

UK Youth Ambassadors

HIGHLIGHTS OF YEAR 1



**YOUTH
WITHOUT
LIMITS**

April 2021 - March 2022

SECTION 1 Youth Ambassadors

As part of our Youth Without Limits strategy, we created our first ever panel of DofE Youth Ambassadors. A group of 24 DofE Award holders from across the UK, the Youth Ambassadors have a diverse range of experiences and backgrounds but share a passion for ensuring youth voice is heard.



Meet the first DofE Youth Ambassadors



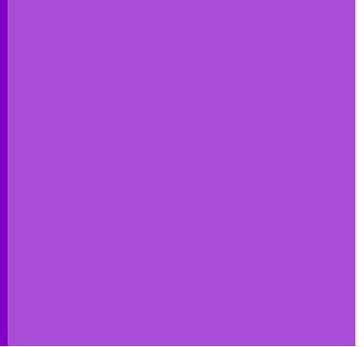
Alice



Amy



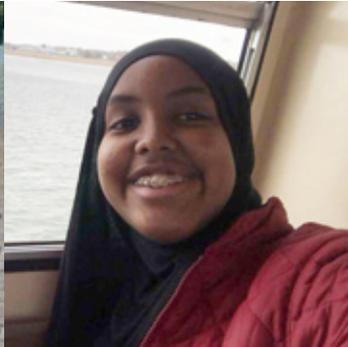
Freddie



Anna



Felix



Hana



Jack



James



Josie



Kayleigh



Lacey



Lola



Before joining the Youth Ambassador programme in April 2021, none of the Ambassadors knew each other. Since then, they have developed a strong team dynamic through workshops, events, working groups and creative tasks throughout the year.



Max



Jessy



Anna



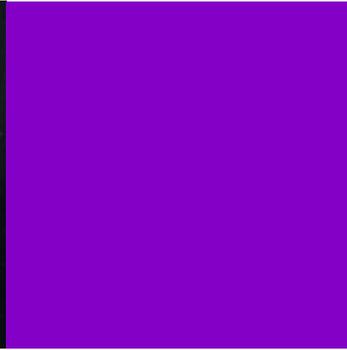
Erin



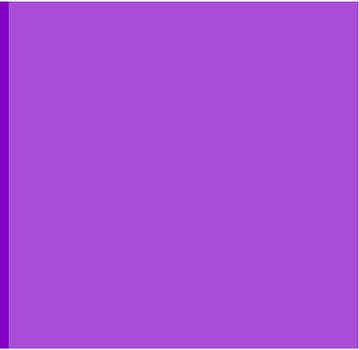
Lowri



Megan



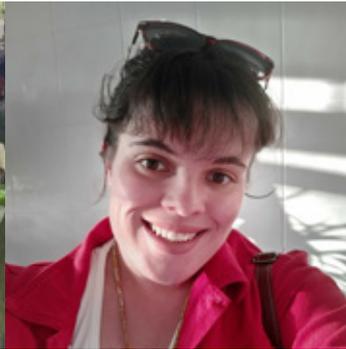
Mohammed



Oliver



Sian



Sophie



Zaynah



Why have Youth Ambassadors?

- To inform key DofE decisions
- To ensure youth voice is heard
- To represent the voices of a diverse range of young people across the UK
- To shape the future of the DofE

As part of their application to become a Youth Ambassador, they shared:

- Their DofE journeys
- The impact they want to make
- Why they're passionate about the role

Throughout the programme we have supported the Ambassadors to develop both their confidence and the skills they need to speak out on issues that matter to them, with DofE as a platform to amplify their views and support them as they move into adulthood.

SECTION 2 Highlights

Over the course of the past 10 months, the Ambassadors have gone above and beyond with their positive attitude, enthusiasm and contribution to the DofE. Here are some of the highlights from the programme...



Our Future Unlimited: A Youth Manifesto for Covid Recovery

One of the first projects the Ambassadors were involved in was a Youth Manifesto, launched as part of the celebrations of what would have been HRH The Duke of Edinburgh's centenary.

It's time to listen to young people. Really listen. As decisions are being made about the Covid recovery that will define all of our futures, it's time to consider what the next generation needs and wants most.

To start the conversation, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) collaborated with young people to develop policy ideas that could help them live without limits as we recover from the pandemic and asked 2,000+ young people to vote on these changes.

The results have become 'Our Future, Unlimited: A Youth Manifesto for the Covid Recovery'.



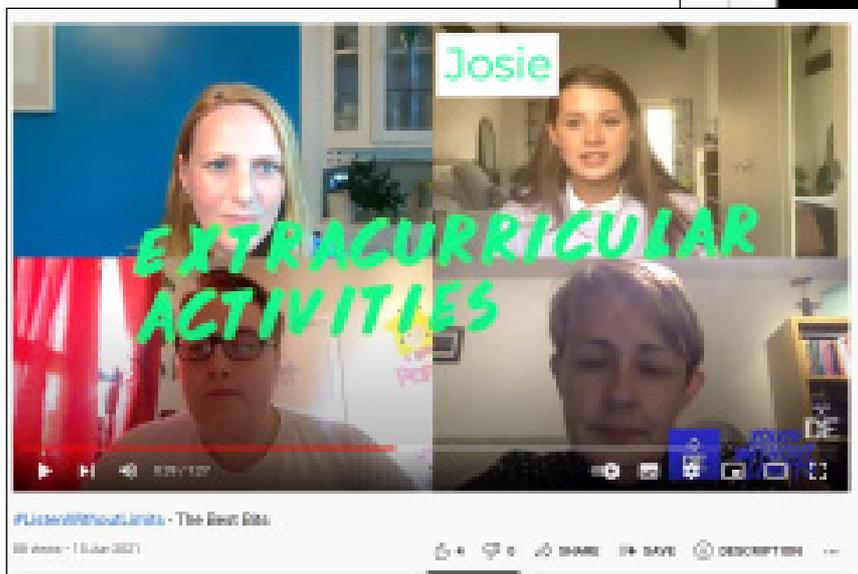
"I have enjoyed being an advocate for people with disabilities, showing that they have a voice and that their opinion matters just as much as everyone else."

Between April & June, Ambassadors attended workshops exploring the findings of the research, discussing the key outcomes, and voicing their opinions on what mattered most to them. In June, they came together to launch 'Our Future, Unlimited: A Youth Manifesto for the Covid Recovery', ensuring they, as young people, felt represented and able to make the changes that they want to see as we recover from the pandemic. Several Ambassadors featured in the launch video to raise awareness of the Manifesto.

#ListenWithoutLimits

Following the launch of the Manifesto, Ambassadors took part in #ListenWithoutLimits conversations with leading figures such as Chris Packham, Harriet Harman, and DofE Chair Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson, to discuss the issues that matter to them, including:

- Disability & Representation
- Mental Health & Wellbeing
- Environment & Climate Change
- Employment & Training
- Politics
- Social justice & Inequality



In the run up to the conversations, which were recorded and shared on social media, Ambassadors received media training to ensure they felt confident when voicing their opinions.

Media coverage around the Manifesto

As part of the Manifesto launch, Youth Ambassador Anna featured in an iNews article highlighting the challenges young people have faced during Covid and the importance, now more than ever, that young people are listened to moving forwards.

To create a Covid recovery plan that works for young people, start by listening to us

It is time for the generations above us to listen – really listen – to what we most need, writes Anna, aged 17

 By i Team

June 7, 2020 12:04 am

If you'd told me that in 2020 that I'd have stopped going to school in March, would not see my friends for months and that going out most evenings would be a thing of the past, I'd have thought you were joking.

The huge, **disproportionate impact of the pandemic on young people** has forced the political spotlight onto us. As the UK unlocks, public debate is increasingly considering how politicians and business leaders can help us to catch up on our studies, and **tackle**



SECTION 3 Sharing their stories

Over the past 10 months, Youth Ambassadors shared their personal stories as part of DofE events and campaigns. We're incredibly grateful to everyone who is willing to share their story publicly to highlight young people's experiences and the impact of the DofE on their lives.



Telegraph Christmas Appeal

In 2021, the DofE was chosen as one of the charities to benefit from The Telegraph's Christmas Appeal. As part of this campaign, we had the opportunity to share young people's stories; Youth Ambassador Erin was one of the young people who got involved.

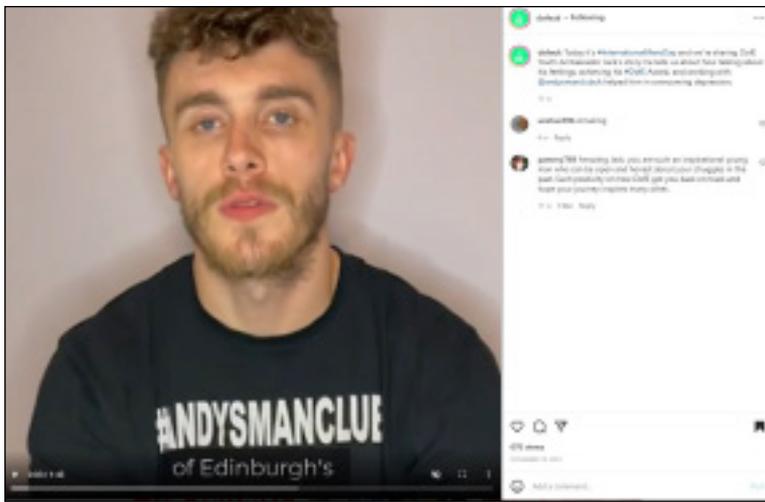
Featuring in an article on 6 November with three other young people, Erin talked about how doing her DofE helped her during lockdown when she had lost her drive and motivation. In the article, Erin described how her experience with the Ambassador programme brought her out of her shell and comfort zone, helping her rediscover her purpose.



**“I’ve worked on our Youth Manifesto; I’m doing the COP26 social media takeover; I’m doing as much as possible.”
(Erin, 18)**

Mental Health Awareness

On International Men's Day (19 November), Youth Ambassador Jack shared his mental health journey to raise awareness of the challenges young men face in society. Passionate about mental health, Jack emphasised that it's important to talk and help is out there if you need it. This was published on our social media channels and shared by mental health organisation Andy's Man Club reaching thousands of people.



Speaking at Parliament

We held an event at Parliament, showcasing the power and impact of DofE to politicians. Youth Ambassador Sian presented at the event, talking about her DofE journey, the impact the Award has had on her, and how it has shaped her to get to where she is today.



“I’ve been really proud of myself when presenting because I wasn’t very confident about doing it but I still did it with my team and started overcoming my fears!”



SECTION 4 Workshops and Speakers

We hosted two workshops and heard from inspirational speakers on topics that were important to them.



Climate and COP26



Climate change is of huge importance to young people, and our Youth Ambassadors are no different. With COP26 being held in Glasgow in 2021, there was additional interest in this topic.

In July, Ambassadors took part in two interactive virtual workshops on climate change and COP26. These included presentations from Joycelyn Longdon (Climate in Colour) and Kate Eastmond (CAFOD, part of the Climate Coalition).



Following the workshops, Ambassadors worked in sub-groups to develop ideas for environmentally focused sectional activities participants could do, and presented them to the DofE Communications team. This developed into a social media takeover #COPTOBER, where Ambassadors shared content to raise awareness of COP26 and influence positive change amongst DofE participants.

Employability

In November, we hosted two employability workshops with external speakers from Balfour Beatty, youth engagement organisation Livity, and Let's Talk Jobs. On the back of these, Ambassadors created blogs talking about their work experience, the skills they developed through DofE, and top tips for young people on the transition into employment and further education. These were published on the DofE website and shared with current participants.



Ashley Manson

Technical Engineer &
Gold Award Holder,
Balfour Beatty



Nina Wallooppillai

Programme &
Engagement Lead, Livity



Francis Arenno

Founder, Let's Talk Jobs

Change and Personal Resilience

The year was rounded off in style with an inspiration session by Alex Staniforth, a record-breaking adventurer, ultra-endurance athlete, international motivational speaker, author and mental health activist – at just 25 years old. Alex focused on the theme of managing change and building personal resilience.



Each Ambassador who attended also received a personally signed copy of Alex's latest book, Icefall.

SECTION 5 Supporting DofE Projects and Events

Ambassadors made a huge impact on the DofE through their contribution to a variety of DofE projects across the year.



Recruiting Participants

Throughout July and August, a group of Ambassadors worked with the Communications team and consultants to give feedback on the charity's current promotional content, share their opinions on how it could be improved, and help shape new recruitment resources. A major focus was looking at how more young people from diverse backgrounds could be engaged.



Lowri

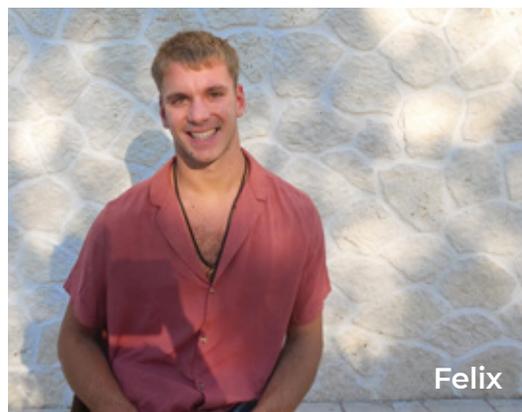


Hana

The resources were launched to the DofE network in September, including a new Welcome Film featuring Youth Ambassadors Felix, Lowri, Hana and Kayleigh.



Kayleigh



Felix

Expeditions with a Difference and Meaningful Volunteering

Ambassadors have contributed to major internal projects focusing on long-term plans for the Expedition and Volunteering sections; they took part in sessions reviewing these sections, shared their own experiences and any barriers they faced, and gave ideas about how these sections can be adapted to be more accessible for all participants.



“I have loved being able to share my ideas that will improve the Award for future participants

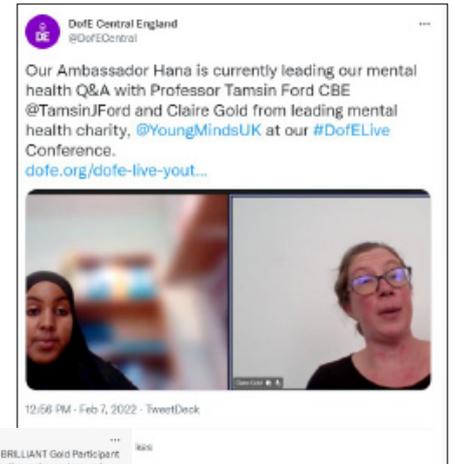


Speaking at Events

Several Ambassadors have supported the DofE at a variety of internal and external events, representing the views of young people and sharing their stories. The Ambassadors who spoke received incredibly positive responses from attendees.

The events they spoke at include:

- An all-staff DofE Town Hall event
- Regional conferences
- SEND training sessions
- An event hosted by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport



A Service of Thanksgiving for the life of His Royal Highness The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh took place on Tuesday 29th March. As part of this event Felix, Jack and Josie represented the DofE as step liners, welcoming guests as they arrived at Westminster Abbey. They also took part in several media opportunities throughout the day, to reflect on the positive impact the DofE Award has had on them.

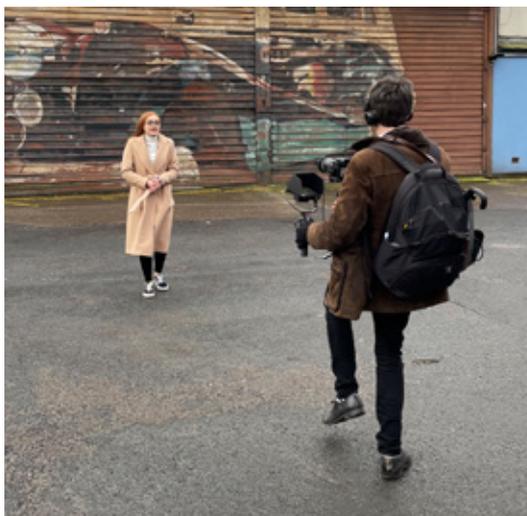


Spoken Word Film

The final project for this cohort of Ambassadors was a spoken word film, where they collaborated with experts to create a script highlighting their key achievements from the past year and to inspire young people to apply to become Ambassadors in the future.



12 Ambassadors were filmed in locations of their choice across the UK, and also took part in additional filming of their stories to be used in future DofE communications.



SECTION 6 Thank you!

We would like to say an enormous thank you to all of our Youth Ambassadors for their passion, expertise, and hard work put in throughout the first year of the Programme. They have shaped DofE for good.

In March 2022 we held a virtual celebration event to highlight all of the incredible achievements and positive impact they have had in their role. The event premiered the the spoken word film 'This Is Our Voice'. HRH Prince Edward attended as a royal guest on the evening and spoke with several of the Ambassadors. We also welcomed our special celebrity guest Oliver Phelps who shared some insights and thanked our Ambassadors personally for everything they have done.



**YOUTH
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