



TEESDALE AND WEARDALE SEARCH AND MOUNTAIN RESCUE TEAM

NEWSLETTER – MAY 17

Street Collection Dates 2017

Bishop Auckland: Saturday 10th June
Barnard Castle: Saturday 29th July
Darlington: Saturday 28th October
Durham: Saturday 9th December

Many thanks to those who helped us out at collections last year, it is very much appreciated. I know some of you have contacted me this year already so if I haven't contacted you a week before the collection you're interested in I'd be most grateful if you would drop me another email.

GOING THE EXTRA MILE FOR MOUNTAIN RESCUE



Battling blisters, aching limbs and the dreaded Scottish midge, team members Tom Deakin & Gabriel Damaszk are trekking 320km across Scotland on The Great Outdoors Challenge, fund raising for the team.

Tom said, "We are both excited to set off. It has been interesting to plan, especially in an event where your route is entirely your choice. We have set ourselves a solid challenge, with a high route necessitating some technical gear, as well as some high mileage days to offset the time spent ascending on others. We are looking forward to completing our trek, fund raise for the team, gain experience, and look to put that towards the next challenge."

The Great Outdoors Challenge is a yearly event which began in 1980, where 300 backpackers head off across Scotland from the west coast, each group choosing their own route through the highlands and their destination on the east coast.

Gabriel said, "I am excited to be setting off on the Challenge and fund raising for the team. We both think it will be the toughest event we have done, with 13,000m of ascent on our route making it a test of endurance as well as navigation. Knowing the money raised will let the team more successfully search for vulnerable people is definitely going to give us an extra reason to complete the trip".

To support Tom & Gabe's challenge, please share their link to promote some further donations:

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/320kmAcrossScotland>



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Move to Barnard Castle Quad Base

It is with some sadness that after 17 years in our current base in Barnard Castle, last week we moved into the purpose built Quad base in the town. This is the end of a 2 year project working closely with Durham & Darlington Fire & Rescue which has seen us acquire 2 new bases, Durham, and now Barnard Castle. The Quad base will house Police, Fire, Ambulance and Mountain Rescue and is the first of its kind in the UK. Working from 2 sites it will give us better response throughout the County, from Durham covering the North and East and from Barnard Castle covering the West and South of the County. A joint opening day with the other services is being planned for later in the year.



HM Coastguard

At Stainton Army Cadet Camp, our Team along with 5 Team members from Cleveland MRT and 3 Durham Police Officers spent the morning training with the HM Coastguard Helicopter based at Humberside airport





JD Sport

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Sports retailer JD Sport recently donated £250,000 to Mountain rescue England & Wales (MREW). As part of this, a request was made for some of its staff to be able to join a team for the day to see what we do. The Teesdale & Weardale team were only too happy to oblige and so four members of staff from across the country, including one from head office joined us for our March exercise.

The exercise was at Cow Green reservoir and Meldon hill, not an unsubstantial hill at over 2500ft. Two volunteer casualties, Linda Collins and partner Merv Stapleton from St.Johns Chapel in upper Weardale , along with a team doctor to oversee treatment provided, were duly driven along a shooting track adjacent to the Pennine way to a point only one mile from the point which would become the 'incident site', the remains of a small building known as Meldon Hall.

The weather was typical of March in the high Pennines, low cloud rolling in and out making visibility very poor at times and almost constant light to moderate rain providing a real test for team and clothing, but showing the staff from JD Sport the tough conditions in which we have to operate. By late morning more information had been gleaned on the possible whereabouts of the incident and the four JD staff were taken by landrover to a point approximately 1.5 miles away so that they could walk in and witness 'the find' and subsequent treatment.

The casualties were located by search dog 'Sam' and the rescuers moved in! When checked by medics, one of our volunteer casualties was found to be genuinely mildly hypothermic and so was warmed up and walked off to the nearest Landrover. The remaining cas. was treated for a mid-shaft femur fracture, was given analgesia, had the leg splinted and was wrapped in a 'cas bag', 'vac mat' and loaded onto a Bell stretcher. Due to the wet conditions it was easy to 'skid' or drag the stretcher over the heather making the carry-out easier and smoother for all concerned.

At the after ex. debrief one of JD Sports staff remarked-" I thought I was fit, but you guys are like machines"! There was also excellent feedback from our casualties who were very impressed with the level of care given. Everyone was cold, wet and very happy! A great way to end our winter hill training.

TWSMRT would also like to thank the Birkdale estate and NWL for special land access.

Picture below is the four JD Sports staff at the raging Cauldron Snout waterfall.





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Communication

After a very slow and painful journey we will be moving our radio system to Tier 3 in the next couple of months. The benefits of Tier 3 include:

No need to change channel as you move around County Durham – In Tier 3 we will use Talkgroups rather than channels. Team members will turn their radio to the Teesdale MRT talkgroup and behind the scenes the radio will find the closest repeater, select that repeater's frequencies and remain locked on. If the team member moves far enough from the repeater the radio will find the next nearest repeater and change frequency to the new repeater. This process is called voting and is what mobile phones do all the time.

We will shortly have Tier 3 repeaters spread throughout the county and all linked to a central hub at our base at Durham, with a backup at Richmond. Whenever a radio transmits to one of the repeaters that transmission will also be sent to all the other repeaters in the county. This means that we will be able to talk from Middleton to Consett on our hand held radios, just like Airwave.

Our Tier 3 system will also be linked to Swaledale MRT's network. This will extend coverage down into North Yorkshire. I hope that in time other teams will also join the system and we will end up with coverage throughout the north of England.

As well as Mountain Rescue we plan to offer the system to other users. We will share the system with Farmwatch, Durham County Council have already signed up for 6 users, Natural England will be coming on board (giving us access to repeater sites at Great Dun Fell and Langdon Beck) and we are in talks with Civil Air Patrol. Income from other users will help to pay the running costs of the system. Eventually the rental of access to the system could become a good source of income for our team.

Darlington Building Society

Ruth Murray and Becca Kesterton from the Darlington Building Society (Barnard Castle branch) present a cheque to Teesdale & Weardale Search & Mountain Rescue Team's fund raising officer, Gabriel Damaszk. The money was raised selling merchandise celebrating the society's 160th anniversary and through their community fund (Photo by Scott Bisset).





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TEAM CALL OUTS

FEB 17 - MAY 17



23.45 14/05/2017	Team were called out at 23.45 to search for a vulnerable male in the Stanley area of County Durham. As the search was commencing the missing person returned to his home.
01.30 14/05/2017	The police called the team having had a phone call from a young lady who had become lost in Hamsterley forest driving back from an event. She has taken a wrong turning and found herself at a locked gate in the forest not knowing where she was or how to get back. We were able to talk to her and she gave us a good description of her surroundings and three team members were then able to locate her and accompany her back in the team land rover.
23.45 07/05/2017	Team called late on Sunday night to search for a missing Female who's car had reported its self as crashed but the driver who was thought to be in a vulnerable state was missing. The car was near the River Wear in Willington. As the team assembled the missing female arrived safely at a friends house and the search was stood down.
12.30 07/05/2017	Team members were in Hamsterley Forest as part if ongoing development work and assisted Mountain biker with deep laceration to leg after a fall. Taken to hospital by ambulance.
01.30 04/05/2017	Team called to search for despondent male last seen on railway at Chester-Le-Street station. Search manager met with police to determine search strategy when missing male arrived safely at partners house in Chester-Le-Street.



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21.00 18/04/2017	The Team searched farmland, river banks and woodland around Durham City for about 5 hours after being called to search for a missing 29 year old female. Despite the extensive search nothing was found and there were no further sightings. After checking all the open ground within 1km of the last confirmed sighting the Team stood down to await further information, at which point the search will recommence if appropriate.
18.00 16/04/2017	Team called to locate and evacuate a party of 4 army cadets and their instructor after reports one of the party was ill. Located at given grid reference and walked off the hill. Location south of Maize Beck between Cow Green reservoir and High Cup Nick. Cold and wet. Evacuation completed by 23.00 hrs. Kirkby Stephen MRT also involved.
09.30 12/03/2017	Team called to search for a vulnerable elderly male with dementia who had left his home in New Brancepeth at some point overnight. The missing male was located near the Arnison Centre in Durham by the police as the team assembled.
16.45 09/03/2017	Team called to assist NEAS with evacuation of a casualty with a lower leg injury from Oakenshaw nature reserve. Team stood down while on route to incident as evacuation had been completed.
12.52 25/02/2017	Callout to assist NEAS with the carryout of an injured mountain biker in Hamsterley Forest. As team were responding members of the public assisted the ambulance service and the Team were stood down.