



Introduction



In this report, we'll share highlights from our recent DofE celebration event, our summer programme 2025, and our kitchen refurbishment. We will also discuss our application to the National Lottery Million Hours fund, to expand our open access work with young people. As always, we have included important information on funding and attendance toward the end of this document. These updates are here to keep our trustees, funders, partners, parents, and young people fully informed about the progress of Pelton Youth Project. If you have any questions about this report, please contact our Youth Project Manager, Tom, at tom_pelton@yahoo.co.uk.

DofE Celebration Evening

On Friday 5th September, we held our latest Duke of Edinburgh's Award Celebration Evening, this time in the main hall at Pelton Community Centre. Alongside our regular fundraising events, we like to host a DofE celebration at least once a year – and this year's event was truly special.

The evening was a chance to recognise and celebrate the achievements of our young people who have completed DofE Awards across all three levels. We were also proud to present special recognition awards: the John Dawson Award went to *Amy Miller*, and the Derek Lythe Memorial Award was presented to *Ruby Gibbon*. Both were recognised for the outstanding support they gave to their peers while out on expedition. In addition, every young person received a *Room 14 DofE Group 2025 Trophy* in acknowledgement of their commitment and dedication.



Entertainment on the night was provided by our very own talented DofE members – *Evie, Charlotte, Ava, Joseph, Isaac, and Thomas*. Supported by music tutor *Peter Morris*, they performed two fantastic sets that really showcased their musical skills. Their performances were not only a highlight of the evening but also a wonderful reminder of how important it is to give young people the chance to shine and share their talents.



The evening was also an important fundraising opportunity, helping us raise vital funds to support our DofE group – particularly the expedition section. We are committed to keeping the programme accessible by subsidising costs for families and ensuring that finance is never a barrier to participation. Thanks to the incredible generosity of everyone who attended, the event raised an impressive £1,343.00 through raffles, auctions, bingo, games, and ticket sales.

A huge thank you goes to everyone who supported the evening, and especially to our young people – whether they were performing, volunteering, or helping with fundraising. Their enthusiasm, commitment, and teamwork made this celebration a real success.



Summer Programme 2025

Pelton Youth Project has provided local young people with a summer programme every year since we began operating in 2008. These programmes often include daytrips, residentials, expeditions, and reward activities. This year, we were pleased to be able to provide activities for juniors & seniors, and our DofE members. Further details for the opportunities provided for each can be found below:



Juniors & Seniors – Thanks to funding predominantly from Durham Fun & Food, we were able to offer young people aged seven and up, sixteen sessions during the summer. Twelve of these sessions were four-hour long youth sessions at room 14, where young people were able to participate in activities that included cheerleading, wellbeing walks, sports, cookery, and more. While all these sessions provided participants with food and refreshments. To compliment the onsite delivery, we delivered four offsite activities for young people including Infinite Air, Tag Active, Fun Shack and a final summer trip to Lightwater Valley, which was the perfect way to complete a fun-filled summer.



DofE Group – Finally, in addition to the expeditions we deliver over the school summer holidays, our team also make sure our DofE members are afforded the opportunity participate in reward activities for their hard work and commitment in completing their awards. This year, our DofE members were given the opportunity to visit Preston Park for an activity day on the water, which included paddle boarding, always a favourite among young people. Perhaps the highlight though, was a trip to Flamingo Land, to enjoy the theme park and the zoo. The sun was shining, and it was the perfect way to end the summer programme.





DofE Gold Qualifying Expedition 2025



During the school holidays, our latest group of young people working at gold level, set off for Wales, to complete their gold qualifying expedition. The young people were to navigate a route along the River Wye, the River Wye is the fourth-longest river in the UK, stretching some 250 kilometres from its source on Plynlimon in mid Wales to the Severn Estuary. For much of its length the river forms part of the border between England and Wales.

During the five days the weather stayed pleasant for our group, who at times endured high temperatures, which can be as challenging as cold weather on an expedition. The expedition also included an educational visit to Castle Goodrich in Herefordshire, which was a welcome break from the challenging canoeing. The feedback from the youth work team and the DofE assessor is that this group worked tremendously hard during their expedition, supporting each other, and remaining positive during the tougher moments. Well done to all those young people who took part, and best of luck as you complete your gold awards. As always, it is a pleasure to support you on your journey.



Room 14 Kitchen Refurbishment

In our last youth project update, we shared our plans to refurbish the kitchen at Room 14 Youth Centre and the fundraising efforts that were well underway. We're delighted to announce that this exciting project is now complete! Thanks to the generous support of The John Horseman Charitable Trust, The Rothley Trust, Point North Community Foundation, The Catherine Cookson Charitable Trust, and the Bernard Sunley Foundation, we were able to turn our vision into reality with a £27,000 redevelopment. The result is a bright, modern, and fully equipped kitchen where young people can take part in engaging cookery sessions. It also provides our youth work team with a fantastic space to deliver food support projects for the community. We're thrilled with the high-quality work carried out by Select Interiors Limited, and we hope you'll agree the photographs show just how wonderful the finished space is. A heartfelt thank you goes to everyone who supported this project financially — your generosity has created a lasting resource for young people and the wider community.





TNL - Million Hours Funding Application

To provide a little context, the Million Hours Fund, made possible through a partnership between the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and The National Lottery Community Fund, is designed to give young people more safe spaces and positive activities. By investing in youth organisations across England, the fund supports extended opening hours, extra sessions, and new opportunities during evenings, weekends, and school holidays. Its aim is to help young people develop skills, build confidence, and form supportive relationships, while reducing the risks associated with boredom and lack of provision in their communities.

Pelton Youth Project have made an application to the fund aiming to expand the youth work delivery from Room 14 youth centre from October 2025 to March 2027. Should our application be successful, we will introduce several new youth work sessions including Friday and Sunday open access sessions, one to one wellbeing check ins, a school support session, and an additional outreach session. We look forward to keeping you informed about the outcome of the application.

Fundraising Update

In August 2025 grants were incoming mainly contributing to the kitchen development, including £7,000.00 from Point North Community Foundation and ££5,000.00 from the Bernard Sunley Foundation. In addition, we received a £300 grant from the Fitton Trust to contribute towards youth club equipment. In September 2025 we received £1,500.00 from the Rothley Trust towards the kitchen refurbishment, £2,000.00 from the Priestman Charity Trust towards youth services, and £1,000.00 from the William Webster Charity supporting youth club equipment. We hope that our grant income will continue throughout 2025–2026, as we rely on this funding to sustain all our services.

Attendance 2025-2026

As of September 2025, Pelton Youth Project recorded a total attendance of 442 young people across its youth services. Of these, 231 attended the One Youth Chester-Le-Street programme, while 139 participated in the R14 Senior Youth Clubs and 105 in the R14 Junior Youth Clubs. A further 38 young people engaged in R14 sports and activity sessions, and 67 took part in the R14 Duke of Edinburgh's Award programme.

Total 2025-2026 Attendance	442
One Youth Chester-Le-Street	231
R14 Senior Youth Clubs	139
R14 Junior Youth Clubs	105
R14 Sports & Activity Sessions	38
R14 Duke of Edinburgh's Award	67
School Holiday Programmes	98
Grange Villa Youth Clubs	113

Closing Comments



This update demonstrates the continued commitment of Pelton Youth Project to providing meaningful opportunities, safe spaces, and positive experiences for young people in our community. From celebrating the achievements of our DofE members, to delivering a wide-ranging summer programme, to investing in facilities like our new kitchen, every milestone reflects the hard work of our team, the dedication of our young people, and the generosity of our funders and partners. As we look ahead, we remain

focused on sustaining and expanding our services, with the Million Hours funding application offering an exciting opportunity to reach even more young people. Thank you for your ongoing support — together, we are making a lasting difference in the lives of young people and their families.