



## TEESDALE AND WEARDALE SEARCH AND MOUNTAIN RESCUE TEAM

### NEWSLETTER – JUNE 2014

#### Assessments

Several members of the C List (Probationers) took their final assessment recently and I am happy to confirm they all passed and are now fully operational members of the A List. Many congratulations to all!

#### Street Collection Dates

It's that time of year again where we start the street collections again. The dates for this year are listed below and as always we would be very grateful to anyone who could spare an hour or so to give us a hand:

5 <sup>th</sup> July	Bishop Auckland
9 <sup>th</sup> August	Barnard Castle
6 <sup>th</sup> December	Durham
13 <sup>th</sup> December	Darlington

The Stanhope collection in May raised a total of £651.32

#### WAP & TAP Grants

As detailed in the December 2013 newsletter, we were successful in gaining the WAP & TAP (Weardale & Teesdale Action Partnerships) grants. We wanted to give you an update on what the grants have been spent on.

##### WAP

This grant was spent on medical equipment – a heart monitor, new suction unit and new stethoscopes.

##### TAP

This grant was spent on summer PPE and new climbing harnesses.

#### March Exercise

This was a joint exercise between ourselves, Swaledale Mountain Rescue team ( SMRT), Cumbria Ore Mines Rescue Unit (COMRU), British Red Cross (BRC) and the Civil Air Patrol, with Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (DDF&R) providing observers. Its purpose was to demonstrate to DDF&R that we could effectively manage and underground incident and secondly to 'stretch' all the resources and assets in coping with the dual incidents.

There were two scenarios; one based round two people being trapped underground in an disused lead / fluorspar mine, and a party of walkers which had not returned from their planned walk. The plan was to use the COMRU and SMRT personnel and assets in the underground incident with TWSMRT and BRC personnel and assets deployed in the over-ground incident, managed from our team control vehicle. Both scenarios were successfully dealt with, the trapped people being released and the missing walkers found. All the casualties had medical conditions requiring treatment. With TWSMRT, COMRU, SMRT and Red Cross Medics involved.

Unfortunately due to the wind conditions on the day, the Civil Air Patrol could not fly, but had brought an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) to use in the search, and despite the weather conditions this successfully demonstrated its potential for searches.

The exercise was very useful for allowing each of the participating teams to be able to see the capabilities of each other, as well as practising the individual control unit's abilities to work together running an incident, with TWSMRT taking the overall management role. It also demonstrated to DDF&R that in the event of an incident in one of the many disused metal mines in Teesdale and Weardale, we were an asset that could be used to help them effect a rescue of personnel.



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### Open Days

We will be holding open days again this year and we would like to invite you all along. They will be held on the following dates:

Wednesday      August 27<sup>th</sup>  
Saturday         August 30<sup>th</sup>

We are planning to run 4 tours of the base which will begin on the hour 1pm to 4pm. You don't need to book so just turn up for whichever time suits you best. There will also be refreshments at the end of each tour. Please do come along, it would be lovely to meet you and an ideal opportunity for you to see how your support helps the Team to keep operating.

### **Vehicles**

#### Durham Police

At the beginning of 2014 Durham Police kindly offered to service and maintain the Team vehicles and only charge us for parts or materials used. By not charging us for the labour, our repair and service costs have been vastly reduced. Recently both vehicles had a major service at the police workshops (all wheels removed, brakes stripped, all oils & filters & cam belt replaced). Some faults were repaired and the vehicles then both passed their MOT first time. Unfortunately due to the age of the vehicles and some temporary repairs carried out in the past, the police workshop had their hands full to ensure our vehicles were maintained to a high standard.

Since the return of the vehicles, we have carried out a number of call outs and training sessions. The feedback received from team members has been really complementary, they say the difference is really noticeable and it's like operating new vehicles which is indeed high praise for the police workshops.

#### New vehicle

Our new vehicle is a defender 110 Landrover which, at present, is in build at Lakeland Landrover who are responsible for converting a lot of MR vehicles. Recently a visit to the Lakeland Landrover workshop was made to check on progress, have a good look at the vehicle and ensure it was being built to our specification. Like any new build it is going slower than we would like but hopefully we should have taken receipt of it by mid-June.

#### LED lights

Recently Mobile Centre generously offered to supply LED lights for fitment to MR Land Rovers, free of charge. We took advantage of this offer and recently had a set fitted to mobile, They look really good and also have the added advantage of providing a brighter light and reducing drain on the vehicle battery.

### **April Exercise**

This was a Rescue from Height Training weekend.

The Saturday was held at our Barnard Castle base where team members practised their skills at abseiling using a Petzl ID device and setting up lifting / lower systems using a mechanical advantage.

The Sunday training was run at HUDES HOPE, near Middleton –in-Teasdale. Here a number rescue scenarios, which required the use of the skills practised on the Saturday were run.



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### May Exercise

The May exercise, held in Hardwick Park, near Sedgfield, was based around a hot air balloon which had got into difficulties and had dropped some of its passengers from its basket while flying over the park. As a result there were a number casualties with various injuries which needed to be located. The rescue of these casualties required the use of a variety of the Team's skills including Rescue from height and rescue from water. In addition to the above casualties there were a number of none related incidents where medical assistance had to be provided. The premise behind the exercise was to put the team, including 'The Control' under pressure, with a large number of incidents/casualties to see how they would cope.



### Call out 12/05/14

The Team were involved for most of the day in the search for a missing Durham University student. The 19 year old was last seen in the early hours of Sunday morning near Baths Bridge in Durham City. Steve Owers, Deputy Team Leader said *"After a request from Durham Police we started our search early this morning. We used 4 of our canoe group to search the River Wear from Maiden Castle footbridge downstream to Prebends weir. We worked alongside the Water Rescue Team from Durham & Darlington Fire & Rescue. Another 8 of our mountain rescue volunteers searched the river banks and a number of areas of woodland in the area where the student lived. Unfortunately we have not found any sign of him."*

It was a very sad outcome when a body was found in the River Wear a week later.

As usual DUCK (Durham University Charity Kommittee, yes that is how they spell it) are running their Three Peak 24 hour Challenge again this year, raising funds for the team. This requires the students to complete the ascent and descent of Ben Nevis, Scafell Pike and Snowdon together with the travel between them in twenty-four hours. There will be four mini bus loads taking part this year.



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### TEAM CALL OUTS

**SEPT - DEC 2013**



11.30 01/06/2014	The team were called to assist with the search for a missing 24 year old from Bishop Auckland area. 13 team members and a search dog searched areas of woodland and open ground in the area surrounding the gentleman's house. Unfortunately nothing was found at this stage.
08.45 01/06/2014	The team were called to search an area of woodland surrounding an abandoned tent. As the team was preparing to deploy they were requested to help with a search in Bishop Auckland so North of Tyne Mountain Rescue team kindly took over this search to enable us to attend the second one.
11.h0 30/05/2014	The North East Ambulance Service requested help from the team to respond to an incident on the River Tees in Piercebridge where two upturned canoes had been sighted. After arriving on scene the boats had been recovered and due to there being no reports of anyone missing the team was stood down.
10.30 21/05/2014	Team requested to assist in search for high risk missing male from Aycliffe Village. Missing person was found by the police while the Team were deploying.
09.00 12/05/2014	Search for Durham University student
12.40 04/05/2014	The team were on standby for a search in upper Teesdale after the driver from a crashed car had gone missing in the early hours of the morning. As the search was being planned he contacted his family to say he was safe and well.
01.30 30/04/2014	Team requested in the early hours of the morning to search for a vulnerable 75 year old male last seen at 8.30 the previous morning, but not reported as missing until late that evening. Missing person found in Durham City by a Team Member en-route to the callout rendezvous point in Crook as a results of the description of the missing person provided.
09.00 15/03/2014	No details.
07.10 10/03/2014	Team called to assist in search for missing 50 year old male from Durham City who went missing the day before and whose car was found by the police in the early hours at Blackhall Rocks picnic site. The Team searched all day alongside the Coastguard and other agencies covering all the ground between the railway and the sea to the north and south of the picnic site. Two Team dogs searched Castle Eden Dene and Crimdon Dene and were also backed up by foot searching. Nothing was found despite the extensive search



Just search for:

**Teesdale and Weardale Search and Mountain Rescue Team**