



# Teesdale & Weardale Search & Mountain Rescue Team

## Newsletter - Summer 2022

Welcome to the Summer 2022 edition of the newsletter. Hopefully you have all enjoyed the warm, if not hot, dry weather, and the chance to get out to enjoy the countryside.

Chris Roberts

### Team Leader's message

Steve Owers (Team Leader)

Amazingly we are already 2/3 of the way through another year. COVID still has an effect on how we operate but much less than last year. Unfortunately, we had to cancel our winter training trip to Scotland again because of COVID issues but fingers crossed for 2023. Our call-out numbers are at a similar level to previous years, but we are assisting North East Ambulance Service more than we have in the past. Support from Associate Members and the public has enabled our finances to remain at a good level but with inflation running as high as it is, we will still need to watch the pennies. Thanks as always to all of our Hill, Support, Canoe and Associate members.

### Tea and medals

Steve Owers (Team Leader)

In June, 33 Team members were proud to receive the Queen Elizabeth Platinum Jubilee Medal. This medal was awarded to all members of the emergency services who had completed at least 5 years of operational service. As volunteers Mountain Rescue was especially proud to be included in alongside the statutory emergency services along with members of the RNLI and Coast Guard.



**Steve Owers (Team Leader) being presented with his medal by Lord Barnard**



## Teesdale & Weardale Search & Mountain Rescue Team

Lord Barnard, a former President and long time supporter of the Team, was kind enough to present the medals at a ceremony held in the garden of one of our Deputy Team Leaders, John Little.



**Team members proudly show off their awards**



## Teesdale & Weardale Search & Mountain Rescue Team

Team Leader Steve Owers said "The Platinum Jubilee Medals are just as much for families as they are for Team members. Without the support and understanding of families none of us would be able to do the work we do."



**The Team Family**

### Team Callouts (January 1st – August 31st, 2022)

Date	Description
16.00 27/08/2022	Team called to report of elderly male who had slipped and fallen into the River Tees in the Cauldron Snout area. The Team attended and found the injured man walking out downstream with minor injuries.
09.00 18/08/2022	We were called to search for a teenager missing from her home address. The searching focused around the initial points she was last seen. After maximizing the search sectors we stood down.
09.00 16/08/2022	Team assisted the ambulance service with an injured walker. Who was flown to hospital by air ambulance
22.30 14/08/2022	A lady called Durham Police to say she was stuck in bushes and gave a W3W location. She managed to self-extricate and walked home.
14.24 04/08/2022	NEAS contacted the team to assist with the extraction of a lady with an injured leg. She was unable to walk out of the wooded area near Bollihope. A party of TWSMRT team members arrived and packaged the casualty in a vacuum mattress. The lady was carefully transported to the awaiting ambulance using the stretcher and wheel. All in all, 14 team members and 2 TWSMRT vehicles attended.



## Teesdale & Weardale Search & Mountain Rescue Team

20.40 16/07/2022	The Team was put on stand-by this evening when a child went missing from home in the North of the County. As we were about to deploy the child returned home of their own accord
12.20 15/07/2022	Team consulted
19.00 06/07/2022	Three team dogs searched an area of woodland near Trimdon Station for several hours last night looking for a vulnerable 45 year old male missing from the area. Nothing was found and the search was stood down to await further police enquiries.
08.00 26/06/2022	At the request of Durham Police, a limited number of Team members searched woodland and the shoreline of Tunstall Reservoir on Sunday.
15.50 21/06/2022	The team was asked to assist NEAS along with CDDFRS for extraction of a patient in a wooded area near Barnard Castle.
03.00 19/06/2022	Team called by the police in relation to a missing child in the Teesdale area but stood down almost immediately when the child was located safe and well.
16.00 15/06/2022	Team called by NEAS to assist with an injured mountain biker on a remote track near Sunderland Bridge. Eight team members attended and assisted NEAS and HART medics with treatment before evacuating the casualty to the NEAS ambulance.
14.29 12/06/2022	We were called out on Sunday afternoon by NEAS to a mountain biker with what turned out to be a painful upper arm injury on the moor above Edmundbyers. HART attended but could only manage to get their vehicle around half a mile from the Casualty. We eventually got Mobile 2 closer however because of the roughness of the terrain we used the stretcher and the wheel to transport Casualty around 800 m where we then loaded him in to mobile two for transportation to the road head and a waiting ambulance.
06.55 04/06/2022	The team were asked to assist Swaledale MRT in the search for missing vulnerable male.
09.00 30/05/2022	Team consulted
09.00 26/05/2022	Team consulted
12.00 21/05/2022	This afternoon the team were called out by Durham Police to assist with the search for a missing person in the Durham area. A search manager attended the police station to gather evidence and create a search plan. At 14:00 the team were called out to search in the Broom Park area. Thankfully, the missing person was located by police fit and well.
13.12 30/04/2022	Team were called out this afternoon to assist the police with access to an area of steep ground in Castle Eden Dene, Peterlee.



## Teesdale & Weardale Search & Mountain Rescue Team

12.40 20/04/2022	The Team was called by Durham Police just after lunch to help search for a vulnerable male last seen at Westerton near Bishop Auckland. As the team were gathering, we were told the male had been located outside the search area.
16.24 10/04/2022	This afternoon the team were called out by NEAS for a person who suffered an ankle injury at Cow Green Reservoir. The team assessed, treat, and extricated the patient to the nearby ambulance for further care and treatment.
00.16 01/04/2022	Team consulted
13.00 25/03/2022	The Team were called to assist with the evacuation of an injured boy on a School Trip in the Bollihope Area. Team stood down whilst en route when assistance was identified as no longer required.
11.45 26/02/2022	The Team were called to assist with the evacuation of an injured kayaker from the side of the river at Abbey Rapids in Teesdale. The Team packaged the casualty and hauled the stretcher up the steep ground before handing the patient back to the ambulance service.
23.30 20/02/2022	Team called to assist a vulnerable male in the Swinehope area.
16.00 20/02/2022	Team called to assist paddlers on River Tees. Stood down while en-route.
12.45 15/02/2022	The Team was called by the North East Ambulance Service to help evacuate a lady who was unwell in a remote part of Hamsterley Forest. The Team were stood down while en-route when the lady managed to make her own way to a road and was picked up by the Ambulance.
16.30 11/02/2022	Two walkers attempted to walk clockwise round Cow Green Reservoir, however, having walked halfway round got to the River Tees and found there's no bridge. They then climbed up the hillside got lost and called the police. The Team searched from the North bank towards their last known position and crossed the river (which was at very low levels) to find the missing walkers. After a quick check over the whole party walked back across the river and were then given a lift back down the track to their vehicle.
10.00 03/02/2022	Team called to evacuate an elderly gentleman from his remote property to the public road for onward transportation by NEAS.
03.00 30/01/2022	Assisting the police with a search consultation for a vulnerable missing person.
13.00 22/01/2022	On Saturday the Team was contacted by Durham Police and asked to assist in the search of an elderly gentleman who had gone missing from a care home near Consett. The Search management group were just about to call out the Team when we were informed the gentleman had been found in his hometown some miles away.
03.00 18/01/2022	Team called early in the morning in relation to a missing 20 year old male from Blanchland to assist North of Tyne MRT. The Team were to be deployed at first light, but the missing male made contact and was found before the Team were deployed.



## Teesdale & Weardale Search & Mountain Rescue Team

Recently the Team assisted in a carry out of an injured walker who had taken a fall down a steep cliff near Cotherstone, and sustained serious injury. A great example of the Team working closely with the Ambulance, and Air Ambulance service. We wish the gentleman a speedy recovery.



## Fundraising

Sarah Hall (Fundraising Lead)

We had our first street collection of the year in Barnard Castle in May which was a great success – we raised in the region of £1,000. Wolsingham Taxis have also chosen to fundraise for us this year; they recently held a Poker Tournament and raised £300 for us.

We have also secured 7 spaces for the Great North Run this year and we hope that this will be a success!

In April, we won the Lakes & Dales Cooperative Community Connect funding and were awarded £5,000 to be used towards the purchase of kit and equipment. Thank you to everyone who nominated and voted for us.



## Teesdale & Weardale Search & Mountain Rescue Team

The Team were also recently presented with a cheque for £2,168 which was raised during the bi-annual Weardale charity tractor run.

We are attending Wolsingham show on Sunday 4th September and have 2 further Street Collections this year which are arranged for September in Darlington and Durham at Christmas time.

Our rescue team consists of approximately 50 volunteers, all on call 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. We typically respond to 40 to 50 call outs per year. Operational costs are in excess of £55,000 per year and we rely solely on donations from the public to allow us to continue providing this free emergency service. For this reason, fundraising is so important to us. We have street collections throughout the year at various locations across County Durham, as well as running other fundraising events thorough the year to raise money for the team. If any associate members would like to get involved in any of the fundraising events, or are keen to arrange your own fundraising event please contact [fundraising@twsmrt.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@twsmrt.org.uk).



### Could you eat cake to support TWSMRT?

John Little (Deputy Team Leader)

Just over a week after the Jubilee Tea and Medals event Deputy Team Leader, John Little, and his family opened their garden gates again, along with Rose Cottage and Number 13, for the National Garden Scheme (NGS).

With the sun shining and a stiff breeze numbers far exceeded expectations with over 300 visitors coming through the gates. The initial supply of 16 cakes was clearly going to be exhausted before closing time so further rounds of sponges, scones and fairy cakes were hastily popped into the oven!

With the gate proceeds, craft stall, and the plant sale over £2000 was raised for the NGS nursing charities, with a further £850 raised from sales of teas, cakes, lunches, and craft products going to the TWSMRT.

John and the Old Quarrington Team would particularly like to thank everyone who volunteered their time to help the event run smoothly and supplying cakes.

The opening date for 2023 will be set in the autumn and we look forward to welcoming new and returning visitors next summer. With the popularity of the event, we will also be looking for some more help with the event next year with both baking and serving cakes, clearing tables and washing up, traffic management or parking cars.



## Teesdale & Weardale Search & Mountain Rescue Team



### Team Activities

Jamie Siddle (Hill Team member)

The Team provided medical cover for the LDWA (Long Distance Walkers Association) Durham Dales 30th anniversary challenge On June 18th. It covered two routes (30 & 14 miles) starting and ending in Wolsingham. We had mobile 2, our control vehicle, and a number of team members.

They were raising funds for us, I believe, and it was a great day with good weather and no serious injuries.

Eric (our Equipment Officer) even walked the whole 30mile route on a whim! We renamed him Teesdale Epic.



### Mountain Rescue Party Leaders course

Mark Sauer (Hill Team member)

Friday 10th to Sunday 12th June I had the opportunity to attend the Small Group Leaders course which was hosted by Mountain Rescue England & Wales (MREW) in the Kingswood Colomendy Centre, North Wales.





## Teesdale & Weardale Search & Mountain Rescue Team

This is a popular event in the MREW calendar. It is normally run at least once a year, but due to Covid had taken a long pause of three and a half years with June 2022 bringing about a welcome restart. The course this year welcomed 35 MREW hill team members from 22 teams from across England and Wales with the course being run by 17 instructors with many years of experience.

The aim of the course is to bring together MREW leadership expertise to share good practice between teams and enhance team members skills in managing small parties on the hills in callout situations.

The training was enjoyable but intense with long days. The course started on the Friday at 7pm giving team members time to finish work and travel. Training started almost straight away after an initial welcome and finished at around 10pm on day 1. Saturday was around 12 hours of training and lectures, with Sunday training finishing at around 3pm.

Days were a mixture of lectures and scenarios. At the start of the training we were specifically asked not to share what scenarios were used, as to not give away to future participants what to expect. They were all challenging; made you think, opened up discussion, and were all based on real experiences, and historical callouts experienced by those providing the training.

I am a relatively new member to the Teesdale & Weardale Search and Mountain Rescue Team so was extremely lucky to get on this course. What I hoped to get out of the training was if I was on a callout and was given the opportunity to lead a team on the hills, that this course would give me the skills and appreciation of how to do that safely (me and the team), effectively and with the added understanding of the dynamics that are involved in doing so.

I gained so much more than that, some of which I never expected. I not only learned about how I react in specific scenarios, which has helped me mentally prepare if they should occur in real life, but also about how team members or the general public may react, and if I am leading a team, the tools which I can use to manage and still achieve an effective outcome. The training was fantastic, and the expertise of the instructors was exceptionally high.

What I also learned was how different each MREW team can be in their own unique way brought about by their location, types of callouts they attend and team members, and actually, more importantly how incredibly similar we all are. How we all come together and even though we are all from different teams, we all operate in the same way, have the same goals and same purpose. It was quite uplifting to be among such a group of highly motivated volunteers that are all so committed to the MREW cause.

It was a great opportunity to mix and mingle with so many other MREW members. The opportunity to share experiences and to work with each other during training scenarios.

A lot learned, a lot experienced, a lot to take back to my team and new skills added to my own skillset that I will definitely put into use on future callouts.



## Durham University fundraising events for TWSMRT

James Chilcott (Group Leader)

TWSMRT have a close link with Durham University Charities Kommittee (DUCK) and jointly organise a yearly National 3 Peaks event. The students taking part are often relatively new to hill walking and so taking on 26miles and 10,000 feet of ascent in one long day is a huge challenge for them and also for our own team members who help support the weekend with 4 team members per minibus to share driving and hill leading over the weekend.

There had been some brilliant fundraising in the run up to the event by all the students taking part and with various meetings to talk about necessary kit, logistics and fitness the preparation was going well.

The most challenging and uncontrollable element of the 3 Peaks event is the weather and in previous years we have had to turn back on some mountains before reaching the summit if deemed not safe to continue by our leaders. With the June weekend chosen 8 months in advance we have to wait until a day before to get a more accurate idea of what to expect on weather and unfortunately the 2022 event was set to have an extra challenge due to high winds predicted on Ben Nevis. The heavy rain was not ideal but the MWIS forecast for the next day on summit wind conditions meant Ben Nevis was not going to be possible on the Saturday.

Fortunately, we could see the forecast set to improve by the Sunday, so we ran the event route in opposite direction to our normal weekend and started the challenge in Snowdon on the Saturday morning where the conditions were more pleasant. The corridor route from Seathwaite to the summit of Scafell Pike and back was taken on a little earlier in the night and with slightly fresher legs than normal due to less walking time earlier in the day. That left the final Ben Nevis summit for the Sunday morning and fortunately the weather was much improved compared to the previous day. The Ben though certainly made for a hard finish to the event having to take on the longest walk and highest mountain at the end of the weekend instead of the start but fortunately all students managed to complete the challenge and filled with pride with what they had achieved. Hopefully they won't stop there and will be walking in the hills for many years to come.



**Ben Nevis summit**



**Scafell summit - middle of the night**



## Teesdale & Weardale Search & Mountain Rescue Team



**Snowdon Summit**



**3 Peaks successfully completed**

This July also saw the team take part in a special one off event in partnership with the Durham University Hill Walking Society who were celebrating their 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary and wanted to take on an All Wainwrights challenge. The Wainwrights are the 214 hills and mountains in the Lake District that Alfred Wainwright wrote about in his guides of the Lakeland Fells.

The society planned to have members share the climbing of all 214 Wainwrights in the Lake District in just one day by carefully planning 37 different routes that would be done in small 2-4 person walking teams.

DUHWS asked our team if they could raise donations to help support Mountain Rescue with the donations raised split 50:50 between Teesdale & Weardale Search & Mountain Rescue and Lake District Search and Mountain Rescue Association.

The event was a success with all 214 mountains completed in 10.5 hours and the photo taken the next morning of the society members shows what a large and active hill walking group they have. TWSMRT were delighted to be part of this challenge and helped support with some team members and logistics on the day, but all the credit must go to Ben Buky (president of DUHWS) and the organising team as they planned the event perfectly.



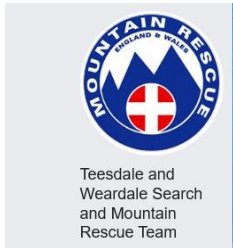
**Wainwrights Challenge participants**



# Teesdale & Weardale Search & Mountain Rescue Team

## Follow the Team on Facebook

Keep up-to-date with all of the activities of the Team. Pictures and news posted regularly.



## Associate Members

Thank you for your continued support of the Team, and renewing your subscriptions. If you haven't got round to arranging your renewal yet this year, then we would be very grateful if you would do so. If you have any friends and family who might like to become Associate members there is a copy of our application form at the end of this newsletter.

I remain hopeful that we might be able to organise an event at our Durham Base to welcome our Associate Members for a look round. Currently there still restrictions in place limiting access - hopefully these will be lifted in the not too distant future

Please feel free to contact me with suggestions regarding the newsletter, or possible events for the coming year.

**Chris Roberts**  
[chris.roberts@twsmrt.org.uk](mailto:chris.roberts@twsmrt.org.uk)

### APPLICATION FOR ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

NAME .....Mr / Mrs / Miss / Ms

HOME ADDRESS .....

.....

.....

POSTCODE.....TELEPHONE.....

E MAIL ADDESS .....



## Teesdale & Weardale Search & Mountain Rescue Team

**Annual subscription of £10.00 is payable every March.**

Payment can be made either by:

- Cheques payable to T.W.S.M.R.T. and post to the address at the bottom of the page.
- BACS to Barclays, Sort code 20-09-44 Account No. 20275603
  - Please use your initials and surname in the BACS payment comment field and return this form to the address at the bottom of the page, or a scanned copy or photograph to the email address below so the payment can be married to your application.

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### GIFT AID DECLARATION

**Completing the Gift Aid declaration allows us to reclaim, from the Inland Revenue and at no cost to you, the basic tax on your gift. Please read the notes before completing this part of the form.**

**I want the above charity to treat all donations which I make from the date of this declaration and until I notify you otherwise as Gift Aid donations**

Sign..... Date.....

Notes:

- 1. You must pay income tax and/or capital gains tax at least equal to the amount that we reclaim on your donations.**
2. You can cancel this declaration at any time by notifying the charity.
3. If your circumstances change and you no longer pay sufficient tax, you should cancel your declaration (see note 1).
4. If you are unsure whether your donations qualify for Gift aid tax relief - ask the charity, or ask your local tax office for leaflet IR 65.
5. Please notify the charity if you change your name or address.

**Please return to: The Treasurer, at the address or email given below**

Teesdale & Weardale Search & Mountain Rescue Team  
The Chris Scott Search & Mountain Rescue Centre, Lanchester Road, Durham, DH1 5RA

Email: [treasurer@twsmrt.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@twsmrt.org.uk)