



DofE Wales Newsletter

September 2022

Welcome to your DofE Wales September Newsletter!

→ We hope that you had a nice summer break and are looking forward to what the new term brings! In this newsletter you will find information on current DofE Wales news and events, as well as training and funding opportunities.



A note from the DofE Wales Director, Steph Price

The opportunities that you are providing for young people to complete their DofE are so valuable, I cannot thank you enough for keeping the DofE going in your centre when things have been so tough for everyone.

We all know how hard this generation has been hit by the pandemic and they have needed all your support to help them through. Thanks to you in the last financial year 10,240 young people got the chance to start a DofE Award – that's 90% of where we were in 2019/20.

It's vital that we continue to give young people all the opportunities they need, and deserve, to bounce back and fulfil their limitless potential. You don't need me to remind you that completing their DofE helps young people build lifelong belief in themselves, supporting them to take on their own challenges, follow their passions, and discover talents they never knew they had.

You will find out a little more about the DofE Wales team in this newsletter and I know how passionate they all are to make sure that you have the best possible support, tools, inspiration and encouragement to continue making a difference to young people's lives.

During my 17 years as Director of the DofE in Wales I have seen many developments but two things have remained constant – the dedication and commitment of our DofE leaders and the positive impact that taking part has on young people's lives.

There are always new things we can learn and things we should be doing better and we would welcome your feedback so if you have something to share, or someone you would like to say a big thank you to, then please follow the link below to have your say. → [Click Here](#)

Steph

A warm welcome from the Wales Team



Welcome to the DofE Wales Team!

Many of you will be in touch with your local operations officer, but you might not know that we are a team of eleven with over 150 years of DofE experience between us! We all share the ultimate goal of supporting our network of leaders and managers, giving more young people the opportunities to experience their own DofE journey.

We thought it would be useful to introduce you to some of the Wales team members, many of which you have probably seen at events, spoken to over the phone, or had an email from in the past.

At the core of DofE Wales we have our Business Support team (BST) which is managed by our Business Support Manager Cath Jeffreys and supported by Rhian McDonough who is our Business Support Assistant. They are on hand to answer your calls and emails that come through and provide support, advice, and direction to the relevant person. The BST also look after our key functions including licencing administration, funding, and payments, as well as other vital tasks to keep us all as efficient as possible.

Directly supporting our licenced organisations we have a team of field based Operations Officers, managed by Operations Manager Hannah Morgan. Each operations officer covers a portfolio of local authorities, if you aren't

sure who your local operations officer is you can find their details below:

- **Kat Long | looking after North Wales & North Powys.**
Kat.Long@DofE.org
- **Jess Rumble | looking after Cardiff, Rhonda Cynon Taf, and the FE colleges.**
Jessica.Rumble@DofE.org
- **Scott Holcombe | looks after Swansea, Neath Port Talbot, Bridgend and the Vale of Glamorgan.**
Scott.Holcombe@DofE.org
- **Mel Johnson | Looks after Monmouthshire, Newport, Torfaen, Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly and Merthyr Tydfil.**
Mel.Johnson@dofe.org
- **Gemma Watts | Who is our newest team member who looks after South Powys, Pembrokeshire, Ceredigion, Carmarthenshire, as well as voluntary & community organisations**
Gemma.Watts@DofE.org

Susan Wildee, Operations Support Officer complements and underpins much of the teams work providing data and managing projects including our ExpedFest.

Finally, Ian Gwilym is our Senior Relationships Manager – basically if you have ever received any funding support from us for your work you can be sure it is down to Ian's skill at bid writing and building positive relationships with our many supporters.

Good Luck!

We're sad to say that we are saying goodbye and a huge 'Pobl Iwc!' to two of our team members, Bev, who is moving to the DofE UK licencing and Grants team and also Lucy who is moving into the DofE UK Communications team. Good luck both!

How your DofE Skill can help your Expedition

Chris from Ysgol Bryn Alyn

When Ysgol Bryn Alyn became a DofE Licenced Centre, Chris (16), was one of the first to sign up to the Bronze Award. Already being keen on woodwork and carpentry, he chose to develop this further and use woodwork for his Bronze and Silver Skill sections.

When they had the chance to complete their Expedition in an open canoe, the DofE team at Ysgol Bryn Alyn spotted an opportunity for Chris to take on an extra challenge and make his own canoe paddle for the Expedition. Having studied and taken measurements from a number of commercially available paddles, Chris set about making his own.



The final product was an excellent showcase of Chris's talent, and even regular paddlers wanted to have a go! Chris completed both his Bronze and Silver Expeditions using his paddle and has just signed up for his Gold Award where he'll be using it again. Well done Chris on your amazing work and good luck on your future paddling adventures!



DofE Pembrokeshire on BBC Countryfile

'DofE really is for everyone' was the main message that Development Officer, Dave Sommerville, wanted to get across in their television appearance.

Several young people from Portfield School, Haverfordwest got the opportunity to showcase their DofE experience on BBC Countryfile.

In the episode, the group are in the community completing their volunteering section. For this, the group set to work clearing a copse filled with dead Ash to make way for new samplings to be planted. The challenge was a 'new adventure' teaching the young people teamwork skills and resilience.

The DofE manager, Clare Sommerville said 'they are still doing the same award as everybody else...And that's what I love about DofE, because you get such a deep relationship with them, and that's why you get so emotional because you're proud of them.'

The group was also joined by Ruth Marvel, CEO for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, who noted how the young people 'grow and develop and shine as a result of the experiences they have on the award'.

The episode is still available on BBC iPlayer [→ Here](#)

Wales Youth Ambassadors



We are on the lookout for more Youth Ambassadors to join our team in Wales - representing the DofE at events, helping inform our decisions and promoting the DofE for future generations.

Our DofE Cymru Youth Ambassador programme – formerly known as Regional Youth Ambassadors – is a chance for young people to go further with their DofE Award. They don't need to be a navigation master, a sporting champion or a local volunteering hero, just willing to share their story and inspire others.

We are looking for young people who are...

- **Aged 16-25**
- **Living in Wales**
- **Have completed at least one level of their DofE Award or are a substantial way through their Gold**
- **Have had a positive experience of the DofE Award and want to share their experiences with others**

Head to dofe.org/join-us for more information on the programme, including how to submit an expression of interest form or nominate a young person. The deadline to submit the form is Sunday 9th October at midnight.



GETTING BACK OUTDOORS



We know that many of you have already been able to make use of the expedition section flexibilities to get your expeditions back underway - if you are not sure how these apply speak to your operations officer or follow the link [here](#).

The countryside was incredibly quiet for the first 12 months of the pandemic but these communities have seen a huge upsurge in visitors and some of these unfortunately haven't always acted as responsibly as they should.

Take some extra time to talk your groups through the countryside code in detail and get them to think about the impact that their actions, whether accidental or deliberate could have on wildlife, local communities and farmers and their livestock.

Farmers and other landowners are generally very pleased to see young people enjoying the countryside and if you know that your routes are going to take them through a lot of agricultural land a quick call to the farmer beforehand can really help. It can be useful to share your plans so that if the farmer is planning on doing a particular activity like harvesting or moving livestock you can discuss what additional advice would be good for your groups.

The countryside is a working environment, and doing an expedition is a great opportunity to help young people with their appreciation and understanding of this as they grow into adults who will hopefully want to continue visiting the outdoors.

The NRW has some great advice on its website [here](#) and Ramblers Cymru has some good advice about walking near livestock available [here](#).

Our local authorities and national parks have also been tackling a backlog of work on maintaining the footpath network so its even more important that you take the time to risk assess your routes and you can find out about access issues and get additional advice from the local authority countryside or national park teams for the area you will be visiting.

If you find a path that's blocked or overgrown its always worth feeding this back to the appropriate organisation so that a review can be carried out. Once again the Ramblers Website has useful information regarding this. <https://www.ramblers.org.uk/advice/pathwatch-report-path-features-and-problems.aspx>

We looking forward to hearing about all of the successful expeditions that are taking place so please tag us if you are tweeting using @DofEWales.

ExpedFest Feb 2023

We are excited to announce that after a three year break, ExpedFest is back!

ExpedFest is our annual training event where leaders come from across Wales to learn new outdoor/ expedition skills (if you are new to DofE) or undertake the Lowland Leaders Training/ Assessment course. We base ourselves at Plas-y-Brenin, the National Mountain Centre, in the heart of the Snowdonia national park. Food, accommodation, and tuition is all included in the cost which is heavily subsidised thanks to our financial supporters.

ExpedFest is also a great event to meet and share ideas with other DofE leaders from across Wales in the on-site bar each evening.

Hold the date!

Arrival - Friday 17th February (After 5pm)

Day 1 - Saturday 18th February

Day 2 - Sunday 19th February

(Finishing around 4:30/5.00pm)

Bookings are taken on a first come first served basis, and more details will be sent out towards the end of September. If you are interested in you or your team members attending ExpedFest, have a conversation with your operations officer NOW to give them a heads up, once advertised places fill very quickly!



eDofE Mapping Changes

You may have noticed that eDofE mapping has changed a little over the last few months, the existing eDofE mapping was quite dated and was no longer fully supported as a product due to the advances in mapping software.

We now offer a free mapping integration with eDofE which makes use of Ordnance Surveys standard mapping platform.

You can find 'how to' instructions on how to use the new system [here](#). However, if you need further training or support on eDofE mapping you can contact your operations officer who will be more than happy to help you, or your team navigate your way through the ins and outs of the new mapping system.

Getting Participants Logged On

It is really good practice to get your young people logged onto their eDofE accounts as soon as possible and we've set ourselves the ambition of helping you to achieve this within 30 days of their accounts being registered:

Why is this so important?

- Young people don't receive a welcome pack until they have logged onto eDofE, which means that they are missing out on lots of information and inspiration to get them motivated
- The welcome pack also contains lots of information for parents which can help them to understand what support they can give to help their young person be really successful.

- It contains the assessor cards they can use when they have completed a section.
- It contains their DofE discount card which they can use to purchase personal equipment ready for training and expedition
- Having your participants logged in means you can better track their progress and make sure they have made appropriate choices for their sections.

Your Operations Officer will be very happy to come and talk you through the best ways to support and motivate your young people to log in, remember participants can log on using the app or through the website.

Funding Opportunities

There are several funding opportunities available for DofE centres supporting marginalised young people in Wales, if you are one of these centres speak to your operations officer to explore what funding you may be eligible for. We can usually support with staff training costs, kit and equipment costs, and we're always keen to hear your ideas on a funded project to develop the DofE in your organisation.

Please also see the below funding opportunities specifically aimed at young people.

Youth Cymru | Inspire Fund

Do you or your young people have an idea for a community event? If so Youth Cymru have a great opportunity called Inspire 2022, the project should be young person led, with projects being based around young people designing positive activities for their own communities, bridging community divides, and giving young people a voice in a year of national celebration.

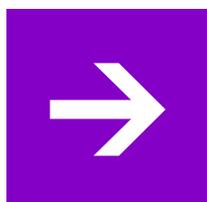
The Cam and Bear Fund for Adventure

Do you have young people in your group who are struggling to start or complete their Duke of Edinburgh's Award because of financial difficulties? Would a grant of up to £500 help?

They may be able to get help from the Cam and Bear Fund for Adventure.

Set up in memory of the late Andrew Foster, the fund aims to provide marginalised and disadvantaged young people with opportunities to experience the types of outdoor activities that he loved, helping them to grow and develop whilst learning the importance of protecting our outdoor environment.

Recognising Achievement



We'd love to hear your views on the DofE Certificate of Achievement and sectional certificates. Below is a link to a short survey (it won't take more than 5 mins) and the aim is to find out more about how you use and value certificates that are additional to the full DofE Award. Your feedback will help us to shape how we recognise participants' achievements in the future.

<https://forms.office.com/r/cePeQSf9Yx>

We'd also like to have the views of your participants, please ask them to complete the survey on eDofE, or share this link with them: <https://forms.office.com/r/bKjXsHKD3V>.

Thanks for your help!

Parents & Carers Information Sessions

We will be hosting our virtual information sessions for parents and carers of DofE participants again this term. If you're not familiar with these, they are designed to help parents/carers understand more about DofE and how they can best support their young person with their DofE programme. The sessions are aimed at parents/carers whose young person is starting – or considering starting – a DofE Award.

Parents and carers can choose between an English session (11th October) or a Welsh session (12th October). The sessions are delivered on Teams Live - no booking is required.

Please find attached a flyer that you can share with the relevant parents/carers. It contains all the information they will need about the sessions, including the links to join the session of their choice.

DofE Leader Training

Now is a great time to be thinking about your DofE team and what additional training they might like to take on. You may also need to consider whether or not you will need to recruit some new staff members to help this year and its always a good idea to be on the lookout for new people who can bring new skills and ideas to your team.

We are always happy to help with recruiting new DofE Leader sand other volunteers , this can range from 1-2-1 training with an operations officer on eDofE, to our DofE Training courses, or helping to facilitate external National Governing Body (NGB) training and assessments like First Aid, and Mountain Training qualifications. Please get in touch to discuss your own and your teams training needs with your operations officer.

Upcoming Wales DofE Training Courses

- **Introduction to the DofE**
[IttDofE016652 | 20/09/2022](#)
[IttDofE016677 | 27/09/2022 \(Welsh Language\)](#)
[IttDofE017306 | 19/01/2023](#)
- **Expedition Assessor & Supervisor Training Course**
[EASTC016655 | 28/09/2022 & 10/10/2022](#)
[EASTC017304 | 25/01/2023 & 01/02/2023](#)

Need a different date?

All DofE training is run virtually, you can find more dates available from other regions, and the UK Training Team on the DofE Opportunity Finder

[→ Here](#)

DofE Resources

Looking for resources to support your DofE recruitment and delivery?

Take a look at our [Recruitment Toolkit](#) for recruitment presentations, videos, enrolment form templates and much more!

For section activity ideas, activity logs, expedition training frameworks and more go to the [Delivery Toolkit](#).

There's also a [brand new page](#) on our website where you can find all our Welsh-language resources. The English-language versions are saved alongside the Welsh so you can download what you need in one or both language in the same place. We'll keep adding to this page as we publish more bilingual resources.

