



NEWS RELEASE

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Quantock Hills AONB and Duke of Edinburgh launch photography competition

Chase away those winter blues by remembering your favourite outdoor adventures on the Quantocks last year.

The Quantock Hills AONB Service and The Duke of Edinburgh's Award in partnership with Splashmaps are running a photo competition to commemorate 2016 being their 60th anniversary year, and are looking for your best outdoor Quantock memories of last year.

Entries can be a photograph or short film and be submitted for two categories; 1. Best Landscape Image and 2. Best Expedition Image. Winners will receive a special edition 60th Anniversary Splashmap, which is a wearable, washable all weather map, designed for the real outdoors. Winners will also have their entries exhibited in a local venue.

Runners up will be exhibited online at the Quantock Hills website and be promoted as some of our finest local photographic and/or film making talent.

The Best Landscape Image must be an image of the Quantock Hills taken in 2016, but can be taken anywhere on the Quantock Hills, in any season with people in it or without. The Best Expedition image must be an image taken of a Duke of Edinburgh expedition, ideally on the Quantock Hills.

A maximum of three entries per person per category is allowed. Entries must be submitted either as a photograph by jpeg, or if a film by mp4 no longer than 30 seconds. The deadline for submissions is 5pm on Friday 31st March.

Jeff Brown, Somerset County Council's Duke of Edinburgh Award Manager says:

"For over 60 years a DofE expedition has been the first experience of the Quantock Hills for many young people in the South West. This competition will allow them to share their energy and enthusiasm for this beautiful landscape but we are also looking for pictures that reflect their full expedition experience so don't ignore the photos of sore feet, walking through horizontal rain or the feeling of pride when you complete your first ever expedition."

Chris Edwards, Manager, Quantock Hills AONB Service says:

"We know that there is an extraordinary amount of photographic talent in and around the Quantock Hills, and we would like to take this opportunity to showcase our finest local photographers, and commemorate 60 years of the Quantock Hills being nationally protected as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty."

By submitting an entry to the competition you are giving permission for the Quantock Hills AONB Service and the Duke of Edinburgh Award to use your image in their marketing material, but your image will be credited to you, and be celebrated as a winning entry.

Competition deadline: Friday 31st March, 5pm

ENDS

Notes to editors:

Further information:

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About Quantock Hills AONB Service

The Quantock Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) was the first to be designated in England in 1956. *An Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is exactly what it says it is: a precious landscape whose distinctive character and natural beauty are so outstanding that it is in the nation's interest to safeguard them.*

The following statements form the Quantock Hills Vision; they describe the AONB we would like to see in twenty years' time.

- Conservation of the distinctive and beautiful character and diversity of the AONB landscape, encompassing Quantock heaths, woods, farmland, parkland and villages.
- Detailed understanding of and protection for the Quantock historic environment and conservation of existing man-made elements retaining both the ordinary and the exceptional.
- Productive farming and forestry businesses that support and enhance the intimate scale, historic character and biodiversity and wildlife habitat over the whole Quantock landscape.
- A maintained level of tree cover containing an increased percentage of native species.
- Harmonious design in any new development in and around the AONB.
- A sustainable level of Quantock tourism and recreation maintaining the quality of experience for AONB users and contributing to the local economy without harming landscape and biodiversity.
- Easily available information helping to protect the Quantock environment and residents, while maximising public enjoyment and appreciation of the area.

There are 40 AONBs in England and Wales (35 wholly in England, 4 wholly in Wales and 1 which straddles the border). Created by the legislation of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act of 1949, AONBs represent 18% of the Finest Countryside in England and Wales. Their care has been entrusted to the local authorities, organisations, community groups and the individuals who live and work within them or who value them.

The Quantock Hills AONB Service is supported and funded by Somerset County Council, Defra, Sedgemoor District Council, Taunton Deane Borough Council and West Somerset Council.

About The Duke of Edinburgh's Award

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, fondly known as DofE, is the world's largest youth achievement award and is run in 144 countries across the globe. Young people between the ages of 13 and 25

years can take part in DofE programmes at three progressive levels which, if successfully completed, lead to a Bronze, Silver or Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

Somerset County Council support the delivery of DofE programmes in schools, colleges and community groups across the county. Between April 2015 and March 2016 2527 young people started a DofE programme and over 1000 achieved an Award.

With assistance from adult Leaders, participants select and set objectives in each of the following areas; volunteering, physical, skills, expedition, and at the Gold Award, a residential.

To achieve an award, the participant must work on each of 4 sections (5 at Gold) for a minimum period of time, and must be monitored and assessed by someone with knowledge of the chosen activities. Each progressive level demands more time and commitment from participants. Participants are required to show regular activity and commitment to the award for the duration of their DofE programme, which is usually at least one hour per week.

www.dofe.org

About Splash Maps

Like all the best ideas, SplashMaps was born of frustration. Failing GPS devices and trying to use wet paper maps outdoors are not great user experiences. With SplashMaps we've taken our knowledge of mapping, gained from years of experience with mapping agencies, added open map data from Ordnance Survey and OpenStreetMap to make a product that is entirely designed around you. A SplashMap shows the places you value the most, with the essential navigation information clearly displayed on an uncluttered map, printed onto a material you just can't wreck! development of SplashMaps we were convinced this was a great idea and one that would resonate with the public. So we put our theory to the test by looking to raise our initial funding on Kickstarter, the crowd funding site for new business ideas, becoming one of the first projects to do this in the United Kingdom. The project was a massive success and we easily exceeded the funding target we needed to get off the ground. Ever since then, people's expectations for SplashMaps remain just as high.

We started trading in 2013. Using our Kickstarter funding we were able to secure a stand at the Outdoors Show at London's Excel, which started us on our road to success. [Media coverage from TV](#), print and radio followed our success and, despite only having 2 maps to produce at the time, SplashMaps became the "[new kid on the block](#)" in the mapping sector, producing something quite unique.

We're now an award winning sports mapping brand having created over 50 top destination maps covering each of the 14 national parks, 7 of the National Trails and many outdoor adventure destinations throughout the UK and central Europe. Now with our [Make-a-Map](#) service YOU can map anywhere in the world onto fabric!

