

in England and Wales

Mountain and Cave Rescue

Review of The year





Foreword

HRH The Duke of Cambridge



Main shot: Sea King over Derwentwater © Keswick MRT. Top: HRH The Duke of Cambridge courtesy of Kensington Palace.

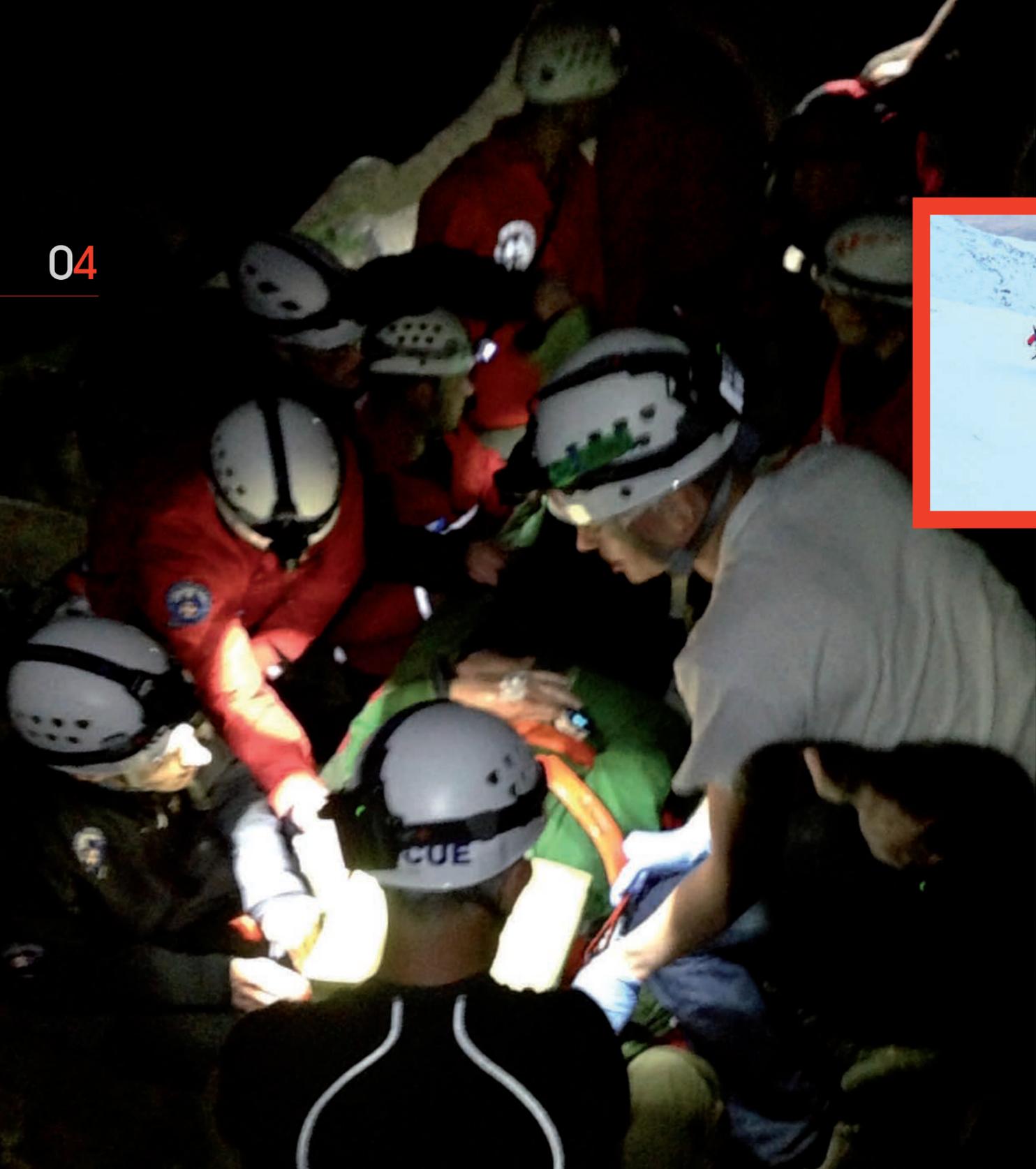


I am proud to be Patron of Mountain Rescue England and Wales and to have been able to see for myself the work that the local volunteer search and rescue teams do in our mountains, and, also in our communities. Each member is committed to a service that can make huge demands on the individuals concerned and on their employers and families. From the night time call out to lost walkers, to the protracted search for a missing youngster, from an ambulance assist in winter weather, to an active role in a national flood alert, mountain rescue volunteers are playing a growing role in responding to crisis situations. At the same time, their expertise is increasingly recognised and they are involved in planning for major emergencies, too.

This all takes time and effort and I should like to thank every member who volunteers - without question and without limit - to rescue others. So many people owe so much to you.

Testun balchder i mi yw bod yn Noddwr Achub o'r Mynyddoedd Lloegr a Chymru; cefais weld dros fy hun waith y timau chwilio ac achub gwirfoddol lleol yn ein mynyddoedd a hefyd yn ein cymdogaethau. Mae'r holl aelodau wedi ymrwymo i wasanaeth a all wneud galwadau aruthrol ar unigolion, ar eu cyflogwyr a'u teuluoedd. O alwad yn y nos at gerddwyr sydd wedi colli eu ffordd i chwiliad maith am blentyn coll, o gynorthwyo tîm ambiwlans mewn tywydd gaeafol i chwarae rhan weithredol ar adeg llifogydd ar raddfa genedlaethol, mae gwirfoddolwyr achub mynydd yn chwarae rhan gynyddol mewn ymateb i argyfyngau. Ar yr un pryd, fe gydnabyddir eu harbenigedd yn fwyfwy, ac maent yn ymwneud hefyd â gwaith cynllunio ar gyfer argyfyngau mawr.

Golyga hyn i gyd amser ac ymdrech, a hoffwn ddiolch i bob aelod sy'n gwirfoddoli - yn ddi-gwestiwn ac yn ddiderfyn - i achub eraill. Mae ar gymaint o bobl gymaint o ddyled ichi.



The past year has seen mountain and cave rescue teams involved in almost every imaginable situation both on and off the hills. Whilst, thankfully, there has been no significant increase in the number of incidents overall, there have been local exceptions – for instance, some teams in North Wales and the Lake District have examples of responding to three cries for help in just twenty-four hours.

It has been suggested that about 65% of people going into the hills would either not be there at all, or certainly not undertaking their chosen route, if they were not confident that mountain rescue teams were not too far away. The number of 'casual' visitors to the hills has risen and generally they are less well prepared to deal with situations when things go wrong. Although the majority of these incidents are of a relatively benign nature, they do contribute to the number of call-outs.

2013 began with snow and more snow — largely preventing people getting to the hills at all, so there were relatively few winter mountaineering accidents. Instead teams throughout the country were busy assisting other emergency services, especially the ambulance service. There were many instances during the year when the weather, often coupled with darkness, prevented the use of air rescue and mountain rescue teams on the ground were the only people able to reach casualties and those stranded. There is a tendency among both the public and the press to assume helicopters will always be able to effect rescues. We know all too well this simply isn't true.

The year closed with more weather extremes. This time water not snow created the problems. Once again teams across the country had some involvement in flood rescue. A new record was set when team members

from as far away as the Lake District decamped to East Anglia when the threat of coastal flooding was at its height.

Our operational success has been greatly enhanced by the use of SARCALL and SARLOC. Both systems are now an indispensable part of our armoury and both have been developed entirely by people within mountain rescue. These volunteers have not only used their skills and experience but also spent many hundreds of hours bringing these invaluable systems to fruition. There are many others in mountain and cave rescue who not only put on a pair of boots to head into the hills in the dark and the rain but also spend countless hours developing and improving new equipment, providing training and, above all, raising the monies without which the service could not function.

We are, I believe, able to look forward to the coming years confident that the same reliable and skilled service will be available. There are interesting challenges to deal with: working with the new SAR helicopter provision and revising our casualty care system are probably the most imminent. Again I am sure these will be accomplished and lead to even better delivery of rescues.

Main shot: Edale team deal with a fallen climber at Stanage © Trevor Lawton. Inset: Aberglaslyn team members deal with an avalanche rescue in February © Aberglaslyn MRT. Top: Night time stretcher carry over a narrow bridge across a ghyll © Keswick MRT.

Front cover: Team winter training in Scotland in blizzard conditions © Andy McAlea.

Mountain and Cave Awareness Weekend:

This annual event takes place across England and Wales every May Bank Holiday weekend – a great opportunity to get to know and support your local team.

National Training Day: Plas y Brenin: Saturday 28 June:

A chance for team members to network with other teams and hone their skills.

Princes' Charities Forum Day: 12 July:

This MREW event is hosted by South Wales this year, with young people and families from WellChild, Child Bereavement and Centrepoin charities joining in the fun.

UK MR Conference 2014: Aviemore: September:

The bi-ennial conference brings together mountain and cave rescue team members from the UK and Ireland, with speakers travelling from across the UK, Europe and beyond, to network, educate and exchange information. This key feature of our mountain rescue calendar will be hosted by Mountain Rescue Scotland in September 2014.

KEY DATES



Chairman
David Allan

This year's facts and figures

The decrease in all four of the key measures of mountain incidents has continued for a third year. The fine weather during the summer months must have made a major contribution to these figures.

Mountain

Participation in these activities appears to be being maintained, so the reduction points to the effects of better weather conditions. These improved conditions are more forgiving to those participants whose preparation was less than adequate.

It stands repeating that the prime causes of incidents in British hills are a failure to develop skill and experience in controlled conditions, failure to temper plans to suit the ability of the least able in a party and failure to have and know how to employ the proper equipment, particularly relating to map and compass.

This steady decrease can be clearly seen in the figures for rock climbing and scrambling: over the five-year period, incidents have fallen by 26%. While the figures for hillwalking show a reduction, the relative amount is much smaller at 7%.

However, over the same period, a dramatic rise of 46% has been recorded with mountain biking. Admittedly a rise in the level of participation has been equally dramatic, but, at this rate, it will not be long before mountain bike incidents outnumber rock climbing and scrambling incidents combined.



A summary of the last five years' mountain incidents and accidents in England and Wales.

Year	Incidents	Fatalities	Injured	Persons assisted
2013	1011	22	624	1179
2012	1073	30	632	1292
2011	1078	33	671	1318
2010	1118	53	658	1394
2009	1059	37	667	1471

A summary of the last five years' non-mountain incidents and accidents in England and Wales.

Year	Incidents	Fatalities	Injured	Persons assisted
2013	460	43	75	274
2012	445	47	114	300
2011	472	52	108	323
2010	710	44	118	335
2009	597	59	126	401

Non-mountain

The missing person search (rural and urban) and support for the emergency services account for around 80% of the non-mountain workload. These two areas of activity are very demanding of time and man-power, generally taking much longer to complete.

Whilst the incident figure has increased, the number of persons assisted has decreased. This does not show the true nature of the work involved. Many of those assisted are not counted here, for very practical reasons. Often, teams assist ambulance crews with access and evacuation, so little or no patient treatment is provided. Equally difficult is reconciling the numbers freed from snow drifts — at one stage, more than 80 people were reported to be freed in one day from snow drifts in south and west Cumbria and this was replicated in Wales and the Pennine regions.

Highlighting mountain biking hazards

The number of accidents requiring rescue team help has seen a rapid increase over the last seven years, according to Ged Feeney, Statistics Officer for Mountain Rescue England and Wales, and these are probably only the tip of the iceberg of actual falls and injuries. There is little doubt that this is principally due to the increased popularity of the sport and the number of participants.

In February, a briefing note to outdoors magazines and the mountain biking press aimed to raise awareness so that participants — and those looking after dedicated cycling trails and popular routes — could understand the issues and take steps to reduce the likelihood of future accidents.

The briefing note and statistical data were pulled together at the request of Phil O'Brien of Bowland Pennine MRT. 'We've an area called Gisburn Forest in Lancashire that has seen a massive increase in mountain biking activity over the last few years. It now has its own café, skills area and trails and attracts a lot of visitors. This has also corresponded to an increase in call-outs for the team.'

'One of the common injuries we see is lower leg injuries where bikers have come off on boardwalks, often resulting in a broken ankle or broken leg, or both.'

Another popular area for mountain

bikers and a hot spot for rescue call-outs is Guisborough Forest in Cleveland MRT's area. 'The Forest can see a dozen or so call-outs in a year,' says Gari Finch. 'The combination of long downhill stretches, trees and speed can create all sorts of problems. Some of the injuries seen are very serious and life-changing.'

Although some media emphasised the negative aspects of the message, the intention was not to discourage mountain bikers but to indicate the growing trend and make cyclists more aware of the dangers.

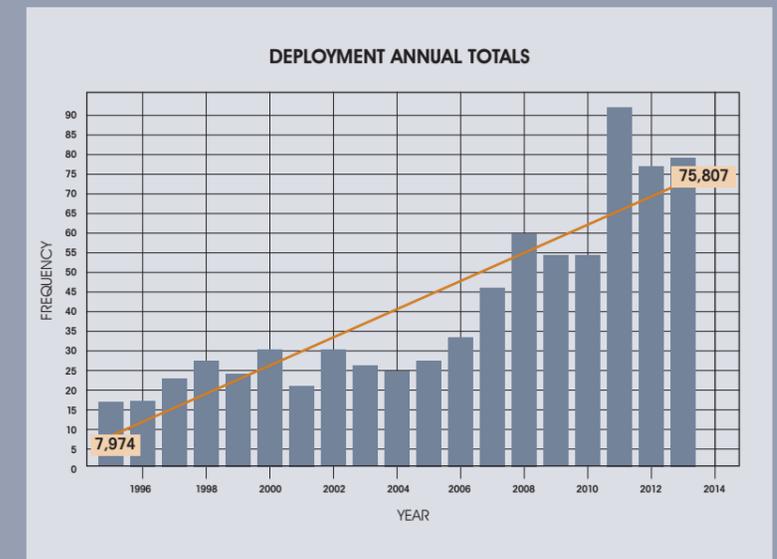
'Wearing protective head gear and having good skills is an absolute must,' said Phil. 'Our main concern is that there have been three fatalities in the past twelve months and mountain bikers need to be aware of this and plan to reduce the risks to life and limb from their activities in the outdoors.'

Facts and figures

- In the last twelve months, there have been three fatalities to mountain bikers, with ten over the last seven years. Some of these were riders out on their own and the outcome only became clear after much effort and anxiety.

- Riders should be aware of the severity of injuries should they have an accident. While travelling at speed and with the body moving head-first, a fall stands a greater likelihood of having life-changing consequences, particularly noted in the frequency of upper body injury.

- Many boardwalks are covered with chicken wire which, in wet or frosty conditions, greatly increases traction. However, there are many boardwalks that are not finished in this way and the build-up of moss, slime and mud, can leave the surface with very little traction.



Centre: Bolton MRT assist the ambulance service with an injured mountain biker in May. A 47-year-old female was guiding a group of riders through the Rivington Terraced Gardens. They didn't know each other very well, having only met on a Facebook group 'Rivington MTB'. The casualty was the only one with any local knowledge! © Bolton MRT.



Team training for winter conditions

Some of the most hazardous conditions for walkers and climbers are those associated with snow and ice. And that means, when the mountains are looking their most dramatic, rescue teams need to be especially on the alert and ready for a call.

But how do rescuers practice their skills, prepare their equipment and build up their experience when winter conditions can be rare and fleeting, especially given that, when they do come, the call-outs can be among the most urgent and critical?

Well, many teams head north to the Scottish Highlands, where snow and ice are a regular feature, often for several days or weeks and the weather and avalanche conditions can be as unpredictable as anywhere else in the UK.

We took a look at three Lakes teams who invested in 'Scottish' training this year. Their experiences show the commitment of members to ensuring they're prepared and ready, whatever the winter.

Patterdale MRT visited Badaguish in Glen More, in the Cairngorms. Their focus was avalanche awareness and search skills with Charlie McLeod, training officer with Assynt MRT, helping out and Kathy Grindrod explaining the work of the Scottish Avalanche Information Service. 'Some team members went into the area the day before to dig 'snow graves' to conceal bodies for search purposes,' says Gillian Mininch, Patterdale's training officer, 'and the 'piste basher' lads prepared an area to simulate avalanche debris.'

For Eelco Docter, this was his first winter training. 'Experiencing rescue scenarios in full winter conditions was brilliant. Only weeks later, we had a call-out to Swirral Edge on Helvellyn where the skills I'd acquired automatically kicked in.'

Penrith team members headed to Aonach Mor near Fort William to focus on avalanche hazard assessment, belays and search techniques using avalanche probes. As it turned out, the connection to a local Scottish team wasn't so much input to the training as a real incident.

'We'd had a challenging Saturday on

the side of Aonach Mor,' said team leader Mike Hill, 'when one of our team members who is also a dog handler was alerted to an ongoing search for a missing male believed to be somewhere on the Ring of Steall in the Mamores, not far from where we were based.'

The Lochaber team were keen for us to help and, on arrival at their base in Fort William, I spoke to one of the search managers who allocated an area for us to cover. We spent the next five hours covering particularly difficult ground to the West of Steall Falls but were stood down shortly before 15:00 and invited back to the base for food. The hospitality was fantastic and we headed back to Cumbria having cemented a great relationship with the Lochaber team. Sadly, the following day, the body of the missing man was located at the foot of Steall Falls.'

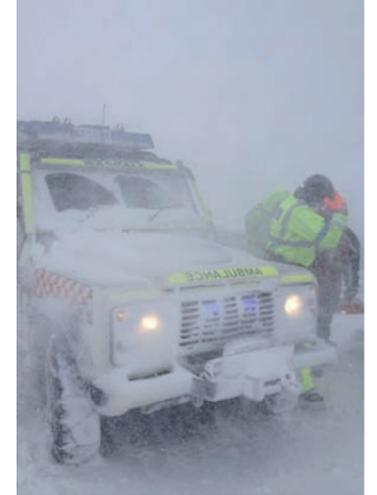
Kirby Stephen MRT travelled to the northern corries of the Cairngorms. Their focus was on recognising varying snow conditions, interpreting weather and avalanche information and general rescue skills for winter conditions.

Frank Price, training officer for the team, coordinated the plans for their visits north, using trainers from other Lakes teams. 'It's a good way to build links and develop a common approach to dealing with a call-out in winter conditions.'

For Peter Miller, it was a valuable first. 'Staying alive is personally a high priority, and in severe winter conditions you have to know what to do. This year's winter skills course, over a snowy windswept weekend, taught essential skills that will help to keep me and others alive. It was also good fun!'

As it has turned out, the mountains of the Lake District and the North Pennines haven't seen much snow this winter but, if next winter sees the return of wind-blown snow features, high avalanche risks and hard ice on paths for weeks on end, the rescue teams will be well prepared with the skills, expertise and equipment to come to the aid of anyone in difficulties.

Main shot: Man and dog hide out in a snow hole during winter training in Scotland © Andy McAlea, Patterdale MRT. Top right: Snowy call-out as team members rescue motorists stranded in their vehicles in West Cumbria © Wasdale MRT.



UNEXPLODED BOMB DISCOVERED ON MOORS: MAY 2013

Woodhead team members were sent to investigate the area after a fell runner noticed an unexploded shell whilst running above Langsetf. Thankfully, the runner had provided an excellent description of the location and the item was found immediately. However, they didn't just find one shell but three, described as '75mm armour-piercing shells dating back to pre-World War Two'. The shells were removed to safety by bomb disposal experts but given their size, they could have caused serious injury.

The moors above Langsetf, crossed by the Cut Gate path, were used as firing range between both world wars. Unexploded ordnance is often found at the end of winter as the shells are forced to the surface by the movement of the peat bogs.

Woodhead leader Keith Wakeley said, 'Anyone who finds a suspicious object in the Peak District should contact police immediately, advising them of what they believe they have found and where they have found it. Under no circumstances should anyone approach these objects as the devices are known to be extremely volatile and could cause serious injury.'



A CRACKING EXPERIENCE: PROFESSIONAL WRITER SHEILA BOWKER DESCRIBES HER EXPERIENCE AT THE RECEIVING END OF MOUNTAIN RESCUE

We'd stood a while, admiring Cautley Holme Beck as it cascaded down the high, vertical camber in the series of stepped waterfalls known as Cautley Spout. We were well toggled up against the frosty conditions, and had manoeuvred round the frozen puddles littering the path before the climb up to the Spout had really got going. It was cloudless, and the low-slung sun had unseasonal warmth as it peeped round the shoulder of Cautley Crag. Being a Saturday, we'd anticipated sharing this stunning landscape with others. But we were alone, and had just spoken about the surprise of having it to ourselves when, seconds later, we'd have given

had sneakily turned the hard, frosty grass into damp, slippery grass, and, whoosh, my right foot slipped and shot up in the air, leaving me no option but to fall 'down the Spout'.

It all happened so quickly. Back and bottom hit the ground with a thump, my left leg somewhere underneath. First concern was for the SLR camera I'd been carrying round my neck, as it hit the ground half a second after me. But, as a pain in my left leg accelerated alarmingly, I realised something else might also be broken. Aagh, so that was the crack I heard.

We made a couple of very painful attempts at getting me upright, but keeping me upright and walking proved out of the

left with my thoughts of how this sort of thing couldn't be happening to me — I wasn't long out of nappies before I climbed my first mountain — although I admit most of the way I sat on my Dad's shoulders. Waves of embarrassment, humiliation and disablement washed through me, constantly interrupted by the excruciating pain coming from my left ankle.

With the wonders of the mobile, 'Help' was fairly easily summoned, grid references agreed, details of my injuries supplied, and when I overheard that, 'yes, there is a reasonably level area just below us', I thought wow, my dreams of a helicopter ride were about to come true. I would have faked a

warrant such excitement. Rather, the burly guys and girls from Kirkby Stephen MRT would be scrambled instead.

Luck comes in doses sometimes and it was a joy to see four walkers coming up the hill towards us. My painful expression told the story, and yes, they had a pack of pain-killing anti-inflammatories, which certainly took the edge off the pain.

The wait for 'Help' seemed ages, but it was probably no more than an hour before a speck appeared, down in the distance. We watched it gradually transform into a guy riding a mountain bike, till the gradient steepened and bike riding was no longer an option. When we saw him drop the bike and begin running the last few hundred yards, we knew 'Help' had arrived in the form of Fraser, a team member who lived just over the next hill. Puffing like Thomas the Tank Engine, sweat coursing down his face, Fraser appeared in more discomfort than me until he got his breath back. Such gallantry, I felt completely humbled that another

...it seemed like the hillside was swarming with post boxes all moving in my direction. Then they were all round me; if I'd had a letter to post I wouldn't have known which one to use.

anything to be surrounded by hoards of helpful walkers. For, as we set off back down the grassy slope, the warming sun

question. There was no choice but to stay put and shout 'Help!' into the mobile phone.

A signal was sought and I was

coma at the very minimum to fulfil the dream, but 'Help' decided a suspected leg fracture wasn't serious enough to

RESCUERS IN FOUR-HOUR MISSION TO FREE DOG STUCK IN 80-FOOT CREVICE ON SNOWDON: OCTOBER

A Llanberis team member spent more than two hours in the 80ft rock crevice in a delicate mission to rescue Chip, a fallen sheepdog who had gone missing as he was bringing sheep down from the mountain. Half a dozen team members made their way up Clogwyn Mawr with the farmer, to where Chip had last been seen two days earlier.

Rob Johnson explains: 'As we approached the crag, the farmer could hear whining from within the mountain. We knew



INCIDENT LOG

person would go to such lengths for me, a stranger.

As Fraser assessed my situation and ensured I was as warm and comfy as possible, another larger speck was approaching in the form of a mountain rescue Land Rover. It got as far up the hill as possible before disgorging its numerous occupants. They were all wearing red jackets so it seemed like the hillside was swarming with post boxes all moving in my direction. Then they were all round me; if I'd had a letter to post I wouldn't have known which one to use!

John took charge with just the right quantity of kindly-spoken assertiveness that one obeyed without question, even putting on my hideous red speckled bobble-hat when he reminded me how much body heat escapes through our heads. There were fourteen chaps and one lady in the team, and all attentive beyond belief. Each one had a specific responsibility, so the chap in charge of pain-killing tablets asked if I'd like some, the one carrying the cylinder of oxygen asked would I like some of that, and a third asked if I'd like another jacket. I wasn't cold (thanks to the hideous bobble-hat) and the pain

was almost bearable (thanks to the tablets) so, feeling rather ungrateful, I refused every offering. It turned out that all their call-outs so far this year had been false alarms of some type, so they were relishing having a real casualty to fuss over. After my third 'no, thank you', the lady rescuer looked at the heavens and said, 'Come on guys, she's a woman', to which I responded, 'Exactly, we're women, we cope!' They laughed, but you could tell they were expecting further feminine grumbles about which gender does the childbirth thing.

Next came the bondage, as I was gently man-handled into a cosy green snuggle suit which, topped with my red speckled bobble-hat, made me look like a reclining Christmas tree. Then my bad leg strapped to the good one, arms strapped to my sides, I was strapped onto a stretcher.

With four either side, they began tobogganing me down the grassy slope, amidst jokes of letting go and seeing who reaches the bottom first. When they came to rocks or uneven ground, they lifted the stretcher and carried me. I was hoisted in through the back doors

of the Land Rover and John, still diligent and caring, crouched in beside me. Jason drove us down and apologised for every bit of unsteady movement and, as we inevitably slid through streams and bumped over rocks, the lovely man was constantly saying 'sorry'.

Progress smoothed when we reached the lane, where an NHS ambulance was waiting. Extricated from the Land Rover, I was freed from my bondage and said 'goodbye and a million thanks' to what now felt like a bunch of great buddies. The ambulance took me to hospital where x-rays proved the fibula was indeed broken so, for the first time in my life, I was in plaster and stumbling around on crutches.

The Westmorland Gazette later described me as an 'experienced, well equipped walker', so all those years on my Dad's shoulders had paid off!

I can honestly say those fourteen team members were kindness and caring to a fault and totally professional in all they did. And the camera still works, thank goodness!

Top left: Sheila Bowker. Above: Kirkby Stephen team members carry Sheila down on the stretcher © David Stewart.

This article first appeared in Cumbria Magazine, October 2012.



Photos © John Grisdale.



at this point that this was going to be an interesting one, made more interesting when, during our scramble approach, one team member dislodged two boulders, trapping his leg!

'Chip was stuck in the bottom of a deep rock crevice, which was extremely narrow and halfway up a steep crag. We rigged a belay and dropped ropes down the crevice and one team member was volunteered as the skinniest build and lowered into the slot. About halfway down he became wedged, so was pulled out — much to his relief!

'The next volunteer was slight and lithe. She reached the same spot before concluding that some cunning was required. A climber's clip stick (a long pole with a clip on the end), was duly delivered within an hour or so — with our team member still in the narrow slot.

'She then spent another hour wriggling and worming her way down to within a metre of the bottom, where she cleverly managed to clip the dog and they were both hauled to safety.'

Miraculously, Chip was unharmed and walked off the mountain with the rescuers.



Mountain and cave rescue at Westminster

Richard Warren (LDSAMIRA), Mike France (MREW) and Jon Whiteley (Devon Cave Rescue) take a well-earned break from 'talking rescue' at Westminster © Richard Warren.

Representatives of mountain and cave rescue teams from across England and Wales travelled to Westminster at the end of October. It was a unique opportunity to talk to MPs and Lords about the work of the 57 teams and the national body, with an emphasis on its voluntary nature. Over five days, they met with over 80 MPs and members of the House of Lords.

Chairman David Allan was one of those in London. 'We focused on two key messages: the breadth of what we are asked to do and the funding gap with similar services,' he said. 'We were encouraged by the level of interest, the obvious support and the understanding of our current status as volunteers providing a vital service. For the future, we need to clarify the next steps in our campaign to achieve regular and significant funding from the Government and we need to maintain and build on the contacts and relationships that have been established in Westminster.'

The MREW exhibition ran in the Upper Waiting Hall in the Palace of Westminster from Monday to Friday and a reception, sponsored by Rory Stewart OBE, MP for Penitth and the Border and leader of the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Rescue Services, held on the Tuesday evening, attracted about 50 people from both Houses including some who were new to MREW.

'I believe this was an important event for Parliament because mountain rescue represents one of the very solid examples in the country of volunteers, people unpaid doing something which is completely vital to the public interest,' said Rory. 'To get nearly fifty MPs to a reception, meeting mountain rescue people, is going to be very important in changing perceptions of what volunteers do for us in society.'

Rory had invited Prime Minister David Cameron to attend the reception and, although unable to do so, he wrote in reply that 'the work carried out by the volunteers and everyone involved in this service is immensely worthy of praise and recognition.'

Andrew Bingham, MP for High Peak and based in Buxton and so one of the MPs with a closer existing connection to local teams, was delighted to be able to support mountain rescue because they 'do such a fantastic job. They really

are the extra emergency service that not only residents rely on but also all the visitors that we get across Kinder. Without the mountain rescue, we really would be struggling.'

David Amess, MP for Southend West, agrees. 'I thoroughly admire the courage, dedication and commitment of the rescue service in assisting desperate people in the mountains. It is important to acknowledge how they put their lives at risk for the safety of others,' he said.

'Volunteer rescuers, about 3,600 of them in England and Wales, are available 24/7 throughout the year,' said Mike France, MREW fundraising chairman. 'And they have to train for many different situations and needs. So it seems crazy that they also have to find time for fundraising just to keep their teams going. We're hoping that the week's discussions in Westminster will have shown MPs the huge discrepancy between the financial support given by Government to Scottish rescuers — about £16,480 per team — and the much more limited funding to English teams of just £2,246 per team.'

'If the Government could guarantee a level of funding from the public purse closer to the Scottish figure, we'd be able to underwrite investments in vehicles and essential kit and subsidise essential training and insurance and our members would be able to focus on getting the job done.'

'We have great support from those MPs local to teams,' said David Allan, 'and the reception enabled us to extend this knowledge and support throughout Parliament. Since then, we have been working with Rory and the APPG to move this campaign on and explore the options for future funding. It is likely to be a long process but the news coverage generated by the week in Westminster and the network that is being built up should all help in our campaign.'

ROSSENDALE & PENDLE MP JOINS EXERCISE ON PENDLE HILL: JUNE

Andrew Stephenson MP joined Rossendale and Pendle team members in June for a training exercise on their legendary hill. The scenario was that a group of three teenagers with an adult had been walking up Pendle when one of them slipped and heard a crack in their ankle.



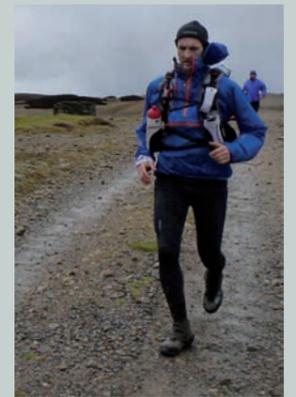
Very soon, handler Steve Garafalo and search dog Finn had located the group, one with a lower leg injury, another reported to be 'mildly hypothermic'. The MP acted as scribe, filling out the casualty cards with the necessary details before assisting with some hands-on stretcher carrying.

'I was delighted to join the exercise,' said Andrew. 'I was hugely impressed by the skill and expertise of all the team members and delighted to offer my support and personal thanks to team members for the fantastic work they do.'

Above: Stephen Garafalo and Finn with Andrew Stephenson MP © Rossendale & Pendle MRT.

TEAM LEADER RUNS COAST TO COAST IN THREE DAYS FOR HIS TEAM: APRIL

If ever demonstration were required, that team members put their hearts and souls – and sometimes blood, sweat and tears – into their mountain rescue commitment, Upper Wharfedale's Andy Jackson provided it by completing the 192-mile Coast to



Andy Jackson runs coast to coast © Rachel Platt.

Coast route in less than three days, to raise cash for his team. He arrived at Robin Hood's Bay having traversed three national parks on a trip that normally takes two weeks to complete. Having set off from St Bees on the Cumbrian coast at 3am on the Saturday, he arrived at the North Sea less than two days and 20 hours later – just 2.5 hours after his scheduled time.

Andy is a keen ultrarunner who has previously taken part in the Ultra-Trail du Mont Blanc as well as the Fellsman, Bob Graham Round and Lakeland 50. He was Upper Wharfedale's underground leader for thirteen years and is currently surface leader.

Demands on the team have grown so much in recent years, they need to expand their beloved HQ, The Hut, in Grassington so Andy's Herculean effort will go some way towards realising that.

The future could be drone-shaped, thanks to a pioneering project undertaken by the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) Aerospace Centre and the Media Innovation Studio, with help from mountain rescue team members in Patterdale. The aim was to see how modern drone technology, combined with social media, might contribute to search and rescue.

During June, ahead of the big day of the trial, the team at UCLan had been recruiting volunteer observers online and had a network of over 350 spotters from across the globe, keen to participate in the experiment from their own computers via social media.

On 25 July, the AeroSee aircraft, or drone, was launched from the Sports Field in Glenridding near Ullswater and made a 20-minute flight covering ten square kilometres in search of a missing hiker, planted by the researchers. Images from AeroSee's cameras were relayed to anyone who had logged on to the special web application.

As images were streamed to people's computers, they were able to tap or click on any area of the image, creating a 'tag' where they thought they might have spotted an injured person on the mountainside.

At the time, Paul Egglestone, Director of the Media Innovation Studio said, 'Drones get lots of bad press as they're

The idea of getting people to help with the rescue operation wherever they are in the world is really interesting...

usually associated with civilian casualties in military situations. They're just a tool and we're using AeroSee for peaceful purposes, encouraging people to participate in something that could be useful in future.'

His colleague in the School of Computing, Engineering and Physical Sciences, Dr Darren Ansell, agreed. 'The design for the AeroSee system – combining the flying vehicle with the power of an online community – proved to be a really effective and elegant solution.'

The Patterdale team and others involved in search and rescue were interested to see how AeroSee worked and whether it was possible to build a community of 'virtual search agents'. Patterdale team leader, Mike Blakey said, 'Mountain rescue is changing as new technology is available, from GPS and mobile phones for people visiting the hills to the SARCALL system that enables us to work more effectively with other emergency services. The idea of getting people to help with the rescue operation wherever they are in the world is really interesting but I'm not sure how reliable the current drones might be in bad weather or at night. Still, we were happy to work with UCLan on the demonstration and mountain rescue got some excellent publicity from the drone trial too.'

Since the trial, the project's combination of aerospace engineering and online cooperation has continued at UCLan and the AeroSee is one of 76 nominations for the Design Museum's prestigious Design of the Year 2014 Awards. The drone is being showcased as part of an exhibition at the Design Museum until the end of August 2014 and the winners of each category in the awards will be announced later this year.

Drone hovers over Patterdale team vehicle © Patterdale MRT.



Drones bring 'crowd' insight to the rescue



Farewell to the 'big yellow budgie'

A familiar sight to rescuers and casualties alike is set to change, with the phasing out of the Westland Sea King, which has been used in a search and rescue role since 1996, by both the RAF and the Royal Navy. For as many years, mountain rescue teams have worked and trained with RAF crew, including our own Royal patron, recently retired from his role as RAF helicopter pilot.

The SAR squadrons currently provide year-round 24-hour cover across the UK, with each squadron maintaining a 15-minute readiness state during daylight hours and a 45-minute readiness state during the hours of darkness. The presence of a Sea King at a mountain incident can make the difference between life or death for a casualty, transferring the injured person from mountain to hospital in the fastest

possible time. And, frequently, the Sea King crew will assist in ferrying team members up to a high incident site, the sooner for them to deliver the appropriate medical care, package the casualty onto a stretcher and carry them to a suitable spot for winching into the helicopter.

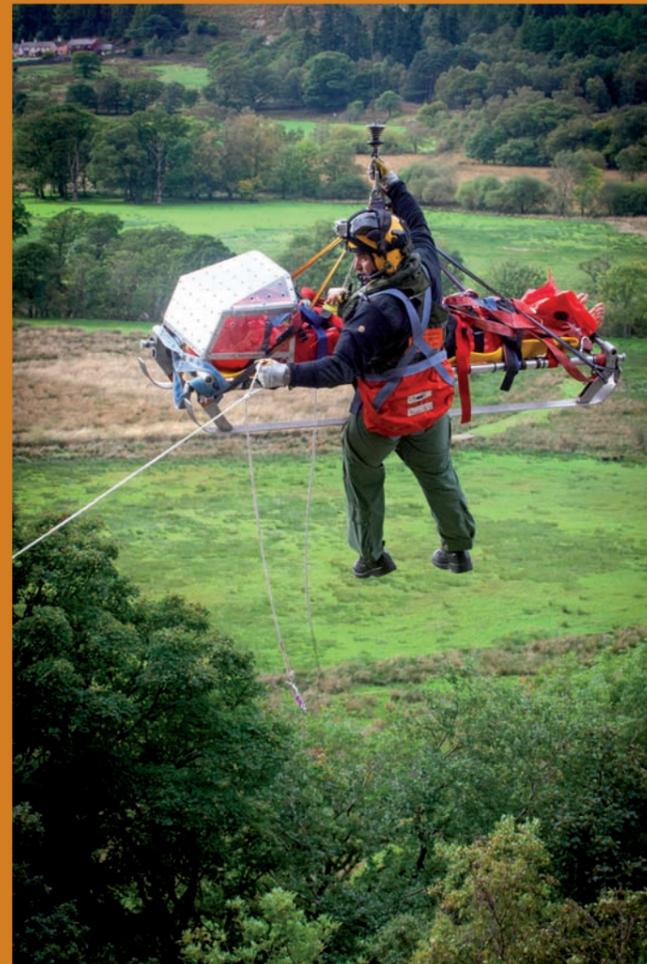
The beauty of the Sea King is its ability to operate to precise navigational standards, even during darkness and difficult weather conditions, and its winching capability. The SAR fleet are also fitted with video/infrared detection, similar to the equipment used by police helicopters, to help search for casualties and crews are trained to operate using night-vision goggles over unfamiliar terrain.

So what happens next? In future, search and rescue helicopters will be operated by Bristow, wearing the HM Coastguard livery, and a huge amount of activity is currently underway at Bristow and the MCA, towards a 'go-live' date for the first base of April 2015. The proposed new aircraft will be the Sikorsky S92 and the Agusta Westland AW189, positioned at ten strategic new bases across the UK.

Needless to say, members of Mountain Rescue England and Wales are also working hard with the Maritime Coastguard Agency (MCA) to ensure that the changeover can be as seamless as possible for teams and the mountain casualty continues to receive the best possible care.

Main shot: Paul Taylor and Toby the Springer dropped off on Bleaklow © Dave Morgan.
Inset: Winchman and stretcher are hoisted back up to the hovering Sea King © Keswick MRT.

Top right: NEWSAR Trainee, Dr Tom Beach (left) returns to base with the RAF paramedic winchman © NEWSAR.



RAF CALL ON NEWSAR TRAINEE FOR HELP IN SEA RESCUE: MARCH

All team members know from experience that training plans can quickly change 'on the hoof' – never more so than when training with helicopters, if crews get called to respond to an emergency. But one North East Wales team trainee got rather more helicopter training than he'd bargained for earlier this year, when he found himself roped into a rather unusual rescue.

Trainee team members were attending RAF Valley to receive winch training when 22 Squadron got a call-out for a 'wet job'. Crew members asked if there was a doctor with the team. Without hesitation, Dr Tom Beach (pictured above, left) donned a flight suit and helmet and headed to the Sea King. Then it was off to a cargo ship somewhere in the Irish Sea to respond to the call for help.

It became clear the call-out was to a gentleman in his 50s who'd experienced a seizure earlier that morning. Landing on the ship's helipad, Tom and the paramedic winchman were escorted below decks to the medical bay. The patient was fortunately relatively stable and he was removed to the Sea King for a rapid evacuation to hospital. A 30-minute flight later, he was delivered safely to hospital. Move over RNLI, mountain rescue is branching out!

LUCKY ESCAPE FOR WALKERS SWEEP AWAY THROUGH CULVERT UNDER A57: FEBRUARY 2014

Photo © Edale MRT.

Both Edale and Glossop teams were called out in early February, to help the ambulance service rescue two members of a group of walkers from Sheffield who'd been swept away in a moorland stream and carried through a culvert under the A57.

After being spat out of the culvert, the middle-aged walkers were carried some distance down a steep cascade before finally coming to rest. One member of the party then managed to make his way to the Snake Inn to raise the alarm. Mountain

rescue assistance was called for due to the difficulty of access and recovery. One lady in her fifties suffered head, chest and back injuries, including a fractured spine in the accident and both the casualties were soaking wet and suffering from hypothermia.

After initial treatment by ambulance service crews and MR team medics, one casualty was assisted back up to the road while the more seriously injured walker was evacuated by stretcher.



Photo © Cockermouth MRT.

IN SEARCH OF A WATER BED: APRIL 2013

Many teams are now equipping and training for swiftwater rescue (a very handy skill with the increasing incidence of flooding across England and Wales), but when Cockermouth team members donned their water kit last year it wasn't quite the job they were expecting.

'It's great being in the team,' said team member Steve Whitehurst. 'There you all are sat at your respective desks, tapping away at the calculator, pounding the keyboard or counting down the minutes till the bell goes and your GCSE students exit at speed – and then it happens: the call comes in and you're transformed, Clark Kent to Superman: all-purpose rescue hero. And that's just what it was like one Monday evening when the call came from the team leader for volunteers.

'We've rescued some strange things in the past but this was the first time we'd been asked to rescue a bed! The 'casualty' had been dumped over the old railway bridge into the river. Council refuse collectors were unable to access it and – needless to say – it was a real eye-sore.

'So those of us trained as swiftwater rescuers got kitted out in our gear and, with our inflatable boat, went off to rescue the bed.

'We floated down the river to the foot of the slope where the bed had landed and, with some difficulty, managed to manoeuvre it on board, along with a lot of other rubbish deposited there. We carefully floated it all downstream to the men from the council who were waiting to collect it. Then it was off to the pub, another daring rescue complete.'

TEAM MEMBERS HEAVILY INVOLVED ACROSS ENGLAND AND WALES AS FLOOD WATERS CONTINUED TO RISE: DECEMBER ONWARDS

A group of team members had an 800-mile round trip call-out in early December, travelling to the other end of the country to help victims of flooding during the exceptional winter storms. Eight rescuers from the Lake District made the journey at the request of emergency authorities to be on standby as the east coast of England was threatened with inundation.



Six members of Wasdale MRT and two from neighbours Duddon and Furness made their journey through the night to Essex where a combination of storm force winds, spring tide and low pressure put large areas of the country at risk of flooding. The eight are all trained in swiftwater rescue techniques in addition the casualty care and other skills mountain rescuers need.

The Wasdale minibus arrived in Essex at 5.00am having travelled down the motorway from the Wasdale base at Gosforth, Cumbria but, in the end, their services were not needed and they returned north later that day.

Richard Warren of the Wasdale team explained the

reason for the long-distance call. 'The team received a grant from DEFRA (the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs), to pay for specialist swiftwater rescue equipment and training but this was on the understanding that we made ourselves available – subject to local call-outs taking precedence – for rescues across the country.

'The group was originally told, late on Thursday, that they were needed in Norfolk. En route, the destination was changed to Hull then finally to Essex, 400 miles and five and a half hours' drive from the team's base. Teams from around the country were at the scene.

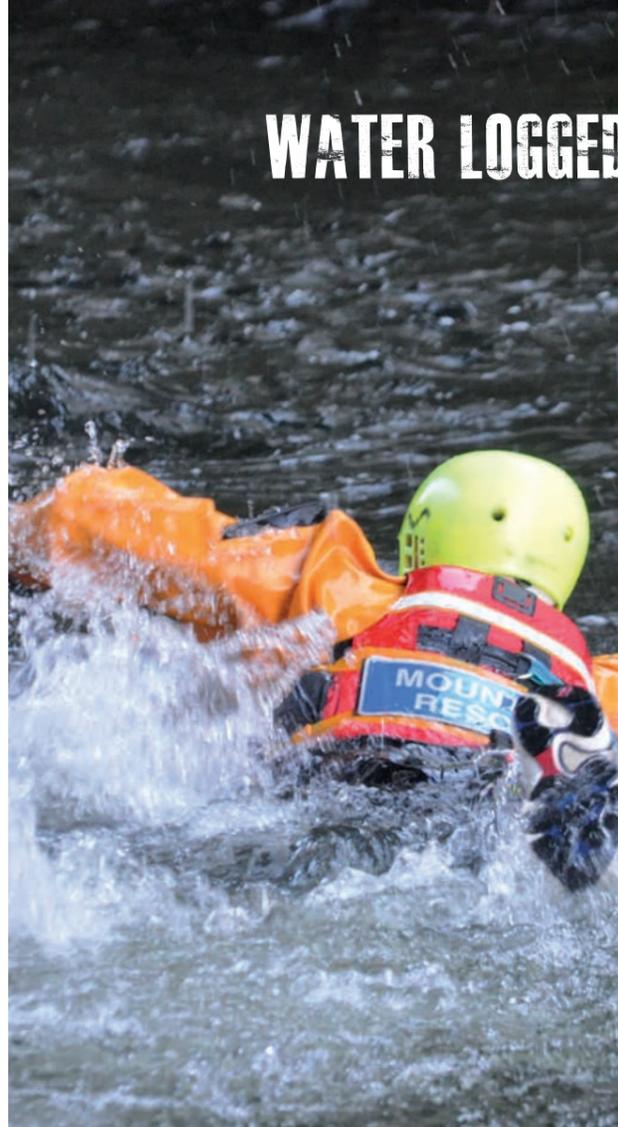
'It was a fantastic

demonstration that we can respond immediately, with such a specialist group of volunteers.'

On that occasion, true to 'mountain rescue form', Stephen Walter, an outdoor instructor and Wasdale team member for fourteen years, spent his birthday on the call-out to Essex. And, as is often the case, when the tired group of rescuers finally arrived back on the Friday evening, they were immediately called out to a rescue closer to home, on the Wast Water Screes.

North Wales teams were also on standby, with Ogwen Valley team members actively involved in the rescue of six people from a flooded farmhouse near Harlech.

WATER LOGGED



TWELVE-FOOT MR DARCY RESCUED FROM A CHESHIRE LAKE: MARCH 2014

Team members from both the Kinder and Glossop mountain rescue teams were involved in the operation, to remove a twelve-foot high Mr Darcy from the lake at Lyme Park in Cheshire. The sculpture depicted Jane Austen's handsome romantic hero – played by Colin Firth in the BBC adaptation of the novel in 1995 – in the memorable wet-shirt-emerging-from-the-water scene which is still firmly etched in the minds of female Firth fans everywhere.

Called in by the National Trust, the challenge for the teams was to rescue the Pride and Prejudice character from his watery home, where he's been since July 2013, the 200th anniversary year of the publication of the book.

Darren Wallis, of Kinder MRT, was one of those involved in the rescue. 'The water turned out to be just about ankle depth and Mr Darcy was held down by about fourteen concrete blocks which were easily removed before dismantling the scaffold frame and floating him about ten metres to the shore.'

All in all, a successful operation, then – except Mr Darcy now appears to have lost his trousers – whatever would Ms Austen say?

Photo (centre) © Paul Burke. Photos (left): Kinder MRT.

Left: Residents in Egham, Surrey, rescued from their home, and town centre flooding in Worcester in February this year. Photos courtesy of FFC. Right: Image © RNLI.



Overall, the North Wales Mountain Rescue Association provided team leaders to work alongside police, fire and rescue, ambulance, RNLI and the Coastguard in a command role at police headquarters during the flooding.

But what happens when the pager goes off with a 'normal' call-out? John Hulse of OVMRO

explained. 'In the case of North Wales, with all six teams 'stood-up' for the flooding response, 'backfill' cover for the OVMRO mountain operations is provided by Llanberis and Aberglaslyn MRTs.

'This mutual aid with different teams seamlessly supporting each other is a great success and a critical part of being able to provide a region-wide response.'

Meanwhile, in the South West, members of the Severn Area Rescue Association (SARA) were working together with the Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service, Coastguard and the RNLI Flood Response Team – over several weeks of sustained flooding.

Continuing heavy rain and

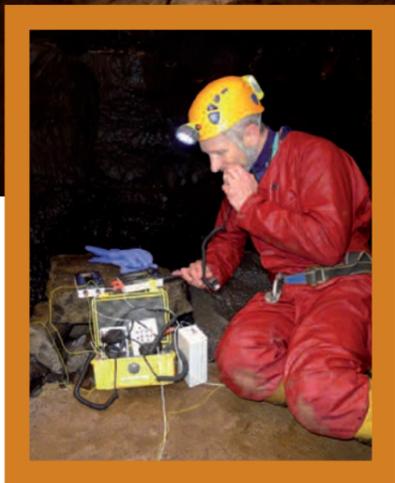
persistently high water levels prompted a sustained multi-agency response and a constant flow of work (excuse the pun) which attracted substantial media interest, with SARA members frequently on camera and in the news.

Incidents included the evacuation of residents by boat from flooded homes, search and rescue of casualties whose boat had capsized whilst travelling between flood-isolated areas, the delivery of oxygen supplies to a patient who relied on it for a medical condition and helping visitors on a traveller site affected by the floods.

Not that the team's continued support through very tough times appears to have been

appreciated by certain members of the community. In early April, SARA's Wyre Forest Rescue Station was the victim of an unbelievable burglary and vandalism which seriously damaged two of the team's Land Rovers and equipment including the Rapid Deployment Craft (RDC), affectionately known as the banana boat, and fuel being stolen from the vehicles and locked boat sheds. A sad day indeed.





Underground and over there

Cave rescues involve cavers rescuing fellow cavers who are injured, trapped or lost. Members of the thirteen cave rescue teams in England and Wales also provide invaluable support for the 'overground' search and rescue teams. And, often, team members respond to calls for help from much further afield or use a trip abroad to train or pass on vital skills to the local team.

Last year saw members of the Gloucestershire Cave Rescue Group travelling to Ethiopia, equipped with one of the team's newly purchased gas monitors. Previous expeditions to the area had experienced particularly low levels of oxygen when exploring some of the caves but had no way of knowing what those levels were. This



time round, they were able to use the gas monitor extensively to monitor the levels in the twenty caves explored — effectively turning the trip into an extended training exercise.

During 2009 and 2010, Emma Porter and Mike Clayton from Midlands CRO, set off on a 'journey of a lifetime', circumnavigating the Med, crossing North Africa and the Middle East before heading back through Europe in an adventure that simply would not be possible today, and driven by a shared hope of all cavers: to find caverns measureless to man! Not content with just exploring, they also managed to

build links with the cave rescue groups along the way, delivering cave rescue equipment to Lebanon and leading a full rescue practice with the local Speleo Club du Liban, with the focus on rescue management and communication.

In May 2013, as a direct result of new contacts made during their travels, Emma and Mike — with two other members of Midlands CRO and two members of Gloucestershire CRG — flew to Tunisia to deliver a cave rescue training programme to the region's fledgling cave rescuers, with great success.

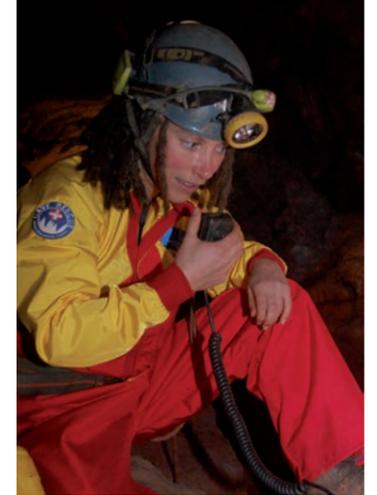
Tragically, the call to foreign climes doesn't always see a successful outcome. In February this year, two Finnish cave divers drowned while attempting a two-kilometre underwater trip between the River Plura resurgence and the Steinugleflaget cave in Plurdal, just south of the Arctic Circle in Norway and British Cave Rescue Council (BCRC) divers were asked to help in attempting a recovery.

Sadly, despite repeated attempts, it proved impossible to retrieve either body. 'This was the second time BCRC cave divers have assisted following a cave diving accident in Norway and, in recent years, they have also played a major part in two extreme rescue and recovery operations, in France and Eire,' said Bill Whitehouse, BCRC chairman.

'Our thoughts and sympathies are with the friends and families of the two Finnish divers.'

Main shot: Rescue practice in Roueiss Cave, Lebanon © Johnny Tawk. **Inset:** The mountain and cave rescue 'brand' reaches the Sahara © Amine Zorgati.

Bottom left: Testing out the new gas monitor in Ethiopia © Andy Clark. **Top right:** Testing out the Nicola © Devon Cave Rescue.



DEVELOPING BETTER COMMS FOR CAVE RESCUE: THE NICOLA 3

Work continues in the testing development of the Nicola radio — despite a series of setbacks and difficulties, not least of all the often 'unpleasant' weather conditions.

Cave rescuers currently use HeyPhone to communicate during rescues. Designed by John Hey, and introduced in 2001, the HeyPhone has greatly improved communication range between the surface controller and one or more underground teams.

However, the Nicola System, developed by British caver Graham Naylor and currently in its Mark 3 version, has broken new ground by providing much of the functionality in software rather than electronic circuitry. Which should lead to an unprecedented level of flexibility, including new features such as text messaging.

Progress is being made — despite the occasional sense that testing only adds more issues to the list — with tests both here and in France. Weather permitting.



Happy anniversary!

The year 2013 had something of a party air about it for three teams in particular, celebrating many decades of rescuing folk from the hills and mountains – Kendal and Cockermouth in the Lake District both reached their sixtieth year and Central Beacons in South Wales their fiftieth. The three teams cover very different areas of operation, but they've shared surprisingly similar changes and challenges since their formation.



COCKERMOUTH: SIXTY YEARS

Photo: The team's first garage, with Eric Hargreaves, Jack Jackson, Antony Rigby, Peter Chandler, Dennis Graves and Dave Towers © Cockermouth MRT.

All three teams have come a long way since their early days when tobacco tins housed the first aid kit, troops were rallied by a knock on the door and the sophisticated equipment and vehicles we know today were just a distant dream. Yet some things remain very much the same – not least of all, the 'getting wet' bit!

It was one evening in February, 1953, and a meeting in a local café which changed the face of rescue in the Cockermouth area. In a room full of climbers and walkers, ambulance personnel, police officers and local farmers and the likes of George Fisher, Mike Nixon and Rusty Westmorland of the Keswick MRT (formed six years earlier) sat sixteen-year-old John Millington and his friend who were there to volunteer. He remembers it well.

'It was these local folks who were alerted when there were incidents on the fells. Everyone seems enthusiastic and there are offers of help from all round. Rodney Twitchen has a contact at the British Ropes Company and is certain he can get some ropes at discount (these new nylon ropes are very expensive) and somebody thinks they know where they can get a stretcher. Dr Jim Joyce thinks local doctors and chemists would help with first aid items and he's also volunteered to be medical officer.

'Transport could be a problem. The police will help when they can and Sydney Graham, a local

businessman with a large estate car, can help on occasions. Norman Lister, who works at Jennings Brewery, says he'll be allowed to use one of their lorries although it won't be very comfortable for those riding in the back. The few who have a telephone pose no problem but those who haven't would be contacted by a knock on the door.'

'Funds will have to be raised for equipment and day-to-day running, and it's likely each team member would have to pay a subscription.

'Some people express concern that David and I are too young to be exposed to potentially dangerous work but Inspector Hulley comes to our defence saying we'd be useful for running messages! We don't say anything but we're hoping to be more involved than that!'

As they looked forward to an exciting year ahead, with the country speculating whether the newly-crowned Queen would still be in place in sixty years, John wondered whether the newly fledged Cockermouth team would last as long...

Further south, in Kendal, a mountain rescue team took shape prompted by the tragic events on the hills of Britain in the Easter of 1952, when fifteen people died and many more were injured. In those early days, the 'call-out list' comprised just twelve members and only two of them were available on week days.

Ten years later, Central Beacons team had its early beginnings as the Merthyr Tydfil Police and Civil Defence MRT – the first in South Wales.

Sixty years on from her coronation, the Queen does indeed still reign and none of these early teams shows any sign of demise – far from it – so what HAS changed?

In Cockermouth, from the six rescues carried out during their first year, incident numbers have continued to rise, with the team dealing with 61 last year. Kendal team now averages fifty call-outs a year but, back then, they were a little sparser – by December 1959 it was reported that the team had been called out three times during the year!

In common with fledgling teams across England and Wales, equipment was hard-won and the main criteria for joining the team



KENDAL: SIXTY YEARS

Photo: Team members in operation during the 1960s © Kendal MRT.

seemed to be 'somebody who liked walking and was quite handy at first aid'. Although Kendal did benefit from proximity to the K Shoe factory, whose outdoor group provided a number of members and they can even boast Alfred Wainwright as their first honorary member.

Cockermouth was the first rescue team in England to have portable radios, after 'some clever infiltration of the Civil Defence by members of the team'.

When it came to transport, ingenuity was often the keyword, with flat bed trucks, coal wagons, milk floats and Jeeps called into action. Quirks were normal. Cockermouth's Jeep required a large concrete block to be fitted to the front bumper to correct a weight imbalance, but this vehicle was replaced, in time, by a Roll's Roycel! It was sixteen years before Kendal obtained its first vehicle: an ex-WD signals truck, purchased for just £400.

The Central Beacons team faced similar challenges to their predecessors, despite being formed a full ten years later, with equipment begged and borrowed from a variety of sources – including one rope, a couple of first aid kits from the Civil Defence, two stretchers from the Army and access to Civil Defence vehicles and radio equipment. But sometimes benefaction came from unexpected sources. One night in the 1970s, whilst the team was on exercise, a chap strolled over and donated a four-wheel-drive lorry ambulance which had once served at RAF Farnborough, and which very

quickly began a new life as a mountain rescue 'control' truck!

Over the years, the teams have seen some devastating events. In 1966, the eyes of the world turned to the mining village of Aberfan following the catastrophic collapse of a colliery spoil tip into the village and its primary school, killing 116 children and 28 adults. Team members operated in a variety of roles, including radio communications.

In 2004, Kendal team members were amongst those called out to help search Morecambe Bay for Chinese cockle-pickers caught by the incoming tide. Sadly, there were 24 fatalities that night.

And, for both Cockermouth and Central Beacons, tragedy has struck at the very heart of the team with the tragic deaths of their leaders. In Cockermouth, the accident (which also claimed the life of a second team member) occurred during a training exercise at Low Crag above Gatesgarth, Buttermere, in June 1969. During a stretcher lower, a huge rock which had been holding the main belay, broke away causing a substantial rock fall which engulfed the stretcher and several team members.

Fourteen years later, in South Wales, tragedy struck when a group of scouts lost their way descending Pen y Fan, wandering onto the dangerously steep north east face. One boy became separated from the group and suffered an injury and Mike Ruddal set out to find and treat him but, in shielding the boy from a spontaneous rock fall above them, he suffered serious head

injuries and was killed.

Incidents like these have a profound effect on team members. Witnessing and dealing with the trauma of a mountain casualty can be difficult enough for volunteers who, unlike their colleagues in the statutory emergency services are less accustomed to the emotional impact of trauma on the caregiver – and it takes on a very different hue when the casualty is one of your own number, going about what some would see as their 'hobby'.

Air crashes feature strongly in the teams' history – not least of all assisting at Lockerbie in 1988. In 1983, a plane crash on the west side of Steeple Ridge left two occupants dead and Cockermouth team members

deeply involved in this incident from the start. And, in 2009, Cockermouth made international news, with the terrible floods that swept through the town in November – an episode team members will never forget.

Where fifty and sixty years ago, enthusiasm, a love for the mountains and the ability to contribute a bit of rope or a flatbed truck might have got you on the team, these days the joining criteria are more stringent as both team members and the public expect – and receive – a world-class professional service. 'Previous experience' might now include not just walking and a basic grasp of first aid, but the ability to walk, climb and navigate in both summer and winter conditions.



CENTRAL BEACONS: FIFTY YEARS

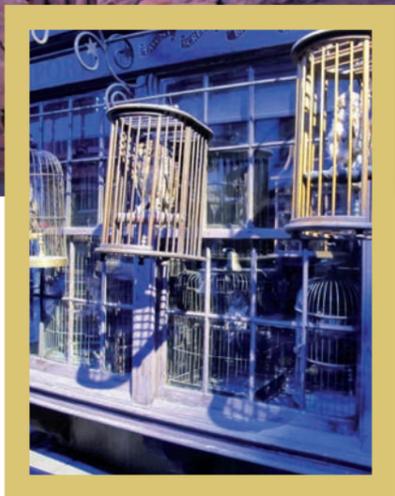
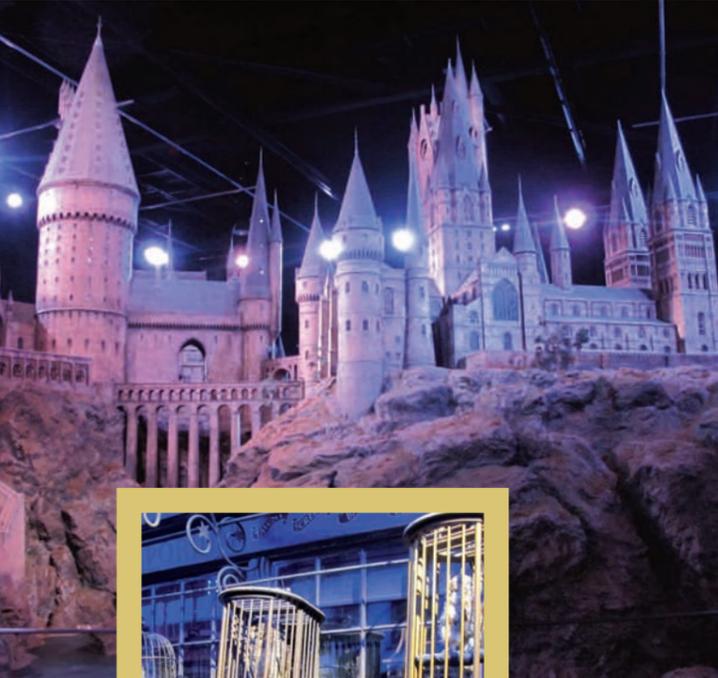
Photo © Central Beacons MRT.

helped bring the bodies down. In 2009, Central Beacons attended a double air crash in which ATC members died. Occasionally, though, the outcome is happier – when Kendal were called to a 2-seater aircraft crashed on Ingleborough in March 2011, both people on board were alive.

Besides the broken limbs and lives, caused by slips and trips on the fells, all three teams have been involved in their share of incidents involving the wider community. In 2010, Kendal and Cockermouth team members assisted the police in the aftermath of the Cumbria shootings and 2012 saw both teams on standby to assist in the search operation for April Jones. Central Beacons team members, of course, were

In sixty years then, much has changed but the mountains, fells and moorland are the same, the injuries are largely the same, and the dedication and enthusiasm of all those involved – some of whom have clocked up a fair few anniversaries themselves – remains as fierce as ever.

This year sees a number of Peak District teams and the PDMRO, their regional organisation, celebrating their sixtieth anniversaries as Keswick, Coniston and Langdale Ambleside push on towards their seventy year mark, not too many years from now. And who knows, the Queen may still be in the big chair by the time they get there...



Occasionally our connection with Prince William, in his capacity as patron of Mountain Rescue England and Wales, brings added excitement. Last year, it brought the rare opportunity for a number of team members, and their families, to explore a very different environment: the newly opened set of Harry Potter, at the Warner Brothers Studio in Watford.

And what was more, they were in good company, with both the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and Prince Harry joining in the fun, casting a few spells and strolling down Diagon Alley. Simon Thresher, of Calder Valley MRT took his son along for the day. 'The tour was a brilliant guided journey around the original sets, props, costumes,

creatures and special effects of the films,' said Simon. 'We walked through the Great Hall and Diagon Alley, jump on magic buses and motor bikes, ride broomsticks, drink butter beer and knock on Harry's front door.'

'We even spotted JK Rowling — and, of course William, Kate and Harry. When they came into view, we positioned ourselves so our mountain rescue logos were on show but sadly, we weren't quite a cute as the flower girls!'

'Still, it was a great day out — and a great opportunity to see the mountain rescue logo in a different setting — although my wallet did feel a lot lighter by the time we'd visited the gift shop!'

Eleven-year-old Hemoine Crispin travelled there with her brother and sister and her Auntie Penny (MREW Treasurer, Penny Brockman), all the way from South Wales.

'The most exciting part of the day,' she said, 'was seeing the Royal Family and JK Rowling. The Duchess of Cambridge filled us with a spark of light as she said hello.'

'My sister, brothers and I felt very honoured to represent mountain rescue.'

In May, Mike France, MREW Fundraising Chairman, and Judy Whiteside, Mountain Rescue Magazine Editor, travelled to Chester as guests of the Audi Polo Challenge. They were there to watch the Royal patron gallop to victory in his third consecutive Chester Audi Polo title.

Following the match, Martin Sander, Director of Audi UK, presented each charity wit a donation on behalf of Audi



and gave Mike the opportunity to stun the assembled crowd of celebrities with a few facts about the breadth of work undertaken by mountain rescue teams, prompting some fantastic words of support from many of the guests.

This was our seventh year of charity polo matches and, despite torrential rain at one stage, it was once again a great day out and a great opportunity to chat to people about the organisation. Thanks go to William for his continued support — and, of course, to Audi UK for their generous £20,000 donation.



Opposite page: The flying Ford Anglia, Hogwarts, Harry's bedroom under the stairs and Diagon Alley © Penny Brockman & Warner Bros Studio Tour. Inset: Harry's first Golden snitch © Penny Brockman. Top: The entrance to the studio tour © Penny Brockman.

Above: HRH the Duke of Cambridge looks on as Mike France talks to the crowd © Judy Whiteside.



The Duchess of Cambridge filled us with a spark of light as she said hello. My sister, brother and I felt very honoured to represent mountain rescue.

Days out with a difference



Youngsters enjoy their day in the outdoors

For the past five summers, mountain and cave rescue has hosted a day that brings together children and families from four charities with a Royal connection and this year the event travelled to the North East. Cleveland team and the other five teams in the region played host in and around the Cleveland team base at Great Ayton in North Yorkshire.

'Planning for the day was underway for over a year,' said Cleveland's Carl Faulkner. 'But we managed to arrange accommodation and a wide selection of activities suitable for all the different age groups, abilities and agilities of the children, young people and families and everyone — more than 25 children and young people in all — seemed to have a great time.'

Cleveland members were supported on the day by members of the North of Tyne, Northumberland National Park, Scarborough and Ryedale, Swaledale, and Teesdale and Weardale teams as well as RAF Leeming MRT and SARDA. Activities included bushcraft, a visit to a mine at Kildale and demonstrations of search and rescue techniques, as well as the opportunity for the youngsters to try their hand at orienteering and abseiling.

Lunchtime back at Great Ayton was a special event too, with members of the local emergency services joining in the fun, led by Assistant Chief Constable Sue Cross from North Yorkshire Police. There was a visit from an RAF Sea King helicopter from Leaconfield, police dog and scene of crime demonstrations, a visit from the local fire and rescue service (complete with sirens and flashing lights, of course) and five search and rescue dogs — who, as we all know, always steal any limelight. The younger children, in particular, loved the search dogs.

As Hannah Bemand of WellChild, said, 'It's so different for these children and their families — an opportunity they will not get anywhere else and they've had a great day out.'

One of the support workers from Child Bereavement, who lost her parents

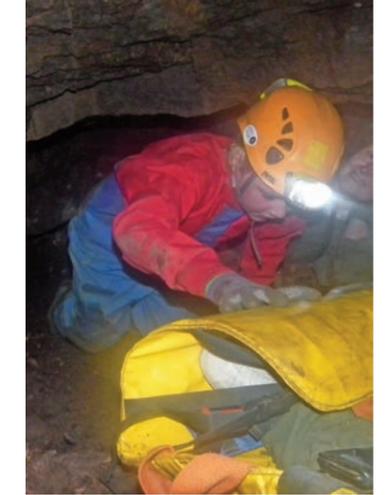
The obvious enjoyment and excitement of the children, young people and their carers and families is the best possible thanks possible.



Who are the other charities?

Centrepoint, another of Prince William's charities, was founded in 1969 by Ken Leech, vicar of St Anne's, Soho. Concerned about the number of young people sleeping rough in the West End of London, he and a group of volunteers opened up the basement of the church as a temporary night shelter. More than forty years later, the charity continues to campaign to give homeless young people a future.

WellChild, one of Prince Harry's charities, is committed to helping sick children and their families as they deal with the consequences of serious



when she was young, said, 'If there had been something like this at the time, it would have given me something else to think about. Thank you all of you — the children have loved it.'

The day ended with a hog roast and the presentation of individual photograph souvenirs and goody-bags to all the children and families, by Carl and ACC Sue Cross.

And, whilst all the guests were busy enjoying their fun day in the outdoors, it was business as usual for the rescuers themselves when the call came to assist an injured fourteen-year-old BMX bike rider in a quarry near Great Ayton. Fortunately, there were plans in place to deal with such eventualities, with a number of team members on stand-by to respond at a moment's notice.

This year's event is set to take place in South Wales, on Saturday 12 July, hosted by the region's mountain and cave rescue teams. The day's events will be based in the Upper Swansea Valley, including Dan yr Ogof caves and Penwylt caving centre as two possible locations.

illness and complex conditions. Their care and support enables many terminally ill children to leave hospital and return home, whilst also supporting their siblings and parents.

The Child Bereavement Charity, another of Prince Harry's charities, supports families, and provides training to professionals, across the entire spectrum of child bereavement — both when a child of any age dies or is dying, or when a child is facing bereavement.



Photo: Lakes handler John Leadbetter with Skye © Darryl Garfield.

Dogs and the smelly human scent machine

Search and rescue dogs, be they air-scenting or trailing dogs, are often the first to be tasked to search for a missing person or casualty and they're often used to eliminate potential search areas before the two-legged searchers go in. Thanks to their sense of smell, they're a valuable resource. But what exactly is it that they're smelling when they sniff someone out or follow a trail?

We all know people smell, in one way or another, but scent is a complex thing, with a number of odours and smells characterising each individual.

Human skin is typically around 9°C warmer than the surrounding air at room temperature which creates a steady current of air around the body and a thermal plume above it. Every bit of the body contributes chemical traces to this current, including millions of skin 'rafts', dead cells which carry bacteria, creating an individual's characteristic odour.

The body needs to dissipate heat and other by-products through the skin to survive and as this happens, scent escapes too.

Typically each of us has around 370 bacteria on our body at any time... then there's mites, yeasts, fungi, viruses...

The air-scenting dog works by detecting the invisible cone-shaped plume left by a human, working systematically back and forth across the area, towards the source. Handlers who work with trailing dogs will use scent articles which the missing person has worn on their upper body — due to the high concentration of bacteria found there — to inform their dog about the smell of that specific person. The armpit, for example, hosts around 2.4 million, the scalp 1.4 million and the forehead around 200,000, per square centimetre!

Typically, each of us has in the order of 370 bacteria on our body at any one time but, unsurprisingly, there are other visitors there too, such as yeasts and the likes of the cold sore virus. And then there's the frequent visitors: the mites, lice, fungi and ringworm and viruses such as the wart virus.

Clothes are significant, as they pick up toiletry odours and household smells.

Besides body smells, footwear has a number of inherent scents such as leather, fabric, glue, polish and cleaners. One experiment found that the scent of a person's foot could be detected by a dog only eight minutes after a rubber boot was worn!

Not surprisingly, genetic factors and the food we eat — particularly foods such as garlic, fish and foods high in vitamin B — also affect our scent and body odour.

'Most handlers,' says Iain Nicholson, a trailing dog handler, 'will tell you that their dogs can detect fear in people, which can be helpful when we're looking for a missing or injured person. A dog will naturally follow and show interest in an injured animal and this may be due to the pheromones produced through fear and anxiety.'

'Similarly, a dog's behaviour towards a person who is afraid of them will change. This is because the pheromones released by the person are inhaled by the dog and that 'information' passes to the hypothalamus, triggering the emotions which drive behaviour in animals and humans.'

There are millions of variations in human scent. So whether it's an air-scenting dog, picking up the human smell from an unseen 'plume' of air, or a trailing dog discriminating the scent of a specific person, it's an amazing feat they perform and certainly not one which any human could achieve.

...the scent of a person's foot could be detected by a dog only eight minutes after a rubber boot was worn!

As Iain concludes, 'It demonstrates the capability, power and usefulness of a trained canine nose in a search environment.'

WUFRA AND UWFRA GO GLOBAL: OCTOBER

Buckden Pike in the Yorkshire Dales, at 2,264 feet, is certainly not the best place to be with a badly broken leg, alone, with no food, drink or shelter from the elements and for something like three to four weeks. But that was the plight of a dog found by a group of walkers whilst struggling against high winds and driving rain close to the summit.

The brown Lurcher Saluki cross was on the verge of death and looked like a bag of bones so the group alerted the Upper Wharfedale team as soon as they were able.



Eight team members set off in appalling weather conditions. Five hours later, Wufra (as he became known) was found, lucky to be alive — although he was skin and bone and unable to stand.

Team Leader Andy Jackson said, 'Wufra was in such an emaciated state it was a delicate operation to lift him but we got him into a casbag and onto the stretcher. The grass had actually died where he'd been lying. He was just happy to see us and be picked up and kept warm, and seemed to enjoy his trip down in the stretcher.'

The story touched the nation's hearts — thanks to extensive press and TV coverage and Facebook, the whole world got to hear about the plight of this sad dog.

And we're happy to report that Wufra is now running around on all four legs and very content in his new home. Despite a public appeal, nobody came forward to claim him and he was 'adopted' by Helen Coates at the Dog People Centre in Grassington.



Photo: Like many teams, Patterdale team members give up weekends, sometimes weeks, of their time to travel to Scotland (as shown here), or even further afield, to gain vital experience in avalanche conditions © Andy McAlea.

Food for thought...

Mountain and cave rescue, whether it's at team or regional level or nationally, simply couldn't continue as the voluntary service it is, without the generosity of the public and our various sponsors, and the continued support of key manufacturers and suppliers.

But what about the 3000+ team members who, last year alone, collectively gave an estimated 89,582 operational hours free of charge to their communities?

On top of this, they put in a further 515,000 non-operational hours, tending to rescue kit and team vehicles, making sure the bills are paid and fulfilling paperwork — not to mention maintaining readiness for the next shout.

Yet, despite all this — and the Government grant (which this year, we're happy to report, has been increased by 25%) — they still need to put in thousands of hours just to raise sufficient funds to keep their teams in operation.

We reckon that amounts to around 604,582 hours a year. And much of that is unpaid absence from their work and their families.

It's not just mountain stuff either. The last twelve months have seen mountain and cave rescue personnel called to assist in extended flooding which hit the country — often in areas very far from the mountains. In previous years, we've

assisted in flood rescue in areas as diverse as Cockermouth, Keswick and Carlisle, Sheffield and Gloucester, Boscastle and North Yorkshire.

We've played a key role in major searches such as the one for April Jones, missing from home in Machynlleth, mid-Wales, in 2012 which involved members of 23 different teams across England and Wales collaborating and coordinating resources over more than a week, far from their own homes and 'patches'.

We've been on hand for disasters such as Lockerbie and Kegworth, and the Grayrigg rail crash and we've helped dig motorists out of their stranded vehicles on the highways and byways of the UK during times of heavy snow.

All of this is free of charge to the casualty. And our team members' time is given freely to serve their communities — and long may that be so. So we'd like to say thank you to you, all our supporters, sponsors and fundraisers — we couldn't do it without you!

Stay safe, and thank you.

How can you support us?

Of course, each team is responsible for raising funds on their own patch — find your local team on the map (see the back cover) and then take a look at our website for the relevant contact details — mountain.rescue.org.uk/organisation/teams.

There are also a number of ways you can support nationally.

Read our books or buy your very own miniature Land Rover.

Or a teddy or a badge, or a car sticker. Or a mug. Whatever takes your fancy.



Go to mountain.rescue.org.uk/shop for details of all our merchandise and how to subscribe to Basecamp.

Join Basecamp — the national support group for mountain rescue in England and Wales — the simplest way to support all the teams. In return you will receive a 'supporter' badge, a window sticker and a year's subscription to our quarterly Mountain Rescue magazine. You can join through our online shop — and, you even add a small donation to your subscription with the Gold, Silver and Bronze options. You choose which amount you want to pay — single membership starts at £24 per year with joint membership at £42.

Remember us in your Will!

A gift to mountain rescue in your Will allows you to support our future. Legacies are a vital part of our funding — even a small gift can make a big difference. And it's the surest way to fund the

Equipping a team member: the costs

Teams work hard to raise sufficient funds to provide the necessary fit-for-purpose kit for their members, including warm, waterproof clothing, comms equipment, bigger items such as vehicles, and their rescue base buildings. That said, the majority of team members wear and carry a combination of essentials supplied by their team, and their own gear.

Bear in mind that team members must be prepared to be out there for many hours — or may be called to two or three incidents within the same day, often in dreadful conditions.

And with the clothing (and spares), the rucksack full of personal first aid kit, maps and compass, torch, headlamp and batteries, notepad and pen, radio, pager and mobile phone, the grand total for each team member is not far shy of £2000 — which we think you'll agree is a huge commitment in personal and team finances.

equipment and training for the years to come as gifts are exempt from inheritance tax, capital gains tax and income tax, so the charity receives the full value of your bequest.

Give securely online through mountain.rescue.org.uk/giving/online-donations.

Organise an event in aid of Mountain Rescue England and Wales or join an existing one and raise sponsorship. You'll be providing funds and raising awareness. It might seem daunting but, with lots of enthusiasm, commitment and support, you will find the experience enjoyable and very rewarding.

Take a look at our website for a more detailed guide to organising an event — mountain.rescue.org.uk/funding/organising-events. And good luck with the fundraising!



Where to find your local team

Lake District

Mountain Rescue:
Cockermouth
Coniston
Duddon & Furness
Kendal
Keswick
Kirkby Stephen
Langdale Ambleside

Patterdale
Penrith
Wasdale
Mines Rescue:
COMRU
Search Dogs:
Lakes District Mountain
Rescue Search Dogs

North East

Mountain Rescue:
Cleveland
North of Tyne
Northumberland Nat Park
RAF Leeming MRT
Scarborough & Ryedale

Teesdale & Weardale
Mountain + Cave Rescue:
Swaledale
Search Dogs:
SARDA England

Mid Pennine

Mountain Rescue:
Bolton
Bowland Pennine
Calder Valley
Holme Valley

Rossendale & Pendle
Mountain + Cave Rescue:
CRO
Search Dogs:
SARDA England

Yorkshire Dales

Mountain + Cave Rescue:
CRO
Upper Wharfedale
Mountain Rescue:
RAF Leeming

North Wales

Mountain Rescue:
Aberdyfi
Aberglaslyn
Llanberis
North East Wales
Ogwen Valley
South Snowdonia
RAF Valley
Cave Rescue:
North Wales CRO
Search Dogs:
SARDA Wales

Peak District

Mountain Rescue:
Buxton
Derby
Edale
Glossop
Kinder
Oldham
Woodhead
Cave Rescue:
Derbyshire CRO
Search Dogs:
SARDA England

South Wales

Mountain Rescue:
Brecon
Central Beacons
Longtown
Western Beacons

Cave Rescue:
South
& Mid Wales CRT
Search Dogs:
SARDA South Wales

South West England

Mountain Rescue:
Avon & Somerset
Severn Area

Cave Rescue:
Mendip CR
Gloucestershire CRG

Midlands

Cave Rescue:
Midlands CRO

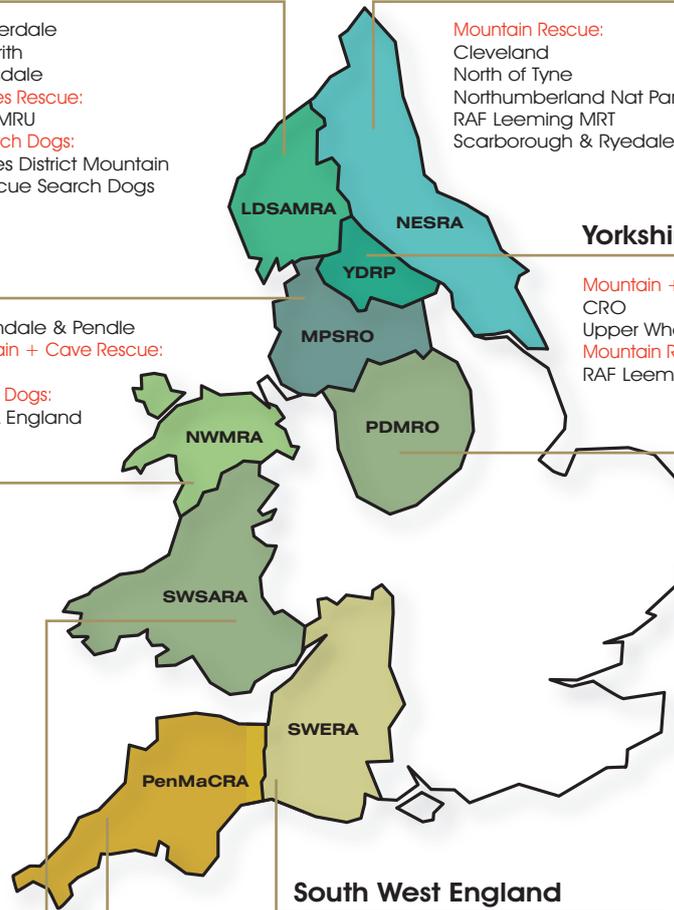
South East

Cave Rescue:
South East CRO

Peninsula

Mountain Rescue:
Dartmoor (Ashburton)
Dartmoor (Okehampton)
Dartmoor (Plymouth)
Dartmoor (Tavistock)
Exmoor

Mountain + Cave Rescue:
Cornwall
Cave Rescue:
Devon CRO
Search Dogs:
SARDA England



In case of accident or incident requiring mountain or cave rescue assistance.

Dial '999'. Ask for the 'Police', then 'Mountain Rescue' or 'Cave Rescue.'



To find out more about mountain and cave rescue in England and Wales go to mountain.rescue.org.uk or caverescue.org.uk

Mountain Rescue England and Wales is a registered charity number 222596.
British Cave Rescue Council is a registered charity number 1137252.