



EXMOOR & QUANTOCK EXPEDITION AREA

Useful information from the Expedition Network

Welcome!

For more information, please contact the Expedition Area Co-ordinator.

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Please note: April 2018

There have already been a number of issues on Exmoor National Park this season with DofE groups leaving gates open as well as problems with littering. Where gates have been left open, this had had significant financial implications on a number of farms during the lambing season and it is incredibly important groups securely close gates behind them.

The DofE benefits from goodwill within the Exmoor area and we want this to continue! Please ensure that participants representing your organisation and the DofE do strictly adhere to the Countryside Code. Issues where DofE groups are identified to be leaving gates open will be followed up and may result in qualifying expedition being reviewed.

Camp sites

A list of campsites is available on our webpage (www.dofe.org/leaders/expedition-areas/Exmoor). You can also find information about camping on the Exmoor National Park website: www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/enjoying

General description and history

The history of Exmoor is one long story of how people from Mesolithic times to the present day have tried in different ways to live on and around the moor and exploit the area for their own purposes. For example, they hunted and fished, cut down trees, built houses, cleared and cultivated land, grazed animals. They also traded, travelled, worshipped, and buried their dead. In doing these things they left behind traces of their activities such as flint arrowheads and standing stones, deserted mine-shafts and derelict buildings. At the same time their actions helped form the Exmoor landscape as we know it. Trees were gradually cleared from the hills and later vegetation was controlled so that sheep could find the best grazing.

The whole Exmoor landscape is therefore a record of how people lived there in the past. It is a particularly important landscape historically because there are so many undisturbed archaeological sites and monuments and probably more to be discovered. Research will of course contribute greatly to our understanding of the past in Devon and Somerset, and nationally.

To find out more go to the Exmoor National Park website www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/index.htm

Assessment

Generally, the Exmoor Expedition Network Area is considered most suitable for Bronze and Silver levels of the award because the 'wild-country' area is quite limited to accommodate a 4 day expedition. However the suitability really depends on the group's abilities and whether a route is considered by the Supervisor and LO to be appropriately challenging.

We are able to assess Bronze, Silver expeditions whether the expeditions are on foot, by horse or mountain biking.

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.

Groups requiring Network Assessor

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 are submitted at least 6 weeks prior to the expedition (please feel free to send them in as early as possible, some groups send them in 5 or 6 months in advance!)
- the EAV (Expedition Assessment Voucher) code is included on the initial notification form
- the group arrives early in the area allowing time for acclimatisation, familiarisation and the pre-expedition check.

Once the Assessor has been allocated then the routes and route cards, equipment lists, menus etc should be forwarded direct to the Assessor.

Notification only groups

Groups who are coming to Exmoor practice expeditions or are bringing their own assessors should submit a copies of their route and the notification form at least 4 weeks prior to the expedition. Groups will receive an expedition number from us.

Horse riding expeditions

The Exmoor Area provides wonderful opportunities for horse expeditions, the terrain is an exciting mix of quiet, traffic-free minor roads and many bridleways. Equestrians are able to mount challenging expeditions, far removed from simple rides.

The facilities are ideal in this horse friendly area and offers support by way of stabling and blacksmiths. In all cases routes are undulating and strenuous, demanding physical fitness and plenty of riding preparation.

It is also essential that riders in such lonely areas should be practically experienced and capable of coping with any problems using their own knowledge and must carry necessary equipment for most incidents.

Cycling expeditions

The Exmoor Area provides wonderful opportunities for cycle expeditions, the terrain is an exciting mix of quiet, traffic-free minor roads and many off-road tracks. Cyclists are able to mount challenging expeditions, far removed from simple touring.

The facilities are ready made for modern mountain bikes, but routes are negotiable on well maintained road - bikes with experienced riders. In all cases routes are undulating and strenuous, demanding physical fitness and plenty of riding preparation.

It is also essential that riders in such lonely areas should be practically experienced and capable of tackling most mechanical problems from their own skill and stock of spares and tools. There are, of course, very occasional garages/workshops in the area.

Cross-country cycling requires careful adherence to the 'Mountain Bike Code of Conduct' and a useful publication is *Cycling Off Road and the La* by Neil Horton, which is available from C.T.C. Shop, 89 Meadow, Godalming, GUY 3H8.

Ideas for Expedition aims

This is a list of possible aims, which may be considerably extended:

- Antiquities
- Bridges
- Craft
- Gates and Stiles
- Height & Vegetation
- Land Utilisation
- Literature
- Moorland Life
- Psychology of members of the Group
- Sketches of the area
- Reservoirs
- Villages
- Wildlife
- Impact of expeditioning on the body
- Weather forecasts & their accuracy
- Reactions made under stress & not under stress
- Ancient Sites
- Churches
- Dry Stone Walling
- Geology
- Industrial Archaeology
- Leats
- Medieval Crosses
- Music
- Traces of Social & Economic History
- Rivers
- Waymarks
- Woodland
- Art
- Conservation
- Flora and Fauna
- Habitats
- Land Formation
- Leisure & Tourism
- Mines
- Photographic Record
- River Studies
- Settlements
- Weather

DofE resources

The current DofE expedition kit list can be downloaded from: 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

Further information of the Expedition section can be found at: www.DofE.org/expedition

Vouchers for network assessors need to be bought from the DofE Essentials shop accessed through eDofE.