

Rowten Pot

Location: West Kingsdale NGR SD698780 GPS- SD6981078000

Grade: 4

Route to cave:

Park conveniently about 500 metres north of Braida Garth Farm. Go through the field with the sheep fold in and follow the dry valley to the wall. Once through the gate the sound of water is heard where it descends a large open shaft.

Access:

Permission not required provided the route is followed and the country code is adhered to.

Warning:

Rowten Pot is an active pothole; parts of the pothole will become very wet in times of wet weather. The Direct Route will become impassable in wet weather. See low anchor warning in this guide.

Eye Hole Route

This fine classic pothole with impressive surface feature can be descended via the Eye Hole Route or the Big Gully Route, both routes take you to the bottom of the main chamber.

The 'eye hole' is to the south of the main shaft (Big Gully Route) and separated by a rock bridge. Three anchors provide a 'Y' hang and a reblay at the lip to the shaft. This is followed by a re-belay under a small shrub. Descend a further 3 metres to a 'Y' hang re-belay. While descending obvious features come into sight, muddy traverse and a rock bridge. A pendulum above the rock bridge will reach the muddy traverse and remove the need to cross the rock bridge.

At the end of the muddy traverses is a 'Y' hang, this is followed by further 'Y' hang and a pendulum into the rift. A 'Y' hang from opposite walls is the start of the long descent of the main shaft. The landing is in a spray lashed position and this route is only advisable under normal conditions. A traverse in the rift to further 'Y' hang will give a drier descent.

At the bottom of the entrance shaft the water cascades through the jammed boulders (during wet weather the water will cascade over the boulders and down The Direct Route); at this point two routes are possible 'The Flyover Route' and 'The Direct Route'. A small opening in the corner is The Flyover Route which offers a drier descent. A 'Y' hang followed by a high re-belay in a cross rift keeps the rope high above the stream (during low water levels it is possible to continue the descent to the bottom of the pitch and continue with the rigging from The Direct Route). A short descent to a re-belay reached by leaning back and bridging across the walls, lands close to the ledge and traverse to the final pitch.

At the ledge, two anchors are provided; the nearer one is to ease the swing of the person de-rigging. Follow the traverse along the ledge and over the holes. A free hang can be gained from the 'Y' hang by careful rigging, but if in doubt a deviation is provided.

The Direct Route is followed by climbing over massive wedged boulders; this can be protected by rigging the end of the rope to the two anchors provided and following the descending route to the start of the traverse and short pitch. The short pitch lands in a small chamber with continuing pitch (Waterfall Pitch) follow the traverse over this pitch into dry by-pass passage and 'Y' hang into final chamber, which is the same chamber as The Flyover

Route lands in.

Big Gully Route

The Big Gully Route descends the main shaft alongside the waterfalls that cascade from Rowten Cave down the gully eventually emerging high in the main shaft of Rowten Pot. This is an atmospheric entrance into Rowten Pot; however, after periods of prolonged rainfall the route can be very wet.

An initial anchor set in the rock as you approach the entrance; this is for protection during times of snow and ice as you are required to climb over limestone outcrops. 4-5 anchors lead over the Rowten Cave water to the head of the Gully Route. A series of re-belays descends the shaft, where you land on a slab of very slippery rock (care). An anchor set high in the wall gives protection as you are required to cross the stream and follow the traverse on the opposite side of the shaft.

Follow the traverse on the right-hand wall to a high 'Y' hang; this is followed by a deviation from the opposite wall. Continue downstream, just before the pitch is the start of the traverse on the right-hand wall, there are four anchors in the traverse terminating at a single anchor giving a free hang to a large ledge.

A high traverse leads to a 'Y' hang over looking the water cascading down the main shaft. The route from here follows the left-hand wall as you look down the shaft. From the high 'Y' hang descend a short distance to a re-belay, this lands on a spray washed ledge, a deviation (anchor set horizontally) pulls the rope away from the spray, and aligns the caver for the descent to the next anchor.

Three re-belays follow around the corner these are conveniently set above foot holds in an otherwise blank wall traverse, to a final anchor. A free hang from a single anchor provides free hanging descent of the main shaft landing on the ledge at the start of the Flyover route.

Minimum equipment required:

Eye Hole Route

Entrance pitch		40 metre rope
Main shaft		65 metre rope
Main shaft		70 metre rope

Flyover Route

3 rd pitch		40 metre rope
Final pitch	1 sling	30 metre rope

Direct Route

Direct Route		35 metre rope
Direct Route traverse and pitch		35 metre rope

Big Gully Route

Entrance Gully to slippery slab		55 metre rope
1 st traverse and pitch	1 sling	30 metre rope
2 nd traverse and pitch to 'Y' hang at main pitch		30 metre rope
Main pitch	1 sling	50 metre rope

