



The Duke of Edinburgh's Award

# Visiting Wales on Expeditions

## Useful information

### Information about the Wild Country Areas:

Bronze and Silver expeditions are mainly outside of the Wild Country Areas. The expectation at Gold level is that most will take place in Wild Country.

In Wales there are three Wild Country Areas, Snowdonia, Mid Wales and the Brecon Beacons.



## Useful contacts

**Brecon Beacons:** Eifion Jones, Rights of Way Officer, Brecon Beacons National Park Authority, Plas y Ffynnon, Cambrian Way, Brecon, Powys LD3 7HP. Tel: 01874 624437.

[eifion.jones@beacons-npa.gov.uk](mailto:eifion.jones@beacons-npa.gov.uk)  
[beacons-npa.gov.uk/environment/planning-access-and-row](https://beacons-npa.gov.uk/environment/planning-access-and-row)

**Snowdonia:** Peter Rutherford, Access Officer at Snowdonia National Park.

[peter.rutherford@eryri.llyw.cymru](mailto:peter.rutherford@eryri.llyw.cymru)  
[snowdonia.gov.wales/looking-after/public-access](https://snowdonia.gov.wales/looking-after/public-access)

You may also find the following contact useful when planning your visit: Elfyn Jones, Access & Conservation Officer Wales at British Mountaineering Council. [elfyn@thebmc.co.uk](mailto:elfyn@thebmc.co.uk)  
[thebmc.co.uk](https://thebmc.co.uk).



# Mid Wales

The main Wild Country expedition areas within Mid Wales are:

## The Pumlumon (or Plynlimon) hills and surrounding area

Featuring the highest peak in the Cambrian Mountains, the Pumlumon (meaning five peaks) area, is full of remote, challenging terrain, offering stunning remote routes and a true navigational challenge.

To the West is the popular Nant yr Arian Mountain Biking Centre, while to the North East, Glaslyn lake is a spectacular spot for bird life, situated on the Glyndwr way, whilst the Nant y Moch reservoir, which forms a centre point of the expedition area is fed by a number of valleys.

Within short walking distance of the peak at 752 metres of Pumlumon are both the sources of the Rivers Wye and Severn (or Gwy and Hafren), which both lead to their own long distance walks, adding to the route possibilities in the area.

## Elan Valley

Possibly the most heavily protected area of special interest and natural beauty outside of a National Park. The Elan Valley area is part of the Elan Valley estate, comprising of the reservoirs and water sources that supply to the Midlands. The estate is rich in wildlife, peat

bogs, bird life and is one of the most untouched and unchanged areas in the whole of Wales. Numerous routes in and around the area are possible, all offering remote, peaceful expedition experiences and a navigational challenge which will leave participants with a very strong sense of achievement.

The support of the Elan Valley estate allows access to a number of farm and wild camping sites, all well away from anything resembling a crowd. At the south western end is an area of lakes known as Llynoedd Teifi or Teifi Pools, which lead to the Cistercian abbey ruins of Strata Florida.

## Llyn Brianne/Llanwrtyd / Abergwesyn

This area is very popular, offering a mixture of remote valley routes, wild country navigation, forestry and yet again, peace.

## Devils Bridge and Cwmystwyth

Tucked between the Pumlumon hills and the Elan Valley estate, this area comprises two recreational forestry areas, a stunning valley full of old mine works and one of the UK's tallest wind farms. Centred on the popular tourist destination of Devils Bridge this area also provides linking routes between Pumlumon and the Elan Valley and vice versa.



# Snowdonia

The Snowdonia National Park which outlines the Wild Country Area 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 Welsh is the first language 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.

The area defined as Wild Country generally includes Cadair Idris and Rhinogs to the South, Snowdon, Glyderau, Carneddau and Moelwyns to the North and the Berwyns to the East.



# The 20 Conditions of the Expedition section

DofE qualifying expedition conditions		
Planning the expedition	1	The team must plan and organise the expedition; all members of the team should be able to describe the role they have played in planning.
	2	The expedition must have an aim. The aim can be set by the Leader at Bronze level only.
	3	All participants must be within the qualifying age of the programme level and at the same Award level (i.e. not have completed the same or higher level of expedition).
	4	There must be between four and seven participants in a team (eight for modes of travel which have tandem)
	5	The expedition should take place in the recommended environment. <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 5px; width: 30%;"> <b>Bronze:</b> Expeditions should be in normal rural countryside – familiar and local to groups.         </div> <div style="border: 1px solid grey; padding: 5px; width: 30%;"> <b>Silver:</b> Expeditions should be in normal rural, open countryside or forest – unfamiliar to groups.         </div> <div style="border: 1px solid orange; padding: 5px; width: 30%;"> <b>Gold:</b> Expeditions should be in wild country (remote from habitation) which is unfamiliar to groups.         </div> </div>
	6	Accommodation must be by camping or other simple self-catering accommodation (e.g. camping barns or bunkhouses).
	7	The expedition must be of the correct duration and meet the minimum hours of planned activity. <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 5px; width: 30%;"> <b>Bronze:</b> A minimum of 2 days, 1 night; 6 hours planned activity each day.         </div> <div style="border: 1px solid grey; padding: 5px; width: 30%;"> <b>Silver:</b> A minimum of 3 days, 2 nights; 7 hours planned activity each day.         </div> <div style="border: 1px solid orange; padding: 5px; width: 30%;"> <b>Gold:</b> A minimum of 4 days, 3 nights; 8 hours planned activity each day.         </div> </div>
	8	All expeditions must be supervised by an adult (the Expedition Supervisor) who is able to accept responsibility for the safety of the team.
	9	Assessment must be by an accredited Assessor. At Bronze level only, the Assessor may also be the Expedition Supervisor.
	10	Expeditions will usually take place between the end of March and the end of October. They may take place outside this period, if so, non-camping accommodation options should be considered.
Training and practice	11	Participants must be adequately trained to safely undertake a remotely supervised expedition in the environment in which they will be operating. <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 5px; width: 30%;"> <b>Bronze:</b> Teams must complete the required training.         </div> <div style="border: 1px solid grey; padding: 5px; width: 30%;"> <b>Silver:</b> Teams must complete the required training and a practice expedition of a minimum 2 days, 2 nights.         </div> <div style="border: 1px solid orange; padding: 5px; width: 30%;"> <b>Gold:</b> Teams must complete the required training and a practice expedition of a minimum 2 days, 2 nights         </div> </div>
During the expedition	12	All expeditions must be by the participants' own physical effort, without motorised or outside assistance. Mobility aids may be used where appropriate to the needs of the participant.
	13	All expeditions must be unaccompanied and self-sufficient. The team must be properly equipped, and supervision must be carried out remotely.
	14	Teams must possess the necessary physical fitness, first aid and expedition skills required to complete their expedition safely.
	15	Groups must adhere to a mobile phone use policy as agreed with their Expedition Supervisor and Assessor. This agreement should also include use of other electronic equipment.
	16	Participants must behave responsibly with respect for their team members, Leaders, the public and animals.
	17	Groups must understand and adhere to the Countryside /Scottish Outdoor Access, Highway and Water Sports Codes (as appropriate).
	18	Participants must plan an appropriate expedition menu, including cooking and eating a substantial hot meal on each day. This is optional on the final day.
	Post expedition	19
20		At Silver and Gold level, a presentation must be prepared and delivered after the expedition.

# Leave no trace

Please 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.



**Respect.  
Protect.  
Enjoy.**

## Closing gates

When passing over farmland, please ensure all gates are left as they are found. As a group, please communicate to the last person in the group whether the gate was found open or closed.

Ideally the person who opens the gate should wait for the whole group to pass through and shut it behind them. This way it not only ensures animals do not stray, but it keeps you together as a group.

To find out more about how you can protect the countryside, visit [DofE.org/country](http://DofE.org/country).



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## Don't leave litter behind

We all have a responsibility to protect the countryside, for other users and for future generations.

Dropping litter can quickly spoil a lovely view and can be harmful to wildlife. It's easy to help keep the countryside tidy for everyone.

If you can't find a bin, take your litter home with you and dispose of it there.

To find out more about how you can protect the countryside, visit [DofE.org/country](http://DofE.org/country).





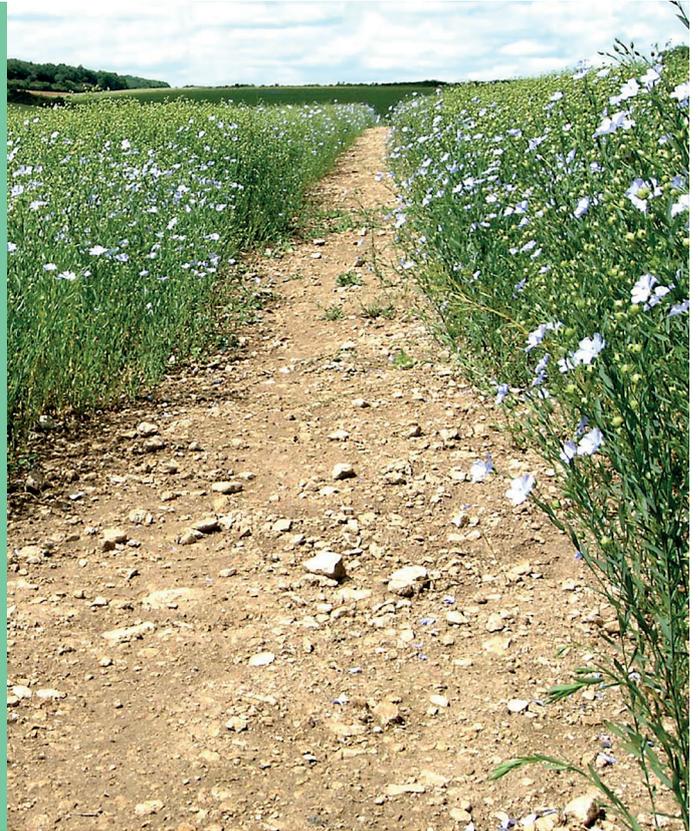
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## Stick to pathways

We are lucky to have free access to routes across farmland throughout the UK. Straying from official paths in these areas can damage the crops that farmers depend on for their living.

Damaging crops costs farmers money and threatens the access to the countryside that many people enjoy. Respect the farmers who allow you onto their land – and stick to the paths provided.

To find out more about how you can protect the countryside, visit [DofE.org/country](https://DofE.org/country).



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## Respect livestock

Large farm animals can be daunting, but they are likely to be just as scared of you as you are of them! Keep to paths and pass animals calmly and quietly to avoid disturbing them – and please do not feed them.

You can also help to keep valuable animals, such as sheep and cows, safe by remembering to leave gates as you find them; leaving a gate open if it was shut could let animals stray onto roads.

To find out more about how you can protect the countryside, visit: [DofE.org/country](https://DofE.org/country).



## Camping/wild camping

Please note that Supervisors/Leaders/groups are responsible for gaining permission to use camp sites.

Please respect all camp sites and other users of the camp sites. Some of the camp sites request that groups are supervised overnight by a responsible adult.

For a current campsite list see the website.

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

The British Mountaineering Council BMC has produced good practical advice for walkers, climbers and mountaineers in the upland environment, highlighting specific wild camping issues. Visit: [thebmc.co.uk/greenguides](http://thebmc.co.uk/greenguides).

## Lyme disease

Lyme Disease is a bacterial infection that is spread to humans by infected ticks, these are commonly found in woodland and heathland areas which groups regularly use.

For more information visit: [nhs.uk/Conditions/Lyme-disease/Pages/Introduction.aspx](http://nhs.uk/Conditions/Lyme-disease/Pages/Introduction.aspx).

## Grass fires

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. Please ensure that groups are trained in case they come across any grass fires.

## The weather/season

The weather in Wales can be quite challenging at times. Check out the latest weather forecast here:

[metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather/mountain-forecasts](http://metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather/mountain-forecasts).

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