

# What different settlement patterns are there?

If you look at map **D** on the next page you will see that the settlements have different shapes. Some are long and thin, some are compact and almost round, others are broken up and spread out. In geography we call these different shapes the **settlement pattern**.

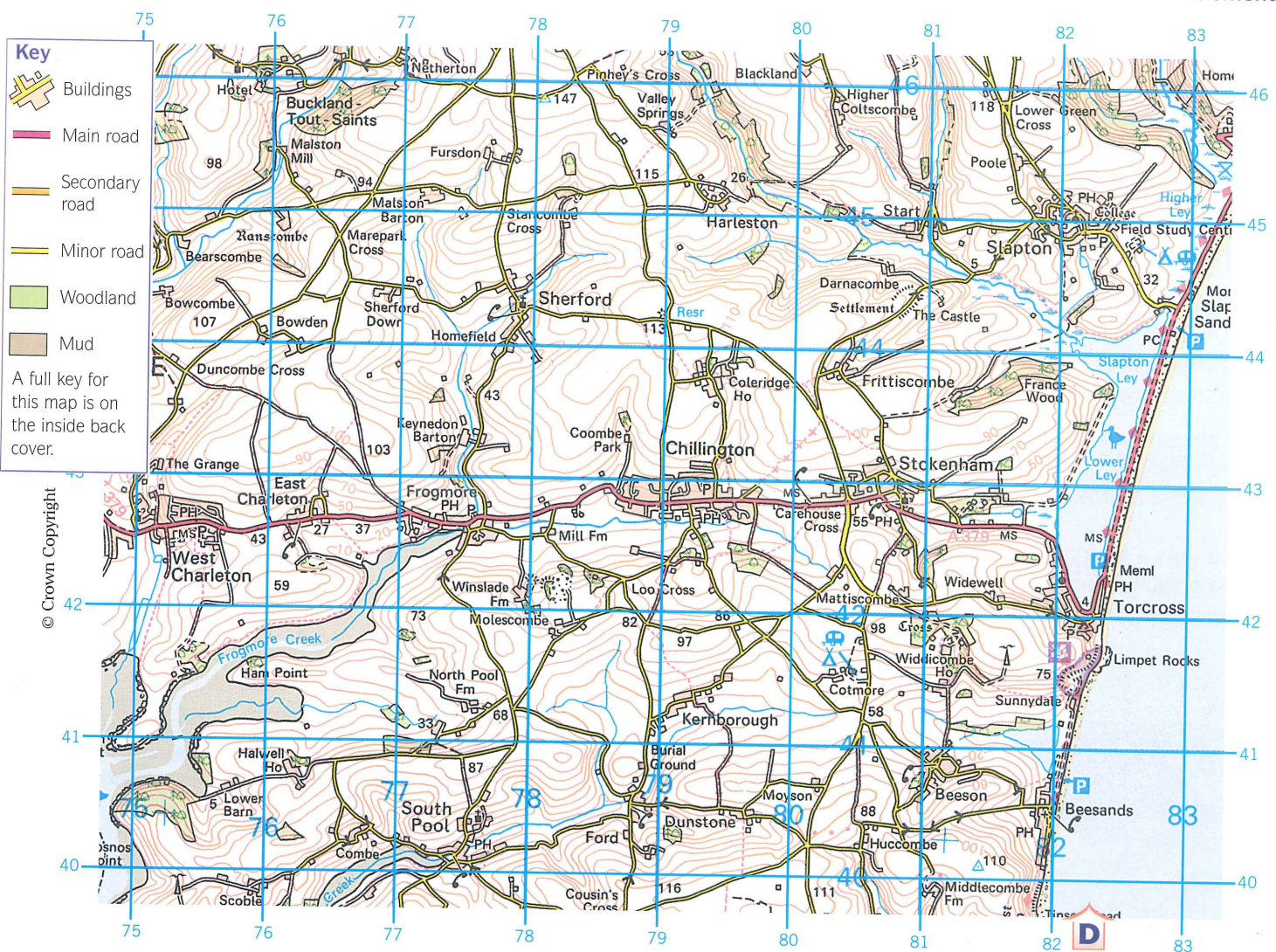
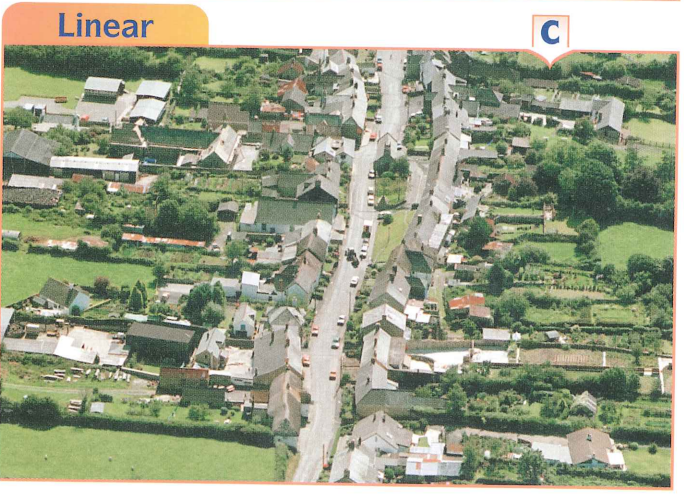


- ◆ A **dispersed settlement** has buildings that are well spread out.
- ◆ Settlements with this pattern are often found in highland areas where it is not easy to build houses close together. Here, people also needed more land to grow their crops or graze their animals.

- ◆ A **nucleated settlement** has buildings closely grouped together.
- ◆ Settlements with this shape often grew around a road junction or river crossing. A long time ago people built their houses close together for safety. This pattern is common in lower, flatter parts of Britain.

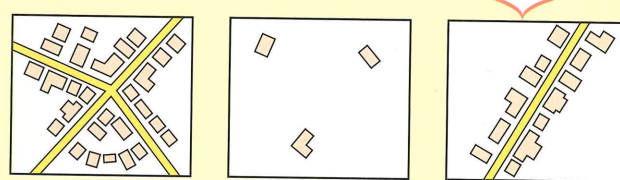
- ◆ **Linear settlements** are often called **ribbon developments** because they have a long, narrow shape.
- ◆ Settlements with this shape usually grow along a narrow valley where there is little space. They may also be found strung along a road or on either side of a river.

Settlement patterns are usually influenced by the natural features of the area. These are often the same features that were considered important when choosing the original site for the settlement. The three main types of settlement pattern are shown below.



## Activities

**1** Copy the settlement pattern drawings below. Label each one **dispersed**, **nucleated** or **linear**. Write a brief description of each one. Suggest a reason for its shape.



**2** Map **D** is part of Devon in south-west England. It shows many different settlement patterns.

- a** Make a larger copy of table **F**.
- b** Complete your table by filling in the empty boxes. The first one has been done to help you. (You may need to look at page 132 to remind you about grid references.)
- c** Find another example of a nucleated settlement and a linear settlement and add them to your table.

Village name	Map reference	Simple drawing	Settlement pattern
Bowden	7644		
Slapton	8144		Dispersed
South Pool	7740		
Cotmore	8041		
Beeson			
Torcross			
Sherford			

## Summary

The three main types of settlement pattern are dispersed, nucleated and linear. The shape of a settlement is usually determined by the physical features of the surrounding area.