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## WELCOME TO ISSUE 61

Mountain Rescue is the membership magazine for mountain and cave rescue in England and Wales.

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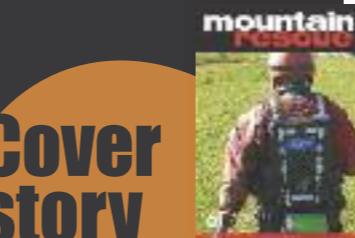
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### NEXT ISSUE ISSUE 62

Editorial Copy Deadline:  
Friday 8 September 2017

Editorial copy must be supplied as Word document. Images must be supplied as high resolution (300 dpi) JPG/EPS/TIFF/PDF.

Advertising artwork must be supplied, ready prepared on CD or via email as font embedded high resolution PDF/EPS/TIFF (300 dpi).



## Cover story

Aberdyfi team members enjoyed a wet orientation session in April, working alongside the team's newly trained swiftwater rescue technician group © Aberdyfi SART

### PLEASE NOTE

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SUMMER 2017

# forST Word

MIKE FRANCE



aware some points made in the draft CIO have upset some, this gives us the opportunity to review the whole document.

- We took on an assistant secretary following the strategy day and formed the Regional Chairs and Operations Groups.

Transparency was a major issue. You say time and time again you don't know what is happening at national level. We understand this is an area we still need to work at, but you now have access to everything: budgets and minutes of all national meetings via the website.

At the strategy day we agreed to look at how we could manage MREW more efficiently. Time pressure and the workload on officers was a big issue.

- One of the first actions was the better management our finances. If anything happened to our treasurer, no-one else understood what was happening. The risk was off the scale. All finances are now outsourced.

- The next step with finances is to put in place a system where officers can track their own budgets and fundraising can track income.

- Insurance is a very important area for all of us. We still have some work to do but all insurance is now outsourced. We are undertaking a full review of our insurance policies, what's covered and whether we are getting value for money.

- Because of our commitments to you with things like insurance, some equipment, the magazine, the list goes on, there is a risk to the organisation with no guaranteed income. In the next few months we will be taking on a freelance, national fundraiser.

- All legal matters are now outsourced.

- The CIO. We needed to do this to protect our trustees and this has been a lot harder and a lot more work than a team moving to CIO. We're not there yet but hopefully before long we'll have something in place to put forward again. The trustees are

undertaking a review of the document following rejection of the Objects by the Charity Commission. Jake Bharier (newly appointed CIO trustee) is assisting with this process, applying his significant commercial skills in this area. The trustees are also

Libor funds have helped us develop national training standards. Applying for the grant money is one thing but ensuring the training is carried out is another and that puts a lot more work on the treasurer and training officer.

In the last two years, working through UKSAR, we have VAT refunds for teams. We are now looking at VED on marked vehicles which will help many teams.

Most of you will be aware that the national body received a paper from LDSAMRA setting out some concerns and suggesting an external review of the organisation similar to the Rescue 2020 report prepared for the Lakes teams. This was discussed in detail by the trustees and they have agreed that the process should be started by forming a working party comprising David Coleman, (newly appointed CIO trustee), Steve Wood (current trustee), and a regional chair (Keith Gillies), to identify the project steering group. The trustees felt that the steering group should be made up of knowledgeable members who will write the framework document and the scoping agreements.

We've come a long way in two years. Yes there is more to do, but if we sit back we give opportunity for others to lead with Land SAR. I believe MREW is a strong member-led organisation. The public, and other professional organisations, trust us. Change takes time, sometimes we need to revisit things because we did not get it right first time. That's fine, but we cannot stand still. ☀



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## meetings

### MREW BUSINESS AND COMMITTEES

Saturday 18 November 2017  
Lancashire Police HQ, Hutton

### MREW BUSINESS AND COMMITTEES

Saturday 19 May 2018  
Lancashire Police HQ, Hutton

To book in to MREW business meetings, contact: **Dave Close** [secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk)

Or speak to the relevant officer for your subcommittee — contact details available on the MREW website.

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Penny Brockman – Treasurer of the MREW



## PROMOTING THE POWER – AND THE PARTNERSHIP

Following on from the October Awareness Day tie-in, The Wanderers' Guide, MREW's press and social media team has been working with VARTA Consumer UK on a spring campaign called Powering up in the Sunshine.

'We learnt a lot about the online content that people were interested in and the best way to present advice in graphics from the October campaign,' says Sally Seed, a member of the MREW team, 'and it seemed like a good idea to reinforce VARTA's practical fundraising and financial support for MR teams across the country with a similar approach for the spring and into summer.'

Sally worked with VARTA's PR agency, Prova, on the content of a second downloadable guide. From the VARTA Consumer UK point of view, the emphasis was on power packs and the ability to keep mobile phones charged by using them in the outdoors. For MREW, it was all about sharing safety advice — most of it taken from the book, Call Out Mountain Rescue? — related to using mobile phones effectively when out on the hills and mountains.

'Prova did all the design work and turned a lot of text information into attractive graphics,' says Sally. 'We then scheduled Twitter and Facebook posts over the weeks between the two May bank holidays. These used individual panels with each post as well as some posts that linked to the full downloadable document and others that linked to a brief animation with top tips for summoning help.'

All in all, the joint campaign reinforced the support partnership between MREW and VARTA Consumer UK and also gave followers of the two organisations on social media lots of information to keep them safe and keep them connected.

'The strongest message and the post that seemed to be best received related to the Text Alert system,' says Sally. 'A lot of people seemed to be unaware that they could register their phone with the emergency services, making it simpler to use a text to raise the alarm in an emergency. It's not a fool proof system but it increases the chances of being able to alert the police and, via them, mountain rescue.'

THE GUIDE IS STILL EASILY DOWNLOADABLE FROM THE VARTA WEBSITE: [BIT.LY/2SG86LK](http://bit.ly/2SG86LK)

## OPERATIONS: MIKE MARGESON

Work on radio transition has been moving ahead at pace. We've also heard that our Libor application has been successful, with a full range of national courses being funded.

At our next operations meeting in July, we need to review the operational priorities for the next Libor fund application, which is

coming up fast as the application dates have changed.

We've a number of applicants for the vacant equipment officer post recently vacated by John Wealthall. Interviews will take place before the November meeting with a recommendation made to the membership for consideration.

I have seen draft work on the update to the rope rescue guidelines which Al and the training group are working on. As I was

instrumental in putting on the first national rope rescue course — 'Rigging for Rescue' as it was then — I am encouraged to hear that we are now looking to tender for the delivery of our own spec national rope rescue training course. I believe the training group are developing syllabus content alongside the guidelines review. This has been a long time coming and I fully support the plan. The benefits of this approach have been evidenced in my own region by courses run each year with team members from across the region. The improved effectiveness in working together is much like the Swift Water 3 technician model.

In Scotland, the national training programme has been running for some years and has proved the benefit of this approach. Sharing of best practice is certainly the way forward. It recognises the different working environments and needs, and that there is always the need for situational awareness on



## BLENCAETHRA CENTRE FOR MOUNTAIN HERITAGE TRUST

On behalf of MREW, Mike Margeson attended the opening in March of the new Mountain Heritage Trust resource at the stunning site at the Field Studies Council Centre on the flank of Blencathra.

The Mountain Heritage Trust was founded in 2000 to record and preserve Britain's rich mountaineering and climbing history. To date it has been housed in a lock-up in Penrith. Supported by the British Mountaineering Council and working with both the Field Studies Council and the Heritage Lottery Fund, a new purpose-built archive, visitor centre and offices has been created on the FSC site for this important collection.

The opening was attended by the great and good of the mountaineering world with speeches by Doug Scott and Nick Cotton representing the BMC with the stunning backcloth of the Lakeland fells covered in a fresh layer of spring snow.

'We had just found an old 1960 mountain rescue film, which Dave Freeborn has had digitised and repaired just in time. I took the opportunity to speak with a trustee of the Mountain Heritage Trust as it would make sense that MREW link up to see if the Trust could look after and make available to the public some of our historical material. This is all at an early point in discussion but potentially is a very positive opportunity to ensure the protection of some important mountaineering and rescue history.'



MREW ambassador Alan Hinkes at the opening in March

## SECRETARIAL UPDATE: DAVE CLOSE

A huge thanks to all those who have communicated with the management team over

the last twelve months — it reassures me that communication across MREW does happen, albeit with still a long way



## ANDY BINSTEAD

Deputy team leader to Bowland Pennine MRT, Andy passed away after an illness in March, aged just 49. Phil O'Brien MBE former team leader, delivered this eulogy at his funeral in Preston on 10 April.

Andy Binstead, Binny to most of us, call sign 'Trough Mike 2' to the anoraks, joined Bowland Pennine in 1990 as a trainee. In 2012, he received his Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal for services to mountain rescue from the Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Lancashire. In April 2015, he was presented with his 25 years Long Service certificate by the then president of Mountain Rescue England and Wales, Peter Bell. On receiving his certificate and medal, Andy commented that he wasn't necessarily very happy about it as this now marked him out as something of a senior team member, a group of more stately members of the team known as the 'greybeards'.

During his time with BPMRT he served on the committee as team rep, press officer and, since 2014, deputy. We often saw press releases about the team's exploits in local papers from 'team spokesperson, Andy Binstead, aged 18'. Such was his humour.

Binny was also an incident controller, a role he performed innumerable times,

with varying degrees of success. We never really knew what was going to happen when we looked at our pagers and read those fateful words 'BINNY HAS CONTROL', and then wondered to ourselves: 'Control of what exactly?'

For nearly twenty years, Binny was also a committed Community First Responder, attending many incidents for the North West Ambulance Service. Responsible for saving a number of lives, persons who but for Binny's care and expertise would have ended up here where we are today, and not with their families where they are now. Always at the head end of the stretcher, his unique bedside manner was of great comfort to the many casualties he dealt with and even more to the rest of us, as we didn't have to do it!

Grudgingly described as 'a top bloke for a southerner', Binny was always smiling, laughing, helpful and supportive. An excellent presenter, clear, knowledgeable and engaging, he passed on his wealth of experience in a

reliable and understanding way to anyone smart enough to listen. Always able to find the fun in any situation, he was a great team player who fully enjoyed the team blood sport of cruel mucky taking and vicious if well-meant sarcasm! Able to hand out the stick, he had the more important ability of being able to take it as well. A solid, dependable mate, Binny was the typical 'glass half full' man and will be sadly missed.

Andy has been cruelly taken from us, way too soon, leaving a large hole not only in our rescue family, but also in his local community and way before he had chance to really fully cultivate that grey beard.

Those of us who knew him and counted ourselves fortunate enough to call him our friend will miss him dearly, but when it was time to go he did so with his accustomed natural dignity, patience and grace.

Well done mate, you've done your bit — STAND DOWN, STAND DOWN. ☺

sold to other MR teams and the SAS.

He leaves us with a legacy of hilarious sketches, irreverently capturing the team's shenanigans of the time. He will be remembered as one of the team's great characters. ☺



One of Pete's memorable cartoons

## PETER JONES

Bowland Pennine suffered a double blow this year, with the death of long-standing team member Pete Jones, in April aged 83, while walking the fells he loved. Tim Cox writes.

servant to Bowland Pennine MRT, greatly respected, sadly missed but remembered with a big smile,' said Phil Lund, summing up Pete's contribution to the team.

Pete joined the South Ribble MRT as a trainee and was one of the first new team members to be enrolled into the newly formed Bowland Pennine Team in 1980. Pete was a very active call-out member for over 20 years and served on the committee as the team members' representative before standing down as an Honorary Life Member.

In the late 1980s Pete used his background in engineering to help develop and manufacture the Phoenix Warm Air Device in his shed using odds and ends including plastic soil pipe. As well as being carried in the team's front-line Land Rovers, a patent was obtained and the Phoenix was manufactured and

Heysham Nuclear Power Station sponsored abseil 15 July 1992

To misquote Oscar Wilde, to lose one team member may be regarded as a misfortune; to lose two looks like carelessness'. Just a few weeks after the funeral of our DTL, Andy Binstead, little did we realise that when the call-out came to a body recovery from Longridge Fell that it would be for one of our own, Pete Jones, another long standing team member.

'Call-out member, reliable, experienced on the hill or underground, always proactive, fantastic company, outstanding

to go. Generally speaking, you are engaging with email, social media, the magazine and website, but there are still pockets which content doesn't always reach. To that end, this year, I want to

address delivery to every member. To achieve this, team ICT officers need to adopt the MREW platform for email, which facilitates a specific address for team officers and members as

well as providing a free data repository for document storage. Officer emails such as secretary@ allow the continued sharing of pertinent information even when personnel change.



### ICT NEWS: MARK LEWIS

A mobile phone tracking app is now being hosted on the MREW servers and feeds into MR Map. An added interface

allows the Garmin inReach satellite trackers to display on MRMap and hopefully soon a direct interface for Spot Trackers will also be available. Thanks to Rob Shepherd for interfacing the app with MRMap and Gerald Davidson for persuading a friend to write the interface for the inReach device. If any team hasn't received information on this app, email ictofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk.

The expected selling of Vodapage to Page One has been widely publicised. The outcome isn't clear but it looks like Page One won't be continuing with the existing infrastructure. Instead, users will be transferred to the Page One network. Predicted coverage data has been requested for areas where teams need to rely on pagers.

SARCALL doesn't interface



## RAY GRIFFITHS AND PETER DYMOND TAKE ON NEW ROLES AT THE TOP

JUDY WHITESIDE

Mountain Rescue England and Wales has two new men at the top, with Ray Griffiths and Peter Dymond OBE taking on the roles of president and vice president respectively. Both will be familiar names to regulars at national meetings and conferences — and Ray, of course, is well known on his home turf in the Lakes. But for everyone else: who are they and what will they bring to the job?

Ray is the longest serving member of Patterdale MRT, having joined the team in January 1976, and he's served in a number of roles with the team, including deputy leader for many years, as well as undertaking work for the region and MREW.

He is, I am reliably informed, a profound font of knowledge on mountain clothing and kit, an 'equipment fetishist' with a fervent interest in all things gadgety. 'His rucksack show was a legend at team winter training sessions,' says Dave Freeborn, former Patterdale team leader. As LDSAMRA delegate on the MREW equipment subcommittee for almost twenty years, with Richard Terrell, MREW equipment officer at the time, he led the process of finding a replacement manufacturer for the Bell stretcher. So, how does he feel about this new national hat he's wearing?

'It's a daunting task, following Peter Bell, given everything he achieved for us. I hope to visit as many teams and regions as I can, to talk to people at all levels of our community. And, by community, I mean far beyond those wearing the team jackets — the partners and families behind us all, our fundraisers and supporters and even work colleagues who tolerate us vanishing at a moment's notice.'

Five years ago, Ray received the Distinguished Service Award for his contribution to the mountain rescue 'family', over forty years' service.

'During that time,' he says, 'above all, I've valued that we get involved in MR to help others. Mountain rescue is unique. We need to work together to do what we do, as a cohesive team, finding or rescuing people in need in mountain and wilderness areas. Yet all teams have evolved individual skills and responses. Our teams operate in many different terrains but interact and support each other without question.'

After such a long period of active membership, he'd begun to think his usefulness was coming to an end but MR is not known for letting folk fade away — not when they're doing such sterling work! While he no longer relishes the idea of flogging up to Striding Edge or the Helvellyn headwall in foul weather and at night (or both) with a heavy load, he reckons that 'us

slower folk do seem to get the heavier loads'. Consequently, he has recently retaken and passed his Casualty Care course and is considering taking up running to join the racing snakes!

His dedication to the mountain rescue cause then, continues unbounded, both locally and nationally. 'By putting myself forward for this role, I intend to work hard to further the aims and interests of all the MR community in the best way I can.'

Newly-appointed vice president Peter Dymond has been an external trustee for a number of years, more recently as chairman of the trustees, and will continue in that role until the charity becomes a CIO.

He feels 'very honoured and indeed humbled by his appointment', viewing his new role as more of an ambassadorial position where he can represent MREW at relevant events and within the wider public arena, 'helping to raise the profile of mountain rescue generally by championing the skills and professionalism of the membership and promoting the charity's objectives'.

He also believes that support, when requested, to those charged with the management of MREW, the regions and teams, is a key element of the role.

'Maintaining currency in mountain rescue is important if I'm to be effective in this representative role so I hope that, occasionally, I will be invited to attend management meetings (as an observer), including those in the regions, where I can keep up to date with operational and organisational developments'.

As many of you will know, Peter has been involved in search and rescue for forty years so has a great deal of experience and background in what he rightly describes as 'this humanitarian business'. He was largely instrumental in the establishment of the cohesive and cooperative UK Search and Rescue organisation we have today in which MREW now plays such a prominent and leading role.

We wish Ray and Peter luck in their new roles.

**Top:** New president Ray Griffiths (left) and vice president Peter Dymond OBE © Sally Seed.

# Navigation: The Dark Art of Clinical Governance

The word 'govern' is derived from Greek and Latin words meaning to 'steer'. The implication is that we are on a journey and must steer our way along a path with a number of interesting challenges. In this article, I will attempt to answer three questions:

- What is purpose of the journey of clinical governance?
- What do we need to do to complete the journey?
- Is there a map to follow?

## WHAT IS THE PURPOSE?

In summary the journey of clinical governance aims to:

- Make sure patients receive safe, appropriate care
- Support volunteers to deliver safe, appropriate care.

In MREW we care for about 800 casualties a year with a wide variety of problems. This is a significant challenge with a variety of carers, multiple teams, wide geographical spread and the challenges of the mountain environment. To deliver good quality casualty care in this system requires structure and support.

In most healthcare organisations clinical governance refers to a systematic approach to maintaining and improving the care provided to patients. The term does not mandate one approach or any particular structure.

In 2015, the UK SAR Medical committee recognised the need for all SAR UK organisations to have a clinical governance process and therefore produced a consensus Clinical Governance Framework Document (2015). Each organisation then developed bespoke local guidance.

In MREW, the medical subcommittee (MREW MSC) recognised the need to support members and teams to take local responsibility for delivering the aims of clinical governance.

Our first Clinical Governance Guideline was published in 2016 on the MREW website. The current version is to be found on the Moodle VLE in the Medical Subcommittee section under 'Clinical Governance'.

## WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO?

There are four key activities to help us achieve 'safe appropriate care':

1. Understanding what we should do
2. Delivering care

3. Reviewing care to identify where we did well and where we need to improve
4. Making change when required.

To do the job we need a set of tools or map skills — to continue with the rather poor analogy! These are sometimes called to elements of clinical governance, which makes it sounds rather more complex than necessary!

**Research and development** helps our understanding of what we should be doing and defines what is good practice. Publications in high quality literature are the main source of information.

**Education and training** helps us deliver the care direct to the casualty.

**Audit** is a process of review by which we compare what we actually do with the standard of good practice and ask if we can improve our performance.

**Openness and no blame culture** is essential to allow constructive review of practice. This requires confidentiality for individual patients and carers. We need to open to change.

**Management of risk** to:

- Patients.
- Carers — our own volunteers and our partner agencies.
- Organisations — teams, regions and MREW.

**Information management** helps us record what we do and provides an essential source of information to reflect on care. It can also be a tool to manage safe care eg. a drug checklist.

The MREW MSC has three main work streams:

- Clinical practice
- Education and training
- Clinical governance.

You will recognise that these support

the aims of clinical governance. The output from this work is available on the Moodle VLE and provides an accessible resource for all members and teams.

## EXAMPLES OF CLINICAL GOVERNANCE ACTIVITY

The MREW MSC uses the latest research literature to inform our practice and we can incorporate this into casualty care at local level. A good example would be the guidance provided on the management of hypothermia and the choice of drugs in our formulary.

We have developed a strong educational package for care through the Casualty Care Certificate. There is improved clarity over Extended Skills and the four levels of care as described in the First Aid Practice and Training document (2016). The changes to the assessment process create much improved assurance for the Casualty Care Certificate.

Incident reporting is really important and we have examples of where this has worked very well (a defibrillator-related event). Safety alerts (the recent IN device alert) can be disseminated thorough the organisation. We can, however, be more open and improve this aspect of our practice across the organisation.

The MREW Clinical Records Guideline helps to explain how we use information in patient care.

The recent work in the MSC, looking at the introduction of methoxyflurane, has largely been around risk management for the layperson in our already well-established system of care.

We have published guidance on a variety of topics such as appraisal for health care professionals and advice for teams on the position of doctors who are still in training posts.

I offer these examples to illustrate that clinical governance is not something

**MIKE GREENE**  
MREW MEDICAL OFFICER



PAGE 9 >

with Page One either and I don't feel Page One is a feasible replacement. We are trying to work with them but communication has been very poor.

With many teams radios becoming unreliable due to age, Iain Nicholson and I have been testing various digital radios for over six months. Towards the end of last year, we met with Simoco, who have offered a solution to assist teams during the migration to digital, along with many other offers. A proposal has been put forward to go with Simoco and hopefully progress will be made soon. This has been circulated to the regional ICT and Operations Group officers.

Bing maps costs MREW close on £4K per annum and John Hulse was keen to reduce this cost but still have good resilience in place. MREW procured an extra

members about getting involved.

Currently we have a number of people managing the various revenue streams and, sadly, after many years of fantastic service, Gail will be hanging up the 'keys to the cash register' in September and taking a well-earned rest from running the online shop. Massive thanks to her on behalf of MREW for all her support and hard work — it has been very much appreciated.

This does leave a vacancy, so, if anyone would like to pick up the gauntlet, or has ideas for improving the shop's offering in terms of products, let me know.



## FUNDRAISING : DAVIE THOMSON

We had a good turnout at the fundraising meeting in May and we're still getting interest from

## COLOURFUL ADDITIONS TO THE PELI AIR RANGE



Peli UK has added three new colours to their premium lightweight protective case, the Peli Air. Up to 40% lighter, the cases retain the strength and durability of the original Peli Protector case and models 1485 and 1605 are now available in yellow, silver, orange and black.

The high visibility of the orange and yellow models is perfectly suited for search and rescue work. The cases are available for storing and transporting items which do not require additional cushioning but need protection from the elements. Case interiors can be configured, enhancing protection and organisation, to house rescue and medical tech such as laptops, tablets and portable defibs. With full foam sets, the pic and pluck foam can be quickly customised and is inexpensive to replace when equipment is upgraded. The yellow padded dividers offer greater visibility and versatility for even the smallest compartments. The Trekpak system comprises of divider panels, locking pins and a precision cutting tool to fully customise the interior.

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## QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS FOR MOUNTAIN RESCUERS PAST AND PRESENT

A number of mountain rescue volunteers, past and present, were recognised in this year's Queen's Birthday Honours. **Judy Whiteside** rounds them up.

Calder Valley team president Bob Utley was appointed an MBE for services to the community in the Calder Valley and Todmorden. Bob, who has held the post of president for 23 years, became involved with the West Yorkshire team after his son Robert, a team member for some years, died while climbing Annapurna III in a white-out in 1983.

Bob is only the second president since the team's formation in 1966, succeeding Phyllis Oakley in the role, and was instrumental in raising £100,000 to help build its current base in Mytholmroyd.

CVSRT press officer Tim Ingram said, 'We're extremely pleased for Bob and would like to take this opportunity to congratulate him. He truly is a fine gentleman and we sincerely thank him for all his years of support for the team.'

Brian Spencer of Keswick was also made an MBE, for services to mountain rescue in Cumbria. He had been a member of the Keswick team for 45 years, during which time he was involved in more than 1200 rescues, only retiring from team service in 2015, aged 80.

He described himself as

'flabbergasted, embarrassed and humbled when he received the letter.'

Team leader Chris Higgins told the local 'Times & Star' he was 'overjoyed' at the news. Brian was not only an active member but in the latter years he took on the job of overseeing the collection boxes from pubs, guest houses and businesses. We calculate that he was responsible for collecting more than £370,000, mainly in coppers and coins.

'He was always working away in the background making a significant contribution.'

In Derbyshire, Bill Whitehouse was also appointed an MBE. The long-time member of Derbyshire CRO and former chairman of BCRC, joined the team in 1964 and spent 45 years as an operational controller, 32 as secretary and fifteen in the chair.

A team spokesperson said, 'Bill's dedication to voluntary rescue services goes much further than that. He has spent 36 years as the chairman of the British Cave Rescue Council and is still vice chairman. He's been involved with MREW for 30 years, UKSAR for sixteen and also helped establish the mountain and cave rescue

the Welsh 1,000m Peaks Race.

Commenting on the honour, team secretary Phil Benbow said that Harvey helped make the team a success. 'Harvey was a well respected and highly-regarded member of the team,' said Phil.

Retired police officer Jon Rushton was honoured with an MBE for services to mountain and cave rescue in North Yorkshire. Jon, who served with North Yorkshire Police for 27



Top: Bob Utley MBE, Calder Valley SRT © CVSRT.  
Above: Bill Whitehouse MBE at play © Bill Whitehouse.

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reckons the most important thing is to have someone in the role who's interested in search.

'When I took it on, there were issues which had gone on for months, years, unresolved. Meetings could be heated. The teams weren't being looked after by the emergency services they were working with. And we didn't always tell them everything they needed to know.'

A Swaledale team spokesman said, Jon worked with all the mountain rescue teams in North Yorkshire and was instrumental in the close working we all now enjoy with the police.'

His charismatic, pragmatic can-do style ensured the brokering of solid working relationships others might envy, maybe even wish to replicate. So does he have any advice for those who might follow his lead?

It might sound obvious but he

years, is credited with forging stronger links between the area's rescue teams and the police during his time as lead POLSA.

'My aim was to bring together those in the emergency services with an interest in search and rescue. If issues did arise, they were on hand to sort them out then report back three months later. And you have to trust that people will get things done, as they say they will, that issues will be dealt with.'

Eighteen months on, a lot of those issues which had been hanging on for months were

resolved. But one of the first things Jon did was to organise a two-course hot meal on the table at meetings. People were travelling a long way to get there, giving up their time to be at meetings — having a hot meal ready and waiting for them gave recognition to that.

He sorted out expenses for the teams, including mileage for the team vehicles. Any reasonable consumables used during a call-out — batteries and such — could also be claimed.

But probably his most high-profile achievement was the awards nights which gave the North Yorkshire Police, and some of the casualties rescued, the opportunity to thank team members for their efforts. There was also a donation to each team of £3-4,000 which was, he says 'hard to get from public

funds' but he got it sorted.

He knew all the teams, all the faces, went out with them on training days, got to know the people on the ground. All this, on top of his work as a police officer and POLSA.

'There was an assumption that the rescue stuff was all I did. It wasn't my full time job but I was fortunate enough to be allowed to manage my own time. I was a PC, but I got my search ticket in 1988 so had a lot of experience.'

Has he missed it? 'I loved working with the teams. Even enjoyed getting grief and being able to sort it!' By which I think he means yes, he will. Maybe some of the time.

**Above left:** Jon Rushton MBE © Jon Rushton.

## OS STUDY REVEALS THAT MOST HILLGOERS ARE UNPREPARED FOR EMERGENCIES

A study by Ordnance Survey has revealed that many hillgoers are clueless about what to do if things go wrong, with one in eight of people asked would not know how to deal with a mountain emergency if they had no phone signal. And three-quarters of recreational walkers don't plan their route properly or pack the right gear, the survey found.

The figures were released as OS announced it was teaming up with Mountain Rescue England and Wales to try to reduce outdoor incidents, following a year in which only fourteen days were without a mountain rescue call-out somewhere.

In 2016, teams across England and Wales attended 1,812 incidents, up 170 on the previous year, of which 360 were serious or fatal. Mountain bike incidents also continued to rise, though not at the same rate as in previous years.

The survey of more than 2,000 adults from across Great Britain who enjoy recreational walking

and hiking highlighted the need for a more safety-minded approach when venturing outdoors.

A total of 83% of those questioned admitted that if they were in trouble on a mountain and had no phone signal they wouldn't know what to do. More

and more walkers and hikers, especially those from younger generations, are not carrying paper maps, compasses or whistles, relying entirely on the functionality of their mobile phones, even though only 28% of all respondents would think to check in advance the availability of a mobile phone signal where they are heading.

'We certainly don't want to discourage people from venturing out into the hills,' says Mike France, MREW chairman, 'but people need to make sure they have the right kit and have let someone know the route they're taking if they are heading off the beaten path. This can save lives.'

Almost 500 of the incidents documented could possibly have been avoided. People called for help because they were lost, stuck, or suffered a minor slip. Some said they were 'simply unable to continue', but these types of incidents place a huge strain on team members and resources. The Ordnance

Survey's Get Outside initiative aims to educate people on the steps they should take to ensure they enjoy the hills but avoid becoming a mountain rescue statistic.

Nick Giles, managing director of OS Leisure, said, 'Great Britain is a varied and beautiful country, offering something different each time you head out. Mountain rescue does an awesome job in often difficult circumstances, and it's a job we should all be appreciative of.'

'While you can never eradicate accidents, let's see if together we can reduce the number of mountain rescue incidents in 2017'.



Image: Map and compass © Jago Miller.



Clockwise from top: Team members watch the first sod being cut; work has begun; Jasper the collie with Adam Nolan © Wasdale MRT.

members, Martin Young, our project lead, who has driven this important project forward with passion'.

The building has been designed by Richard Mottram of Egremont and further developed by WK Design Architects Ltd. After a comprehensive tender exercise, the contract was awarded to Roland Hill Ltd. The team has been supported by Baker Mallett who have provided invaluable expertise with respect to construction design and management regulation and also supplying the project quantity surveying services.

## PATTERDALE TEAM REPLACES STOLEN GENERATOR THANKS TO GENEROSITY OF SUPPORTERS

Over the Easter weekend, we reported that thieves had stolen the Patterdale team's mobile generator from their trailer during a fundraising event. This vital piece of equipment was used to run the team's promotional displays but, more importantly, to power laptops and communication systems in a major incident, and absolutely essential to day-to-day running.

Following Storm Desmond, the team realised it needed to improve its ability to remain self-sufficient in the event of a future major incident and installed a commercial generator to supply the rescue base and fire station with electricity for at least 24 hours. This was kindly funded by the Cumbria Flood Fund. The plan was to purchase a second portable generator to enable team members to operate remotely, away from the base.

Team leader Mike Blakey said, 'Following the theft, we were overwhelmed by the support we received when we asked people, via Facebook, to look out locally for our stolen generator. We received a generous



back a few years, the project began in earnest in 2014, thanks to Adam Nolan's dog Jasper, which went missing in the team's patch. Jasper was found by a member of the public and then rescued by the team but the story triggered a viral social media campaign raising over £51,000 plus Gift Aid.

Team chairman John Bamforth said, 'This is the culmination of a lot of hard work and donations by many people. I'd like to thank the CCF, NDA and LDSAMRA for their continuing support and several benefactors who left very generous amounts in their wills to make this project possible. Singling out individual effort in a team is never easy but I'd particularly like to thank one of our



Above: Patterdale team members with their TWO brand new generators! © Patterdale MRT.

## LAKE DISTRICT

### FIRST SOSDS CUT IN WASDALE

In early May, Wasdale team signed a contract to build a purpose-designed new base near Gosforth in Copeland, the next step to bringing their new base concept to reality. It follows an allocation from the Copeland Community Fund (CCF) of £218,043, earmarked funding from LDSAMRA of £12,000, and an interest in land granted by the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA).

After over 40 years in the village of Gosforth, the team decided a few years ago that they'd outgrown their current base behind the Kellbank. Built on land that is currently owned by the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority and leased at a peppercorn rent, the new base will be modern and fit-for-purpose with enhanced training and welfare facilities, communications and accessibility to the A595.

When LDSAMRA set up the Rescue 2020 fund, some years ago, one of the aims of which was to help fund significant projects which teams couldn't ordinarily afford.

Richard Warren, chairman of LDSAMRA said, 'We are very pleased to support the team from the funds donated to the region. Aside from being a fabulous new facility for the team, the building will significantly enhance the region's capability to deal with major regional incidents'.

Although the notion of a new base goes

donation from Nick Bentley to enable us to be able to replace the generator, and Stephen Caldwell of Generator Power Ltd offered to provide us a more modern, higher spec generator at a massively reduced cost.

'The Trail Riders Fellowship, coordinated by Craig Layfield, also raised funds and arranged to buy us a new generator. We couldn't believe the brilliant response from these guys. They even sent us an extra donation for the fuel!

'From what first appeared a nightmare situation, the very generous members of the Trail Riders Fellowship provided us with a new generator. As it turns out, there was even more kindness on the way to us, as Stephen Caldwell also delivered a generator and quietly announced that this was being donated to us, so we ended up with two identical new generators.

'We'd like to formally thank Nick Bentley, Craig Layfield, the Trail Riders Fellowship and Stephen Caldwell. These two new generators, of the highest specification, mean that not only are we better prepared to support our flood technicians when they go further afield but we can now get out to the various events we'd planned to attend across the county this summer.'



## LAKES AND MREW LAUNCH REVISED SAFETY LEAFLETS THANKS TO CICERONE

Cicerone has a long history of supporting mountain rescue safety campaigns. Over several years, they have sponsored leaflets specifically aimed at visitors to the Cumbrian fells, as well as the wider hillwalking public.

Based in Milnthorpe, Cicerone produces guidebooks for walkers, mountaineers, trekkers, climbers and cyclists so are ideally placed to work with mountain rescue in providing this potentially lifesaving information.

'At Cicerone, we seek to play a positive role in supporting charities directly associated with mountain and outdoor activities,' says Lesley Williams, of Cicerone, 'and we are delighted to sponsor these information leaflets.'

'The number of call-outs in the Lakes dropped last year by around 10%', says Richard Warren, 'but we still received a huge number of 999 calls for what we regard as totally avoidable incidents. These leaflets primarily target those people who perhaps need a little bit of help in preparing themselves for their outings onto the fells, many of whom won't have been high up on a mountain before.'

'The same principles of safety apply anywhere in the great outdoors, of course,' says Judy Whiteside, who designed the icons used in both versions, 'and the MREW version is designed to address those areas outside of the Lake District. The information included also echoes the advice available from the MREW website.'

Hillwalkers are encouraged to take the leaflets along with them, tucked in their rucksacks as a reminder of what to do and who to call in case of emergency. With this in mind, a significant improvement might be to produce water-resistant leaflets but this would incur more costs and would require some external funding support. Potential sponsors please take note! The Lakes version is available to download from [idsamra.org.uk](http://idsamra.org.uk).

**Copies of the MREW version are available to teams, individuals and businesses who would like to carry stock. Contact [EDITOR@MOUNTAINRESCUE.ORG.UK](mailto:EDITOR@MOUNTAINRESCUE.ORG.UK) to order**



## MID PENNINE

### CALDER VALLEY WELCOMES FOUNDER'S FAMILY TO BASE

In April, Calder Valley team members welcomed relatives of founder team member Will Sutcliffe to their base. Will was a well respected member of the team and sadly passed away recently. He always followed the team with interest and often



Above: Calder Valley team leader Ben Carter welcomes founder Will Sutcliffe's granddaughter Rosie to the rescue team base © CVSRT.

attended the team's meetings.

One of his two daughters, Hazel Stobbs, and his granddaughter Rosie were there to present the proceeds of a collection from Will's funeral (almost £500). In addition to this, Rosie recently came third in a national bouldering competition in Reading, and donated her prize of a £20 DMM voucher to the team. DMM kindly doubled the value of the voucher.

The team would like to thank Hazel and Rosie and all those who attended the funeral and donated to Calder Valley. Sincere condolences to Will's family and friends.



## NEW HARNESSES THANKS TO WEST YORKSHIRE POLICE

Calder Valley team is the latest group in the district to benefit from money returned under the Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA).

The district's Partnership Funding team bought ten specialist harnesses using money seized from criminals. The harnesses were presented to the team's equipment officer Richard Smith and deputy team leader Jonathan Cole at Halifax Police Station.

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Above, left to right: Superintendent Vince Firth, Lisa Raynor with Richard Smith and Jonathan Cole from Calder Valley SRT © CVSRT.

Superintendent Vince Firth said, 'We are delighted to be able to support Calder Valley Search and Rescue Team through money taken from criminals under the Proceeds of Crime Act. This money is going directly back to support the wider community and the fantastic work Calder Valley team members do each and every day.'

'We regularly work closely with the team, their support is invaluable to us, particularly when searching for missing or potentially vulnerable people. They do a fantastic job in supporting the communities of Calderdale each and every day and helping to keep people safe.'

## NORTH WALES

### KATE HUMBLE AND BBC FILM CREW VISIT OGwen

The film company, contracted by BBC Wales, was making a series about life along the Dragon's Back, a route from North to South Wales along the highest points.

Kate Humble, with her Welsh Collie called Teg started on top of the Great Orme where they met a tenant farmer.



Image © Babs Boardwell Photography ([babsboardwell.co.uk](http://babsboardwell.co.uk)).

## NEWSAR TEAM MEMBERS TIE A DIFFERENT SORT OF KNOT

Former team leader Iain Ashcroft and long-time partner Becky Vaughan, both of North East Wales Search and Rescue, were married in typical mountain rescue fashion in June, accompanied by stunning scenery and a Land Rover polished to within an inch of its life. Congratulations both!

'He's farming land recently bought by the National Trust for an annual rent of just £1,' says Chris Lloyd. 'For this, he has to farm to protect the ecology of this peninsula.'

'The company also wanted to look at mountain rescue, especially the work of the search dogs. Filming took place in April. Earlier in the week, the weather had been fine and we hoped the dramatic backdrop of Tryfan would make for some good footage. Unfortunately, good weather never lasts long, and the actual day was slightly hazy.'

'Team members and a couple of dog handlers met the film crew at Oggi base.'

Everyone was on best behaviour and it was Kate Humble who broke the ice with an expletive!

John Pailthorpe of SARDA Wales takes up the tale: 'When the BBC contacted OVMRO asking if Kate Humble could visit to film part of an episode for an upcoming series about people working and playing in the Welsh mountains, several members of the team were happy to help out.'

'Of course, the Snowdonia mountain weather did not make things easy. It was a blustery, cold and very wet day with only the odd break in the driving rain. As a dog handler herself, Kate particularly wished to meet Sally Armond and her search dog Spin, who have been valued members of OVMRO and SARDA Wales for around a decade.'

Spin is a small, smooth haired Border Collie with many years' experience as an air scenting Mountain Rescue Search Dog and

Clockwise from left: Enjoying the filming in liquid sunshine, Teg in the background intently watching proceedings; Ogwen's Jed Stone signs Kate's autograph book with Sally centre; Ogwen team members join Sally, Spin, Kate and Teg in a brief interlude from the driving rain. Images © John Pailthorpe.



## IRELAND

## IRISH TEAMS SAW RENEWED INTEREST IN THEIR WORK DURING 2016

A rising interest, particularly in the work of the search and rescue dogs, is attributed to the role played by Irish Coast Guard volunteer Catriona Lucas, who died in September 2016, during the search for a missing man off the Clare coast with Kilkee Coast Guard.

The MRI annual report pays tribute to Catriona's role in dog-assisted searches. The mother of two, an experienced member of the Irish Coast Guard's Doolin unit and a SARDA dog handler, was recently awarded a posthumous Clare Person of the Year award. She was also an experienced climbing instructor with many associated skills, ranging from first aid to boat coxswain.

Many of the twelve mountain rescue teams were also deeply affected by the loss of the four Irish Coast Guard Rescue 116 air crew — Captains Dara Fitzpatrick and Mark Duffy, Paul Ormsby and Ciarán Smith — who lost their lives in the crash off north Mayo in March. Team members, particularly those from the Mourne Mountain, Dublin-Wicklow and Glen of Imaal teams, who had trained with the air crew and participated in extensive shore searches on the west coast during the two months before the incident.

The report records that the Dublin-Wicklow and Glen of Imaal teams were the busiest last year, with 66 call-outs, while a 37% increase in Mayo's call-outs, totalling 51 last year, related in many cases to accidents on Croagh Patrick.

Mountain Rescue Ireland chairman Alan Carr said that SARDA membership had increased with more dogs and handlers from the south west in particular, and an increase in local search dog organisations. He said that 2016 served as 'another demonstration of the commitment of mountain rescue volunteers to those requiring emergency assistance in upland and mountainous areas.'

'However, the challenges of maintaining a 24/7/365 emergency response service in an entirely volunteer capacity remains' due to funding 'uncertainty'.

The organisation receives an annual grant of €69,750 and an insurance grant of €66,245, and its insurance costs last year were €71,760. Its income of €157,657 last year included subscriptions from members at over €7,800 and donations at over €8,400, and its outgoings amounted to over €212,000.

Other challenges facing the teams relate to vehicle replacement and the development of physical infrastructure to allow the storage, cleaning, inspection and maintenance of equipment.

**Top:** Image © Mourne MRT.  
**Left:** Image © Dublin-Wicklow MRT.



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with several finds under her collar. During filming, Sally wanted to emphasise that it's the relationship between dog and handler, functioning together as a team, that leads to them being a successful search unit.

'When Kate and the film crew arrived at Oggi base, her friendly personality soon put everyone at ease, not least Sally, who was not relishing her debut as a national TV star! Kate was also accompanied by her own dog, Teg, a rather handsome working Welsh Collie sheep dog.'

'The professionalism and good humour of the film crew, facing the adversity of keeping camera and sound recorders dry in the squally conditions, made a cold, wet day very enjoyable. The drone pilot had a particularly difficult task, but he did manage to get his machine aloft to take, what I am sure will be, some spectacular shots from the air.'

'During the interview, Sally emphasised that the unsung heroes of SARDA, are the volunteers who give their time to be 'dogs-bodies', hiding themselves high up in the mountainside among the rocks, so the dog teams can practise finding them. OVMRO team member Jed Stone, himself an experienced dog handler, embraced the opportunity, once again, to play 'hide-and-seek' with Spin, whom he has helped train since she was a pup. Jed found a good hiding place amongst the boulders below Clogwyn y Tarw, whilst Kate interviewed Sally about the work of search and rescue dogs in Wales.'

'When Sally gave Spin the command Away-Find! their training and experience working as a team was clearly demonstrated. Sally skilfully worked Spin, who quartered across the steep hillside into the gusting wind. It was at a distance of a few hundred metres that those of us watching could see Spin lift her head as she picked up Jed's scent to strike off towards the boulders where he was hidden. Having located Jed, and given him a thoroughly wet licking, she headed back to Sally to give a volley of barks and lead her back to the 'casualty'. It was text book stuff. We could clearly see that Spin had done this kind of thing, in training and for real, on many occasions. Spin seemed delighted to repeat the last section of the 'search' twice more, so the film crew could get some different angles and close-ups. A few more drone shots and then we headed back to base for a well-earned brew and to warm up.'

'The day was a great success, despite the weather, and we are all keen to see the final version on TV later in the year (to be announced). Kate Humble was a pleasure to

meet and made the event enjoyable for all the team members who kindly gave their time to assist. Final thanks must go to Sally and Spin for being prepared to put themselves into the public eye and, of course, for their long-term dedication to UK search and rescue.'

## NORTH EAST

## JD FOUNDATION STAFF ENJOY DAY OUT WITH TEESDALE TEAM

Sports retailer JD Foundation recently donated £250,000 to Mountain Rescue England and Wales and, in return, asked whether some of its staff could join a team for the day to see what we do.

The Teesdale & Weardale team were only too happy to oblige and so four members of staff from across the country, including one from head office, joined team members for their March exercise at Cow Green reservoir and Meldon hill — a not unsubstantial hill at over 2500 feet.

Two volunteer casualties, Linda Collins and partner Merv Stapleton from St Johns Chapel in Upper Weardale, along with a team doctor to oversee the treatment provided, were duly driven along a shooting track adjacent to the Pennine way to a point only one mile from the point which would become the 'incident site', the remains of a small building known as Meldon Hall.

'The weather was typical of March in the high Pennines,' says Scott Bissett, the team's press officer, 'with low cloud rolling in and out making visibility very poor at times, and almost constant light to moderate rain



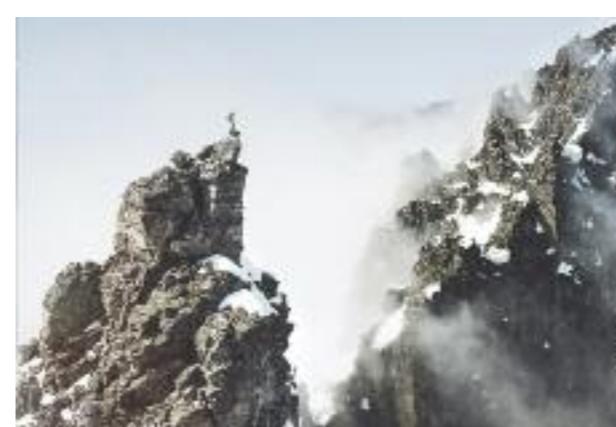
**Above:** The four JD Foundation staff pictured at the raging Cauldron Snout waterfall © Teesdale & Weardale SMRT.

providing a real test for team and clothing, but showing the staff from JD Sport the tough conditions in which we have to operate. By late morning more information had been gleaned on the possible whereabouts of the incident and the four JD staff were taken by Land Rover to a point approximately 1.5 miles away so they could walk in and witness the find and subsequent treatment.

'The casualties were located by search dog Sam and the rescuers moved in! When checked by medics, one of our volunteer casualties was found to be genuinely mildly hypothermic, so warmed up and walked off to the nearest Land Rover. The remaining casualty was treated for a mid-shaft femur

fracture and given analgesia before being wrapped in a cas bag, vac mat and loaded onto a Bell stretcher. Due to the wet conditions it was easy to skid or drag the stretcher over the heather making the carry-out easier and smoother for all concerned.'

At the after exercise debrief, one of JD staff remarked, 'I thought I was fit, but you guys are like machines!' There was also excellent feedback from our casualties who were very impressed with the level of care given. Everyone was cold, wet and very happy — a great way to end the team's winter hill training. TWSMRT would also like to thank the Birkdale estate and NWL for special land access.



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### PEAK DISTRICT

#### ASDA CREATES 7-INCH REPLICA OF DERBY'S 9-FOOT STATUE

At the end of 2014, after 34 years in the role, Steve Hilditch MBE stepped down as Derby team leader. Recognised for his commitment to mountain rescue and scouting with an MBE in 2015, Steve was also awarded the Silver Wolf medal by the Scout Association, a most prestigious award only bestowed on a few.

In appreciation of his hard work and dedication, the team wanted to create the 'Steve Hilditch Trophy' to be awarded to team members who epitomise the ethos of mountain rescue.

Martyn Turner, a former team member, had seen ASDA's '3DME' project, which allows anyone to have a miniature figurine of themselves created using 3D printing technology. The customer stands in a futuristic scanning pod and, in just twelve seconds, up to 1500 images are captured and stitched together electronically, the finished ceramic figurine available for collection within 21 days. This seemed perfect, but the only reference available was 'Peat Grough' — an impressive nine-foot statue weighing over 150kg. Clearly a plan was needed.

Tommy Hornby, ASDA's photo processing and 3D operations manager, thought it might be possible to create the required images using a hand-held version of the scanner. So, in secret, a few of the team joined Tommy to erect a scaffold system next to the giant and he spent an afternoon attempting to capture a likeness of the giant. It was a challenging

task — not only because of the sheer size of the statue, but the unwanted reflections coming off its high gloss finish — but Tommy returned to his office with the scans and spent a further day stitching them together and correcting anomalies. The result was unbelievable: a 7-inch statuette, complete with rope and climbing gear.

Two were made — one for Steve and his wife Kim and one for the team to use as an award — both mounted on wooden plinths made by Martyn's father and presented to Steve and the team in 2015.

Sadly, Steve lost his battle with cancer later that year but, before his death, he had nominated the first recipient of the award. At the team AGM in March, Kim presented it to Nic Berry.

Everyone at Derby would like to thank ASDA and Tommy Hornby for their generosity and support.

#### IAN HURST REMEMBERED

Buxton team has unveiled the latest addition to its response vehicle fleet with delivery of a new Toyota Hilux 4 wheel drive, now the team's primary response vehicle.

The Toyota Hilux Double Cab 4WD, 2.4D with Icon Specification in Metallic Silver, complements the existing fleet of three vehicles, and each has a specific role in the team's response depending on the nature of the call-out.

The total cost of replacement is over £45,000, funded by the magnificent support of the public. Continued careful budgeting built up a cash fund specifically targeted for the purchase but the individual help of two

PAGE 25 >



From top: Left to right, Julian Walden, Martyn Turner, Tommy Hornby, Steve Hilditch and Nic Berry; The Steve Hilditch trophy; Kim Hilditch presents the trophy to Nic Berry.

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Hardyal Dhindra for a very wet morning heading to Kinder Scout.

Our Blue Light was established in 2016, following the success of the Blue Light Walk and aims to improve the mental health, wellbeing and working life of the blue light emergency services. The relay is set to stop off at different cities and locations throughout



Above: Kinder team leader Neale Pinkerton and deputy Neil Woodhead, Hardyal Dhindra holding the torch, with the rest of the group © Kinder MRT.



Top: Zan Hurst with BMRT Vehicle Officer, Matt Simon and family members. Middle: The new Hilux out and about. Above: Close up of the inscription © Buxton MRT.

Higton presented the team with a cheque for £5,000 which she had raised with a sponsored climb of Mt Kilimanjaro in Africa. Becky was helped by the team and given treatment by the team doctor when she suffered breathing difficulties whilst running in the Christmas Cracker fell race in 2014. To say 'thank you' she set off on an amazing fundraising event.

The new vehicle has been dedicated to the memory of Buxton's late president, Ian Hurst MBE, who died earlier this year. Ian's widow, Zan, and her family, helped launch the vehicle into service. The team sends a huge 'Thank you' to all those who made the purchase possible — every gift is greatly appreciated.

## #OUR BLUE LIGHT MENTAL HEALTH RELAY IN DERBYSHIRE

On Saturday 10 June, Kinder team members welcomed the relay torch to the county as it passed from the north west to



Above: Red-jacketed mountain rescue mourners await the arrival of the funeral cortege © Buxton MRT.

## FOREVER REMEMBERED

It was a cold and blustery day in April but nearly one hundred fellow mountain rescuers from teams across the Peak District lined the churchyard to pay tribute to Ian Hurst MBE.

Ian had been a stalwart of mountain rescue from the early 1960s, a Justice of the Peace since 1986 and a Peak District National Park Ranger for nearly forty years. A great family man, he was just thirteen days short of his 74th birthday and missed seeing his ninth grandchild by just five days. He will be sadly missed by friends and colleagues from across so many different areas of the community.

Fellow team members carried Ian into the church for a poignant service performed by the Parish of Buxton Curate, Margaret Slyfield with a eulogy spoken by old friend and team colleague, Roger Bennett.

'He will be forever remembered by all who knew him, the sort of man that can never be replaced,' said Roger.

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## STAY VISIBLE WITH HAMMOND

Both the visibility and safety of rescue crews is paramount, and new features on the Hammond SR140 Search and Rescue drysuit are designed with this in mind. Managing director, Chris Hammond, explains the 2017 upgrades.

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The Hammond SR140 drysuit is available in standard sizes as well as made-to-measure for the ultimate fit. Neoprene seals, Bekina boots, and front or rear entry zips are all optional extras for added comfort and safety.

All drysuits are made by Hammond in Dartford, Kent and the company supply search, rescue and fire crews, as well as the Environment Agency, port authorities and offshore rescue services.

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**HAMMOND**



## LAKE DISTRICT

### KENDAL'S NEW WHEELS APPEAL GETS OFF TO A FLYING START

Kendal team members would like to thank Don Shore, a founder member of the Kendal based BOOTboys walking group for arranging a fundraising event to mark his 70th birthday. The event raised £2,710 — a fantastic start to the team's New Wheels Appeal.

'I am delighted' says Don, 'that so many friends were able to help commemorate my significant birthday in such an enjoyable way. Fortunately, we've never needed to call out the rescue team and I hope we never will. However, it's been a comfort to know they are there, just in case. They have done, and will continue to do, a great job in aiding those who have found themselves in difficulty on the fells. My thanks go to all who have supported me in this appeal to help KMSRT continue fulfilling their vital role.'

'The money raised by Don and the BOOTboys will be used to replace our ageing control vehicle,' says team chairman Dave Hughes. 'New technology like satellite broadband and digital radios is changing how we can coordinate our response to call-outs and our existing vehicle was designed to be used differently. We're hoping to raise £40,000 this year to customise a new vehicle and Don's efforts are very welcome! I'd also like to thank the people of Kendal who donated during our collection in the town centre recently, raising a further £1,350, which again will go straight into the New Wheels Appeal.'

Don and the BOOTboys have been walking the Lakeland fells as a group since 2004. 'In a typical year,' says Don, 'we will venture out 45 times and climb a total of 100,000 feet at an average of about ten miles per outing. We've a hard core of some ten regulars but several more who accompany us when they can and we had a really good turn-out for my 70th birthday walks.'

For his special 'big birthday' walk, his regular band of BOOTboys were accompanied by a number of honorary BOOTgirls and BOOTboys, aged from 4 to 72 years old — and a good day out was had by all.



Top: A few of the BOOTboys and BOOTgirls. Above: Don Shore. Images © Don Shore.



Above: Exmoor vehicle at work © Exmoor SRT.

## PENMACRA

### EXMOOR TEAM CELEBRATE 25 YEARS OF SEARCH AND RESCUE

'1992 won't seem long ago to many readers, but the world of search and rescue has changed a lot since then,' writes Phil Sparks, Exmoor deputy team leader. 'We started out as the North Devon Search Volunteers, but this was changed to Exmoor Search and Rescue Team, reflecting our first ever search, for an elderly lady near Minehead in Somerset. The tragic result brought home the reality of what the team was doing.'

John Gent and Sami Bryant Jones have been stalwarts since the first inaugural night in Barnstaple. Back then, the team's bank account was held in a tobacco tin, which progressed shortly afterwards to a tin with a key. Into this tin John, Sami and other members put their own money to buy the first set of radios.

John has been a long-standing search manager, where his eye for detail and thoroughness have been a vital asset. Many years ago he produced a set of plastic circles that correspond to the missing person behaviour analysis statistics and these have been invaluable. Nowadays, he spends hours playing with the IT and advising me on how to use it — but on a cold night several miles from the nearest phone signal, planning search from the bonnet of my car — it will be John's circles for which I reach!

'One unfortunate casualty of John's long membership has been his rucksack. Last Christmas his wife bought him a new one — his second in 25 years. We all look forward to training exercises near John's home, as a fried breakfast of eggs from his own hens or (being in Devon), a cream tea, is often provided.'

'The plots for his exercises are legendary. We've rescued Father Christmas stuck on a rock face and searched the moor for clues to the whereabouts of missing 'glamour' film makers. The props for that one were interesting and in the best possible taste.'

'Sami was secretary and then chairman in the period we rented our first base in Barnstaple and rapidly developing as a team. Then she moved on to her main interest of as the team's medical officer, a role in which she revels. Her love of first aid is only outshone by



## WINNING WALES

Two South Wales teams have been celebrating awards recently.

Western Beacons (pictured above) say a massive 'Diolch bawb. Fe Iwyddon ni!' to everyone who voted for them in this year's People's Projects. Their votes helped the team secure £44,100 in funding. Meanwhile, Longtown MRT received the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in June for service to the public, saving lives in remote places for more than fifty years. 'The award is in recognition of the work of team members past and present,' reads the team's Facebook page, 'and they should all be very proud.'

her love of chocolate. If the command were to search a field for a bar of chocolate, she would be scoring the fifteenth point on the Glasgow Coma Scale for 'obeying', unless of course there was a cow in sight.

'Sami is always at the front of the queue to be casualty for an RAF crewman or a fireman! However, the most memorable occasion was being 'rescued' from the beach by the RNLI. She now knows that the sea is wet and cold and lifeboats travel very fast. We had one very bedraggled medical officer that day.'

'Without John and Sami's dedication and hard work, many changes would not have been achieved with such thoroughness and integrity. All of us at Exmoor thank them for their time and dedication.'

The award category came under the Emergency Services Award with the team nominated by the daughter of a man rescued from a caving incident in Stump Cross Caverns seven years earlier. His daughter did a sponsored run for the team at the time and wanted to tell the story of how the team had saved her dad. Her citation was a most moving account of how grateful her family were. A promotional video of the team's work was shown on a huge screen, to huge applause.

Stray FM serves a wide area covering the Harrogate district as well as Skipton, Ilkley and the Dales. 'They're great supporters of the team,' says Derek Hammond, 'giving us so much airtime. We couldn't ask for more.'



Above: Left to right: Iain Geldard, Derek Hammond and Martin Bleasdale © Sira Studios.

## YORKSHIRE DALES

### LOCAL HEROES AWARD

Dinner jackets, not red jackets, were the order of the day for members of the Upper Wharfedale FRA as they collected a local heroes award from regional radio station Stray FM in May. The glittering ceremony, at the very prestigious Riddings Park Hotel near Harrogate, included some 300 invited guests and several local Olympic champions.



# peer review



Scarborough & Ryedale team members on their peer review © SRMRT.

## Post call-out hot debrief

TIM CAIN



It is 3.00am, the search has just come to a successful conclusion after eight hours of searching difficult ground in appalling weather conditions. The casualty was located by a hill party way off their intended route with life threatening injuries, but due to excellent cascare, and some innovative ropework, they were safely evacuated to the waiting Coastguard S92 and hospital. Team members are exhausted and looking forward to their beds. Valuable lessons were learned during the call-out, but how are they captured?

Peer review has identified that debriefing is a skill that may not be as well developed as it might be across mountain rescue. Post call-out debriefs, like post-training debriefs, tend to be — at best — informal narratives. Fatigue, emotion, time pressure, complex situations and 'unknown unknowns' all contribute to human error and omissions. These 'human factors' can result in the loss of valuable learning opportunities and potentially impact on a team's ability to continuously improve. The format which follows is designed to mitigate the inevitable human factors we all face following a call-out or training exercise.

### POST EXERCISE AND CALL-OUT 'HOT DEBRIEF' FORM

1. Purpose of the call-out/exercise. *(Insert outline of mission/task)*
2. Feedback *(Ask the whole group the following questions. Capture responses below and on the rear of the sheet)*
  - a. What one thing went really well?
  - b. What one thing didn't go so well?
  - c. Did anything out of the ordinary happen?
  - d. Did you have any equipment failures?
  - e. Does anyone have any injuries?
3. Key Learning Points: *(Ask the members present to comment on the following questions with a show of hands, enter a cross in the majority response box)*

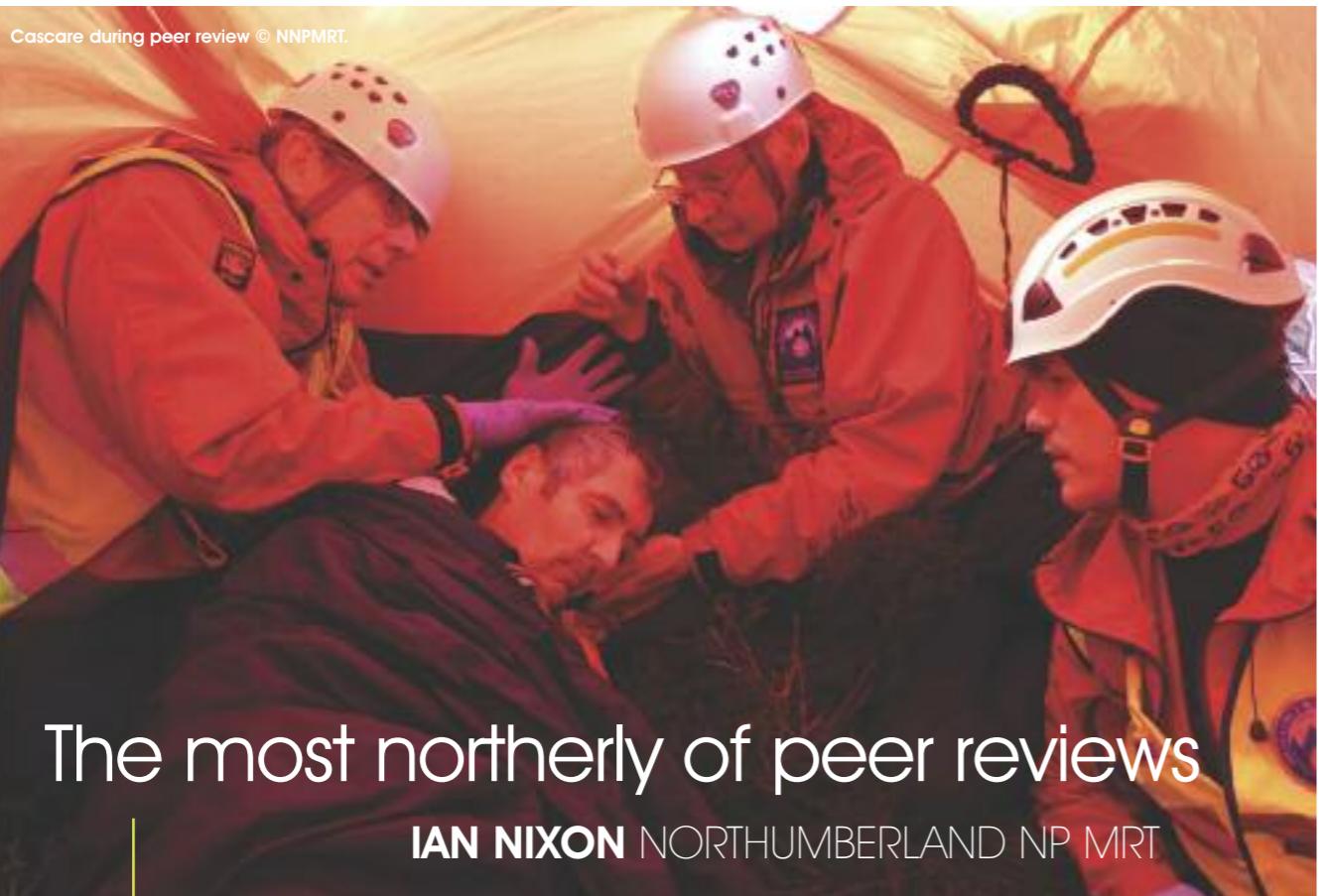
KEY LEARNING POINTS	DEFINITELY/OUTSTANDING	YES/GOOD	MAYBE/OK/	NO/AREA FOR DEVELOPMENT
Were we safe at all times?				
Did you observe any 'near misses'?				
How detailed was the Initial Information (Situational awareness)				
How clear was the verbal briefing				
How effective were radio communications?				
How effective was the Cascare?				
How effective was the IT? (SARMAN/SARCALL/SARLOC/ MR Map)				
Was our driving safe?				
How effective was our welfare? (Team members, feeding etc)				
How fit for purpose was the equipment?				
How thorough was our handover?				

Add detail to the notes below for any future action requirements

Name of debrief lead

Date

Note. The form can be stored in SARCALL before the incident/exercise is closed.



## The most northerly of peer reviews

**IAN NIXON** NORTHUMBERLAND NP MRT

Back in March three intrepid and very gallant mountain rescue team members headed north to a far flung corner of England. In fact, had they travelled very much further they would have been in Scotland! For those of us who are involved in mountain rescue in this part of the country, it meant only one thing... it was time for the peer review of the Northumberland National Park Mountain Rescue Team or as we're affectionately known as by our sister team, the 'Parkies'.

After much discussion the team's committee and operations group decided to engage in the process because, for us, the timing was right. The team's

operational leadership had changed two years earlier and we were well on the way to delivering a three-year development plan. Peer review provided us with an

ideal opportunity to review the progress we'd made and to identify areas for development.

The process of completing the question set prior to the weekend

was as a valuable experience in its own right. The weekend comprised of two socials where there was an opportunity for our reviewers to meet team members, interspersed by two long days where we were supported through a self-evaluation process.

Day one was spent at our base exploring all aspects of our operational procedures, training, vehicles and equipment, technical rescue and medical. Day two involved an exercise in the Lordenshaws and Simonside Hills area, a real time exercise based on an incident many, many years ago.

The whole process was highly beneficial and whilst there were no surprises the review very much helped us to confirm what we're good at and what we're not so good at. Areas of good practice highlighted by the reviewers included:

- The information sharing across the whole team with brief details of incidents circulated straight afterwards by the responding incident officer and a summary of all incidents in a month and updates on the outcomes of incidents provided in the team leader's monthly briefing.

- The skills framework developed and implemented by the team underpins training and provides for a structured programme of development for trainees and a means by which progress is monitored.

- The implementation of a simple tagging system for all

equipment, including medical, carried in both Land Rovers provides a visible, accountable system — at a glance you can tell what kit is out of the vehicle.

- The medcomms system whereby a casualty carer can call a highly-experienced and qualified healthcare practitioner within the team for additional advice over the phone/radio.

- The team's casualty carers, some of whom have extended skills, maintain currency and competency through periods of 'observation' with North East Ambulance Service Paramedics.

- The implementation and use of satellite broadband to enhance the management of incidents and communications no matter where the incident is in the team's large operational area, a significant proportion of which is not covered by a reliable mobile signal.

- The links with Northumbria Police and Northumberland Fire & Rescue Service (NFRS) were identified as being particularly strong and the inclusion of the team in NFRS's immediate flood response plan demonstrated the level of integration.

The review also confirmed that our practice is still developing in many areas, with the recording of individual training and skills being a key area for further development. Practice is currently limited to specialist areas such as casualty care and water but this needs to be extended to all skill areas going forward. The (over) reliance on

Tetra Airwave as the primary means of communication between control and hill parties, and the ageing VHF radios, many of which are faulty and can no longer be repaired, was identified as a vulnerability.

The things which made the weekend work and ensured we benefited from the process were:

- The preparation, preparation and even more preparation put in ahead of the weekend, ensuring most things went to plan!

- The commitment and enthusiasm shown by all team members and their willingness to engage in the process in an open and honest way — there's no point trying to hide things!

- The style and approach of our

were very well fed and watered, they were early to bed in three comfy rooms both nights, and were even chauffeured around, on day one at least!

As a team we've already begun to address the areas for improvement identified during the process. For instance, a form to support a structured 'hot debrief' has been introduced, the standard operating procedures all have clearly identified team officers as their owners, and funds have been swiftly raised to replace our ageing analogue high band radios with digital ones. The funds, including the MREW grant, will enable us to provide a handset to each member.

Having digested the feedback received from our reviewers, we now intend to refresh our development plan which will guide us through the next three-year period. We are also keen to share practice and continue to learn from others inside and outside of mountain rescue.

We have, for example, already shared our generic and dynamic risk assessments with two out-of-region teams — the dynamic risk assessment is based on practice adopted from NFRS.

Finally, the whole team would like to thank MREW for supporting the peer review process and our reviewers, Tim Cain, John Hulse and Mike Wakerley, who gave their time and had long journeys back home after a tiring weekend. ✎

**THE WHOLE TEAM  
WOULD LIKE TO THANK  
MREW FOR SUPPORTING  
THE PEER REVIEW  
PROCESS AND OUR  
REVIEWERS – TIM CAIN,  
JOHN HULSE AND MIKE  
WAKERLEY – WHO HAD  
LONG JOURNEYS BACK  
HOME AFTER A TIRING  
WEEKEND**

three reviewers was supportive yet challenging — the probing questions really did make us stop and think!

But what was really, really important was that the reviewers were well looked after. They



## Thoughts from a peer review

**ROGER HARTLEY** SCARBOROUGH & RYEDALE MRT

All our team were very positive about the process and looked forward to welcoming the review team to our patch. They arrived from the north and south on Friday night and were shown around the base and then directed to their accommodation.

At SRMRT we had arranged for the heads of our subcommittees (training, medical, ops, PR, equipment, vehicles and the members reps), to be present on Saturday for the mammoth question and answer session. As I was one of the reviewers on the first peer review undertaken, I can say that it's far better over a full weekend than over an evening and a day. Having said that the stress levels are probably equal on both sides of the table.

I think it's fair to say that each subcommittee has found improvements they could make as a result of this process. The reviewers also pointed out areas of good practice that should be shared around the wider MR community. This started one of the longest conversations

ie. how to disseminate this without it looking like bragging or the reviewers trying to impose their will on other teams. So, with that in mind, there is a list (not very long) at the end of this article of the areas the reviewers thought were good practice. If anyone wants any further info on them drop me a line and I'll share what we have. Maybe if every team that gets reviewed produces a list of good practice all other teams could dip in when needed.

So, a long day, leaving both reviewers and reviewed in need of refreshment ended. To give the reviewers chance to talk to the wider team and get the low down on the committee from the other team members we put on a barbecue and some refreshment. These

reviews do seem to revolve round the breaks in proceedings and I'm sure sometimes more is learned when questions aren't being asked.

The following day, despite our best efforts, the reviewers turned up for the exercise looking refreshed and ready to go. A couple of our team members had organised an exercise with the usual clutch of terrible accidents. The rest of our team genuinely didn't know what was coming including the incident controllers for the day.

For some reason we (I think that means 'I'), had agreed to host four reviewers. Dr Dave Strachan, Derek Hammond, Vicky Coumbe and, of course, Tim Cain so there was an ideal opportunity to put them all in one party,

make Tim the party leader and send them 'somewhere safe'. Clearly that wouldn't have been right, so they were thinly spread around control and the search parties. The exercise seemed to go well from what I saw, obviously there were things that could have been better but that's why we exercise in the first place.

Vicky was the first to leave as she had to travel all the way back to Plymouth (wherever that is). Several debriefs followed and everyone departed. All we had now was the long wait (probably seemed longer than it was), for the feedback and the returned question set.

We are now in the middle of the review of the review (if that makes sense), and here's the thing. The biggest part of the process is deciding which recommendations to take on board, that will either streamline our operational procedures or make our admin more efficient, or that we can happily ignore as irrelevant to us. This is probably going to take us another couple of months but we are already seeing benefits from the peer review process.

I just wanted to say a big thanks to Tim, Vicky, Dave and Derek for all the hard work they put in. I know it's a long weekend but you should know that it has already made a difference. ☺

### GOOD PRACTICE

- Dealing with complaints
- Integrating new members into the team
- Documentation of equipment maintenance
- Vehicle log books
- Call-out process
- Team's leadership and control structure
- Team social cohesion.



Image © SRMRT.

## January to March 2017

### Lake District

Coniston	7
Duddon and Furness	7
Kendal	2
Keswick	15
Kirkby Stephen	1
Langdale Ambleside	27
Patterdale	5
Penrith	6
(Last quarter: 75)	<b>70</b>

### Mid-Pennine

Bolton	21
Bowland Pennine	19
Calder Valley	21
Rossendale & Pendle	2
(Last quarter: 46)	<b>63</b>

### North East

Northumberland NP	1
Scarborough & Ryedale	11
Swaledale	7
Teesdale & Weardale	1
(Last quarter: 39)	<b>20</b>

### North Wales

Aberdyfi	4
Aberglaslyn	6
Kendal	2
Ogwen Valley	5
South Snowdonia	3
(Last quarter: 77)	<b>29</b>

### Peak District

Buxton	14
Derby	5
Edale	2
Glossop	6
Kinder	12
Oldham	4
Woodhead	4
(Last quarter: 68)	<b>47</b>

### Peninsula

Cornwall	4
Dartmoor Okehampton	17
Swaledale	12
Teesdale & Weardale	14
(Last quarter: 19)	<b>47</b>

### South Wales

Brecon	3
Longtown	7
Llanberis	11
(Last quarter: 5)	<b>10</b>

### South West

Avon & Somerset	5
SARA	3
(Last quarter: 7)	<b>8</b>

### Yorkshire Dales

Upper Wharfedale	8
(Last quarter: 18)	<b>8</b>

### Search Dogs

England	5
South Wales	3
Wales	4
(Last quarter: 13)	<b>12</b>

### Total

(Last quarter: 373)	<b>314</b>
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**EDITOR'S NOTE: PLEASE NOTE THAT NUMBERS QUOTED MAY NOT BE PRECISE FOR ANY GIVEN PERIOD. STATS SHOULD BE RETURNED TO THE STATISTICS OFFICER, NOT TO THE EDITOR.**

## RHINO FAWR HELICOPTER CRASH. AN INITIAL REPORT

### PHIL BENBOW

On 29 March, a privately-owned Twin Squirrel helicopter crashed into Rhinog Fawr in the southern part of the Snowdonia National Park. The aircraft had taken off from a private airfield near Junction 13 of the M1, and was flying to Weston airfield in Dublin for a family event. On board were five members of the same family.

The aircraft took off at 11:45 and was due to land at 14:00 at Weston, having overflowed Caernarfon Airport. It was last seen on radar at 12:58 over the Coed y Brenin forest. Concerns were raised mid-afternoon, with the MCA initiating a search of the Irish Sea by SAR helicopter. This was unsuccessful, and an inland search with a second helicopter was begun at around 18:30, based on the high ground on the helicopter's flight path, namely the Rhinog range which lies north of Dolgellau. However, the cloud level had been low all day and this restricted the possible search area.

Mountain rescue teams were alerted by North Wales Police at 22:00, the initial call going to South Snowdonia SRT. The NWMRA Silver cadre were alerted within ten minutes. A Silver cell was established in the police control room in St Asaph and all the NWMRA teams alerted for a possible major incident. Bronze control was set up at the South Snowdonia team base and search teams including RAF Valley MRS asked to assemble there for a first light search. Meanwhile, RAF Leeming travelled to North Wales, arriving by mid-morning on Thursday.

Overnight, still in low cloud, South Snowdonia and Aberglaslyn team members searched the area to the east of Rhinog Fawr, a complex area of heather and bilberry-covered rocky terrain, which is very difficult to traverse. In the early hours of the morning, they reported a strong chemical smell. Together with radar and phone data which had been worked up overnight by the Silver group, this produced a high probability search

area and, next morning, eight members from Llanberis and Aberglaslyn teams set off into the cloud to search the area to the east of the summit on Rhinog Fawr.

At about 09:20 they discovered the first of the wreckage from the missing helicopter and, soon after, the scattered remains of the aircraft and its passengers. These details were passed to Bronze and Silver control and team members tasked to protect the scene until the RAF Valley team arrived to mount a crash guard. They then descended to Bronze control at South Snowdonia team's base to debrief and pass the gathered evidence to the police.

At a Gold meeting that evening, it was decided the RAF would remain onsite overnight and the Air Accident Investigation Board and Police Disaster Victim Identification teams would deploy there next morning, to begin investigation work and recover the victims of the crash. Several NWMRA team members remained at the South Snowdonia base overnight in support of the RAF team members on the mountain.

On Friday morning, members of the AAIB were joined by members of the North Wales Police DVI team at the Bronze control with the intention of walking to the crash site escorted by RAF personnel. However, due to the nature of the terrain and the anticipated walk-in time, they were lifted by SAR helicopter as close as possible to the crash site near to the summit of Rhinog Fawr. It had been decided that to minimise NWMRA team members' exposure to the traumatic crash scene they would not be deployed to the crash site. Their role was to support

the RAF teams in casualty recovery down the mountain and to deal with potential further casualties from the police, AAIB and RAF personnel on the mountain.

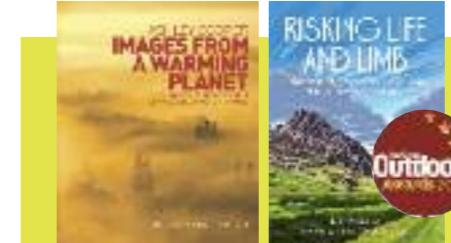
The AAIB and DVI teams completed their work by late afternoon. It was estimated it would take between three and four hours to recover each casualty down the mountain, to a position where they could be transferred to a vehicle. This was deemed unacceptable so, after some high-level negotiation between ARCC and the Silver group at NWP, a SAR helicopter was tasked to recover both personnel and casualties from the mountain.

The NWMRA teams worked well together, delivering a really good regional response, in exceptionally trying conditions. From the initial call, it took eleven and a half hours to find the crash site, mostly in darkness and poor weather, in a remote and difficult to access location: testament to the level of teamwork and commitment displayed by all those involved. There was excellent collaboration with both NWP, and the RAF MRS. The NWMRA Major Incident model worked well, and it was felt that MRT members were treated as true partners by police colleagues and others with good information sharing at all levels. The operational debrief for the incident was on 12 June and there will be a further article to follow to share the lessons learned.

Finally, we would like to send our condolences to the family and friends of those who sadly died in the crash. ☺

Image: Rhinog Fawr © John Lucas (cc-by-sa/2.0).

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## IN THE news

MREW media trainer and PR consultant, **Sally Seed**, looks at an aspect of publicity and PR and offers some advice.

### When is a press contact not a press contact?

It's just over a year since I wrote about social media in this column but a couple of recent enquiries, issues and calls from journalists have reinforced the need to mention it again.

In April 2016, I wrote:

**Journalists use social media too** — There've been a couple of times recently when teams have been surprised that a journalist has picked up on a story or a picture or a piece of video as 'we didn't send a release out to them'. Many teams now have 1000s of Likes on their Facebook pages and 1000s of Followers on Twitter and it would be unusual if none of those people were journalists.

More recently, mention was made at the MREW AGM of live streaming of video from an incident and there've also been examples of journalists picking up on team criticism of a casualty on Facebook when the press release itself had been carefully worded to avoid it.

All of this creates issues and I thought it would be worth expanding on them.

**Everyone's a critic** — you and your team need to agree your stance on criticism. I know it's not a uniform approach although there's a long history in MR of avoiding negative comments. I'd advise that criticism is still best avoided even though the media often encourage it as it makes a better news story or headline.

I'd give two reasons. Firstly, you don't want to discourage those in difficulties from calling on mountain rescue for fear of being embarrassed. Speed of call-out can be a big element in a positive outcome. Unnecessary delay could make things worse. Secondly, those same casualties and their friends and families are likely to be your most generous supporters — so it seems a shame to sour that connection from the outset.

This advice isn't quite so straightforward when the team's avoided any criticism but then the casualty posts something on Facebook and the world and his wife weigh in with comments, barbs and rants — sometimes all in the comment stream on the team's Facebook page. Your social media lead needs to keep an eye on this and, if necessary, remove or hide posts that go too far, reinforcing the positives with a team comment.

**Streaming video and pictures** — social media thrives on images and there's a huge temptation to follow that trend and post GoPro footage and phone camera shots at every opportunity. However, that immediacy is rarely a good idea and posting needs planning and control.

- Everyone on the picture needs to have given permission for their image to be used (including ambulance, air ambulance and other helicopter crews, bystanders and casualties). That's not just on real call-outs but also training situations with volunteer 'bodies'.

- There are clear rules about not featuring helicopter interior images or rescue footage online. These rules are part of the SAR-H training and briefing so please check and remind yourself of those rules. Don't rely on a cheery 'that's fine' from crew members on the day — it's not their decision.

- Think about possible outcomes. Basically, until you know that a casualty or search subject is safe and OK, don't post anything

— words or images. A fatality may be highly unlikely but it's not worth the risk of posting something inappropriate.

- **Timing is everything** — following on from that 'Think ahead' angle, it's worth reinforcing it to all your team members (and probationers and their friends and families) from Day 1. A simple post online about 'heading off to XXX for another call-out' seems pretty harmless but it can cause problems. There are teams that have had volunteers turn up to help — not ideal during a difficult rescue and sometimes confusing about someone's expertise too. And there are other teams who've had local news journalists turn up during a search asking questions and getting in the way of doing the job.

You can't control this if it comes from other emergency services but you need to have your own rules. Then at least you can be consistent in your responses, clear in your communications and you're not going to be seen as the culprits by the others involved.

This all seems a bit negative and it's not meant to at all. The connections between social media posts and print and broadcast media can be really helpful to MR and to spreading the word about safety and planning. It's just a case of being aware of the potential pitfalls and planning to avoid them.

If you've examples from your team, positive or to be avoided, I'd be interested to hear about them so please get in touch via [sally@stoneleighcomms.co.uk](mailto:sally@stoneleighcomms.co.uk) or via the editor. Thanks ☺

THINK ABOUT POSSIBLE OUTCOMES.  
BASICALLY, UNTIL YOU KNOW THAT A CASUALTY OR  
SEARCH SUBJECT IS SAFE AND OK, DON'T POST  
ANYTHING – WORDS OR IMAGES



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# Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. What is it?

**CHARLOTTE PEPPER MA MBACP**

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a set of symptoms following exposure to, or the witnessing of, a traumatic event. These symptoms typically include vivid distressing memories of the event or flashbacks (otherwise known as intrusion or re-experiencing); avoidance or numbing behaviour; an altered view of the self, others or the world; and a degree of hyper-vigilance, as if constantly on alert. PTSD can occur weeks, months or in the case of 'delayed-onset PTSD', years after the event.

There are many theories that attempt to explain why PTSD symptoms occur. Advances in neuroscience and the advent of Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) support the theory that traumatic experiences are not processed by the hippocampus (a sea-horse shaped structure in the brain involved in laying down memory), in the same way as normal experiences. As a result, the memories 'get stuck' in the brain. When the stuck memory is triggered, for example by a particular sight, sound or smell, a common feeling is that the danger is current and happening now, as if the memory — and the fear that goes with it — cannot be put in the past. Symptoms can persist for months and even many years without intervention.

## WHO EXPERIENCES PTSD?

Most individuals will be exposed to trauma at some time in their lives yet relatively few people will go on to develop PTSD. The lifetime prevalence is 10% for women and 6% for men<sup>1</sup>. This does not necessarily mean that women are more prone to PTSD; it could imply that women experience more traumatic experiences. The figures vary greatly depending upon age, type of trauma, number of occurrences and severity<sup>2</sup>.

The US National Comorbidity Survey (2001-2003)<sup>3</sup> show these figures vary widely for a given cohort. For example:

- 7%-8% of people in the United States experience PTSD at some time in their lives
- 86% of women refugees in Kabul and Pakistan
- 18% of UK professional fire-fighters
- 100% of US children who witness a parental homicide or sexual assault
- 44% of Americans reported at least one symptom of PTSD after 9/11.

## WHY DOES PTSD HAPPEN TO SOME AND NOT OTHERS?

Much research has been carried out to attempt to explain why PTSD happens to some and not to others when two or more people are involved in or witness the same



Adapted from Brewin, C. R. (2003, p.47)

event. From the table, it can be seen that the biggest determinate of whether an individual goes on to develop PTSD or not, is the degree of support available at the time of the trauma and afterwards<sup>4</sup>.

Lack of support can leave the individual feeling psychologically alone in their distress, and particularly vulnerable to PTSD. Other post trauma stress is the second most significant contributing factor (Risk Factor i). Evidence also suggests that it isn't so much exposure to the trauma that can lead to PTSD but what it means to the individual that is of great significance. For example, some may view what happened as a lucky escape whereas another exposed to the same trauma may feel inadequate in some way and go on to develop high levels of chronic distress.

## HOW DOES A PERSON WITH PTSD FEEL?

PTSD can be severely debilitating. Individuals can feel that they are a different person from themselves pre-trauma. They can often feel that they are going mad and at the same time feel powerless to do anything about it. Feeling that they can't cope with the symptoms or questioning why they

## WHAT TREATMENT IS RECOMMENDED?

The National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE), the body that advise the NHS on treatment, recommend three approaches for the treatment of PTSD<sup>5</sup>:

- Eye Movement Desensitisation

**CHARLOTTE PEPPER MA, MBACP** IS A DIRECTOR & TRAUMA THERAPIST WITH MEDRA COUNSELLING SERVICES, BASED IN NORTH WALES. MEDRA OFFERS GROUP SUPPORT FOLLOWING A TRAUMATIC INCIDENT AS WELL AS INDIVIDUAL THERAPY TO HELP REDUCE PTSD SYMPTOMS. MEDRACOUNSELLING.COM.

- Reprocessing (EMDR) Therapy  
 • Trauma-focused Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (TF-CBT) Therapy  
 • Pharmacological Treatment.

## WHAT HAPPENS IN THERAPY?

An important part of EMDR and TF-CBT therapy is psycho-education which helps the individual to see that their symptoms are common and their bodies and minds are normal; that the symptoms are, in fact, evidence that they are trying to protect the self from further harm. Self-compassion is encouraged, to help deter the individual from beating themselves up and adding extra burden to their uncomfortable feelings. Exploration through talking and therapeutic exercises help identify erroneous, harmful, negative appraisals with a view to modifying these forming new associations with the traumatic material. The individual is also encouraged to 'reclaim a life'. As a result, emotional distress is reduced.

More information can be found on the Royal College of Psychiatrists website at <http://bit.ly/1fly2ow>.

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## TALKING SAVES LIVES – TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF AND YOUR TEAM



Mind's Blue Light Programme has been delivering support to staff and volunteers across search and rescue, police, fire and ambulance services in England since 2015, and in Wales since April this year. Funded through LIBOR fines, the programme offers information and resources to teams so members can take care of their own mental health and support others.

Our survey of over 1,600 staff and volunteers across the emergency services shows that nearly 9 in 10 have experienced stress, low mood or poor mental health while performing their role, and one in four has contemplated suicide.

Regie volunteers in a search and rescue service. He said, 'I've been suicidal twice in my life. It was awful but I managed to get through it. I realised the best thing to do is to spread the message that we've just got to talk about it. That can be the difference between life and death.'

Mind's confidential Blue Light Infoline is available by calling 0300 303 5999 (Monday-Friday, 9am-6pm), emailing [bluelightinfo@mind.org.uk](mailto:bluelightinfo@mind.org.uk) or texting 84999. Trained advisers can offer advice on mental health to emergency services staff, volunteers, and friends and family and signpost to local support services.

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## Mental health in the search and rescue service - talking saves lives

Mountain, cave, lowland and coastal search and rescue staff and volunteers do an extremely challenging job, frequently encountering difficult and traumatic situations.

Mind are experts in mental health and we did some research into mental health in the search and rescue service in late 2015.

### Our research showed:

- 54% of search and rescue respondents had experienced stress, low mood or poor mental health at work.
- Despite this, only 12% of search and rescue personnel said that they had taken time off for these reasons.
- Search and rescue personnel identified trauma as a trigger for poor mental health 50% more often than any other factor.



That's why Mind set up the Blue Light Programme. We've been engaging with search and rescue service staff and volunteers across England for the past two years and our support is now available in Wales too. We can work together with services to help them challenge stigma, improve their overall approach to wellbeing and take care of their staff and volunteers.



### What can affect mental wellbeing?

We all have times when we have low mental wellbeing – when we feel sad or stressed, or find it difficult to cope.

Your mental wellbeing can be affected by work-related factors like:

- repeated exposure to traumatic events.
- impact of physical injuries
- workload pressures.

It could also be affected by other things in your life, for example, if you:

- suffer some sort of loss
- experience loneliness
- have relationships problems
- are worried about money.

Sometimes, there is no clear reason why we experience a period of poor mental health.

Simon volunteers for a search and rescue service. He said:

I've accessed support through the Blue Light Programme and it's encouraged me to be more aware of my own mental health and see that there was other people just like me who I could talk to and understand. It's made me understand how to support colleagues more than before too.

Mental wellbeing is just as important as physical wellbeing. If you work or volunteer in a search and rescue service, it's especially important for you to look after your mental wellbeing and seek support if you need to.



# We're here for better mental health

Get involved with Mind's Blue Light Programme.  
Visit [mind.org.uk/BlueLightSAR](http://mind.org.uk/BlueLightSAR)

### Contact our confidential Blue Light Infoline

Get helpful advice on mental health for you or a teammate. We can signpost to local support services too:

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## News from the Rescue Benevolent Fund: There for the mountain and cave rescue family in need

JUDY WHITESIDE, SECRETARY & TRUSTEE

Lots to report since the Spring magazine, not least a small change in working title for the benevolent fund – less of a tongue twister than the registered version!

First off, the reason we're here at all: to help team members and their families who have been affected by or suffered hardship as a direct result of their involvement in a mountain or cave rescue incident. Since our first faltering steps, three years ago, we've dealt with seven applications, which have continued to broaden the range of applications we receive – including two for physical rehabilitation, one for financial support, three for counselling and one for support with funeral expenses.

All seven have fallen within the guidelines set out in our Declaration of Trust, but there's no doubt that the varied nature of claims has interrogated the robustness of those guidelines!

### MENTAL HEALTH IN MOUNTAIN RESCUE

It's also raised concerns amongst the fund's trustees about the issue of mental healthcare within mountain rescue. Are we looking after our team members sufficiently well? When I first got involved in mountain rescue, almost twenty years ago, the prevailing culture – following a particularly traumatic or harrowing incident – was always, 'We go to the pub and chat things through over a pint. We're fine'. Or, as we say in the north, 'It'll be reet'. But maybe that's no longer enough.

PTSD, it is now very clear, isn't confined to the armed forces or those engaged in conflict, something that happens to other people. It can affect anyone – even ruffly tufty mountain rescuers.

Dave Whalley's honest account in April, about his own struggle post-Lockiebie and other high profile events, struck a chord with a number of people. The

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issue recently came up on the Members group, with a number of brave souls putting their heads above the parapet and talking about their experiences. The benevolent fund too has wrestled with the issues surrounding this and how we can or can't help.

With this in mind, I approached Charlotte Pepper, a director and therapist with Medra Counselling Services in North Wales, to explain PTSD from the therapist's point of view. You can read her article on pages 38/39.

I understand that MREW is also considering the impact on volunteers (who might otherwise be staring at a computer screen or engaged in relatively benign activities in their day-to-day lives), of the often extremely traumatic situations team members find themselves exposed to. Questions about how the mental health of team members is dealt with now form part of the peer review process. Teams are embracing TRIM training. Wheels are very slowly turning, the culture changing.

What we, as fund trustees have discovered, is that there is help out there. You are not alone. Mind (see opposite) have their Blue Light Infoline, and your local police authority will often offer counselling services in extremis. And, as a benevolent fund trustee, I am always happy to field enquiries and point you towards the appropriate help, where possible. On occasion, we may even be able to offer financial help, if your case fits the fund's criteria and other avenues have failed you.

Wearing both my hats, as magazine editor and benevolent fund trustee, I intend to keep this topic under the spotlight so, if this is an issue which concerns you, please don't hesitate to get in touch via [secretary@rescuebenevolentfund.com](mailto:secretary@rescuebenevolentfund.com).

### NAME THAT TUNE...

Which brings me to our change of name. As you read last time, our website launched

at [www.rescuebenevolentfund.com](http://www.rescuebenevolentfund.com) in March. And now we've adopted the working title of Rescue Benevolent Fund – which we think is a whole lot easier to digest than the full-fat version. We've also amended our strapline to 'For the mountain and cave rescue family in need'.

of the 'rescue family' to self-fund at these centres. If you wish to do this, email me via [secretary@rescuebenevolentfund.com](mailto:secretary@rescuebenevolentfund.com) in the first instance, and be aware that both the PTC and the FFC have their own application and assessment process.

Finally, we would encourage teams and team members to keep in mind the service offered by the fund. We may not always be able to help but if we can help, we will. If you think you could benefit from the fund's support, speak to your regional rep or drop me a line – same email address – and we'll take it from there.

Stay safe and be well. ☺



benevolent fund. Oh and our just giving page is up and running and looking very lonely. So any bright ideas, let me know.

### MENTAL AND PHYSICAL REHAB

We now have agreements in place with both the Police Treatment Centres (PTC) and the Fire Fighters Charity (FFC) rehab centres, so we can offer a range of physical and mental rehabilitation therapies around the UK, if this is a course of action agreed by an award from the Rescue Benevolent Fund.

It's also possible for members



### GIVING TO AND FUNDRAISING FOR THE FUND

- By BACS to the Benevolent Fund CAF Cash account, clearly marked with who you are! The details are: Sort code: 40-52-40. Account Number: 00023601. Charity number: 1152798.
- Give via [justgiving.com/rescuebenevolentfund](https://www.justgiving.com/rescuebenevolentfund)

# Using the Moodle Virtual Learning Environment

**AL READ MREW TRAINING OFFICER**

Over the last couple of years MREW has begun to develop and use Moodle as its preferred virtual learning environment (or e-learning), alongside the iSAR e-learning environment for the SAR-H stage 1A training.

Moodle is free open source software that is hosted on the MREW server and access is available to any team member and others who have a proven need for access. It's been around since the early-2000s and is increasingly being adopted and adapted by a large number of institutions, including the Open University which supports over 250,000 students using it.

It has a number of features that, hopefully, will make national training more accessible to all team members (assuming you can access the internet). MREW teams are spread throughout England and Wales and having access to Moodle means that every team member should be able to gain access to materials that may help with training, be it as an instructor or a student. The courses can also act as a useful repository of information and documents that support operations as well as some administration type activities (for example the training subcommittee makes use of Moodle to share information to its attendees. Figure 1).

## HOW DO I GAIN ACCESS?

Moodle is accessed via the web using a normal web browser such Internet Explorer, Safari, Chrome etc. It can also be accessed via various apps available to mobile devices once you have downloaded, installed and provided your log-in details.

You will be provided access via a user account and, to set one of these up, an email address (ideally a team one), your full name and your team is needed. Send this to: moodlesupport@mountain.rescue.org.uk.

You will then usually receive an email with your username and a password that you will be asked to change.

If you forget your password, Moodle provides a way for it to be reset automatically but if that does not work

then an email to the above address should the right information to you are some point.

Once you have access to Moodle, you can update your profile in much the same way that you can on Facebook.

## COURSES IN THE MREW MOODLE VLE

Once you've gained access to Moodle you will see that you will have access to various online courses. A lot of the courses are open and allow 'guest' browsing so you see the content of the course. Others are more limited and you may need to request access to the course.

Some courses are not visible to team members unless they have an instructor or manager level role (and the same applies to hidden topics within a course).

## USING MOODLE

Moodle has many ways to provide learning to participants, these include:

- **Simple topics** bring together different content text, files, pictures and video to provide a session that can be worked through.

- **Forums** allow participants to post and receive information. Usually a forum is based inside a course so it allows participants to share ideas, comment or generally discuss the different themes from the course. In many courses there are also hidden forums available to instructors to help develop and manage the course and its content, providing a useful record of how the course was developed.

- **Books** offer a more structured page by page approach and can include links to other useful documentation and resources.

- **Lessons** are similar to books but allow more assessment of progress with the use of questions to check someone's understanding as well as allowing some branching to allow

deeper exploration of subjects if it is wanted.

- **Quizzes** draw their questions from a question bank so the people can check how well they've learnt something or be pulled together to create an exam paper.

A great advantage is that Moodle allows people to learn at their own pace and can also help with offering more background information that can be covered during any course, provide pre-course materials to help people read into what they may be doing.

A range of images is also provided so they can be put together to show some of the above topics.

## WHAT CAN'T I DO?

Using Moodle does need a participant to behave in the best interest of others, and it does have an acceptable user policy. For example, a lot of material used to create content has a copyright associated with it and the material might not be available to be downloaded and used outside of the MREW context. If that does happen that material may have to be withdrawn so others then lose access to it.

## LOOKING FORWARD

Moodle will take time for content to be developed and it is useful to have a range of people who can take on different roles within the Moodle support environment. Course content is often time consuming to produce, especially content that is more interactive or pulls in a range of different ways of learning.

Not everyone is happy with computer-based learning but many items can be printed to help, however, Moodle does provide a much wider access to materials that can help with training team members, be they just starting or to the more experienced team members how wish to pass on their hard-earned experiences. ☺



From top: Figure 1: Training subcommittee; Moodle lesson; Moodle forum; Moodle courses.

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# Boxing clever

## LYLE BROTHERTON

The dictionary definition of 'Boxing Clever' is to use inventive thinking above all other attributes in order to achieve an end goal and this is equally apt for Boxing in navigation. It is much underused and people often try to circumnavigate obstacles, such as rough terrain or marsh ground by walking its edge and invariably get stuck! The bottom line is that Boxing circumnavigates these and other obstacles and keeps you on your original bearing.

Boxing requires practice and, like all navigational techniques, should be second nature for mountain rescue responders so they are not having to think how to, rather where to and concentrating on searching, stretcher carrying etc.

There are three levels of difficulty for Boxing: Rough, Pure and Stepped. Learning them all will put you at the top of your game! The golden rule for Boxing is 'DO NOT MOVE YOUR COMPASS BEZEL'.

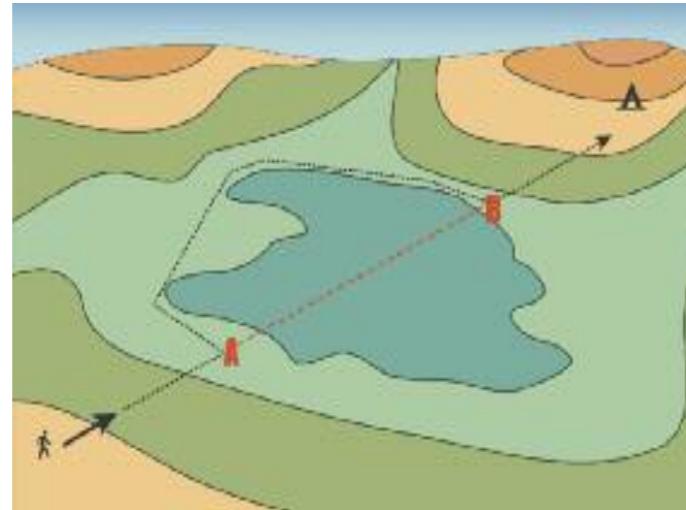
**LYLE BROTHERTON**  
IS FOUNDER OF THE  
ULTIMATENAVIGATIONSCH  
OOL.CO.UK CHARITY  
AND AUTHOR OF THE  
ULTIMATE NAVIGATION  
MANUAL.



### ROUGH BOX

Used where you can clearly see to the other side of the obstacle and the obstacle is well defined, such as a lake.

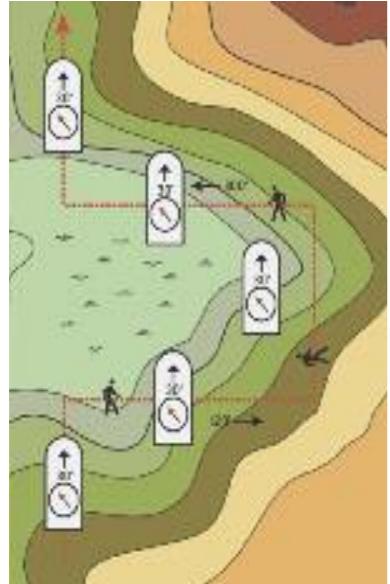
1. As you approach the obstacle, in this case a lake, identify a very clear intermediate landmark that is on your course beyond the obstacle.
2. Stop at a point before the obstacle (A) that you will be able to see once you have reached the landmark (B).
3. Circumnavigate the obstacle to the landmark (B). Once you have reached it, turn around and confirm that you are in the correct place by taking a back-bearing to the point before obstacle (A).



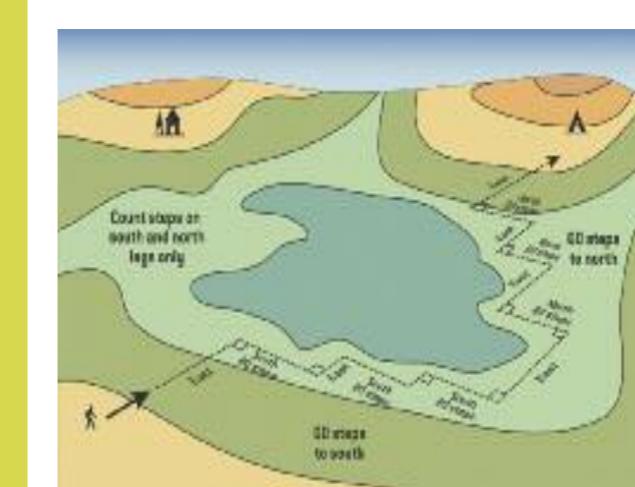
### PURE BOX

Used where you cannot see the other side of the obstacle.

1. Stop at a safe distance when you reach the obstacle – in this case a bog. Estimate its size, either from the map or visually if it is not on the map.
2. The detour starts at right angles to the bog by choosing either east or west on your compass.
3. As you have been walking on a bearing the needle of your compass will be pointing north. Rotate your body until the red north of the compass needle points to either east or west on the compass bezel.
4. Pace this bearing until reaching the edge of the bottom of the bog and when it is safe to, walk forwards again and stop. Turn and follow your original bearing.
5. On reaching the edge of the bog, and when it is safe to walk across the top, stop. Then rotate your body until the red north of the compass needle points either east or west on the compass bezel — whichever is the opposite of the start of your detour.
6. Pace this bearing using exactly the distance that you originally paced and stop. Turn and follow your original bearing.



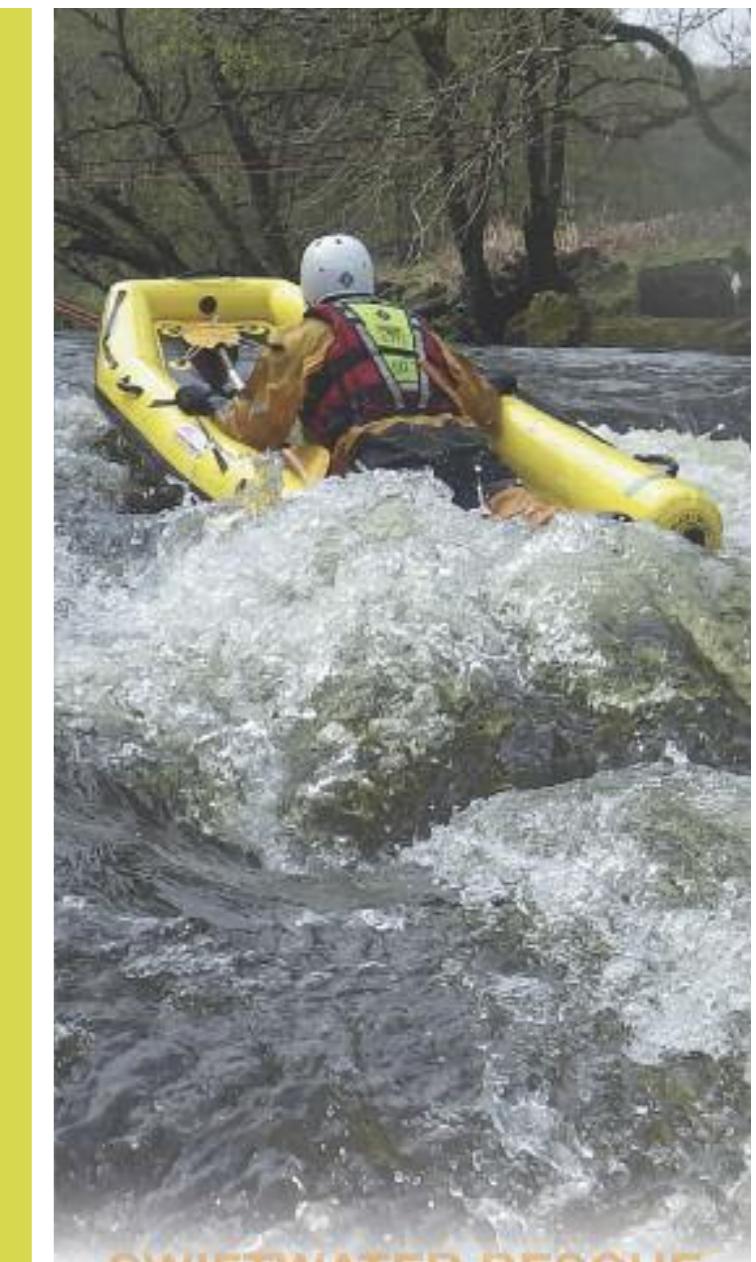
**IN WINTER, WHEN  
BOXING AROUND  
SHEER DROPS,  
TAKE A VERY WIDE  
MARGIN FROM THE  
EDGE BECAUSE OF  
POTENTIAL  
CORNICES.**



### STEPPED BOX

Used if the obstacle is particularly large and irregular in shape.

- 1: Stop at a safe distance when you reach the obstacle, facing it. The detour starts at right angles to the obstacle by choosing either east or west on your compass.
- 2: Rotate your body until the red north of the compass needle points to either east or west on the compass bezel. Counting your paces, walk in this direction until reaching an area where it is safe to walk forward again, then turn and follow your original bearing until reaching another area where you need to detour, and stop.
- 3: Again, rotate your body 90° in the same direction as Step 2, and pace this bearing until reaching an area where it is safe to walk forwards again, stop and add these paces to your first east/west part of the detour.
- 4: Repeat this as much as is required to reach the top edge of the obstacle and when it is safe to walk across the top and stop.
- 5: Rotate your body until the red north of the compass needle points either east or west on the compass bezel — whichever is the opposite of the start of your detour. Pace this bearing using the total east/west distance you covered and stop. Turn and follow your original bearing.



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Scarborough and Ryedale Mountain Rescue Team

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# When y'all is lost

## KEVIN BROOKER

GPS? FITBIT? SRI? The digitalisation of navigation is leading us seriously astray. Have we gone too far to find our way home?

Our sophisticated, professional, out-of-town house guest has an appointment across the city and asks for guidance to a well-known location. 'Easy: just head straight south until you hit 17th and it's two blocks right.' She nods for a moment, yet with a look of puzzlement. 'Um, which way is south?'

It's a good thing I'm painfully aware of the assault that is 'mansplaining', so we don't discuss the fact that it is noon on a cloudless spring day in a city built on a strict north-south grid pattern. All I do is escort her to the front porch and point down the street at, you know, the sun.

It would be swell to think that humans aren't losing the basic skills of navigation, but experience and science both teach us that we f\*\*\*ing well are. Granted, our centuries-long evolution into urbanites has already reduced the life-or-death consequences of knowing neither where we are nor where we are going. But once you add in our ever-increasing willingness to depend on electronic aids, flawed as they and their users are, any hope of our retaining innate directional skills seems doomed. A passenger mentality is thus becoming humankind's default pose.

And what are those innate powers? Sexually dimorphic, to be sure. Studies of human navigation, of which there have been many, indicate that women appear to favour the mental logging of landmarks, while 'mansplainers' lean towards establishing a map-like schematic in their minds. Beyond that, the science gets murky, if occasionally magical. There is, for instance, evidence that our brains have a neural response to Earth's magnetic field. Wow, actual spideysense. Of course that too is likely in a state of decay.

It is thus useful if we have any instinctual skills whatsoever, because public education never saw fit to teach everyday navigation in my time, and doesn't seem any more interested in the GPS era. To me that is a terrible oversight, and therefore reminds me of another key life skill,

the one and only thing Canadians are all required to do — fill out an annual tax form — which was likewise never brought up in school.

So of course we're going to take the easy way with smartphones and vehicle guidance systems. But, as we know, for numerous reasons they often simply don't work. When they do, many people can't read them or even respond appropriately to their commands. Who among us has not experienced a situation where associates failed to make a meet-up because their nav tool led them astray and then they got confused about it? Inevitably they wind up calling fellow mobile phone users for directions — time-wasting activities which probably would have been avoided with a few pen strokes hastily scribbled on a napkin. If I were a business running a mission-critical operation with multiple mobile participants, I would seriously consider banning GPS use, except as a last resort. Such problems have

exploring a remote massif, and only ignored at one's locational peril. Of course, mountain dwellers confront navigational challenges every day, though often subconsciously. We know that when walking some place unknown, it's vital to turn round periodically to register the landmarks we need to spot when it's time to retrace our steps. We also don't — or shouldn't — need a FitBit to have a general idea of how fast we're going, the amount of elevation change and how long we've been at it.

Yet we can be too smug. Navigation is relatively easy where you can see everything at once. But drop a savvy BC hiker into the unending sameness of the US Midwest on an overcast day, and all bets are off. It's therefore essential to recognise our deficits. I know, for example, that my own star knowledge is insufficient. Under a clear canopy, no problem. But if all I get is one brief hole in the clouds, that doesn't happen to contain, say, Orion, I know I'll be stumped.

Next up: driverless cars. And we think we're passengers now?

It's time to start the resistance. Make navigation a life-time learning and don't forget the kids. If we let that one skill terminally atrophy, then all will be lost.

KEVIN BROOKER IS A CALGARY-BASED WRITER WITH A GENERALIST BENT. HE IS A REGULAR CONTRIBUTOR TO THE CALGARY HERALD AND HIS ONGOING COLUMN IN THE KOOTENAY MOUNTAIN CULTURE MAGAZINE HAS SOMETHING OF A CULT FOLLOWING. THIS ARTICLE WAS FIRST PUBLISHED IN THE SUMMER 2017 ISSUE (LEFT) AND REPRODUCED HERE WITH KIND PERMISSION.





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## OBIT



### ARCHIE ROY OBE

Archie Roy will be remembered by many in mountain rescue – not just in Scotland but across England, Wales and Ireland too, through his involvement with the UK MR conferences. **Bob Sharp** describes his close friend, next-door neighbour and Lomond team colleague.

Archie became a member of the Lomond MRT in 1989, serving as operational member, equipment officer and latterly trustee. We'd met a few years before and I knew him to be a keen mountaineer and aspirant Munroist. When the team needed extra personnel to help with a large-scale search, I cajoled him into joining us. He seized the invitation with immediate enthusiasm.

At the time he was a senior civil servant responsible for the UK's Benefits Agency and some 70,000 employees! He had chosen not to live in London but to commute almost every day from his home in Scotland. Mountain rescue opened up a new dimension to his life, respite from his heavy workload and enormous responsibilities, regular forays into the Scottish mountains and, most important, an opportunity to help others less fortunate. That was Archie's style throughout life.

Very quickly he became a key team member and, whilst not able to attend all rescues, his wise counsel, quiet authority and canny ability to make important decisions when most of us were flailing, ensured the team ran smoothly at times of great stress. He played a significant role when the team faced 'competition' from a rogue rescue organisation intent on taking over our patch. His ability to deal effectively with confrontation, communicate easily with senior members of national organisations and manage publicity successfully helped the team surmount the challenge.

It was clear early on that Archie had an utterly selfless approach to the team's work. Typically, he was always the first to volunteer when others might back off. He involved himself fully (and often organised) fundraising events, and when other team members had left the post following a rescue, he would remain cleaning the vehicles and sorting out gear. He always considered others before himself. This was epitomised on a rescue in which he

suffered a severe leg injury. Tasked to climb to the summit of Ben Lomond to serve as a radio link, he fell through a snow bridge and suffered severe hyperextension of his right leg. In considerable pain and in need of urgent medical attention, he insisted I leave him to take up the link position and that the team continue searching for the missing girls. I reluctantly agreed and it was two hours before he was eventually airlifted to A&E. So severe were his injuries, he was off work for over six months.

On another occasion, he revealed what a true team player he was. Descending the Cuillin ridge, we witnessed a walker fall several hundred feet from Collies Ledge. Within seconds, we located the man and proceeded to apply first aid. There was little need to talk as we coordinated our efforts in harmony. Archie's calm

role at several UK MR Conferences. He was a key figure with RESCUE 2020, bringing to bear his outstanding interviewing skills. As his 'scribe', I marvelled at his capacity to engage people in a friendly way whilst teasing out critical and revealing details that might otherwise have been hidden from view.

He struggled with ill health for the final four months of his life, but continued as a trustee and also to critique my efforts at writing notes about mountain rescue. Indeed, I suspect that everything I have written for this magazine over the years has received a light touch from Archie's wide knowledge and wisdom.

Archie Roy was one of our unsung champions. When he spoke at a meeting, everyone listened. His wise advice was often sought and his selfless approach was a lesson for us all. Held in great



**Top:** Archie and Morag Roy on the John Muir Way, his last ever hill walk. **Above:** Archie and team members after just completing The Great Munro Bash, a fundraising event organised by Archie but also designed to break the Guinness record for climbing the four most extreme (east, west, etc) Munros in Scotland.

affection, one of the team's two vehicles was named after him when he retired from active service a couple of years ago. 'Lomond Archie's' legacy will continue for many years into the future. ☀

# search dogs



## It's a dogsbody's life

PETER SAPSFORD LAKES DOGSBODY

'Great God! This is an awful place and terrible enough for us to have laboured to it without the reward of priority.' Captain Scott, speaking in 1912, might have had in mind being a dogsbody ascending to the edge of a Lakeland forest on a warm summer's evening, surrounded by a few thousand unfriendly midges and waiting in deep grass for the last dog to make the 'find'. To be honest, Captain Scott had tougher challenges, but it's fair to question why do search dogsbodies do it?

The answers are usually about liking dogs and wanting to do something to support such a worthwhile organisation as the search and rescue dogs.

For me the start of 'dogsbodying' came about after hearing the experiences of a long-established 'body'. I'd recently retired, had the time, expressed some interest and was invited to go along and see what it was like. I found it fulfilling to be with such clever dogs and took an interest in the training and development of individual dogs over the months and years.

Of course, their training would be impossible without volunteer bodies to use for practice. Being out on the mountain sides is enjoyable anyway and these training sessions add a valuable purpose to a nice day out.

One definition of a dogsbody is that it's a person who does unpleasant tasks others don't want to do: perhaps hanging about in obscure locations for lengthy periods in all types of weather?

Having listened to what is to be achieved by the training session, the first task is to get to the location the assessor requires. This is often a joint problem in agreeing the description of sections of a hillside for the best body location. It can often be something like, 'See that pointy-shaped patch of heather with a small crag to the side, up there near the green/brown grass? Find somewhere suitable in there...'

As you might expect, by the time you've trekked up to the area it looks nothing like the verbal description from below.

Next, the local wind direction and speed can be relayed to the assessor to help plan the shape of the search area and the search routes. As a lay observer of search dogs in action, I find the effect of the wind to be the most interesting and unpredictable. The handler can be expecting one thing, then it changes. The wind affects how the dog

searches and how far away from me the dog first picks up my scent.

With the dog approaching from downwind with a moderate direct breeze blowing, my scent can be picked up well over a hundred metres away. Then there are the occasions when the wind is variable and the dogs have difficulties even fairly close to my hiding place. I've seen times when the wind has picked up my scent, blown it down the hillside and dumped it down at a small location. The dog then investigates that location and decides the scent isn't helpful and no-one is there. Brilliant!

It helps if there's no ground scent leading directly into the location — after all the aim of the exercise is to find the body by taking advantage of the air scent. The dogs are not following a trail for a specific person but seeking the scent of someone in

Hungry midges, long grass, unsuspecting mountain bikers and slobbery dogs — what's not to like?

the search area. They cover the area by mixing free 'hunting' and roaming with direction and control from the handler. At the body site, bodies keep the area free of scraps of food and dog toys that would be a distraction.

After finding the body, the dog is expected to indicate and convey the location by barking at the body site, then returning to the handler, barking, then back to the body with enough repetitions of this to get the handler to the body. As bodies, we're frequently told to do nothing until the handler gets there. Then the excitement starts.

After a significant bark the body is expected to erupt into action, become an animated nutcase and

show the dog that this resurrected body is the most entertaining option in the area, assisted of course by the mandatory squeaky toy. This is the dog's reward for all its hard and professional work!

The dog's response depends on its age, experience and ability and the younger dogs possibly get over-excited. Luckily, I haven't been overlicked or walked on by either dog or handler. When it's all calmed down, the assessors and handlers can benefit from a body's detailed descriptions of what happened from the first contact and how long it took for the dog to respond.

The real challenge and achievement, of course, is the handler and dog's two years of training and then, after achieving graded dog status, continual training and call-outs. As a dogsbody the whole experience is very satisfying and occasionally funny.

One evening earlier this year, I was asked to go deep into Whinlatter forest and hide as an 'upright' body behind a tree. Alongside a narrow track, and in the pitch darkness, I was surprised to see a head torch approaching, earlier than I'd expected. It turned out to be a mountain biker making his way up an unofficial track.

I was leaning against a tree and he would be passing within touching distance. What should I do? Warn him I was there? Creep away deeper into the forest and risk being seen acting suspiciously? Or do nothing, be spotted at the last moment and frighten him off his bike? I chose to do nothing and luckily, he was concentrating on his torch beam lighting the track, not noticing me right by his shoulder. If he had been a dog he would have known of my presence a minute or so earlier. ☺

**Main photo:** Search dog Rona with Keswick team members and the Air Ambulance © Rob Grange.



## SARDA IOM starts the next chapter in an exciting journey

**JIM MACGREGOR**

Over the last twelve years, since its formation, there have only ever been two dogs on the call-out list with SARDA IOM, which covers the whole of the island (220 square miles). This constantly poses a high dependency on the two handlers to cover the area and contrary to many people's views, the majority of the island is rough moorland.

Over the last two years the two search dogs on the call-out list have continued to respond to a variety of incidents and also attended call-outs when training in other areas such as North Wales and England.

Jim MacGregor and Mountain Search Dog Star, have now been operational for over ten years. Jim qualified as an NSARDA assessor and is currently treasurer for NSARDA.

Gary Wright and Holly qualified as a full Lowland Search Dog team when SARDA IOM held their first

assessment on the island. This coincided with SARDA Wales visiting the Isle of Man for a week and carrying out a great training week in glorious sunshine, further cementing the strong working relationship between the two organisations.

New beginnings have come about in the last twelve months with the addition of two new pups, securing continuity and innovation for the future.

Marc Marshall and trainee search dog Matt have begun their training, passing the stock and obedience

tests at six months. Matt has been funded through NSARDA by a charity set up in memory of Matt Leach by his partner, and Matt now has his own Facebook page — search for @Matttheseachandrescuedog. He's making great progress towards becoming the island's next air scenting dog.

Jim MacGregor has started on his own next chapter, training a wired haired pointer (Ruby), kindly sponsored on the island by Pokerstars. Ruby passed her stock and obedience tests at ten months and is now making progress to become a trailing dog. SARDA IOM reviewed the types of call-outs we receive in the Isle of Man and decided a trailing dog would be hugely beneficial.

The organisation continues to forge strong relationships with other SARDA organisations and has a policy of being viewed externally at least once a year to maintain the high standards set. We continue to do school talks, exercises with St John cadets, IOM police cadets and joint exercises on the island. ☺

**Left:** Malc and Matt. **Above:** Search dog Matt © SARDA IOM.



## SARDA England news

**JACQUIE HALL**

Sadly, our dogs don't last forever and a new generation of SARDA England dogs is starting to emerge as some reach the end of their career.

Search Dog Jake, handled by Tim Hollinshead of Cleveland has sadly had to be retired due to an ongoing injury but Jake now has a young aspirer in the household: 12-week-old Labrador Murphy. He was joined in the SARDA puppy class at Carlton in Cleveland by Border Collie Chief, also twelve weeks old and owned by Tony High. Tony already has a fully graded Border Collie, Isla.

Occasionally, handlers opt to take on a rescue dog instead of a puppy. Nick Shepherd was tipped off about a beautiful (and lively) six month old German Shepherd bitch



## SOLIDARITY OVERSEAS SERVICES MALTA WITH URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE K9

**HAROLD BURROWS MBE**

NSARDA assisted in a major incident exercise, Novex 2017, in Malta over the weekend of 29/30 April. There were search teams from Iceland, Norway, Italy, Malta Police and USAR K9 Malta taking part, with dogs and humans searchers. The exercise was put in place by John Gera and his team in USAR K9 unit with backing from SOS Malta.

### SATURDAY 29 APRIL

Handlers and their dogs were picked up from the airport at 22:30hrs on 29 April and taken to 'home' for the exercise. There they were briefed and given fifteen minutes to have their gear together and be ready to depart for the search area. Once at the disaster area, a full briefing and maps of the search area were given. Each team was allocated an area to search, along with an aerial Google map of the search area. As teams made a find of a casualty, the location and condition of the casualty was relayed back to search control. Final debrief was held with us all getting back to base for 03:30hrs.



### SUNDAY 30 APRIL

The day began at 0600hrs with breakfast and a full exercise briefing showing the extent of the disaster area to be searched, and the amount of the hillside that had fallen away. Explosives were still on site and care had to be taken and a safe route across the area established. All dogs and handlers had to be winched across the disaster area, to the base of the collapsed hillside, where the search for casualties began.

As the casualties were located, first aid and psychological assistance was given. Due to the extent of the search area, and to speed up the recovery of injured casualties, dogs were given to the search teams and worked well with the unknown handler to the dog. A major medical facility was set up by the medical team of trauma doctors and nurses, along with the psychological team.

As the search teams worked through the area, it was the search team leader who made sure that refreshments were given to the search parties, along with some rest periods. It was apparent that some time out for both physical and psychological rest was needed for search dogs and searchers. As midday approached, shade was becoming a problem for all taking part in the exercise, which added another dimension for the search teams.

The end exercise was at around 1500hrs, all participants agreeing it was a tremendous exercise put together, with a lot of learning over all. The teams were taken back to base for time to wash and get ready for the BBQ being held on Sunday night. The local Scout group once more were cooking the food and kept the beer cool as well.

NSARDA was pleased that USAR K9, one of our associate search dog groups, had put on such a great exercise for dogs and handlers to take part. ☺

called Lady looking for a home and being fostered by German Shepherd Rescue (North East).

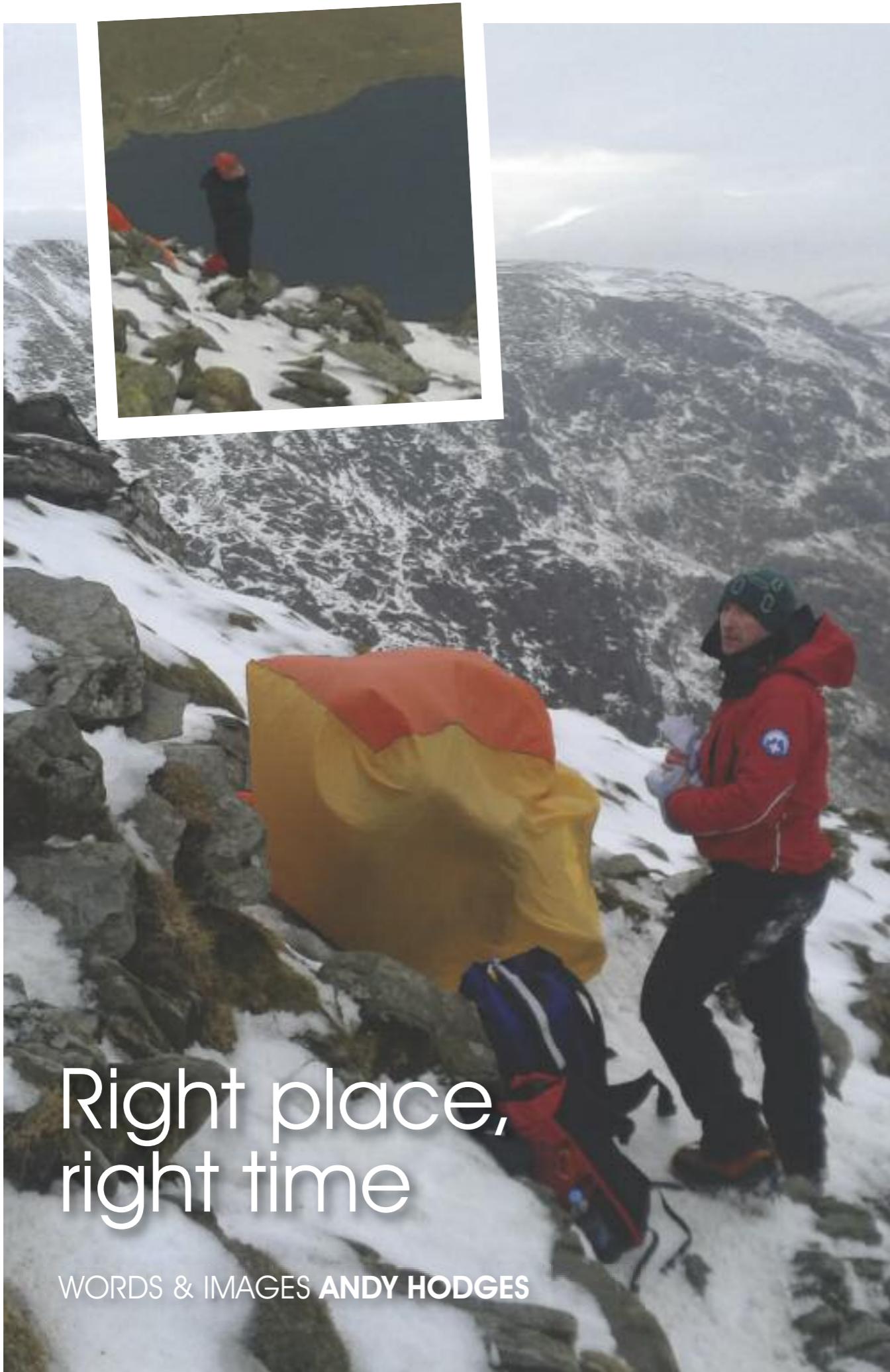
Nick, from Kinder team, already has a fully graded German Shepherd Dog called Dolly who is still operational and has had seven successful finds to date. Following a thorough vetting by the GSD Rescue, Nick was permitted to take Lady and, after only a few weeks training with Nick, she passed her obedience test and also her stock test on the same day — quite a feat! Lady is now an official SARDA England trainee and more importantly, has fitted in well to the Shepherd household. Very apt surname!

We have another Golden Retriever puppy joining us soon. Lottie, from Exmoor, will soon make her first appearance at training and a Springer Spaniel called Orion too!! Border Collies certainly seem to be to be in the minority just now! ☺

**MORE DETAILS OF ALL OUR DOGS AND HANDLERS, CALL-OUTS AND FINDS CAN BE SEEN ON OUR WEBSITE AT [WWW.SARDAENGLAND.ORG.UK](http://WWW.SARDAENGLAND.ORG.UK).**

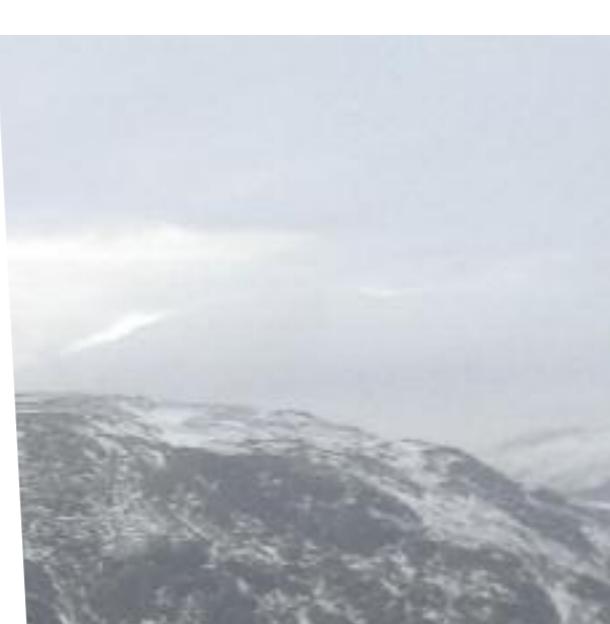
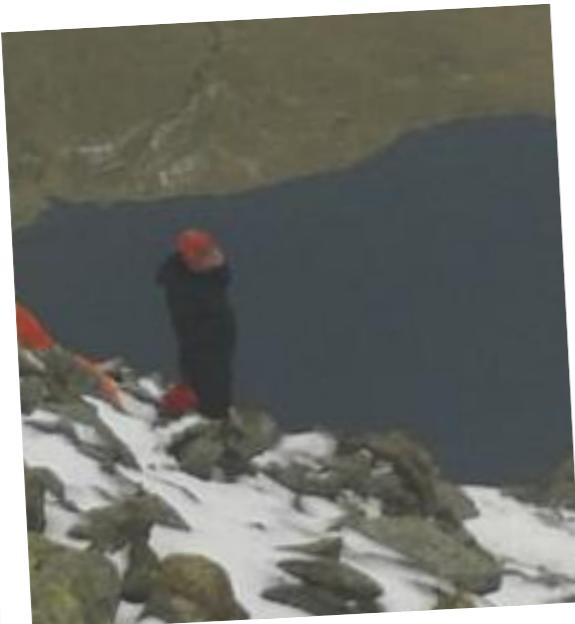
**Left:** Murphy in training. **Below:** SARDA England puppies and handlers 2017. **Right:** Lovely Lottie © SARDA England.





## Right place, right time

WORDS & IMAGES ANDY HODGES



**ANDY HODGES** HAS BEEN A MEMBER OF DSRT TAVISTOCK SINCE 1994 AND IS PART OF THEIR HASTY TEAM. HE IS DEPUTY HEAD OF AN INNER CITY PRIMARY SCHOOL AS WELL AS ASPIRANT IML AND AUTHOR FOR CICERONE PRESS.



We've been friends for over forty years, meeting in Cub Scouts in the 1970s, progressing through Scouts and Venture Scouts, our outdoor skills and sense of responsibility shaped by Baden Powell and our more modern scout leaders. We've both been members of mountain rescue for about two decades and our socialising centres, as always, in the mountains.

Today we were meeting up for the first time in a couple of years so it was a good chance to have a bimble and chat. The mountain of choice was Coniston Old Man, just out of Sim's 'home patch'. The friendly giant which would allow us old (ish) men to walk, talk and then wander the gear shops of Ambleside before meeting up with my wife and mum who were spending the day café-touring.

The sky was clear, the visibility as far as the eye could see and all was set for a great day. The Walna Scar Road gave way to the track to Goat's Water. We stopped for a brew at the water's edge and spotted familiar lines on Dow Crag, a few scramblers and climbers were visible, making their way ever higher. Brexit had been sorted out, the internal politics of our respective teams discussed and compared and the state of our profession (teaching) lamented. The day was good.

We reached the snowline and managed to gain the Old Man summit without needing crampons, instead using the edges of our four-season boots to edge, old school style. I took a photograph of Sim that we agreed was almost identical to one taken 30 years earlier and marvelled at how much kit had improved since the first photo when school trip ski kit, corduroy trousers and a school coat were pretty much standard walking kit!

A cold lunch on the summit and a decision to descend the 'tourist path' was made. The ground in descent was trickier and, after a couple of slithers, we decided to don crampons. 'I like it when I've used everything in my rucksack,' I commented, 'except for the first aid kit!'

We laughed and enjoyed the instant security the crampons gave, confidently marching down the hill and chatting away. We hadn't yet got onto the one remaining topic of conversation we needed to air — Donald Trump, but we'd plenty of time, we wouldn't let him miss out!

'Should I take my radio? No, I shouldn't need it.' The day was going to be a relaxed affair. Both long-serving team members in very different teams — I am in DSRT Tavistock on Dartmoor, Sim in Duddon and Furness, in the Lakes — we were packing light for an enjoyable short day on some well known fells.

Couples and small groups were slithering and slipping their way towards the summit. A couple of them asked about conditions and we were able to tell them that the route towards Goat's Hause was in the sun, the snow was a little softer and, by choosing your own route, the descent on untracked snow was likely to be safer than trying to descend this way which was compacted, slippery and difficult. Few had winter boots stiff enough to kick a step, few had crampons or axes.

We encountered a group having particular difficulties, a mother who was finding ascending difficult and was even more afraid of descending so we offered to help. We escorted them to the bottom of the snow by

### WE DROPPED INTO MOUNTAIN RESCUE MODE. DESPITE BEING IN TEAMS 350 MILES APART WE WERE ABLE TO WORK SEAMLESSLY

providing steps and helping her stay upright. As we reached the relative safety of the path Sim's phone pinged — a call-out assist with Coniston team. A fallen walker/climber near Goat's Water. With no phone reception, we scrabbled to the ridge line to gain a signal and a quick call to Coniston base with an offer to help meant we were tasked with returning over the Old Man and on to Goat's Water ASAP. We set off at a lick passing many others who had only recently seen us passing them in descent.

As we were reaching the summit slope of the Old Man a group looked 'not right'. Someone was sat down and a few were stood around looking at her and looking around with anxiety and trepidation. Rocks, snow, steep slopes. 'Are you OK?' I asked.

No, they weren't OK. The woman on the ground was injured, her boyfriend was sat with her and the passers-by had stopped to help. Emma told us she'd dislocated her knee. She'd done it once before, aged twelve and it had happened again. Amazingly, she had relocated it with help from her boyfriend, Dan, but she couldn't move it or put weight on it. I assumed the grid ref that had been reported for the fallen walker was about a kilometre out (as can

often be the case when someone calls in an incident in a panic). A quick call by Sim revealed that this was not the case, this was another shout called in about fifteen minutes earlier.

Support was on its way but was likely to be at least an hour if not more. We dropped into MR mode. Despite being in teams 350 miles apart, we were able to work seamlessly. Sim had a cascard in his rucksack which I began to fill in as first aider and he provided an update to Coniston base via mobile phone. Imagine if we'd had a radio! My first aid kit was out — so, it would be used after all!

A check of the injury and the application of a couple of support bandages, cascard completed, group shelter and spare clothes supplied — the team was working faultlessly. I said that once more team members and kit arrived we'd be able to provide pain relief, probably Entonox and a vacuum splint. I explained how these things work and how they will help. The casualty was cold and cas-evac was likely to be hours away so we offered some coffee, fairly sure that surgery wouldn't be needed so warmth was more important than any surgical needs. The air ambulance kept circling the Old Man and we were hopeful of a possible summit landing, there were enough walkers there to help with a short carry. I went to the summit and held the classic Y-shape. No luck. It flew on.

Emma was concerned her toes were going numb. Swelling had made her boot tight so we loosened the laces and reset the support bandaging as swelling around the knee had made this tight too. We rearranged Dan to support her leg better and put more kit underneath to keep them warm from the snow. We'd already been on site for an hour and the forecast cloud had swallowed the view. More concerning for us was whether it might impact on the ability of the S92 to fly.

The S92's clattering rotor blades sounded louder and louder. Surely they were coming for us? We'd been here about an hour and a half by now and it was getting colder all the time. It was flying directly towards us, bingo! And then it disappeared behind a ridge-line and the all-too-familiar hovering sound

emerged. It was dropping other team members off for the Goat's Water shout.

Neil from Langdale and Ambleside arrived having hared up from a Land Rover driven into the mine workings. He had Entonox, meds and a vac splint. We also had a radio on site so much better info and comms. Neil handed me the kit and asked for me to provide Entonox and sort the splint. It was all pretty much identical to our kit on Dartmoor so the ability for the three of us to mesh as one unit from three teams was simple.

Two hours had ticked by, we'd recorded meds on the cascad and transferred into a bigger shelter to allow one of us in to add more warmth. An hour and a half until dark, we were still close to the summit unable to move. Emma was concerned it would be dark soon. I reassured her we were with her throughout the event and the helicopter could still operate in the dark. I also pointed out that teams throughout the country train in the dark, the wet and the cold each week so we were well within our normal operational parameters. Emotional first aid is often as important as the contents of the kit!

Two Duddon and Furness members appeared from over the summit carrying the two halves of a Bell stretcher. Things were beginning to take shape. I emerged from the group shelter and more MRT personnel were on scene, this time from Coniston. A casbag appeared, and warm jackets. Comms was also easier with more people on scene. Sim had a text from his son at John Ruskin School (beneath us in the gloom) asking why there were two helicopters on the football field, he was supposed to have had PE!

We learned that the casualty from Dow Crag had been recovered to the school field by helicopter. Once he was stabilised and transferred to the air ambulance, the S92 would be able to come to winch Emma. We began assembling the stretcher, preparing the casbag and planning a suitable winching spot. Despite the stretcher assemblers being from four different teams, the process was a smooth as a normal Wednesday night's training: same kit, same processes all really helped. Neil briefed the casualty and the stretcher handlers were ready.

The carry-sledge-carry down to a level area for winching was tricky, off-camber paths covered in ice and compacted snow made for difficult going but, once more, the training and common systems meant the process worked perfectly — although there is seldom snow and ice on Dartmoor. Crampons are unlikely. Emma was concerned about the slipping movements and jolts

as the stretcher was manhandling between rocks and around overly-difficult terrain but team members continued to offer reassurance and before long the winching area was reached. I'm not sure who was most relieved that there would be a helicopter recovery — Emma for not having to endure a couple of hours of being bumped and slid down the path, or us for not having to perform the same operation with little likelihood of support teams to help!

The sound of the approaching S92 was a relief to all. The team swung into operation and I stood back with Dan to



watch from a distance. Winching is a rarer event on Dartmoor — a spot of CPD for me to watch the Lakes teams work so efficiently to set up the winch cables and the hi-line.

## 'WILL YOU BE WANTING PIES?' ASKED CONISTON BASE OVER THE RADIO. NOW, THERE'S SOMETHING I'VE NEVER HEARD IN TWENTY-THREE YEARS ON DARTMOOR

Within minutes, Emma was being whisked away and we began the long walk down in the fast-approaching dark. Headtorches were deployed and the chat revealed that some of those on the hill had worked with some of my teammates from DSRT Tavistock in the York floods, the previous winter. Distant teams ending up together working in difficult situations (increasingly responding to flooding in particular) seems to be a feature of the future.

'Will you be wanting pies?' asked

Coniston base over the radio. Now, there's something I've never heard in 23 years on Dartmoor. Cross team training — there's always something to learn. I'll be asking DSRT Tavistock to sort an oven out in our base, pasties will be the regional variation though!

**Footnote 1:** Emma was discharged from hospital later that evening with a confirmed dislocation and a referral to a knee specialist for a recovery treatment programme. She said, 'Just wanted to say a massive thank you to the combined efforts of the mountain rescue team members who gave me



Images © Oldham MRT.

## MAY: OLDHAM OWL RESCUE

Oldham MRT had a rescue of a different kind in early May, when a team member received a call, late afternoon, from the RSPB to see if he could assist in putting back some long-eared owl chicks at Dove Stone.

The RSPB had been notified by a walker that, due to high winds, two chicks had fallen out of their tree, along with most of their nest. The chicks were put safely back in their tree and also got themselves a posh new home in the form of an old hanging basket which now houses what remains of their nest — necessity being the mother of invention, as the saying goes. Well done to all involved in getting our fluffy friends safety back in their home.

A week later, the RSPB reported that the chicks had been spotted in the nest and are definitely looking bigger.

**FACEBOOK: @OLDHAMMRT**

## JUNE: NIVEN WALKS 536 MILES FOR MOUNTAIN RESCUE IN SCOTLAND

Mountain rescue supporters frequently take on huge challenges in the name of their chosen charities and Niven Easter certainly tested himself with his 40-day adventure.

The 38-year-old from Edinburgh walked the Scottish National Trail — around 863,895 steps if you're counting — from Kirk Yetholm to Cape Wrath, to raise money for Scottish Mountain Rescue.

'Luckily,' says Niven, 'none of us have gotten into a situation in which we've needed to make that call yet, but the knowledge that if it does all start to go wrong, a team of volunteers who have never met us before, will drop what they're doing and potentially risk their own lives to help us out is seriously comforting.'

'Sometimes in life you have a daft idea and sometimes that daft idea turns into one of the greatest adventures you can imagine.' Well done Niven.

**TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT NIVEN'S ADVENTURE, CHECK OUT FACEBOOK.COM/NIVENEASTER**



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'We certainly had four seasons in one day, every day! The sun shone bright and hot followed by wind and rain but I was well versed in what piece of clothing to whip out and when. I knew my kit would stand up to the rigours of long days on the hill with its great venting and temperature control features. The trousers are like wearing your favourite pair of jeans and the softness of the Templo and the Ventura fleece next to your skin is a huge bonus. Control the controllables they say — and having the right kit is certainly a controllable.' Jo Bradshaw [www.jobradshaw.co.uk](http://www.jobradshaw.co.uk)

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Ann Wilson, Dog Handler with Zee the Search Dog, Scarborough and Ryedale Mountain Rescue Team

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### JUNE: ANNUAL PRINCES' CHARITIES DAY TAKES PLACE IN SOUTH WEST

This annual adventure day is hosted by Mountain Rescue England and Wales, to entertain children and young people – and their families – from some of the charities under the patronage of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and Prince Harry.

Since 2009, when the Duke himself dropped into the event at Patterdale, the day has rotated through the regions. The intention is to offer youngsters from Child Bereavement, WellChild, Place To Be and Centrepoint the opportunity to undertake and enjoy activities they might not otherwise be exposed to.

The young people from Centrepoint spent the morning caving as a team, led by the Gloucester Cave Rescue Group. Trusting even a friend was a new experience for many. In the afternoon, again working as a team, they spent over two hours on a 'GoApe' aerial ropeway course, at times a good twenty feet above the ground.

The younger children from Place to Be, WellChild and Child Bereavement spent time on the climbing towers, in a caving tunnel made from plastic drainage pipes and on the zipline, along with many other activities.

One of the young people was heard to say, 'I can't do that, I'm scared of heights'. Yet, within fifteen minutes, she had climbed to the top of the 30-foot climbing wall, thanks to the confidence instilled by the instructors.

Next to the activity centre was a heritage railway, so just before lunch the younger children went on the steam train, returning an hour later for lunch.

Before leaving for home all the young people received a certificate and goodie bag from Mountain Rescue England and Wales.

'Mountain and cave rescue team members are always ready to help and support people who get into difficulty no matter where or when,' said MREW chairman Mike France, 'and they used many of their rescue skills here, to give the children and young people – many of whom have huge challenges in life – a special day out.'



### JUNE: EMILIA AND PALS RUN MARATHON FOR MOUNTAIN RESCUE

Emilia Osborne and six others ran the Maverick series Snowdonia Marathon in June, raising just over £1000 for MREW.

'We wanted to thank you for our mountain rescue running tops,' writes Emilia, 'and also send a photo of the team. It's been a pleasure raising money for you.'

We rather think it's we who should be thanking YOU and your friends, Emilia! Well done and thank you.

### COMING UP IN AUGUST: OGGIE TEAM INVITES YOU TO TAKE PART IN THEIR 9TH 'OGGIE 8' EVENT

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FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO APPLY ONLINE, GO TO:  
[ogwen-rescue.org.uk/oggie\\_8](http://ogwen-rescue.org.uk/oggie_8).



### MAY: SOUTH EAST CRO RECEIVES GENEROUS GIFT IN MEMORY OF PAUL DOLD

SECRO team member Paul Dold's death last year in a tragic diving accident in Cornwall shocked his many friends. A justgiving campaign was set up in his memory and his family chose to share the money raised between the Horsham District Scouts, Cornwall Air Ambulance and cave rescue.

In early May, team members held an exercise at a mine in Surrey to test communication equipment and practise stretcher carrying. Members of Paul's family went along to meet the team and donate the £2,500+ raised. Paul's brother Martin paid tribute to him as the cheque was handed over. Paul had been an active member of the team, often taking on controller's duties during exercises.

Above: SECRO members receiving the cheque from Martin Dold outside the mine entrance © SECRO.



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Ian Hugill, Incident Controller,  
Scarborough and Ryedale Mountain Rescue Team



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# SARCALL news

FROM JOHN HULSE  
& JON WHITELEY

Developments continue at a pace both in terms of users of the platform and development of additional modules...

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● We're pleased to announce that two new calling authorities have been added to SARCALL.

The North East Ambulance Service (NEAS) is now using SARCALL to call out teams. The project is led by Iain Nixon of Northumberland National Park MRT who is also a SARCALL regional rep. NEAS is the fourth regional ambulance service to join SARCALL and we look forward to welcoming others in the near future.

South Wales Police now regularly calls out the region's four MR teams, together with South and Mid Wales CRT. This successful integration has been led by Nigel Dawson and Mark Lewis, the SARCALL reps for South Wales.

Working towards an integrated information environment, the All-Wales Air Desk which controls and tasks the three Helimed 5s in Wales, is also starting to use SARCALL. A key reason is to promote sharing of situational awareness and help improve linkages with teams and other calling authorities. The possible use of SARCALL 'in-flight' is also being investigated. The Air Desk project is led by Mark Lewis.

● Elsewhere, the RAF Mountain Rescue Service wants to extend their current use of SARCALL to message and interact with their three teams across the UK, and to link better with the civilian teams and other partners.

This exciting development is being led by Dave Wright, the Scottish national lead for SARCALL and is partly driven by the missing helicopter incident in Snowdonia in March, which resulted in a major search and multi-agency operation for all the North Wales teams and the RAF MR teams.

● In the Republic of Ireland, the An Garda Siochana (Police) is installing SARCALL across a number of control centres.

To enable learning points of incidents and operations to be captured within the specific

well underway in a number of the MR teams across Ireland.

● BCRC teams all now share a single call group of doctors and medics through an option in the dropdown menu of each team's SARCALL page.

This adds a layer of resilience and ensures all teams have access to the best possible medical knowledge and information.

Brendan Sloane, the BCRC medical lead and a member of Derbyshire Cave Rescue, is coordinating the list, supported by the SARCALL team.

● Many users are members of multiple teams or regional groups (eg. regional water team) and this has resulted in users having multiple log-ins and passwords.

To reduce the challenge of managing multiple SARCALL accounts, we've introduced a simple sign-on process. This has proved a popular and very successful facility.

When a team is called out via a calling authority, an incident log is automatically created. Teams are requested to 'manage' their open logs and ensure prompt closure once the incident is complete. To assist with the process, a warning message will now appear on a team's SARCALL home page if there is an open incident log present. The warning message and associated hyperlink allows team users easy navigation to the open log and also enables the 'Close log' process to be completed.

The new SMS response 'Get history' facility enables an Excel report to be downloaded, listing all the SMS responses for the user's team. This enables team leaders to review and analyse the SMS responses received from all team members.

Jon Lynch has been experimenting with analysis of the SMS response data and this is producing some very interesting information.

● The Traccar app, hosted on the MREW servers, allows a member's phone to send its GPS position to a central server.

This position then appears on

MRMap and the SARCALL Map as a team asset. Traccar is simple to use and very lightweight on a user's mobile phone battery. The app is now firmly established in some teams.

● A number of teams have also fitted tracking devices such as TK103B or similar to team vehicles that will integrate with Traccar.

These GPS-enabled devices record and send data via a SIM card to the server and then to MRMap. In discussion with the MREW ICT group, the SARCALL team has developed a method to automatically create a new record in an open incident log when a team vehicle leaves a base or arrives at a well-known RV location. This is achieved by establishing a number of geo-fences in Traccar. Note that care and thought needs to go into the drawing of these geo-fences, but once this is done, a clear audit trail is established to evidence the movements of team vehicles and assets. This could be especially important in the event of an incident log being carefully reviewed. A detailed 'how-to' guide will be available in July.

● As part of the on-going development of SARCALL, an increasing number of pages are being converted into a mobile-friendly format.

This process will continue along with further improvements in the database and application.

● To keep users abreast of developments and ideas, the SARCALL team has established a Facebook page.

If you are a social media user and have not as yet signed up to the Facebook group, search for 'SARCALL — News' and request access, one of the admin team will then approve you. ☺

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the  
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A climber with curly hair, wearing a bright green t-shirt with a small white logo on the chest and a black climbing harness with multiple carabiners and gear attached, is shown from the side and back, reaching upwards with one hand on a dark rock surface against a clear sky.

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