

BAGSHAWE CAVERN

NGR 1714 8088

Grade III (Part Show)

Alt. 770ft (235m) Length: 1.9 miles (3km) approx

Show Cave. Adventure trips etc. Details from the proprietor, Mr. P. Revell, 12 Bradwell Head Road, Bradwell, Essex, SS16 2QJ, 0437 20540

On southern outskirts of Bradwell village.

Upper Levels

Old workings at and below entrance formerly known as Mulespinner Mine. Entrance covered by a small stone building. Descend steps in vein, then turn left along obvious passage following tourist path for 540ft (165m) to the junction with Calypso's Cave, 180ft (55m) long to a choke. Tourist path turns left, passing the wide low Agony Crawl on the left. Just beyond, steps lead down to the top of the Dungeon, an 18ft (5.5m) pitch. The main passage continues beyond the Dungeon for 295ft (90m), and lowers to a crawl. To the right is the Cave of Worms, where a climb down boulders rejoins the main route, which continues as a large passage for 460ft (140m) to the Hippodrome, a wide boulder-strewn chamber.

Turning left at the Hippodrome, a sloping muddy passage leads to the streamway. Left downstream has been dived in a tight bouldery sump for 60ft (18m) containing one air bell. Right (upstream) can be followed with minimal air space for 220ft (67m) to Sump 1, 30ft (9m) long, followed by a 70ft (21m) crawl leading to a 15ft (4.5m) duck. 40ft (12m) of larger passage follows to Sump 2, 25ft (8m) long. 50ft (15m) of canal passage leads to Sump 3 which has been dived to a gravel choke 500ft (150m) from base at a depth of 100ft (30m).

An oxbow on the west side of the Hippodrome leads to a short climb down into Glory Hole Passage, a phreatic joint-controlled inlet which descends to a duck, then rises again to the head of an impressive pothole, 45ft (14m) deep to water, the Glory Hole. The water level in the Glory Hole falls considerably in dry weather. It has been inconclusively dived. Just to the right of Glory Hole Passage is a crawl, which gradually lowers until it is too tight.

Lower Series

From the bottom of The Dungeon 330ft (100m) of crawling and walking leads to a chamber where the Agony Crawl enters at roof level. Shortly beyond is The Lake, a waist deep pool. A further 1000ft (305m) of varied passage leads to a sump, which becomes a duck in dry weather. 300ft (91m) of passage follows, mostly crawling, to a permanent sump. Just before the sump, a passage on the right is the entrance to the Far Drought Series, first entered in 1989, consisting of 395ft (120m) of stooping and crawling to a sump. Shortly before the duck, a left hand branch can be followed for 500ft (152m) to another sump. The sumps lie close to the level of the nearby resurgence at the head of the Bradwell Brook.

The New Series

On the right of the Upper Series between the Cave of Worms and the Hippodrome, a gate leads to an ascending hands and knees crawl. After a tight squeeze the passage enlarges, in places to walking size, and leads to a junction. To the left a crawl (flooded in winter) leads to a series of passages with high avens, while to the right the route soon lowers to an unpleasant restricted muddy duck. Beyond the duck the passage soon becomes larger, and further branches lead up-dip to the left. The main route continues until it lowers and ends at clay chokes close to the entrance vein.

Tackle:	Ladder	Belay	Lifeline
Dungeon	18ft (5.5m)	Spreader	30ft (9m)
Glory Hole	50ft (15m)	20ft (6m)	70ft (21m)

References: Baker, E.A. c.1910. Moors, Craggs and Caves of the High Peak. Chapter XXV. Survey. Farr, M. 1977. CDG N/L No.45. pp.18-19. Ford, T.D., Burek, C., and Beck, J.S. 1975. Trans B.C.R.A. Vol.2. No.3. pp.133-140. Survey. D.C.P. 93 p 2 Orpheus 29 no 567 p 26