartmoor

21km/13 miles 7-8 hours

Always take a map out with you on the hill



TRAIL ROUTE 4
NOVEMBER 2017

ROUTE STATS



Distance 21km (13 miles)

Total ascent 1400m

Time 7-8 hours

Start/finish Meldon Reservoir (SX561917)

Nearest town Okehampton

Terrain Worn paths and sheep tracks following rivers, steep sided moorland with rocky tors and boggy areas. **Note:** this route crosses a military firing range – look out for red flags/lamps and check firing times before you go at tinyurl.com/dartmoorfiring

Maps OS Explorer (1:25000) OL28; OS Landranger (1:50000) 191

Accommodation All in Okehampton: Fountain Inn, (01837) 53532; Youth Hostel, 0845 371 9651; Okeside Cottage B&B, (01837) 55363

Public transport No direct bus, and no trains stop in Okehampton. Taxis are available from Okehampton to Meldon.

Tourist info Okehampton TIC (01837) 53020



Ancient oak woodland of Black Tor Copse.

GET THIS ROUTE ON YOUR PHONE!

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In association with



1 SX561917 Leave the car park via the steps leading past the public toilets, and through the gate. Follow the road down to the trail that leads to the reservoir itself and across the dam. At the metal gate, turn right and follow the track around the reservoir. At a small bridge, continue on the track, following it around to the right, and leading you further around the reservoir.

2 SX556903 The track then descends and opens up into grassy moorland. Keep to the left-hand side of the small river on the

3 SX563893 Follow the river into Black Tor Copse and pick your way through the oak woodland and rocks. Staying close to the river, you will soon pick up the track that leads you beyond the woodlands and into the valley between Lints Tor and Kitty Tor. The track fades here and is harder to find, but continues on the west side of Lints Tor, heading south.

4 SX578871 Continue heading south until you meet the meanders of the river. The

river winds from the east below Great Kneeset Tor. Continue east following the meanders of the West Okement River. Again, the track here isn't as obvious, but the worn grass banks indicate the direction.

5 SX592864 Below Jackmans Bottom, a tributary joins the main river from the south. Continue past this until you reach a tributary at Vergyland Combe. Cross the river here to get onto the southern side and follow the narrowing river to the south-east.

6 SX599864 The river begins to narrow to a small stream, until it becomes barely visible other than a dip in the grassy terrain. As you continue south-east, it splits into two again. Cross the stream coming from the right, and follow the main source which leads to the right, and up the hill to a plateau.

7 SX601861 Once on the plateau the river disappears with some boggy ground replacing it. From here, continue to finish at grid reference **SX602858**, and to the concrete letter box marking Cranmere Pool. The letter box and pool are in a large depression in the plateau and can be hard to find. From the south this is marked by some areas of exposed peat banks. Walk up and over these into the depression to find the letter box. Don't forget to



Reaching the letter box at Cranmere Pool.



Approaching the Black Tor Copse, with the West Okement River to the right.

well-worn track, heading up the hill with woodland and a large river on your right-hand side. This is where the West Okement River falls to meet the reservoir. As you near the top of the slope, there is a wall of the old water works. Go to the right of this and follow it around until you rejoin the river. Black Tor will now be in view, with Black Tor Copse below it.

sign the book! To return, simply follow the same route out. If you wanted to return over Yes Tor and High Willthays to make it a circular route, make sure you check the range firing times (see panel, left.)

