

It's DoE Gold for our James Heydon!

James Heydon, who is a key member of our Order Fulfilment Team, has earned a Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award. We had a chat with James to find out more about his award and what it took to achieve it.

Why did you decide to pursue a Duke of Edinburgh award, and particularly to keep going to Gold?

When I decided to pursue a Duke of Edinburgh award, Gold (the highest level of achievement) was always my target. I started my DofE through the scout movement, and working with the Yarnton Scout Group who kept me motivated to pursue the Gold award. Yarnton Scout Group gave a platform for everyone to excel, and if it wasn't for them, I'm not sure I would even know what the Duke of Edinburgh award was, let alone achieve the Gold award and meet the Earl of Wessex! My parents also motivated me to get on and complete the expedition part, which was my last section, and finish the award. The Gold award must be achieved by the age of 25; I have completed it at only 21.

What activities have you done to earn the award?

The components of the Duke of Edinburgh Gold award are volunteering, physical, skills, expedition, and a residential task. I began by volunteering at the local cub pack at Yarnton Scout Group and never left – I'm now an assistant cub scout leader (or ACSL for the scouting people!). My expedition consisted of a 4 day/3 night canoeing trip, and my residential task involved spending a week redecorating a homeless centre in London.

What happened at your ceremony?

The ceremony took place at Buckingham Palace, which involved an early morning start and a higher level of security than I typically encounter on a weekday! We had the opportunity to walk around the gardens before the ceremony, which then featured the Earl of Wessex (Prince Edward) and Mount Everest climber Jo Bradshaw. I now have a lovely certificate to enhance my sense of accomplishment.

Now that you've reached Gold, what are you going to do next?

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Well, I have definitely gained a lot through Yarnton Scout Group and I would like to continue giving back by remaining on as a leader with the cub pack and taking an active part in weekend activities (such as scout camp this weekend).

Needless to say, we are immensely proud of James and his attainments. It is indicative of the drive and tenacity of our team, and the need to be the best that we can be.

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James with his Duke of

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Edinburgh Gold award

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