



THE DUDDON AND FURNESS MOUNTAIN RESCUE TEAM

Affiliated to The Lake District Search & Mountain Rescue Association and Mountain Rescue, England and Wales

Registered Charity 1098201

President: Peter Jackson MBE

Vice President: Doug Scott CBE

Supporters' Newsletter – 2017



Masons who enabled us to equip a second water team with a boat and full personal equipment (illustrated).

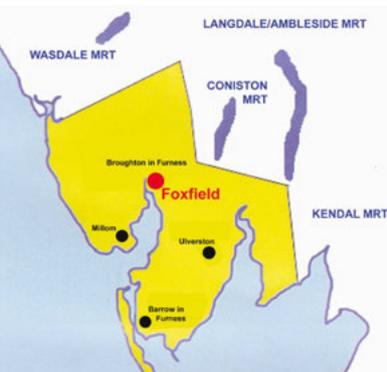
On-Call Regime. People ask how we manage members on call. We have 35 active members who are all permanently on call. Calling these at any time will usually get a response of about 15, enabling us to man the base and send out three hill-party groups of 4. A further call can be made for those who could not respond immediately, or we call an adjacent team. This works well and those joining later can plug search gaps or carry equipment to a casualty.

Thanks. A big thank you to all our supporters, both financial and active, for all that you do for us.

Return to Normal. After a spike of activity in 2015, due to Storm Desmond and increased support to Wasdale MRT, 2016 returned to the 5-year average with 33 call-outs, half in our own area and half in support of other teams. During 2016 we supported Wasdale MRT (8 times), Kendal (5 times), Coniston (4 times) and Kirkby Stephen (once) demonstrating how we inter-operate across the region (see map). The increasing need to react to major incidents such as Storm Desmond has resulted in joint training,



Call-outs. 2016 confirmed the idea that call-outs reflect tourist activity with rescues from High Dam, Gummars How and Hoad Hill – all popular locations for a short walk. A grandmother who should have been picked up by her family on their return from the summit decided to make her own way down and went 180° in the wrong direction. After a search of several hours assisting Kendal she was found by one of our groups (illustrated). There were several carry-offs from Scafell Pike in support of Wasdale and a night search for a party climbing the Pike for charity. One call to Scafell Pike saw 4 members airlifted by helicopter from Foxfield to the summit, going from reasonable weather at sea level to an icy gale on the summit 8 minutes later – a good test of preparedness. The missing person, out all night in very bad weather, turned up at the Dungeon Ghyll Hotel (for a much-needed full breakfast). Another good test was provided by Kirkby



both for command and control and by Swift Water Rescue teams. We are grateful to those who donated following the storms and particular thanks go to the Wigan group of rotary clubs and the Cumberland and Westmorland



Stephen MRT who needed help searching for a grouse shoot beater who failed to return, with a 36-hour search in a remote Pennine area needed to find him, including the closure of the Warcop Army Range.

A growing trend, with 3 calls in 2016, is for searches for people with dementia or despondency. This can be challenging as such missing people don't follow the normal behaviour rules such as walking downhill and being channelled by natural features. There were several accidents involving cyclists – another growing trend. A cyclist and motor cyclist were separately rescued when they came off the road descending Hardknott – the steepest road in England. Two other cyclists were rescued during the Fred Witton Cycle Challenge, which we support as a full team each year, and for which we receive a significant and much appreciated donation. A call-out in December saw us operating with the Air Ambulance again to enable evacuation of a cyclist with head and shoulder injuries to a specialist hospital (illustrated). On an amusing note, although not for the people concerned, we assisted a man who hurt his back lifting the head of a large snowman and a man injured on the Barrow slag heap playing Pokémon Go. (Further information on many of our call-outs can be found on Facebook.)

New Base and Vehicle. We identified a plot for a new base 2 years ago but access issues have delayed progress, leaving us with the dilemma of waiting for a resolution or looking for a new plot. On a positive note a new load/people carrier, with an additional mobile command role, has been ordered and will maintain our fleet of 3 operational vehicles with one replaced every 4-5 years. Our fundraising has continued apace and we are now in a position to match any grant funding for the new base leaving us with the usual task of covering running and vehicle costs of £40,000 a year. Apart from occasional grants and legacies, and income from collections and boxes, we rely on over 400 individual donations, mainly from readers of this newsletter – so again, many thanks to you all.

Legacies. We received an enquiry about leaving a legacy to the Team and have produced a simple guide which we can send to anyone interested.

Commitment. Although our number of call-outs may be lower than for some teams, reflecting the tranquillity of the Duddon Valley (illustrated below) and the Furness Peninsulas, this requires a higher commitment to training to maintain our standards of expertise. In addition to general training (navigation, steep ground and communication) there has been increased specialist training in off-road and blue-light driving and crag and swift water operations. We have introduced a new medical training regime with greater emphasis on practical skills including several sessions of training and on-line modules leading to the 3-yearly exams. There are also wide administrative roles both within the Team and at regional and national levels, where we are well represented.



Recent recruiting has been good with 4 new probationers completing their year's training and another 3 still undergoing training. These include 3 doctors and an average age in the 30s bringing the average age of the Team down from the upper 50s to the mid-40s. We have established level 2 and 3 membership which allows us to retain those members with valuable experience but who find the race up Scafell too much of a challenge and those with no operational role but who can continue to provide administrative support.

Finally – please visit our website for a Donation Form which contains a Standing Order Mandate, Gift Aid Declaration and our Data Protection Policy. Your contact details will only be used on an individual basis and if we do not hear from you again (unless you are a life supporter) we shall stop bothering you further.