



newsletter

News from The Duke of Edinburgh's Award in the South West

Happy New Year!

Happy New Year to you all.

Following the launch of eDofE in September, we have had a great response. Many of you are already using eDofE, and we are seeing a daily increase in numbers using the system. There are already more than 23,000 participants and 2,800 centres on eDofE. In the South West, all of our Operating Authorities have been trained and set up to use eDofE, and we already have 3,300 participants on the system.

The Expedition Assessor Accreditation Scheme has also been well received in most areas, with nearly 400 South West Assessors already registered on our database, more than 200 of whom are now fully accredited. Remember that Operating Authorities will only be able to sign off Record Books / Keeping Track booklets / eDofE if the Bronze, Silver & Gold expeditions of 2010 have been assessed by an accredited Assessor. So please check your Assessor has a current ID card. If you are in doubt, please contact your local Operating Authority in the first instance.

You should also remember there will now be a charge of £60 per Gold expedition assessed by a Dartmoor or Exmoor Network Assessor. This is in line with charging nationally, and helps to pay expenses to the Assessors.

Finally, a reminder that we have funding available to help young people that are struggling to start their DofE. We don't want lack of money to be an obstacle to participation.

See inside for details of some of the funding opportunities available in the South West. Full details are on our South West pages on the website: www.DofE.org/southwest

Welcome!



The growth of the DofE continues with more and more establishments looking for the opportunity to offer the DofE to young people in their area. The South West region is no exception, with new groups, and even new Operating Authorities (OAs) joining our network.

The last few months have seen many enquiries from potential new delivery partners and while some have been advised to offer DofE programmes with their local Operating Authorities, some have taken the plunge and decided to apply for their own licences.

Satisfying the DofE criteria for Operating Authorities is no easy task, but we are delighted to say that three new Operating Authorities have been approved in the region:

The Students Union of Bournemouth University successfully applied for independent Operating Authority status in the autumn of 2009 with their licence becoming active in November. With a very pro-active and enthusiastic team at the Students Union, the DofE fits perfectly with their extra-curricular programme and already many students are enrolled to do their DofE while making the most of their university days! The Students Union are now developing their own DofE training timetable and will soon be offering training that is available to all.

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Our Mission

To inspire, guide, and support young people in their self-development and recognise their achievements.

Are you up to date?

Make sure you sign up for your free copy of the DofE magazine and e-newsletter at www.DofE.org/leaders

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Welcome to three new independent OAs!



Peter Westgarth with Stephen Criddle at the South Devon College DofE launch

The Operational Manager at the Students Union is Jane De Vekey and her contact details are jdevekey@bournemouth.ac.uk and 01202 965771.

Still in Bournemouth, we are delighted to announce another successful application for independent Operating Authority status from **Bournemouth Grammar School!** Having only recently gone through the process of application, their approval is hot off the press! We are absolutely delighted for the school and I am sure that you will join us in congratulating the management team. At this stage details are limited, but the Operational Manager is Harry McAulay and his contact details are: HMcaulay@bournemouth-school.org / 01202 512609.

As you can see, the DofE is growing rapidly in Bournemouth and part of the licence process has been that the new OAs work closely with existing partners to compliment the delivery of DofE programmes. As such the approval of two new OAs within the Bournemouth area can only bolster the work already being undertaken by the Council. We will look forward to many exciting DofE times in Bournemouth!

As the third new independent Operating Authority, **South Devon College** in Paignton is already experiencing considerable success. With a major commitment from the highest levels of the college management, there are now many participants enrolled on eDofE and enjoying their DofE programmes. As is the way with such a progressive and dynamic establishment as South Devon College, the senior management team were keen to officially launch the DofE with a bang! So, on 30 November, a high profile launch was held at the college. The event was attended by many of the DofE participants from the college who enjoyed a fabulous lunch in the college's top rated restaurant, Horizons. The event was hosted by the college Principal, Stephen Criddle. With the Vice Principal Pat Denham and the Chair of Governors Vince Flower also in attendance, the college's commitment to the DofE was clearly evident. The new Licence was handed over by DofE Chief Executive Peter Westgarth who welcomed the college on board to the DofE as well as extending the Charity's thanks to Torbay Council who, after having established DofE at the college, were happy for it to take the step to independence and apply for their own licence. This open minded and visionary approach will no doubt not

only benefit the college, but will also benefit Torbay and other local OAs who will of course profit from the resources and opportunities available through the college. At this point the DofE would like to thank everybody involved not only in the organisation of the launch event but also in the establishment of South Devon College as an independent Operating Authority. These people include, among others, Frank Sobey, Shirley Mascard and Linda Westaway. In true Oscars style, if we have missed anybody off please do not be offended – your contribution is greatly appreciated! The Operational Manager at South Devon College is Shirley Mascard and her contact details are shirley.mascard@southdevon.ac.uk / 01803 540540.

The process for becoming an independent Operating Authority is not a quick or easy one. Being an independent OA is a large responsibility which means a firm infrastructure being in place as well as concrete commitment from the highest levels of management of the organisation. Not only do the correct policies have to be in place and submitted to the DofE, but the organisation has to demonstrate a clear determination to work to the DofE's standards and procedures while looking to develop the reach of the DofE and work alongside the Charity in a progressive and innovative way. Taking on average 9-12 months to complete the process, all potential Operating Authorities have to demonstrate patience and endurance! Not all prospective independent OAs reach the application stage and some are recommended back to their local existing Operating Authorities to develop their DofE provision. This may not mean that they do not meet the criteria, but often just that their resources and commitment combined with those of the existing Operating Authority would mean a much more productive outcome for the DofE locally. Other organisations are referred back to existing local provision simply as they are not in a position to act as an independent OA.

The Regional Office will always look at organisations who approach us about applying for an Independent Licence and each case is taken on an individual basis. However, as you can see the end result is not always an Operating Authority Licence – but we can always guarantee that the best course of action for the DofE will be taken.



Participants at the launch of the DofE at South Devon College



Peter Westgarth with Stephen Criddle cutting the DofE cake

My Bronze DofE! by Sam Armstrong-Gambier

Sam was really keen to get started on his Bronze DofE but found that money was getting in the way. With a little help from the DofE in the South West, we were able to source some funding to help him out.

He shares his experiences below...

I am writing to express my gratitude for the financial support which enabled me to complete my Bronze DofE.

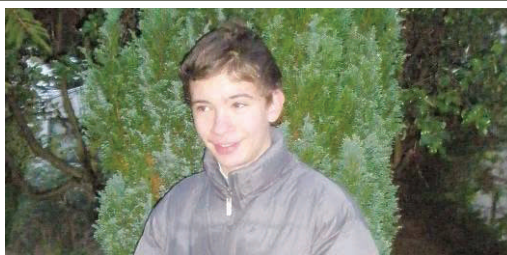
For the Volunteering section, I volunteered at a local charity shop, Sue Ryder Care. I found my six months there very useful as it has given me an understanding of working in retail. It was interesting to learn about how charity shops operate and how the shops support the work the charity is doing, as well as providing a service in the local community. My tasks included sorting donations, pricing goods, helping on the shop floor and helping and serving customers. I have also been involved with fundraising through promoting gift aid in the shop, at several local events by selling raffle tickets and helping increase sponsorship for the assistant manager who has recently run a half-marathon in aid of the charity.

I enjoyed the experience so much that I'm still volunteering at the shop every Saturday and during school holidays. I've recently been trained to use the till so now sort and price donations on my own.

I chose to do swimming for my Physical section. I have always enjoyed swimming as a hobby, and as part of my Bronze programme it has helped me gain confidence and improve my stamina, fitness and ability. A few months ago the local pool was going to close because the council said they could not afford to run it anymore. However, it's been saved for now which means I will be able to carry on swimming so I am really pleased.

For my Skills section I chose to study archery as it was something different and I knew very little about it before the DofE gave me the chance to find out. As part of the course, I found out about the history of archery, famous archers, origins of surnames and the different parts of a bow and the equipment. I can now string a bow, fletch and repair an arrow and have had the opportunity to shoot using a variety of bows. There were eight sessions in the course which cost around £100 and I would not have been able to take part without your help.

This was a really exciting opportunity and something I'd definitely like to carry on with in the future.



Sam Armstrong-Gambier

The expeditions were great; I really learned a lot. The practice expedition in June helped me hone the map reading and plotting skills I had been taught during the weekly meetings. I loved camping out with my group, it made us think really seriously about lots of stuff and it was also great fun. I like cooking but it was quite challenging doing it outside on a small stove. It was a bit scary at times but we all worked together and it gave me a chance to think about working in a team. I managed to hire most of the kit I needed for both expeditions from the youth equipment store, which we would not have found out about without your help.

During the assessed expedition in September, I learned even more about orienteering, emergency procedures and camp craft. The weather was good and we had a lot of fun, even though we had a very long first day. The expedition was a valuable chance for me to work as part of a team, learning more new skills and a lot about each other.

The main aim of the final expedition was to study churches in the Quantocks and I found this very interesting. We discovered loads of information and took a lot of photographs which our team used to create a PowerPoint presentation for our final assessment.

I feel really proud to have achieved my Bronze Award. I am actually quite sad that it has finished. It has been a fantastic experience and I am definitely going to carry on to the next level as soon as I can.

Mostly, I really would just like to thank all the staff in the South West DofE office for your support as without it I would not have been able to experience all of these new things.

Thank you so much for helping.

We hope that Sam's story will inspire other young people in the South West.

Take a look on the back page for details of funding available in the South West, or go to our funding pages on the website:

www.DofE.org/southwest

Countryside Etiquette

The DofE Expedition section is reliant on the goodwill of rural communities, and we need to show consideration and courtesy if we are to be welcomed.

As the Expedition season approaches, please make sure you use this good practice guide when planning expeditions:

- Keep to footpaths: do not trespass
- Always leave gates as they are found
- Don't leave litter: take it home
- Be quiet on camp sites
- Respect local residents: remember that it's their home.

Remember, it is up to all of us to ensure that we keep our countryside beautiful.

Expeditioners and their supervisors should leave nothing behind in the countryside other than their thanks for the opportunity to enjoy it.

Countryside Code

For free learning resources visit:

www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk

The Vetting & Barring Scheme

The DofE does not anticipate that the new Vetting & Barring scheme will have significant negative impact on young people volunteering as part of their DofE programme long term.

The scheme will increase the protection of young people involved with their communities.

Only those aged 16 or over need to register and only for specific types of volunteering involving children and vulnerable adults. Volunteering involving supporting an elderly or disabled neighbour is usually organised by parents as a private arrangement with the neighbour so not covered by the legislation.

Young people volunteering in schools under the direct supervision of teachers are also exempt. For the young people who do need to register, the process is straight forward and registration is free for volunteers.

Providing an individual is not banned from working with children or vulnerable adults their registration remains valid for life, for all their volunteering involvement.

We have been working with the Home Office on the guidance and will continue to monitor the Scheme as it is rolled out over the next few years, to ensure any issues are fully considered. Adult volunteers and teachers who run DofE groups are already vetted and will register with the scheme as their checks are updated.

Funding Opportunities in the South West

Remember that we have a limited amount of funding from the South West Fund available for young people in financial hardship, or for new groups starting up DofE in deprived areas.

Applications should be sent in writing to the South West Office, clearly stating which fund the application is for. The successful applicants will usually be asked to submit photos and a short report at the end, but please don't let this put you off as it doesn't need to be anything fancy!

We also have funds specific to areas or projects in the South West:

The Bath Youth Trust

We have a small trust fund available to young Leaders and participants from Bath and the surrounding area. If you are a young Leader undertaking expedition training and need some help with funding, or if you are a DofE participant who needs help with funding for a project or expedition costs, then why not apply?

The SWiP Fund

Limited grants are available to participants and groups in Bournemouth, Poole, and Dorset.

The Norman Family Charitable Trust

This fund is administered by the DofE Office in the South West on behalf of the Trust to support young people doing their DofE in Somerset, Devon and Cornwall.

The Vanessa White Fund

Applications are welcome from any young person or their Leaders in the South West where financial support is needed in order for them to do their DofE.

The fund may also be able to assist Leaders working with disadvantaged young people.

The SERCO Fund

This is available to help disadvantaged young people, and groups or individuals can apply. Successful candidates will be asked to submit a short report on how the funding helped them with their DofE programme.

SW Bursaries Fund

Through monies raised in fundraising events run by the SW DofE Office, we have been able to set up a fund to help young people from the SW to take part and complete their DofE.



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Please remember all DofE programme information is on the main pages:

www.DofE.org

Our regional noticeboard on the website has local information:

www.DofE.org/southwest

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