

mountain rescue

ISSN 1756-8749

£4.75



WINTER 2020 **71**



THE ONLY OFFICIAL MAGAZINE FOR MOUNTAIN RESCUE IN ENGLAND, WALES, SCOTLAND AND IRELAND

PROVIDERS OF
BESPOKE INSURANCE
FOR MOUNTAIN RESCUE ENGLAND & WALES



We provide insurance to MREW teams. Contact Chris Jones to discuss your teams' insurance:

D: +44 (0)161 419 3097 | M: +44 (0)7768 887 689 | E: chris.jones@integrogroup.com



NEW NAME, SAME SERVICE
INTEGRO IS CHANGING ITS NAME TO TYSERS

www.integroedge.com

Tysers is a trading name of Integro Insurance Brokers Limited who are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Registered Office: 71 Fenchurch Street, London, EC3A 4BS. Registered Company No. 2957627 England. Photograph © Daryl Collins, Central Downs M3 Team

WELCOME TO
ISSUE 71:
WINTER 2020

Mountain Rescue is the **only** official magazine for mountain rescue in England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland.

EDITORIAL

Editor: Judy Whiteside
07836 509 812
editor@mountain.rescue.org.uk

Publicity Officer: Andy Simpson
07836 717021
press@mountain.rescue.org.uk

Advertising: Caroline Davenport
01270 878 324
caroline@media-solution.co.uk

Web: mountain.rescue.org.uk

NEXT ISSUE

ISSUE 72:
SPRING 2020

Editorial Copy Deadline:
Sunday
8 March 2020

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

UWFRA team members attend a female walker who had slipped from a stile in remote area of Malham Moor, suffering extreme pain and exposure
© Sara Spilleit



PLEASE NOTE

Articles carried in Mountain Rescue do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Mountain Rescue England and Wales. We do not accept responsibility for advertising content.

inthisissue



Digital security 16

Neil Sinclair explains why being prepared is so much better than being rescued and how to look after your digital security



Sleep: Advice from The FireFighters' Charity: how to sleep better

24

Titan rescue: The longest haul
Bill Whitehouse describes an epic cave rescue operation

34

MREW Peer review updates: From Upper Wharfedale, Ogwen Valley and Duddon & Furness teams

46



Navigation: Nigel Williams explains how improving personal skills adds value to mountain rescue

56

what's in at a glance

MEDIA ADVICE: 13

MEDICAL: 38-41

HERITAGE: 15

PEER REVIEW: 46-49

ALAN HINKES: 20-21

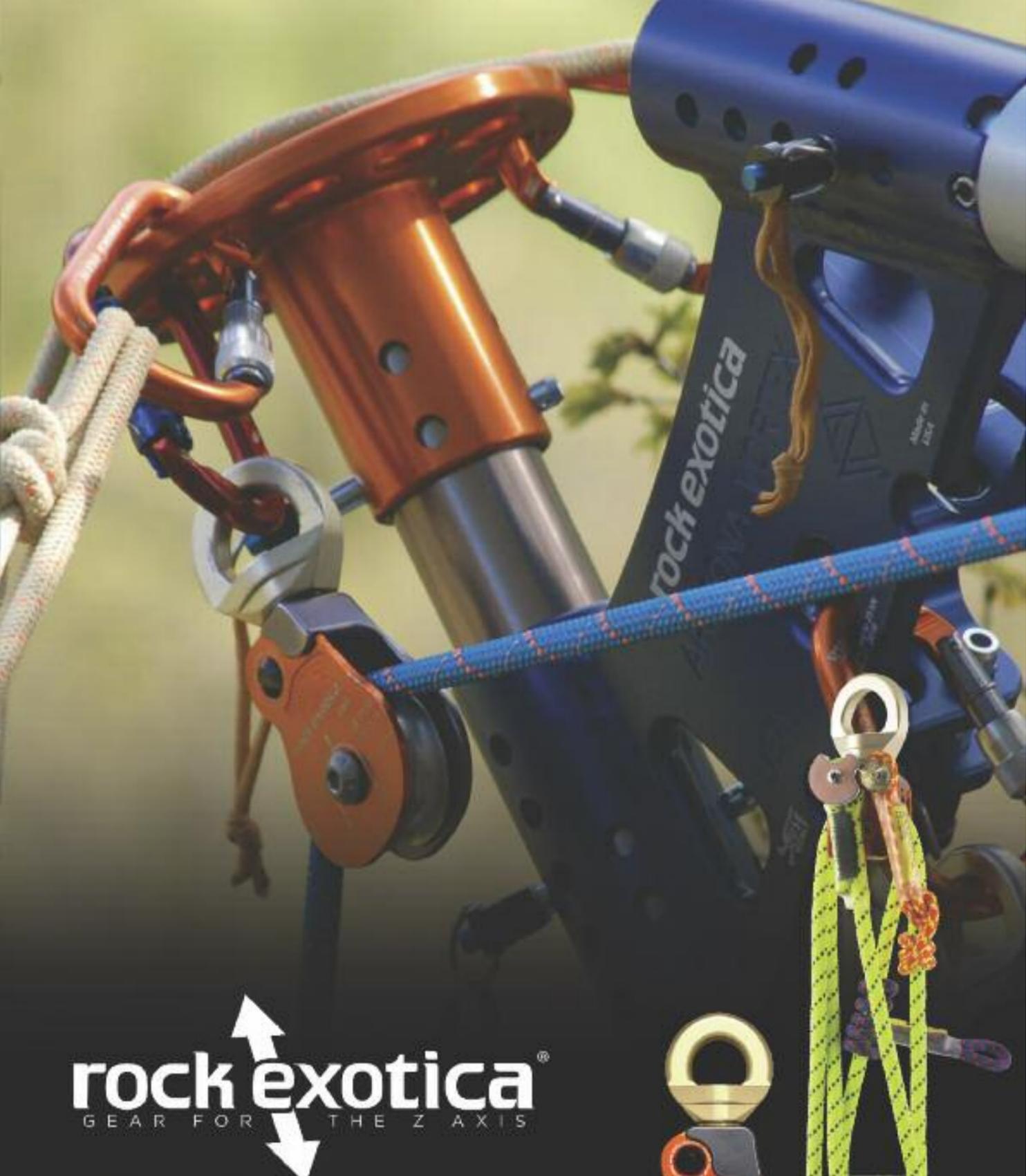
STATISTICS: 54-55

WELLBEING: 24-31

NAVIGATION: 56-58

CAVE RESCUE: 34-36

WHO'S WHO: 61-62



rock exotica
GEAR FOR THE Z AXIS



R3 SAR GEAR
The Old School
Glydyfrdwy
Denbighshire
LL21 9HH

UK & Ireland Distributor

T: 01978 280252 E: sales@rockexotica.co.uk W: www.rockexotica.com



View from the chair...

MIKE FRANCE MREW CHAIRMAN

Well it's done! What? you may ask. At the November 2019 trustees' meeting, all the papers required to transfer the charity from an unincorporated charity to a CIO had been signed. A big thanks to all involved – I know it's gone on for a long time but we wanted your involvement and to do that took time.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all the unincorporated and holding trustees for all their hard work over the years. These individuals will be standing down at the MREW AGM in May. Peter Dymond, as chair of the unincorporated trustees will also be standing down but will be stopping on as our vice president.



At the November meeting, Jake Bharier was elected as chairman of the CIO trustees, which gives us two 'chairs' so, at the December management meeting we agreed that, from 1 January 2020, we would change all our paperwork, business cards and email footers to show the correct charity number and our new job titles. Penny has used the title Finance Director when talking to organisations outside mountain rescue for some time, and it was felt that Mike Greene's role should be termed Medical Director because he too deals with many bodies and organisations outside the mountain

rescue family. My title will become Senior Executive Officer and Mike Margeson will be our Operations Director.

In November, we talked about the need to appoint my successor. As you are all aware, there has not been a long queue of people waiting to take on the role. I believe we have come a long way during my tenure. I have tried to listen to your views, we

have put in place regional chairs' and regional ops meetings, and we have a representative from the chairs group (representing your views) sitting at the trustee board. We ran the road shows in 2019 and reading the final report, which I hope you have all seen, if we haven't actioned the issues raised, it's in hand. Then, with the CIO change and the work still to do around our strategy, and as we had no candidate for my role, I have withdrawn my request to stand down and will be stopping in post for the next couple of years (subject to you voting me in at the AGM). That gives us time to look at my job description and lighten the job. I have already started looking at everyone's job role, our governance and framework. Working with the trustees and regional chairs, I am hoping that by the AGM we will have something to show you. It will take some time to get the strategy and governance in place but I have time now the CIO is in place.

Julian Walden and I have been overseeing the national fundraising role together, in the absence of a national officer. We've had some interesting meetings over the last six months so watch this space. I understand some teams are not happy using team email addresses, but I can tell you that national companies want to support us and they are very keen that support goes to current team members. I am not going to tell you to use a team address, but I can tell you there's no back door route to these deals.

Finally, over the last year, a lot of work has been done looking at helicopter training for MREW. For most regions this has not been an issue, but it has for LDSAMRA. A team of us have been meeting with the Maritime Coastguard Agency and Bristow to discuss the issues and it's thanks to Mike Park's detailed reports to the group, I think that we are getting somewhere. The figures talked for themselves. Mike is now standing down from his SAR-H role. He represented MREW and the teams well and fought the corner for all of us. Great job done Mike, thanks. 🙌



NOVEMBER: ELANCO STAFF SUPPORT MOUNTAIN RESCUE

Basecamp member Malcolm Napier invited MREW chairman Mike France to the Elanco United Way Annual Charity Distribution Event in late November, to receive a generous donation from the company and staff.

Elanco runs a scheme whereby members of their team can choose to donate money to charity each month from their pay. The donations are added to by the company as well as being eligible for Gift Aid.

The staff select the charity they wish to support and nominate a charity to receive a donation from the central fund. A long-time supporter of mountain rescue, Malcolm has been supporting the scheme for a number of years. He was successful in nominating MREW to receive a donation from the fund in 2019. Thank you Malcolm – your support means a lot to us.

Above: Left to right: Mike France, Malcolm Napier and Julian Walden.



NOVEMBER: CENTRAL BEACONS WIN 'VOLUNTEER TEAM OF THE YEAR' 2019

Announcement of the award, sponsored by PrintSauce and presented at the Welsh Charity Awards at the National Museum Cardiff, was delayed as team members were called upon to respond to three separate incidents.

The Welsh Charity Awards recognise and celebrate the fantastic contribution that charities, community groups, not-for-profits and volunteers make to Wales — from befrienders dropping in to visit their older neighbour every Tuesday, to organisations campaigning for nationwide equality, the awards highlight and champion the positive difference people can make to each other's lives.

Above: Central Beacons team members receiving their award © CBMRT.

LEDLENSER

WIN £1000 FOR THEM OR THEIR CAUSE PLUS A LEDLENSER GOODY BAG WORTH £500 FOR YOU!

Visit www.ledlenserhero.com to enter

#LedlenserHERO

NOMINATE YOUR EVERYDAY HERO

7 YEAR WARRANTY*

ML6 Lantern
Max 750 Lumens
Micro Prism Technology
Red Light Feature

MT18	MT14	MT10
LUMENS: 3000/600/30 BEAM DISTANCE: 540/260/80m RUN TIME: 5/9/96h	LUMENS: 1000/200/10 BEAM DISTANCE: 320/120/30m RUN TIME: 9/20/192h	LUMENS: 600/250/10 BEAM DISTANCE: 150/100/20m RUN TIME: 10/15/120h

TO BECOME ONE OF THE MANY UK AND INTERNATIONAL SAR TEAMS THAT LEDLENSER ARE PROUD TO HELP & SUPPORT CONTACT US ON **01344 876222** OR EMAIL mail@ledco.co.uk

ledlenser.com ledlenser-store.co.uk

Bestard SAR PRO Boot

R³ SAR GEAR

Bestard PROFESSIONAL SINCE 1940

- ▶ Vibram sole and reinforced toe
- ▶ Gravel gator
- ▶ Stainless steel eyelets
- ▶ Reflective strips front and rear
- ▶ Lace stash
- ▶ Optional stab proof innersole
- ▶ Comfortable and robust
- ▶ Sizes UK 6-13 (including half sizes)

The next generation in water rescue boots

R3 Safety & Rescue Ltd: 01978 280252 | www.r3sar.com | info@r3sar.com | sales@r3sargear.com

TEAM TALK AUTUMN



NOVEMBER: DERBY TEAM LAUNCHES FACEBOOK FUNDRAISING APPEAL AFTER DAMAGING GARAGE FLOOD

The garage had flooded before, in 2000 so, when the flood warnings came in, a number of items were moved to higher shelves. Sadly the water level was higher than last time and some items and interior walls were damaged.

Team members chipped in to wash down and disinfect the walls and floors. A number of items were saved and cleaned, but many now need replacing. The team had already received donations following their flood response over the weekend, but anticipated a big repair bill. Fortunately, the vehicles were out of the garage, still responding to the flooding across the county.

Photos © Derby MRT.



DECEMBER: ED WINS EARLY CHRISTMAS PRESENT FOR SCOTTISH MOUNTAIN RESCUE

Scottish MR viewers of the Chase were 'extremely excited' to learn that 'the incredible Ed Byrne' had donated his £22,500 win on a Celebrity Chase Christmas Special to Scottish Mountain Rescue.

The special saw the Reverend Kate Bottley, Dr Ranj Singh, reality TV star Toff Toffolo and comedian Ed take on all five of the Chasers. It's not the first time Ed has appeared in the Chase, or won acclaim for his success. In a 2013 celebrity edition of the show, Chaser Anne Hegerty offered him the largest amount offered to any contestant with £117,000. He went on to win the multiple choice round and the Final Chase was for a record £120,000. Clearly a man to have in your corner!



Above: Left to right: Ed Byrne, Reverend Kate Bottley, Bradley Walsh, Toff Toffolo and Dr Ranj Singh © ITV #thechase.



OCTOBER: COCKERMOUTH TEAM MEMBERS RAISE £1725 + GIFT AID FOR RESCUE BENEVOLENT FUND

The Charity Auction Night, held at Cockermouth base, was organised by Laura Connolly, Cockermouth team member and regional rep to the benevolent fund.

Tickets cost £6 and the diverse array of auction lots were kindly donated by team members, friends and supporters of the team – ranging from Spanish lessons, exercise classes and sports massages, through homemade sticky toffee puddings (which, quite frankly, could have been sold several times over), flower bouquets and teeth whitening, a variety of mountain-related books (signed by the authors), 'cosy cottage stays' and climbing adventures, to various items of clothing. There was even a first edition stamp collection. Auctioneer for the evening was Mark Wise, from Mitchells Antiques in Cockermouth, who brought a generous helping of professional wit to proceedings. A very entertaining and successful evening.

'We owe a huge thank you to Laura for organising this,' says Neil Woodhead, chairman of the Rescue Benevolent Fund, 'and to those who either donated physical items or pledged their time in support of the fund. And, of course, we must thank those who generously entered into the spirit of the evening to bid for all the lots on offer.'



NOVEMBER: MOUNTAIN RESCUERS JOIN OTHER CHARITY GUESTS TO ENJOY A BERRY ROYAL CHRISTMAS WITH THE DUKE AND DUCHESS OF CAMBRIDGE

Penny Brockman (MREW Finance Director), Simon Thresher (MREW Vehicle Officer, Elaine Gilliland and Steve Nelson (Bolton MRT), John Halstead (Woodhead MRT) and Paul Hudson (Dartmoor SRT Tavistock) were invited to join in the baking fun, at an event designed to throw the spotlight on the staff and volunteers from charities and organisations who dedicate their time over Christmas.

The one-off BBC TV special culminated in a Christmas party, hosted by The Duke and Duchess — with special guests, cookery legend Mary Berry and Bake Off winner Nadiya Hussain, on hand to help out with the Christmas menu. The Duke and Duchess were also involved in the kitchen with the party prep.

Throughout the programme, Mary prepared some of her favourite Christmas recipes for viewers to try out at home as she helped prepare the festive party food.

Viewers saw the Duchess of Cambridge and Mary travel to Liverpool to visit The Brink, the UK's first dry bar set up by Action on

Addiction to provide a safe space for people who are suffering from addiction. The Duke of Cambridge and Mary visited The Passage, the UK's largest resource centre for homeless and insecurely housed people. Established in 1980, The Passage has helped over 130,000 people in crisis through its resource centre, homelessness prevention projects and two innovative accommodation services. Along the way, they met the inspiring people whose lives have been changed by the help and support these charities provide, especially at Christmas time.

Mary also joined The Duchess of Cambridge behind the scenes at RHS Wisley, including a tour of Wisley's new play garden, inspired by the 'Back to Nature' garden she co-designed at the Chelsea Flower Show to inspire children and families to get outside and experience the benefits of the great outdoors.

By all accounts a good time was had by all. And there was plenty of cake. The programme aired on 16 December 2019.

Top: The Duchess of Cambridge and Mary Berry. Below: The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge with Mary Berry and Nadiya Hussain. Images supplied by The Royal Foundation.



OCTOBER: PENRITH TEAM CELEBRATES SIXTY YEARS

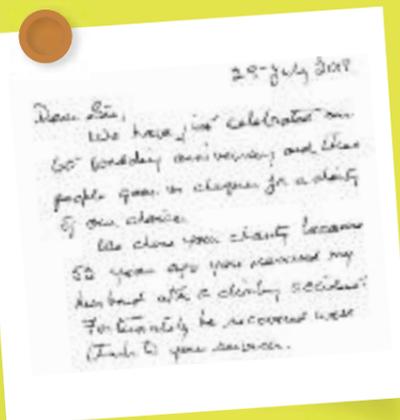
Since its formation, the team has responded to over 1500 incidents, some of the most notable including the Beast from the East snowstorm in 2018, the Carlisle floods in 2015, and the Grayrigg train derailment in 2007. Looking to the future, the team is looking to build a new purpose-built rescue centre, having outgrown their current base in Penrith.

AUGUST: DONATION SAYS THANKS TO TEAM FOR RESCUE OVER YEARS AGO

Patterdale MRT received a surprising and heart-warming donation, when a note arrived from Jean Ward, thanking them for their help in rescuing her husband Eric — fifty-two years earlier.

Patterdale team members had rescued Eric after a fall from Tarn Crag in Glenridding, in June 1967, and the couple wanted to mark the occasion of their sixtieth wedding anniversary with a gift to the team.

Eric had fallen whilst on a climbing trip with two pals, knocking his head on an overhang, then falling about ten feet before rolled down scree. 'The children used to refer to it as 'when daddy fell down the mountain!' Jean told the local Westmorland Gazette. The couple had asked friends and family not to give them presents for their anniversary, but some of their friends wanted to give to a charity on their behalf instead. And their chosen charity was Patterdale MRT.



TEAM TALK AUTUMN

INTRODUCING THE NEW MREW WATER OFFICER, MIKE GULLEN

Mike's mountain rescue 'journey' began, aged 21, as a probationer with Cockerham MRT. 'Unfortunately,' he says, 'at the time I was moving house to Whitehaven, starting a new job and, not having a full appreciation of the commitment needed, didn't finish my probation'. He joined Wasdale MRT in 2007 and held a number of committee roles there before moving house again in 2017, for his son's schooling, and Cockerham kindly took him back on. 'They would argue I completed a ten-year probation with Wasdale!'

In the years between, he has been an active member of LDSAMRA, as both water officer and operations lead, and representing the region at national meetings, the Local Resilience Forum and subgroups. 'I always wanted to be involved in mountain rescue, mainly due to the influence of my late uncle who was a keen fell walker in the Lake District. From six years old, I was walking the Lakes hills with him every Sunday until he passes away a few years ago. We often watched the mountain rescue teams in action, especially the iconic Sea King. I suppose I also wanted to be part of something great and I can say that being a member of Cockerham MRT has fulfilled just that. The camaraderie and professionalism, and the fact that we are a bunch of mates trying to make someone's life that little bit better in difficult times, ticks all those boxes. In 2018, I needed a new focus in MR and decided to have a go at training a search dog! In September 2019 we were graded and I have never looked back.

Asked about his involvement in water training, he reveals he's 'always kind of been known as a water baby. My mother managed the local swimming pool so I suppose I have been brought up with it. I worked as a lifeguard and swimming teacher during school and college. I'm an active white water kayaker and have many Alpine river descents ticked off. So when I joined mountain rescue, swiftwater training was a natural progression. I was heavily involved in the flooding of 2009 where we had a number of close calls! After this I decided I wanted to help with training, standardising how we all worked together, so I trained as an instructor with Rescue 3.

'From being qualified, I started to train all the LDSAMRA regional teams, providing consistent, commonly-understood training to team members. I'm proud of where we are as a region with our water training and that we can all work together to achieve the same aim in a safe professional manner, working with the statutory emergency services. I suppose the greatest test of the regional training came in 2015 during Storm Desmond, something none of us were expecting. I never quite made it into a dry suit then, being confined to Silver and Gold command for the region, along with other MR colleagues.

'I think what drives me towards water rescue is how bad it can become, very quickly. I want to ensure that none of our members become injured — or worse, killed — during our operations in water rescue. By having commonly understood training standards and safe working arrangements we will collectively ensure this doesn't happen.'

As for the future, in his role as national water officer, he hopes to start talking about this at the next main meeting with the water committee. The sort of questions he'll be asking are: What challenges do you have? Based on risk, what training do you need? What support would you like to see from the national body? Do we have annual CPD events?

'What I am clear on is that water rescue is not MR's primary purpose. I do not want to reinvent the wheel but use what is currently out there to provide this support without writing new arrangements and standards for MR specifically.

As to how he fits all this in, along with family commitments, skiing, climbing and a busy day job as an Emergency Preparedness & Resilience Manager in the nuclear industry, he has no idea! Welcome to the fold Mike!

Above: Mike Gullen outside Cockerham MRT base with Search Dog Marty.

NOVEMBER: EMERGENCY SERVICES STAFF JOIN CAVE RESCUE FOR JOINT EXERCISE UNDERGROUND

Derbyshire Cave Rescue organised the joint underground training exercise with Lymm Fire Station, Wilmslow Fire Station and an ambulance service HART team at Wood Mine, Alderley Edge, Cheshire. A great opportunity to work together, sharing knowledge and ideas between different emergency services.

Right: Photo courtesy of Lymm Fire Station/DCRO.





NOVEMBER: ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL PARTY LEADER COURSE IN NORTH WALES

Another full course this year, writes **Iain Ashcroft**, (on behalf of himself and co-organisers Becky and Chris). And once again, team members from all over England and Wales attended – from Cornwall SRT in the deep south, to North of Tyne MRT in the far north, from Aberdyfi SRT in the west to Cleveland MRT in the east, 34 team members from 22 different teams with 25 staff assisting, at the Kingswood Colomendy Centre at Loggerheads near Mold, in North Wales.

After the formal introductions on the Friday night, team members were split into the groups they would work with all weekend during the practical sessions. This was followed by a group discussion on 'what makes a good party leader' — which produced some interesting results — and an enlightening talk by Detective Inspector Mike Waters of Cheshire Police, on police expectations of mountain rescue. Most importantly, the evening ended with a networking session in the local hostelry into the wee small hours.

After a full breakfast and lots of coffee/tea for those who needed it, the morning started bright and breezy with the groups having five different theoretical sessions on different aspects of being a party leader from management skills to briefing and debriefing and triage. In the afternoon, it was into the woods for seven different scenarios, designed to test what they had learned in the morning and practice different situations, ranging from organising a search with a surprise at the end to a very distraught, Oscar-winning mother who'd lost her child, with a persistent pressman wanting a story. All the scenarios were debriefed so everyone was able to learn from each situation and build on their experience.

After dinner, Phil Benbow talked about PTSD — a very important subject that, whilst tough to deal with after a full day, an important one that cannot be missed out. Then another networking session to end the day.

Sunday morning started with a session on the press and social media from PR professional Sally Seed, followed by dealing with fatalities and scenes of crime protocols. Once more coffee and tea had been consumed, it was back outside for the last seven scenarios, designed to put participants under more pressure and get them working as a team. Considering they had only met thirty-six hours previously, they did remarkably well. Must be the fact we're all after the same goal: to save lives. Once all the scenarios were complete, it was back for a final debrief, tea and biscuits and certificates.

The course cannot run without the support of the instructors, from across the different regions, who bring an enormous range of experience so a huge thanks to them. If you wish to help out in future, please contact us via partyleader@mountain.rescue.org.uk. We're always looking for more help. ☘

NEXT YEAR'S COURSE WILL BE ON 22–24 NOVEMBER 2020 AT THE COLOMENDY CENTRE



OCTOBER: DOUBLE CELEBRATION FOR PATERDALE TEAM MEMBERS

It was a double celebration for Patterdale team members in October as they were shortlisted in the Emergency Services category of the Pride of Britain Awards 2019 and also met up with the group of walkers involved in the incident at the heart of their award nomination.

On August Bank Holiday Monday, 2017, Patterdale, along with colleagues from HM Coastguard, Penrith MRT and the Great North Air Ambulance, were involved in rescuing Paul 'Robbo' Robinson after he fell some 650 feet from Striding Edge on Helvellyn.

Robbo's Staffordshire bull terrier, Rossi, was also severely injured in the fall but, after a lot of surgery, care and recuperation, both of them have made a fantastic recovery. They visited Patterdale's Rescue Centre just before the announcement of the Pride of Britain winners, along with Robbo's wife, Alex (who made the Pride of Britain nomination) and fellow walkers, Tracy and Andy Jackson.

'It's amazing to see how well the two of them have recovered,' said ex-team leader, Mike Blakey, who led the rescue two years ago. 'The nomination for the Pride of Britain Award came out of the blue and we'd like to thank Alex and Robbo for all that they've done since his fall to raise awareness of what we do as volunteer mountain rescuers. It's always a privilege to meet those we've rescued in the months and years that follow and to see how our actions made such an important difference.'

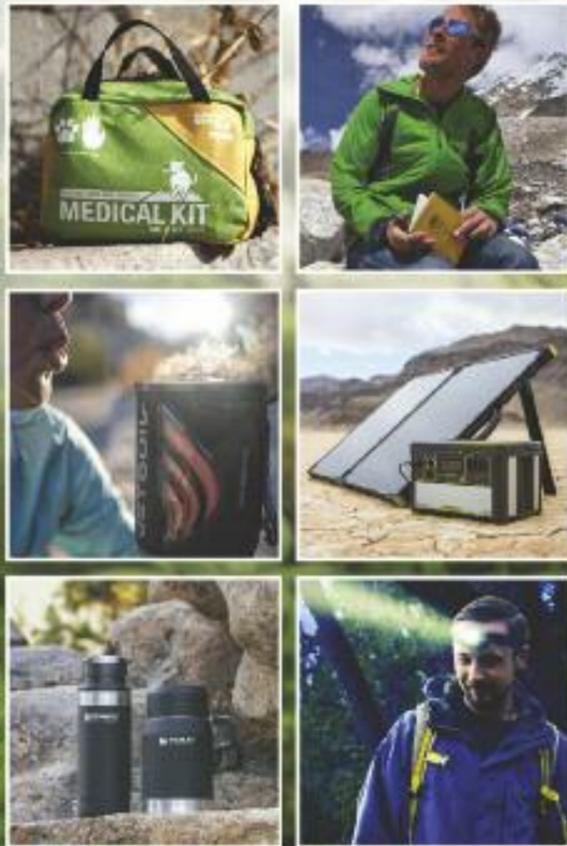
Above: Alex and 'Robbo' Robinson with Rossi, their Staffordshire bull terrier, friends, family and members of Penrith MRT who got together just over two years after Robbo and Rossi's fall. **Front row, left to right:** Tracy Jackson, Mike Blakey, Robbo Robinson with Rossi, Alex Robinson and Mike Rippon (Team leader, Patterdale MRT). **Right:** Rossi the bull terrier.



Photos: Colin Martin Photography.



Direct Account Opportunities



As a leading UK equipment distributor and a supplier to the emergency services, Burton McCall are now pleased to extend our trade pricing to Mountain Rescue Teams on world-class outdoor brands.

Please submit all enquiries via an official Mountain Rescue email account.



Email: sales@burton-mccall.com
Tel: 0116 234 4611
www.burton-mccall.co.uk



MIKE MARGESON OPERATIONS UPDATE

In November, Mike Gullen was unanimously voted in as our national water officer. Having worked with Mike on many occasions, I look forward to him rejoining the Operations group. It is also great news to confirm that Paul Smith has decided to continue as equipment officer. Continuing with the operations news, Mike Park, our SAR-H lead (a co-opted role) stood down at the end of the year.

I would like to place on record our thanks to him for his commitment and hard work. Behind the scenes, Mike has worked tirelessly to keep MR training interests at the front of the agenda at SAR-H meetings. At the most recent meeting, he pushed

and helped make some hopefully significant progress with our training delivery plan. We need to replace Mike and, as I write, we had only one expression of interest. If there is anybody that feels they would like to take on this role, they should contact myself or Julian Walden as soon as possible. We are at a significant point with SAR-H with future contract discussions underway and we need to ensure we speak as one alongside our Scottish colleagues at these meetings.

Also regarding SAR-H working, you should ensure the helicopter strobs being used when presenting to an aircraft for winching are the correct strobs for the stretcher you are using as the lengths are critical for entry into the cabin door.

I spoke about Adventure Smart in my last report, we still need to get behind this safety initiative. There are a number of teams that don't have a link to Adventure Smart on their websites and it would be good if this could be rectified as soon as possible. ☺



DATE FOR YOUR DIARIES:
SATURDAY 6 JUNE:
NATIONAL TRAINING DAY
SUNDAY 7 JUNE: NATIONAL TRAINING OFFICERS DAY
BOTH AT PLAS Y BRENIN

books

NAVIGATION TECHNIQUES AND SKILLS FOR WALKERS
BY PETE HAWKINS
REVIEWED BY MIKE MARGESON

In the preface, one of our mountain rescue ambassadors Alan Hinkes says that the book will help raise your knowledge of this essentially satisfying skill. This latest edition, updated to include 'Technology, GPS and computer mapping', to my relief sticks predominately to map and compass fundamentals and core skills. In fact I was delighted to read Pete state he remains 'firmly of the opinion that being able to read a map and compass properly, without relying on technology, is vital. Good map reading and compass skills will never let you down.'

The thirteen chapters cover all the key map and compass skills required in a very clear and easy to understand way. Exercises are set to practise and check learning, but I would like to have seen more in the poor weather, bad visibility and night navigation section, in particular the importance of bringing all the skills in your toolbox together: compass, distance, timing, shortening and breaking legs down and using all the orienteer's tactics to the full. My personal view with contour, shape and feature appreciation, is that less is sometimes more. I find the Harvey's 1:40 map fantastically good at defining shape.

This is a really handy great little book and I'd recommend it to you whether you are a seasoned or new mountain rescue team member.

NAVIGATION TECHNIQUES AND SKILLS FOR WALKERS BY PETE HAWKINS
PUBLISHED BY CICERONE. 146 PAGES. PRICE £9.95. ISBN 978-1-85284-891-0

AVAILABLE, ALONGSIDE A NUMBER OF NAVIGATION, MOUNTAINEERING AND CLIMBING TITLES FROM THE MREW SHOP.

News type © Sporeheater. Dreamstime.com



MREW PR consultant and media trainer, **Sally Seed**, looks at an aspect of publicity and PR and suggests ideas to build on for the future.

This time: **So much more than words**

Apologies for mis-quoting the MREW strapline — worth noting that there's no 'just' in here either as both mountains and words are important! My theme for this issue — and ideally your reminder for the coming year — is communicating without words, whether through social media, on conventional broadcast media or in print.

Pictures (moving or otherwise) — the old adage of a picture being worth 1000 words is as true as ever today. Have a look through any social media feed and the posts that stand out (and therefore get 'liked' and 'shared') are the ones with a strong image. To be honest, posts without any image at all tend to disappear as you scan down — even more so on a phone or tablet.

Your picture doesn't have to be an amazing landscape or a moody portrait but it needs to add something to the post and, ideally, tell the same story. Interestingly, one of the most shared posts on the MREW Facebook page in October was a simple graphic of a watch/clock face — and the story was all about MR awareness and the clocks going back to GMT.

Here are a few ideas from recent months:

- If you have a Base Open Day, don't go for 'messy' informal groups of people, especially backs of heads, but get a picture of a cake next to a piece of MR kit, ideally with a collection tin too.
- If you're celebrating the arrival of a new vehicle, open it up and show the kit inside or take a picture of it with your other team vehicles, perhaps all lights blazing and at night (with thanks to Dave Freeborn at Patterdale MRT for that one!).
- People love search dogs — awake or

asleep, on the hills or in Base, in a vehicle or with a body find, training for snow or training for summer, rural or urban search, together in a group or with just their handler — and they're great for caption competitions online too if you can capture an expressive face.

• A pile of wet kit tells the story of a long rescue in rain, a stack of used mugs tell the story of a busy day with several call-outs, a pile of rope and a stretcher tells the story of a long carry — it's not all about groups of people.

• But people tell stories too so encourage the photographers in your team to capture moments. One of the best images from Storm Desmond (after the young lady in the tiger onesie and Penrith MRT's crocodile pictures, of course) was the shot of a Penrith MRT member crouched down, almost asleep and definitely exhausted with SWT kit and team colleagues in the background.

One final thought on images — if you're trying to get coverage in a particular publication or online, have a look at the images they usually use and create something that fits their preferred style. If they love giant cheque presentations, create one — if they never feature them, it's probably deliberate so avoid like the plague!

Numbers — Rob Shepherd, MREW Statistics Officer, puts a lot of time and effort into collating and interpreting the data that teams supply to create useful information. And you'll know your own team and region's equivalent data and its trends too. Think about how best to communicate the numbers — detailed 1000s are hard to communicate but that simple figure of how many days in the year didn't have an MR call-out (just 9 in 2017 and 14 the year before that) can make a big

impact. Numbers are also useful when talking about other areas of what you do.

Fundraising (and fundraisers and donors) can be quantified in different ways, depending on the message you want to communicate and don't forget that your supporters will have no idea of how many biscuits you get through in a busy month, how much fuel you've used this year or how many bacon sarnies were eaten during that big search for a dementia sufferer.

Tone — we all know that it's not just what you say but how you say it that communicates your message to other people. Beware of slipping into what I call 'police-speak' — you're expert volunteers helping visitors and your local communities so that's who you need to sound like. If your regular media spokesperson is also employed in the paid emergency services, it's worth them practising their non-work style and tone — and getting other team members to help.

Tone is especially important online with social media where people hear a voice in their head and you need to be sure that it's not nagging them or criticising or shouting at them, or whingeing. Be absolutely clear in the language you use — 'could happen to anyone', 'anyone can make a mistake', 'this is why we volunteer', 'nice to be appreciated when we got back to base' — so you spell out that 'avoiding the avoidable' message with added advice on the positives and what to remember in future.

I hope some of these hints are useful as you think about your media for 2020. If you've anything to add or recent experience to share, please get in touch with me sally@stoneleighcomms.co.uk or via the editor. Thanks. ☺



THE LOWA PROFESSIONAL LINE: QUALITY AND SAFETY

Since 1923, shoemakers LOWA have manufactured excellent products and strived for perfect fit, quality, function and innovation, the cornerstones of our company philosophy and the foundation of our success. You can place your trust in these values. We are 100% 'made in Europe'. We know what value there is in good craftsmanship, comprehensive know-how and commitment to quality as well as in highly flexible production processes. As an outdoor brand, at home in the mountains, we know that safety and reliability are precious in the mountains. Which is why we have equipped top athletes for their expeditions for a very long time. These decades of experience have been built directly into the LOWA professional line. Our 'Task Force' collection is now the 'Professional' collection, perfectly suitable to different surfaces, climates and terrains. For real work situations, comfort and fit are deciding factors — and quality is of vital importance and several of our products have become real classics, such as our ZEPHYR model, which enjoys an outstanding reputation beyond military circles. **30% discount for Mountain Rescue team members**

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT OUR PROFESSIONAL LINE:
EMAIL: SALES@TASKFORCEDISTRIBUTION.CO.UK
PHONE: +44 (0)1752 344355
WEBSITE: LOWAMILITARYBOOTS.COM



Brand Strategy: The Importance of branding and identity

HANNAH HALLIDAY

The act of branding is often thought of as the 'The devil's spawn' of the creative industry. Perhaps even more so within the charity/voluntary sector where it is often viewed as inflicting an unnecessary and costly veneer on an organisation that doesn't need or desire to be cloned, homogenised and enforced by a corporate straightjacket that limits individual personality and freedom of expression. These attributes I would argue are not a prerequisite of a successful brand presence. I would like to suggest that this view unfortunately clouds and fuels a reluctance to see the potential benefits of a consistently managed brand.

This was the starting point for my lecture at the recent MREW Conference in Leeds. A stance that immediately split the audience in two and made for a lively discussion...

The charity sector is investing more in brand than ever before as a way of leveraging their message and standing out from a crowded landscape in a fight for awareness and financial support to stay afloat in challenging economic conditions. This dilemma is even more prevalent within the voluntary emergency sector where your presence is not omnipresent. Unlike the RNLI, Air Ambulance and St John Ambulance, mountain rescue as a voluntary emergency response organisation is less well known nationally. When it comes to recall of charities or consideration for donations, it's not in the forefront of our minds unless there is prior personal experience or they are a large part of the local community.

Indeed in large regions of the UK, where there is no permanent presence in the community nor regular mentions in national press, perhaps people don't see you at all even when you are on the TV screen in front of them. Without prior knowledge or understanding, people don't see you wading through floodwater, or searching for missing people. They just see red jackets. They may even think you are fire fighters. There is little widespread public knowledge and understanding of the breadth of what you do, who you are and how you are funded.

So how can we correct the misconception, increase awareness and recognition and gain greater understanding and appreciation of the wider role of mountain rescue and start to leverage support to help bolster even more the reach and work of the charities which form the wider mountain rescue organisation?

The most precious asset a voluntary organisation collectively owns that can be leveraged is their brand and the collective power of its ambassadors — the people.

A successful brand can harmonise, unite and reinforce the core aspirations and attitudes of its members and supporters. It can enhance the profile and increase the awareness and appreciation of the organisation. It can be harnessed to help 'support' both financially and emotionally. However, in order to do this, both the external and internal brand need to be united and work in harmony in every channel and through every experience.

So let's start at the beginning. What is a brand?

In the words of Wikipedia 'a brand is a name, logo, slogan, and/or design scheme associated with a product or service. And, by consequence, branding is a set of marketing and communication methods that help to distinguish a company from competitors and create a lasting impression in the minds of customers.'

I believe brand creation is about attitude. It is about creating and

sustaining trust. Giving purpose. It means delivering on promises and being relevant. The best most successful brands are completely coherent. Every aspect of what they do and what they are, reinforces everything else.

With this in mind, every presence is an application of the brand, visually through its graphic elements, verbally through its tone of voice and physically through its members and supporters. Every time someone comes into contact with the brand, they are building a knowledge base and bias either positively or negatively about that organisation and what they stand for. The balancing act of consistency and integrity is key to building a positive presence and a feeling of 'warmth' or support for the brand in question.

In an industry article earlier this year, Dan Defour, a leading brand strategist who specialises in the charity sector, identified five key trends as drivers to build awareness and recognition in the minds of the public: Human Authenticity, Empowerment, Inclusivity, Partnership and Entertainment. All these themes are shared attributes and beliefs that are commonplace within many charities. But strength comes when they are communicated outwardly as a united front. The benefit of a united voice is that it brings purity and clarity to the delivery and message.

We have already established that within the emergency sector the idea of 'presence' is even more crucial due to limited exposure to the brand in the average day-to-day life.

Therefore the physical assets of the identity should be protected and used carefully to help build repeated recognition and confidence. However, the identity is only part of the brand mix. It needs to be applied and communicated consistently every time it's used in order to build believability and integrity of its presence. All brands are open to personal interpretation... a brand is not an objective fact, it consists of a series of individual and subjective assessments. And those assessments are made by our emotional selves not our rational selves.

There is a growing appetite amongst consumers to be able to make informed choices about how and where to spend their time and money. Collective social conscience is growing and becoming a key driver to spending habits. Larger purposeful actions and partnerships can be seen to be growing in popularity. For example, the Tesco and WWF four-year partnership bid to 'halve environmental impact' of UK groceries (www.org.uk).

'Positive change' is no longer a marketing buzzword, it's an action many people are looking for in their everyday lives. They are looking for ways to spend with their conscience intact. Be it charity Christmas cards, or bottled water that funds clean water projects.

Successful branding for me is the 'art form' of sharing compelling

stories. A good brand delivers meaningful experiences that surprise and enrich our lives... and... are memorable. By telling stories about who you are and what you do, people will be able to engage, feel part of the story and begin to understand the magnitude of the voluntary role you play. They then will choose to support, join and 'belong' to your family. This idea of belonging and building long-term trust and loyalty is key and something that Wally Ollins writes about in many of his books on the subject.

The combination on one hand of public social conscience actively looking for ways to give back and support the organisations and causes that they care about, contrasted on the other hand with the very public scrutiny in the press of charity practices and actions that has led to the need for complete transparency. With this in mind, in order to leverage the goodwill and recognition throughout the UK, I would argue that now — more than ever — the evidence shows that the potential benefits gained by uniting under one managed consistent brand presence outweigh the counter arguments for multiple smaller more diverse community identities and personalities.

Building recognition through partnerships has also been an increasing trend within the charity sector. The likes of Finisterre and Helly Hansen creating clothing partnerships with the RNLI is a pertinent example, where best-in-class clothing manufacturer supports and invests in the new development of the RNLI kit. A partnership that has created a new level of technical functionality that benefits both parties. New kit 'that will change the way they save lives' (RNLI.org), and brings great public awareness to the breadth of work by the RNLI through its partnership and support by Helly Hansen.

This covers the consistency of the identity and brand assets, but what about the people? The memorable link that carries through these examples is the people involved and the storytelling of the experiences. Stories are 22 times more likely to be remembered than facts alone. People share stories and they grow to become urban legends. But there needs to be a common goal. Everyone who represents the organisation does so with their own personality and flair of storytelling. This brings richness and warmth but each individual must also be seen to share an ethos and set of beliefs that brings a collective integrity for the shared vision. Thus creating a consistent presence that helps the brand be seen, recalled and remembered, bringing recognition and prompting belief and action by many more potential supporters.

I believe in the power of brand to make the world a better place... and by harnessing yours, you will be able to build a loyal family network that will support you for many years to come. Thanks for reading. ☺



HANNAH HALLIDAY IS A SENIOR LECTURER ON THE BA (HONS) GRAPHIC DESIGN AND MASTERS PROGRAMME AT NOTTINGHAM TRENT UNIVERSITY. SHE SPECIALISES IN BRAND CREATION.



Mountain heritage project update

The project group met in December at the MHT offices at the Blencathra Field Centre, to finalise our inquiry submission. We hope to have a response from the Heritage Lottery Fund early in 2020, and a full application will swiftly follow.

MIKE MARGESON
MREW VICE CHAIRMAN

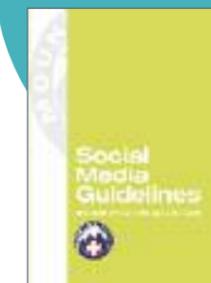
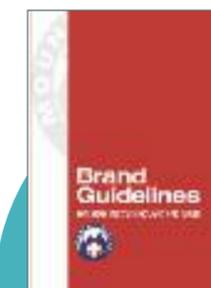
The key objectives are to focus on filming and recording our oral history, followed by the cataloguing of artefacts and photographs.

The application is for funding to cover a two-year project, including a project worker who will coordinate the work. Based at the Mountain Heritage Trust offices at Blencathra, they would be expected to travel to and work with all nine MR regions and would be co-managed by the MHT and MREW, allowing us direct access to the specialist skills available from MHT staff. The

project officer will also provide training and expertise to individual teams in what should be looked after and how. Educational and mountain rescue exhibition resources will also be developed.

In the Autumn magazine, October 2019, I posed the question, 'What next?' I also asked for help from teams and regions, particularly around compiling a list from each region of key people that should be recorded. Guess what? I have heard from nobody... yet! We still need your help to compile a list of people you think have contributed to the development of mountain rescue — who you also think would be happy to share their memories and anecdotes.

Lastly, we would have an even greater chance of success with our application if we had some pledges of funding to augment any successful bid. Currently, we have none, so if any teams, regions or individuals have any ideas of donors, corporate sponsors or fundraisers who may be interested in supporting the project, please get in touch via vice-chairman@mountain.rescue.org.uk. ☺



Brand and Social Media Guidelines available from:

Julian Walden
via assistant-secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk

or **Judy Whiteside** via editor@mountain.rescue.org.uk

digital security



NEIL SINCLAIR IS NATIONAL CYBER LEAD FOR THE POLICE DIGITAL SECURITY CENTRE AND HAS BEEN RECOGNISED IN THE PROGRESS 1000: LONDON'S MOST INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE 2019 FOR HIS WORK IN TECHNOLOGY & CYBER SECURITY. HE HAS WORKED IN UK COUNTER-TERRORISM POLICING FOR OVER THIRTY YEARS, INVOLVED IN MOST OF THE METROPOLITAN POLICE'S BIGGEST TERRORIST OPERATIONS. A KEY MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL TERRORIST FINANCIAL INVESTIGATION UNIT FOR 10 YEARS, HE IS AN ACCREDITED FINANCIAL INVESTIGATOR AND WAS THE LEAD FOR FINANCIAL INTELLIGENCE AT GCHQ, PRIOR TO JOINING THE POLICE DIGITAL SECURITY CENTRE.

Being prepared is so much better than being rescued!

NEIL SINCLAIR

The beauty of any time spent in the great outdoors ought to be a combination of total wonder at the magnificence of the natural world and euphoria at being able to escape the digital world of which we are now all prisoners, albeit some more willingly than others.

Nevertheless, it is more than likely we will take our digital footprint with us, for reasons extending from a mobile device being a last resort, emergency contact or a tracking device or for those ubiquitous selfies. A positive addition to one's kit, but not without certain risks to one's general security too.

At the other end of that digital intrusion is the need for you, in your role with mountain rescue, to plan, record and share planning, information and incident reports across the World Wide Web. It is unquestionably a boon for all that necessary record keeping, but are you also aware of the risks that this creates for you, your colleagues and the organisation?

PREPARING FOR THE WORST

So what should you be considering before you pack that smartphone in your rucksack? Presumably, location settings will be a key facet, whether for tracking, maps or weather. But you should be selective about just how many apps and services are using your location. Apart from the drain on the battery, exactly who is benefiting from knowing where you are? There is an inherent risk in having all those Instagram pictures time and location stamped too: if you're taking a photo on Scafell Pike, you're clearly neither at home nor with your vehicle so not a bad time for a bit of burglary or car theft. And don't be lulled into thinking you're

too unimportant to be a victim. As we readily accept followers on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn, we are giving away our personal information to all sorts of nefarious types, some of whom are very patiently waiting for that one opportunity.

There are a number of other things to consider about the security of your mobile device and I commend the National Cyber Security Centre's guidance to you. But above all, ensure you know, on that fateful day when you lose the darned thing, how to recover your data and then wipe the phone so that the 'new owner' can't steal that too. It's worth a lot more than your smartphone!

PROTECTING THE ORGANISATION

It is a huge security risk for mountain rescue that it doesn't yet have the funds for a stand-alone digital infrastructure. This means that many of you are storing the organisation's data and sharing information on desktops and laptops that are also being used for personal stuff and possibly other work. This carries a huge risk to you as an individual and to the organisation as a whole.

Primary concerns are that the data about MREW activities should be the property of the organisation but, of course, as soon as it sits on someone's personal device, that ownership is compromised. If the data refers to some other identifiable individual — the subject of a rescue for example — and that data is 'lost' there is a possibility of a whole heap of legal ramifications.

And the likelihood of that happening is much greater if you are carrying out 'non-MR' activities alongside other day-to-day stuff.

It is, hopefully, unlikely that we click on a gambling site, shopping site or even a TV licence renewal email on work's equipment, but we might not be so careful on our own devices. Add to that various Facebook links, tumblr blogs, spam emails resulting from a myriad of marketing cookies, and all the things our nearest and dearest also do on the family network, and many home

computers will be rife with spyware and viruses that are equally likely to infect MREW business as they are the old school alumni in Australia.

So if it is impractical to buy stand-alone machines for your MREW area or MRT, then you should, as a minimum precaution, be taking the following steps:

1: Set up a Google account or similar that the team can use, setting up unique email addresses, calendars, shared folders and so forth. This ensures that MR business stays in one place, rather than getting mixed in with individuals' long-standing personal accounts, and documents can be stored safely, not on a domestic 'c' drive. Most importantly, when new members join they can be added to the group, and when old ones leave, they can be deleted.

2: Make sure everyone sets up a good password. The generators are very good, and it is well worth using something like LastPass, Dashlane or 1Password, both to generate passwords and to save them across multiple platforms.

3: Turn on two-factor authentication (2FA) but, rather than receiving a code via sms, use an authenticator by Google, Duo or Authy. SMS authorisation is the latest popular area for cyber attacks, so it's wise to avoid it from the outset.

4: Even if everything is being stored 'in the cloud', make a point of doing regular back-up to a thumb-drive or external hard drive and keep it separate from your machine. Thus, if something awful does happen (the 'cloud' crashes, a laptop is left on the Ffestiniog Railway) you can revert to a recent back-up without having to go near a potentially compromised server or piece of kit.

5: Don't let anyone do important stuff online on public wifi. This particularly includes coffee shops and cafés: the issue being that very few of us bother to check the certificates of the public wifi we blithely join, so although it may say 'Starbucks wifi' it could easily be a masquerade.

6: You may also want to consider whether you really want to make your home wifi router accessible to your neighbours and random passersby. You should be aware that once someone has access to your router, they have access to your network.

KEEP YOUR PUBLIC LIFE PRIVATE

The simple key to keeping things safe online is to do simple things well. Regularly attend to security issues such as backing-up data, installing updates as soon as they become available, change generic and simple passwords to something unique and complex. And really give some thought to who and why you are befriending someone on social media.

I have covered backing-up already but to reiterate, you should not rely on 'cloud storage' being a panacea for all evil. Cyber criminals are targeting cloud security right now because they know that business and the general public see the cloud as a one-stop security solution.

Updates, or patches, need to be applied as soon as you are aware of them. You have approximately 24 hours before criminals exploit all the security vulnerabilities exposed by an update, so switch on the automatic update feature on your devices and at the start of every day, check that everything has been installed. It is definitely worth starting working a few minutes later if that 'update available' message means your machine is going to have to restart.

I have covered passwords too. We probably all know we should change generic passwords and we should not make a note of them on a post-it note or in our paper diary! A good password should last you a very long time; a password manager is the best way to create and store it.

And social networks? It is undoubtedly cool to have a 'friend' who is a member of the K2 Mountain Rescue Team, but are you really sure who this person is? If you can't verify who wants to be your friend, don't 'friend' them. You wouldn't give your house keys to someone you'd passed on the street.

Finally, never think that you are too unimportant to be a target. The cyber criminal will take anything from anywhere. There's minimal risk and even your name, job title and date of birth has a monetary value. If you keep your personal footprint secure it will go a long way to keeping the organisation's property secure too.

Have fun but keep safety first! 🚒

Development of Search and Rescue Dogs in the Lake District and Wasdale team in particular

RICHARD WARREN CHAIRMAN, LDSAMRA

When Hamish McInnes, of the Glencoe Mountain Rescue Team, attended an avalanche dog-training course in Switzerland, he was the first from the UK to attend such a course. On his return, he began training his own dogs and ran a course in Scotland in 1964. Derek Connor was the first search dog handler in the Wasdale team in the 1970s and Dave Riley became a handler in 1974.

Dave was a founder member of the Millom team in 1967. He subsequently moved to Cockermouth, then Wasdale and finally Langdale, before retiring to Scotland. Over that time he had three dogs, Bryn, Loch and Rosie, and was a leading light in the training of search dogs in SARDA (Search and Rescue Dog Association) which at the time covered the whole of England, and then SARDA Lakes, when it became an independent organisation in 1992 (now the Lake District Mountain Rescue Search Dog Association).

Penny Kirby, a long-serving member of Wasdale MRT, was introduced to the world of search dogs by Dave Riley quite by chance. She was sitting next to him at a team dinner and he asked if anyone had a dog they'd like to train for search work. Penny had Ben who was already two years old and went on a training weekend where some of the experienced handlers played some finding games with him. She drove home, having been told 'Ben had potential' and that was it. She was hooked!

Search dogs are encouraged to use their incredible scenting capabilities to pick up a person's scent in the air, follow it in to find the person and return to the handler to let them know they have found. Dogs have been

centimetres. Dogs can cover a much bigger area of ground than human searchers, get into difficult areas where it might be dangerous for humans, and are not limited by darkness or mist in the way humans are. It is estimated that in some conditions, a dog is equivalent to twenty human searchers.

Training involves people who are prepared to act as bodies for the dogs to find. In the early stages, they need to interact with the dog at precisely the right moments, to encourage the dog to bark when they are found and reward the dog by playing with them. As training progresses, the dog learns to go back to the handler, to indicate by barking that they have found someone, and take the handler back to the body, and to work large areas.

By the time the dog gets onto the call-out list, they need to be able to work 2-3 hours without a break, and will often work longer — even through the night. It's not so much the physical effort this takes, but the mental concentration on the dog's part. They 'find' by quartering the ground, directed at a distance by the handler, searching for airborne scent. This is made up of minute particles of skin, hair, clothing, oils and bacteria. They need to ignore sheep and other distractions. All dogs and handlers are

in the Lake District, and one trailing dog, which can follow a ground scent. And there are a further eight search dogs undergoing training at present.

Although dog-handlers are already members of a team, they can be asked to travel to other areas, both within and outside the Lakes. Consequently, dog-handlers are often searching areas they have never been to before, so might have a navigator with them to enable them to concentrate on working the dog.

With 36 years' involvement in mountain rescue, Penny Kirby is now on her fifth trained search dog, Jess. Over that time she and her dogs have seen many searches, both on their own and with a navigator. She recalls some memorable moments.

'With Search Dog Ben — being mistaken for a sheep rustler at night in Eskdale. With no prior warning, a hand on my shoulder from behind as I tried to creep through the farmyard without waking the farm dogs and family. A bit unnerving!

'Another time, finding two people camping in the upper Esk on the other side of the river, so I had to cross the river as well, only to find they weren't who we were looking for, so I had to cross back again to resume my search!

'Bivvying overnight near Lingmell Col with team members when it was deemed too dangerous to try and extricate people from Piers Gill in the dark — I was tempted to rent Ben out as a hot water bottle.

'Helping myself and my teammate get off Broad Crag one winter's night, struggling to find the descent route in snow, mist and darkness. Ben tried several routes, coming back up to us when he wasn't sure. When he happily disappeared down into the darkness, tail up, we followed. He was right.

'At Lockerbie, in 1988, Ben and I spent six days in and around Lockerbie, having two days off for Christmas partway through. He kept going throughout, despite being buzzed by Chinook helicopters, sleeping alongside my bed in strange surroundings, being fed a rich diet of dog food and numerous treats from the wonderful WI who fed us and lavished affection on the dogs, and coping with unwanted attention from the media. We did take some time off afterwards and later returned to Lockerbie for a special service. All the dogs were there

different, and the relationship between them is different to another partnership, so there can be no hard and fast rules as to the best way to train the dog.

Training a dog from puppyhood takes, on average, 3-4 years and there are currently eleven operational air-scenting search dogs



Above: Search Dog Jess, Penny's fifth trained search dog.

and behaved impeccably. I still feel very privileged to have been able to help at that time and have special memories of the people I met there.

'Search Dog Mif drew the short straw. I became pregnant while I was training her so she moved down the pecking order in the family, but she and Ben, who was less active by then, provided endless amusement for the baby by splashing around in rivers and lakes. I still managed to get out on some searches.

'Search Dog Pippi took a long time to get the confidence to play with bodies. Later on in training, I asked them to use fish skin as titbits, to encourage her to spend time with them once she had found them — very committed dogsbodies!

'One day I was about to start a rock climb on Great Gable with some friends, when we got a call for a lady who had gashed her leg badly. It was quite close to us so we were first on scene. Without direction from me, Pippi quietly sat herself behind the casualty against her back, I think to give comfort.

'On another occasion, not a call-out, I was with some friends making an ascent of Crinkle Gill, near Bowfell. We stopped for some lunch when we emerged from the ghyll. Pippi was playing with a big flat stone. She pushed it onto a large patch of snow, then with her front paws on the stone, and her back legs trying to keep up, she not so gracefully headed off down the slope, a hundred yards or more. She was able to stop when the snow ran out. They say dogs don't like being laughed at... sorry, Pippi.

'Of all my dogs, Search Dog Ollie perhaps had the strongest work ethic — indeed he was a workaholic and had his own ideas of how to search — usually at variance with mine. On one training weekend in the Howgills, we were working a large area of fellside, when the watching assessors apparently said to each other, 'At what point should we tell her that the dog is going to Tebay and she's going to Sedbergh?'

'On another occasion training near Devoke Water, I could tell from a distance he had

something in his mouth — it was a goose egg, miraculously unbroken. I retrieved the egg, stuffed it inside my jacket to keep it warm and set off up the hillside to where I thought the nest might be. Pippi found the nest with another three eggs in it and I returned the egg. We beat a hasty retreat and I think I saw the goose return.

'I was on a search with Ollie, at night and in winter, when he picked up the scent of somebody on the far side of Scales Tarn, Blencathra. He took off across the frozen tarn. My heart was in my mouth at the thought of him disappearing under the ice, but no amount of shouting and whistling would distract him from the task in hand. He found two people camping on the far side — again not who we were looking for.

'With Search Dogs Pippi and Ollie together, for a short time until Pippi retired, both dogs would come out on a search and they developed their own system — Pippi did the barking while Ollie did the legwork, it was a superb partnership which worked really well. If one found the body, the other had to be in on it as soon as possible.

'Search Dog Jess, now four years old and recently graded, sometimes licks faces instead of barking at the body, which is tough if you're the body and you've been asked to play dead! We haven't had to resort to fish skin yet.

'On different occasions on night searches I have been mistaken for a glowworm, a helicopter (a very quiet one, obviously), car headlights and a hallucination. Many searches finish without the dog getting the reward of finding anyone, the missing person or people are not in our allotted search area — sometimes team members will help out by being a body on the way off the hill, even at the end of a long night.

'Why do I do it? Apart from the camaraderie with other handlers and bodies and the incredible relationships with my dogs, it's the possibility that my dog might just save someone's life. To all the bodies and my fellow trainers who have helped over all these years — thank you. 🐾

DECEMBER: DUNDONNEL TEAM LEADER STANDS DOWN

Donald MacRae said he had thoroughly enjoyed his time as leader, but believed it vital to the success of the organisation that the team provides leadership opportunities to others. 'We have an amazing pool of talent within the team and this has made my job as leader so much easier'.

It's been a busy year for the Dundonnel team, with almost 3,000 rescue hours, covering a range of rescues, from those fallen in the mountains to extensive searches for missing people, plus almost 5,000 training hours.

'Everything we do is centred on providing a better service to those in need. At times we need to deliver this service in very challenging circumstances. I want to take a moment to remember those families who we have supported following the loss of a loved one. Sadly, this year we have had five fatalities in the mountains. During my time as leader, I have taken on a lead role in developing wellbeing support for all our members.

'Over the years, we've built strong relationships with Police Scotland, leading to highly effective partnership working, providing better outcomes for the public. I have had the pleasure of being in Dundonnel MRT for over thirty years. I look forward to continuing an active role within the team and nationally. Whilst I maybe stepping down, I have every confidence in the successive leadership team'.

Iain Nesbitt now takes up the leadership reins. Iain, who works locally as a forester, joined the team in 2002 and has been a deputy leader since 2014.

Top: Donald MacRae © Donald MacRae.
Below: Iain Nesbitt © Iain Nesbitt.



Above: Left to right: Penny Kirby with Search Dogs Mif and Pippi; Search Dogs Ollie and Pippi; Pippi and Ollie © Wasdale MRT/Penny Kirby.

known to pick up on 0.001 parts per million and from a distance of a mile (across water), and, amazingly, from people buried in snow at a depth of five metres. A German Shepherd dog has 200 million olfactory cells, over 170 square centimetres, and humans have five million, over five square

Hinkes
thinks

Mountain rescue in the Falkland Islands...

It's possible, as MREW ambassador **Alan Hinkes** discovered, on a recent trip far south, but there are no MRTs. And the wildlife might be very different, but the landscape, weather and the locals feel very familiar.

It is 8000 miles away and yet feels like the UK. The Falkland Islands takes the best part of 24 hours to get there on the 'Air Bridge' from RAF Brize Norton and yet it feels like Britain. It looks like Britain. The weather is familiar — if a tad windy at times. The people are British. The landscape is very familiar, the hills and mountains near Stanley are mostly akin to north west Scotland, very similar in topography to the Suilven area. The underlying rock is a quartzite which weathers similarly to the Torridonian sandstone, Lewisian gneiss and Cambrian quartzite. The very prominent

Mount Two Sisters is classically carved and scoured by glacial ice to make two prominent rocky peaks, somewhat like Nunataks. The height is also similar to north west Scotland, the highest peaks just over 2000ft/700m.

The well-known peaks from the 1982 war with Argentina — Tumbledown, Longdon, Harriet, Two Sisters, Wireless Ridge, William, Kent and Sapper Hill — are all easily accessible from Stanley. They make interesting hill walks in their own right — some, like Mount William and Two Sisters with easy scrambles to the summit

cairns/memorials and airy Striding Edge/Crib Goch like ridges should you wish to deviate onto them. They are made more interesting with the battlefield history associated with them. Abandoned Argentinian equipment is still to be found on the hillsides, such as recoilless rifles, mobile field kitchens, 50mm machine gun emplacements, dug-outs, shelters, shoes, blankets and sometimes some of our spent munitions. Thankfully, the minefields have been cleared, otherwise that would be a tad more serious than the risk of avalanche in winter.

Further afield there are other interesting and challenging hills, mountains and walks. Some of the coastal walks are particularly interesting and spectacular, often with white sandy beaches, cliffs, turquoise sea, penguins, sea lions, seals and other wildlife. The Rockhopper penguins are particularly endearing — they literally hop on their two feet, up near vertical cliffs, sometimes using their beak for balance/grip. They nest well above the sea to try and get away from predators such as Leopard seals and sea lions. Unfortunately, they're still not safe as skuas and caracaras dive into the colonies and fly off with eggs and very young chicks.

There are also more accessible low-level day walks such as around Darwin and Goose Green, which also has the interest from the Second Battalion, Parachute Regiment (2 PARA) assault in 1982, when Lieutenant-Colonel 'H' Jones was killed.

Another bimbles was around the coastline of Gipsy Cove, near Stanley. This easy walk has panoramic views to the hills, white beaches, rocky headlands, old WW1 and WW2 battery guns, a photogenic shipwreck and penguins. The low-lying Bleaker Island is stuffed with wildlife and birds galore. A lovely low-level walk culminated on the summit of the island, Semaphore Hill. At 89ft/27m, a far cry from a Himalayan peak but nevertheless very interesting and enjoyable with a lot of wildlife to see.

If you want something more demanding the highest peak is Mount Usborne at 2313ft/705m. Its outline is reminiscent of a North Pennine fell such as Cross Fell, Whernside or Pendle Hill and it is about the same height. But the north face is more like a Cairngorm corrie, which is peculiar as in the southern hemisphere. It should be the

south side that has the glacial corries. No one really knows why the corries are on the north 'sunny' side. Perhaps in the last ice age it was the prevailing cold wind from the south which deposited snow on the lee slope to keep feeding the glaciers and forming the corries and now remaining 'tams'.

Getting to Mount Usborne can be a challenge. I had help from Grant, a local hillwalker with a Land Rover, otherwise it's a 10-15km walk over moorland-like terrain to reach the foot of the mountain. You do need to be skilled in real off-road driving and I do not mean as in the UK on rough tracks. This is true off-road driving, across country. It is preferable to travel in two vehicles, so you can tow each other out, and big jacks and wheel boards for driving onto are essential. I had the full experience on Usborne when Grant got bogged down. Generally, if you cannot extricate yourself, a local will probably come and help. There aren't many locals though and that can take hours. Grant advised me to bash on alone up Usborne while he jacked his Land Rover out. I had to walk a few extra kilometres further over the lower-approach terrain but it still only took me three-and-a-half hours to get up and down, by which time the Landie had been debugged.

Usborne is not a technical climb, more of a North Pennine walk. There are no paths or tracks on the ground or rights of way and permission must be sought from landowners. Mount Usborne is on Falkland Island government land and permission is no problem, and landowners are usually happy to let you walk on their land.

The terrain is rugged with a mixture of whitegrass, peat bogs, red crowberry (a heather-like scrub known as diddle-dee) and rocky stone runs, which are low-angled areas of quartzite boulders and rocks — like rivers of stone. These stone runs are a geological feature of the Falklands which Charles Darwin noted on his voyages.

In general, I didn't find the terrain as gnarly as walking across country in the Pennines. The bogs didn't seem as deep, the whitegrass is easier than bracken, the diddle-dee is not as high or as thick as heather and the rocky stone runs are more stable and less steep than scree.

That said, the weather conditions can be taxing. Even though it was summer, on my ascent and descent of Usborne the wind was relentless, and on the descent I was engulfed in a mini-blizzard and plastered in snow. I found my Fjallraven windproof clothing really useful, sometimes wearing a waterproof shell in the odd heavy rainfall period. The atmosphere and air is very clear, fresh and clean. I found sunglasses were useful even on dull days and definitely helped to protect my eyes in the blizzard on

Right: Out and about with some of the local wildlife and their very fluffy young © Alan Hinkes.



Mount Usborne. Sunburn and windburn is a hazard and I used sunscreen on my exposed face and neck.

The Falkland Islands is a great place for hillwalking and scrambling and there are impressive crags for rock climbing. As in any mountainous remote area, it's best to be prepared and as self-reliant as possible. Mobile phone coverage is not good, the population is sparse and long distances to remote farmhouses may have to be covered to raise help. Generally you will be alone in the Falkland hills or on walks, which is great if you like solitude away from the Bank Holiday crowds on UK hills!

S61 helis used for transporting military personnel and supplies. All four helicopters could be used for medical emergency response if necessary.

If the helis couldn't fly due to cloud or other conditions, the Fire and Rescue Service and the Falkland Islands Defence Force (FIDF) would be called out as de facto mountain rescue service and they do train for such emergencies. Using off-road vehicles such as Land Rovers and ex-military tracked BVs, they would be able to access close to an incident. Essentially, they are the mountain rescue team! If necessary, the SAR heli would coordinate and lift the FIDF and fire



Top: One of the last remaining minefields. All the hills are cleared so there's no risk in the hills and everywhere should be cleared by December 2020. Above: Left to right: Rocky coastal walk close to Stanley with Mount Two Sisters in the distance; Mount Usborne; Memorial cross on Tumbledown with Stanley in the background © Alan Hinkes.



Above top, left to right: Mount Two Sisters in the distance; jacking up the bogged in Landie; Going cross-country. Above, left to right: More cross-country; Fire and rescue service vehicles at the ready © Alan Hinkes.

Should anything go wrong there is an efficient well-trained search and rescue service with two dedicated AW 189 helicopters permanently on standby at Mount Pleasant Airport MPA. As in the UK, until recently this rescue capability was covered by the military with yellow RAF Sea Kings. With these gone, the privatised helis are branded Coastguard. There are also two

and rescue personnel to an incident, especially if it was on West Falkland which is very sparsely populated. Some of the pilots are ex-British military such as ex-RAF 202 Squadron SAR Lossiemouth. Essentially there is rescue cover in the hills, which from a population of about 3000 people is very well organised. ☺

KONGUR MRT JACKET



Born from necessity and tested by rescue teams worldwide, the Kongur MRT Jacket is built with GORE-TEX Pro for those moments when nothing else matters.



MADE WITH



Guided
by
necessity



Making solo tracks across a Siberian lake

Raising funds for rescue

Bolton MRT's training officer, Mike Stevenson, is a man on a mission. An extremely cold one. In 2018, he was part of a three-man team to break the speed record for an unsupported crossing of the world's largest lake, Lake Baikal in Siberia, in temperatures of minus-35 and winds that whipped them off their feet. With five extreme cold expeditions under his belt, he's planning his sixth, this time solo.

He returns to Siberia in February 2020 to improve on the record now held by someone else after he was forced to withdraw from his 2019 expedition at 350km, due to an infected foot. The total crossing is around 690km, dependent on the pressure ridges and open leads which he will be forced to navigate around. The solo element is what makes this expedition different, experiencing the vastness of the lake in solitude and the danger that brings. His hope is that the nature of this challenge, by an operational mountain rescue team member, can help generate both awareness and funds for mountain rescue.

This wasn't always the plan. 'I will come back to Baikal, but just to explore', he wrote, within hours of withdrawing from the 2019 expedition. 'One successful speed attempt and one unsuccessful is enough on this beast.'

'Don't ever listen,' he now cautions, 'for at least the first week, to anything that spills from the mouth of someone who has been forced to withdraw from any test of endurance. First let the raw emotion subside, give them time to gather their thoughts and then still question them!'

'Before I'd even begun my long trip back, I'd already started to plan and contemplate my return. I could never leave things as they were! Despair, heartache, failure and tears are not what my lasting memories of Baikal will be. It isn't just the pure desire to exorcise the 2019 expedition, it's the ambition, the will to succeed, the edge that drives the competitive, the need to chase the elation of 2018. It's to hold true to my beliefs going into the 2019 trip: The education, the show of resilience, this will be the true achievement!'

'On my return to the UK, 24 hours hadn't passed and my partner had given me the green light to return!'

'Things were falling into place. After all, family play a huge part in these big trips both in the preparation and support whilst out

there. Then there are toddlers and teenagers who need looking after. Life goes on whilst explorers are gallivanting. This isn't just a test for me, it's a test of endurance for Lauren too.

'Watching from home as my teammate, and expedition partner reached Nizhneangarsk, a new record, was a surreal and numb feeling for me. There was the obvious elation I felt for Scott. He was safe. He'd succeeded in reaching the small town on the most northern part of the lake for a second time, something I had failed to do — a true show of steely resolve, self-discipline and raw determination. I wanted to be a part of his success, not through entitlement but because I hadn't contemplated having to withdraw, and certainly not in the circumstances I did.'

'It was during a video call with Scott, hours after his finish, listening to him describe the northern part of the lake, his experiences and the conditions he encountered on the part I didn't get to see this time, that my resolve started to harden. The hunger was building. In my head, the decision was made.'

'But this time I wanted more. I wanted to add to it, to push the bar higher, have a new experience. After five trips into the extreme cold I wanted a solo one. A solo crossing of the frozen Lake Baikal!'

'In late-March, discussing the trip in detail, I declared my intent to go back the following season. It became apparent we were both of the same mind: with some more refinements and a bit of good fortune a sub-10-day crossing was possible. But, what did this mean? What was happening to my solo trip? It was disappearing into the clag! After all, Scott is my teammate, we started our Baikal adventure together in 2018. I'm also grateful for all he and his business partner Phil have taught me about the cold and how to travel in it, both being the experienced polar travellers they are.'

'I was torn between loyalty to Scott and my desire and motivation to really test myself in

an environment few have even encountered, let alone survived truly unsupported.

'I confided in Lauren that it was the solo trip I sought. I want to feel the remoteness of the lake, to embrace the loneliness and the fear.'

'As summer approached, Scott began to speak of other possibilities for the following year like the Kungsleden in Sweden. I was adamant, Baikal had my full attention and I was going back the following year. I wasn't leaving it how it was. Scott had always spoken with a cautionary tone about a return due to the nagging injuries from the rigours and demand of two crossings in subsequent years. All the time I had been planning for what I craved whilst knowing, out of loyalty, it may well be a partnership should Scott choose to return.'

'To myself though, I began to question Scott's motivation and the realisation came that a solo crossing may be on the cards. He'd already completed two successful crossings. Would he want to put himself through the torture and pain again? The pain in your knees from ice so hard, every step resonates through your joints. The agony. The sleepless nights listening to Baikal as it cracks and shudders beneath your tent. The days marching on like a zombie towards a horizon you can't see. Struggling to see your hand holding your GPS as it fails in the denseness of the white out.'

'Or, if it's clear and Baikal is offering one of its mesmerising days, the horizon is forever in the distance never getting closer before darkness comes once again. These trips are only for the committed and Scott knows this. He was also right, there are plenty of other enchanting places to visit and explore. If I'd had two successful back-to-back crossings would I even consider going back for a third?'

'It was late September when Scott contacted me to say he wouldn't be going back to Baikal. His plans for 2020 lay closer to home, in Scandinavia. So there it is: Baikal solo, 2020... watch this space...'

Good luck Mike. Safe travels. 🍀

FOLLOW MIKE'S PROGRESS ON INSTAGRAM AND FACEBOOK @FROZENTRACKS

Sleep is a process of surrendering the body, emotions and mind to a temporary 'shut down'. There has to be a balance between these three elements for the organism to fall asleep. Don't expect the body to perform a good night's sleep if:

- Your body is restless, in pain, stressed or affected by caffeine, alcohol or other drugs that affect its level of energy and activation — it will be difficult to come to a resting point.
- Your emotions are playing out on their own accord with events that have happened or will yet happen. Upsets, anger, guilt, resentment, remorse, sorrow... any emotional discomfort or excitement can prevent you resting.
- Your mind refuses to rest with thoughts of 'to do' lists, deadlines and other problems. It will charge your body and emotions with activity, making it difficult to settle.

Stress and emotional issues such as anxiety and depression cause half of all insomnia cases, but your daytime habits, sleep routine and physical health may also play a role. Try to identify all possible causes of your insomnia.

- Are you under a lot of stress?
- Are you feeling depressed, emotionally flat or hopeless?
- Do you struggle with chronic feelings of anxiety or worry?
- Have you recently gone through a traumatic experience?
- Are you taking any medications that might be affecting your sleep?
- Do you have any health problems that may be interfering with sleep?
- Is your sleep environment quiet and comfortable?
- Are you spending enough time in sunlight during the day and darkness at night?
- Do you try to go to bed and get up around the same time every day?
- Are you taking naps during the day?
- Do you suffer nightmares?

Once you figure out the root cause — physical, mental or emotional, you'll have a chance to deal with that specific problem and retrain your body to sleep with simple relaxation techniques and a sleep hygiene routine.

- **Physical:** A combination of sleep hygiene and relaxation techniques will help restore a good sleep pattern. If it doesn't resolve, see your GP for a physical evaluation.
- **Emotional:** You'll need to find a way to handle your emotions. This might be through regular meditation, yoga, Tai

Chi, self-help reading, talking to a friend and sharing feelings, taking up a creative activity, or other practices that help you acknowledge and deal with your emotions. Don't push them aside, they may go away temporarily but will surface again when you're not busy.

It might be helpful to journal your emotions. Write them down if you can't sleep and make a note of your dreams in the morning before starting your day. Dreams are a huge part of the sleep process, even if the dreams seem funny or weird — noticing them helps create an interest for your inner life.

The daily stresses of life and work, getting older, marital upset, bereavement, alcohol and drug use, poor diet, noisy environment, addictive technology — not to mention the odd extended or traumatic mountain rescue incident — all these things and more can affect your ability to sleep well. And once disrupted, poor sleeping patterns can become ingrained. So how do you break the cycle?

If these strategies don't work, consider seeking the help of a professional counsellor, psychotherapist, psychologist or cognitive behavioural therapy.

- **Mental:** You can use many self-help strategies to cope with uninvited thoughts. The simplest is to get out of bed after trying to sleep for thirty minutes, and write your 'to-do' list down to get it out of your mind. Or, if your thoughts are just random 'birds', try focusing on slow deep breathing — diverting the mind to something soothing may help.

SLEEP HYGIENE

Making small adjustments to your bedtime routine will help you sleep a great deal better.

- **Make sure your bedroom is quiet, dark and cool.** Try using a sound machine or ear plugs to hide outside noise, an open window or fan to keep the room cool, and black-out curtains or a sleep mask to keep out the light.
- **Stick to a regular sleep schedule.** Support your biological clock by going to bed and getting up at the same time every day, including weekends. Get up at your usual time in the morning even if you're tired. This will help you get back into a regular sleep rhythm.
- **Avoid naps** (unless, you work shifts — see later). Napping during the day can make it difficult to sleep at night. If you feel you need to take a nap, limit it to 30 minutes before 3.00pm .

- **Avoid stimulating activity and stressful situations before bedtime** including vigorous exercise, big discussions or arguments and TV, computer or video game use!
- **Limit caffeine, alcohol and nicotine.**
- **Use the bedroom only for sleeping and sex.** Don't work, read, watch TV or use your computer in bed or in the bedroom so when you get in bed, your brain and body get a strong signal that it's time to nod off — or be romantic.
- **Get out of bed when you can't sleep.** Don't try to force it. Tossing and turning only ramps up the anxiety. Get up,

body, working your way up from your feet to the top of your head.

- **Listen to relaxing/soothing sounds** such as nature or instrumental music.
- **Consider taking valerian as a tea or supplement** for its mild sedative effects — but check that these do not interfere with or amplify the effects of any medication you may be taking. **If in doubt, speak to your GP or pharmacist.**

HOW TO BREATHE FROM YOUR BELLY

This is how you breathed as a baby. Belly breathing drops and lifts the big muscle of the diaphragm, the natural body mechanism that pushes air in and out of your lungs. It centres awareness in your body, rather than your head, so you feel more physically and energetically grounded and helps relax

your neck, shoulders and arms. It also provides a wonderful massage for your internal organs, just as massaging your muscles adds to their tone and overall functioning, and increases the blood circulation.

Ideally, inhale and exhale only through your nostrils — only inhaling and exhaling through your mouth as a last resort. As you breathe, make both your inhale and your exhale smooth and full,

Image © edmondlafoto via Pixaby.



leave the bedroom and do something relaxing such as reading, drinking a warm cup of caffeine-free tea, taking a bath or listening to soothing music. Write that 'to-do' list, note the emotions which are upsetting you and acknowledge them without judging them either good or bad or trying to change them. When you feel sleepy, go back to bed.

- **Move bedroom clocks out of view.** Anxiously watching the minutes tick by when you can't sleep — knowing you're going to be exhausted when the alarm goes off — is a sure-fire recipe for insomnia. You can use an alarm but make sure you can't see the time when you're in bed.

RELAXATION TECHNIQUES TO HELP YOU SLEEP

- **A relaxing bedtime routine** — focus on quiet, soothing activities such as reading, knitting or listening to soft music and keep the lights low.
- **Abdominal breathing** — most of us don't breathe as deeply as we should. When we breathe deeply, involving not only the chest but also the belly, lower back and ribcage, we help engage our parasympathetic nervous system, which controls relaxation.
- **Progressive muscle relaxation.** Lie down and make yourself comfortable. Starting with your feet, tense the muscles as tightly as you can. Hold for a count of ten then relax. Continue to do this with every muscle group in your

Some useful advice, courtesy of **The Fire Fighter's Charity**, offered as part of their in-house rehabilitation programme, available to mountain and cave rescue team members via the Rescue Benevolent Fund.



without strain. When your exhale is full, your next inhale will naturally flow and arise by itself.

Focus on not holding your breath between the end of an inhale or exhale and the beginning of the next. Let one flow into the other in as relaxed a manner as you can.

Keep the tip of your tongue on the roof of your mouth and your mouth closed. If you make the sound 'le' (as in the word 'let'), your tongue will touch the correct spot just slightly behind your top front teeth. When your tongue touches the roof of your mouth, it helps maintain deep belly breathing.

There is no gain in putting tension in your body by straining to take longer inhales and exhales. Breath-induced tension increases stress and outweighs the benefits of breathing quietly, softly and deeply in a relaxed manner.

Allow your lungs to expand to maximum capacity only if they seek expansion naturally. Don't force it. By staying within 70-80% of your capacity, you will wean yourself from pushing yourself and gain the habit of relaxation.

You can practice the belly breathing any time you remember to do so. The goal is to train your body to breathe this way most hours of the day.

COPING WITH SHIFT WORK

Shift work brings its own challenges, having to sleep during the day and stay awake and alert during work time. Adequate sleep and feeling rested is essential for good health, productivity, memory retention, weight maintenance and managing health conditions. Try these extra strategies to help you cope:

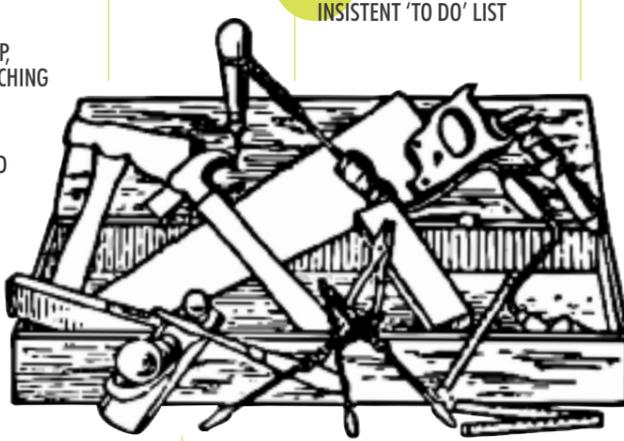
- **If possible, take a short nap** during your shift.
- **Work with other people around you** to increase alertness.
- **Get moving during your breaks** — go for a walk, stretch or do some exercise to keep your body active.
- **Beware drinking caffeine too late in a shift** — it may prevent you being able to sleep after work.
- **Maintain the same sleep schedule**, even on non-work days. Make sleep a priority at the weekends or on your days off so you can pay off your sleep debt.
- **Avoid caffeine and heavy meals close to bedtime – and alcohol!**
- **Adjust your sleep/wake cycle** when you wake up at night by exposing yourself to bright light. Use bright lamps or daylight simulation bulbs in your workplace and wear dark glasses on your journey home.

WHERE TO GO FOR PROFESSIONAL HELP

bacp.co.uk British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy.
psychotherapy.org.uk UK Council for Psychotherapy.
bps.org.uk British Psychological Society.
babcp.com British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Therapies.
helpguide.org for information on everything to do with mental health and wellness — well worth a tour.
painscience.com for science-based advice on aches, pains and injuries, both mental and physical and related treatments and therapies.
sleepcouncil.org.uk and **sleepfoundation.org.uk** for hints, tips and articles to help you get a better night's sleep.
<https://health.clevelandclinic.org/how-you-can-sleep-better-if-you-work-the-night-shift> tells how you can minimise shift work sleep disorder. ☺

Under an agreement with The Fire Fighters' Charity, the Rescue Benevolent Fund is able to support physical and mental rehabilitation for mountain and cave rescue team members and their families. For information, email secretary@rescuebenevolent.fund.

WHAT MAKES FOR A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP? CREATE YOUR TOOLBOX...



- TAKE THE TIME TO WIND DOWN BEFORE BED**
- IF YOU CAN'T SLEEP, AVOID CLOCK-WATCHING**
- ESTABLISH A GOOD SLEEP ROUTINE**
- DEVELOP STRATEGIES TO REDUCE STRESS**
- REMOVE TVS AND IPADS FROM THE BEDROOM AND...**
- ...WHILST IT MAY NOT BE PRACTICAL FOR A MOUNTAIN RESCUER TO TURN THE PHONE OFF, THINK ABOUT MOVING IT OUT OF ARM'S REACH AND TURN OFF SOCIAL MEDIA NOTIFICATIONS**
- AVOID DAYTIME NAPS**
- HAVE A PAD AND PEN BY YOUR BED, READY FOR THAT INSISTENT 'TO DO' LIST**
- AVOID ALCOHOL AND OTHER STIMULANTS BEFORE BEDTIME**
- CONSIDER HOW ANY MEDICATIONS MAY BE AFFECTING YOUR SLEEP PATTERN**
- DON'T FORCE IT! GET OUT OF BED IF YOU CAN'T SLEEP, LEAVE THE BEDROOM THEN RETURN TO BED WHEN YOU'RE SLEEPY**
- EXPERIMENT WITH EAR PLUGS, EYE MASKS, DARKNESS AND LAVENDER PILLOW SPRAY TO INDUCE SLEEP**
- KEEP COOL IN THE BEDROOM!**
- DON'T EAT A BIG MEAL THREE HOURS PRIOR TO BEDTIME**
- PRACTISE BELLY BREATHING AND VISUALISATION TECHNIQUES**
- CHECK HOW YOUR EMOTIONS ARE AFFECTING YOU**

Toolbox image from Vintagesnipsandclips via Pixabay
 Info courtesy of The Fire Fighters' Charity firefighterscharity.org.uk

WE ARE WHAT WE EAT

PENNY KIRBY WASDALE MRT

There is a lot of attention being paid to wellbeing at the moment and, in October, as part of plans to develop 'Looking after number one', Wasdale MRT hosted a talk by Jeanette Jackson, director of the Manchester Stress Institute, looking specifically at stress and nutrition.

We invited other Lake District teams and members of the emergency services. The talk came about as one of our members had attended an NWS wellbeing day, which looked at stress, nutrition, mood, sleep and risk of injury and Jeanette had been one of the speakers. It was apparent that all the above are very closely linked and can be affected enormously by what we eat, on and off the hill. It has great relevance for mountain rescuers, who often miss proper meals and substitute crisps and chocolate bars — not ideal.

Short term stress has its uses (fight or flight response) but long-term stress has many negative impacts — for example, the body's delayed ability to heal physically, slower reaction times and disrupted sleep because of the increased level of cortisol, which is not used up quickly like adrenaline.

We all know we are supposed to eat a 'healthy' diet — Jeanette explained why and what the various elements in what we eat are used for. She also explained how we can tailor our food intake to what we are doing. For instance, a three-course dinner is not needed for fuel if you're sitting at a desk for hours at a time, or just before going to bed. The ratios of carbohydrate, protein and vegetables are key to getting the most benefit in terms of energy and overall health.

She explained the mechanics behind feeling tired and wanting to comfort eat, how mood affects our eating patterns and vice versa and consequently our ability to cope with stress. But probably the greatest revelation was that there are nine teaspoons of sugar in a pint of real ale — more than in a Bounty bar — and eleven in a glass of mulled wine!

The studies the Stress Institute has undertaken with different groups have had amazing results in terms of productivity at work, increased self-esteem and improved sleep. In one project, with a group of young offenders, the reoffending rate dropped by 30% after a few weeks of proper nutrition and support.

Wellbeing continues to be a developing area and nutrition is one aspect where we can be proactive and have a direct and positive impact on ourselves every day. Jeanette has provided us with some great recipes for meals and cakes — some of which we provided as 'tasters' on the night. [See right for two of these — we'll bring you more in Spring]. ☺



AVOCADO & POACHED EGG ON TOAST

Avocados are a good source of healthy fats and eggs are a great source of protein and vitamins.

- 2 x slices of wholemeal bread
- 1 x avocado
- 2 x eggs
- 2 tsps full fat butter

Salt & pepper to taste
 Glass of full fat milk

1. Poach the eggs in a poach pod.
2. Meanwhile remove and discard the skin and stone from the avocado, then place the avocado in a bowl and mash it up.
3. Toast the bread then butter generously.
4. Spread the avocado evenly over both slices of toast and place the poached eggs on top.
5. Drink the milk with the meal.

Recipes serve 1



SWEET POTATO & POMEGRANATE SALAD

Sweet potatoes are an excellent source of vitamins A, C and B6, manganese, copper and pantothenic acid. Even as a jacket potato they make a great lunch or dinner.

- 1 x sweet potato, cubed
- Olive oil, salt & pepper for roasting
- Handful spinach
- 4 tsps pomegranate seeds
- 3oz crumbled feta
- 2 tsps toasted pistachios
- 2-3 spring onions, chopped

For the dressing, whisk together:
 2 tsps olive oil
 1/2 clove minced garlic
 2 tsps honey
 1 tsp sherry or white wine vinegar
 Salt & pepper, to taste

1. Preheat oven to 200°C. Chop sweet potato into bite-sized cubes. Drizzle with olive oil, salt and pepper, and roast in the oven for 20-30 minutes, or until the edges start to turn a darker brown.
2. Mix roasted sweet potato with remaining ingredients and serve with dressing. Season to taste.



BIOLITE HEADLAMP 330

An ultra-thin, 330 lumen USB rechargeable headlamp featuring 3D slim fit construction making your hands free light wildly capable and so comfortable, you'll forget you're wearing it. The construction is based on three dimensions of a perfect fit: a flush front, better balance and smart fabrics. Seamlessly integrated housing merges the electronics directly into the band creating an ultra-thin front that sits flush on your forehead with no bouncing. Reorientating the battery to the back, keeps the weight off your face to reduce slippage and a natural fit. The moisture wicking fabric will keep you cool and dry during activity and weighs only 69g. With four modes, the torch allows you to control your light through easy dimmability with just one hand. Easy recharging via micro USB and a run time of 40 hours, you can ditch the batteries and power up with the BioLite Energy Eco System.

BioLite ORDER DIRECT FROM BURTON MCCALL LTD
 T: 0116 234 4646 E: SALES@BURTON-MCCALL.COM

Rescue Benevolent Fund: How to make a claim

JUDY WHITESIDE SECRETARY, RESCUE BENEVOLENT FUND

If you or your family is suffering from hardship, physical or emotional injury as a result of a mountain or cave rescue incident, the Rescue Benevolent Fund may well be able to help.

Maybe you've suffered a physical injury during a rescue or rescue practice, something which needs not just days but weeks to heal, time off work and the call-out list. Something which would benefit from a course of intensive physiotherapy but the family purse just won't run to it privately and the earliest NHS appointment is weeks down the line.

Or maybe you've experienced a particularly traumatic call-out — nothing you haven't seen before but this time it hits a button you didn't even know was there — and a couple of pints at the pub with your mates just isn't cutting it.

Maybe all this is affecting your ability to support yourself and your family.

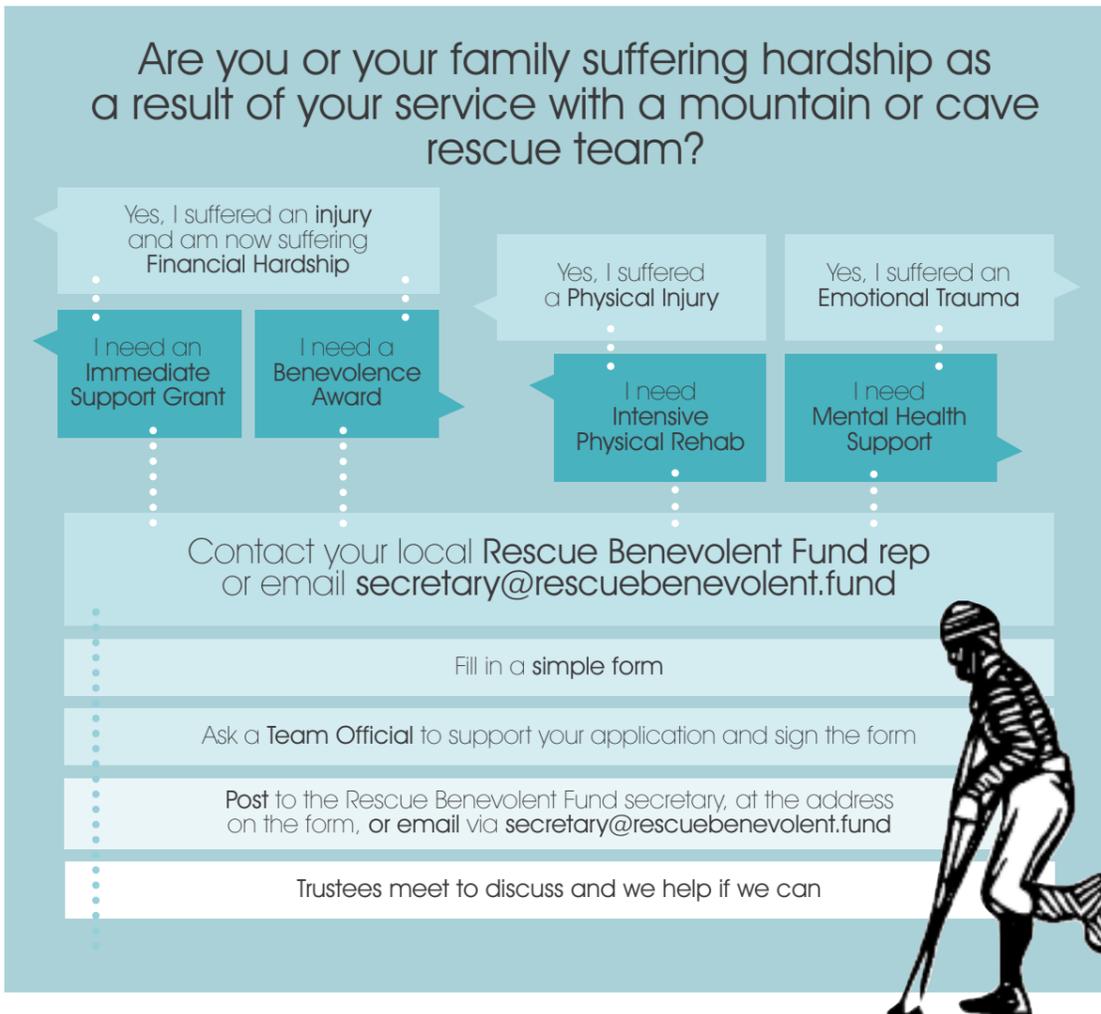
The Rescue Benevolent Fund may be able to support you with an immediate financial grant, and a further benevolence award if that's appropriate. We may be able to speed your recovery with a week or two's intense rehabilitation at one of The Fire Fighter's Charity centres or Police Treatment Centres (we have agreements in place with both organisations). We may even be able to work with you to source and pay for therapy nearer to home if this is what your doctor recommends.

We know it's not in the nature of the average mountain and cave rescuer to come asking for this sort of help — surely, we've often heard, there must be someone else, more deserving? But, honestly, this is what the fund was created for — to support YOU — and we'd like to think that the more members we support, the more will come forward for our help. So don't

suffer in silence. Or risk long term pain or damage by not getting treatment sooner. Make a claim.

All you have to do is fill in an application form, get it signed by a team official who supports your claim and send it to me (wearing my other hat, as secretary of the fund). The trustees will consider your claim as swiftly as we can — an immediate support grant might be a matter of days, anything else we would hope to resolve within a couple of weeks of receipt of your application.

To make the application process clearer, we've produced the simple graphic below, taking you through from incident to approval. And, finally, if you'd like to ask for our support — or donate to or fundraise for the fund either as a team or individual — email secretary@rescuebenevolent.fund for details. Stay safe out there and be well. ☺



20% DISCOUNT

for Mountain Rescue volunteers using code **AF-MTNRESCUE-AF**

#UNITEDBYATTITUDE

Stores nationwide | snowandrock.com

Full T&Cs apply. Not to be used in conjunction with any other offer or discount. Selected lines are exempt. Only valid upon production of your Mountain Rescue membership identification to store or use of code AF-MTNRESCUE-AF online. Offer expires 31.12.20.



#itsoktotalk



ANDY ELWOOD
CHATS ABOUT
MENTAL HEALTH,
LADIES AND
STAYING WONKY

Firstly, I want to thank everyone who supported my #MenDoLunchDay initiative on 14 November 2019. 'Movember' is a month of awareness about men's health and, as you may have guessed, my event is all about men's mental health.

Anyone fancy lunch and a chinwag?

The idea is to have one day in the year as a focus, reason or excuse to take some time to connect with a man you know/care about and ask him how he is doing, how he really is?

I have been trying to normalise this conversation about men's mental health for a few years now and this is one of my fun ideas — and there is food involved, so it must be good!

All you had to do was:

1. Invite a man to lunch,
2. Ask him how he is — how he is really doing?
3. Post a selfie with hashtag #MenDoLunchDay

Well, the response was amazing and photos came in from around the globe — Singapore, USA, Canada, Panama, New Zealand, Australia, throughout Europe and even one photo from Antarctica — outside in the snow!! The reports of great conversations and of how some people had reconnected with old friends were so encouraging.

How often does normal 21st-century life on the hamster wheel take over and we never get a chance, or don't make an effort to make time to keep in touch with our good friends?

This is one day in the year when there is an excuse to connect with that old friend or even reach out to someone else because you feel that it would do you good to talk about how things are maybe getting on top of you at present...

The event is very male-focused as three out of every four suicides in the UK are men and suicide is still the number one killer of men under-50 in

of ladies invited men out to lunch as you can see from the photographs! A special thank you to all the ladies who got involved.

I posted lots on social media pointing out the early warning signs that someone may be under too much pressure and how the first symptoms tend to show up in others and ourselves. I also posted plenty of information of how to listen, when someone decides to open up and tell you how they really are:

- Create safety and trust
- Listen carefully
- Don't judge.

Many people, men especially, try to fix themselves and keep their troubles and innermost doubts and worries to themselves due to fear, shame and stigma. But when someone decides to open up and talk, they are merely being human and shame, stigma and fear can be killed when someone listens with understanding and empathy. It's about the simple act of connection with another human, and feeling heard and understood.

It's actually easier than you think, despite our natural tendency to catastrophise about what it may mean if we show any vulnerability to our friends, family or colleagues. Talking is often the first step to finding hope, support and a way forward.

Non-judgemental listening is a major part of Mental Health First Aid training and I'm looking forward to assisting with the delivery of this fantastic course to mountain rescue volunteers in Scotland in early March.

Have you put your name forward for



Above: Stop bottling it up! and the 'Talk, Hope, Live' graphic for #MenDoLunchDay November 2019

the UK. However, women had a crucial role to play in this initiative, as many men, who don't feel comfortable opening up to their male friends or colleagues, will talk to a woman they trust. Consequently, lots

this training? If not, you may still be in time...

If you're in England and fancy the MHFA training, please drop me a line at chinwag@andyelwood.com.



GIVING BEYOND CHRISTMAS

Christmas is a very focused time for giving gifts and although it's great to receive something special which someone has really thought about. Lately we have been transformed by a very commercial world, especially at this time of year.

I've been focused lately on a different kind of giving and I'd like to recommend it to you for the new year, as something you might like to try for your own happiness.

As a volunteer in mountain rescue, you will already know how good 'giving' makes you feel and I've recently been learning about the happiness research, which has been around for over ten years. It turns out that giving is one of the key factors to being happy. (Try The Happiness Advantage by Shawn Achor, if you're interested...)

Random acts of kindness or conscious acts of kindness really do make us feel happy when we do them for others, as well as how the giving also benefits the receiver of our kindness. Win-win!

Allow me to tell you about two of my recent giving experiences, which really stand out as simple but brilliant. Last week, I gave someone two of my self-help recommended books after one of my talks. It was obvious that these two books would be of much more use to the lady in front of me, who was having some real family difficulties at the moment with her husband and son, so I gave them to her and then replaced them for myself. She was overcome with joy and said she would speak to her husband with them that evening.

Secondly, I offered to buy an ambulance crew a brew each in a service station, where we were both filling our vehicles. They guys were very suspicious of me tapping on their window and their faces clearly showed that initially they didn't welcome the intrusion from a member of the public — but when I explained that I was getting a brew and would buy them one also if they wanted one — they both broke into big smiles and said how kind that was. How nice that they really appreciated it, however, they had just got drinks for themselves (unbeknown to me). I thanked them for the work they do and said so many of

us really appreciate everything they do for the public and how great it is that we can always call them when we have an emergency. I couldn't believe how much they were beaming as I walked away — it really seemed to have made their shift.

We have all gotten the buzz and felt the satisfaction of helping someone in their hour of need, even if, or maybe even more so, it has involved a particular hardship for ourselves — maybe due to weather, precarious rescue or long endurance/protracted operation.

So, thank you for volunteering, for going the extra mile in really poor weather, for strangers who may be ill-equipped and untrained to be out in the wilds

You are saving lives and making your own life better by giving your time, energy and experience in MR. I respect that, value that and I hope this carries through to you on those particularly dark, wet, cold night call-outs when if only they had some better gear and knew how to operate a map and compass...

Try giving a little extra in 2020 and feel your happiness soar. Go well! 🙌

Above: Images from around the world of last November's successful Let's Do Lunch © Andy Elwood.



DECEMBER: CASUALTY'S FAMILY AND FRIENDS HELP FUND NEW STRETCHER AND DEFIB FOR KINDER TEAM



Hannah Lowe tragically lost her life at Kinder Downfall in April of this year but, following the incident, her family and friends have undertaken a simply astounding series of fundraising events for the team, in honour of Hannah.

Their efforts have enabled the team to purchase a training defibrillator and a new stretcher, named 'Hannah' in her memory. Hannah's family visited the team's base in Hayfield to meet some of the members, tour the base and take part in an informal handover of the stretcher.

This was a 'tragic event for Hannah's family', said the team via their Facebook page, 'but this has also been an incredibly emotional experience for the team and the two will forever be connected, not least through this very fitting tribute.

'We understand that Hannah's partner Adam, who has already undertaken some amazing fundraising feats, has more crazy plans up his sleeve. Thank you Adam, and the rest of Hannah's family, friends and all the teachers, parents and children at Sharon Lowe's school for all the money raised. Thank you for helping us to continue helping others'.

Top: Kinder team members with Hannah's family.
Above: Stretcher inscription in memory of Hannah.
Images © Kinder MRT.

Woolpower
ÖSTERSUND

OUTWEAR
01576 490 100 | info@outwear.co.uk
www.outwearltd.co.uk

Woolpower, the globally trusted MERINO clothing brand. Now distributed in the UK.
Contact Outwear to discuss samples, trials and discounts exclusive to Mountain Rescue and SAR Teams.

TEAM TALK
AUTUMN



JUNE & NOVEMBER: ABSEIL RAISES FUNDS FOR BOWLAND PENNINE AND BAY HOSPITALS CHARITY

The charity abseil was held at Williamson Park, Lancaster for around 50-75 participants with Bowland Pennine team members providing the rigging and safety cover on the day. Bay Hospitals Charity (bayhospitalscharity.org) organised the event, providing recruitment, advertising and administration of participants in the run up and on the day.

The iconic Ashton Memorial was used for the abseil with two abseil lines allowing an 8-metre free abseil. Team members prepared abseilers with lots of encouragement, fitting harnesses and helmets, briefing on the abseil and a welcome back on the ground.

Monies raised were split between Bay Hospitals and Bowland Pennine, with £4,750 going to the team. Team leader, Kev Camplin, said, 'The target I set was for each charity to raise £1,000 each, getting almost £10,000 from the event was way above my expectations.'

In November, team members and Bay Hospitals Charity staff met again at the memorial for a presentation, along with the team's frontline Defender and the MREW Discovery. Two more abseils are currently planned for 2020 with charity partners.



Photos © Bowland Pennine MRT.



NOVEMBER: POLICE AWARDS RECOGNITION FOR SEVERN AREA RESCUE ASSOCIATION

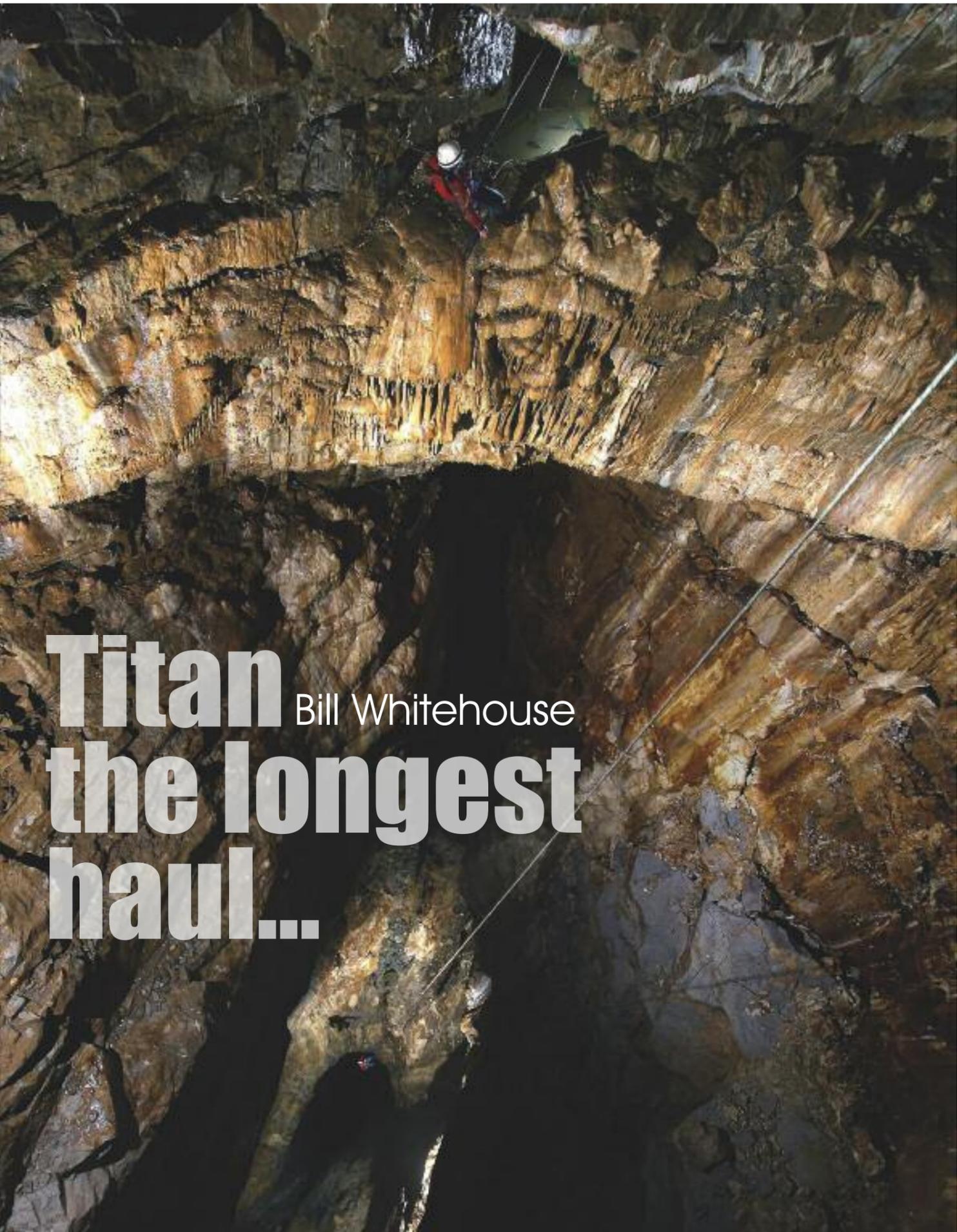
The team's work was recognised at the Gloucestershire Constabulary and Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner for Gloucestershire Impact Awards which recognise excellence in policing and community safety in the county. SARA received the Caroline Symes Memorial Bowl, for 'outstanding work in the voluntary sector'.

From left to right: Rod Hansen (Chief Constable), Bob Streeter (Tewkesbury Station Manager), Derek Williams (Beachley Deputy Land Training Manager), Kathy Donaldson (Beachley Land Training Manager), John Dutton (Exec Land Search Manager), Edward Gillespie (Lord Lieutenant of Gloucestershire) © Antony Thompson, Thousand Word Media Ltd.

Assistant Chief Constable Julian Moss, said that since he joined Gloucestershire Police in 2017 he'd heard nothing but praise for SARA and what they do, noting that in his previous force area they had nothing like the same relationship with their local search and rescue team. Sergeant Tony Scragg highlighted that the team was 'instrumental in our missing person policy and keeping people safe. Without these people I am sure that members of the public would have been found deceased in Gloucestershire and actually they've helped to save lives.' It was also noted that frequently the police do not have the skills to operate in water, marshland or remote areas and provide an invaluable search resource.

The teams work closely with all the emergency services through Gloucestershire's LRF SAR Group and with other voluntary teams via SWERA, in particular with Gloucestershire Cave Rescue Group and Midlands Cave Rescue. The three organisations providing mutual operational support on call-outs and train together on a regular basis.

Dr John Dutton, SARA Executive Land Search Manager, commented that 'this award acknowledges the commitment, both to training and in responding to call-outs, by all SARA volunteers in supporting the police. We are especially grateful to the families of SARA volunteers, whose support is essential in allowing the volunteers to be so responsive.'



Titan

Bill Whitehouse
the longest
haul...



Titan is the deepest known natural underground shaft in Britain. On New Year's Day 1999, cavers broke through to the foot of this huge aven after years of digging upwards through a boulder choke in the further reaches of the Peak Speedwell cave system. They then spent days climbing upwards before reaching the roof of the aven, some 145 metres above. They realised that the top was quite close to the surface and after some careful survey work and negotiations with the landowner, began to sink a shaft to connect with Upper Titan at a point it could be safely rigged for a descent. This took several years and the connection was not available until 2006.

Following the connection, Titan became a fourth route into the Peak/Speedwell system offering a popular challenge for competent vertical cavers. Many visits to Titan involve parties making a through trip to or from one of the other entrances to the system.

A descent first involves a 48-metre abseil down the artificial entrance shaft and then negotiating a short 20-metre passage to the Breakthrough Window into Titan at a point some 130 metres (426 ft) above its floor. A descent from there is then normally in two stages. First is a free abseil down to the Event Horizon — a sloping ledge just over half way. A traverse and a re-belay then permit a second free abseil down to the bottom and access to the climbs and crawls through to the rest of the cave system. A stream enters the shaft from just above the Event Horizon and the lower sixty metres of the descent can be quite wet even with the rope rigged to avoid the worst of the water.

On Saturday 14 December 2019, a party of cavers descended Titan intending to exit via one of the other routes back to the surface. However, due to heavy rain some of the connecting passages from the foot of Titan were impassably flooded and to get out again they had to retreat to re-climb Titan instead.

One member of the party experienced difficulties on the lower and wettest part of the climb and returned to the bottom, cold and exhausted, after failing to reach the Event Horizon. While one member stayed with him the others managed to reach the surface where they raised the alarm. Derbyshire CRO were called out just before 8.00 pm and the first team members were on site on the surface within half an hour.

The initial information was confusing and it was not clear how many people were in trouble or whereabouts they were in the shaft. It was thought they were at the Event Horizon ledge half way down the shaft. This had been the location of a couple of previous rescues. However, the first two team members into the shaft found that they were actually at the bottom, although communications with them was not possible.

By 9.30 pm, team members had reached the foot of Titan and found that only one of

the two was in trouble. The other climbed out accompanied by a team member who reported that the remaining caver was in no condition to try climbing again and would

By about midnight, all was ready for the extraction to commence. The ropes in lower Titan had been rigged to avoid the falling water as far as possible but, even so, a



Opposite page: Titan from the top, shows one caver in Breakthrough Window and another about at the Event Horizon © Robbie Shone. Above: Multipod set up over entrance shaft on rescue © Mick Earle.

need hauling out — first, 130 metres up past the Event Horizon to the Breakthrough Window and then 48 metres up the entrance shaft to the surface. A rescue all the way up Titan had not been done before. It would be the longest free-hanging haul ever carried out on an underground rescue in the UK.

While other team members started setting up for the haul, a team doctor descended to the casualty where he found him to be exhausted and cold but otherwise in reasonable shape.

team member later described conditions as like operating in a washing machine. The doctor would prussik alongside the casualty as he was hauled. Two team members were stationed on the Event Horizon to operate a releasable deviation for the haul and safety lines and a hauling party of five were in place at the Breakthrough Window. On the surface, another team erected a Multipod frame over the top of the entrance shaft and rigged that ready for hauling as well.

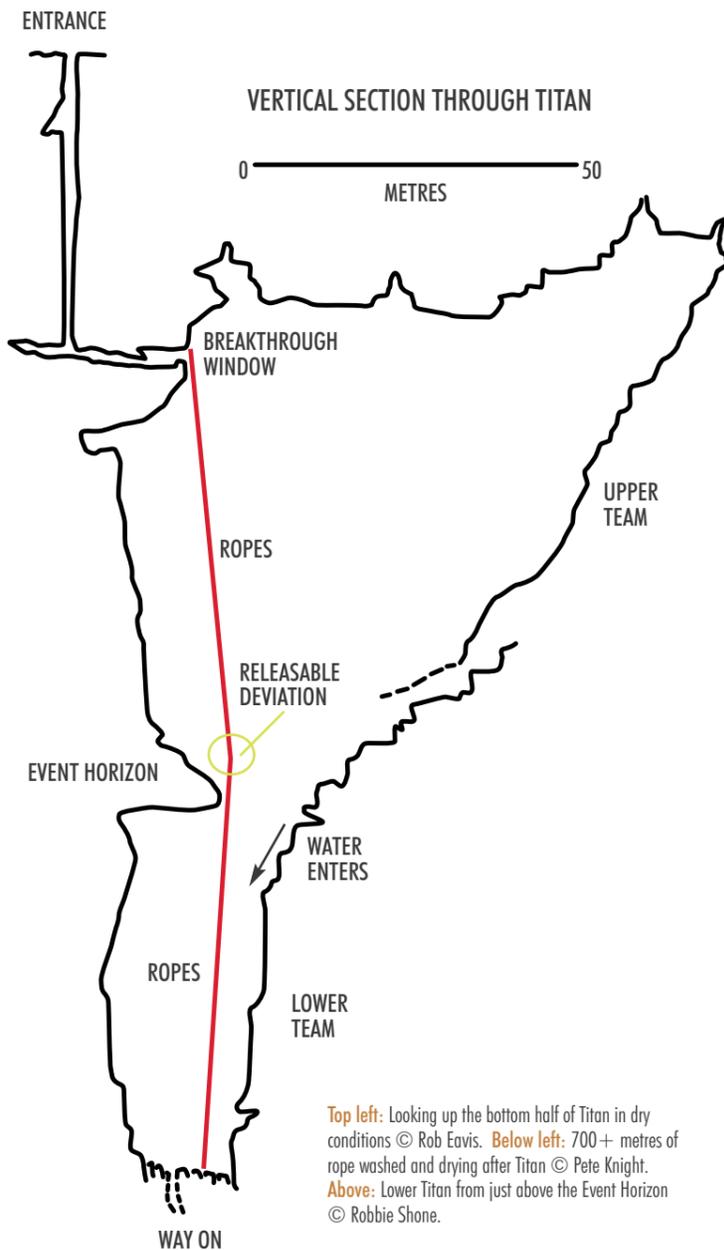
The journey from the bottom of Titan started about fifteen minutes after midnight

***aven** (plural avens): A vertical shaft leading upward from a cave passage, sometimes connecting with passages above. A pothole.

and progressed slowly but steadily. Communications in the shaft were difficult largely due to water noise lower down but matters were improved by the use of a number of PMR radios. A bit of a luxury this — radios don't often perform well underground but due to the sheer size and volume of Titan this time they did.

After an hour dangling in the air, the casualty was safely at the Breakthrough Window and moved through to the foot of the entrance shaft. Another half hour and he was on the surface sipping tea in the cab of a Land Rover. It then took an hour and a half to de-rig the shafts and get everybody and all the kit back to the surface and then to the roadhead.

Over the next few days something over 700 metres of rope and a mass of other kit had to be washed, dried and repacked — a task which took almost as long as the rescue itself! 🍵



Top left: Looking up the bottom half of Titan in dry conditions © Rob Eavis. Below left: 700+ metres of rope washed and drying after Titan © Pete Knight. Above: Lower Titan from just above the Event Horizon © Robbie Shone.



EXCLUSIVE PSMA BUNDLE FOR RESCUE TEAMS



active 20

THE ULTIMATE SPORTS GPS

- TOUCHSCREEN
- BLUETOOTH AND WI-FI
- BUTTONS
- WATERPROOF (IP68)
- FAST GPS PERFORMANCE
- SHOCKPROOF (IK7)
- LARGE 3.5" HI-RES SCREEN
- GPS/GLONASS/GALILEO
- LONG BATTERY LIFE (16 HRS)
- BAROMETRIC ALTIMETER








Available online and from leading outdoor stores
satmap.com/psma-sar | sales@satmap.com | 01372 869 070

Readers should watch this short video, at www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/stories-50630441/life-after-death-how-seven-kids-came-back-from-the-dead. It's about the Praesto Fjord incident in Denmark, in which seven teenagers were immersed in ice cold water following a boating incident. All were rewarmed with ECMO (heart lung machine for rewarming the patient) and all survived and made a good recovery. It reminds us why we do what we do. Seven young adults are alive because someone didn't give up just because they appeared to be dead.

PAPER SUMMARY

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS FOR MOUNTAIN RESCUE TEAMS

The consistent finding from several studies is that all casualties cool off quickly and are hypothermic by the time the Emergency Medical Services arrive on scene.

Unless we are in the middle of a heatwave and the air temperature is approaching 30°C, a shelter and external heat will be needed. This is particularly important in trauma cases. If there are enough team members on scene, then shelter, insulation and heat can be commenced immediately whilst others are attending to medical issues. If there are only a couple of rescuers on scene, unless the casualty is expected to have severe hypothermia, when it is important to slow the

rate of cooling, the priority is always to attend to immediate life threats first of all. A casualty will die far more quickly from an obstructed airway or anaphylaxis than the additional cooling that will take place in the few minutes it takes to do the Primary Survey. Once hypothermia has occurred, there is no easy way to recover body temperature, so minimise how much you expose the casualty to examine them, and cover them up again as soon as you can.

A fascinating review looked at the clinical characteristics and outcomes of witnessed hypothermic cardiac arrests in 206 patients. There were several very important practical findings.

* Hypothermia alone does not cause unconsciousness or cardiac arrest if the core temperature is $\geq 30^{\circ}\text{C}$. So, if you are able to measure temperature, it's higher than 30° and the patient has a reduced conscious level, something else is going on eg. drugs, alcohol, hypoglycaemia, stroke, etc.

* Cardiac arrest is unlikely to occur in hypothermic patients with a normal conscious level.

* Signs of life can be present, even when the body temperature is in the low 20s.

There were three important papers about the use of external heat pads. External heat increases comfort, preserves body energy supplies (less shivering) and reduces the workload of the heart.

• One study looked at whether applying heat to the head could be of value.

• The second reported on three cases of burns due to heat pads.

• The third is a case report in which a moderately hypothermic person was rewarmed using a chemical heat blanket on top of her clothing, and a 'hypothermia wrap'. The wrap consisted of insulation underneath, an outer waterproof layer, and an inner sleeping bag (similar to our cas bags). They were also able to exchange some of the casualty's wet clothing for dry.

* Heat pads were placed on the armpits and chest and compared with heat applied to the head. This study found that almost as much heat can be delivered by applying external heat to the head, although it is practically more difficult to achieve. One way would be to put a heat pad around the head of a casualty who is lying in a cas bag.

* Never put a heat pad in direct contact with the skin of a hypothermic casualty. It will cause a burn, because even if the heat pad is not very hot, in moderate and severe hypothermia, the heat will accumulate because the circulation through the skin is very poor. This will eventually reach burning temperature. The authors, who are two very highly-respected workers in the hypothermia world, recommend that insulation is placed between all heat sources and the skin. In addition, in moderate and severe hypothermia, do not lie the casualty on a heat pad, or the back could

be burned. If the casualty does lie on heat pads, the authors recommend checking the skin periodically for signs of burning. This is impractical for MR during a stretcher carry in adverse conditions, so it is simplest just not to lie the casualty on heat pads.

* The third paper (case report) illustrates the effectiveness of the use of heat, insulation, and vapour barrier.

* Other things to remember about heat blankets:

- * They have a limited shelf life
- * Once activated, they won't work again
- * If there is a hole in the packaging, it will allow air in. This will activate the heat blanket and it then won't work when needed.
- * They don't work if they are wet.

Some teams carry blood pressure monitors. Standard guidelines state that the cuff should be put on a bare arm. However, this is clearly a problem in MR because casualties are often wearing several layers of clothing. Exposing an arm is fiddly and risks further cooling

This study looked at the accuracy of BP measurement when the cuff was placed over 2-3 layers of autumn or winter clothing. It found that the measurement was sufficiently accurate to be clinically acceptable. You do

need the blood pressure cuff to fit snugly around the arm, but it isn't necessary to get down to skin to get a useable BP reading.

PAPER SUMMARY

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS FOR MOUNTAIN RESCUE TEAMS

The well-known Swiss Staging System for hypothermia, which was first described in 2003, was reviewed for accuracy. 305 cases were reviewed to estimate the percentage of patients who were correctly classified. The authors also compared the theoretical with the observed ranges of temperatures for each clinical stage.

The optimal temperature thresholds for discriminating between the four stages were almost identical to those proposed in 2003 ie. 32°C, 28°C, and 24°C. However, analysis of the figures showed that the transitional temperatures at which one stage changes to another is not sharp (eg. exactly 32°C for stage 1 to stage 2), but is quite blurred, and occurs over several degrees due to individual patient factors. Consequently, the temperature was only classified correctly in 95 of the 185 patients (61%), based on clinical staging alone. The temperature was over-estimated in 18% and under-estimated in 21%. The authors emphasise that the potential consequences for misclassifications can be significant. For example, underestimating the casualty's

temperature (21% of the patients) might lead to unnecessary patient monitoring or to them being sent to an ECMO hospital when it wasn't needed. Although wasteful of resources, this is not clinically dangerous. By contrast, overestimating the patient's temperature by using the clinical staging (18% of the patients) is more concerning, as it might lead to under-treatment due to an underestimation of the cardiac arrest risk. Thus, whilst clinical staging provides a basic working tool for field treatment, it is insufficient on its own to accurately predict body temperature, because there is variability in response to cold. This point is also emphasised in the Wilderness Medical Society 2019 Practice Guidelines (see page 41).

'Hypothermia as a forgotten sign of prolonged severe hypoglycaemia' is the title of one case report. A 58-year-old diabetic man had a low blood sugar (2.6) and the temperature was 33.6°C. Most importantly, despite heat blankets and external warming, the temperature would not rise until the hypoglycaemia was treated.

In the primary survey, 'D' (Disability) means 'Disturbance of Conscious Level'. So, anything that can cause this should be considered. Obviously, it includes traumatic brain injury, stroke, drugs and alcohol, but it can also include hypothermia and hypoglycaemia. Whilst the precise mechanism by which hypoglycaemia causes hypothermia is

unknown, many diabetics who have had a 'hypo' have experienced it. The likely underlying principle is that reducing metabolic rate will reduce glucose consumption by the body tissues, leaving more available for the brain which needs a steady supply in order to function normally.

Some prescription medications that are taken by patients with mental illness, such as schizophrenia, affect thermoregulation.

Not only do these people have a lower than normal body temperature, but they are at greater risk of cooling if outdoors. If we are tasked to search for a vulnerable missing

person who is taking this sort of medication, expect them to be very cold when you find them and manage them according to the MREW Severe Hypothermia Protocol.

Two reviews were published about non-freezing cold injury, which is something that particularly affects the feet. It occurs due to continuous exposure to cold conditions (0-15°C) for prolonged periods (hours to days), causing chilling (not freezing) of the tissues. In wartime, this was called 'immersion foot' or 'trench foot'. The cold disrupts the blood supply to the nerves in the feet causing nerve damage. The result is impaired sensation in the feet and chronic pain. This is a life-changing injury and symptoms can persist for years.

Although rare in MR, we could encounter a case if we are searching for a lost person who is out for a couple of days, as happened in the Lake District in early 2018. The key management principles are:

- * Recognise at-risk individuals from the history
- * Dry the feet

* The prognosis is worse if there are multiple cycles of cooling and rewarming, so avoid this

* Rewarm very slowly (rapid rewarming can exacerbate the injury)

* Special analgesics will be needed. Standard drugs are ineffective

* All at-risk individuals should be admitted to hospital.

Hypothermia

Les Gordon (Langdale Ambleside MRT) summarises papers on the management of accidental hypothermia that were published in 2019 and are relevant to UK mountain rescue.

DS MEDICAL Supporting Professionals That Care Since 1979

The all new Modular Response Bag
Product code: D302373

T: 01329 411411 | E: info@ds-medical.co.uk | www.ds-medical.co.uk
DS Medical, 1, High Street, Uxbridge, Middlesex, U.K. | 01329 411411



FRED® easyport®
The world's first pocket defibrillator

- ▶ Ultra light: only 490 grams
- ▶ Ultra small: 133 x 126 x 35 mm
- ▶ Manual override: doctors can override the AED mode

Find out more...



SCHILLER UK Ltd. sales@schilleruk.com www.schilleruk.com

BASP Outdoor First Aid Training
2 and 3 day Courses
UK Wide Venues
Recognised by Mountain Rescue and Outdoor Sports NGBs

Book online at basp.org.uk • 03302 000 443

CASUALTY CARE IN MOUNTAIN RESCUE (SECOND EDITION) IS DOWNLOADABLE **FREE** TO MEMBERS FROM MOODLE.MOUNTAIN.RESCUE.ORG.UK AND VIA THE MREW SHOP PRICED £15.

PLEASE NOTE THIS BOOK IS NO LONGER AVAILABLE IN HARD COPY

To advertise, call Caroline Davenport on **01270 878324** or email caroline@media-solution.co.uk

BLIZZARD PROTECTION SYSTEMS: PREVENTION OF HYPOTHERMIA

Hypothermia is a potentially dangerous drop in body temperature, usually caused by a prolonged exposure to cold temperatures. The risk of cold exposure increases as the winter months arrive. But if you're exposed to cold temperatures on a spring hike or capsized on a summer sail you are at risk of hypothermia. Normal body temperatures average 98.6 degrees. With hypothermia, core temperature dropped below 95 degrees. In severe hypothermia, core temperature can drop to 82 degrees or lower. During exposure to cold temperatures, most heat loss up to 90% escapes through the skin, primarily through radiation, and speeds up when skin is exposed to wind or moisture. At Blizzard, we recognise the importance of protecting and maintaining core temperature to protect against hypothermia and, with our Reflexcel technology, we provide the ultimate in lightweight thermal protection, with a range of products to suit all scenarios.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON BLIZZARD PROTECTION SYSTEMS PLEASE CALL MICHELLE SANDYWELL ON 07867692708

BLANKETS • JACKETS • BAGS • THERMAL HEADGEAR

The Wilderness Medical Society (WMS) Practice Guidelines for the Out-of-Hospital Evaluation and Treatment of Accidental Hypothermia (2019 update) have recently been published. The document goes into considerable detail, covering all aspects of the pre-hospital management of hypothermia. The guidelines were produced by sixteen of the leading international experts in the field of hypothermia. They reviewed all relevant articles, particularly those published between 2013, when the last update was produced, and 2019.

The MREW Hypothermia Protocol is kept regularly updated (next edition due out early 2020), and so contains the current best practice guidance. The highlights from the WMS update are:

* Shivering ceases around a core temperature of 30°C. Once this occurs, body metabolism decreases with further decreases in core temperature. This explains why heart rate, respiratory rate and conscious level fall.

* The key factors guiding hypothermia treatment are level of consciousness, alertness, shivering intensity, physical performance, and cardiovascular stability (based on blood pressure and cardiac rhythm).

* A 'decision aid' (eg. a protocol) should be used to facilitate evaluation and treatment of accidental hypothermia in the out-of-hospital setting for responders with varying levels of medical training.

* Casualties can be cold and shivering, but not hypothermic, simply because shivering is triggered by skin cooling as a mechanism for preventing hypothermia. A shivering casualty with a core temperature >35°C is 'cold-stressed' ie. feeling the cold and reacting to it, but not yet hypothermic. However, they are at risk of developing hypothermia and should therefore be closely observed and managed proactively (dry clothes, feeding and protection from the environment) until they settle. Shivering is an effective method of rewarming a person who is cold-stressed or mildly hypothermic. The patient must be adequately insulated from the environment to retain the generated heat.

* There is a big inter-individual difference in response to the cold, so estimating core temperature based on clinical signs (the Swiss Staging System) is only an approximation. Importantly, temperature ranges for hypothermia stages should not be considered absolute, but correlated with clinical observations. For example, a shivering patient with impaired consciousness should be treated for moderate, not mild, hypothermia. Rescuers should classify hypothermia as mild, moderate, severe, on the basis of clinical observations, remembering that shivering can occasionally occur below 32°C, though usually with altered mental status. Also, patients can have detectable vital signs with core temperatures below 24°C. Rescuers must be aware of core temperature overlap between classification categories.

* Rescuers should consider causes other than hypothermia, eg. hypoglycaemia, drugs, etc, to explain altered mental status or lack of

shivering that do not correlate with the measured core temperature or are associated with a history of minimal cold exposure.

* Protect from further cooling by using insulation and vapour barriers until the casualty has reached a warm environment, such as the heated interior of an ambulance. If removing wet clothes, preferably do so by cutting them off, only when the patient has been protected from the cold. Vapour barriers protect against convective and evaporative cooling, thereby substantially reducing heat loss, and importantly also keep the insulation dry and more effective. Barriers can be made from any impermeable material eg. bubble wrap, sheets of plastic, reflective blankets, etc. with a hole cut out for the face. The vapour barrier(s) may be placed inside the insulation (to keep the insulation dry if the patient is packaged wet) and/or outside the insulation to protect the insulation from a wet environment. If necessary, two vapour barriers can be used (an inner and an outer).

* Active sources of heat should be used e.g. heat pads. These should be used in conjunction with a vapour barrier and insulation. Never put a heat source in contact with bare skin as it will cause burns. Always put it on top of something else eg. clothing. In a mildly hypothermic casualty who is conscious, apply heat to the armpits, chest and back (in that order). Additional heat can also be applied to the neck. However, where the conscious level is reduced and there is minimal circulation, do not lie the casualty on a heat source as it will burn the back (recent case reports – see earlier).

* Fixed, dilated pupils, apparent rigor mortis, and dependent lividity (which is skin discolouration at the lowest parts of the body that can be a sign of death), are not considered contraindications to resuscitation of a severely hypothermic patient. The only time the authors advise against attempting resuscitation is in a casualty with obvious fatal injuries or whose chest wall is too stiff for effective compressions.

* For teams using an ECG monitor or an AED that displays ECG, CPR should not be performed if the cardiac rhythm shows organised complexes compatible with life. The value of delayed and intermittent CPR, where necessary, is highlighted. Use a guide time of five minutes on, five minutes off.

* Glucose should be administered to the hypoglycaemic hypothermic casualty, particularly if they are still able to shiver. If glucose testing is not available, administer glucose empirically to a hypothermic casualty with altered mental status.

A case report was published in which a 95-year-old who had a hypothermic cardiac arrest (temperature 22.9°C) was rewarmed using a heart-lung machine and made a full recovery.

The practical implication for MR teams is that age *per se* is not a barrier to attempting full resuscitation.

This is your outdoors

In partnership with



We've been where you're going

We believe the outdoors is something to be shared. We take every opportunity to discover new adventures and to bring you expert advice born from experience to help you love every moment spent outside. This is our outdoors and it's yours too. Let's go somewhere, together.

Laura-Lee Johnston
Store Manager, Belfast Boucher
Mourne Mountains, Northern Ireland



20% discount
for Mountain Rescue

Full T&Cs apply. Not to be used in conjunction with any other offer or discount. Selected lines only. Partnership discount is only valid for customers signed up to our Free Explore More box set scheme. Maximum 10% discount on bikes. Only valid upon production of your Mountain Rescue identification in-store or use of code AP-MTRRESQIE-AP online. Offer expires 31.03.20

Stores nationwide
cotswoldoutdoor.com

COTSWOLD
outdoor
Let's go somewhere

TEAM TALK AUTUMN



NOVEMBER: 10-YEAR-OLD SCRAMBLES DOWN 328 FT RAVINE TO COMFORT HIS INJURED MOTHER

The boy had climbed down the ravine after his mother fell during a mountain climb, landing on a ledge with a 'large drop' below. The family, including two girls, aged five and nine, had ended up on very steep ground after taking a wrong turn on Ben Cruachan near Dalmlaly.

The challenging incident was reported on the Oban team's Facebook page, once they were reassured that the mother was 'out of danger'. The boy had managed to get down to his mother and used her mobile phone to call the emergency services for help, while his father, whose phone is understood to have been out of charge, looked after his two sisters.

Oban team members were called into action at 7.50 pm. Meanwhile, the lad managed to talk to the police giving a location description and local police officers were dispatched to try and locate them. It was dark by this point and luckily the family were well prepared and had a torch.

'Meanwhile,' explains the post, 'the lad was talking to his mum reassuring her that help was on the way and keeping her conscious. It took our hasty party about 30 minutes to get to the scene up a very steep hillside and to set up a basic safety system and start treating the casualty. The rest of the team went up the hill heavy with just about all the kit you could imagine to deal with the situation.

'It takes a while to deal with this sort of situation and the lady was very lucky she stopped where she did as a large drop awaited below. After her injuries were treated – the best we could in the situation – she was ready to winch. All the while the lad was still with his mum, talking to her. Rescue 199 winched the casualty at about 11.00 pm then we had to assist the rest of the family off the hill. I think the kids went down the hill quicker than some of our team members – they were glad to be moving again!

'A superb effort by all the Oban MRT team members and Rescue 199 in dealing with a technical rescue on steep ground in the dark. It was challenging to access, difficult medically and a challenging lift for the helicopter. The result is that Mum is doing well in Glasgow.

'A brave lad who should get an award for his actions. Just getting to his mum was hard, then looking after his mother in an extreme situation, talking to the police and keeping calm. He was amazing'.

Top: Looking down the ravine © Oban MRT.



DECEMBER: ROUND BRITAIN WALKER DROPS INTO BUXTON BASE

Raising funds for rescue

In October 2018, Beth Wickes began an epic fundraising trip from Tower Lifeboat Station in London. Having recently graduated from university as a mature student, her aim was to walk as much of the coast of Britain as practical, plus some long distance inland paths, raising awareness and money for three charities: Mountain Rescue England and Wales, Lowland Rescue and the RNLI.

Since then she has been walking clockwise around the coast, chalking up over 2785 miles, covering 10-12 miles a day with a rest day every fourth. She's doing it full-time, solo and unsupported save for the kindness of strangers offering her their spare rooms, food, washing machines and occasional transport.

Along the way, she's met up with one or two rescue teams. In July, OVMRO members played host while she walked the northern part of the Lleyn, Anglesey and on to Llandudno. Right on cue, as Beth was being shown round Oggi base, a job kicked off, 'so she was able to see it all happen for real,' says Chris Lloyd, 'including the MCA's S92 flying a small party of us up onto the cliffs of Glyder Fach'. In December, she dropped in on Buxton MRT to spend a little time with team members and chat about mountain rescue. While there, she was presented with a 'supporter' t-shirt and joined in the fun at the Christmas party and quiz.

The next stage of her journey sees Beth walking towards the east coast to the Humber, along the Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex coastline before finishing back at Tower RNLI. To find out more about her adventures, offer her support her and help her raise vital funds, go to bethfootforward.co.uk.

Top: Left to right: Richard Doran, Beth Wickes and Rick Mobbs © Buxton MRT.

JANUARY: MBE FOR TWEED VALLEY TEAM MEMBER

Steve Penny was honoured at New Year for his 'services to mountain rescue'. A team member for 28 years, he has been actively involved locally and nationally, serving as team leader and secretary, vice-chair and acting chair of Scottish Mountain Rescue (SMR). He is currently SMR Wellbeing Officer.

Described by his team as a 'true gent', Steve was initially with the Galloway team before joining Tweed Valley team in 1992 when he moved to the Borders. He has also served as a search dog handler since then. He sits on the UKSAR Wellbeing Working Group and is an enthusiastic champion for volunteer responder wellbeing.



Above: Steve Penny MBE © Steve Penny.

In 1998, John Hulse, one of Ogwen's team leaders suggested we should have an external audit, writes **Chris Lloyd**. Three people from outside Ogwen would spend a weekend examining the workings of the team, report on their findings and make recommendations. The suggestion sent shivers up many spines.



The audit went ahead with the help of two eminent members of Langdale Ambleside and one from Aberdyfi. Their observations were varied as our performance and their recommendations had a strong Langdale Ambleside stamp on them. However, intentionally or not, we soon found that we were taking them up.

More recently, we decided to dip our toes in the water once more, knowing we'd only gain from the experience. Nearly twenty teams in MREW had undergone this peer review, so why not Ogwen? Two team

members were despatched to find out more about the process and the benefits. Their report was attractive. Tim Cain was invited to meet team members at Oggi Base for an evening in late August. Unfortunately, he arrived mid-rescue. Although the cragfast man had been rescued, when we returned him to his party and minibus, they asked where his colleague was. The operation was then repeated to retrieve the second man.

The review date was set and members were asked to answer the 75 or so

preparatory questions of the 'standard' questionnaire — which immediately highlighted weaknesses when many team members realised how little they knew of the overall picture of running a mountain rescue team! It's not just call-outs and training. After much chasing, the two team members reviewed the numerous answers and selected a few per question for forwarding to the Peer Review Group. Then the review had to be postponed for a few weeks when it was realised it clashed with Remembrance Sunday.

Opposite, top and centre: Team members on Milestone Buttress © Chris Cookson. Below left: Milestone Buttress and a view of the wider Oggi patch as depicted in 'Rising Life and Limb'. Illustration © George Manley.

So, one Friday evening in late November, our three reviewers, Tim Cain (Swaledale), Chris Cookson (Cockermouth) and Owen Phillips (Holme Valley) arrived at Oggi Base, their home for the weekend. After supper at the Ty'n y Coed Hotel, they returned to base to make their plans for the weekend. The whole of Saturday was to be spent indoors, with the three reviewers asking a varying group of team members about the questionnaire. There were always about eighteen team members present, though faces changed as the subjects changed. Tim would read the question and comment on the team's written replies. He or his two colleagues would then ask follow-up questions in response to our answers, so that WE had to look at ourselves and justify our answers: a very useful exercise.

Our subject matter experts varied from the team secretary to equipment officer, transport officer to lead casualty carer. North Wales Police input was given by the recently-retired Chief Constable (and now Ogwen MR trustee) Gareth Pritchard and the serving Chief Superintendent Nigel Harris. This gave the review team an insight to the close working relationship and cooperation between Ogwen and North Wales Police. After a day of asking

questions, providing answers, making comments and taking notes, interspersed with breaks for coffee, lunch and tea, this session finished at about 6.00 pm. Once again, the review team — with a few team members — retired to the hospitality of the Ty'n y Coed Hotel.

Sunday morning started with a hard frost. Team members had been briefed to expect a call-out and it came at about 9.30 am. As members arrived at base, they were briefed and dispatched to the Milestone Buttress, at the foot of the North Ridge of Tryfan. There had been a leader fall and he was unconscious with suspected spinal injuries. If this was not



enough of a challenge, the frost had covered every square inch of rock with black ice. Where there was turf instead of rock, it was concealing water ice. This delayed the operation considerably.

With the safety of the MR troops in mind and also the time limitations on the review team, the exercise was terminated before its successful conclusion. This gave time for a quick lunch and a return to the lecture room for a debrief, and an opportunity to discuss the review and its procedures. We bade farewell and safe journeys to our three reviewers mid-afternoon. Most team members left for home after an intense two days, leaving just two of us to catch up on some work before leaving at 4.30 pm.

An hour and a half later, we returned to search for and rescue three cragfast students high up on the frozen rocks of the North Ridge of Tryfan... or so we believed. Arriving at the notch between Western Gully and North Gully, the students were identified as being about 75 metres down the latter. Twin ropes were set up and a rescue party of four was lowered. Meanwhile, three members made their way to Heather Terrace, via the startit summit and South Ridge to receive everyone. Eventually, we all enjoyed a late supper of pizza and flapjacks in front of the glowing log burner at Oggi Base in the early hours of Monday morning.

Our conclusion? Peer Review is an excellent opportunity to look at yourself and your team with the great help of fellow mountain rescue experts. They are the catalyst for your team's future.

Very many thanks to Tim Cain, Chris Cookson and Owen Phillips. ☺



As peer review enters its fifth year and seventeen teams reflect on their respective outcomes, the process goes from strength to strength. Feedback from those teams who have run their own reviews has been overwhelmingly positive. Much has been learned within, and between, teams with a growing appetite for sharing good practice across our community. It doesn't seem twelve months ago we held the 'Lessons Learned' seminar at Edale base and since then four more teams (Holme Valley, Upper Wharfedale, Duddon & Furness and Ogwen Valley) have opened their doors to peers, and sometimes other partners from the emergency services.

The process itself has been dynamic, each team nudging the format and evolving the question set to achieve continual improvement. 2020 offers the opportunity for five more teams to conduct this exercise in self-awareness. It also sees the beginnings of embedding the process as part of 'the way things are done around here' with early adopters of peer review (Bowland Pennine and Kendal) conducting mini-reviews to chart the progress made since their own reviews, in 2015 and 2016 respectively. This initiative by both teams addresses concerns that peer review might only be a one-off weekend with no developmental follow up. Dynamic self-awareness and continuous improvement are the watchwords of peer review.

So what's next? We will be running a second 'Lessons Learned' seminar on one Saturday in March/April 2020, date TBC. The seminar will be open to teams who have conducted peer reviews to share their findings, and also to teams thinking about running their own peer review who want to know more. If any team thinks they could host this event, and have a date in mind, please get in touch as soon as possible. ☺



Peer Review Get your team involved...

Five opportunities exist between **February and December 2020** for teams to take advantage of the peer review process.

Contact peer.review@mountain.rescue.org.uk for more, or to arrange a briefing visit with no commitments.



As if Peer Review weren't scrutiny enough, in early October last year, Upper Wharfedale Fell Rescue team members invited their local Craven Herald journalist, **Lesley Tate**, to share the experience.

It was bad enough lying on concrete-hard, wet, jagged limestone after having carefully lowered myself into place, but in my role as a practice casualty for Upper Wharfedale Fell Rescue I had in fact fallen 70 feet and crash-landed onto the unforgiving surface.

Along with my fellow volunteer, team member Phill Nelson, I had been standing at the top of Troller's Gill, near Skyreholme, trying to see if there were any climbers, had got too close to the edge, and toppled off.

I didn't really like to dwell too much on just what such a nasty fall would have done to my 56-year-old body, but imagining, as Phill had instructed 'the worst pain possible', I suspected not even the most prolonged of childbirths would have come close.

So, there I was, in the driving, cold rain, my face and teeth pressed against wet rock, and my legs stuck out at all angles, waiting for the rescue team to arrive, and meanwhile, trying not to think of the Troller's Gill barghest — a large black dog with flaming red eyes, said to be the inspiration for Arthur Conan Doyle's nightmarish Hound of the Baskervilles.

Phill had told me to make like I had severe lower back pain, with no feeling in my feet,

and to answer the rescue team when spoken to, but not to offer up anything else. When asked on a scale of one to ten just how much pain I was in, I was to answer eight. Just how much I wanted to embellish my role was left to me.

A paramedic once told me it was the quiet ones in an accident you had to worry about most, not the screamers, so, apart from the occasional groan, I kept Schtum.

The team regularly carries out practice exercises. Phill had told me that a previous volunteer had spoken to his rescuers throughout in German, and seeing as none of the team could speak the language, it had been a very worthwhile and useful exercise, with much use of hand signals.

Back to the freezing cold gorge, and awfully close to the barghest's lair, the approaching team members — immediately obvious in red jackets, shouted reassuring words, and asked if we had a dog.

I later discovered, even the most docile of Labradors can get protective of an owner in distress, so the volunteers come prepared with bags of treats. A team member will, if necessary, look after any dog and take it back to team headquarters in Grassington to be collected later.

So while Phill, performing well as anxious and slightly annoying partner, was taken off gently to one side, to be calmed down, I was covered with a tent, mercifully out of the rain, examined, constantly spoken to, and my breathing and pulse regularly checked. I was also given gas and air — a pain reliever also used in childbirth — weirdly, although the machine was not actually switched on, I thought it was, and instantly became very relaxed. Interestingly, although I had not been lying on the stone for long, I had become very cold, what with

all the rain, and had started to shiver uncontrollably, it made me think how quickly hypothermia must kick in.

I was then gently lifted onto a specialist Bell stretcher by several pairs of hands, turned over and secured into a vacuum mattress. I was asked if I wanted my hands inside or out — good for someone like me who is slightly claustrophobic — and whether I had anything in my pockets. This, I learned later, was to prevent items like keys getting painfully stuck in legs. Once the casualty is secured in the mattress, the air is taken out, leaving them extremely secure and warm.

Then, the stretcher was picked up and the carrying out of the gorge began. I knew how difficult navigating the limestone had been earlier, Phill had put me in a spot off

the track, and it had been raining for some time. The surface was treacherous. I'm not sure how they managed it, but my passage out of the gorge was swift and smooth. The stretcher carriers stopped frequently, with someone up ahead looking out for the easiest route, but I never once felt in any danger of being dropped. In fact, the soothing words of the team, the imaginary gas and air, and the gentle rocking of the stretcher almost sent me off to sleep. Even being lifted over a ladder stile at the neck of the ravine, difficult enough at the best of times, was smoothly done.

Once out of the gorge, we reached an accessible spot from where, had I been a

genuine casualty, I would have been taken to hospital via air ambulance, the rescue team's work at an end.

My taking part as a practice casualty was all part of a peer review weekend, which on the Saturday had involved a round-the-table exercise at the Grassington headquarters and, on the Sunday, the practice rescue.

What of course could not be planned were the two actual call-outs during the day! One came in just after the team had arrived to rescue me in the ravine, and which had threatened to put a stop to the whole exercise. Fortunately, a second team was dispatched to assist the mountain

Opposite & below: Team prepares to take Lesley out of Troller's Gill © Ed Poulter.





Above: Team members and peer reviewers after the 'rescue' © UWFRA. **Right: Top:** Inside the cas tent, Lesley is checked over © Tim Cain. **Bottom:** Preparing the kit © Ed Poulter.

biker who had fallen at the top of Shortbank Road in Skipton and broken an ankle.

The second call, to assist a woman at Buckden Pike, came shortly after we arrived back at headquarters. I had just been given a mug of tea and was talking to Tim Cain, of Swaledale Mountain Rescue Team, and national peer review lead, when the call came in. Minutes later, and most of the team had gone, off to rescue someone else.

Before he disappeared, Tim told me that so far in 2019, fifteen peer reviews had taken place with a further two planned before the end of the year. His role, he explained was not to try and catch the team out, but to hold up a mirror to members, to support the highly trained volunteers and help the team to constantly improve. Sharing good practice with other organisations was highly valuable, he pointed out, especially as different teams had different challenges.

Along with Tim, the review team included Rob Sturdy, of Buxton Mountain Rescue Team, and Tim Radford of Ogwen Valley Mountain Rescue Organisation in Wales.

The Upper Wharfedale Fell Rescue Association has been going since 1948 and is based at The Hut in Hebden Road, Grassington. Its 80+ team members come from all walks of life to rescue people and animals from the caves, mineshafts, fells and crags of Wharfedale, Nidderdale, Lilldale and Mid-Airedale. More than half of rescues take place on Ilkley Moor or the area around Brimham Rocks.

The team is also occasionally called in to help the Cave Rescue Organisation based in Clapham. ☘



LESLEY TATE IS A JOURNALIST WITH THE CRAVEN HERALD. LESLEY.TATE@CRAVENHERALD.CO.UK

ARTICLE FIRST PUBLISHED IN THE CRAVEN HERALD, OCTOBER 2019.

Duddon and Furness held its peer review weekend in October, writes **Will Scott**, and the team is now moving forward with a plan to turn the pages of notes and feedback points into actionable tasks.

From the team's perspective, peer review has proven to be everything the MR community has said: a true and honest reflection of the team, with open and non-judgemental perspective from the reviewers. It provided a process that members could enter into in the full knowledge that the more effort, honesty and open mindedness they put in, the more detailed and valuable outcomes would be achieved.

Prior to the weekend, Tim Cain was invited to a team meeting, which helped support the whole team buy-in, and commitment and willingness to take part in the process. Tim set the scene, answered questions and established an outline for a weekend (Saturday being a detailed look at the question set, 96 questions used to paint a clear picture of the team's current operational position, and Sunday a real time incident).

Perhaps the most enjoyable part of the process for myself as the team's peer review lead, was talking to others from around the country about their experiences, what went well and what they would change with hindsight. This helped us tailor the weekend specifically to the team rather than sticking to a standard format.



Right: Mike Margeson acts as casualty © Tim Cain. **Below:** Team members in action © Duddon & Furness MRT.

In preparing our responses for the question set, we held two evenings where small groups discussed different areas, such as training, equipment etc. This really encouraged self-evaluation and in-depth thought and, for newer members, a bit of historical context about how some systems had evolved.

We opted for four reviewers, including Tim, which gave the flexibility to run sessions in two parallel groups. Our thanks must go to Paul Witheridge, Bill Batson and John Bamforth for giving up yet another weekend to help the team as reviewers. Their professionalism was much appreciated.

The inevitable Saturday afternoon real call-out came in mid-session, providing a good practical opportunity to see call-out procedures in action. Luckily the job quickly stood down, but the two review groups, created to accommodate the call-out, helped get through the questions, which would have been a juggle otherwise. With hindsight, removing a good number of questions in areas which our own self-assessment showed confidence would have saved time and allowed us to focus on specific areas which we felt needed moving forward.

The volume of information collected throughout the process is colossal. Critical to peer review is putting in place a solid and chronological method of capturing internal conversations, points and observations throughout the process. This supports and gives context to the final feedback report from the reviewers. Supported by excellent reviewers, led by Tim Cain, the volume, quality, depth, accuracy and honesty of the feedback, comments and discussion will take time to process. The weekend has a reputation of being full on. It gets to the point where questions and input cannot be fully

addressed at the time if the momentum is to be maintained.

So much forethought goes into planning the weekend that it is important to set in place a process of how the feedback, questions and suggestions can be turned into projects that individuals or small groups will take on and move forward into the future. For Duddon it's been evolutionary and we're at the stage, after a little space to reflect, of forming a group made up of a balance of newer and longer serving members to move things forward, with the offer of ongoing reviewer support and discussion.

What can we say in reflection, to other teams considering making use of the MREW Peer Review opportunity? It was challenging, hard work and tough for the team but an incredibly worthwhile process. None of us are ever very good at looking at ourselves. ☘



Duddon & Furness

peer review

Experiences of leadership: A personal review

PAT HOLLAND

In 2007 I published an article on leadership in this magazine. I was then chairman of Mountain Rescue Ireland. What style of leadership is appropriate for the federation chair? Facilitative perhaps, consultative definitely, and then an uneasy mix of directive and servant. Often the issues were immediate and operational rather than governance or strategic.

After my term as chair I began to write up a course with the aim of providing senior members with the personal skills needed. The course included leadership styles, power and authority and some psychological models. I added coaching questions and scenarios. The dynamic between **task and process and relationships** was the fundamental model of our course. By 2015, it had settled down to a mature pattern¹. It had core values of being multi-agency and focusing on human interactions, often deliberately not providing the 'right' answer. Generally the responses by participants were very positive.

Then I was asked by my team to be the next team leader. I realised the team could do the job as normal without me. So what then was my role? I did see it as being the operational leader. Experience showed me that I needed to step back to keep an eye on other things and let others do it. Difficult.

I wanted to be a coaching leader and to further develop clarity of command, command structure and operational roles. A clear middle career and training programme was another aim. My greatest concern and fear was of injury or death to a team member. During my time, member teams of MRI lost two team members in accidents. These were tragedies for their families and teams, sad and sobering for team leaders.

The aims I had are all good ones, though we could debate them. Very early on, however, we had to deal with a very difficult HR issue. Dealing with the loss of trust, the shock and betrayal all took time and energy. Protecting your team's good reputation is vital but it is not a primary operational matter.

A good portion of my time also went into trying to deal with SAR politics. We had to make hard decisions. It was not a time for coaching but for a hard realistic counting of allies and friends and a decisive response. All of this takes time and energy. The emotion generated among the team members is an additional load. We would not be doing what we do without being passionate about it. Having been so passionate about MR to be a member and a senior member, you then have to try to become dispassionate, calm and rational as team leader.

Governance and liability is a huge issue. I had hoped to be a coaching leader. But when faced with some situations which were potentially life-threatening, I had to choose between parent and coaching. I regret that in that case I went parental. One of the times when I felt I let coaching down but the reality is that, at times — for good reason I think — you have to be strict. I was not a coach when my responsibilities, the operational situation or my values/fears invited me to be directive and task-orientated.

So I would now see the message of the leadership course to be 'you have to deal with **process and task and relationships** in order to maintain **task**'.

I saw my role as trying to achieve developmental aims as well as being the operational leader. The interesting bit was my realisation

of what the team wanted me to be. It is worth comparing these roles with the ones I wanted to do and or the ones the leadership course I led coached the participants on. The team wanted me to be:

- **Final authority on various matters:** This was not a request to coach the team members considered but to make a decision. If I did not make a decision, I was open to being considered as devious or indecisive. These decisions were both governance and operational. This range of decisions was not included in the leadership course.

- **Equipment supplier:** Budgeting, purchasing, tendering to get the budget spent were not part of my aims as team leader. They were also not included in the leadership course.

- **Watcher on communication between members:** It is inevitable that some people will take things up the 'wrong' way. Fixing disputes between members was not one of my aims but I knew it to be necessary. We did teach the useful Drama Triangle and the Parent Adult Child model in the course.

- **Knowledge holder:** Team members expected me to know all that was going on in the team. I soon realised that the amount of change since I had last held office was huge. Knowing all was not one of my aims. We had not included briefings in the course.

- **Mediator:** Team members on occasion wanted me to intervene in an argument between two members. Mindful of the Drama Triangle, I was very cautious.

- **Parent figure:** The team expects you to be a nurturing parent to encourage the trainees, a harsh parent to non-performers, an operational leader during their career and a friend when they have to step down.

- **Coordinator:** Team members know what is to be done, what they need more than a supreme operational leader is a coordinator of events and tasks.

- **Enforcer:** I had team members coming to me to demand that I deal with other voluntary emergency units. I had no authority whatsoever to do this. Some of these protests were people venting worries and you have to take the venting.

- **Liaison:** I did suggest what we thought were important improvements in the practices of some agencies, with good results.

- **Figurehead:** As team leader you are also expected to be a sympathetic person for those members going through a hard time, to lead the team at funerals and other social events and to be able to function credibly at all sorts of meetings. We did not include this kind of task in the leadership course.

In my experience you only know how much the team expects their team leader to do in the weeks after you stand down. The phone

stops ringing, emails die down and you wonder why people are not coming to you for decisions. You realise, with a sense of both loss and relief, that you do not have to know all that's going on any more.

OTHER LESSONS LEARNED

- It is vital to have boundaries around your work as team leader and to know when to say no, despite what your 'drivers' are pushing you to do.

- Going and meeting all the other agencies might be good networking, but a relationship that is dormant may be less trouble than one awakened and irritated.

- One of my aims was to bring necessary change. The key word is necessary. Sometimes, not to get in the way of what is working fine is more important than showing the way.

- My greatest pride was to see the quiet confidence of my team in all situations.

- What was valued most by me, is not the work we do, which is our basic aim, but the atmosphere and values of the team and the commitment of the members to turn up again and again.

- You can offer responsibility and suggestions to people but they must be free not to take them.

- Some of my changes did not survive beyond my term but that's a good thing, a new team leader can choose what worked well.

In considering the next move in leadership training, I am very taken by Tim Cain's idea of a 'leadership tapestry where coaching, mentoring, directing, supporting, challenging etc are interwoven' within the context of aspiring to good governance, ethical behaviour and operational effectiveness. The stretch for any course will be to show all these styles, with sufficient discussion, so that participants start to design their own styles.

A leadership course for those at, or aspiring to, senior member posts should be of four elements: practical advice re human interactions, briefings by experts on a wide range of topics, presentations by each participant and plenty of time for discussion. It could be on an interagency basis or be a shared enterprise between the MR bodies in these islands.

The aim of the course would be to give the current and next generation of leaders the skills, knowledge to successfully maintain and grow the service and so continue to serve the casualty. ☘

¹ I must thank my then co-presenters Diarmaid Scully and Mary Mullins for their commitment and interest in the course and all the participants and team leaders and other services who supported it.



training professionals

OUTREACH RESCUE

A range of courses are available to meet the unique requirements of the mountain rescue teams within the UK. All our staff have considerable experience within civilian and military Mountain Rescue and understand what your needs and expectations are.

Courses include:

- Water Incident Management
- Search Management
- Emergency Care in the Outdoors (ECO) Levels (1/2/3)
- Advanced Casualty Extrication
- Water Safety/Water Technician

www.outreachrescue.com Call us on 01248 601546

www.rescuenortheast.com

Water Related courses (PETRA Compliant)

- Water Awareness
- First Responder
- Swiftwater & Flood Rescue Technician
- Management of Water & Flood Related Incidents
- Rescue from Vehicles in the Water
- Casualty Intervention & Considerations in Water

Technical Rope Rescue Courses

- Technical Rope Rescue Operative
- Technical Rope Rescue Supervisor/Party Leader
- Technical Rope Rescue Instructor

Industry Related Courses

- Working at Height Awareness
- Working at Height & Rescue
- Safe Working at Height
- Confined Space Training
- First Aid
- Manual Handling
- Fire Awareness
- Life Jacket Awareness
- Safe Working in and around Water

Rescue North East is a dedicated nationwide training provider delivering specialist training to the emergency services- Police, Fire & Rescue Service, Ambulance Services, Search and Rescue Teams and Mountain Rescue Teams. We pride ourselves on our expertise and the quality of our training.

Visit our web site for a full range of courses

01247 227170
01825704500
admin@rescuenortheast.com
www.rescuenortheast.com



Leading with British Exploring Society: How your skills can help inspire young people in the outdoors

The benefits of being in the outdoors need no explanation here, but the impact of spending time in the outdoors is a very personal one, similar to the reasons so many of you generously give up your time to be part of mountain rescue. And, over our long history as a youth development charity, British Exploring Society (BES) has benefited from the skills, experience and commitment that mountain rescue volunteers have offered. For some of you, we'll be a familiar name, whilst for others, we hope this can be our introduction.

British Exploring Society prepares and takes young people on expeditions to remote locations where they face challenges, gain skills and learn about themselves — acquiring knowledge relevant to their lives and to the fragile environments they explore. Through their adventure

together, they forge friendships for life and become part of a unique, supportive and continuing community of explorers with shared experiences, values and perspectives on the world.

Amina, a young explorer who was part of the Peruvian Amazon Expedition in 2018 said, 'It was one of the most transformational experiences of my life and came at a time when I needed it the most. I have realised that life is about choices. I am in control of my own life and destiny'.

These outcomes are only made possible by an extraordinary community of volunteers who give up their time to lead with us. Their breadth of experience, diversity of skills and unfaltering commitment to supporting the development of young people is exceptional. We've worked with a number of individuals who also volunteer with mountain

rescue teams across the country. Amongst them is Nigel Harling, one of several in Patterdale MRT who have dedicated their skills and time in support of our work for many years.

'I started my involvement with both organisations at roughly the same time and 30 years later can honestly draw so many comparisons. I've filled many roles in mountain rescue and been involved in six British Exploring Society expeditions, initially as a young explorer and then moving up to becoming an expedition chief leader'.

Reflecting on the similarities between the two organisations, he highlights the transferability of skills gained volunteering with mountain rescue. 'Both organisations were formed to help people, and both do an enormous amount of good for those they support. If I were recruiting for mountain



rescue and a British Exploring Society leader came along, I'd bite their hand off and vice versa for MR volunteers applying to lead on an expedition. Both have the right mindset and skills to be a very valuable member of any expedition.'

Our teams are multi-disciplinary, made up of an incredible group of volunteers, including mountain leaders, scientists, educators, conservationists, medics, media specialists and youth workers, to name but a few. It's this diversity across the leaders and young people that enriches the experience.



Opposite: Ben Watts Canadian Yukon 2018 Paddle Leader.
Above: Emma Brennand Amazon 2018 Media Leader & Craig Borthwick DNG 2018 Adventure Leader. Images supplied by BES.

Building a large team of hugely diverse leaders, allows teams to make individual and ambitious plans. A cornerstone of how BES expeditions work is enabling young explorers,

along with their skilled leadership team, to determine their objectives, both collective and individual, allowing them to design and develop their expedition together to create their unique experience. For many of our leaders, it is the sense of community.

For the young people we work with, we commonly hear that going on expedition allowed them to

- Meet new people from different backgrounds and make new friendships
- Discover how to face whatever challenges life throws them
- Develop a love of the outdoors and an appreciation of the natural world.

For one young explorer who took part in the Dangoor Infinity Expedition in 2019 the impact of their expedition was transformative and his story inspiring. 'Things changed for me this summer when I found the inner strength to ignore the negativity of bullies and overcome my self-doubt and anxiety...

'I have learned that the taking part, giving 100% and being a good, reliable team member are what matters, not necessarily the end result. The challenges of life on expedition have made me stronger, more resilient and more prepared to take on life's challenges and obstacles as a visually impaired person, and more determined not to be held back by what others say or do.'

HOW TO LEAD WITH US

We are really keen to hear from mountain rescue volunteers who would like to lead with us in 2020. To begin the journey, please visit britishexploring.org to find out more about our organisation and start your application to lead with us. If you have any questions or would like to discuss the roles and what's involved in more detail, email expeditions@britishexploring.org or call us on **02075 913141**. We really look forward to hearing from you.



OCTOBER: TRIBUTES PAID TO FORMER RAF RESCUE TEAM MEMBER

Sarah Hassall, a member of the RAF Kinloss team during the early years of her fourteen-year military career, had served in the RAF and the Royal Engineers before leaving to start a family. She was reported killed in Pontyrid in early October and a man later appeared in court charged with her murder.

Former RAF Kinloss team leader Dave 'Heavy' Whalley said that his happy-go-lucky' colleague was a 'talented rock climber' who 'loved the mountains' and had always been an enthusiastic member of the rescue team and so funny'.

'We had many great days on the hills and crags over the years. She was a great team member who loved mountain rescue and was a strong lass on the hill', adding that call-outs to incidents for the RAF team were 'never easy' and Sarah had attended 'some sad events'.

She had climbed extensively in Scotland and in the Alps, and during her time at RAF Kinloss, spent many of her days off in the hills and mountains of Scotland.

In a statement released on behalf of her family, a close relative said, 'Sarah was my best friend and touched many more lives along the way. We all now mourn her passing, grateful for the short time we had in her company.'

Top & below: Sarah Hassall, at home in the mountains © Dave Whalley.



AWARD WINNING VELEZ EVOLUTION

The Páramo Velez Evolution Smock is an ISPO Award winning waterproof with adaptable temperature control for outdoor enthusiasts and professionals in higher altitudes. It is a multi-season, high energy jacket which delivers full winter and mountain performance but can be adapted to provide an extremely well ventilated garment. It can be worn in a number of ways to suit your activities and conditions. It combines two full-length two-way zips and forward facing arm vents to keep your temperature regulated with carefully designed articulation to provide ease of movement throughout all conditions. It also features a large 'dry' zipped drop pocket and an external twin zipped tunnel hand warming pocket, giving you excellent storage and security.

OUR PÁRAMO MOUNTAIN PRO SCHEME IS AVAILABLE TO INSTRUCTORS, GUIDES AND MOUNTAIN RESCUE TEAM MEMBERS. TO FIND OUR MORE CALL 01892 786446 OR E-MAIL CONTRACT.SALES@PARAMO.CO.UK



NIKWAX DOWN WASH DIRECT

Down filled items are used to provide lightweight insulation to keep you warm. When down gets wet it clumps together. This causes it to lose loft and insulation as it can't trap air effectively. Wet down loses all of its insulating properties as water conducts heat away from the body up to 25 times faster than air. It will also gain weight and its breathability will be significantly reduced, leaving you feeling cold, wet and uncomfortable. Nikwax Down Wash Direct has been specifically designed and optimised for down filled gear. It is a highly effective cleaner which removes body oils and dirt from both the fabric and the down fill. It restores the Durable Water Repellency (DWR) of both the outer fabric and the down. This protects against rain and condensation, prevents the item from wetting out and maintains the natural insulating properties of down.



TO FIND OUT MORE, VISIT: NIKWAX.CO.UK

A snapshot of the stats for England and Wales since 1990

ROB SHEPHERD MREW STATISTICS OFFICER

Mountain Rescue in England and Wales has official roots since the 1930s with the number of incidents growing over time as participation in outdoor activities has increased. Many teams have formed (and sometimes merged or divided) over the decades, to service popular areas with 49 teams currently in England and Wales (the recent split of the Cornwall team to East and West adding a further team to the list.

Our computer database holds records from the early 1990s, so our statistics are always 'at least' but, since 1990, mountain rescue teams have turned out to at least 37,000 incidents, over 35,000 casualties and missing persons assisted and approaching two million rescuer-hours. So where are we today? It is typical to see an overall increase in effort year-on-year and our current yearly effort amounts to over 2000 incidents per year in England and Wales, around 1750 subjects and missing persons assisted and around 80,000 rescuer-hours per year. The number of hours is impacted significantly by major incidents which can contribute tens of thousands of hours for a single incident (eg. flooding lasting >1 week etc).

Since 1990
37,000+
 incidents
35,000+
 casualties and
 missing persons
 Approaching
2 million
 rescuer-hours

Current
 yearly effort
2,000+
 incidents
 per year
1,750+
 casualties and
 missing persons
 per year
80,000+
 rescuer-hours

ANNUAL TREND: OVER ALL TYPES OF INCIDENTS (TO 2017)



SEASONAL IMPACT: BY WEEK OF YEAR (TO 2017)

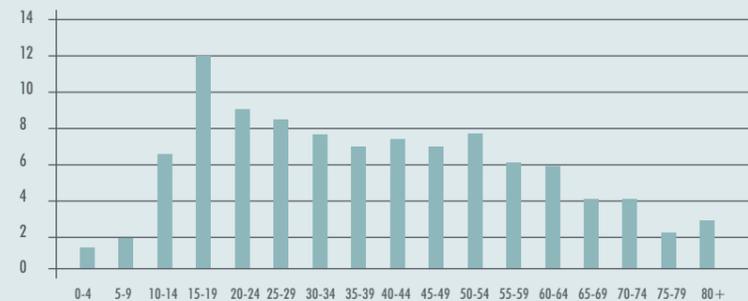
Call-out rate is predominantly influenced by fine weather and public holidays. More participants enjoying fine weather equates to the expectation of higher incident numbers. The spikes surrounding the summer months are half-term holidays and Easter breaks.



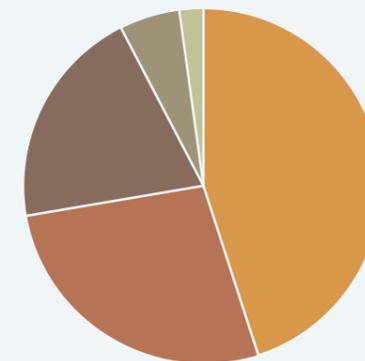
* Absolute call-out numbers are not important here – the shape of the chart shows the relative week-by-week call-out pattern

* Spikes at weeks 1 and 52 are due to 'ambulance-assist' call-outs (snow/ice affecting statutory ambulance attendance at busy times for the period, over Christmas and New Year). There is also a slight rise in hill-walking incidents during this holiday period.

CASUALTY AGE GROUPS: PERCENTAGE OF SUBJECTS BY AGE CATEGORY



MOUNTAIN RESCUE CALL-OUTS BY ACTIVITY



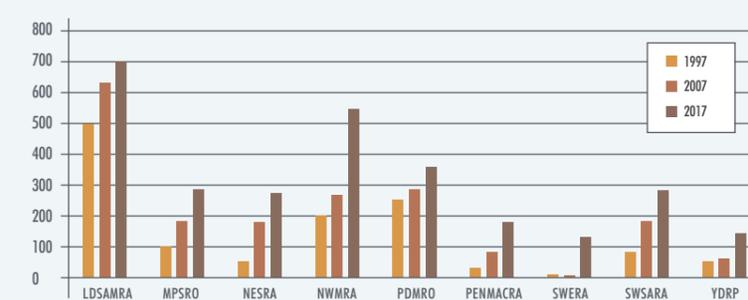
HILL WALKING
 MISSING PERSON
 LOCAL INCIDENT
 MOUNTAIN BIKING
 CLIMBING/SCRAMBLING
 OTHER

CASE STUDY: NUMBER OF INCIDENTS OVER THE EASTER* PERIOD



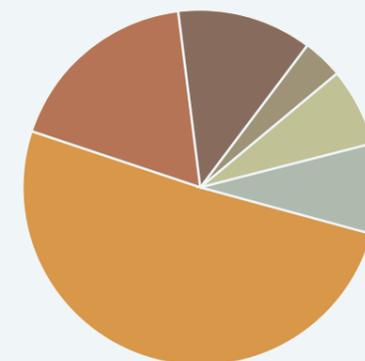
*Easter is defined here as the four-day period from Good Friday through Easter Monday
 **2011 saw record breaking high temperatures for Easter holidays in the UK, indicating an increase of incidents arising from increased participation

RISING INCIDENT NUMBERS: SNAPSHOTS BY REGION



The graph shows how the increasing numbers differ by region, decade on decade. Some regions have seen an increase of 40% between 1997–2017 but others have increased 3-fold or more in the same period.

CASUALTY CONDITION



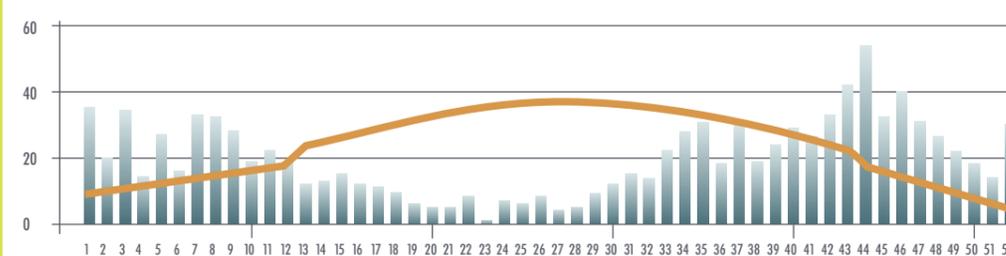
UNHURT
 MINOR
 SERIOUS
 FATAL
 UNKNOWN

'Serious Injuries' are those that suggest a reasonable risk to life (or would suggest an overnight stay in hospital and is a better category to focus on, rather than fatalities. This category also gives us a good number for 'lives saved' (at least this number) – and represents a good few hundred per year.

Illustration © VARTA.



CASE STUDY: CLOCKS GO BACK: BENIGHTED INCIDENTS BY WEEK, VERSUS DAYLIGHT AFTER 08.30



'Benighted' is a non-specific term used when a casualty party is unable to get themselves home after dark. We see a spike around the time the clocks go back, which is coincidentally the autumn half-term holiday.



navigation

How improving your personal navigation skills – and training to teach others – is good for mountain rescue

THE AUTHOR OF 'TEACHING NAVIGATION', NIGEL WILLIAMS IS A FREELANCE INSTRUCTOR, AND FORMER HEAD OF TRAINING AT GLENMORE LODGE. HE HOLDS BOTH MOUNTAINEERING AND ORIENTEERING AWARDS.



A Scottish charity that operates UK-wide – and in some overseas schools – the National Navigation Award Scheme (NNAS) is currently celebrating its 25th year. In that time it has helped thousands of people engage and develop confidence with a map and compass. There are around 500 providers offering three levels of the Navigator award; Bronze, Silver and Gold.

In addition, the Outdoor Discovery Award (ODA) is aimed not just at the very young but also those needing the very simple basics to go beyond their front door or local park – health walkers, for instance. And, lastly, in 2016 NNAS introduced a one-day Tutor Training Course which all tutors of the awards are required to attend in order to provide a consistent process of delivery and a level of quality assurance.

There is currently no UK-established teaching methodology for navigation. Much of the teaching goes back to the military in the 1940s and is based on static plotting and map reading skills. With the huge rise in outdoor recreation which requires on-the-move navigation and decision-making, a different approach is required. That doesn't mean that plotting skills are redundant but their relevance to travelling through the countryside for recreation is limited and often more related to communicating a meeting point or dealing with emergencies.

Orienteers use maps without grid squares and numbers, their compasses don't have

numbers on and the dial doesn't turn, so how is it that they are the best on-foot navigators in the world? The answer is simply that they have developed a progressive syllabus of teaching relevant skills and train all their coaches to teach the subject. The NNAS has adopted a similar approach with the aim of progressing people onto OS or Harvey mapping formats and using a standard baseplate compass. It is the only organisation in the outdoor sector apart from orienteering to do this and the methodology is relevant to walking, biking, paddlesports etc.

The NNAS Tutor course provides underpinning principals of the how, what and why of navigation teaching. The course is also recognised by Mountain Training UK linked bodies as CPD so it's worthwhile training in its own right.

The pre-requirement for attending an NNAS tutor course is to be 16, have some navigation skills and an interest in teaching the subject.

From experience of running a few of these courses for mountain rescue team members

in Scotland, it seems to create a new enthusiasm around the subject and offers navigation games and ideas for school visits, open days and fundraising activities, as well as improving the team members' confidence with navigation skills.

COMMON NAVIGATION PROGRESSIONS

The table below broadly reflects how we develop our outdoor navigation experience. It also represents the skills at NNAS Bronze, Silver and Gold levels.

Bronze equates quite well to Mountain Training Lowland Leader Award level, Gold is very much Summer Mountain Leader level. Interestingly, these levels also tend to match the navigation skills of other awards schemes, especially the Bronze level. Following linear features, making decisions at junctions and other basic skills fit very closely with British Cycling Mountain Bike Leader Level 2 Award (just add use of a trip computer for estimating distance), the DofE Bronze and British Canoeing awards following a river or lake shore line. This rather begs the question as to why we don't have a universal and trainable approach to teaching the subject within the outdoor sector.

Few walkers actually want to leave the security of the footpath so it makes sense to start by teaching the skills required for that. After a while we get a bit braver and start to

59



Opposite: Map and compass © Graham Uney. Above: Teaching navigation © Nigel Williams/NNAS.

1

Following line features eg. paths, usually in lowland terrain

Building confidence

- Map setting with and without compass needle
- Basic pacing/timing and route planning
- Introduction to contours – simple up and down recognition
- Simple map setting decision making – which path to take?

Compass

Static confirmatory quick bearing to determine which path.

Strategy

Tick off features, catching features. simple route decisions.

2

Line feature to line feature or obvious point features with short cross-country legs usually on more remote hilly countryside

Confidence off line features

- More contour interpretation and recognition of linear contour features, simple slope aspect
- Route planning strategies.

Compass

Moving with or following a simple compass bearing.

Strategy

Aiming off, attack points on line features, relocation along line features.

3

Line or point feature to point feature in challenging and remote mountain terrain or poor visibility

Confidence with contours and compass in poor visibility

- Use of contours as a primary navigation feature
- All compass skills, navigation over longer distances and ability to use non-specific intermediate points.

Compass

Following a full bearing accurately across country.

Strategy

Complex route decisions, attack points in open ground, boxing, dog legs, combinations of strategies. All map to ground and ground to map relocation skills to operate in poor visibility.

INSTANT SHELTERS

Robust, high quality *Instant Shelters* for the Event, Exhibition, Market, Motorsport and Leisure Industry

AVAILABLE IN 5 GRADES, 12 SIZES AND 24 COLOURS

INCLUDING A WIDE SELECTION OF OPTIONAL EXTRAS TO MEET ALL YOUR PROMOTIONAL NEEDS

With design and print branding options to suit every individual or organisation...

HIGH END, FULLY BESPOKE, FULL FLOOD COVERAGE

OR

ECONOMICAL, IMPACT AREA, THERMAL PRESSED VINYL

01925 819608 **SURFTURF**.co.uk info@surfturf.co.uk

Pennine Outdoor Fabrics Ltd
SPECIALIST FABRICS & HABERDASHERY

- Water Resistant
- Breathable • Fleece
- Stretch & Technical
- Fabrics for Clothing • Tents
- Bags • Rucksacks
- Awnings • Covers

Wide range of Buckles • Webbing Cord • Accessories

Seam Sealants

Waterproofing

Reflective tapes

Patterns • Zips

MAKE OR REPAIR YOUR KIT & CLOTHING

www.pennineoutdoor.co.uk

sales@pennineoutdoor.co.uk • 015242 63377

1st Floor, Central Buildings, Main St, High Barnham, LA2 7HE. "Ring bebie crawling"

Leak Detection Spray

At the press of a button – GOTEK LDB is instantly ready to locate the smallest low pressure leaks from compressed air and every other gas – quickly, reliably, safely and conveniently.

- Non-inflammable
- With corrosion inhibitor
- Non-toxic and biodegradable
- Free from oils, halogens, salts, metals & CFC's
- Propellant: Compressed Air
- Totally safe to user, equipment, environment & ozone layer
- Can with 360° valve – spray at any angle from upright to inverted
- NATO Stock No: 4610-99-030-4489
- For sub-zero ambient temperatures down to -45°C use GOTEK LT45

Gotec Trading Ltd
Boulton Road, Pin Green, Stevinge, Herts SG1 4QL
Tel: 01438 740400
Fax: 01438 740205
enquiries@gotecrading.com
www.gotecrading.com

gotec

pewag SNOWCHAINS
snowchainshop.co.uk

Tel: 08451 774 999

Official **AutoSock** retailer!

.....the original & best snowsocks!

ACTION PACKED ADVENTURES

Indoor & Outdoor Activities in the Brecon Beacons!

Rock Climbing • Horse Riding • Sky Trek • Challenge Course • and more!

0333 600 20 20
www.activityuk.com

To advertise, call Caroline on

01270 878324

or email **caroline@media-solution.co.uk**

Mountain Recreation

Norway Ice Climbing
Winter Skills Scotland
ML, RCI and CWI
Navigation Skills Training
Rock Climbing and Scrambling
Alpine Walking and Trekking

Mike Margeson
mike@mountainrecreation.co.uk

Morton Emergency Utility Vehicle

For further information and prices please contact:

A Y Morton & Co Ltd
Station Road
Strathaven ML10 6BE
01357 522311
alastair@aymorton.co.uk
www.aymortonpolaris.co.uk

ALWYCH

ALL-WEATHER NOTEBOOKS
Serious Climbers rely on their 'ALWYCH' NOTEBOOK

Order direct on

0141 352 6816

or click:
www.alwych.co.uk

01904 630 686
wildtalk.com/star

wildtalk.com

Team Channel Repeater

- Quadruple Coverage
- Fits in your Pocket
- Repeats Team Channels
- No Channel Changing
- SD Card Voice Recorder

cut corners between easy handrails which themselves act as catching features. That starts to develop the confidence and skills to go across country point to point and eventually operate in poor visibility.

Unfortunately, all too often the skills for the third level get taught and applied out of context. For example, the teacher demonstrating the use of map and compass in the class room on a 1:50,000 map where the complexity and numeracy skills required then puts people off the whole subject. Digital mapping and GPS then appears to be an easy option instead of map and compass. And that is probably part of the reason MR teams are kept busy!

PROGRESSIONS OF SCALE, ENVIRONMENT AND REMOTENESS

The starting point should be practical, active and have an element of fun with progressions of map scale, skills, environment and remoteness (from classroom, to garden or neighbourhood park, to forest and to the hill) and everyone should have a map. Teaching map and compass basics is essential in the first place and as people move into more remote terrain, introducing the GPS to complement those basic skills should become an integral part of teaching navigation.

Orienteering maps can be key to introducing virtually every navigation skill and strategy. It offers quick practice, feedback and repetition opportunities for the learner in a non threatening environment and with minimal environmental distractions. They show much more detail including underfoot interpretation to help a novice build confidence relating what they see on the ground to the map before moving onto more standard maps with less detail. Steady progressions build confidence and engagement with the subject.

British Orienteering has nearly 600 maps that can be accessed through their website that anyone can download, see britishorienteering.org.uk/pocs. Some are free, others have a small charge. You don't need to be a member, wear lycra or run. These maps are merely a tool to maximise teaching time, can be of local areas which helps reduce travel time, saves money and contributes to sustainability.

DELIVERING NNAS COURSES

Broadly, each of the navigator awards requires two days of combined training and assessment which can be delivered in small chunks over a period of weeks or months.

In order to run NNAS courses, the first step is to get some team members (ideally those already holding a Mountain Training qualification, although it is not a requirement) trained as Tutors. (A few teams have



Above: Teaching navigation © Nigel Williams/NNAS.

arranged a tutor training course with a local provider and trained ten members in one go). Then arrange with NNAS for the team to be a Provider of NNAS awards and approve a few named course directors (usually the more experienced tutors). After a while most teams could become self sustaining with a full range of NNAS courses including their own Tutor training courses. A course Provider can also run courses commercially. A Mountain Training Lowland Leader who has attended the Tutor course will usually be approved as a Bronze course director so the process should be quite accessible. Gold courses operate at summer ML level.

BENEFITS TO MR TEAMS

The NNAS navigator awards; Bronze, Silver and Gold levels offer MR teams progressive and defined benchmarks of

competence which can be recorded and which are transferable if a member moves to a different team. Tutor training enables a universal teaching methodology with a level of quality control for those with a training responsibility.

The Tutor award and the Gold award are also viewed as CPD by Mountain Training UK affiliated bodies. For experienced NNAS tutors wishing to deliver the Gold award there is a further Gold Conversion training day also recognised as CPD.



FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE [HTTPS://NNAS.ORG.UK/](https://nnas.org.uk/)

OBIT



BOB WHITTALL KINDER MRT

It was with tremendous sadness that Kinder MRT announced the death of long-standing team member Bob Whittall, in the early hours of Sunday 13 October, following a period of illness. **Mike Potts** remembers him.

Bob was the second longest-serving member of the team, having joined in 1972, and only recently stepping down from operational status with the team. During his time with the team, Bob served as team leader and was also a PDMRO regional controller, responsible for receiving initial calls from the police and passing on to the relevant team.

He was an extremely keen, active and highly competent walker and mountaineer. Amongst his long list of exploits he was a qualified Mountain Leader, a well-known and active member of his local YHA group and a member of the Long Distance Walking Association. He led groups in the Alps for Ramblers Holidays, completed the Munros in the mid-1980s (being the 301st person to do so), climbed both the Matterhorn and Mount Vinson in Antarctica, and was invited on an expedition to Baffin Island. A formidable list of achievements by any standards. He had a great love of the mountains and traditional music of Scotland, and a good knowledge of Gaelic, much of which was self-taught. He leaves behind his partner Jill, two daughters and a number of grandchildren.

On 16 November, Bob's family and friends gathered at Stockport Crematorium for a final farewell and to celebrate his life. In time-honoured fashion, one of the team's operational vehicles was used to carry him to the Crematorium and mountain rescue team members, from Kinder team and elsewhere, formed a red Guard of Honour. A stalwart of the team for many years, a guiding hand for many, he will be greatly missed. Stand down Bob — gone but not forgotten. ☹️

Right: Mountain rescuers line up to greet Bob's arrival at the Crematorium.



Cross-Border teamworking in the Cheviots © NNP MRT.

SEPTEMBER: CROSS BORDER TEAMS WORK TOGETHER TO RESCUE INJURED WALKERS

Northumberland National Park MRT, North of Tyne MRT and Border Search and Rescue Unit (BSARU) were called out when a walker in his early-20s sustained a lower leg injury as he and his father were climbing towards Auchope Cairn in the Cheviots.

A small group of team members reached the casualty very early, thanks to the College Valley Estate Manager and his UTV. They accessed the Border Ridge via the Auchope Shelter, while members from BSARU accessed the ridge from the Scottish side near Cocklawfoot, and the casualty was confirmed as being close to Score Head. By this time, the wind had picked up and heavy rain was falling. With temperatures dropping it became vital that the teams reached the casualty quickly.

The hasty team reached the pair just before 11.00 pm. Additional rescue kit was delivered by the UTV and colleagues from BSARU provided a stretcher for a difficult 4.5km carry in strong winds and heavy rain. Team members eventually stood down well into the early hours of Tuesday morning with the incident lasting 7 hours and 45 minutes and involving sixteen team members from the North East and a further twelve from north of the Border.



DECEMBER: HOLME VALLEY TEAM MEMBERS SCRUB UP FOR AWARD

With not a muddy walking boot in sight, five team members and PC Lambert were awarded the District Commander's Commendation Certificate for their work in locating an 83-year-old gentleman with dementia, missing from his rural care home in December 2018.

The man went missing late at night. The team was drafted in because the area is surrounded by waterways and difficult terrain and joined police, fire service and the police helicopter in a 'race against time'. The gentleman was discovered in a Leeds street at 2.40 am. Following the search, West Yorkshire Police praised the work of the mountain rescue volunteers. A worthy award!

Above: Left to right: PC Craig Lambert (POLSA), Jon Ison (Deputy team leader, HVMRT), Chief Superintendent Steve Cotter, John Wood and David Garside (both HVMRT). HVMRT members also receiving awards but not present were Neil Allen and Steve Hayes © HVMRT.

who?

Mountain Rescue England and Wales @mountain.rescue.org.uk



SEO: MIKE FRANCE
chairman@



OPERATIONS DIRECTOR: MIKE MARGESON
vice-chairman@



ASSISTANT SECRETARY: JULIAN WALDEN
assistant-secretary@



FINANCE DIRECTOR: PENNY BROCKMAN
treasurer@



MEDICAL DIRECTOR: MIKE GREENE
medicalofficer@



VEHICLES: SIMON THRESHER
vehicleofficer@



PRESS: ANDY SIMPSON
pressofficer@



TRAINING: AL READ
trainingofficer@



ICT: MARK LEWIS
ictofficer@



EQUIPMENT: PAUL SMITH
equipmentofficer@



PRESIDENT: RAY GRIFFITHS
president@



VICE PRESIDENT: PETER DYMOND
peter.dymond@



WATER: MIKE GULLEN
waterofficer@

specialist advisers



EDITOR: JUDY WHITESIDE
editor@



STATISTICS: ROB SHEPHERD
statisticsofficer@



PR SUPPORT: SALLY SEED
sally@stoneleighcomms.co.uk

CIO trustees



CHAIRMAN: JAKE BHARIER
chair@

**CIO TRUSTEES: PHIL BENBOW
DAVID COLEMAN**

ambassadors



ALAN HINKES



PAT PARSONS

British Cave Rescue @caverescue.org.uk

CHAIRMAN: PETER DENNIS



VICE CHAIRS: BILL WHITEHOUSE & GARY MITCHELL

vicechair@ assistantchair@



SECRETARY: EMMA PORTER
secretary@

MEDICAL: BRENDAN SLOAN



TRAINING: JIM DAVIS



INFORMATION: ROGER KING



EQUIPMENT: MIKE CLAYTON
equipment@



COMMS: TONY HAIGH
communications@



TREASURER: HEATHER SIMPSON
treasurer@

LEGAL: TOBY HAMNETT



DIVING: CHRIS JEWELL



Irish Mountain Rescue @mountainrescue.ie

CHAIRMAN: ALAN CARR
chair@

SECRETARY: RAY BRADFIELD
secretary@

TREASURER: JEROME HOPKINS
treasurer@

PRO: RUTH CUNIFFE
pro@

STATS OFFICER: LORCAN O'NEILL
stats@

PEER REVIEW OFFICER: DERRY CULLEN
peer.review@

SARCALL REGIONAL ADMIN: DONAL MACNAMARA
sarcall.admin@

Scottish Mountain Rescue @scottishmountainrescue.org

CHAIRMAN: DAMON POWELL
chair@

VICE CHAIR: KEV MITCHELL
vicechair@

SECRETARY: AL ROSE
secretary@

TREASURER: MOIRA WEATHERSTONE
treasurer@

HEAD OF DEVELOPMENT: ELSIE RILEY
elsie@

DEVELOPMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE LEAD: YASMIN HARROWER
yasmin@

Rescue Benevolent Fund @rescuebenevolent.fund

CHAIRMAN: NEIL WOODHEAD
chairman@

TREASURER: SHIRLEY PRIESTLEY
treasurer@

TRUSTEE: HUW BIRRELL
huw@

SECRETARY: JUDY WHITESIDE
secretary@

TRUSTEE: BILL WHITEHOUSE
bill@

YOU CAN CONTACT ALL THE TRUSTEES TOGETHER VIA trustees@rescuebenevolent.fund

REGIONAL REPS:

LAKES: LAURA CONNOLLY **MID PENNINE:** KEITH GILLIES
NORTH EAST: CARL FAULKNER **NORTH WALES:** BECKY ASHCROFT
PEAK DISTRICT: BRIAN BAILEY **PENMACRA:** ROGER KING
YORKSHIRE DALES: BOB SCURR **SOUTH WEST:** VACANT
SOUTH WALES: VACANT **CAVE RESCUE:** CHRIS JONES

Rescue Benevolent Fund We're here to help you



There's never a 'good time' to have an accident. Right? But accidents happen, we know that.

Sometimes, they happen to team members while they're involved with rescuing someone else. And, more often than not, they've put their own lives and families on hold to help someone in need. Quite apart from any physical or psychological injuries, that accident might impact on their ability to earn. Their family might struggle, both financially and emotionally.

The Rescue Benevolent Fund is there to help team members and their families when they need it, with the physical rehabilitation of broken limbs, emotional support through access to counselling and even immediate or longer term financial support.

It could just as easily be you. So if you feel you could benefit from our support, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

To donate, go to justgiving.com/rescuebenevolentfund



W: rescuebenevolent.fund E: secretary@rescuebenevolent.fund



MAESTRO® L

Descender for technical rescue with built-in progress capture pulley, facilitates manipulation of heavy loads, and may be used as a primary system or as a back-up belay. www.petzl.com

PETZL RESCUE SOLUTIONS

The challenge of the rescue professional is their ability to adapt, facing the unexpected in every situation. In order to always be prepared, this American team trains on a daily basis, for example here, in a ravine near Salt Lake City, Utah, USA.



WHEN COMMUNICATIONS MATTER.....

*....and terrestrial networks are inconsistent,
scarce or simply congested.*

MultiNet DELIVERS!

Anywhere! Anytime! Any location!

Fulfilling the demand for:

- **Disaster Response.**
- **Temporary networks.**
- **Greenfield developments.**
- **Festivals.**
- **Sporting events.**



To book a demonstration, contact Henry Walker:

Tel: +44 (0) 3453 455734

Mob: +44 (0) 7711 266773

email: henryw@primetech.co.uk

www.primetech.co.uk

