

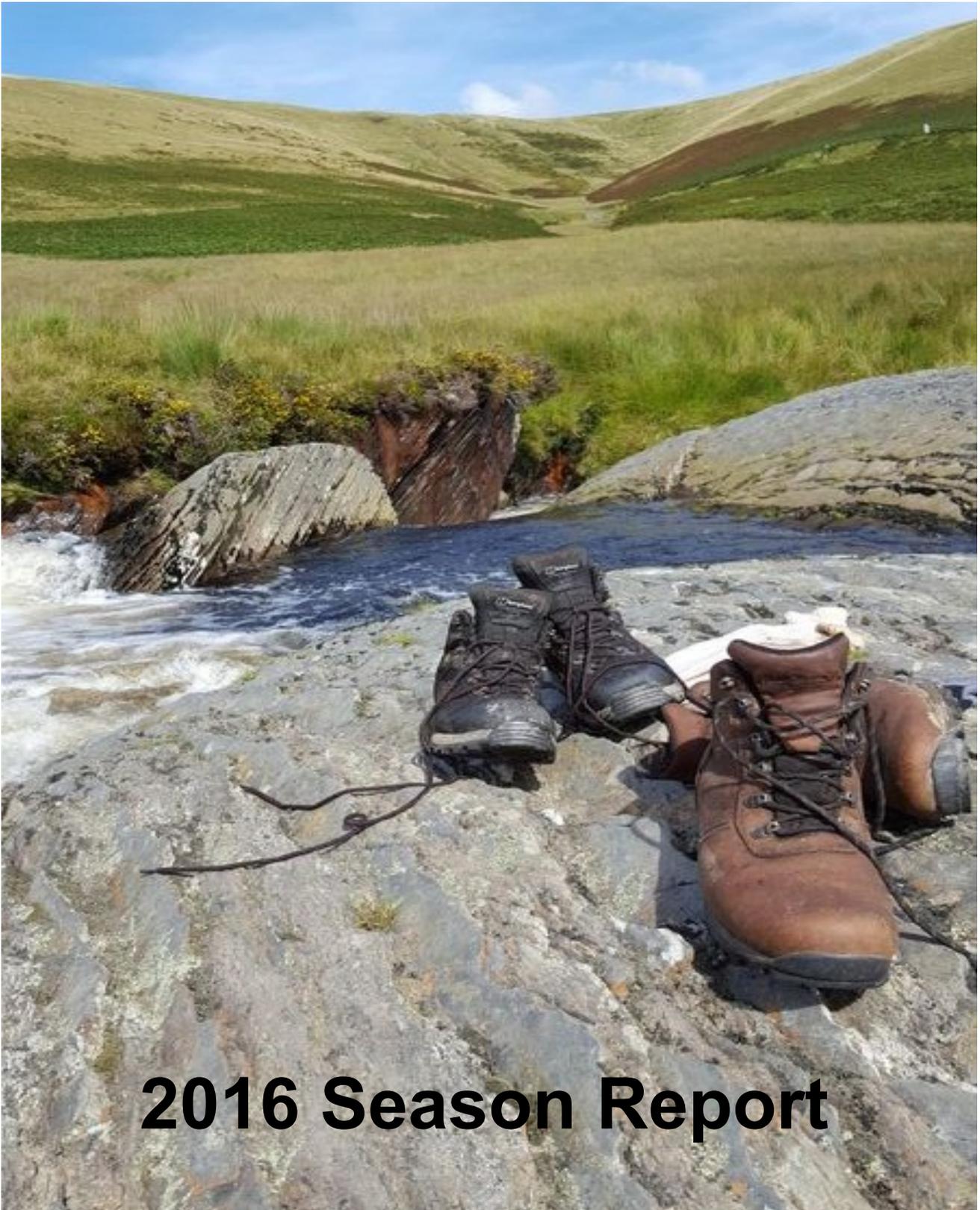


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WALES

EXPEDITION NETWORK



2016 Season Report

Snapshot of the season

- 3,225 groups went on wild country expeditions this year in Wales!
- Groups spent over 8,000 nights under canvas!
- Over 92,000 hours of walking on the hills!



A big thank you to the **thousands** of DofE Leaders and Assessors, giving up their time, and making it all possible!

Also a big thanks to landowners for their support!

Statistics

TEAMS	BRONZE	SILVER	GOLD
Number of qualifying expeditions received and assessed	0	5	140
Number of qualifying expeditions received and NOT Assessed by Network members	106	359	1069
Number of practice expeditions notified	96	246	1203
Total notifications received (including Practice Journeys)	202	610	2413

July was the record month with 1091 groups going out over the month!

AREAS OF EXPEDITIONS	TOTAL
Snowdonia	1347
Mid Wales	251
Brecon Beacons	1627





MODE OF TRANSPORT	TOTAL
Foot	3200
Cycling	11
Canoe	9
Horseback	4
Sailing	1

350 expeditions were delivered by AAP's



Number of Assessors in the Wales Network	180
Number of expeditions assessed by the Network this season	145
Number of Assessors who were able to assess for the Network in 2016	40
Total assessments reached by one individual assessor this year	15

We have received a very small number of complaints and issues this year, the small number we have received relate to the usual areas; litter, gates left open, groups going off the paths across private land, going through harvest crop fields.

We would like to reduce these issues again next season and encourage groups to follow these basic principles:

Respect the interests of other people: Acting with courtesy, consideration and awareness is very important. Respect the privacy, safety and livelihoods of those living or working in the outdoors, and the needs of other people enjoying the outdoors.

Care for the environment: Look after the places you visit and enjoy, and leave the land as you find it.

Campsite Information

Over the winter, we will be writing to all of the campsites currently on our lists to ensure we have the correct details on file. We have also been advised of some new campsites to add to our lists for next season. Here are some updates we have been made aware of by assessors:

Wild Camp Llynau Diwaunydd (Grid Reference SH687536), the landowner is no longer giving permission for groups to camp on his land.

Llyn Dulyn Wild camp (Grid reference 704664) is now very popular and has been very busy/full on occasions over the season. However we have had confirmation from Snowdonia National Park that there is other suitable land nearby which is available for groups to use if this causes problems.

We have been advised that **Bryn Hall** site is no longer suitable for DofE groups.

Private Land:

Kings Youth Hostel, this is private land which is being used as a base for DofE groups. As they have limited parking they are requesting that groups avoid using it as a meeting Point/Car Park and we request that groups who are undertaking their DofE kindly cooperate.

Dragons Back Pub, Pengenffordd, currently have an honesty box parking facility on site, they charge £2 per vehicle, proceeds from this are given to local charities. The car park is currently being used by a large number of DofE groups who are not contributing, despite several signs on site. Again we would request that groups who are undertaking their DofE kindly cooperate.

Blaen y Cwm Isaf Farm, Cwmdu (grid reference SO168250).

There was an incident this season where a minibus knocked down the landowners wall, again as a result of minibuses using this as a turning/meeting point. The damage matter has been resolved and the driver has taken full responsibility however we request that DofE groups avoid using this site in future.

Access:

We have received very few access issues this season, the main issue being in the Rhyd Ddu area, you can find a link to the Snowdonia National page on our website, where you can find further information.

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If you are advised of any issues please remember to let us know so that we can spread the word.

Coming up:

Over the winter Head Office will be introducing a new Assessor database and our Assessors will automatically be transferred over to this in 2017. In preparation for this transition, Head Office have asked us to carry out a full audit of assessors as there are a large number who have now become inactive.

To assist with this process, if you have been unable to assess for the network for the past 2 years, but still wish to continue, please could you confirm this in writing to: walesexped@dofe.org.

We will also be looking at all the re-accreditations due up to and including the 2017 season and will be contacting Assessors with the aim to get all the records up to date and completed before the season commences, as workload will not give us the opportunity to complete this throughout the season.

Some assessors have found it useful to attend a refresher course.

There is an open invite to all network assessors to attend our next

Assessor Training Course, free of charge,

on 18th January 2017, at Plas Y Brennin

or

15th February 2017 at Christ College, Brecon

If you would also like to take up this opportunity please contact:

Rhian.McDonough@DofE.org

Ideas for next season:

We are going paper free! The majority of green forms are received by email however we do still receive a number in hard copy. We are gradually moving forward to an on-line notification system therefore for the 2017 season, green forms will only be accepted in electronic format. We require the green form and a map of the route, either as a scanned pdf or an online mapping attachment. We only require route cards for expeditions being assessed by the network.

Following requests we also plan to produce a more defined network area map possibly highlighting popular campsites across the network which would be useful to new groups, this will then be uploaded with links to our website.

In 2017 the Wales Expedition Network will have a direct telephone line: 01874 615383. An answerphone facility will be available on the days that the administrator is not in the office. The administrator will continue with the part time hours of Monday/Wednesday/Friday, 9.00-5.00pm.

We are extremely grateful for the support of our Assessors. In 2017, we will be introducing a post expedition email checklist, which will be distributed direct to Assessors following expeditions. This will be an opportunity for Assessors to feedback any concerns or success stories to the Wales office which will conclude the Assessor process.

Photographs courtesy of Expeditions Wales.

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Not only did a group from Millfield School complete their expedition they also rescued a dog on their journey, we thought we would share this with you....

A Doggie Story A Random Act of Kindness

Recently 4 boys from Millfield School came across a dog whilst on their Silver DofE (assessed) expedition. She was just waiting patiently and it turned out her name was Bella. Phoning the number on her collar they were told she had been missing for 2 days and her owners really wanted to be re-united with her.

Tom and Will went back down the mountain to Danywenallt Dam with the dog, whilst James and Ryan waited with the rucksacks. Once the happy owners and Bella were together again the team continued on their way. Now 2 hours behind schedule they adjusted their pace and route accordingly.

After a good nights sleep the group decided that as it was such a nice morning and, as they had not been to the top of Pen-y-Fan, due to the activities of the previous day, they would add that to their route for the day. After an additional 10 kms and 636 metres of ascent and descent they arrived back at their start point to begin their journey for the day!

The team arrived in camp at 8pm a little tired but happy. Having cooked, eaten and erected their tents they were soon in their sleeping bags and pushing out the zzz's. So ended day 2.

James Chattock



We would love to hear of any other positive stories, please share them with us at:

walesexpeds@dofe.org.