

Chairman's Chat

It seems pretty certain that the second wave of COVID-19 is upon us. The 'rule of six' limits the size of gatherings and, as I write this on 21 Sep, further restrictions are being threatened. The Horse & Farrier remains closed with no obvious plans to re-open, so there is no way that we can hold a conventional, face to face, AGM.

Our constitution stipulates that we must hold an AGM, but makes no provision for social distancing. The committee is authorised to make decisions about anything that isn't contained in the constitution, and **so at last week's committee meeting we agreed to use the forum** instead. We did consider using Zoom but ruled it out on the grounds that it would be far more difficult to control, could easily be disrupted, and that voting would prove difficult. The forum makes voting very easy, has the advantage that there is no time limit for questions and discussion, and allows all members to participate; not just those available on the evening.

Each agenda item will be listed on a separate thread, with room for justification, questions and answers, and comment. You will be able to vote on any proposals, and change your vote, at any time up **until the deadline on the 3**rd **December 2020**.

As things stand, we have just one (reluctant) volunteer to stand for each post on the committee. It's hard to see why you would vote against this proposal, unless you want to stand. If you do then please get in touch...

Although we haven't quite reached the end of our financial year (30th September), the Treasurer reports that we are in a good financial position. We did discuss the possibility of reducing subscriptions but, with the uncertainty surrounding COVID-19, we judged it more prudent to recommend leaving subscriptions (and the contribution to the Flying Fund) the same next year.

Members are more than welcome to submit their own proposals (*Editor*: see AGM Notification next).

All proposals, including the Treasurer's full report, will appear on the forum around the second week of November. The proposals, together with reports from committee members, will also be published in the November edition of Skywords.

The COVID-19 threat also extends to the coaching course, the reserve repack and the Farmers' Dinner, all planned for February 2021. We haven't yet cancelled these events, but we haven't made any financial commitments either.

Fly safely, Martin Baxter, Chairman

Annual General Meeting

Deadline for voting will be: Thursday 3rd December 2020

Due to the Covid 19 situation, this year AGM business will be conducted on the DHPC members only forum. A separate thread will be provided for each agenda item and there will be a facility to vote on each proposal, with a cut off time on the 3rd December (the time will be confirmed in the November edition of Skywords). There will be no opportunity to vote in person.

If any member wishes to submit a formal proposal please ensure it reaches the Secretary (<u>Contacts@dhpc.org.uk</u>) by 1st November 2020.

As well as being published on the forum, all proposals will be published in the November edition of Skywords. There will be no opportunity to raise new issues for voting after November 1st, as per the <u>Club Constitution</u>.

At the AGM, in addition to setting membership subscriptions and contributions to the Flying Fund, all committee posts are up for re-election. Members are free to stand for any post - none of the incumbents or recommendations will be offended if you wish to have a go at their role. Committee membership simply requires a little spare time and a willingness to put something back into the club. If you want to have a non-committal conversation about any role, then please contact the Chairman, Martin Baxter, at chairman@dhpc.org.uk

This will certainly be a different AGM but we hope that the format will allow greater participation than usual.

Casting Votes

In order to cast a vote on the forum, **you will need to have registered to use the forum** – over 70% of club members are already registered. It's very easy to do if you have not already done so. If you have forgotten your password it's also easy to ask for a reminder.

Registering for a forum account

If you don't already have an account, you can <u>register</u> for one using your name, email address and BHPA number. Once the Administrator has reviewed your request and activated your account you'll receive a confirmation email and you'll be able to login.

If you are having problems logging into the forum please contact the Membership Secretary at membership@dhpc.org.uk.

It's well worth being registered to be on the forum, not only to take part in the core business of the club at the AGM, but you can also access and participate in interesting discussions on a whole variety of (mostly) flying related material.

DHPC Reserve Repack

Planned - but to be confirmed Sat Feb 13, 2021 in Ilkley Grammar School

This is your chance to repack your reserve in time for the 2021 season. Andy McDonald and <u>Guy Richardson</u>, both BHPA licensed packers have kindly agreed to attend to help out.

You come along with your harness and reserve and repack it under the supervision of licensed BHPA packers. This is a great opportunity for you to become more familiar with your equipment, learn how to repack your own reserve and to make sure your reserve system will operate correctly.

All welcome

Everyone is welcome: paragliders, paramoters, speedwings, hang gliders ...

When Sat Feb 13, 2021 10:30am until 4pm

Where Ikkley Grammar School, Cowpasture Rd*, Ikkley LS29 8TR

*Please use the Springs Lane entrance for the sports hall. This is to the back of the school and leads into the main car park which has 83 parking spaces.

http://www.ilkleygrammarschool.com/

- Contact David May
- Email <u>dav.may@gmail.com</u>
- **Phone** 07928 318219
- Price £10 for DHPC members, £15 for non DHPC members

Advanced booking preferable and you can pay either by a Bank to Bank transfer or by cheque.

Bank to Bank Transfer: this is my preference as it means less work for everyone involved. To facilitate this Marek has created a very nice web tool that provides the bank details and reference to use - see https://apps.bettersoft.uk/#/payment-info/generate
Cheque: please send a cheque made out to DHPC to my (David May) address above.

Andy McDonald and Guy Richardson, both licensed BHPA packer, will be with us toInfohelp out and provide guidance. However, they are not here to repack your reserve - you will learn to do this yourself.

Let me know the make/model of reserve(s) you are bringing as it helps to have a list

of what to expect and if there are any reserves that will require a little extra attention

Bring your harness with the reserve attached. This will allow you to practice pulling it and also to have it replaced in the harness after being repacked.

What is a repack session and what should I bring?

The annual reserve repack is an opportunity for you to repack your own reserve and fit it back into your harness (*Editor*: for those new members: this is not as scary as it sounds) with a licensed BHPA parachute packer on hand to provide advice and support. To this end you should bring the following:

- Your reserve and harness.
- Your reserve repacking instructions. You may have received this when you bought your reserve or if not then you should be able to download from the manufacturers website.
- a bit of string, paracord or something suitable for the packing loops on your reserve (if appropriate to your model) and also a bit of paraglider line or strimmer cord to assist with the pins when putting it in the harness
- Suitable rubber bands to pack the lines.
 - Every year I am asked where to get suitable rubber bands as they are surprisingly difficult to find. The best option is to source the same rubber bands used by the manufacturer of your rescue chute perhaps drop the manufacturer an email to see if they can point you in the right direction. Failing that, you could search the internet for size 8 rubber bands (not elastic bands). They should have as high a rubber content as possible over 80% is good. The best I have found are available from <u>UK</u> <u>Airsports</u> though they are a little expensive. (Note: I am not affiliated in any way with UK Airsports).
- Warm clothing the sports hall will be cold.

Why bother repacking?

A properly packed and fitted reserve can open within 30 - 50m of being thrown. Most manufacturers recommend repacking every six months (some as frequently as 90 days). There are several reasons for this:

- Once the reserve is packed, it can absorb moisture from being left in damp air conditions, not just wet from rain. The moisture will not get back out again easily and can cause damage to the strength of fabric and lines as well as causing the fabric of the canopy to stick together.
- The reserve packed in the harness gets squashed, especially if the harness is the type that the pilot is likely to sit on it whilst waiting for a launch or having their sandwiches. The effect of this is to almost iron creases into the reserve which have been shown to make the deployment slower, as the airstream takes longer to get between the leaves of the canopy to allow it to open.

- After about a year, the rubber bands that hold everything together long enough to deploy properly, can decay and need checking.
- Any velcro in the system needs to be checked because if left for a long time the it can get "welded" together, and it takes great strength to pull the reserve out. It has also happened that the velcro on the side holders for the bridle on the harness did not open!
- A reserve can also be difficult or sometimes impossible to throw due to incorrect fitting into the harness.

Or perhaps you're the type of person who prefers a visual argument. I did a quick search on YouTube for a few clips to show the difference between a slow reserve inflation and a fast inflation. See for yourself ...

Slow Inflation

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_4nFokxbVNY

At about 0:15 seconds the reserve is thrown but it is slow to inflate. This then leads to complications with the reserve twisting up with the main canopy – the pilot was lucky the wing re-inflated by itself in the end.

see also: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yByGAiMd4EM

Fast Inflation

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dX9HnsmSZaM

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=co_PQAtBd1Q (around 30 seconds in)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zLIFJ8_Oq28 (around 25 seconds in)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dX9HnsmSZaM

There are a number of reserve throws in this video and all of them inflate significantly faster than in the first video.

When your reserve falls out...

Can you refit your reserve when it accidentally falls out, after a quick drag over Wetherfell? It really is simple once you know how. If you cannot refit it safely then at best you could lose a day's flying and at worst...

North South Cup 2020

TL;DR¹ - We Lost. But had a laugh doing it.



Jocky Sanderson called the weekend on with two day's notice. I called the weekend on with 10 hours notice and stuffed things in the van quickly. One of my lockdown projects had been to get it back into shape so I was glad I'd spent the time on it, even if it was going to be a brief weekend away. Pete Darwood didn't fancy the 5am start so I was going to be on my own on the way down.

Three and a half hours later I arrived at **Frocester** Take Off (pronounced Froster by the yokels) as Hugh Miller, Jim Mallinson and Jocky were debating the task. The North team had

mustered fifteen pilots, Richard Meek, Gary Stenhouse and Rob Cruikshank being fellow Dales regulars. This being Wayne Seeley's home site the first task was to celebrate his life with a competitive shout. The north won by 4 decibels. Of course we're there for the flying as well and well before lunch we were setting up for a 89km task to Reading (where Heathrow airspace forces you down).



The steep take off had quite a bit of wind but all were safely away onto a really pleasant ridge to fly. There was plenty of bubbly lift about but no real break through climb outs, it was too early in the day. I ended up having to commit to some weak climbs at the north end of the ridge with a few other pilots and we all had gaggle envy as the main gaggle caught a climb out of the south bowl and got on their way. Anyway, you make do with what you've got... Over the back caution is needed here as the ground is high but dropping with a low base. Gary had been with me but peeled off to a small ridge with a lake and landed there. I headed for a high common with an into wind ridge. It was working for the pilot above me but crucially not me. I had windy, disorganised climb above the house on the ridge. I called it a

¹ TL;DR – represents "Too Long; Didn't read", and is the very short summary

day above the house and put down in an empty paddock on the slope. It was then my day started looking up.



As I started packing a guy appeared over the gate and I was soon offered a brew (second in a row for land outs! I'd been handed a brew in Northallerton the previous Tuesday). I finished up in his front garden (distanced), having a pleasant chat about Salsa and vineyards and was offered a lift back to Take Off in his camper (T4 Bilbo conversion). Shout out to Salsa Phil of Theescombe - you saved my day.

The second climb out was much more organised and I parked myself in buoyant air with two sailplanes and an Ozone Alpina for company. The clouds downwind were obviously working and this time I was high enough to capitalise on reaching them with height to play with. Some work and searching later, with an Alpina (Chris Blanchard probably) I found wispies at 1200m right in front of Cotswold International Airport.



I don't mind airspace within reason, we've all got to live together, but seriously? No one goes in or out of there, it's a parking lot for 747s. Neither of us want to risk sinking down into the ATZ so we skirt around the south side and pick up the next climb south of the Cotswold Water Park. A biplane ambling by comes in for a closer look.

A weaker set of climbs puts us at a higher 1300m base as we move ever inland and approach Swindon. There's a decision to make though...



The south of Swindon is densely clouded, looking a bit like spread out but with three light grey clouds in front of the mass. In front and on track to Reading is a big blue hole to cross and to the north of the town its more blue ringed with spread out cloud but with sun on the ground. I'm in front of Chris by a kilometre, so the decision is mine to make.



I choose the active looking light cloud over Swindon and begin the long glide. Chris follows. It is of course the wrong choice and I've consigned us to the ground but I do get a nice view of the Intel campus in Swindon where I notionally work. I bail over the town centre and head for the Honda factory in the sun.



I drop onto the solar farm east of Swindon and I'm sure it's wanting to release. There're trees to act as the trigger and the panels themselves will be plenty hot. However, it's stubbornly remains a mass of disorganised air stuck to the ground. I roll along with it until I start sinking so I make a dash south onto brown fields with a kite flying nearby.

"It's at this point that the right half of my wing decides it doesn't want to be above me anymore..."

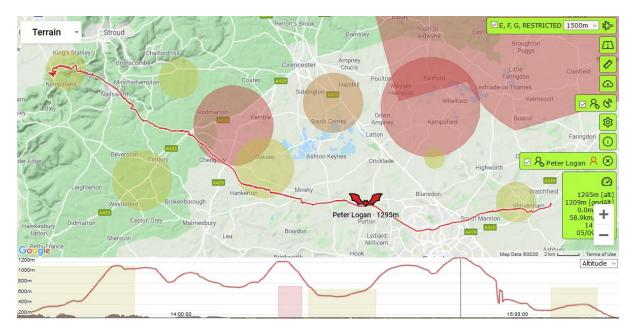
i'm on it quickly, looking up and getting onto the left break. It's not an issue but **it's a sign that somewhere around me there's a climb...**

I have about 200m height to spend and decide to search downwind. I pass Shrivenham defence academy and it's golf course and it looks inviting to land at. Given the price of a new F35, a golf course with manicured greens is probably chicken feed in comparison, let's not begrudge it. I try one last turn to hook the rising air but it's not happening and I set up for a safe and windy landing in cut stubble next to a road. I've not reached goal but I have a smile on my face none the less. I made a decent effort to get there and won't have let the northern side down if it comes to counting distance with fifty odd kilometres. It's always interesting to fly new terrain and true flat land flying is not an everyday thing for a Dales pilot.



Check in, pack, close instruments down.... What's that? Now XCTrack decides to tell me that Shrivenham is a big, red no land area. Thanks, I was considering an easy land and pack on the fairway, chat with Colonel Mustard and tea at the 19th before exiting the gates and taxi into Swindon. I need to have words with XCTrack I think.

On the flip side, deciding not to land there has saved me being shouted at and frog marched out the gate by some beefy military police, followed by a stiff letter to the BHPA!



On the road, I stick out my thumb and three cars later I have a lift into Swindon town centre and the Kings Arms whilst I wait for Gary Stenhouse and Gill to pick me up. The lift into town came from Steve and his wife who used to climb grit in the Peaks and always hitched there and back and now always pick up strays on the road. **6:3 to the South** now, as they trounce us into goal. Rob Cruickshank grasps defeat from the jaws of victory as his instruments give out just before Reading. Amateurs...

The evening was at the Prince Albert Inn, Rodborough, above Stroud. Good pizza, chats, catching up with a few folk, prizes for the last year's flying and a bit of reminiscing about Wayne Seeley too. Last orders was at 10pm which prevented things from getting too out of hand, it looked flyable on the next day.

We put in a visit into Stroud in the morning to get breakfast and also for Richard Meek to interview Ricard Carter about his incident on Monday.

Richard Carter and Rob were four climbs onto an XC from Stannage and high over Chapeltown when he took a deflation which exited into an autorotation. He landed (on his reserve) in an estate but unfortunately dislocated his shoulder. You can hear more on this on Richard's YouTube channel at:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCEC1xHSJ4QBjXBCtfcyEgEA

Sunday back at Froster and it had a heavy sky and no wind. Whilst we waited for conditions an accuracy landing was setup with five a side. I volunteered and made ready. Gary Stenhouse was first off and flew around the corner. He nailed it 150m below to the cheers of the crowd sat watching on the far ridge. My take off was great, after that it went south. I

setup for a constant aspect approach but had too much height still. I turned it off but on my Cayenne5 there's too much energy conversion. Dumb idea really and I overshoot. I should have deeply braked it off instead.

I'll be practising this on Baildon through the winter I think. It is important to nail a landing when you need to after an XC. One all for accuracy as the South's tandem effort ploughs a furrow onto the pad but we all did better than Tim Pentreath who did manage to make the right field....but only just.



The sky just kept showing us more than enough lapse rate but even the sailplanes weren't skying out and they have a sink rate of 1 foot a week! We called it a day, with the North graciously ceding victory to the South shortly after midday and people said their goodbyes or went off for a big Sunday carvery. I'm glad I made the call to go, if a weekend forecast looked on it's something I'd consider doing overnight again now that van's up to scratch.

Just a word on the N-S Cup itself. It has the reputation of being only for SkyGods but it isn't like that in reality. There's a jokey, non-competitive atmosphere, people put their hands in their pockets for flying and local causes and wildcard pilots are picked and flying too. As if to emphasise to the point, the first wing into goal was an EN B

Read more about at: <u>https://northsouthcup.wordpress.com/about/</u>

Roll on next year... Pete Logan

Learnings:

Reflections from a gusty launch site

Following an incident at Carlton Bank

So Covid was receding, cross country was allowed (if you could figure out a retrieve) and the forecast looked promising. Windy, but promising. Pete and I headed for Carlton Bank and although we weren't late there were gliders up already when we arrived (apparently the first was in the air at 8.45). As it was windy we walked past the bottom launches initially. I've not flown from them before and they didn't look that inviting and the wind there was light so we headed up the hill. On the top launch the wind was strong but variable, with lulls when you could launch, but quite gusty.

The gliders in the air didn't seem to have any trouble penetrating, and during the lulls they got quite low on the ridge. There were quite a few paraglider pilots and hangies on launch, some preparing, some just chatting.

For those who've not flown Carlton Bank it's not the most manicured site. There's a small area on top of a broken cliff where the heather is a bit shorter and you can launch. There is an option of walking down a bit and balancing between boulders and heather and trying not to get your lines caught. I'd only flown there a couple of times and it's perhaps also worth commenting that it tends to get blown out on good days (hence the need to get there early).

I set up just below the path (didn't fancy the boulder option), with a hang-glider setting up above the path. There is only really room for one wing to launch at a time (so a bit of pressure and plenty of spectators). I fluffed my first launch having tripped over a clump of heather as I turned (almost got away with it!) which put me on the back foot. I had a second fluffed launch (I can't remember the detail now) and my compass fell off my deck. It's a big compass which I was rather proud of but the Velcro doesn't work very well so it is also attached by a bit of line. I was reattaching it as a gust came through and lifted me up swinging me into the hang-glider waiting behind. I was completely unhurt but sadly I had collided with the most expensive piece of kit on the hill and it's understandably upset owner.

Analysing this I think there are 4 things to learn, of note, 3 are "non-technical skills" (call them "human factors", i.e. situation awareness, decision-making etc.) and only one is a "technical skill".

1. Decision to launch (decision-making)

Were the conditions right for me to launch at that time, on that day, in my condition? Like most pilots I was pretty rusty from lockdown and the wind had picked up since the first pilots launched. Far better pilots than me were struggling with the launch conditions. John Ellison phrased it well a bit later:

"Could I launch now? 7 out of 10 times I would be fine, 2 out of 10 I would have a bit of trouble, and 1out of 10 I might have an accident. I'm not prepared to play those odds".

This is not a way I had thought of it before and he was clearly gutted not to be flying but I found it a useful analysis. Instead of me thinking "I can probably launch in this"

and think of the potential reward! (this was the day the boys flew over the Humber to land near Lincoln, *Editor*: as covered in last month's Skywords).

So the question to ask is "is it safe for me to launch now?", **not** "was it safe 10 mins ago". Or if I had been flying all year, **not** "should I be able to handle these conditions", **but** "can I handle these conditions"), **or** "look who else has launched" (and got away with it?). If I was going to launch then the key was to wait and select a lull (and to be fair I was waiting when the gust came through).

2. Hang-Glider Proximity (Situation Awareness)

I knew the hang-glider pilot was fairly close behind me; I had already asked him if he wanted to launch first. I had a failure of level 3 situation awareness:

- Level 1 Perception did that OK Saw the hang-glider
- Level 2 Interpretation sort of did that It's a hang-glider preparing to launch
- Level 3 Prediction of what happens next This is where I failed. I did not interpret him as a threat, an obstacle downwind of me when I launched.
 Obviously had I recognised this there were plenty of things I could have done to rectify it, which essentially would have involved one or other of us moving.

3. Distraction (Situation Awareness)

My level 1 situation awareness completely failed when the gust came through as I was distracted looking at my compass. It's not the first time the compass has fallen off so now sadly it's been banished from my deck. Obviously distraction can occur in almost limitless forms, but worth considering if there are "potential threats" in terms of distraction in our kit set-up.

4. Strong Wind Ground-Handling (Technical Skill)

Yes there was one technical skill. Admittedly I was caught "off-guard", i.e. lack of situation awareness, but I know I am not confident at strong wind ground-handling and this is something I need to work on.

I did make one good decision! After the incident, although physically, mentally and emotionally I felt fine, I decided not to fly that day. There were no delayed physical effects, but emotionally it hit me on the retrieve drive and perhaps had I been in the air that mental state that might have affected my situation awareness and decision-making.

It could have been a minor incident (just dragging, if the hang-glider hadn't been there). But all the lessons (except the hang-glider proximity) would have been the same, just unreported and un-discussed. This is why I favour a culture of "near miss" or minor incident reporting.

There is massive under-reporting of paragliding incidents and accidents and we lose a huge potential to learn if we rely on learning from only those incidents which result in serious injury or death. I hope this has been helpful.

Rosie Darwood

Comment from Martin Baxter (Chairman):

I'd like to thank Rosie for such an open, thorough, and insightful analysis. There is an old adage that a pilot should make every effort to learn from the mistakes of others, because he won't live long enough to make them all himself.

Depending on your preferred analogy; holes in slices of cheese, or links in a chain; the contributory factors are pretty clear: currency, conditions, hazard, distraction.

I was just behind Rosie on the walk up. I clipped in in front of the hang gliders and I remember thinking that it was a bit selfish of them to 'hog' the area behind take-off. Whilst we all have it drilled into us not to launch in front of a hang glider, I think that they have a similar responsibility not to rig just behind the only launchable area.

(Editor: I remember the first thing taught when learning (by Dean): Site Assessment, the first thing within that – "look behind you", this has certainly been a reminder).

I was also concerned about the wind strength. When I aired my concerns, one very experienced pilot told me that, if I wasn't sure, I could always get the wing above my head and see how it felt before launching. With hindsight, I'm not convinced of the wisdom of such advice in those circumstances.

Concerned about the hang gliders, my own skill level, and the size of the audience; I walked about 20 metres down the ridge to a far less attractive launch point with heather, rocks and potential rotor. I was lucky to get off in a lull. Dave, seeing my success, took the vacant slot and waited for about an hour for a lull before giving up and walking down. I was surprised to find out later that the experienced pilot who had given me advice earlier had also walked down, perhaps having witnessed Rosie's incident.

Sometimes the consequences of what might happen are not immediately apparent. A seemingly 'harmless' drag can be far more serious when there is something in the way.

I do hope that Rosie has inspired others to submit any near miss reports / Learnings (anonymously if you wish) for us all to learn from and thus avoid similar situations.

Martin Baxter

Editor: Remember all submissions (of any kind) welcome to: <u>newsletter@dhpc.org.uk</u>

Club Meetings

2020 - 1st Thursday in the month, 7.30pm

(Due to Covid, all held online, details available on the Dales Club website)

3rd September - Ben Ireland - An insight into the Red Arrows (Editor: was excellent)

1st October - Charles McDonald - Coming back from adversity.

5th November - Kieran Campbell - Flying and photography in Scotland & beyond.

3rd December - AGM and round up of the years flights.

2021

Not finalised yet, but lots of exciting people in the pipeline

Rosie Ireland Social Secretary

International Baildon Sod 2020

With regret, following the Government's latest (8 Sep) announcement banning gatherings of more than 6 people, it has been decided NOT to attempt to hold the International Baildon Sod for 2020.

Anyone who has already booked a place may carry it forward to 2021, overseas competitors may wish to re-book their flights for any autumnal evening in 2021 when light easterlies are forecast. Leeds/Bradford Airport has been advised that their flight patterns are not likely to be disrupted this year. Baildon Council has issued a yellow warning indicating that the heather on Baildon Moor is likely to be higher than the seasonal norm. On hearing the news, the landlady at the Malt Shovel commented that she expects the share prices of fish & chips and craft beers to tumble.

Comment from Pete Logan:

"Shame, I'd got myself specially tooled up for it this year as well":

(*Editor*: Looks like we also have a solution for an environment friendly Portaloo!)



Obituary

In memory of Kate Maddison

Kate had been suffering with a long-term breathing condition that finally took her a couple of weeks ago and will be sadly missed by family and friends. It was not a Covid related death.

Kate was a former member of the club, and amongst other things was commissioned to design the Mark Sellern Trophy - awarded each year for 'Services to the Club' (the large one in the middle), which is made of solid bronze and is most impressive.

Kate's contribution to the club lives on.



Site Guide Updated

Nont Sarahs

Following some questions relating to the accuracy to the site guide for Nont Sarahs (hosted on the Pennine Club website, linked to from the Dales Club site), this has now been updated.

Shaun Pickard Sites Officer South

Picture Corner

From Gary Senior – Whernside 17-09-20





