

**For those in  
School Yr 9  
There are  
lots of  
opportunities  
within  
Scouting...**



# EXPLORERS

Dear Scout / Parent,

After you finish at Scouts which is run by the local Scout Group you may be wondering what there is for you - there is the Explorer Scout section for those whose age is between 13½ and their 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday (and Scout Network from 18 to 25). Explorer Scouts is run by the District and there are 7 Explorer Scout Units (ESUs) to choose from located across the district which meet on different evenings of the week so there is plenty of choice to fit in with your other activities. Their locations can be found on the Groups page of the District Website (<https://cesd.org.uk/groups>) and their meeting evenings are:

- Challenger ESU (1<sup>st</sup> Yate Scout HQ) – Friday 8:15pm
- Endeavour ESU (1st Olveston Scout HQ) – Wednesday 7:30pm
- Mvumbuzi ESU (1st Severn Beach Scout HQ, Pilning) – Thursday 7:00pm
- Nike ESU (1st Chipping Sodbury Scout HQ) – Monday 8:30pm
- Phoenix ESU (1st Thornbury Scout HQ) – Friday 7:30pm
- Sharman ESU (1st Woodend Scout HQ & Avening Green) – Thursday 7:30pm
- Zeus ESU (District HQ, Coalpit Heath) – Tuesday 7:30pm

In Explorer Scouts you have the opportunity to take adventurous activities to a higher level and the opportunities to progress through the Chief Scouts Platinum and Diamond Awards and King's Scout Award. These Scouting awards are closely aligned to the Duke of Edinburgh Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards respectively.

Once you start the school year in which you turn 14 (i.e. school year 9) you can register for the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme (see: <https://dofe.org>). Your school may also run a DofE group and may try to persuade you to register for DofE through them, however as the Scout Association is the largest DofE Operating Organisation and we are all volunteers the costs of doing your DofE award through scouting is far lower than schools and other local authority groups charge. Schools are charging anything from about £150 upwards but if you remain within scouting its only £24 to register for the DofE Award through your local Explorer Scout Unit and the costs of the expedition are minimal. All 7 of our Explorer Scout Units are registered DofE Groups. The DofE Award Scheme forms part of the Explorer Scouts (including Young Leaders) programme and as the normal minimum age for Explorer Scouts (and Young Leaders) is 13½ years of age, the Scout Association will not register participants for the DofE Bronze award until they are 13½ years of age. It is possible to register to participate in the DofE Bronze Award level while you are in school year 9 even if you are still attending Scouts and not fully transitioned to Explorer Scouts

but will need to wait until reaching 13½ years of age. For more information about DofE and how to register through scouts please carefully read: <https://cesd.org.uk/dofe/>.

As a Scout District we also enter teams into the annual Ten Tors Challenge on Dartmoor in May (see: <https://cesd.org.uk/tentors/>) so will be looking for volunteers to start training for next May in the October before to start training in November. As the youngest Ten Tors participants can still be 13 when the event occurs in May (need to be 14 by end of school year) we take members who are still Scouts when they start training and moving up to Explorers later in the year. Please let me know any time between now and mid September if you are interested in participating in Ten Tors with us (some of the local secondary schools may also give you the chance to participate in Ten Tors). One of our weekend Ten Tors training sessions is also run as a Duke of Edinburgh Award Bronze expedition and your walking training can also count for your DofE Physical section so by training for Ten Tors you can complete at least 2 out of the 4 sections of your DofE Bronze Award (and Chief Scouts Platinum Award).

It may be that you don't want to participate in DofE / Chief Scouts Award or take on the Ten Tors challenge but would still like to continue adventurous scouting and camps then Explorer Scouts is still for you. In Explorer Scouts you, as a member, will be much more involved in the decisions about the activities your Explorer unit does as Explorers are encouraged to lead themselves in deciding the programme and direction of the Unit, with support and guidance from the unit's leaders.

Subject to there being space (some of our Explorer Units have waiting lists), you can start trying Explorer Scouts once you are 13½ years of age or older while still attending your Scout meetings and then make the transition to become an Explorer Scout, sometime around the date you turn 14, or up to 14½. The flexibility in moving up age means that you can move up to Explorers with others from your Scout troop all at the same time, with the intake into Explorer Units being managed to coincide with term start dates. As you can start attending Explorer Scouts and continue in Scouts e.g. to complete your Gold Chief Scouts Award please check with your Scout Leader when the best time to finish at Scouts would be.

Also from age 13½ there is also the opportunity to stay involved within your current Scout Group as an assistant at the Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs or Scouts section under the Young Leaders Scheme, where young people are trained for and able to take on a leadership role in one of the younger sections. We encourage our Explorer Scouts to become Young Leaders and this can also be used to complete the volunteering section of the DofE / Chief Scouts awards. Likewise for anyone interested in being a Young Leader we would also encourage them to become members of one of our Explorer Units to benefit from the full range of activities Explorer Scouting offers. More information about Young Leaders available at: <https://cesd.org.uk/young-leaders>

It would be helpful if you could let me know when you plan to move up to Explorers, if you would like to become a Young Leader, whether you are interested in registering for the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme or would like to join the group training for the next Ten Tors event.

More Information about Explorer Scouting and the opportunities available can be found on our webpage and Facebook Pages:

- Website: <https://cesd.org.uk/sections/explorers/>
- Main Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/CotswoldEdgeExplorers>
- Young Leaders FB: <https://www.facebook.com/CotswoldEdgeYoungLeaders>
- Ten Tors FB: <https://www.facebook.com/CotswoldEdgeDistrictTenTors>

If you should have any questions about any of this please don't hesitate to contact me:

**Derek Forward (Lead Volunteer 14-18 Team)**

**Cotswold Edge Scout District**

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