

# DUKE OF EDINBURGH OPEN AWARD



Do you want a fun and exciting challenge? Are you interested in being involved in a non-competitive, yet rewarding programme of personal development?

Offering you the opportunity to fulfil all these goals, taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh expeditions programme also results in you getting an award. Bronze (aged 14+) or Silver (aged 15+)

Enjoyment is guaranteed, but commitment and perseverance is required.



## BRONZE DUKE OF EDINBURGH - MY EXPERIENCE

BY SANDHYA NARAYANAMURTHY, AGED 17

I did my Bronze expedition via Kingston Youth Service, where we did our assessed expedition at Southdowns, near Brighton.

There were about 20 of us and we split up into teams of 3 called: Peas and Ham, The Incredibles and The Monkeys! It was my first time camping and I can definitely say that I really enjoyed the new experience. The first thing to be appreciated are the views; they are absolutely panoramic and it is brilliantly peaceful to be in the wilderness. It felt so amazing to see the beginnings of spring; breathtaking blossoms...adorable animals...thrilling landscapes...we were absolutely amazed by what we saw.

At the campsite we played loads of games and ate good food (pasta, noodles, chocolates, name the junk food, it was there!) and there was a neighbouring paddock with many beautiful horses, and some of us took our hot chocolates and stood on the other side of the fence watching horses with the sunset as a

backdrop...HEAVENLY OR WHAT!

Unfortunately there were bad experiences too: it was freeeeezing at night (plus it rained!) One thing to have ALWAYS is extra pairs of thick socks and a pillow to sleep on and some of us did not really take enough warm clothing in our rucksacks. Speaking of rucksacks...whoa...they were HEAVY! - that includes the tent and Trangia stoves! We really felt the weight of the rucksacks when we had to ascend the large contours, not to mention raw, red blisters on feet, stiff backs and nearly fractured shoulders!

A funny thing that happened to our team was that we had to cross a field full of cows... we got chased by them and had to continue our journey by wading through the next field where we encountered a low wire fence that looked suspiciously like an electric wire fence (and it was wet!!!!!!)...gosh we had so much fun!! All along we kept team spirit high and entertained ourselves by singing and basically

working very well as a team (e.g. pushing each other uphill when some of us were fatigued). We found this to be highly essential- team work, a sense of responsibility and commitment, and good communication. It wasn't like one of us did all the map reading and the others just followed. When we got lost we had the whole group coming together as a team to work out what went wrong (plus yummy snacks shared with everyone!) In the end, I ended up making many new friends, excelling in cooking pasta and putting up tents, and passing my Bronze expedition with flying colours!

If anyone asks me whether they should do D of E, I would absolutely recommend it as apart from doing the expedition, we end up working with our local community (I'm working in a nursing home), learning a new skill (I did Indian classical singing) and excelling in a recreational activity (I did badminton). I have already decided to pursue the Silver award,

## BRONZE DUKE OF EDINBURGH - MY EXPERIENCE

BY SHERELLE BUSHAY, AGED 16

The best points of Duke of Edinburgh were socialising and meeting new people at meetings, playing games at the campsite, telling ghost stories and singing songs along the way. Most of all though, when I actually finished the expedition and was on the way home, I felt really proud of myself!

I would have to say that the worst problems were waking up in the tent in the morning. When you are in the tent you really value your sleep. If your tent isn't put up on flat land, then I assure you, you will wake up at the bottom of the tent! It tends to get very cold at night- especially if it rains so make sure that your tent is secured tightly. Be prepared to walk up steep

hills and walk across farms – as we later found out!

I have learnt that you can do anything if you put your mind to it. Sometimes during the journey it wasn't always easy to keep going. You feel tired, dehydrated and ill but if you try and be positive about the whole experience then you will have fun. Teamwork and communication is essential in Duke of Edinburgh. You will find out that you will need all members of your team. My team 'The Incredibles' got on really well. We all helped to motivate each other and kept the spirit going. Some were better at motivating people or map work and others had more skills in cooking. If you all help each other then things will go

smoothly. Make sure that you pack wisely. Lots of food is essential to keep you going or else you won't have any energy and you need to drink lots of fluid.

Overall I thoroughly enjoyed Duke of Edinburgh. Everyone is really friendly and we all made such good friendships. Duke of Edinburgh is a once in a lifetime opportunity and it is a challenge. I am now going to start working towards silver and my main goal is to reach gold. Duke of Edinburgh shows that a person is

The Duke of Edinburgh Award starts in Oct 2005  
For more info email Jamie at [jamie.foster@kingston.gov.uk](mailto:jamie.foster@kingston.gov.uk)  
or call 0208 391 3432.