

A wide landscape photograph showing a vast, flat field of dry, golden-brown grass and low-lying shrubs. The horizon is low and distant, with a few small, dark silhouettes of trees or structures visible. The sky is filled with soft, grey clouds, and a faint, horizontal band of light is visible near the horizon, suggesting a low sun or moon. The overall mood is quiet and expansive.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
discoveringblackdown.org.uk

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
cheddargorge.co.uk

A scenic view of a lake surrounded by autumn-colored trees and a grassy field. The foreground is a lush green field with some small white flowers. In the middle ground, a calm lake reflects the sky, bordered by a dense line of trees in vibrant autumn colors (yellows, oranges, and reds). A few people are visible walking along the path near the water's edge. The background shows rolling hills under a clear blue sky with a few wispy clouds.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
bristolwaterfisheries.co.uk/chew-valley-lake

A wide-angle landscape photograph taken from a high vantage point on a rocky, grassy hillside. The foreground is dominated by light-colored, jagged rocks and patches of green grass. Below the hillside, a valley unfolds with rolling green fields, some small clusters of buildings, and a few winding roads. The horizon is marked by distant hills under a vast, deep blue sky filled with wispy white clouds and a few faint contrails.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
nationaltrust.org.uk/mendip-hills

Take your knowledge to a deeper level and find out more about the area at mendiphillsaonb.org.uk

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
priddyparish.org

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
nationaltrust.org.uk/mendip-hills

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
forestry.gov.uk/StockHillForest

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
swheritage.org.uk/deer-leap

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
forestry.gov.uk/EastHarptreeWoods



Postcodes in the countryside cover large areas.
Please also use a map.

- Be safe – plan ahead and follow the many signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- For the protection of plants and animals (and the views) take your litter home
- Keep dogs under close control and always clean up after your dog
- Consider other people

If you experience access difficulties on Public Rights of Way, visit the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) page on our website for the contact details of local authority Rights of Way teams.

The Mendip Hills AONB is on **OS Explorer maps 141, 153 and 155**

A LANDSCAPE READY FOR LIFE

The Mendip Hills is a surprising and distinctive landscape south of Bristol and rising above the Somerset Levels. It's full of adventure and atmosphere for you to experience.

There are 12 'special qualities' you need to experience on the Mendip Hills. These experiences are what makes the Mendip Hills special.

- 1 | THE EVIDENCE OF HUMANS** dating back 500,000 years. Henge monuments, barrows and hillforts through to World War 2 sites are prominent features on the plateau. Romans and Victorians left a mining landscape that nature is reclaiming.

- 2 A TOUGH LANDSCAPE FAMOUS FOR ADVENTURE AND GETTING IN TOUCH WITH NATURE.** The geology has created incredible opportunities for caving, climbing and cycling. But the tranquility allows quieter activities like bird watching and simply walking.

- ### 3 **DISTINCTIVE LIMESTONE RIDGE**
- with windswept plateau, punctuated by spectacular dry valleys and gorges, ancient sinkholes and depressions, and impressive rocky outcrops.

- #### 4 A SPARSELY POPULATED PLATEAU
- with settlements of Mendip stone along the spring line where the water emerges from underground. Dark skies give you an incredible view of the stars at night.

- 5 THE DIVERSE GEOLOGY THAT IS EASILY SEEN** ranges from Devonian to Jurassic in a small area making it one of the best places in the country to appreciate the relationships between geology, landscape and natural history.

- 6 THE CAVES** for their wildlife, geological, archaeological importance. Avelines Hole is the oldest burial site in Britain and Goughs Cave in Cheddar Gorge is one of the most important Palaeolithic sites in Europe.

- 7 THE LIMESTONE AQUIFER** feeding the reservoirs of Cheddar, Chew Valley and Blagdon lakes provides habitats of local and international importance for birds.

- 8** | **THE CHEW VALLEY** is the sheltered, farmed landscape with fields divided with hedges, that contrasts the windswept plateau.

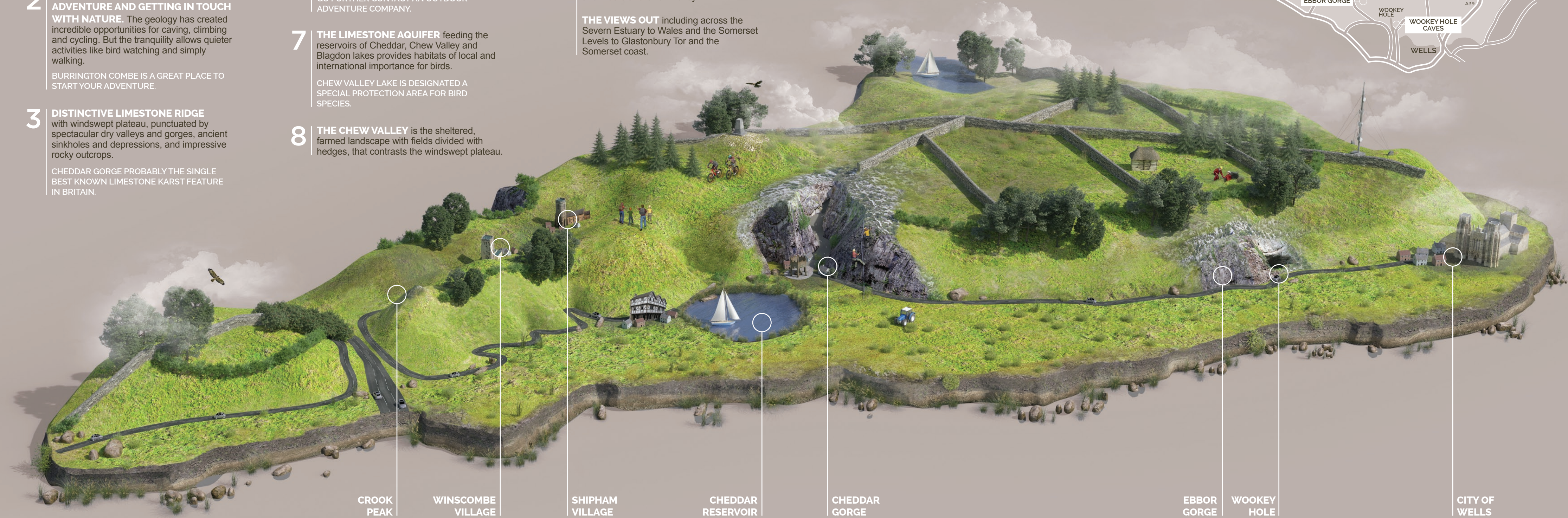
- 9** **DRYSTONE WALLS** criss-cross the plateau dividing the farmland grazed by sheep, beef and dairy cattle. The walls are vital lifelines for wildlife like adders, they are perfect for basking on and make a safe way of moving from one place to another.

- 10** | **STEEP SOUTH-FACING SLOPES OF FLOWER-RICH LIMESTONE GRASSLANDS** come to life in the summer.

- 11** | **ANCIENT WOODLAND** combs on the north and south slopes offer rich habitats of national and international importance for a wide diversity of wildlife like dormouse and bats.

- ## 12 | VIEWS TOWARDS the Mendip Hills from Exmoor, Quantocks, the Somerset Levels and Moors and Chew Valley.

THE VIEWS OUT including across the Severn Estuary to Wales and the Somerset Levels to Glastonbury Tor and the Somerset coast.



HOW THE GROUND BENEATH OUR FEET WAS FORMED