



Park Bank Crag

O.S. Ref. SK087429 Altitude: 145m a.s.l.

This fine crag was once one of the major crags in the area. Now, as it is within the grounds of the famous amusement park, multiple layers of barbed wire, surveillance cameras, machine-gun nests, minefields and the Alton Towers Republican Army mean that you are very unlikely to ever access this crag.

As access is so unlikely scant details are given here. For full descriptions, see www.thebmc.co.uk/guides. To approach, follow the Ina's Rock directions. Go through the kissing gate, as for those directions, and along the fence to where the Ina's path strikes up and right. At this point go directly up the hill along the fence. There was traditionally a hole in the fence which allowed access. This is no longer true. The crags lie along the walkway which leads to Ina's Rock.

Pass the main crags along the walkway. 100m beyond the left-hand buttress is a smaller buttress. A steep groove on the right-hand of the buttress, to the right of its main nose, is the first landmark. The groove line gives **Tre Cime** (VS 4b, 1971) to a routine finish. The layback crack to the left is **Per Rectum** (VS 4b, 1971). The usually wet wall left again with the use of a lassoed stump for aid is **Extractum** (HVS 5b, 1971). The corner around to the left gives **Mark** (S, 1971) and an exit left and up from Mark gives **Stark** (VD, 1970). The corner left again is **Stephen** (VS 4a, 1971), reserving its hardest to last. The final and best route here **Dark Star** (E3 5c, 1975), goes up the arête to the

left. The crags continue in the direction of Alton Towers but diminish in height. Back on the main rock is:

- 1 Time Flies By** E4 5c 1986
20m The hanging arête to the left. Climb the wall on its left-hand side and swing right on the right-hand side of the arête. Climb the wall on dirty holds to a break and swing left to finish up the arête. **The Overhang**, (E1 5b, 1970) is an awful route up the tree infested face to the right of a blocky overhang on the wall to the left. Best forgotten.
- 2 Patient Weaver** E6 6a ★★ 1989
20m Climb the shallow corner and exit left via some fingery moves. Continue up the wall above moving leftwards via a shallow depression to a good hold and a long reach to finish.
- 3 The Humble Potter** E5 6a ★★ 1978
20m Climb Patient Weaver to the rest ledge, then follows the obvious traverse line, right under the headwall to climb the arête on its left side.
- 4 Miss Understood** E6 6a ★★ 1989
20m A bigger white knuckle ride than any in the nearby theme park. The main arête to the left of the chimney is taken direct low down, and on its left-hand side above one-third height. Protection is very limited but the rock is sound throughout. A significant pitch.
- 5 Brad's Chimney** VD ★★ pre-1951
18m An atmospheric journey up the magnificent chimney.

- 6 Open All Hours** E4 6a 1989
15m From just right of the main chimney line, climb a shallow groove and step right at the roof. Pull over into a worrying red corner and from its apex finish via the headwall on the left. Typical Churnet runners and typical Churnet E4.

The buttress to the right of this provides **Honest John** (E1 5a, 1971), which starts at the right side of the wall before traversing left and move up to a flourishing rhododendron. Another bush and slab leads to the top. Fifty metres right, and left of the next major buttress, is **Four Horsemen** (E2 5c, 1977). An awkward crack on the left gains a break. The nose above has small holds and loads of lichen. The thin filthy crack 10m right is **Uchimata** (D). To the right lies a forest of descents, whilst the layback provides **Blunder** (D, 1959–63) with wooden holds.

- 7 Grounded** E5 6b ★★ 1989
7m The wall past a hole and debilitating reach.

- 8 No Future** E6 6b ★ 1988
9m You may not have if you fall off. The centre of the bald wall to the right above the remains of 'Mark Capper'.

- 9 Anthem for a Doomed Youth** E4 5c 1975
9m From 5m left of the arête, move up and slightly rightwards. Step back left to a sandy ledge and finish directly.

- 10 You'll Always Reap What You Sow** E5 6a ★ 1988
9m Nor would this. The elegant round arête taken directly and with no protection.

- 11 The Renaissance** VS 4c ★★ 1970
9m A classic of the Churnet. The prominent thin crack gives fine climbing and protection. Wouldn't

The Lower Churnet > Park Bank Crag

be out of place on the Roaches.

- 12 Left Twin Crack** S 3c 1959–63
9m The left-hand crack. There are two exits. Starting 2m left to gain the next route is **The Height Below** (E1 5c, 1977).

- 13 Right Twin Crack** S 4a ★ 1959–63
9m A fine jamming pitch via the obvious crack. **Aliens** (E3 6b, 1988) is an excellent problem up the vague flake and crack to the right, avoiding the main crack, while **Alien Wall** (HVS 5b, 1970) is the shallow scoop right again, leading, with difficulty, to the ledge. Finish into Right Twin.

- 14 Chilton's Superdirect** VS 4b 1959–63
9m Start just to the left again. A short corner and groove lead onto the arête of Defiance.

- 15 Defiance** VS 4a ★★ 1959–63
9m A narrow slab to the left gained from an obvious corner below. Good.

Hollybush Hell (S, 1959–63) once lay up the crack under this holly, while **Hopeless Holly** (E1 5b, 1988) climbing the slabby arête to the left, is similarly uninviting.

- 16 Fast and Bulbous** E2 5b 1984
10m The right-hand arête of the crack to the left of the roof. Start on the left and move right onto a ledge at 4m. Finish on the arête's right-hand side. A direct start is 5c.

50m right, the first buttress contains **Coelred's Crack** (HVS 5c, pre-1951), which is the obvious crack through a roof.

