

# Highlights Guide

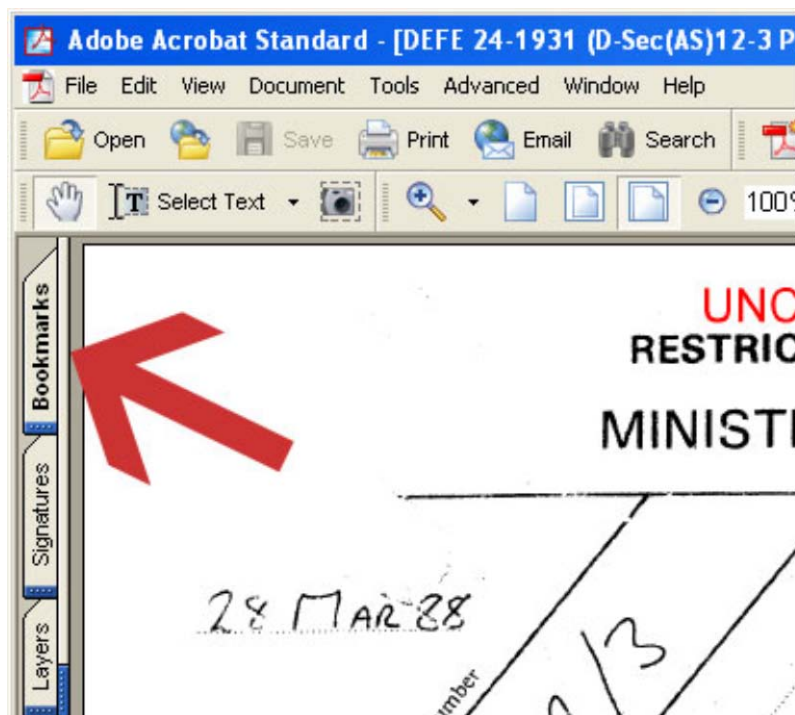
This document contains details of how to navigate through the newly released files. We have included bookmarks in each of the PDF files of key stories and reports highlighted by Dr David Clarke. This will make it easier to navigate through the files.

For information on the history of government UFO investigations and where these files fit in please read [Dr David Clarke's background guide to the files](#).

## Navigating the files using the bookmarks

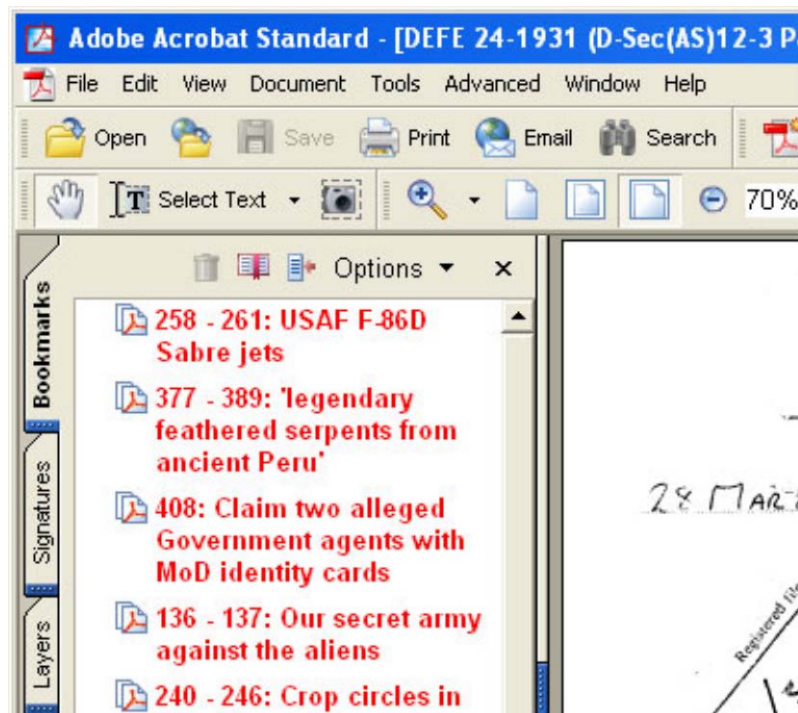
To view the bookmarks, click on the 'Bookmarks' tab on the upper left hand side of the PDF window, the bookmarks tab will expand – as shown below.

1. Click on 'Bookmarks' tab



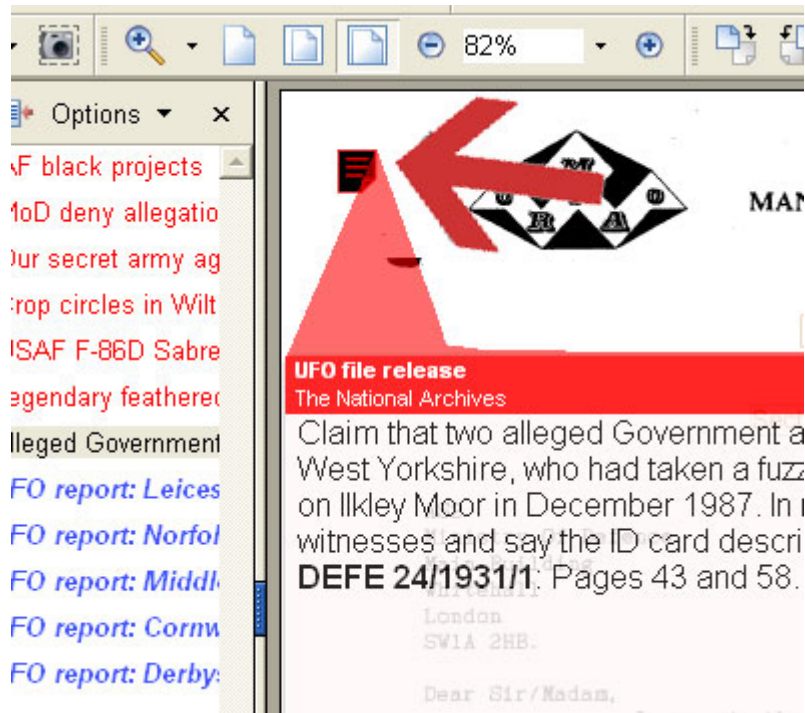
The 'Bookmarks' tab will then expand and a list of relevant bookmarks will be displayed – as shown below.

2. Bookmark tab will expand.



Clicking on a bookmark will take you to the pages of the file related to that particular story. To see the details of each bookmark – hover over the icon that appears on the top left hand corner of the relevant page of the PDF document – as shown below.

3. Hover or click on bookmark icons to see detail



Below is information on the key stories and reports of UFO activity contained in these files. It includes a list of the bookmarks contained in each file, with a short summary of each bookmark. Please note that not all files contain bookmarks.

### **Key stories and events featured in the files:**

Due to the volume of files released, highlighted files have been divided into the following categories for ease.

- **Files released under the Freedom of Information Act**
- **Parliamentary interest in UFOs**
- **Government Policy on UFOs**
- **UFO sightings and Reports**
- **Sighting reports by geographical location**

## **Freedom of Information Act**

### **Code of practice request to release UFO files**

**DEFE 24/2028/1** contains background papers covering a Parliamentary Ombudsman judgement on the release of MoD UFO papers to a UFO researcher in 2000 under the Code of Practice for Access to Government Information (the precursor of the Freedom of Information Act). Earlier papers (**DEFE 24/1986/1**) include a 1997 briefing circulated to all MoD departments on the implications of the implementation of the Act (p117-118). A 1999 request by Lord Hill-Norton for the accelerated release of UFO files under the 30 year rule was refused on the grounds of its implications for departmental workload and the Data Protection Act (**DEFE 24/1997/1** p318-320).

### **UFO-related Freedom of Information requests**

A series of six files from 2005 contain details of all the UFO-related requests made to MoD under the newly-implemented Freedom of Information Act **DEFE 24/2049/1** (p45-56), **2050/1** (p257), **2052/1**, **2053/1** (p172-246, p267), **2054/1** (p31-33, p83-131) and **2055/1** (p6-62).

## **UFO files released under Code of Practice for Access to Government Information and the Freedom of Information Act**

### **UN discussions on UFOs**

File **DEFE 24/2032/1** (p10-34) contains papers dealing with United Nations discussions on UFOs in 1977-78 generated by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office and the MoD. These papers reveal how in December 1977, with assistance from the Foreign Office, the MoD used its influence to talk down a call by Sir Eric Gairy, the President of Grenada, for a UN agency to conduct research into UFO sightings. This file shows British diplomats at the UN refused to sanction such a move, with one official describing this as "a ridiculous proposal that will only bring the United Nations into disrepute." Gairy withdrew his original proposal but continued his campaign for a full UN debate on UFOs, calling on the UN General Assembly to make 1978 "the year of the UFO". Gairy was deposed in a military coup on Grenada in 1979.

### **USA UFO documents**

File **DEFE 24/2026/1** file contains UFO documents mainly produced by US Government agencies. Highlights include CIA papers on the use of UFO reports for "psychological warfare", Project Blue Book reports (p409), analysis of a 1952 movie from Tremonton, Utah (p451), showing UFOs and UFO reporting procedures to be followed by US and Canadian pilots dated 1953 (p354-363).

Additional material released in this tranche relating to US UFO policy and the 'Roswell incident' can be found in **DEFE 24/2023/1** (p235-262) which contains copies of papers by an agency called 'MJ-12' allegedly set up by the US Government to cover-up evidence of the 1947 Roswell incident. Note - these papers are widely believed to be fakes.

### **Flying Saucer Working Party report**

In August 2000 the MoD received a Code of Practice request from Dr David Clarke for a copy of a report produced in 1951 by the MoD's Flying Saucer Working Party that had been used to brief PM Winston Churchill (**DEFE 24/2030/1** p196-198). The report was referred in a file released two years earlier at The National Archives, but MoD insisted no trace of the report could be found in its records and Dr Clarke was told it had "not survived the passage of time" (p201). In May 2001 the missing report was discovered during a routine re-review of closed files (see **DEFE 24/2050/1** p34-39).

### **UFO TV debate**

File **DEFE 24/2037/1** covers a Yorkshire TV debate on UFOs in 1979 that featured the head of the MoD branch responsible for UFOs at that time, Patrick Stevens. The file contains a detailed briefing on MoD UFO policy for use in his interview with presenter Richard Whiteley (p101-135).

### **Alien Autopsy Film**

File **DEFE 24/2024/1** contains MoD discussion about and Alien Autopsy film released in 1996-97 (p55-56).

### **UFO book**

File **DEFE 24/1986/1** includes the MoD's assessment of claims made by retired US Colonel Corso in his 1997 book 'The Day after Roswell'. It is concluded that Colonel Corso was not a reliable source of information (p157-158).

### **The Disclosure Project**

Papers on 'The Disclosure Project' can be found in **DEFE 24/2025/1** (p292-300, p312-324), **DEFE 24/2026/1** (p273-290), and **DEFE 2092/1** (p175, p308).

## **Parliamentary interest in UFOs**

### **House of Lords UFO Debate**

File **DEFE 24/2032/1** (p10-93, p216-49) contains copies of MoD, Department of Science & Technology and Foreign Office briefings from 1978-79 in preparation for the House of Lords UFO Debate in January 1979 (the only full debate on UFOs held in the British Parliament). The file includes the full text of speech by the Government's spokesman, the late Lord Strabolgi, in response to Lord Clancarty's request for a British Government study of the UFO mystery. Referring to Clancarty's claim that evidence existed of thousands of such visits, Strabolgi said: "...there is nothing to convince Her Majesty's Government that there has ever been a single visit by an alien spacecraft...As for telling the public the truth about UFOs, the truth is simple. There really are many strange phenomena in the sky, and these are invariably reported by rational people. But there is a wide range of natural explanations to account for such phenomena."

### **Number of UFO sightings**

In **DEFE 24/2092/1** (p101) a response to a Parliamentary Question from Lynn Featherstone MP reveals numbers of sightings reported to MoD had fallen dramatically from a peak of 609 in 1996-97 to an average of 130 per year between 2001 and 2006. Just 12 reports received since 2001 had been referred to experts in Air Defence for further scrutiny and "none of these had been determined as posing any risk to the integrity of UK airspace".

### **Study of UFOs**

In 2006 the MoD responded to Parliamentary Questions about the Defence Intelligence study of UFOs, tabled by MPs Norman Baker and Julian Hayes. Background briefings on the UFO report can be found in **DEFE 24/2092/1** (p47-48, p86, p130-131, p145, p149-151, p152-153).

### **UFO Policy**

A briefing on UFO Policy prepared for Defence Minister Peter Kilfoyle MP in 1999 can be found in **DEFE 24/2050/1** (p229-231).

### **RAF Rudloe Manor, Wiltshire – Britain's "Area 51"**

A background briefing on the role of Rudloe Manor and a list of the RAF and military units stationed at the base in 1998 can be found in **DEFE 24/2018/1** in response to a Parliamentary Question from Matthew Taylor MP (p214-216).

File **DEFE 24/1986/1** (p139-40) describes a meeting at MoD Main Building in June 1997 to discuss "a recent spate of [questions] about past and present roles of RAF Rudloe Manor, its underground complex and its alleged role in UFO investigations". Later in the year the MoD were asked to look into a purported attempt by UFO enthusiasts to break into the Wiltshire base during a "Roger Cook"-style investigation (p140-141).

## Government policy on UFOs

### Change in UFO policy

File **DEFE 24/1986/1** is the first of a number of UFO policy files to be released. The file shows that during 1996-97 the workload of the UFO desk at MoD increased by 50 per cent due to media interest in the subject around the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Roswell incident. This led to a change in MoD policy and In February 1997 they set up a UFO hotline where members of the public could report sightings (p407). In April a decision was taken by the UFO desk to refer only those UFO sightings deemed to be “documented, corroborated and timely” for further scrutiny by Air Defence and Intelligence branches at MoD. The file contains a detailed briefing by the RAF Wing Commander responsible for UFOs which covers Air Defence responsibility for UFO reports, media coverage of UFO issues, the role played by Black Project aircraft and the possibility of ‘Extra Terrestrial’ visitations. More discussion of UFO policy can be found in **DEFE 24/2018/1** (p189-193).

### Defence Intelligence study of UFOs – Project Condign

In January 1997 the Defence Intelligence Staff decided to create a computer database of UFO reports as the first step in the production of their study of ‘Unidentified Aerial Phenomena’. A letter from the official working on the study says he wished to keep “a low profile” due to his other secret defence related work. He reveals the name of the UFO study as “Project Condign” (**DEFE 24/1986/1**). The report, classified as “Secret: UK Eyes Only” was completed in 2000. It concluded that UFOs posed no threat to the UK and there was no need for any further Defence Intelligence involvement in the subject after 50 years of collecting sighting reports from the public and armed forces. The partly redacted report was released to the public in 2006 following a request under the Freedom of Information Act (p258-259, p416-418).

### Examination of space debris

File **DEFE 24/2037/1** reveals MoD were keen to examine examples of space debris and wanted the police to ensure any found by the public were swiftly reported to the MoD’s UFO branch. The MoD were presented with two sets of “debris from space” that had supposedly fallen in Britain. One metallic object was found on a golf course in Eastbourne, while another – consisting of twenty pieces of “rock-like debris” – woke a woman in North Wales when they crashed onto her roof at 5am one June morning. The file reveals police divided the rocks into three samples, placed them in plastic bags and sent them to Whitehall. The lump of metal from Eastbourne was found to be “simply a piece of molten scrap metal” (p68-96).

### Emergency procedures in the event of space debris falling to earth

A UFO file from 1979 (**DEFE 24/2037/1**) reveals government concern about the risk posed by the crash-landing of debris from space on UK. Fears of what could happen if a piece of junk should fall from the sky over Britain were raised when the giant US space station Skylab began to decay from its orbit. The head of MoD’s Defence Intelligence asked the Home Office to circulate guidelines to local authorities in the UK. The ‘restricted’ document *Satellite Accidents*, spelled out the emergency procedures that should be put in place in the event of a nuclear hazard reaching the UK from space (p81).

See also **DEFE 24/1997/1** (p358-363) for claims that the Home Office had emergency procedures for dealing with “landed and crashed UFOs and space satellites.”

### **RAF interception policy during the Cold War**

File **DEFE 24/2041/1** contains details of RAF interception policy. During the Cold War aircraft were scrambled on a daily basis to intercept Warsaw Pact aircraft approaching the UK coast. After 1989 there was a dramatic fall in scrambles to just two or three incidents per year and there was “no evidence to suggest that any of these scrambles have taken place against anything other than man-made aircraft” (p71).

### **Student ‘flying saucer’ hoax 1967**

A UFO Policy file (**DEFE 24/1986/1**) contains correspondence with a TV journalist who was researching a programme based upon a ‘War of the Worlds’ incident in 1967 that, for a few hours at least, was treated as a potentially real “alien invasion” of the UK. Early in the morning of 4 September police and RAF were flooded with calls from the public reporting six small “flying saucers” that had been discovered in locations in a perfect line across Southern England from the Sheppey to the Bristol Channel. Four police forces, bomb disposal units, the army and the MoD’s intelligence branch were all mobilised, before it emerged the saucers were a rag-day hoax by engineering students from Farnborough Technical College. The papers show MoD concern that secrets about intelligence interest in UFOs might be revealed if a retired RAF Group Captain was interviewed for the programme (p309).

### **RAF briefing on UFO radar detection in 2001**

A RAF briefing prepared for the MoD’s UFO desk officer (**DEFE 24/2025/1**) reveals 15 unidentified aircraft were detected on radar approaching UK between January-July 2001 in the months leading up to the 9/11 terrorist attacks on New York and Washington. Six of these were unidentified (although two did not enter UK airspace and four were assessed as ‘friendly’) (p309). The RAF were reluctant to answer specific questions from members of the public about these radar detections as they were concerned the information would be misinterpreted by those who did not understand how the air defence system worked or that their answers could reveal official secrets to an enemy. More information on radar detection of unidentified aircraft and procedures for scrambling RAF aircraft to intercept intruders can be found in **DEFE 24/2041/1** (p71).

## **UFO sightings & reports**

### **Lights in the sky over Lincolnshire**

An investigation report was compiled in October 1996 following press reports of lights in the sky filmed by police in Lincolnshire that were reportedly confirmed by a blip seen on radars at RAF Neatishead, Norfolk (see **DEFE 24/1986/1** p364 and **DEFE 24/2018/1** p316-322 ). These events led the late Labour MP for Don Valley, Martin Redmond, to write to Defence Minister Michael Portillo questioning why no RAF aircraft were scrambled to investigate this apparent breach of UK airspace. As a result, a senior RAF Wing Commander was asked to compile a report and spent eight working days quizzing eye-witnesses. His report (**DEFE 24/2032/1** p419-450) concluded that two entirely separate phenomena were involved - the lights seen by police were bright stars and the blip on radar was a permanent echo created by a tall church spire (Boston Stump).

### **HMS Manchester UFO sighting**

In September 2002 Lord Hill-Norton asked if the MoD could confirm a UFO sighting by crew members of HMS *Manchester* and other Royal Navy ships during an exercise off the coast of Norway in 1998/99. Enquiries by the MoD revealed the ship’s log covering the period had been “blown overboard by a gust of wind” whilst the destroyer was

docked in Norway. The ship's captain had no recollection of any incident involving UFOs (file **DEFE 24/2092/1** p225).

### **Spate of UFO reports across Britain on 16/4/78**

File **DEFE 24/2048/1** (p108-138) contains information into the RAF's investigation following a flurry of UFO reports across the British Isles on 16 April 1978. This was solved when RAF Fylingdales station in North Yorkshire found the sightings coincided with the re-entry of space debris into Earth's atmosphere.

### **Colour photos of unusual phenomena over Sri Lanka**

File **DEFE 24/2036/1** (p63-68) contains two colour photographs of "unusual atmospheric occurrence" taken by a retired RAF officer during a holiday in Sri Lanka in March 2004. He heard a clap of thunder followed by the appearance of a doughnut-shaped cloud in the sky that "did not rise but headed from the high atmosphere towards the earth". He believed it to be an "air burst" of some kind. Submitted to MoD via RAF Fylingdales.

### **UFO alongside RAF display aircraft**

File **DEFE 24/2027/1** contains a colour photograph submitted to the MoD, showing a UFO alongside an RAF Lancaster display aircraft in East Yorkshire during August 2004 (p50).

### **UFO sighting by RAF Tornado crew**

File **DEFE 24/2041/1** (p10, 11, 27 and 108) contains detailed discussion of a UFO sighting made by the crew of a RAF Tornado in Dutch airspace in November 1990. The report reveals the pilot suspected the object may have been a US Stealth fighter. The MoD did not investigate as the sighting took place outside UK airspace. A possible explanation of the sighting could be the re-entry of a Russian rocket-body logged by RAF Fylingdales (see also **DEFE 24/2027/1** p35).

### **Possible 'alien abduction' in London**

File **DEFE 24/1999/1** (p106) contains a letter from a man who believed he may have been abducted by aliens after witnessing an aircraft hovering over his house one October evening and waking the following morning to find he had experienced a period of missing time. The MoD responded to his letter stating the aircraft was likely to have been an airship and that the clocks had gone back an hour that night which would account for him gaining an hour (p105).

### **'Flashing lights' over Bromley, Kent.**

File **DEFE 24/2036/1** (p175-178) contains reports from a police helicopter crew and observers on the ground, who saw "flashing lights" of a UFO over Bromley in Kent in November 2003. Nothing was seen on RAF radars (see also **DEFE 24/2054/1** p61-65).

### **UFO reported on 9/11**

File **DEFE 24/2021/1** (p29) contains UFO reports received in September 2001. Just one sighting was reported to MoD on 9/11 by a driver near Hailsham, Sussex, who saw two 'cone-shaped' objects in the sky.

### **Files on Rendlesham Forest incident (Britain's Roswell) destroyed**

During 2000 a search by MoD records staff revealed that a collection of Defence Intelligence files covering the period 1980-82 (including on the famous Rendlesham Forest incident) had been destroyed, even though other files from the surrounding years had survived. Records staff could not say when or why files were destroyed as the



destruction certificates themselves were not retained for longer than five years (**DEFE 2026/1** p182). Officials from MoD warned that if what it called this “apparent anomaly in the records” were made public “it could be interpreted to mean that a deliberate attempt had been made to eradicate the records covering this incident”.

### **UFO Files – sighting reports by geographical location**

Numbers in bold indicate **DEFE 24** reference, followed by relevant page numbers.

Notes:

- (a) this is not a comprehensive index of the contents of this file tranche. Incidents have been selected for inclusion where their content is of particular interest or includes detailed descriptions.
- (b) There are 5 ‘sighting report’ files in this tranche, covering reports made from March 2001-October 2002 and August 2003-September 2005. Other files contain details of sightings from earlier periods, filed under ‘correspondence’ and ‘Parliamentary questions’ etc.

#### **Berkshire**

DEFE 24 /2059/1 (p144-45)

#### **Derbyshire**

DEFE 24 /2092/1 (p12)

DEFE 24 /2059/1 (p105-6, p147-156)

#### **Devon**

DEFE 24 /1999/1 (p275)

DEFE 24 /2050/1 (p294)

#### **East Yorkshire**

DEFE 24 /1997/1 (p152)

DEFE 24 /2027/1 (p148-151)

DEFE 24 /2022/1 (p4-7)

#### **Essex**

DEFE 24 /1999/1 (p68-69)

#### **Ireland**

DEFE 24 /2021/1 (p289-291, p23-26)

#### **Isle of Man**

DEFE 24 /2040/1 (p37)

DEFE 24 /2025/1 (p267)

#### **Kent**

DEFE 24 /2040/1 (p5-91, p117-18, p120-121, p130-140)

DEFE 24 /2036/1 (p176-178)

DEFE 24 /2054/1 (p61-65)

#### **Lancashire**

DEFE 24 /2036/1 (p63, p105)

#### **Lincolnshire**

DEFE 24 /2032/1 (p419-450)

**Liverpool**

DEFE 24 /2024/1 (p131-142)

DEFE 24 /2021/1 (p64, p262-265)

**London**

DEFE 24 /1999/1 (p106)

DEFE 24 /2021/1 (p217, p225-228)

DEFE 24 /2022/1 (p12-13, p160)

DEFE 24 /2036/1 (p6-8)

DEFE 24 /2038/1 (p79-83)

DEFE 24 /2050/1 (p282)

**Manchester**

DEFE 24 /2024/1 (p260-62)

DEFE 24 /2055/1 (p133-135)

**Netherlands**

DEFE 24 /2027/1 (p16-35)

DEFE 24 /2041/1 (p10-11, p27, p31-34, p108)

**Norfolk**

DEFE 24 /2022/1 (p175-177)

**Northants**

DEFE 24 /2058/1 (p114)

**North Yorkshire**

DEFE 24 /2025/1 (p287-289)

DEFE 24 /2032/1 (p216-249)

**North Wales**

DEFE 24 /2038/1 (p101-103)

DEFE 24 /2041/1 (p126-127) (p129)

**Norway**

DEFE 24 /2092/1 (p213-225)

**Nottinghamshire**

DEFE 24 /1986/1 (p308)

DEFE 24 /2039/1 (p185-187)

**Scotland**

DEFE 24 /1999/1 (p308-9)

DEFE 24 /2021/1 (p18)

DEFE 24 /2026/1 (p5, p7-8)

DEFE 24 /2038/1 (p37-38)

DEFE 24 /2049/1 (p105-106)

DEFE 24 /2054/1 (p31-33)

**Shropshire**

DEFE 24 /2038/1 (p126)

DEFE 24 /2092/1 (p25)

### **Somerset**

DEFE 24 /1999/1 (p137-139)

DEFE 24 /2036/1 (p6-8)

DEFE 24 /2052/1 (p30, p32-35)

DEFE 24 /2058/1 (p160-161)

DEFE 24 /2059/1 (p130-131)

### **South Wales**

DEFE 24 /1986/1 (p241-242, p248)

DEFE 24 /2036/1 (p42)

DEFE 24 /2054/1 (p83-131)

### **Staffordshire**

DEFE 24 /2026/1 (p29-60)

DEFE 24 /2027/1 (p242-268)

DEFE 24 /2037/1 (p20-24)

DEFE 24 /2059/1 (p42-43)

### **South Yorkshire**

DEFE 24 /2018/1 (p231-252)

DEFE 24 /2022/1 (p209-211)

DEFE 24 /2024/1 (p143-144)

### **Sri Lanka**

DEFE 24 /2036/1 (p64-69)

### **Suffolk**

DEFE 24 /2039/1 (p232) (see also Highlights Guide entry on Rendlesham UFO)

### **Surrey**

DEFE 24 /2022/1 (p290)

### **Sussex**

DEFE 24 /2021/1 (p29)

### **West Midlands**

DEFE 24 /2032/1 (p249-384)

### **West Yorkshire**

DEFE 24 /1997/1 (p212-216)

DEFE 24 /2036/1 (p98, p202)

### **Wiltshire**

DEFE 24 /2021/1 (p286)

DEFE 24 /2054/1 (p68-69)

DEFE 24 /2058/1 (p13)

### **USA (Idaho)**

DEFE 24 /2058/1 (p128-129)