

DORSET AMATEUR RADIO

SOCIAL NETWORK

Technical Supplement

January 2026

www.darsn.co.uk

Welcome to the January edition of the Technical supplement Newsletter.

In this issue we look at KICAD and Circuit layout editors. The promised power supply circuits will be in the February issue due to time constraints after being plagued with ill health.

We hope you have all had an enjoyable Christmas and Happy New Year. We have done a lot of work behind the scenes to bring you lots of activities and projects this coming year.

On with the show!



Lindsay - 2E0VDD
Secretary / Treasurer



Bill - 2E0WEG
Chairman



Tim - 2E0TPH
Editor

Events in January

Worlds End - Meetup
18th January 2026

The Worlds End
Almer

Meet up from 12 noon.

Everybody Welcome.

See page 5 for more.

Nets

Monday	145.375 FM
Tuesday	70.375 FM
Wednesday	144.375 SSB
Thursday	Zoom Session
Sunday 15:00	144.375 SSB

All details can be found on our
Facebook page



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Sprat Subscriptions are due!

Please note that the Subscriptions for SPRAT (the G-Qrp) newsletter are due from December 31st every year. This year will see an increase to £10 up from £6

This is the first time in 30 years that an increase has had to be made and still represents excellent value for money.

If you have a subscription please don't overlook renewal and get it for £6 before its increase in June.

Your Projects Wanted !

Have you got a project that you would like to share with us?

You can submit articles / projects for inclusion here by sending them to the Editor.

Submissions should be tested and be of your own work. We cannot and will not publish anything we feel is Copyrighted material.

Anything is considered.

New Net!

We are pleased to announce our new net run by Martin M7HQU
Martin operates our Sunday SSB Net on 144.375 USB at 15:00 Hours
The net is gaining more members / participants and is growing steadily.

Whilst we are talking about "Nets", Mark 2E0VOV had a mention in Radcom. Well done to Mark and everyone who gets behind and supports the endeavors of others.



Bio of the Month - Martin M7HQU



Martin - M7HQU

**Website Admin Guy and Tech
Advisory to DARSN.**

**Sunday Afternoon Net
144.375 SSB
Come and Join in!**

It all started off three years (two winters) working for The British Antarctic survey in South Georgia and Antarctic continent. A spell in HM armed forces working with electronics. Once leaving the military started with a local Poole company which most people would know as Davy McNee, working in real time control systems for high speed rolling mills. I have worked all round the world installing, commissioning and repairing mills. I absolutely love this job, I have worked on great big steel mills and plate mills right down to very specialised mills in the royal mint and many other specialist mills. It was a fantastic job as you have to use all your senses and be multi/cross disciplined in mechanics, electronics, drive systems, hydraulics and pneumatics with very tight tolerances – in some case down to 3 microns of accuracy when running at 1000mpm.

About 6 years ago whilst working in India I ended up extremely ill which resulted in a long stay at Poole Hospital. I had to retire from work completely and I am now disabled. I have taken up radio as a way of getting out in the world on equal terms. Amateur Radio has been a god send to me and its great fun.

[Martin also runs the Sunday Net – Details on Left - Ed]

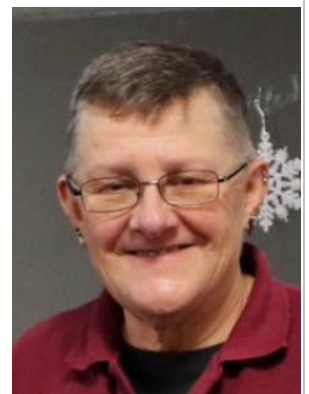
Christmas Lunch – The Hamworthy Club

DARSN held its first Christmas Lunch on the 10th December 2025, quite a success with a good attendance, everyone was in high spirits and thoroughly enjoyed themselves. We even had an impromptu raffle in which I won some rather handy items.

I managed to win a Non Contact Voltage probe (NCV) which is handy for some of the High-Voltage projects that I do from time to time and a multi-purpose hammer to knock in those mast guy pegs in chalky / stony ground and of course a baseball cap.

I have only included a few photos that were taken, the complete album can be found on the [DARSN Facebook group](#).

Personally, I would have liked to have seen more attending but the atmosphere was great and I would definitely attend more!



DX News

Dx News gets it own page now as there are too many expeditions to cram into a small box.

The following screen capture comes from the Cloudlog server that I host and is open for everyone to use. To get a username and password for Cloudlog simply send me an [Email](#) with your Name, Callsign and Email address or use the [contact](#) form and I will get you an account setup.

Some events run across December AND January hence the two screen captures below.

December 2025

Start Date	End Date	Country	Callsign	Notes
01/12/25	31/12/25	Gambia	C5YK	Not Worked Before By ON7YK; 20-10m; SSB FT8 FT4 RTTY PSK, some CW; QSL via ON7YK direct; to continue until Jan 2025
07/12/25	05/01/26	Guatemala	TG9/AF4CZ	Not Worked Before By AF4CZ as TG9/AF4CZ; 40-10m;; FT8 FT4, perhaps SSB; spare time operation
21/12/25	02/01/26	Surinam	PZ5OZ	Not Worked Before By OZ0J; @PZ5RA; 160-6m; SSB CW FT8, perhaps RTTY; QSL via Club Log OQRS or OZ Buro
22/12/25	15/01/26	French Guiana	TO2FY	Worked Before Confirmed By F4GPK fm Kourou (GJ35pe); 40 20 15 10m; SSB
22/12/25	18/01/26	Cambodia	XU7O	Not Worked Before By DL7BO; 160-6m, focus on low bands; CW SSB FT8; QSL via Club Log OQRS or DL4WK
24/12/25	31/12/25	Revilla Gigedo	XF4B	Not Worked Before IOTA NA-030 Needed By XE1B XE1MO N1DG fm Socorro I (IOTA NA-030); 80-6m; SSB FT8 (SuperFox & call validation); QSL via Club Log OQRS
26/12/25	03/01/26	Azerbaijan	4K/DL4XT	Not Worked Before By DL4XT as 4K/DL4XT; HF; CW SSB FT8; vertical, dipole; QSL via Club Log OQRS
29/12/25	31/12/25	Azerbaijan	4K0T	Not Worked Before By team fm Shahdagh National Park (POTA AZ-0006, LN41ch) 17m; SSB
29/12/25	03/01/26	Mariana Is	KH0/AJ6VJ	Not Worked Before By JO1VRK as KH0/AJ6VJ fm Saipan I; 40-10m; CW SSB RTTY FT8 FT4; QSL via Club Log OQRS
30/12/25	03/01/26	Monaco	3A/MM0NDX	Not Worked Before By MM0NDX as 3A/MM0NDX and MM0SAJ as 3A/MM0SAJ; HF w/ focus on 160-30m, incl 60m; SSB FT8 FT4 RTTY; QSL via EB7DX

January 2026

Start Date	End Date	Country	Callsign	Notes
01/01/26	16/02/26	Grenada	B/D	Not Worked Before IOTA NA-024 Needed By WE9G fm IOTA NA-024 (FK92ef); 160-6m; mainly FT8, some CW SSB; QSL via Club Log OQRS or WE9G (B/d)
02/01/26	06/01/26	French Polynesia	FO/J1JKW	Not Worked Before IOTA OC-066 Needed By J1JKW as FO/J1JKW fm IOTA OC-066; 40 20 17 15 12 10 6m; SSB CW FT8; 200w; QSL via J1JKW; holiday style operation
06/01/26	06/02/26	Benin	TY5GG	Not Worked Before By F5NVF fm Godomey, Abomey-Calavi HF; Spiderbeam, multiband dipole; QSL via F5RAV direct; operation to continue until 6 Apr 2026
07/01/26	15/01/26	Palau	T88HS	Not Worked Before By JA6KYU as T88HS, JA6EGL as T88SM, JH6OPP as T88XE fm Koror; 160-6m; CW SSB AM FM
10/01/26	22/01/26	Lakshadweep Is	VU7RS	Not Worked Before By VU2RS (Leader) VU2ADX VU3DXA VU3GDS VU2AR EY8MM DL6KVA YT1AD R7KW DJ5IW VU2DWA fm Agatti I; 160-6m, focus on low bands; CW SSB + digital
11/01/26	29/01/26	Aruba	P40AA	Not Worked Before By DL4MM; HF; CW FT8 SSB; QRV for CQ 160m Contest; QSL via DL4MM or Club Log OQRS
12/01/26	15/02/26	San Felix & Ambrosio	3G0XQ	Not Worked Before IOTA SA-013 Needed By remote team fm San Ambrosio I (IOTA SA-013); 160-10m; CW SSB FT8 w/ focus on CW and FT8; see Web for full QSL details
13/01/26	21/01/26	Sint Maarten	PJ7/IZ2DPX	Not Worked Before By IZ2DPX as PJ7/IZ2DPX; also fm St Martin using FS/IZ2DPX /m; 60-6m; SSB FT4 FT8; 100w; vertical, dipoles; QSL via Club Log OQRS or IZ2DPX (B/d)
13/01/26	10/02/26	Desecheo I	KP5/NP3VI	Not Worked Before By NP4G and team as KP5/NP3VI fm FK68gj; 160-6m, incl 60m; CW SSB FT8; QSL via MOOXO; dates unclear/approximate
15/01/26	28/02/26	Kenya	5Z4/OZ6ABL	Not Worked Before By OZ6ABL as 5Z4/OZ6ABL fm Watamu (LI06ap); 80-6m; CW SSB FT8 FT4; holiday style operation; QSL via OZ6ABL or Club Log OQRS
18/01/26	24/01/26	Maldives	8Q7JI	Not Worked Before By DS1TUW fm Dhaalu Atoll; 80-10m; CW FT8; QSL via DS1TUW direct
18/01/26	30/01/26	Barbados	SASE/GREEN	Worked Before Confirmed By WA7RAR fm Sea Cliff Cottage; 20-10m; SSB CW; QSL: Chris Billings, PO Box 1383, Shady Cove, Oregon, 97539, USA; SASE/green stamps NOT required
19/01/26	26/01/26	Maldives	8Q7EL	Not Worked Before By IW5ELA fm Vaavu Atoll; HF; mainly CW; holiday style operation
20/01/26	10/02/26	Guadeloupe	B/D	Not Worked Before By F1DUZ; 80-10m; SSB; QSL via F1DUZ (B/d)
22/01/26	28/01/26	Micronesia	V6HUCHIDA	Not Worked Before IOTA OC-011 Needed By JA1XGI as V6HUCHIDA fm Chuuk I (IOTA OC-011, QJ57wj); 160-10m; CW SSB + digital; QRV for CQ 160m CW
22/01/26	31/03/26	Curacao	PJ2/W2APF	Not Worked Before By W2APF as PJ2/W2APF; 80-10m; CW SSB FT8; QSL via W2APF direct
30/01/26	03/02/26	St Kitts & Nevis	V47JA	Not Worked Before By W5JON fm Calypso Bay; 160-6m; SSB FT8; yagi, verticals; QSL also OK via W5JON direct

In a future issue, I will give you a full “Getting Started” guide to Cloudlog and its very feature rich interface.

Did you know you can do real time uploads from your favourite log system and have those exported directly to Qrz, Hrdlog, LOTW and many others? It is just one of my favourites saving me time and effort of saving .adi files and manually submitting them.

I would like to hear from you, what is your favourite log system? Do you still use paper or different devices with the ability to Sync them all?

DARSN / G3DAR Events

We are planning lots of events for 2026. I will try to dedicate a full page every issue so you can see whats coming up!

18th January 2026

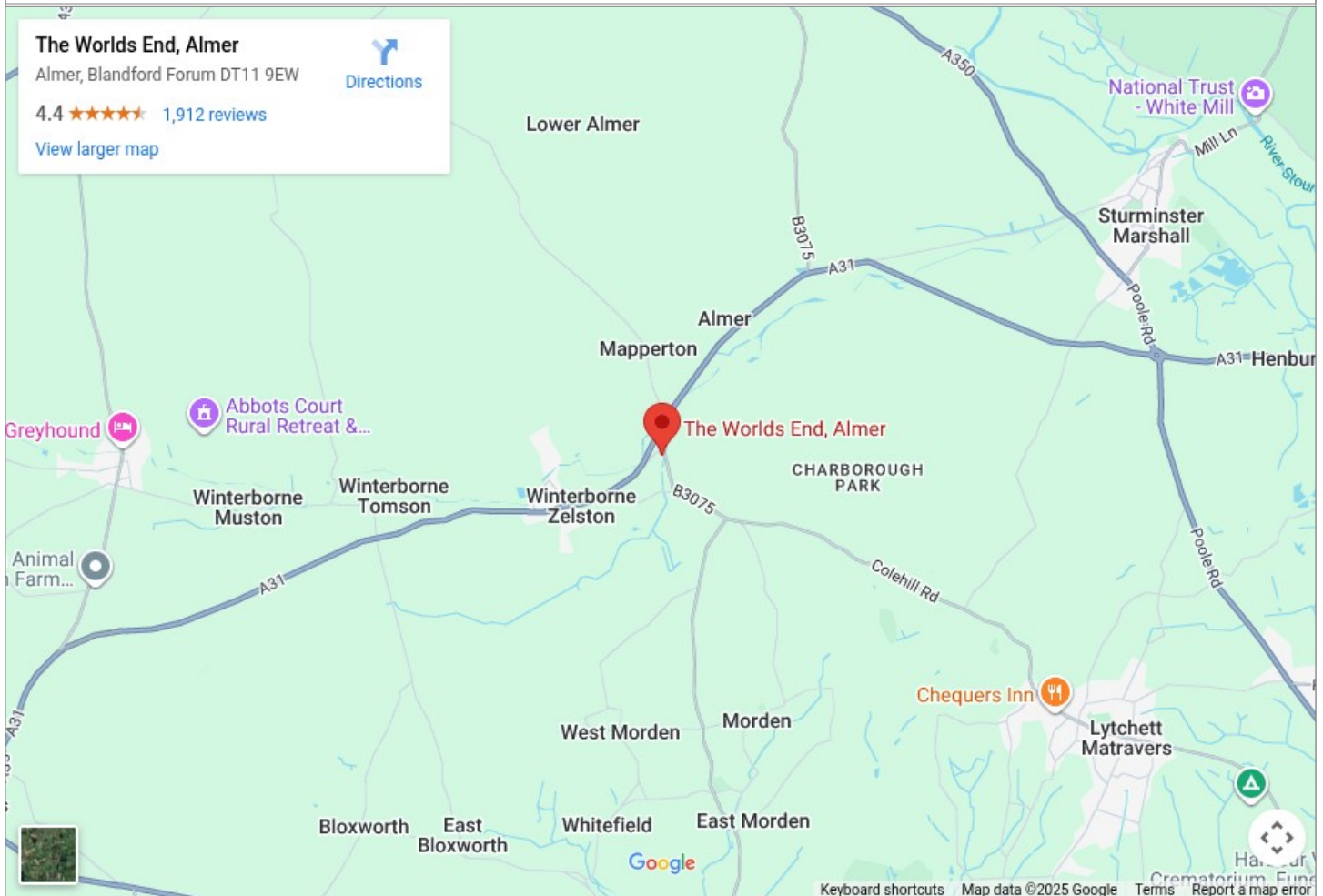
The Worlds End
Almer
Blandford Forum
DT11 9EW

Driving:

The World's End is located at the "gateway to Dorset" just off the A31 as you drive between Wimborne and Bere Regis. A perfect location to rest & refuel passengers on journeys between the London area & the South West. We're about 15 minutes' drive from Wimborne, 18 from Poole and 25 minutes from Dorchester. If you put our postcode into your Sat Nav, you'll get pretty close! Look out for the smart thatched pub and our trademark festoon lighting.

SAT NAV: DT11 9EW

GRID REFERENCE: SY 90773 97811



We also have an event planned for the 21st February 2026 to visit the Tank Museum at Bovington. Again, further details will be on page 5 of the Newsletter and on the DARSN Website and Facebook Group [You can find the links on the first page - Ed]

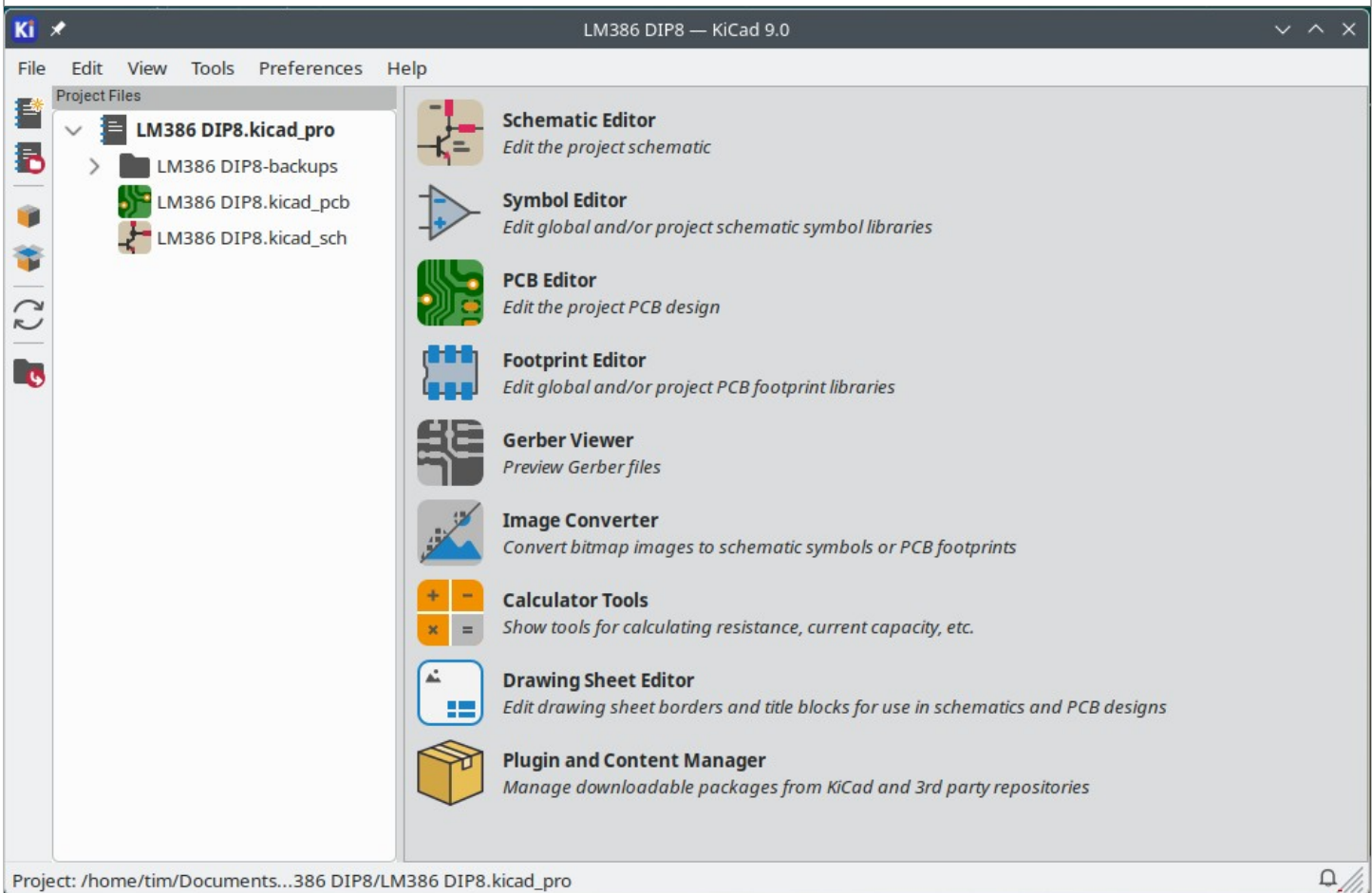
Introducing KICAD

Ever wanted to make your own Printed Circuit Boards? What if I told you that you can!

KICAD is a free (to use) application that runs under Windows, Linux and Mac operating systems. It offers very powerful, feature rich solutions that makes making your own Schematic and Board layouts, surprisingly easy.

Simply start off by launching your web browser and go to <https://www.kicad.org/> Once you are there, go to the “Download” section and get the version that is correct for your system. Let it install and launch it.

You will see a screen similar to the one below. It may look daunting but it is quite straightforward to use, all you require is a little patience and some practice. I have been using KICAD for well over 10 years. I have designed many projects for myself and the Amateur Radio Fraternity. Lets go ahead and make a basic Audio Amplifier Circuit that you may have seen in the last newsletter!



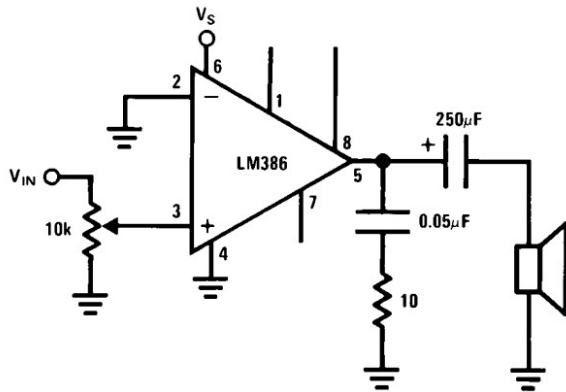
Let us lay down some basics, lets say we have a box full of LM386 parts that we found at a recent rally. We have a good selection of Resistors and Capacitors, we have a suitable project box and we have some prototyping board. That’s a great start

First we need to look at the DataSheet for this device, you might find one at <https://wavewizards.org/service/Datasheets/ANALOG/LM386.PDF>

Take a look and we can see an “Typical Application” circuit for this device. Lets keep things simple and build this circuit for ourselves.

Typical Applications

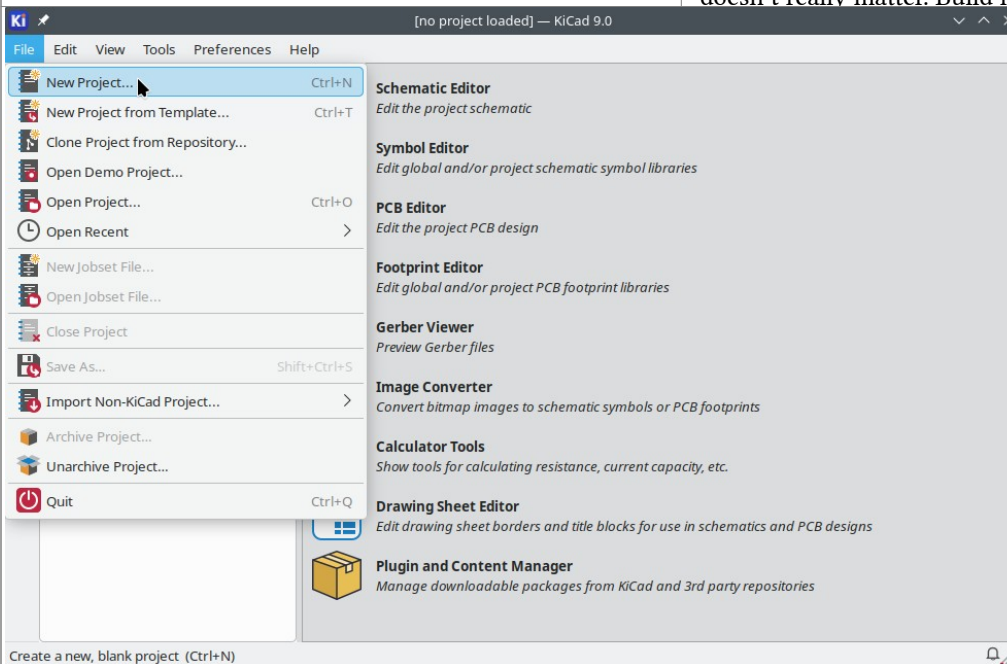
**Amplifier with Gain = 20
Minimum Parts**



We now have something to work with. We can make the Schematic a bit more pretty by replicating it. We also have a “BOM” or “Bill Of Materials” which we can check against our parts bin to ensure we have everything. Some slight changes in this circuit will be just fine. Some changes to a Schematic for a logic decoder system might not work at all. This design however, is a simple Audio Amplifier so we need not worry too much about getting everything exact.

- 1x10K Potentiometer
- 1xLM386 Audio IC
- 1xCeramic Capacitor 0.05uF
- 1xCeramic Capacitor 250uF
- 1x10 Ohm Resistor
- 1 x Speaker (Anything around 8Ohm Impedence will do)

Another consideration is do we need to use an I.C. socket that will enable us to swap out a damaged part? Maybe we connected the power supply the wrong way around! A simple circuit like this doesn't really matter. Build it on Perf Board, it'll be fine!

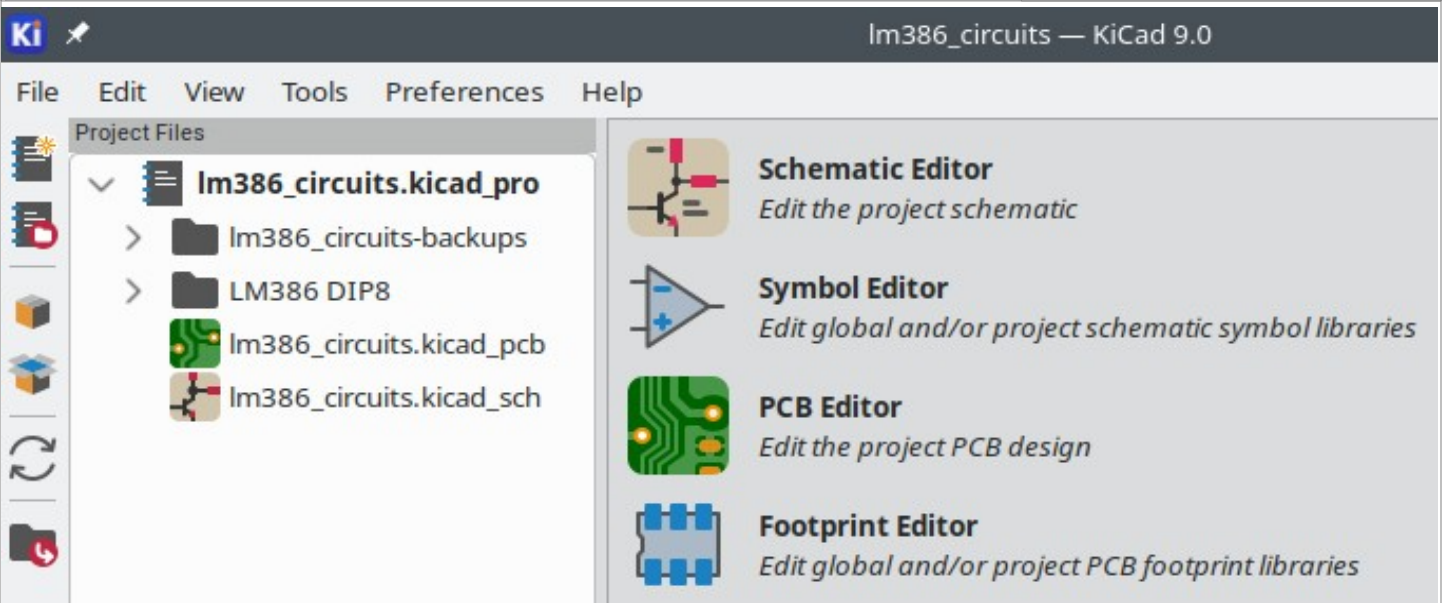


Go to FILE, New Project and give your project a name: Lets call it LM386.

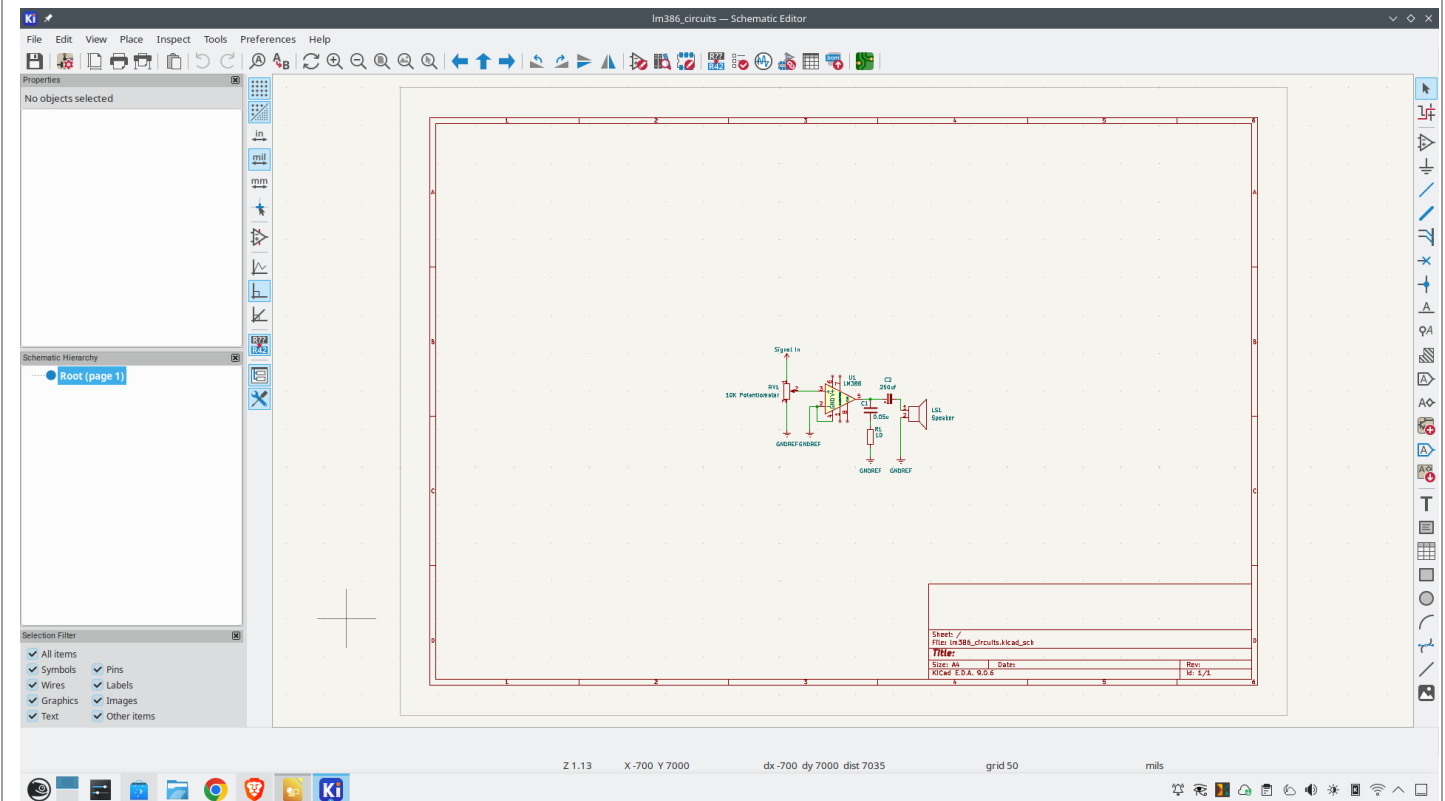
A good tip is to make a directory under “My Documents” called “Kicad Projects”. This keeps everything in one place making it easy to find your projects at a later date.

Linux users can use /Home/Yourusername/Kicad or where ever you want.

You will now find yourself at the Application menu. Go ahead and click the “Schematic Editor” Button. [Fig 1 - Below]



KICAD Cont..



This is the main Schematic Editor screen, due to space and size limitations you can zoom in to see the extra details. You can see that I have already got some components on the layout. Quite soon you can also have something similar!

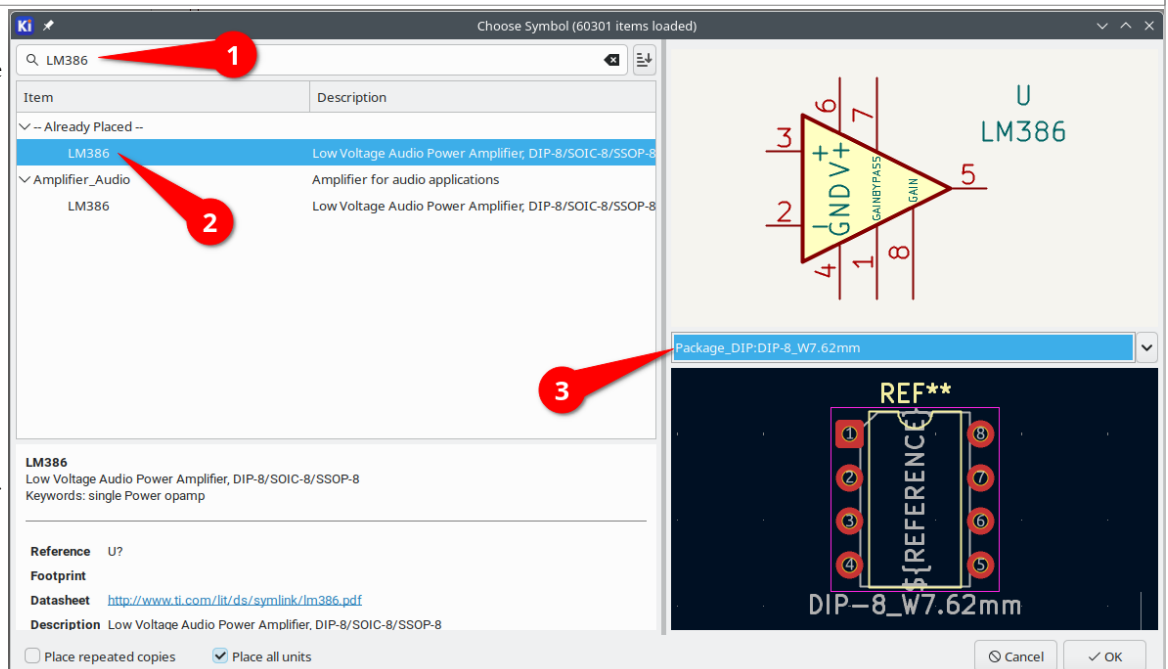
Go ahead and chose a location towards the left of the Schematic Canvas. Traditionally we read schematics from left to right, this can change with the complexity of the circuit but I always try to follow the “Norm.” We can drag the entire circuit layout around later, lets get some components on the Schematic. Press “A” and a dialog pops up: [See Below]

Search for the part in 1 and the list below will update dynamically. Select your part from 2, the part will show on the right. Sometimes you will have a choice of parts depending on the type of “Footprint” you wish to use. This is helpful if you wish to use through hole rather than surface mount parts. Once you have placed the part on the canvas, you can press A again to add another part, use R for resistor, C for capacitor etc. You can also search for “Audio” to bring up and part with “Audio” in the description.

Don't be shy, place some random parts to get some practice. You can Move, Rotate and Edit the attributes to reflect your circuit and the component values.

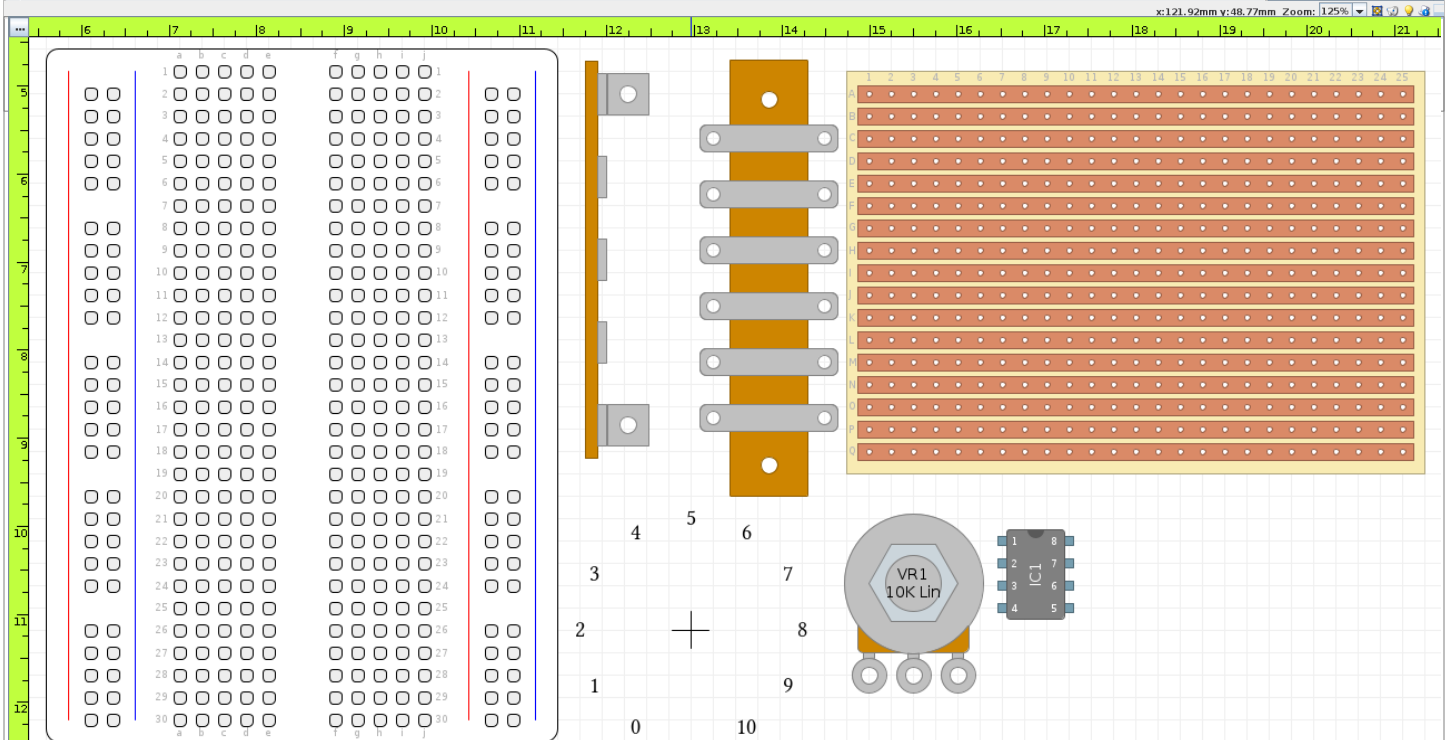
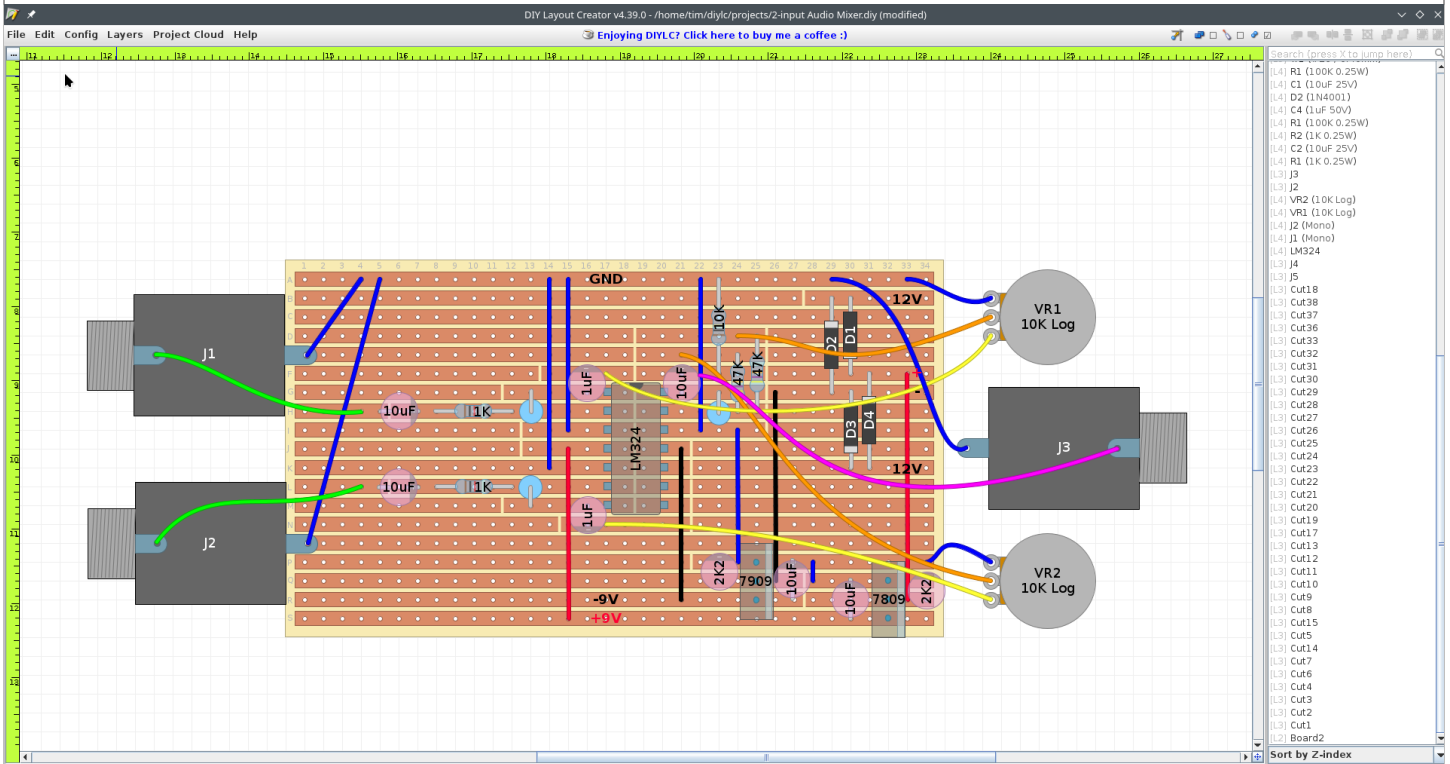
Don't forget to save your project!

We will continue this in the next issue. In the meantime, find some schematics online and have a go at making your own version.



Prototyping and Perf Board

If you felt that KICAD was a little bit too extreme for you to learn there are plenty of resources out there on the Internet to pick from. One that I can recommend is [DIY Layout Creator](#) which is also free to use and you can upload and download projects from the server. One such project is shown below.



From left to right, Good old Breadboard, a Terminal Strip, Tag Strip (6 way) and Vero Board. You can also see a dial creator that you can print custom front panel stickers for lets say, an Audio Amp. Also displayed is a Potentiometer and an 8 Pin Dip package (could be a LM386, NE555 or maybe an Op-Amp. You can find all you need on the Internet. Just have a search for PCB layout designer and see what you can find that works with you. I figured this may be of use to those of us who are not well versed in such matters. Any questions, please get in touch with me. Contact details on first page.

Other things...



The long established 145Alive net is taking place on the 7th February. This time around it has been decided that SSB will also be catered for as well as the favourite FM mode.

As usual, I will be taking part with John (M3YTQ) assisting in the logging and coffee pouring. [Thanks John – Ed]

Reece (M7DVX) will be at Hardys Monument (IO80RQ) operating the net on FM. I will be on SSB from Portland Heights which also happens to be a Parks on the Air site. Two birds, one QSO!

As always, it is always appreciated if you could take a moment to call into the net. There is no obligation to stay for the 3 hours! The Net starts at noon and runs for 3 hours until 1500. Feel free to hunt us from some high ground.

Operational Frequencies will be known very soon. Watch the FB group for details. It is likely that a live stream on YouTube might happen!

POTA or “Parks On The Air”
Have you ever heard of it?

There are qualifying sites all over the world that Amateur Operators can go and “Activate” and win Awards. We have many of these sites in the Dorset and Hampshire Areas [See maps below -Ed]

You can check out my [Profile https://pota.app/#/profile/2E0TPH](https://pota.app/#/profile/2E0TPH)

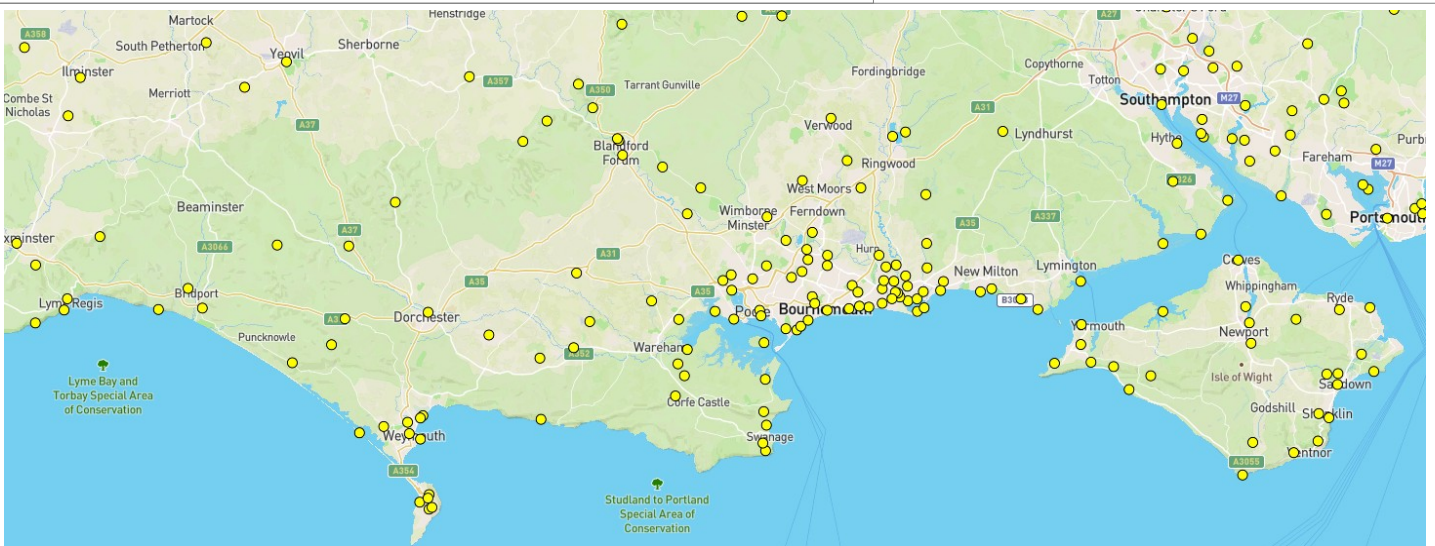
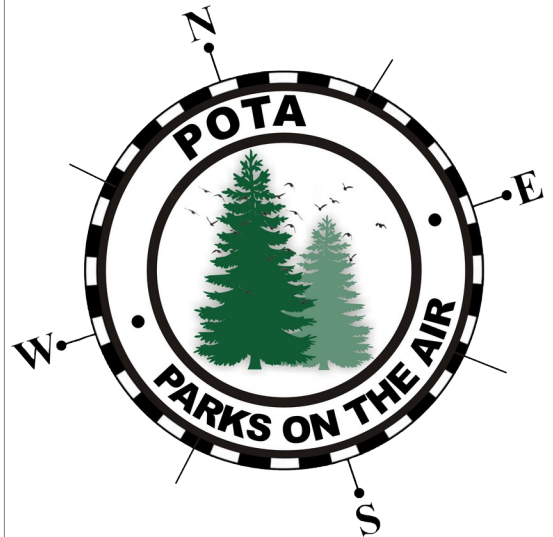
This event happens seasonally, on the 3rd full weekend of the month (Saturday & Sunday UTC). These are ‘activity weekends’ where the main purpose is to get out in the parks, and have as much fun as possible.

Winter - 3rd Full Weekend of January. January 17-18, 2026

Spring - 3rd Full Weekend of April. April 18-19, 2026

Summer - 3rd Full Weekend of July. July 18-19, 2026

Autumn - 3rd Full Weekend of October. October 17-18, 2026



To date there are 5769 recognised sites in the UK alone. You only need to make 10 contacts to call it an “Activation”
It’s great fun so when things get warmer, why not get in touch with me and let’s give it a go!

Well, that's this end of the January Newsletter. I hope you have enjoyed this issue.

In the February issue, we will continue our look at power supplies, in particular, higher currents using the 2N3055. Audio Amplifiers and circuits are also coming along with how to make your own boards at home and a surface mount beginner guide.

Join the [Facebook Group](#) to get the newsletter or download it from <https://www.darsn.co.uk>.

If you would like to contribute articles please get in touch.

Why not submit your story about how you got into this hobby?

Got some pictures of a project you have done and tested?

As usual, a huge thanks to everyone who go out and participate in events and meet ups.

Until next time, keep those finals warm. 73's

[Make a Donation](https://pay.collectiv.com/dorset-amateur-radio-social-network-running-costs-33420) <https://pay.collectiv.com/dorset-amateur-radio-social-network-running-costs-33420>

Lots of merchandise available check out the website for details, let me know if you would like anything. Caps, t-shirts, key rings, sweatshirts, hoodies, chopping boards, pens, lanyards, note books, mugs etc

We are a not for profit club and all proceeds go towards keeping the club going.

Thank you for your support 2EOVDD