



Using Bothies

Session plan for DofE Leaders

What is this resource for?

The following pages provide you with guidance and ideas to help educate the young people in your group about bothies: their history, purpose and best practices for their use.

The resource contains five things:

- A 50-60 minute session plan exploring the basics of bothy use and the Bothy Code
- Bothy Dos and Don'ts
- The Bothy Code
- *Bothies 101* resource leaflet
- Examples of clean and mistreated bothies

We encourage you and your group to adapt the session plan as you see fit—the activity suggestions allow plenty of scope for individuality.

What is a bothy?

Bothies, also known as mountain huts or refuges, are permanent basic shelters which are often found on expedition routes.

Bothies are free to anyone to use, whether to stop in for a break, or shelter from the weather, or to stay for the night. Although DofE participants should not be using bothy's overnight.

Bothies can be very basic, just shelter and a concrete floor, or can have stoves, fires and toilet facilities.

Most bothies are looked after by the Mountain Bothies Association (MBA) volunteers, but are property of the landowner.

What is their use in DofE?

Except in unusual circumstances, bothies are not to be the planned camping shelter for DofE expedition groups (see *The DofE Expedition Guide*). However, they are a point of interest on many expedition routes and can be used for

breaks, rendezvous points or emergency shelters, particularly in inclement weather.

How should DofE groups treat bothies?

MBA has produced a Bothy Code of Conduct, which is included in this pack. Basically, groups should treat bothies, and the people they may meet there, with respect.

All rubbish, extra food, and equipment should be taken when groups leave the bothy. There should be no graffiti left on the walls. Toilet facilities, should they exist, should be used respectfully, or best practices for waste should be followed by going a couple hundred metres away from the bothy.

Why is training important?

In the past, some bothies have been vandalised by DofE groups, with graffiti or rubbish being left behind.

In order to avoid this situation in the future it is important that DofE groups are familiar with the Bothy Code and how to treat them with respect.

Setting the scene

Before starting this session, it is a good idea for you to set the right atmosphere so that excitement is created in your group. Examples of how to do this are:

- Set up the room using expedition equipment such as roll mats, sleeping bags and hot chocolate in camping mugs. Some of this can be used later in the session.
- Play music chosen by young people or which relates to the session such as, *Respect* (Aretha Franklin)
- Display resources e.g. the *Bothies 101* leaflet, pictures of bothies, examples of mistreated bothies and the Bothy Code



Session Plan: Respecting Bothies

Aim:

For your DofE group to understand their responsibilities when using bothies and the benefits of taking care of them.

Resources:

Flipchart, coloured marker pens, pieces of paper, sellotape or post-it notes to attach paper to the walls, 7-10 pieces of expedition equipment (sleeping bag, rucksack, Trangia stove, sleeping mat etc.), copies of *Bothies 101* and the *Bothy Code* for each participant.

Useful bothy facts:

- Most bothies are taken care of by volunteers—like DofE participants doing their Volunteering section
- Bothies come in all shapes and sizes but the one thing almost all have in common is that they're remote
- Most bothies had previous uses, for example, as housing for deerstalkers on Victorian estates
- The Mountain Bothies Association was formed in 1965 and the volunteers work all year round to keep them in good condition
- Bothies really can save lives—Mountain Rescue Teams are full of stories of walkers being saved by using bothies as emergency shelters

Plan:

Timing	Section	Activity
15 mins	Getting started	<p>Icebreaker: Bothies can be a great place for meeting other walkers and hearing their stories. Get the group to tell a tall tale about staying the night in a bothy. You start a story with a sentence that ends in SUDDENLY. The next person has to add to the story with a sentence that also ends in SUDDENLY. Continue the story until everyone has contributed. The story becomes crazier as each young person adds their sentence. Get someone to write out the story as it continues, or record it on a phone to play it back at the end.</p> <p>Sharing aim: Explain that for the rest of the session the team will be thinking about why and how they should take care of bothies. As with the story, bothies can be a great place of fun, sharing and community, but they need to be used responsibly.</p>
40-45 mins	Group work	<p>What is a Bothy? (10 mins) Get the group talking about what a bothy is and why they would need to use one for DofE. On the flipchart, draw a bothy everything they would want in it (sleeping areas, toilet, fire, etc). Distribute the <i>Bothies 101</i> leaflet to help explain what a bothy is and what can generally be found in them. Are these things listed on the flipchart realistic? Possibly not, but there is a reason for that—they're a shelter not a hotel.</p> <p>What kind of experiences will they have? (30-35 mins) Divide the group in two and get Group A to set up a 'bothy' that is clean and Group B to set up one that has been vandalised (15 mins). The groups can use separate corners of the room, or mark out their bothy with tape, and 'create' their bothy with the materials provided and drawings on paper. Group A might have a stove, a 'toilet' drawn on a piece of paper, some firewood, etc. Group B might make a mess by sticking up graffiti post-its, having kit thrown about, mice drawn on paper, etc. Once they've finished setting up, explain a scenario where each group will have to rescue an ill team member to the other team's bothy (5 mins). Ask the participants to explain their experiences (10 mins). How does the group with the vandalised bothy feel about rescuing their team member there compared to the clean one? Does the ill team member have a better chance of surviving in the clean one? Did both teams feel safe? Which would they want to be rescued to? Another scenario might be using the bothy to cook and prepare food.</p>
5-10 mins	Summary	<p>End the session with a review of what they've learned about bothies. Use the Dos and Don'ts sheet on the next page and get the participants to vote by raising their hand for what is a do and what is a don't. Conclude with any further questions about bothies and a copy of the <i>Bothy Code</i> for them to take home along with the <i>Bothies 101</i> leaflet.</p>



Bothy Dos and Don'ts

Situation	Do	Don't
Leave extra food		X
Use the toilet facility (if it looks in good condition)	✓	
Take out other people's rubbish as well as your own	✓	
Leave 'emergency' supplies (sleeping bag, first aid)		X
Vandalise the bothy even if others have		X
Become a MBA member or volunteer	✓	
Enjoy your time in the bothy and record your visit	✓	



The Bothy Code



If you find a bothy with rubbish, graffiti or other signs of misuse, please report it to the Mountain Bothies Association via their website: mountainbothies.org.uk/

The Bothies maintained by the MBA are available by courtesy of the owners. Please respect this privilege. Please record your visit in the bothy logbook if one is provided. Note that bothies are used entirely at your own risk

Respect Other Users

Please leave the bothy clean and tidy with dry kindling for the next visitors. Make other visitors welcome. If they are not MBA members set a good example.

Respect the Bothy

Tell us about any accidental damage. Don't leave graffiti or vandalise the bothy. Please take out all rubbish which you can't burn. Avoid burying rubbish; this pollutes the environment. Please don't leave perishable food as this attracts vermin. Guard against fire risk and ensure the fire is out before you leave. Make sure the doors and windows are properly closed when you leave.

Respect the Surroundings

If there is no toilet at the bothy please bury human waste out of sight. Use the spade provided, keep well away from the water supply and never use the vicinity of the bothy as a toilet.

Never cut live wood or damage estate property. Use fuel sparingly.

Respect Agreement with the Estate

Please observe any restrictions on use of the bothy, for example during stag stalking or at lambing time. Please remember bothies are available for short stays only. The owner's permission must be obtained if you intend an extended stay.

Respect the Restriction On Numbers

Because of overcrowding and lack of facilities, large groups (6 or more) should not use a bothy nor camp near a bothy without first seeking permission from the owner. Bothies are not available for commercial groups.



What's a bothy?

A bothy is a shelter that anyone can use. They sometimes look like this one on the left.

They belong to landowners and are often looked after by volunteers from the Mountain Bothies Association.

Large groups (6 or more) shouldn't camp near a bothy without permission from the owner.

How do I use it?

Bothies can provide important shelter in bad weather, during emergencies or as a meeting point with your Supervisor.

If you are in a bothy treat it, and the people you may meet there, with respect.

Remember:

"If you've carried it in, then carry it out."

This applies to all rubbish or equipment you may have with you. Leave bothies looking like you found them, or better.



What do I do about...

Rubbish

Just because someone has left rubbish doesn't mean you can too.

Take it out with you like you do with other expedition kit.

If you've carried it in, then carry it out.



The Loo

Grab a spade and get walking.

Find a spot a couple hundred metres from the bothy, downstream, to do your business.

Bothy toilets can be over-used so do your research to find out if it's better to dig a hole.

Graffiti

Drawing on the walls makes people think the bothy isn't cared for and can lead to other vandalism. Often there is a visitors book to sign.

Just because someone else has done it doesn't make it right.

Extra Supplies

It's a myth that leaving extra food or a sleeping bag in a bothy is a good thing.

It makes the mice happy, but them being around won't make you happy.

If you've carried it in, then carry it out.



If you find a bothy with rubbish, graffiti or other signs of misuse, please report it to the Mountain Bothies Association via their website: <http://www.mountainbothies.org.uk/>



DO use toilet facilities **IF** they are in good condition. If not, get a spade and walk at least 200 metres away from the bothy.





DON'T leave 'emergency' supplies like sleeping bags and food in the bothy. It encourages misuse.

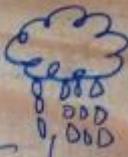
DO enjoy your time in the bothy and learn about others' experiences.



DO become a Mountain Bothies Association volunteer and help keep bothies in good condition



LARA & MO
WAITING FOR D&E GROUP.
COLD, WET, FED UP!
8/8/14
→


Elwin Yuen
was Here
8/7/14
D&E Gold

