

Glastonbury Tor

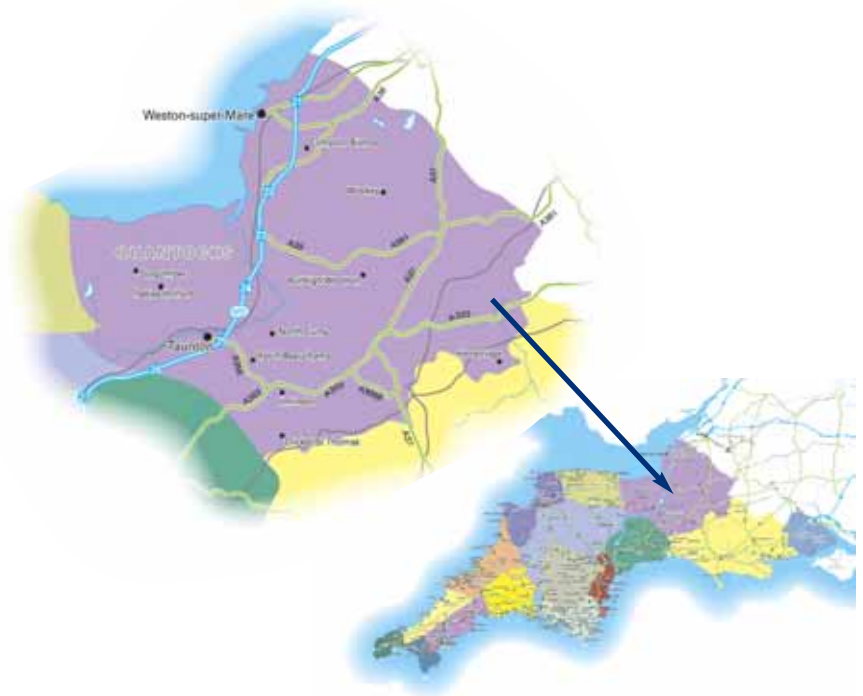


River Parrett near Langport



Wells Cathedral

Somerset is dairy cows in lush water-meadows, huge rolling cornfields, immense views, dark chocolate ploughed fields, luxuriant cottage gardens, orchards, and the hedgerows alive with songbirds. In the **Vale of Taunton**, between **Exmoor**, the **Quantocks** and the **Blackdown Hills**, is some of the richest farmland in England, and wonderfully unspoilt and peaceful. **Taunton** (county town), **Wellington** (good looking small town) and **Milverton** (extremely pretty large village) are its main centres. To the north, the limestone **Mendip Hills**, splendid for walking, containing caves and **Cheddar Gorge**. In Somerset's middle, the flatness of **Sedgemoor** (where Monmouth enticed the West Country's farmers to be slaughtered for him) with cattle at sunset as in a classical painting, villages on low hills like islands above streams lined with willows, a bird sanctuary. Nearby are **Glastonbury** with its tor and legends (and festival) and **Wells** with its tremendous cathedral. To the south is the **Hamstone country** - beautiful rolling farmland where almost every cottage is of golden stone, and every few miles are magnificent houses/gardens open to the public and glowing villages with old pubs and splendid churches. At **Yeovilton** is the excellent Fleet Air Arm Museum (Concorde); **Ham Hill** has an Iron Age/Roman fort on its top. And to the north-west, the 40 square miles of the beautiful **Quantock Hills** stretching from Taunton to the Bristol Channel sea and big sandcastling beaches. Wooded, heather-topped, home to red deer and loved by Wordsworth and Coleridge. Superb walks/rides, tremendous views, deep romantic valleys, pretty villages. Along the Quantock's western foot chugs the steam railway from **Bishop's Lydeard** to **Minehead**. Few beautiful-country areas are so rich in interesting and splendid man-made things to see.



SOMERSET: valley below Windwhistle Hill . . .



Cricket St Thomas: private estate (church, wildlife park, hotel – Grantleigh Manor in ‘To the Manor Born’) in a pretty valley below Windwhistle Hill on the A30, 2 miles from **Chard** (small town). Pub and golf/country club, 2 miles; cider mill, 3 miles; fine houses/gardens nearby (Forde Abbey, 2 miles). **Lyme Regis** (sea/sand), 15.

... within the **1,000 acre Cricket St Thomas Estate** (yours to roam) is an **attractive, stone-built cottage**, one of three around a gravelled courtyard. A mile away is **Cricket St Thomas Wildlife Park** (discounted entry, wild animals/children’s farm), and the hotel with restaurant/evening entertainment. You have use (over 21s only) for a nominal charge of its **indoor heated swimming pool** (55’ x 16’ x 3’9” to 5’8”), **spa pool** (both pictured below left), **sauna, steam room, beauty therapy, sports facilities.**



On three sides of the cottage are lawns, a terrace and a decked area (furniture, barbecue) overlooking countryside; adjoining on the other is the owners’ cottage. Close by is the owners’ private equestrian centre. Downstairs, a simple pine kitchen/breakfast room (**dishwasher, washing machine, microwave, Belfast sink**), larder (**fridge-freezer**); snug (stone-flagged floor, inglenook fireplace with **open fire**, CD player, **piano**) and light, airy living/dining room with **woodburner** and French windows to the decked area, garden and equestrian training ring; loo (washbasin). Upstairs, **three bedrooms** – two double (both with TV), one (5’ bed) with en suite shower-room (suite), one smallish, and a narrow twin overlooking the garden; bathroom (suite plus bath-shower). 3 TVs/2 DVDs in total. **Stabling** by arrangement and riding nearby.

Hotel pool

★★★★½	Sleeps 6 Friday	Bedrooms 3 Bathrooms 2	£ G Ref: E15	CH WB OF	☎	T HC BS	☂	🔥	🐾 Extra	🚗	SHORT BREAKS
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. . . far-reaching views



Iminster: small town at the heart of the ‘Hamstone country’. Nearest sea, about 15 miles (Dorset coast). **Yeovilton** air base nearby. Very easy to reach: M5, 8 miles; A303 straight there.

... 3 miles north-west of **Iminster**, in the tiny hamlet of **Rapps** (larger **Ilton** with pub and shop, 1 mile), a good sturdy **detached, local stone-built farmhouse**, on the edge of the same country estate as E66 (see page 17). With **far-reaching views** over neat farmland from almost every room, the house has a pretty, lawned garden to the front/side with a suntrap sitting-out area (table/chairs, barbecue) behind, all enclosed.

Gated drive to back door; large, oak-floored hall-cum-**games room** (football table); lovely light living room (TV/DVD, ‘living flame’ electric fire) with oak floors/rugs, and steps up to sunroom (cane furniture) with pretty orchard **views** and doors to garden; smart kitchen/diner (**dishwasher, microwave, fridge-freezer**) off which, snug/second sitting room (TV, Xbox); utility room (**washing machine, tumble drier**); loo (washbasin). Stairs up to **four bedrooms**, all stylishly decorated with long, farmland **views** – two double, one with 6’ four-poster brass bed and en suite shower-room (suite), one with 5’ brass bed, a pretty twin and a single. Bathroom (suite with roll-top bath plus hand-shower and separate shower). **Comfortable and stylish, lots of light/space. Cautionary Deposit £150.**



★★★★	Sleeps 7 Friday	Bedrooms 4 Bathrooms 2	£ GG Ref: E71	CH EH	☎	D HC BS	☂	🔥	🐾 B/A extra	🚗
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... cider apple orchards ...



Ilminster (see page 16):

... about a mile outside **Ilminster**, within a **great country estate of much history**, is the **Gingerbread House** – **thatched, hexagonal, Grade II listed**. On the edge of woods, about 300 yards down a farm track, 100 yards from farm-buildings and approx. 300 yards from the busy A358 road (visible), it was built c1800 as a game-keeper's home and has been restored. **You are welcome to walk the 500 acres of farmland (sheep), park and woodland by arrangement**. Farm café within walking distance.

The cottage has good-sized, secluded lawn (table/chairs, barbecue), leading to woods and fields. Leaded gothic windows, pine-shuttered. Studded front door; little hall; downstairs loo/washbasin (**washing machine, tumble drier**); two living rooms, one with **open fireplace**; and kitchen/diner (**dishwasher, microwave**). Steepish curved stairs (rope rail) up to **three bedrooms** - one double, two twin – and big bathroom (suite plus bath-shower). TV/DVD/video.

★★★★	Sleeps 6	Bedrooms 3	£ H	NSH EH OF	T HC	Washing machine Tumble drier	B/A extra	SHORT BREAKS
	Saturday	Bathrooms 1	Ref: E66					



... and 2 miles from **Ilminster**, in the small hamlet of **Hurcott**, this attractive attached **local stone-built cottage** sits at the end of a row of three. Good-sized

gardens to the front and side (patio with table/chairs, barbecue), a gravelled courtyard and 1½ acres of cider apple orchard (picnic bench) to the rear: a lovely peaceful location with **far-reaching countryside views**. Inside, utility room (**washing machine, tumble drier**, butler sink). Well-equipped fitted kitchen/dining room (attractive handmade distressed units, granite worktops, modern gas range with double ovens, **dishwasher, microwave, fridge-freezer**) with wood floor and large dining table perfectly positioned in the window (window seats all round) for those great time-wasting **views**. From the kitchen, arch through to cosy living room with fine stone fireplace (**open fire**), TV/DVD. Downstairs twin bedroom (TV/DVD, doors to garden) and shower-room (suite, power-shower). Stairs up to two more bedrooms (both with long, rolling countryside **views**) – a double (5' sleigh bed), and a single. Smart bathroom (suite plus hand-shower). Outside, a garage/store, now a **games room** and brick-built dog kennel and run. **A peaceful retreat, comfortable, well-equipped and good quality throughout.**

★★★★	Sleeps 5	Bedrooms 3	£ G EE	CH OF	T HC	Washing machine Tumble drier	B/A extra	SHORT BREAKS
	Saturday	Bathrooms 2	Ref: E14					

... little conservation village

SOMERSET



Hatch Beauchamp: little conservation village (pub, restaurant, pretty church where Colonel Chard of Rorke's Drift was buried) in beautiful, rolling farmland between **Taunton** (6 miles) and **Ilminster** (see page 16), 5 miles. Very central base for visiting great houses/gardens, hamstone villages, Exmoor, the Quantocks and Mendip hills, **Sedgemoor**; north and south coasts, within 20 miles.

... ½ mile from **Hatch Beauchamp** and near to Hatch Court (beautiful Palladian country house with deer park) is Belmont Farm with its 200 acres of wood and farmland. On a hill (superb views) is the **former cider barn**, attached at right angles to the farmhouse. In front of the Cider House is your own private part-walled patio and you share the owners' lovely garden with summer house and pond (occasional kingfishers and herons), and are welcome to wander the farm and woodland with its romantic remains of an 18th cent. landscape garden and the historic 2 mile Line Wood woodland walk with dramatic views and abundant wildlife.

Inside, the Cider House is spacious, comfortable, light, with antiques, pictures. Downstairs, good-sized twin bedroom with en suite shower-room (suite), **washer-drier**. Upstairs, exceptionally nice, big, beamed, open-plan living (**woodburner, TV/DVD**)/dining/fitted kitchen (**dishwasher, microwave, fridge-freezer**) with fine views, and large, pretty L-shaped double bedroom (5' bed) with en suite bathroom (suite plus hand-shower). **Peaceful, civilised with lots to see and do nearby. Everything included. No children under 8, except pre-crawling babies.**

★★★★½	Sleeps 4	Bedrooms 2	£ GG EE	CH WB	T HC	Washing machine Tumble drier	B/A extra	SHORT BREAKS
	Saturday	Bathrooms 2	Ref: E70					

North Curry: friendly village (PO/shop, church) on a ridge within **Sedgemoor**, the beautiful expanse where the last battle in England was fought. **Taunton**, 7 miles; the M5, 5 miles. Excellent base for superb houses/gardens, including Montacute, Hestercombe, Barrington Court, Knightshayes, Lytes Cary, East Lambrook Manor. The Quantocks, 9 miles, the coast at **Lyme Regis**, 35.



... in the centre of **North Curry**, adjoining the PO/shop, a **Grade II listed, Georgian terraced cottage**, formerly a bakery, set back from the village square behind wrought iron railings with flower tubs in its small gravelled front garden. Small courtyard (table/chairs, barbecue) at the back. Inside, slate-floored hall and large oak fitted kitchen (8-burner gas range, **dishwasher, washing machine, microwave, fridge-freezer, CD player**) with glazed door to courtyard; dining room and living room (**woodburner, TV/DVD/video**) overlooking the square and, from the living room, door to windowless snug (previously the baker's enormous oven with fireplace recesses and bread oven door). Steepish curved stairs (handrail) up to **three bedrooms** – one double with en suite shower-room (suite), another double plus single bed, and a twin – and bathroom (suite plus bath-shower). All refurbished, smart, comfortable but retaining many original features (beams, low ceilings, sloping bedroom floors, oven recesses). **Excellent countryside for walking and cycling.**

★★★★	Sleeps 6	Bedrooms 3	£ E	CH WB	T HC	Washing machine Tumble drier	B/A extra	SHORT BREAKS
	Saturday	Bathrooms 2	Ref: E8					

SOMERSET: Wootton House



Butleigh Wootton: hamlet (stone cottages) in unspoilt countryside on the Somerset Levels, 1½ miles from **Butleigh** (pub, shop/PO, church). **Glastonbury**, 3 miles; **Street** (shopping), 2; **Wells**, 10; Wookey Hole Caves, 11; the north Somerset coast, 20. Several Nat. Trust houses/gardens nearby. Excellent walking, cycling, golf and horse riding on the Somerset Levels.

... **Wootton House** is a **fine country house** with a Queen Anne facade on the edge of **Butleigh Wootton**, overlooked by the monument of Admiral Sir Samuel Hood high on Polden Ridge. The house has evolved since its original construction in the 18th cent. for the Hood family. It sits on a **1,000 acre estate** comprising gardens, woods, lake, parkland and working farms. It has a large mature garden (all yours) with **croquet lawn** and **hard tennis court**; across the fields are fishponds, and there's a small lake in the woods. At the end of the drive is the Home Farm, where riding can be arranged with the tenant farmer.

The house is comfortable, elegant, delightful - if a little frayed around the edges - and has recently been renovated and modern facilities introduced.

Downstairs: a large front hall (wood floors, oak panelling, ornamental fireplace) and equally large back hall (**Steinway grand piano** and upright **piano** – both tuned) with French windows to paved terrace and the garden (table/chairs, gas barbecue).



Off the front hall, with views across the parkland to the Hood monument, one step down to the drawing room (**open fire**) with its original silk wallpaper and French windows to garden, and the sitting room (marble **open fireplace**, fine paintings, TV/DVD/video). At the back, overlooking the garden, a large formal dining room (beautiful oak dining table, enormous carved wood and stone Jacobean-style ornamental fireplace); large kitchen/diner (**dishwasher, microwave, fridge-freezer**, original Edwardian butler sink and terrazzo flooring, Sheila maid, 4-door **Aga** plus electric cooker, farmhouse kitchen table, TV/DVD, door to garden) and pantry (**washing machine, tumble drier**, Sheila maid, Edwardian butler sink). (Partially adjoining the kitchen, but completely private from the house, is a tenant occupied cottage.) From the back hall, a passage leads to a downstairs bathroom and the Abbot's Room (an enormous **games room** with table tennis, small pool table, darts, TV, PlayStation, Hammond organ).



Upstairs: oak stairs from the front hall lead up to the landing (original William Morris wallpaper, library area with window seats) off which are **eight bedrooms** – four double, one with en suite bathroom (suite), two with four-poster beds (one a 5' wide bespoke hand-carved mahogany bed with beautiful drapes, the other 6' wide); and four twin, two with zip-linked beds, one with en suite shower-room (suite), and two with washbasins; two bathrooms (suites, one with roll-topped bath) and one shower-room (shower, washbasin).



Professional catering available. **Cautionary Deposit £250**. Arrival after 4pm. A magical place that has been in the same family for generations, with extensive grounds that children, and adults, will enjoy exploring.

★ ★ ★	Sleeps 16	Bedrooms 8	£ see pg 233	CH	OF	D	H	HC	Extra	SHORT BREAKS
	Friday	Bathrooms 6	Ref: E12	☎	🚿	🛁	🛏	🛀	🐾	🚗

... Wookey Hole and Cheddar Gorge ...



Henstridge: village (church, PO/shop, good pub, Indian restaurant) on the Somerset/Dorset border, overlooking beautiful Blackmore Vale. **Stalbridge** (good shops), 1 mile. **Sherborne** (old town), 6½ miles. Mainline railway station, 2 miles; regular bus/coach services. Golf, riding and fishing within 5 miles, and fine houses/gardens, including Stourhead (Nat. Trust) and Longleat, within easy reach. Cycle hire.

... on the outskirts of **Henstridge** is Quiet Corner Farm. At the end of its 200 yard drive with cider apple orchards and paddocks on either side grazed by sheep and miniature Shetland ponies (bred by the owner), is a **most attractive single-storey, mid 18th cent., stone built cottage**. It nestles at the end of a large lawn and adjoins the owners' converted barn, close to the former farmhouse. Lovely suntrap garden (barbecue, table/chairs) with two adorable guinea pigs. The cottage has lots of character with beams, some exposed stone walls, leaded windows, wood doors and floors with rugs. Hall, off which are the living (**woodburner**, TV/DVD, Edwardian sofa)/dining/kitchen (**microwave**, **washer-drier**) with high ceiling and an enormous exposed beam, overlooking the garden; a bathroom (suite with corner bath plus hand-shower and bath-shower); and **two pretty, pink floral bedrooms** (electric blankets) – a small single (Velux window), and a double looking into a garden room. Transport from train station (by arrangement).

★★★★	Sleeps 3	Bedrooms 2	£ BB	CH	EH	WB	☎	🛏	🪵	👤	🐕	🚗	SHORT BREAKS
	Friday	Bathrooms 1	Ref: E7										



Wookey: sleepy village (pubs, working watermill with tearoom and adventure playground) on the edge of the Mendip Hills (splendid walking, birdwatching). Famous **Wookey Hole** caves, 2 miles; **Cheddar Gorge** and caves, 8. **Wells**, 3 miles; **Glastonbury**, 8.

... peacefully tucked away on the edge of **Wookey**, a **semi-detached, limestone glebe cottage**, smartly renovated, facing a meandering garden (shared with owner) that leads through gates to the river. Inside, comfortable living room (some beams retained) with large fireplace (**woodburner**), polished wooden floor and French windows to open-sided porch (bench seating), perfect for morning coffee; excellent fitted kitchen/dining room (**dishwasher**, **washing machine**, **tumble drier**, **microwave**, **fridge-freezer**) with Shaker-style units, richly coloured tiles and stone floor. Loo (washbasin). Upstairs, **two bedrooms** - double and twin, both with beams and en suite shower-room (suite). TV/video. **Extremely comfortable, much appreciated cottage** at any time of the year.

★★★★½	Sleeps 4	Bedrooms 2	£ EE	CH	WB	☎	🛏	🪵	👤	🐕	🚗
	Saturday	Bathrooms 2	Ref: E64								

... super place for a gathering

SOMERSET



Compton Bishop: tiny farmland village (fine church) on the Mendips' southern slopes - splendid walking, with views across the Somerset Levels. **Axbridge** (shops), 2 miles; **Cheddar Gorge** (caves), 4; sea/sandy beaches at **Weston-super-Mare**, 8, or **Burnham** (good golf), 9. Riding locally; Blagdon Lake (fishing), 7 miles. **Bristol**, 18. Nearest pub, 1½ miles.

... standing on its own, with **good views** down the valley and 200 yards from **Compton Bishop** church, is **Compton House**, a **comfy family home**. At the front, a south-facing terrace running the length of the house with Magnolia grandiflora and other interesting plants, table/chairs and barbecue. Surrounding it, a large, enclosed lawn garden with sun terrace, croquet lawn (mallets provided), **children's 'adventure playground'**, trampoline, **outdoor heated swimming pool** (seasonal use), new all-weather hard **tennis court**, giant jenga. The Mendips rise directly behind with good walks up to Crook Peak and fine views over the levels. **Games room** (pool table, board games, TV/Sky/DVD).

Entrance hall (for coats/boots) into kitchen (**dishwasher**, **microwave**, **fridge-freezer**) with table seating 8. Off this, larder and utility room (**washing machine**, **tumble drier**); loo. Formal dining room with table seating 10 and large living room (**open fire**, TV/DVD/video). Hall with **table football**. Loo (washbasin). Children's playroom with PlayStation 2 and TV/DVD/video. Upstairs, four bedrooms, all with **good views** - a single (washbasin), a double, a double with en suite bathroom (suite plus hand-shower), and a children's room with three singles. Bathroom (suite plus hand-shower).

At the rear of the house is **the annexe**: two bedrooms, a double and a single, bathroom (suite) and small living room with TV/DVD.

Also to the rear, lots of parking and, in the garage, **table tennis**. Fun **coarse fishing** available on 1 mile of rivers Axe and Yeo, up to 15 March and after 15 June (licence required). Ready meals available. **Arrival after 5pm. A super place for a gathering: efficient, comfy, homely.**



★★★★½	Sleeps 10	Bedrooms 6	£ RR	CH	UHF	OF	☎	T 2	🛏	🪵	👤	🐕	🚗
	Friday	Bathrooms 3	Ref: E620										

SOMERSET: granny-sitting available . . .



Trebles Holford: hamlet in beautiful wooded farmland a mile from **West Bagborough** (small village with pub on Quantock's flank). **Bishop's Lydeard** (attractive village, start of private steam railway to **Minehead**), 3 miles. Many footpaths from the property; riding and golf locally.

... tucked away peacefully on the edge of **Trebles Holford**, a **good, warm, single-storey, detached, red-stone cottage** made from a farm-building by the owners (he a master-joiner) close to their fine house and another cottage. Small lawn with seats in front and barbecue. Two tortoises, aged 100 and 75, live in the garden. Direct access to footpaths from the cottage, and well positioned for the steam railway. Granny-sitting available!

Inside, hall; good-sized living/dining room (**woodburner**, TV/DVD/video, CD player) with beams to the apex; well-fitted kitchen (**dishwasher, microwave**, oak units, ceramic hob); **two bedrooms**: double (5' bed) with glazed door to small lawned garden (picnic table), and twin; bathroom (suite plus bath-shower). **Washing machine** in separate building, and use of owners' **tumble drier**. A much appreciated place.

★★★★½	Sleeps 4	Bedrooms 2	£ DD	CH	WB	HC BS	Extra	SHORT BREAKS
	Saturday	Bathrooms 1	Ref: D183a					



... and on the edge of **Trebles Holford**, a **little house** cleverly built on the far end of an ancient wagon barn. A high beamed roof attaches it to the friendly owner's lovely house, and all surrounded by a huge garden (you are welcome to enjoy) and meadows.

Door into open-plan living/dining/fitted kitchen (**washing machine, microwave**) with TV/DVD/video and French windows opening to a patio (table/chairs). Stairs up to **double bedroom** (5' bed) with exposed ceiling beams, great **views** of surrounding countryside and the antics of nesting swallows, and en suite bathroom (suite plus bath-shower). **Lots of lovely walks**; pub about one mile (remember to take torch!).

★★★★	Sleeps 2	Bedrooms 1	£ C	CH	WB	HC BS	Extra	SHORT BREAKS
	Saturday	Bathrooms 1	Ref: D4					

. . . Britain's longest steam railway



Stogumber: pretty little red-stone village (cobble pavements, medieval church, good food pub, station on Britain's longest steam railway: **Bishop's Lydeard** to **Minehead**), between the Quantock hills, Exmoor and the sea. Not far to exquisite villages like **Dunster** (see page 26), the very beautiful coast west of **Minehead** (small resort, sandy beach), 12 miles, good reservoir trout fishing, and heather hills. The nearest sea: **Watchet**, 6 miles, and **Blue Anchor** (sand), 8. **Taunton** and the M5, about 12. Lovely country. Good local walks.

... in **Stogumber**, 300 yards from the pub and shop, a **sweet, 18th cent. cottage**, recently renovated and refurbished. Tall, wrought iron gates from the lane lead into a sunny, paved access area (bench), shared with the neighbouring property. Inside, thoroughly well done, pleasing and attractive: living room with **woodburner** and CD player; fitted kitchen (**dishwasher, washing machine, tumble drier, microwave**) with table and chairs; stairs from hall up to **two bedrooms** - a double, and a twin; smart bathroom (suite with corner bath plus bath-shower). TV/DVD/video.

★★★★	Sleeps 4	Bedrooms 2	£ DD	CH	WB	HC BS	Extra	SHORT BREAKS
	Saturday	Bathrooms 1	Ref: D180					