



**DE** | CENTRAL  
ENGLAND

THE DUKE  
OF EDINBURGH'S  
AWARD



**Annual Review  
2016-2017**



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### Our mission

To inspire, guide and support young people in their self-development and recognise their achievements.

### Our vision

To reach more young people from diverse backgrounds and equip them as individuals to succeed in life.

### Our guiding principles

At the DofE we strive to achieve our mission through personal development programmes and the assessment and presentation of Awards.

All our programmes are driven by the following ten guiding principles, which are at the heart of everything we do:

- Non-competitive
- Achievable by all
- Voluntary
- Personal development
- Personalised
- Balanced
- Progressive
- Achievement focused
- Demand commitment
- Enjoyable

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is a Registered Charity No: 1072490 and in Scotland No: SC038254, and a Royal Charter Corporation RC000806. Registered Office: Gulliver House, Madeira Walk, WINDSOR, Berkshire SL4 1EU 24/08/2016



### The Duke of Edinburgh's Award

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Arthur House Sutton Coldfield, B75 5BL  
T: 0121 308 9470  
E: Centralengland@dofe.org  
W: DofE.org/CentralEngland



# Foreword by the Regional/Country Director

## Welcome to the 2016/17 Annual Review

This was a momentous year for the Charity as 2016 marked the Diamond Anniversary of the founding of the DofE.

This was the ideal platform from which to launch a year of celebrations that included the creation of a new concept for the year called **The Diamond Challenge**.

The Challenge was a resounding success with over 10,000 participants of all ages taking up the challenge and we've captured some of those events in this review.

Overall our Anniversary celebrations raised over **£5 million nationally** to support work to enable our most disadvantaged or disengaged young people. Additionally, it helped raise the profile of the Charity through a variety of social media outlets promoting activities undertaken through the Diamond Challenge.

The Regional Team worked closely with our licence holders to showcase the breadth and reach of the DofE through nine Royal visits to the Region by HRH The Earl of Wessex as part of a wider tour of the UK in the Diamond Year.

In a number of areas there has been a migration to the **Directly Licenced Centre** model of operation. The pattern of success of such migrations continues to extend the reach of the DofE to more young

people in existing centres and consistently opens up opportunities to many more schools that have never had the opportunity to offer dofE programmes.

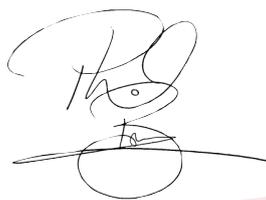
We hope that the case studies within this review will give you a real flavour of the inspirational work that is taking place around the Region.

Regional Office support provides centres with access to training which is essential to the investment made in the people who volunteer for us and with our partner organisations.

Last year Regional staff were able to train **1,630 delegates** who attended 150 courses, covering a very wide range of skills development during the year.

I hope that you will enjoy reading about the range of activities and case study achievements from across our Region.

We wish to thank all of our volunteers, partners, donors, supporters and network for all of their support in the last year, and we look forward to this year being better than ever.



**Phil Brown**  
Director – DofE Central Region



*"We wish to thank all of our volunteers, partners, donors, supporters and network for all of their support in the last year, and we look forward to this year being better than ever."*

See our list of Licensed Organisations and Directly Licensed Centres at [DofE.org/centres](http://DofE.org/centres).



*"This has been some year! It has been the most successful year in our 60 year history. Sixty years of experience that has enabled our great charity not only to plan and achieve an incredible year of Diamond Anniversary celebrations and fundraising, but also to continue rolling-out our growth plans and engage more young people than ever before."*

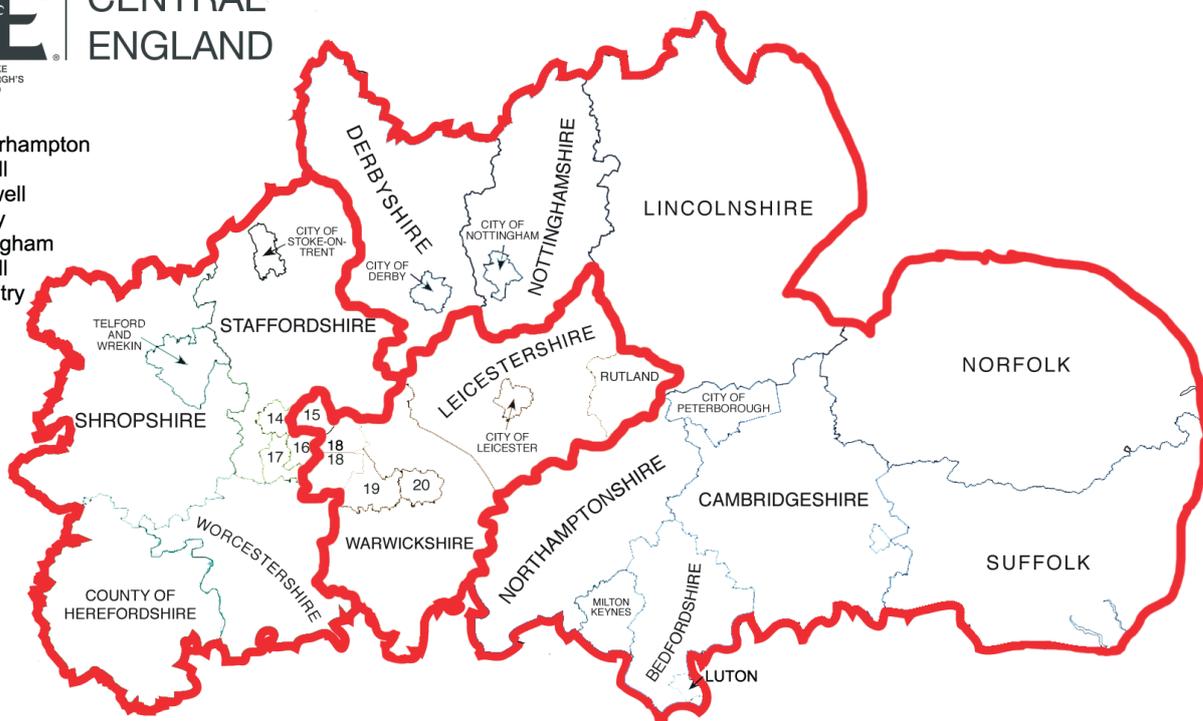
**The Lord Kirkham CVO, Chair of Trustees**

# Our Region/Country



CENTRAL  
ENGLAND

- 14: Wolverhampton
- 15: Walsall
- 16: Sandwell
- 17: Dudley
- 18: Birmingham
- 19: Solihull
- 20: Coventry



## Central England Team



# Who we are and what we do

Many young people find achieving a DofE Award life-changing. A fun adventure and major challenge, three progressive Award levels (Bronze, Silver and Gold) and a wide range of activities offer endless possibilities to anyone aged 14-24. Millions of young people in the UK have already taken part in the world's leading youth achievement award – pushing personal boundaries, gaining new skills and enhancing their CVs and university applications.

“*The Duke of Edinburgh's Award has helped countless young people on their sometimes difficult path to adulthood.*

**HRH The Duke of Edinburgh KG KT** ”

For the past seven decades, our Charity has inspired and transformed the lives of millions of young people from all walks of life. From volunteering to physical activities, life skills to expeditions, achieving a DofE Award is a passport to a brighter future, valued by employers and universities.

The world's leading youth achievement award, the DofE in the UK is proud to be part of The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Foundation, which drives and supports global growth.

## Our delivery partners

**A Licensed Organisation (LO)** is one which holds the licence to manage the delivery of DofE programmes and verify Awards.

**Operating Authority licences** are often held by local authorities which offer the DofE through their youth services and which support a range of DofE centres in their area. Due to cuts in several Local Authority areas some authorities no longer deliver the DofE and the only way for young people to access the DofE in that area is through Directly Licensed Centres.

Some large organisations (colleges and universities) may hold an OA licence to deliver the Award across several faculties.

**A Directly Licensed Centre (DLC)** is a type of LO which holds a licence to deliver DofE programmes to young people on its own premises.

Directly Licensed Centres can include, for example, schools, academies, colleges, youth clubs and young offender institutions, which do not run their DofE provision under a licence provided by an Operating Authority.

Find out about our Trustees at [DofE.org/trustees](https://www.dofe.org/trustees).



## Our Founder

Whilst Prince Philip's announcement (just after our year-end) that he was to step down from public duties does not change his relationship with us as Patron and Founder, it prompts us to reflect on his foresight, tenacity and energy in creating, sustaining and inspiring

such an extraordinary youth programme. Our 60th Anniversary year and his announcement prompted accolades for the role he has played in public life and, in particular, the creation of what has become part of our way of life, and proved to be one of the greatest 'best of British' creations: The Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

# Strategic objectives

## UK strategic objectives

In 2011/12 we set ourselves challenging targets to be achieved by 2016/17. At that time we could not have foreseen the dramatic impact of cuts in Local Authority budgets and the resulting closure of youth work activities across the country.

At the DofE we felt the impact of these changes in 2014/15 when we were able just to maintain activity levels but we lost a year in our growth plan. Reassuringly, however, we demonstrated that we could increase the proportion of young people completing and achieving their Award.

This will require a committed investment in both people and facilities to recruit, train and support the thousands of volunteers that will be required, and to help those young people less able to fund their own DofE involvement. We have a clear strategy and plan for this over the next five years.

Our Anniversary year has reinforced the strength of our position as a well-run, cost-effective Charity, achieving excellent results for young people and engaging our communities in the noble aim of developing the next generation.

We are undoubtedly well placed and have a wonderful opportunity to make the most of this position for the benefit of young people and society as a whole.

## Our 2016/17 targets were:

- **Awards started: 300,000.** We started 271,439 on their Award programme... +7% on the previous year.
- **Disadvantaged participants: 20%.** We increased the number of disadvantaged participants by 19% to 49,453. Frustratingly this is 18% of our Awards started which falls just short of our target of 20%. This objective will continue to form a central part of our strategy for the coming five years.
- **Awards Achieved: 50%.** A rate over 50% has been achieved – 133,369. Traditionally this rate has been calculated by dividing the current year completions into last year's starters. However, the development of our business information systems will allow for a more sophisticated cohort view of completion to be established for future years.

**19%**  
increase of  
disadvantaged  
participants to  
**49,453**

## Our new targets to 2020/21 are:

- **Awards started** increasing annually to reach 350,000 per annum by 2020/21.
- **Disadvantaged participants** rising to 70,000 per annum, representing 20% of Awards started annually.
- **Awards Achieved** rising to 210,000 per annum by 2020/21 representing around 60% of Awards started.



**Sutton Coldfield Grammar School** for Girls received funding from the Goldsmiths' Company which allowed members of staff to attend the Introduction to the DofE and Managing a DofE Group courses. The new team under the leadership of the new DofE Manager, Cath James, completely reassessed how the DofE was delivered at the school. The additional trained staff has allowed the school to resource the DofE in a greater way which has in turn seen an increase in the number of Bronze participants registering and completing their Award. Emphasis was put on ensuring that the girls had access to leader support to choose their activities, and then doing their expedition at the end of the academic year, having completed all of the other sections.

## To achieve this we will need to:

- Optimise the reach of each DofE centre increasing the average number of participants. In order to reach this target we will invest in the training and support of DofE Managers and their teams.
- Improve the proportion of participants progressing through the Award levels.
- Optimise staff team performance, delivering maximum value for the fees and donations that fund all staff posts.
- Implement a range of key development initiatives including:
  - Improved management information for volunteers and staff.
  - Continuous improvement of IT systems and mobile access.
  - Campaigns highlighting the positive benefits of a DofE Award for Employability and Wellbeing.
  - Build on our positive brand position, refreshing and updating all materials.
  - Focused support and resources to engage with at risk and marginalized young people.

## Central England strategic objectives

**Awards Started:** In 2016/17 we saw growth of 5% within the Region to 42,472 young people starting an Award. Over the next five years we are looking for an average growth of 7% per year which will enable 60,000 participants a year to undertake a DofE programme by 2020/21.

Our key strategy is to build the capacity for delivering the DofE in existing centres alongside recruiting new centres to start delivering the DofE. One of these elements is to address the decline in the number of

Silver Awards being started, and a number of centres this year are being encouraged to start Silver for the first time with Regional funding support. Additionally centres are supported to move to a year 9 delivery model which allows Silver to be delivered in year 10.

We will build on our successes in licencing colleges targeting courses and departments, to enable young people in post 16 education to undertake their DofE. Within Higher Education we will work with Careers departments, Student Unions and Faculties to support students to enrich their CV whilst studying.

**Disadvantaged:** Within the Region over 15% of our participants are disadvantaged, according to nationally recognised measures. In some areas, the number of disadvantaged participants enrolling is over 40%. We will continue to support centres to engage their disadvantaged students, working towards engaging a regional representation of 20% within the next five years. The money raised during the Diamond Anniversary will be used in a variety of ways to support disadvantaged young people and centres to undertake the DofE.

**Awards achieved:** Within the Region this year our average completion rate was 50% and over the next five years we will be working to achieve at least a 60% completion rate. This will be through engaging with our centres and Leaders, and importantly our verifiers to ensure that young people are supported to complete a quality programme.

**Growing the Central England team:** Over the next five years we will continue to grow our staff team where necessary to ensure that every centre continues to receive support at a local level from an Operations Officer.

## Lincolnshire DofE Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) Cluster Group



The Operations Officer formed a group to provide and share specialist experience, ideas and opportunities for participants. The benefits have been:

- Bringing together Licensed Organisations which share an interest or specialism in supporting DofE participants with SEN and/or disabilities.
- Focus on the needs of participants with challenging behaviours, disabilities and learning and communication difficulties.
- Improve links, relationships, communication and access to specialist SEND knowledge.

The group has successfully submitted a joint funding bid to purchase expedition equipment for use by disabled and disadvantaged participants within the County. The group is currently working on a joint initiative to bring in bespoke training for volunteer DofE staff within the group.

# Extending our reach

We've continued to extend our reach, working towards our strategic objectives of getting more participants to start and complete their DofE Awards and reaching more young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

## Disadvantaged

It is extremely pleasing to report record numbers of young people setting out on their DofE Award programme with 271,439 Awards started in the year, an increase of 7% over last year.

This is particularly satisfying as the number of young people starting a DofE programme from a background that puts them at a disadvantage, by being at risk or marginalised in our society, has increased by 19% to 49,453.

There were 133,369 Awards achieved during the year, which was another record with 11% more young people becoming Award holders than in the previous year.

This demonstrates a wonderful improvement in the quality of Award support provided by our nationwide, diverse and highly committed network of around 40,000 volunteers, professionals and DofE staff.

## A Diamond Year

In 2016, the Diamond Anniversary of The Duke of Edinburgh's Award was a fantastic opportunity for our DofE family and friends to join together in support of the Charity's ambition to bring the benefits of an Award to even more young people.

Through a programme of Royal visits across the UK, our **Diamonds are Forever** gala, very special Gold Award Presentations, support from our Diamond partners and ambassadors and a DofE-inspired **Diamond Challenge** to get everyone feeling the impacts of working towards a DofE Award, the Charity raised around £1.5m to support our growth ambition. By taking a flexible approach to our licensing, building our professional staff team structure, and investing in the training and development of our network, we are clearly achieving our aim of bringing the benefits of a DofE experience to many more young people.

We have been encouraged in our efforts this year by many great supporters. We wish to thank our Diamond Headline supporters – **Amey, British Gas, RSM** and **Heathrow Airport** whose quite exceptional help for the year lifted our motivation and turned so many ideas into fun, successful activities.

The success of our Diamond Anniversary year has also enabled and encouraged us to be even more ambitious in thinking of the future. In particular, by building on



the investments from **The Queen's Trust, Pears Foundation, Gosling Foundation** and many other benefactors that will enable us to reach even more young people on the margins of our society: those whom our research and experience tell us will benefit most from our work.

This year the efforts of thousands of individuals, rising to the opportunity to take on their own DofE Diamond Challenge, have raised funds that will provide direct support to groups and young people who find it difficult to engage with the activities that will contribute towards their DofE programmes.

None more so than **HRH The Countess of Wessex** (*pictured below*) who showed us the way by raising the most money and capturing the nation's imagination with her Challenge of cycling from the Palace of Holyroodhouse to Buckingham Palace. We engaged the whole country in our Diamond year, fuelled by the amazing energy of DofE Trustee **HRH The Earl of Wessex** (*above*), whose commitment to a 12-month long programme of visits to groups and events across the UK inspired us all.

He met, worked with, challenged and celebrated with thousands of people during the year, acknowledging the achievements of our young people and heartily thanking the amazing DofE volunteer network.



# Incentivising achievement

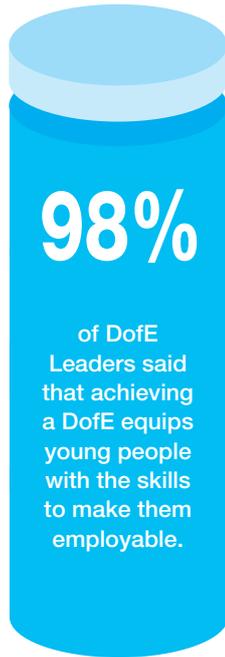
## Skills for work

We know that the development of work-ready 'soft' skills is important to young people and to their potential employers.

Research from YouGov tells us that 78% of participants undertake a DofE programme to enhance their CV/job applications. Employability benefits are therefore a big incentive for participants to see their programmes through to the end.

Throughout 2016/17 we raised awareness of the skills and attributes a young person gains through their DofE and how these translate to the workplace.

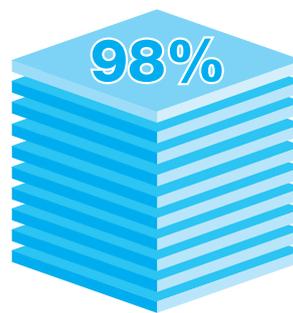
By seeding employability messaging and stories across our network and social channels through inspiring case studies, the creation and promotion of new content on the LifeZone and leveraging external



hooks such as summer exam results, our regular survey of Bronze, Silver and Gold achievers revealed a 6% increase in the awareness of their improved employability.

In addition, we grew our employability evidence base with over 100 UK employers endorsing the DofE as a great way for young people to gain the skills they want in their business.

View the list of endorsements from these top companies at [DofESkills.org](http://DofESkills.org).



In a recent survey of Gold Award achievers, 98% were employed or had obtained places in higher/further education.

## Molly's story

**Molly** joined the **Hollies PRU** as a young carer with a school attendance of below 10% and very low self-esteem.

Her Leader thought that everything that the DofE represents was most definitely what Molly needed and encouraged Molly to get involved. Molly pushed herself out of her comfort zone throughout the year, whilst tackling GCSEs and looking after her mum.

Molly not only achieved her DofE, but also climbed Snowdon and rose over £500 for the children's charity Action Medical Research.

When asked what she enjoyed most about taking part in her DofE, Molly replied *"I enjoyed the commitment, self-discipline and will power that I had to put in"*.

Molly truly believes that the DofE has encouraged her to apply for jobs and she has been successful in gaining employment and has now applied to study travel and tourism. Molly said, *"I believe that The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is a once in a lifetime opportunity to push yourself out of your comfort zone, to build self-confidence and to achieve your future aspirations and goals. By doing my DofE, it has made me realise what I would love to do in the future."*



# Delivering quality DofE programmes

As ever, a great deal of our time and resources over the last year have been spent in supporting the delivery of DofE programmes.

## eDofE

This year, we have continued to develop eDofE, dealing with 510 support tickets and implementing 62 separate developments to improve the system. Key developments have seen a mobile version for participants introduced.

We also released our new eDofE training functionality, giving eDofE users access to see the record of the DofE training that they have completed. We've also introduced 'Single sign on' making life far easier for those who have multiple roles in eDofE because they only have to remember one set of login details.

## Staff

The number of Licensed Organisations we work with has continued to grow rapidly and in order to continue offering those organisations a high level of service, we've continued to expand our staff team. Each DofE Region in England now has a number of trained Operation Officers and Operation Managers, each of whom deals with a number of Licensed Organisations.

## Volunteer roles

Adult volunteers continue to play an essential role in the delivery of DofE programmes across the country. Around 40,000 adult volunteers offer their time, skills

and dedication to allow increasing numbers of young people to take part in their DofE.

With Assessors, Supervisors, Leaders, Managers and other roles being undertaken (by both volunteers and by paid staff), we see positive success stories every day – for example, Gold participants becoming young Leaders at their former groups. A focus is being put on the DofE Manager role, similar to that put on the Award Verifier role, with training to follow in 2018.

The DofE continues to thrive in large part because volunteers continue to provide us and our Licensed Organisations with their support. Thank you.

## Volunteer management

We have continued to support Licensed Organisations with their use of adult volunteers. LOs continue to request advice on how to make best use of volunteers in the running of DofE programmes.

The *Volunteer Management Toolkit* resource is intended to provide LOs with support in this area. The *Toolkit* combines both guidance on volunteer recruitment, management and support, with 23 document templates (e.g. a volunteer role description) which can be adapted for LO use. A flyer that advertises the *Toolkit* is distributed to each LO when they sign their Licence.

We have advertised the *Toolkit* throughout the year and made updates to make sure the content is relevant and accurate.

**133,369**  
Awards  
achieved  
nationally



**Sandon Meridian Academy's** first year of delivering the DofE was a resounding success; an overwhelming uptake resulted in 23 young people receiving their Bronze Award at the school's first DofE presentation event.

The success of the programme was down to a number of key factors which included the hard work, effort and commitment of the young people, a dedicated team of school staff and the support of the school Principal and Senior Leadership Team.

There is clear evidence that participation in the DofE has had a positive impact on achievement and progress across a range of subjects, as well as on attendance and attitude to learning scores. Parent and student questionnaires have shown that the DofE has impacted positively on self-confidence, resilience and communication skills. Part of the reason for this success is because the DofE has been run in-house which has allowed staff to build supportive relationships in and out of school. The school is now into its second year and has almost doubled the numbers of students taking part. The school has seen that completing a DofE programme has had a hugely positive impact on their students, not just academically but also socially and emotionally.

This work will be built upon in the coming year, with similar work also planned to provide guidance for DofE staff who work with volunteers.

## Training

The **DofE Expedition Skills** (DES) course is a brand new training programme and an addition to the DofE's Modular Training Framework (MTF) – our collection of training courses and e-learning modules. The DES course was added in 2016.

A growing number of course delegates have attended the DES and developed their expedition skills. The training covers basic practical and theoretical skills needed to support expeditions on foot (in normal, rural and open countryside – i.e. standard Bronze expedition terrain).

We introduced another new **Award Verifier** (AV) course in early 2017, specifically for Award Verifiers. Award Verifiers are a key role for the DofE who verify and grant final approval to all Bronze and Silver Awards achieved by participants in eDofE (Gold Awards are verified by the Award Verifier, but approved by DofE offices).

They are independent from the delivery of DofE programmes to the young people and act as an important and independent quality check.

## Age range pilot

Last year we launched the piloting of an extension of our lower age ranges at Bronze and Silver to accommodate whole school year groups.

This enabled Leaders in schools and out of school to offer the DofE to young people who would in the past have been excluded from taking part with their year group cohort because they are just below the lower

age limit for their level. We have been delighted with the response this move has received from schools in particular.

## DofE Direct

In 2016, we launched a pilot project known as **DofE Direct**. Targeting young adults, a demographic where the DofE has historically been under represented, DofE Direct allows participants to enrol on their programme without being associated with a traditional Licensed Organisation.

Participants are supported remotely by staff at DofE's Head Office and their progress is monitored via eDofE.

Initial results are encouraging, with a number of young adults who would not otherwise have participated in a DofE programme signing up. Find out more at [DofEDirect.org](http://DofEDirect.org).

## Operations Officers

In order to support the dramatic and sustained growth in the number of Directly Licensed Centres, we have increased the number of Operations Officers and Managers in our Regional and Country Offices.

Our Operations Officers are often based within the areas they cover and are able to provide hands-on support to new and existing Licensed Organisations, DLCs and the wider DofE network.

## Approved Activity Providers (AAPs)

The DofE has increased the number of Approved Activity Providers, enabling Leaders and participants to find opportunities for each section of a DofE programme. During the year, a drive was initiated to develop the number of AAPs in the Volunteering, Physical and Skills sections.



**Kisimul School** in Lincolnshire received £750 from the Maria Marina Foundation fund.

The school used half of the funding to develop its infrastructure to offer expeditions to more students, to improve the DofE experience and increase completion rates. To do this they required a large kit store to provide adequate kit.

The other half of the money was allocated for staff training. By training four new Expedition Supervisors and a second Award Verifier the school is now able to offer more expeditions with more trained staff.

# Fuelling growth

## The DofE network continues to expand

The pace of growth in the number of Licensed Organisations that make up our network shows no sign of slowing, increasing this year to 2,601: an increase of 43% year on year, following an increase of 42% in the previous year and 41% in the year before that.



This is a key factor in our growth, as each Licensed Organisation demonstrates a commitment to ensuring their young people benefit from the DofE experience.

However, it also brings with it a growing demand for back-ups, requiring an increase in the number of employed professional staff we need to deliver it.

This in turn drives increased demand for income and donations to maintain our growing infrastructure. So far we have proven more than capable of generating the necessary revenues and charitable donations to support this structure, but we are always well aware of the need to balance our investment in future growth with our ongoing requirements.

*"I want to heartily thank everyone involved in making the DofE experience a reality for so many young people of the UK. My fellow Trustees and I are exceedingly grateful but, more importantly, as I meet the young people you have helped, I know that they appreciate and highly prize it too."*

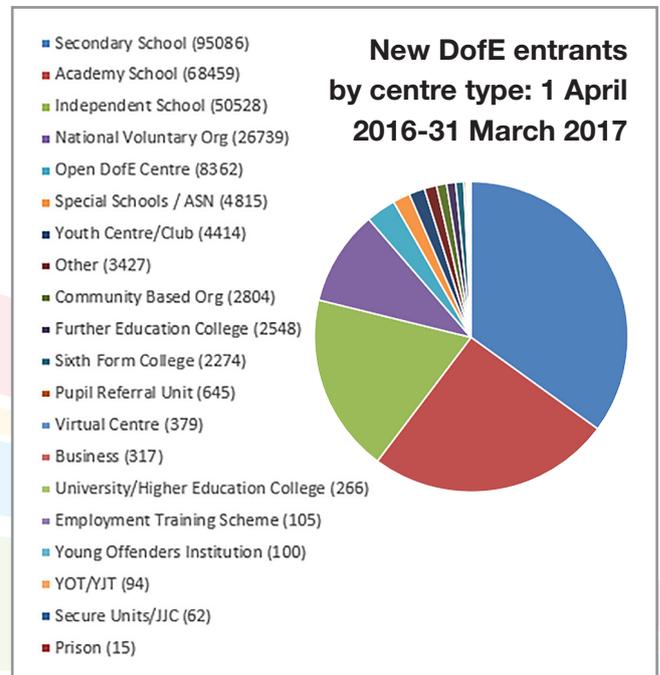
**The Lord Kirkham CVO, Chair of Trustees**

## Business intelligence

We have continued to develop our business intelligence solution to give our staff and volunteers the best information to support and encourage young people doing their DofE programme.

In the last year we have started to bring in additional information sources which, when combined with our existing data, have given us a more detailed view of the areas and individuals we serve and the impact we could and do have.

Once again, our data has shown that the majority of the 271,439 young people who started their DofE programme in 2016/17 did so through a secondary or academy school.



**St Thomas Aquinas** has successfully run the DofE for 22 years and currently has 40 volunteers. They started with 35 participants and, thanks to the investment in volunteers, are now able to enrol over 90 participants across all three levels.

The school takes pride in its volunteer achievements and, this year, presented six volunteers with DofE long service certificates, who in total had given 74 years of service to the DofE.

Their volunteers combined have given over 200 years of service and countless hours.

# Funding the DofE

## Licence fees

Some funding comes from Licence fees paid by those who offer the DofE. The pace of change for our Charity shows in the growth in the number of Licensed Organisations (LOs) that make up our network.

Other funding comes from donations and, of course, payments from young people for their DofE Participation Places.

## Finances

The Diamond year has further strengthened our underlying financial position, allowing us to plan for future growth with a high degree of confidence. The success of the year has also created funds for immediate investment in support of those whose backgrounds put them at a disadvantage.

Our income this year increased by just over £4m, driven mainly by some one-off Diamond Anniversary fundraising. We continued to invest in our staff team and this contributed to our total expenditure increasing by £1.3m.

## Commercial partnerships

In addition to the more traditional fundraising income and publicly available grants, we continue to develop a profitable commercial offering to the DofE network of participants and adults/volunteers.



A high proportion of commercial income comes from the 12 expedition brand licensees who offer kit advice and a range of field-tested **Recommended Kit** to participants and Leaders.

In addition to the approved Recommended Kit list, the **DofE Reward Card** is available free to the DofE network providing a discount at Cotswold Outdoor. An interactive **Expedition Kit List** was also introduced in 2017 to help participants work out what they have, what they need and where to get it.

The DofE's standalone shopping website, [DofEShopping.org](http://DofEShopping.org), has been updated during the year and brings together a range of discounts, special offers and prize draws for those involved with the DofE.

The official DofE clothing range is also being extended and developed in 2017/18 to provide a greater selection and price points.



With all commercial income invoiced through ASL, the DofE's trading arm, we maximise the contribution back to the DofE Charity, which supports the Charity in meeting its core strategic objectives.

## Future funding

Keeping the momentum alive, we were thrilled to announce that The National Lottery and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's #iwill fund, set up with social action charity Step Up To Serve (responsible for the #iwill campaign), will fund match £1 million raised in England to support young people in accessing high quality social action opportunities. Through other funding sources the DofE has also doubled the Challenge funds raised in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales.

From autumn 2017 the DofE will work with established DofE centres in schools, clubs and other organisations across the UK to agree how the collective Diamond fund of around £3 million can best support more disadvantaged young people in starting and doing their DofE over the next four years and in the long-term.

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is grateful for the generosity and dedication of thousands of DofE supporters which will enable more disadvantaged young people to access the DofE and experience its life-changing benefits; developing vital skills for both work and life.

Without the money raised by our 15,000 Diamond Challengers this opportunity wouldn't be possible.



# Diamond successes

In our Diamond Year, The Central England Region celebrated the prestigious anniversary with a total of nine Royal Tours from **HRH The Earl of Wessex**, which included a fantastic opportunity to walk through the Peak District with him.

We had the pleasure of two visits from **HRH The Countess of Wessex** as she completed her Diamond Challenge of cycling from The Palace of Holyroodhouse to Buckingham Palace.

One of the Gold Award Presentations was moved from its usual location at St James's Palace, to the beautiful grounds of Buckingham Palace. **HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, HRH The Earl of Wessex and HRH The Countess of Wessex** were all in attendance on the day as well as a few famous faces.

We would like to take this opportunity to say a big **THANK YOU** to everyone who got involved with their own, unique **Diamond Challenge** and helped raise money for the DoE Charity. We hope you enjoyed your challenges and your support is greatly appreciated.







The world's leading achievement award for young people.



*“We are extremely proud of the commitment and perseverance displayed by all students resulting in such a high number of them achieving their Bronze Award. They have demonstrated confidence, good attendance, positive behaviours, and been determined to succeed.”*

**Rob Manger**, DofE Manager English  
Martyrs Catholic School, Leicester

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*“My motto is now to aim higher because my DofE has proven that I can overcome difficulties. It has given me a boost of self-esteem and has also proved to people that I don't really have a disability and am just the same as others. It has enabled me to experience the outside world.”*

**Simone**, Gold Award Holder

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*“I love food, I love cooking, I love my career, I love my life. It is all down to my experiences with the DofE. I could be a million miles away from where I am now. I believe all young people should take part and achieve their Award. It can truly unlock your potential and help you grow into who you really want to be.”*

**Jon**, Gold Award holder

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**Photographs:** From DofE groups around the UK, to whom we are most grateful.

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