

Odin Mine, Castleton.

Grid Ref: SK 13295 83460 (GPS)

Alt: 290m

Length: Much of the mine is now inaccessible due to collapse. The exact length of the original mine is unknown but a reasonable part of it can still be explored.

Access: No known access restrictions.

Introduction

WARNING: A large proportion of this mine is in a dangerous state of collapse. The described route is relatively stable but even this requires great care. Resin "P" Hangers have been installed throughout the popular route. Avoid banging your head on the roof!! The system is generally confined to a worked out mineral vein varying in width from 40cm to a 1.5m with a total depth of some 100m. Almost all the levels have false floors, supported by dry stone arch, stone stemples and in some cases, wooden stemples, but there are a few solid exceptions.



The Mine

From the bus turning area at the end of the lower Mam Tor road head West through the fence and up the large worked out rake. On the left is the large obvious entrance to **Odin Cave** (see The Smaller Caves of Castleton). Head up the rake through the piles of leaf mould to a climb at some dead trees. At the top is a small platform with three obvious entrances. The left entrance is an unbolted 10m pitch. Top right is an entrance that leads into the same rift as the **main entrance** which is in the middle. This is equipped with a resin anchor in the left wall some way in and down the mud slope. Drop down the rope for 5m to an entrance filled with dead leaves and branches. Here there is another resin anchor. Tie off your rope here to stop

it being pulled up by passing "tourists". Ropes have been removed in the past.

Heading into the hill duck under the first of many false floor fragments to the first crosscut on the left. This leads for 9m to a partly flooded parallel rift. To the right the rift soon chokes, while left leads under some unstable loose false floors back out towards the surface, ending in the bottom of the left entrance.

Back in the main vein the passage continues. 13m on another cross cut on the left leads to a blind level ending in a small chamber with an "uncommon for Odin" solid roof. Onwards leads to a pool with an uncertain floor and the start of an **ascending 45° slippery** slope (equipped with resin anchors and there's usually a handline in place). This tops out into a short blind level. Climb up vertically through a collapsed floor level and go through a low arch and follow a slope down to an open shaft "**Weasel Pit**", this is around 20m deep and soon bells out beyond spanable range so don't attempt to climb down it. Resin anchors are provided to rig a traverse line over it. Beyond, the passage continues to the **2nd Pitch**, equipped with resin anchors. Right is a cross cut into another parallel vein. The descent of the pitch passes a false floor at -3m to land on a col 10m down.

Forward (West and into the hill) leads to the top of another series of pitches and levels. This portion of the mine is very unstable and best avoided. This descent leads down through 50m of loose rift and levels with questionable belays then through a level consisting of 50m of crawling under rotten wooden stemples, and a final pitch that drops down to the water level and more flooded mine workings.

Back up at the col a loose slope descends to the East for some 20m (back towards the entrance) and is best protected with a handline. A step over a pit of uncertain depth leads to a level with a roof consisting of some very impressive stone stempling. Like everything else in Odin Mine, this is best admired without touching. After 18m this turns into dry stone walling and then a solid roof before emerging into a tall rift. Right at this point leads for 15m to a dry stone arch and a collapse. Left is a 6m pitch, equipped with resin anchors and some "interesting" stemples made from kitchen table legs!

At the bottom of the pitch a level leads for 6m to enter the large **Cartgate Chamber**, roofed by very impressive dry stone arching. This chamber is on the same level as, and only 120m away from, the crushing rings observable on the surface to the east of the bus stop. The Cartgate is

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thought to have once led out to the surface and as the name suggests, may well have been the main way out of the mine.

A 2m drop (resin anchor) reaches the floor. Here, the observant will notice a small hole in the wall at floor level. This leads to more pitches and the aforementioned extremely unstable levels, best avoided. Forward for 15m leads to some nice natural solution pockets on the right accessible through a low arch, then a waterfall and some more natural cavities on the left. The waterfall corresponds to the muddy pool and sometime waterfall on the surface rake.

Ahead a climb up a loose rubble slope reaches the roof. The rubble that forms this slope has come in from a major collapse at the current end of the Cartgate Chamber. The collapse should not be investigated. It does not go anywhere and is not stable. 4m back from the end is a climb up the wall leading to a cross cut through to another level. Left soon chokes but right drops down using resin anchors 18m to a moderate chamber. From here the route on is usually blocked but is occasionally dug out to another pitch, best avoided.

There were a number of other shafts into the mine but these are no longer accessible from surface or below:-

| | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| West Shaft | SK 12275 83197 |
| Forest Shaft | SK 12434 83245 |
| Castleton Shaft | SK 12451 83256 |
| Engine Shaft | SK 12705 83317 |
| Tinkers Shaft | SK 13143 83419 |
| Knowles Shaft | SK 13519 83490 |
| Odin Sough Shaft 1 | SK 13580 83441 |
| Odin Sough Shaft 2 | SK 13635 83432 |
| Odin Sough Shaft 3 | SK 13691 83407 |

Description Notes:

Written: January 2004, Tim Webber & Brendan Sloan with additions from Shaun Puckering.

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Surveys:

- Basic cross section: Crewe CPC Rigging Guide available from Hitch n Hike.
- Basic plan with shaft locations and surface related detail: Limestones and Caves of the Peak District (p337), Trevor D Ford 1977, out of print ISBN 0 86094 004 1 (paper) & 005 X (cloth)



Further reading:

- Crewe CPC Rigging Guide available from Hitch n Hike.
- Caves of the Peak District (p85), DW Gill & JS Beck 1991, now out of print ISBN 1-85568-034-3.
- Rocks & Scenery of the Peak District (p80), Trevor D. Ford 2002 ISBN 1-84306-026-4.
- Limestones and Caves of the Peak District (p163, 234, 237-8, 242-3, 248, 337 & 339), Trevor D Ford 1977, out of print ISBN 0 86094 004 1 (paper) & 005 X (cloth)



Entries in Descent:

- #47 (p16) Jan./Feb. 1981 (bad air).
- #145 (p11) Dec./Jan. 1998/9 (final pitch collapse).



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)

WARNING!

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

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CAVE RESCUE

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

Professional caver training is available from