

CMAT climbing weekend

Gradbach 10th to 11th September 2022

We've been heading up to the Scout centre at Gradbach in the Peak District for many years now, but somehow we were yet to experience the famous 'Roaches' crags, which host some of the best climbs in the UK. Now with the promise of some good weather we split into morning walking and climbing groups and set off to get our hands on grit. Our walkers were guided up through Gradbach woods and past incredible rock sculptures, before tootling down a little to the climbs at the Roaches Skyline. By the time they arrived our climbers were well into tackling the various arêtes, cracks and corners on offer. Thomas, at first a tad nervous about abseiling, was by now zooming down "Looking for tomorrow" for the umpteenth time and our other Scouts and Explorers were enjoying solving "Breakfast problem" and bouncing up "Wallaby wall", which was named after the Wallabies that used to live on the Roaches: yes really!! Meanwhile, Stumpy had found his perfect rock climb, a horizontal off-width that he named "40 winks" after claiming the first descent!

Exhausted, we headed back to fuel up, but the weather was just too tempting and so out we (almost all, Stumpy "zzzzzzzz") headed again on our night pilgrimage to Lud's Church, an incredible chasm caused when an ancient landslip ripped the rock apart.

The sun was shining still in the morning and so we drove around to the 'Leek-side' of the Roaches to have a play around the "Chalkstorm", which is a perfect section of rock just past "Death knell". Needless to say we were very careful not to mix these up! Keith might have had other ideas as he rigged up one of our most ambitious abseils down "Piece of mind", which proved to be a fantastic challenge for everyone (leaders included)! The climbs around "Prow corner" and "Prow cracks" were also attracting a lot of attention, all the while being shadowed by the "Prow", a spectacular rock resembling the front of a ship, which overhung the cliff!

Thanks again to all of the CMAT team for another fantastic weekend.



Imogen devours "Breakfast problem"



Matthew, insect-like on "Mantis"



Stumpy smashing "40 winks"



Another fantastic night hike through Lud's Church



Playing around on Prow corner and cracks



Thomas abseiling down "Looking for today"



Lana abseiling down "Piece of mind"