



## Useful information from the Wales Expedition Network on Snowdonia

### Welcome

For more information, please contact the Wales Expedition Network:

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### IMPORTANT

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award does not endorse any campsite, activity centre, courses or other opportunities contained within these pages. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award cannot be held responsible for any arrangements, financial or otherwise, concerning participation in any opportunities described here. Participants should check with their Licensed Organisation to ensure that an opportunity they wish to pursue will count for their Award. Whilst every care is taken to ensure that each entry is accurate, neither the Wales Expedition Network nor the Duke of Edinburgh's Award take any responsibility for the omission or errors regarding any entry. It is the responsibility of the user to ascertain that, where necessary, a provider has an appropriate license under the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations. The supervision of Expeditions is the responsibility of the Licensed Organisation.

### Contact Details

To ease the process of route approvals for Snowdonia, the Wales Expedition Network welcomes electronic versions of the Green notification forms and routes on Memory Map (mmo or gpx files) software. If information is to be sent by post, can green forms be accompanied by 1 copy of the route on a photocopy of the OS map with routes clearly highlighted and all camp sites marked. Please note that due to a very high level of demand in late July and August, the service may not be able to supply assessors for some teams. You will be notified as soon as possible before your expedition if we are unable to supply you with an Assessor.

### About the Snowdonia Expedition Area

Snowdonia National Park covers 823 square miles of the most beautiful and unspoilt countryside in North Wales. Snowdonia offers mountains, lakes, woodlands and valleys. History and culture is everywhere and the Welsh language is the mother tongue of 65% of the population. The landscape illustrates the history of the area through Stone Age burial chambers, Roman forts, churches, castles, slate quarries and other industrial works. Snowdonia is famous for its most spectacular mountain scenery with Yr Wyddfa (Snowdon) in the North and Cadair Idris in the South. In all there are more than 90 summits over 2000ft and 15 over 3000m.

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The expedition service covers Cadair Idris and Rhinogs to the South, Snowdon, Glyderau, Carneddau and Moelwyns to the North and the Berwyns to the East.

## The Weather

The weather in Snowdonia can sometimes be very fickle. Even in summer, the rain and wind can sweep across the mountains in a similar force you would expect in winter. Due to its location on the western side of the UK, the area is influenced by the moist air masses coming from the Atlantic. Snowdonia often experiences heavy rainfall and groups travelling to Snowdonia need to be prepared. Unexpected snowfall in October and March will cause problems for groups.

Check out the latest weather forecast on mountain weather wales here:

<http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather/mountain-forecasts/snowdonia#?tab=mountainWarnings>

Previous experience, fitness and good quality equipment is a necessity when considering an expedition in the mountains. Travelling through the mountains rather than over is the safest option. Any high level walks need to always be accompanied by **bad weather alternatives**.

## Routes and Access

Mountain walkers have very good access in Snowdonia thanks to the Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000 and 'good will' on behalf of landowners. Snowdonia benefits from having an extensive footpath network in the form of permissive paths, public rights of ways and bridleways. Much of the land in Snowdonia is owned by private landowners (farmers) who make their living from 'working the mountains', extensively sheep farming.

When planning routes in Snowdonia, please take into consideration non-access land i.e. land that is not part of the CROW Act. In some circumstances, land owners do not permit the right of access through their land unless there is a designated public right of way.

Visit the Snowdonia National Parks Authority - Ardwod Parc Cenedlaethol Eryri website:

<http://www.eryri-npa.gov.uk/visiting/walking/leisure-walks>

Due to the nature of the terrain in Snowdonia, it is inadvisable to use areas that are exposed and require techniques of scrambling. Additionally, terrain that is heavily eroded or scree, and is difficult in poor weather should also be avoided. In the northern Snowdonia area, Crib Goch and the Watkin Path on Snowdon are not acceptable routes. Similarly, in the southern part, the Foxes path and the permissive path leading directly to Llyn Cau on Cadair Idris are also not suitable routes. The Minfordd path on Cadair Idris should be only used by experienced walkers.

Fires in the countryside cause widespread damage to the environment and wildlife and of course are a risk to human life. Grass/Moorland fires take hold very quickly—always take great care when using stoves and disposing of matches. Do not light camp fires or burn toilet paper to dispose of it.

Download the DofE 'Caring for the Countryside' leaflet

## Camping

Please note that Supervisors/Leaders/groups are responsible for gaining permission to use camp sites. Please respect all our camp sites and other users of the camp sites. It is important to seek permission of the land owner when considering wild camping. Some land owners will charge for wild camping. Many of the camp sites request that groups are supervised overnight by a responsible adult –please check.

For a current campsite see the list on the website.

## Wild Camping

Wild camping in England and Wales is currently not permitted. The CROW (Countryside and Rights of Way) Act 2000 forbids camping unless you have permission of the land owner.

The British Mountaineering Council BMC has produced good practical advice for walkers, climbers and mountaineers in the upland environment. Section 8 deals specifically with wild camping issues and section 9 with sanitation.

Visit: [www.thebmc.co.uk/greenguides](http://www.thebmc.co.uk/greenguides)

## Lyme Disease

Lyme Disease is a bacterial infection that is spread to humans by infected ticks. Ticks are small, spider-shaped insects that feed on the blood of mammals (commonly sheep and deer), including humans. The ticks that cause Lyme disease are commonly found in woodland and heathland areas. Due to their breeding patterns, the tick population is at its highest during late spring and early summer. The best way to prevent Lyme Disease is to take sensible precautions when you are in areas known to have a high tick population, such as wearing long-sleeved shirts, long trousers and using insect repellent. At the end of each day walking, inspect your skin for ticks, including head, neck and skin folds (armpits, groin and waist band). If you find a tick on your skin, gently remove it by gripping it as close to the skin as possible, preferably using a fine toothed tweezer and pull steadily away from the skin.

For more information visit: <http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Lyme-disease/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

## Planning Your Route

- All expeditions must have a clearly defined purpose or aim - some examples are listed below
- Spread out your route equally over the duration of the expedition
- Avoid travelling over difficult ground late in the day. Try as far as possible to make steep ascents early in the morning.
- **Groups should not use motorised transport** and should take the form of a journey through the mountains and not over them.
- Avoid campsites that are remote. It will greatly help assessors if campsites are chosen which are easily accessible by road.
- It is time consuming and expensive for assessors to visit groups whose routes straddle the whole of Snowdonia.
- Avoid '**peak bagging!**' – It can be just as rewarding to travel through wild country rather than attempting every mountain in sight!
- Avoid steep ground and exposed ridges – remember they are carrying heavy rucksacks.
- Safety of the groups is the responsibility of the supervisor. The supervisor should be based in the assessment area and adequate arrangements should be made to keep in contact with the assessor with regards to a change of plan.
- **Alternative bad weather routes and escape routes should be clearly marked on the maps**
- Routes should be clearly marked on either a photocopy of a map with the route, campsites, and escape routes highlighted or clearly marked via memory map.
- Any expeditions planned (unaccompanied practice and qualifying ventures) in Snowdonia, the Wales Expedition Network has to be notified. **THIS INCLUDES ALL BRONZE, SILVER AND GOLD EXPEDITIONS IN WILD COUNTRY.**

## Examples of suitable expedition purposes/aims in Snowdonia

- Footpath erosion
- Land use
- Slate mining
- Plant life
- Glaciation
- Tourism
- Upland birds and animals
- Litter

## Expedition Assessments

The Wales Expedition Network in Snowdonia predominantly only assess Gold expeditions, however we will try and help support other levels if our volunteer team can help.

All expeditions, including practice journeys, are to be supervised by an experienced adult who must accept responsibility for the safety of the group. He or she must be satisfied that the participants are fully trained and properly equipped to undertake the expedition planned.

Please send/email your notification forms and a copy of the routes (2 copies of each), to us as early as possible. Assessors are all volunteers who give up their free time to assess groups; therefore it is not possible to guarantee an Assessor for your group.

However, it is more likely that an Assessor will be available if:

- Notification forms and routes are submitted at least six weeks prior to the expedition.
- Routes etc are clearly marked on either Memory map or highlighted on a photocopy of a 1:50 or 1:25 map.
- Please ensure you have purchased a voucher. We cannot allocate an Assessor until this is purchased.

We require two good quality copies of the routes and two copies of the notification form with either a SAE or an email address. No further information is necessary at this stage. Once the assessor has been allocated and approved the route then route cards, equipment lists, menus etc should be sent to the assessor directly.

- We will then provide you with an Assessor.

### **Notification Only Groups**

For groups who are coming to Snowdonia for practice expeditions or are bringing their own assessors, one copy of their intended route and one copy of their notification green form should be sent at least four weeks prior to the expedition.

**Groups will then receive an expedition notification number from us (please include either a SAE or email address).**

### **DofE resources**

The current DofE expedition kit list can be downloaded from: [www.DofE.org/go/expeditionkit](http://www.DofE.org/go/expeditionkit)

A range of expedition downloads, such as the Green Form and spare expedition safety cards, can be downloaded from: [www.DofE.org/go/downloads](http://www.DofE.org/go/downloads)

Further information of the Expedition section can be found at: [www.DofE.org/expedition](http://www.DofE.org/expedition)