

Lathkill Dale Area Index

Foreword:

This index is intended to provide a reference to the existence and location of all sites of interest in the area including where known, current access information. If you can provide any further information, highlight an omission or an error please contact caveguides@peakdistrictcaving.info. All significant updates are passed on the DCA. Detailed guides to each of the major caves in the area are in the pipeline and will be published on-line as part of the Peak District Caving Micro Guide series.

The area:

The Lathkill Dale / Monyash Basin hydrological catchment area is often overlooked in general caving circles, but it is home to some significant caves. For the sport caver they provide some hard and rewarding trips, and for the explorer, some of the best potential for new cave, which will inevitably be hard won. Classic trips in the area include Lathkill Head Cave, which although usually flooded, provides an excellent through trip during prolonged dry weather. The extensive Knotlow and Hillocks systems are part mine, part cave, varied and sporting. Water Iclide Close Cavern, although not particularly long, contains large high level fossil phreatic passages and major potential for further exploration.

Boulder Pot

Grid Ref: SK 16413 66499 (GPS), Alt: 258m.

Length: 35m, Depth: 35m.

Access: No known restrictions, if lies just to the east of the Ricklow Dale footpath among a ruckle of boulders.

Description: In places very narrow and predominantly unstable.

Other: Caves of the Peak District, D Gill & J Beck 1991 p181.

Descent #102 (p14) Oct./Nov. 1991.

Descent #110 (p14) Feb./Mar. 1993.

Calesdale New Cave

Grid Ref: SK 17360 65372 (GPS), Alt: 214m. Length: 18m.

Access: No known restrictions.

Description: Hidden in the undergrowth almost opposite Lower Calesdale Cave, a flat out oval passage becomes too tight after 18m. There is evidence of badger occupation, grrrrrr.

More Info: Caves of the Peak District, D Gill & J Beck 1991 p183.

Cascade Cavern

Grid Ref: SK 15728 66407 (GPS), Alt: 249m.

Length: 45m, Depth: 18m.

Access: Rowson House Farm, Monyash.

Description: A 12m deep shaft lands in a chamber modified by mining. A descending slope leads to a 5m pitch. Beyond a natural passage leads round to the right ending in a dig.

Other: Caves of the Peak District, D Gill & J Beck 1991 p183.

Descent #100 (p16) Jun./Jul. 1991.

Descent #142 (p11) Jun./Jul. 1998.

Critchlow Cave

Grid Ref: SK 17104 65932 (GPS), Alt: 220m.

Length: 823m.

Access: The entrance is next to the Lathkill Dale public footpath, but be aware it is within a National Nature Reserve. An agreement has been drawn up between the Derbyshire Caving Association and English Nature. Basically, no prior permission is required, but:- all lights must be electric (i.e. no Carbide) and all visitors must be affiliated in one way or another to the National Caving Association, and the rest is just common sense.

Description: An extremely arduous flat-out cave with numerous restrictions and obstacles. Sections become impassable in wet weather and in flood a stream resurges from the entrance.

Surveys: Published by John Beck, available from Hitch n Hike.

Other: Caves of the Peak District, D Gill & J Beck 1991 p184.

Classic Caves of the Peak District, I Barker 1997 p45-46.

Descent #44 (p7) Jan./Feb 1980.

Descent #101 (p15) Aug./Sep. 1991.

Descent #102 (p14) Oct./Nov. 1991.

Descent #110 (p14) Feb./Mar. 1993.

Engine Close Mine

Grid Ref: SK 16064 65954 (CAP), Alt: 254m.

Access: Unknown.

More Info: Descent #86 (p15) Feb./Mar. 1989.

Caves of the Peak District, D Gill & J Beck 1991 p184.

Surveys: Descent #86 (p15) Feb./Mar. 1989.

Freezland Mine

Grid Ref: SK 16089 65922 (CAP), Alt: 261m. Access: Unknown.

Other: Caves of the Peak District, D Gill & J Beck 1991 p185.

Descent #84 (p8) Oct./Nov. 1988.

Green Cowden Chert Quarry Cave

Grid Ref: SK 20028 67812 (TBC), Alt: 250m.
Length: 6m.

Access: No access, entrance blocked.

Other: Caves of the Peak District, D Gill & J Beck 1991 p185.
Descent #115 (p9) Dec./Jan. 1993 (entrance blocked).

Hillocks Mine (and the Whalf Shafts)

Hillocks Entrance: Grid Ref: SK 14516 62739 (TBC), Alt: 288m.
Whalf Engine Shaft: Grid Ref: SK 14479 67308 (TBC), Alt: 288m.
Whalf Climbing Shaft: Grid Ref: SK 14495 67295 (TBC), Alt: 288m.
Length: 600m, Depth: 50m.

Access: No known access restrictions.

Surveys: Published by John Beck, available from Hitch n Hike.
Caves of the Peak District, D Gill & J Beck 1991 p186.
Whalf Shaft: Descent magazine #142 (p31) Jun./Jul. 1998.
Whalf Shaft: Descent magazine #154 (p33) Jun./Jul. 2000.

Other: CCPC Rigging Guide, available from Hitch n Hike.

Caves of the Peak District, D Gill & J Beck 1991 p185-187.
Classic Caves of the Peak District, Iain Barker 1997 p79-82.
Descent: #142 (p10) Jun./Jul. 1998 (Whalf Shaft full report).
#142 (p30-32) Jun./Jul. 1998 (Whalf Shaft full report).
#147 (p11) Apr./May. 1999 (pollution).
#149 (p17) Aug./Sep. 1999 (Whalf Shaft).
#154 (p32-33) Jun./Jul. 2000 (Whalf Shaft).
#169 (p14) Dec./Jan. 2002/3.

Knotlow Cavern

Chapel Dale Shaft (210): Grid Ref: SK 14374 67414 (TBC), Alt: 291m.
Climbing Shaft: Grid Ref: SK 14382 67388 (TBC), Alt: 290m.
Engine Shaft: Grid Ref: SK 14237 67542 (TBC), Alt: 280m.
Crimbo Hollow Shaft: Grid Ref: SK 14294 67541 (TBC), Alt: 279m.
Length: 2km+, Depth: 75m.

Access: No known access restrictions to the Chapel Dale 210 or Climbing shafts. Large adjustable spanner required. There is no access to the Engine Shaft or Four Ways Shafts from the surface.

Surveys: Published by John Beck, available from Hitch n Hike.
Caves of the Peak District, DW Gill & JS Beck 1991 p186.
Classic Caves of the Peak District, Iain Barker 1997 p96-97.

Other: CCPC Rigging Guide, available from Hitch n Hike.

Caves of the Peak District, D Gill & J Beck 1991 p187-188.
Classic Caves of the Peak District, I Barker 1997 p95-100.
Descent: #47 (p16) Jan./Feb. 1981 (pollution).

#96 (p12) Oct./Nov. 1990.
#118 (p9) Jun./Jul. 1994.
#147 (p11) Apr./May. 1999 (pollution).

Lathkill Head Cave

Resurgence: Grid Ref: SK 17079 65882 (GPS) Alt: 210m
Top Entrance: Grid Ref: SK 16719 65952 (GPS) Alt: 247m (TBC)
Garden Path: Grid Ref: SK 16508 65982 (GPS) Alt: 260m
Length: 1.5km+, Vertical Range: 50m.
Access:-

- **The Resurgence:** This entrance is next to the Lathkill Dale public footpath, but be aware it is within a National Nature Reserve. An agreement has been drawn up between the Derbyshire Caving Association and Natural England (English Nature as was). No prior permission is required, but... all lights must be electric (i.e. no Carbide) and all visitors must be affiliated in one way or another to the National Caving Association, and the rest is just common sense.
- **Top Entrance:** No prior permission required but the agreement between DCA, Chatsworth Estates and Natural England (English Nature as was) must be adhered to:
 - 1). Access is limited to members of DCA or to members of NCA member clubs who must also be able to produce evidence that they hold a current Public Liability Insurance.
 - 2). The prescribed route to the cave must be followed: Follow the public footpath from Lathkill Dale to One Ash Grange; Leave the footpath at a point just north of the 4-wall junction with two cattle troughs at SK 16595 65867, go through the gateway over to the left (E) and head diagonally NE across the field to the obvious gateway by the wall junction; Go through the gate and then follow the wall north to the entrance.
 - 3). The lid on the shaft requires a large adjustable spanner to undo the bolt and it must be bolted shut from below once you are down the shaft. (The bolt can be undone from either above or below at all times.)
 - 4). Cavers must comply with the NCA Minimal Impact Caving Code - also maximum party size is 6 and minimum is 3.
 - 5). A log book is kept inside the cave at the top of the shaft and cavers are asked to sign in on entry.
 - 6). The cave is within the newly redrawn boundaries of the Lathkill Dale SSSI and National Nature Reserve. All digging activity in the cave must be approved by Natural England.
- **The Garden Path:** This entrance is gated and locked on the instruction of the landowners (Chatsworth Estates). This is covered by a different

Professional caver training is available from

agreement from Lathkill Head Cave Upper Entrance, and access is restricted to those doing scientific work. Details of the conditions for such work to be carried out are available from the DCA Access Officer (see end of this guide for contact details). Proof of P.L. Insurance required.

Surveys: Published by John Beck, available from Hitch n Hike.

Garden Path: Descent #97 (p10) Dec./Jan. 1990.

Northern Lights: Descent #110 (p14) Feb./Mar. 1993.

Lathkiller to Tiger 7 & Ricklow Cave, Descent magazine #128 (p13) Feb./Mar. 1996.

Other: CCPC Rigging Guide, available from Hitch n Hike.

Selected Caves of Britain & Ireland, 1997. p128-129.

Caves of the Peak District, D Gill & J Beck 1991 p190-191

Descent: #96 (p13) Oct./Nov. 1990.

#97 (p9) Dec./Jan. 1990/91 (Garden Path).

#102 (p14) Oct./Nov. 1991.

#103 (p9) Dec./Jan. 1991/92.

#110 (p14) Feb./Mar. 1993.

#126 (p13) Oct./Nov. 1995 (Black Rock Sands).

#128 (p12-13) Feb./Mar. 1996.

#134 (p13) Feb./Mar. 1997 (Tiger 6 & Tiger 7).

#138 (p10-11) Oct./Nov. 1997 (Gdn Path & Upper Ent's).

#172 (p13) Jun./Jul. 2003 (Garden Path).

Lathkill Resurgence Cave

Grid Ref: SK 18085 65707, Alt: 183m

Length: 61m

Access: No known restrictions.

Description: Entered in drought and normally submerged, a long low crawl formed in tufa finally becomes too small for further progress.

Lynx Cave

Grid Ref: SK 17225 65097 (TBC), Alt: 233m.

Access: Unknown.

Other: Caves of the Peak District, D Gill & J Beck 1991 p192.

Limestones and Caves of the Peak District (p281), 1977.

Lower Calesdale Cave

Grid Ref: SK 17366 65408 (GPS), Alt: 203m.

Length: 1055m.

Access: No known access restrictions.

Surveys: Published by John Beck, available from Hitch n Hike.

Other: TSG Journal #14 1993

Caves of the Peak District, DW Gill & JS Beck 1991 (p181-2)

Classic Caves of the Peak District, Iain Barker 1997 (p32-35)

Descent: #97 (p10) Dec./Jan. 1990/91.

#96 (p13) Oct./Nov. 1990.

#97 (p9) Dec./Jan. 1990/91.

#98 (p12) Feb./Mar. 1991.

#134 (p11) Feb./Mar. 1997.

CDG NL: #99 (p19) Apr. 1991.

Mandale Mine

Incline: Grid Ref: SK 19680 66140 (GPS), Alt: 180m.

Sough: Grid Ref: SK 19706 66113 (GPS), Alt: 172m.

Founder Shaft: Grid Ref: SK 19121 66354 (CAP), Alt: 248m.

Access:

- **Incline and Sough:** No problem, as it's just next to the Lathkill public footpath, but be aware it is within a National Nature Reserve. An agreement has been drawn up between the Derbyshire Caving Association and Natural England (English Nature as was). No prior permission is required, but.... all lights must be electric (i.e. no Carbide) and all visitors must be affiliated in one way or another to the National Caving Association, and the rest is just common sense. A 24mm or large adjustable spanner is required to open the gate on the adit / incline entrance.

- **Founder Shaft:** No access.

Other: Caves of the Peak District, D Gill & J Beck 1991 p192.

Classic Caves of the Peak District, Iain Barker 1997 p115-117

Limestones and Caves of the Peak District 1977 (various)

Classic Caves of the Peak District, Iain Barker 1997 p116

Surveys: #90 (p10) Oct./Nov. 1989 (bad air).

Descent: #91 (p14) Dec./Jan. 1989/90 (air).

#114 (p11) Oct./Nov. 1993 (Forefield Shaft).

#131 (p9) Aug./Sep. 1996.

agreement from Lathkill Head Cave Upper Entrance, and access is restricted to those doing scientific work. Details of the conditions for such work to be carried out are available from the DCA Access Officer (see end of this guide for contact details). Proof of P.L. Insurance required.

Surveys: Published by John Beck, available from Hitch n Hike.

Garden Path: Descent #97 (p10) Dec./Jan. 1990.

Northern Lights: Descent #110 (p14) Feb./Mar. 1993.

Lathkiller to Tiger 7 & Ricklow Cave, Descent magazine #128 (p13) Feb./Mar. 1996.

Other: CCPC Rigging Guide, available from Hitch n Hike.

Selected Caves of Britain & Ireland, 1997. p128-129.

Caves of the Peak District, D Gill & J Beck 1991 p190-191

Descent: #96 (p13) Oct./Nov. 1990.

#97 (p9) Dec./Jan. 1990/91 (Garden Path).

#102 (p14) Oct./Nov. 1991.

#103 (p9) Dec./Jan. 1991/92.

#110 (p14) Feb./Mar. 1993.

#126 (p13) Oct./Nov. 1995 (Black Rock Sands).

#128 (p12-13) Feb./Mar. 1996.

#134 (p13) Feb./Mar. 1997 (Tiger 6 & Tiger 7).

#138 (p10-11) Oct./Nov. 1997 (Gdn Path & Upper Ent's).

#172 (p13) Jun./Jul. 2003 (Garden Path).

Lathkill Resurgence Cave

Grid Ref: SK 18085 65707, Alt: 183m

Length: 61m

Access: No known restrictions.

Description: Entered in drought and normally submerged, a long low crawl formed in tufa finally becomes too small for further progress.

Lynx Cave

Grid Ref: SK 17225 65097 (TBC), Alt: 233m.

Access: Unknown.

Other: Caves of the Peak District, D Gill & J Beck 1991 p192.

Limestones and Caves of the Peak District (p281), 1977.

One Ash Cave

Grid Ref: SK 17215 65096, Alt: 245m
Length: 30m

Access: No known restrictions.

Other: Caves of the Peak District, DW Gill & JS Beck 1991 (p192).

One Ash Shelter

Grid Ref: SK 17305 65545, Alt: 245m

Access: No known restrictions.

Other: Caves of the Peak District, DW Gill & JS Beck 1991 (p194)

Raven Mine

Grid Ref: SK 15838 65977 (GPS), Alt: 265m.

Length: 400m+, Vertical Range: 58m.

Access: Unknown.

Surveys: Descent #112 (p18) Jun./Jul. 1993.

Descent #113 (p18) Aug./Sep. 1993.

Descent: #110 (p14) Feb./Mar. 1993.

#112 (p18) Jun./Jul. 1993.

#113 (p18) Aug./Sep. 1993.

Ricklow Cave

Grid Ref: SK 16454 66051 (GPS), Alt: 232m.

Length: 130m (not including Lathkill Head Cave)

Depth: 16m to usual sump level.

Access: The entrance is next to the Lathkill Dale public footpath, but be aware it is within a National Nature Reserve. An agreement has been drawn up between the Derbyshire Caving Association and Natural England (English Nature as was). No prior permission is required, but... all lights must be electric (i.e. no Carbide) and all visitors must be affiliated in one way or another to the National Caving Association, and the rest is just common sense.... There is a gate, just inside the entrance, for which you will need a large adjustable spanner. The gate should be secured behind you, both on the way in and on the way out.

Other: Caves of the Peak District, DW Gill & JS Beck 1991 (p194).

Surveys: Caves of the Peak District, DW Gill & JS Beck 1991 (p193).
Descent magazine #128 (p13) Feb./Mar. 1996.

Descent: #65 (p7) Aug. 1985. #99 (p10) Apr./May. 1991.

#97 (p10) Dec./Jan. 1990/91. #110 (p14) Feb./Mar. 1993.

#98 (p12) Feb./Mar. 1991. #134 (p11) Feb./Mar. 1997.

CDG NL: #99 (p19-20) Apr. 1991 #102 Jan. 1992 (p17)

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Ricklow Quarry

Grid Ref: SK 16523 66137 (TBC), Alt: 248m.

Access: No known restrictions.

Description: A number of entrances at the back of the old quarry lead into mined out chambers.

Upper Calesdale Cave

Grid Ref: SK 17230 65405 (GPS), Alt: 240m.

Length: 60m.

Access: No known restrictions.

Other: Caves of the Peak District, DW Gill & JS Beck 1991 (p182).

Water Icicle Close Cavern

Grid Ref: SK 16105 64580 (CAP) Alt: 339m.

Length: 218m, Vertical Range: 40m.

Access: No known restrictions. Park at the end of Derby Lane taking care not to block any of the gates. Derby Lane can get rutted in places, especially after wet weather.

Description: A fine 32m deep mine shaft lands in a chamber at the junction of three large passages. The **North Passage** soon lowers to stooping then crawling in squalid mud terminating in a dig. The **South Passage** soon reaches a large rift modified by mining. Just prior to the rift a small crawl at floor level on the right is **Batty Farber Passage** which closes down after 8m. The **North West Passage** is over 100m long and is predominantly easy going along an impressive fossil phreatic passage up to 3m in diameter. It ends at a breakdown chamber which has been the focus of a number of digging projects. This is one of the most promising sites in the area but as yet no one has managed to find the way on through the choke.

Other: CCPC Rigging Guide, available from Hitch n Hike.

Surveys: Published by John Beck, available from Hitch n Hike.

Descent: #122 (p9) Feb./Mar. 1995.

#125 (p13) Aug./Sep. 1995.

Wharf Mine / Shafts (see Hillocks Mine entry)

Whim Mine

Grid Ref: SK 13811 66417 (CAP), Alt: 329m (Shaft #4).

Access: Unknown.

More Info: Descent #123 (p12) Apr./May. 1995.

Surveys: Descent #123 (p12) Apr./May. 1995.

Description Notes:

Written: December 2006 by Shaun Puckering with assistance and contributions from Malc Whitehead.
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Further reading:

- Caves of the Peak District, DW Gill & JS Beck 1991, now out of print ISBN 1-85568-034-3.
- Peak Rigging Guide, published by Crew Climbing & Potholeing Club.
- Peak District Sump Index, R.L. Carter & J.N. Cordingley 1994, published by the Cave Diving Group.
- Rocks & Scenery of the Peak District, Trevor D. Ford 2006 ISBN 1-84306-026-4.
- Limestones and Caves of the Peak District , Trevor D Ford 1977, out of print ISBN 0 86094 004 1 (paper) & 005 X (cloth)



Amendments and additions can be sent to:-

caveguides@peakdistrictcaving.info (any information regarding access or safety issues is automatically passed on to the Derbyshire Caving Association).

Abbreviations:

- GPS = Positional data derived from Global Positioning System.
- CAP = Positional data derived from calibrated aerial photograph.
- TBC = To be confirmed.
- CRoW = Site lies within a designated Countryside Rights of Way area. See the note at the end of this guide.
- CPD91 = Caves of the Peak District, DW Gill & JS Beck 1991, ISBN 1-85568-034-3 (out of print).
- CCPD97 = Classic Caves of the Peak District, Iain Barker 1997, ISBN 1-86126-058-X (out of print).

Clubs:

- TSG = Technical Speleological Group
- CDG = Cave Diving Group.
- SUSS = Sheffield University Speleological Society.
- CCPC = Crewe Climbing & Potholeing Club.
- EPC = Eldon Pothole Club.
- OCC = Orpheus Caving Club.

Notes:

CRoW: Some sites lie within a designated Countryside Rights of Way area so, in theory, there should be no restrictions with regard to general access. However, we advise the utmost respect towards the land and the land owner. It is worth remembering, sites within CRoW areas can be freely visited but legally there is nothing to stop an aggravated landowner freely visiting the site themselves and filling the entrance full of concrete..... Be considerate and respect their wishes! (e.g. Thistle Pot).



Contacts:

- DCA Access Officer:
Iain Barker, 56 Thornbridge Crescent, Birley, Sheffield. S12 3AE.
Email: iainbarker@peakland.freeserve.co.uk

WARNING!

Caving and exploring mines can be dangerous and fatal accidents can happen, especially if you are not sufficiently trained.

Anyone using this guide does so at their own risk while understanding and accepting that, although every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, the writers and/or contributors can not be held responsible for any outcome however linked to this text. Do not rely on this description as it may contain errors. Your safety and the safety of those around you is your own responsibility. The existence of this guide does not imply a right of access to the cave. An access agreement may or may not be in place with the land owner. Liability Insurance linked to a Landowner Indemnity Clause may be required.

CAVE RESCUE

In case of accident telephone 999 and ask for Cave Rescue.

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