

Crich Tors

by Ian Parsons (as per 1991 guide)

The edge consists of a line of east-facing outcrops and quarried walls in a strip of woodland overlooking the Crich/Bullbridge road and just beneath the public footpath running along the ridge between Crich and Chadwick Nick. It is generally sheltered and fairly quick to dry, though its location in a wood makes it prone to reclamation by the local flora.

Parking and approach

From the centre of Crich (parking available) walk a short distance uphill along the B5035 Whatstandwell road as far as the Fire Station on the right, opposite which is the start of a path signposted PUBLIC FOOTPATH TO CHADWICK NICK. Follow the footpath across several stiles and fields. After the third stile, keep close to the wall on the left. A few metres after the fourth stile carefully cross the fence on the left and descend back leftwards to the foot of the main crag. The most obvious feature is a horizontal ceiling split by a jamming-crack; this is The Roof.

History

In view of the opening quote some of the following should be treated with a degree of circumspection. The first recorded climb here was The Roof, Done in the 1950s by Steve Read as an aid route and climbed free in the 1960s by Ted Wells. Thereafter, although a number of obvious lines were climbed, nothing was claimed until 1985 when Paul Pepperday and Alan Thompson added to the route tally. At Easter, usually accompanied by Dave Candlin, the tall Pepperday applied himself to the quarried area with the resultant eminently climbable Mainstream and the almost impossible, reachy Brainstrain, Max Head Room and Sputnik Trembles. Meanwhile, Alan Thompson and some students from Belper High School accounted for Mini-railway Slab and Trade Route. Finally, in 1986, Mark Robson, S. Pykett, and M. Carless strung together the two sections that make up Waiting for a Grade.

The climbs are described from left to right.

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OS ref. SK 349537 alt. 225m

Sixty metres to the left of *The Roof* and below a tree is an isolated four-metre-high arête which provides a pleasant 5a layback problem. On the main crag, eight metres left of *The Roof*, is a steep, open slab with an overhang at about one-third height.

I Mini-Railway Slab HVS 5a 1985

8m Climb the slab to the overhang and pull round this at its left-hand end. Ascend the upper slab on small holds.

3 Trade Route HS 4c 1986

8m Start 3m to the right of *Mini-Railway Slab*. Climb the slab to a break in the overhang; struggle through this and continue to the top.

4 Waiting for a Grade VS 4b 1986

12m Between *Trade Route* and *The Roof* a narrow slab leads up into a groove containing a large block. Climb up into the groove, then step right below the block and traverse to the upper crack of *The Roof*. Move right to a vague crack and finish up this. Contrived.

5 The Roof E15c 1950s/mid-1960s

10m Climb the back wall to the ceiling. Jam across this to a crux at the lip and finish up the deep crack above. The best route hereabouts.

Eight metres to the right is a dirty crack.

7 The Wall E15c 1985

8m Climb a wall just right of the crack to a thin horizontal crack. Pull through the bulge above (crux) to the top.

Fifty metres farther right, after some slabs, is a detached flake/ buttress; the front face offers a six-metre climb of Severe standard.

A farther 100m to the right, past a fence and several quarried walls, lies a steep, clean slab with a thin crack rising from just right of a tree to a small oak at its top; this is Mainstream. The

four routes hereabouts were all first climbed by a giant; of the harder ones, only Brainstrain is known to have been repeated (also by a giant). The grades still await confirmation by normal climbers and will probably increase as a result in the meantime, please treat them with caution. When topping-out on these routes, great care should be taken to avoid damaging the wall.

8 Sputnik Trembles E5 6c 1985

13m Ten metres left of *Mainstream*, climb a faint crack in the wall passing two pegs.

9 Max Head Room E4 6b 1985

10m Climb the wall just left of *Mainstream* to a peg and finish slightly leftwards.

10 Mainstream E1 5b 1985

10m Climb the thin crack.

11 Brainstrain E4 6b 1985

10m Climb the wall three metres to the right of *Mainstream* to a scarred hold. Move up past a peg to a loose finish.

Forty metres farther right is a clean five-metre-high bouldering wall. Several problems up this provide entertainment, particularly if the painful-looking shrub below claims a victim. Hereafter, the crag dwindles as one approaches Crich. As the few remaining pieces of rock are in somebody's back garden, usually in the vicinity of a kennel, it is probably not worth the hassle and teeth marks to seek them out.

Crich Tors First Ascents

1950s	The Roof (Aid)	Steve Read
mid-1960s	The Roof	Ted Wells
1985	Mainstream	Paul Pepperday, Dave Candlin, Glynn Farman
1985	Brainstrain, Max Head Room	Paul Pepperday, Dave Candlin
1985	Sputnik Trembles	Paul Pepperday
1985	The Wall	Paul Pepperday, Dave Candlin
1985	Mini-Railway Slab	Alan Thompson, Andrew Spencer, Simon Parish
1986 April 30	Waiting for a Grade	Mark Robson, S Pykett, M Carless
1986 April 30	Trade Route	Belper High School students
1997, June	The Dave Cellulite Affair, Withering	Geoff Hornby, Mark Turnbull

