

Rowter Hole, Castleton.

Grid Ref: SK 13435 82334

Alt: 425m

Length: 120m+, Depth: 82m.

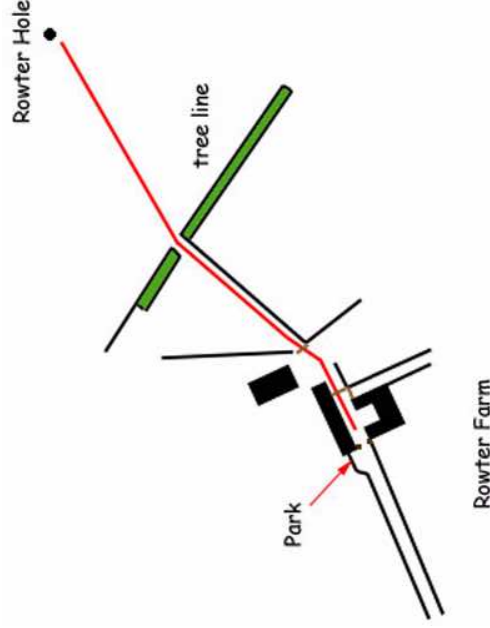
Access: Call at Rowter Farm for permission, small fee charged (£2 per caver at the time of writing). No access during lambing (April 1st - 30th).

Introduction

Another good trip, without being too time consuming, making it an ideal evening jaunt. The entrance is in a fine location, looking out over the Hope Valley and catches the last of the days sun. In winter though... it can be very bleak! A superb 69m (225ft) mine shaft drops into a natural cavern leading to a mixture of mine workings and natural passages.

Location

From the farmyard head east between the farm buildings and through two gates to enter a field. Go north-east keeping to the right wall to a gap in the walled trees. From the gap veer slightly right in the direction of the distant but prominent summit of Win Hill (look for the nipple!). Continue over the brow and down slope for 170m. The entrance is on an obvious knoll.



The Cave

The entrance is capped with a metal lid and scaffold belay bar, both of which is are showing their age. Although reasonably solid care should be exercised and a backup belay used. The 69m deep shaft can be rigged as a single drop or a Y-hang rebelay can be employed 32m down (resin anchors in north wall) followed by a deviation at -37m (resin anchor in south wall). Rigging this adds interest and speeds up the exit. At -51m (18m from the floor) the shaft breaks out into the roof of a large chamber, 30m long by 6m wide to land on a rocky floor. There is much debris from mining activity and a host of 'junk' from more recent digging operations. Up in the roof, next to the mine shaft, an aven can be seen. From the base of the shaft the mine can be explored both east and west.

East

To the east, an ascending slope leads for 14m to a point where a stream enters from high up in the left (north) wall. A 6m climb reaches a small inlet. This is Hypothermia, a flat out and in places, very tight crawl in water. After 24m this intersects a larger transverse passage. Right leads to a choke from which the stream enters. Left leads to a small chamber with a blind aven. Back at the start of **Hypothermia** an exposed ascending traverse up right reaches a climb up into the Upper Chamber (beware loose deads).

Back down in the main passage the ascending slope continues for another 5m narrowing to a shaft in the floor. This is 0.6m x 1m and 5m deep with unstable sides. A resin anchor in the right wall marks the start of a 2m traverse over the top of this to reach the top of a second more stable shaft (2nd Pitch). This can be rigged with a Y-hang from resin anchors on opposing walls. First drop is 8.5m, passing the base of the first shaft, to a ledge and a step sideways to the head of another drop with a single resin anchor in the far wall. A further 8m descent in a clean worked out vein lands on another ledge. Below a further 2m descent down through a hole reaches the start of a tight grovelly dug out crawl heading west that soon ends in a gravel choke. Back at the last ledge, an ascending slope up a 70cm wide worked out vein leads for 9m to a 5m descent to a 3.5m climb down. At the bottom to the east is a 3m long blind working and to the west, another blind working containing a small pool.

West

From the base of the entrance shaft a loose descent drops into a mined passage. Down to the left is a large silted up natural descending passage with scalloped walls. Ahead continues past a dig in the floor to reach

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another large chamber. There is no way out at floor level and despite investigation by various 'climbers' no way on has been found at higher levels.



The entrance to Rowter Hole. Photo: Shaun Puckering

🔧 Equipment:

Entrance Shaft: 80m rope, sling, 3 krabs + 1 deviation.
2nd Pitch: 30m rope, 4 krabs.

📁 Description Notes:

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Positional Data provided by 3D Differential GPS
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📝 Surveys:

Basic A4 elevation in CCPC Rigging Guide available from Hitch n Hike.

📖 Further reading:

- Crewe CPC Rigging Guide (topo).
- Caves of the Peak District (p98), DW Gill & JS Beck 1991, now out of print ISBN 1-85568-034-3.

- Classic Caves of the Peak District (p159), Iain Barker 1997, now out of print ISBN 1-86126-058-X
- Limestones and Caves of the Peak District (p332), Trevor D Ford 1977, out of print ISBN 0 86094 004 1 (paper) & 005 X (cloth)



Entries in Descent Magazine:

- #37 (p10) Dec. 1977.
- #105 (p14) Apr./May. 1992 (climbing The Abyss).
- #156 (p9) Oct./Nov. 2000 (Hypothermia).



Amendments:

Amendments and additions can be sent to:-
caveguides@peakdistrictcaving.info (any information regarding access or safety issues is automatically passed on 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