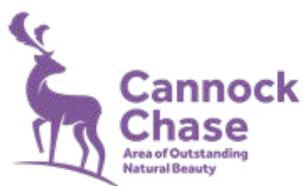
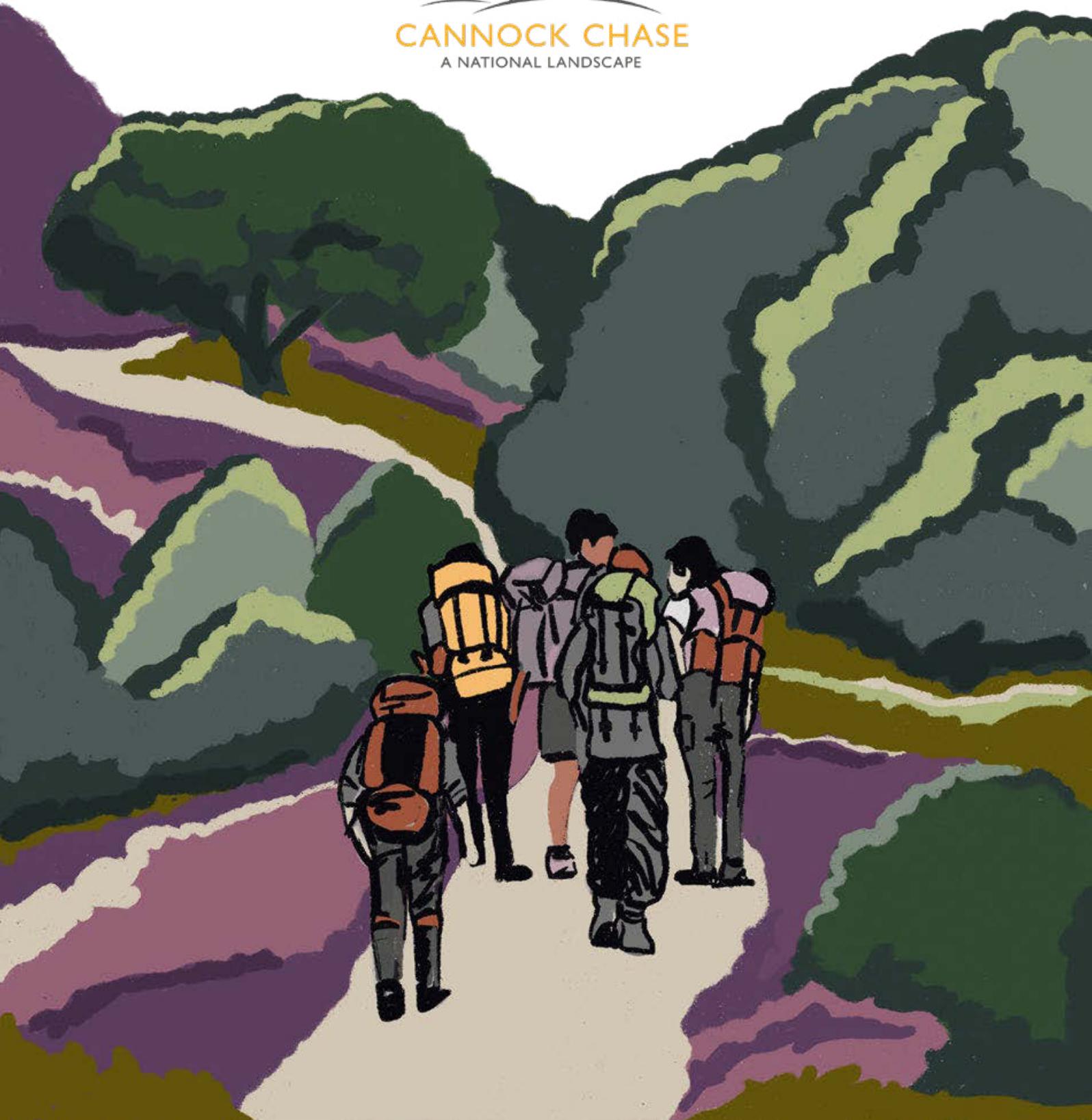


A guide to Cannock Chase for DofE activities



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Welcome!

This pack is designed for anyone supporting young people to do their Duke of Edinburgh's Award in and around the Cannock Chase area, one of England's finest landscapes. In it, you will find suggestions for activities in each of the required Award sections as well as maps and a link to an introductory Powerpoint presentation for participants.

Cannock Chase is a unique place to base your DofE. A peaceful wilderness in the heart of the West Midlands, it comprises a range of landscapes with internationally important wildlife habitats and a fascinating history. So beautiful that it was designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in 1958, Cannock Chase presents unforgettable scenery for your participants to explore. Cannock Chase is also home to the largest surviving lowland heathland in the West Midlands and is one of the best remaining areas in the UK for European Dry Heath, a habitat so rare that it has been awarded Special Area of Conservation (SAC) status, the highest legal environmental protection in the UK, highlighting its fragile and significant character.

The terrain is made up of woodland, heathland, forests and farmland with paths, bridleways and walking trails, making it suitable for DofE expeditions. Many of the trails are also wheelchair friendly.

With so many opportunities to develop an appreciation of nature and history, and to enjoy being outdoors in stunning scenery, Cannock Chase is keen to welcome DofE participants. By providing these memorable experiences, it is hoped that these young adults will be inspired to value the landscape and recognise the importance of protecting Cannock Chase for future generations to enjoy.

We would appreciate it if you could take some time to familiarise yourself and your groups with the Cannock Chase Code prior to planning expeditions in the Chase. Please see the Cannock Chase Code sheet on page 22 of this pack.

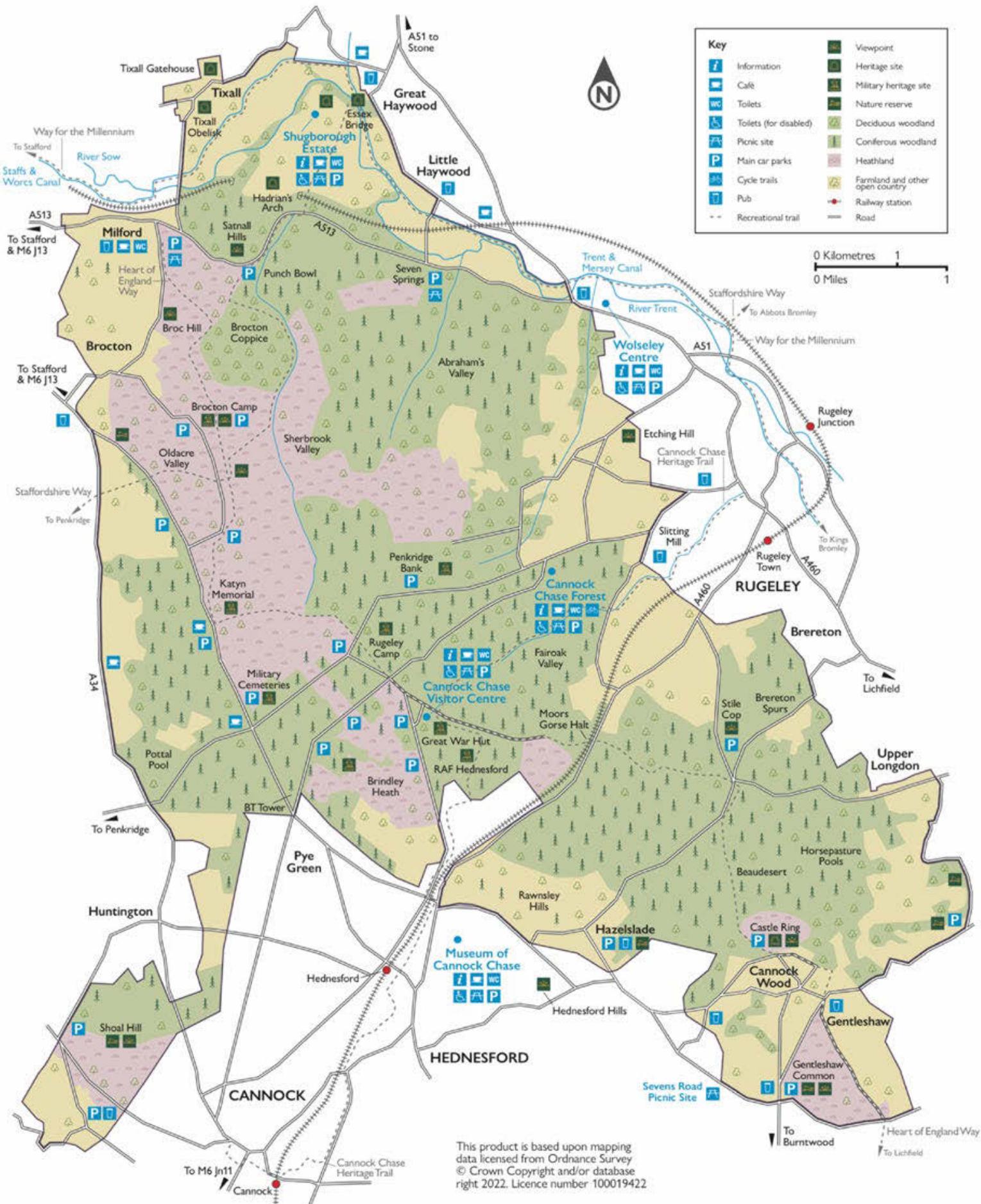
To support this, we've produced a short PowerPoint presentation for you to show participants, together with a quiz for them to take and a pledge for them to sign, promising that they will uphold the code during their time in the area.

It is intended that this document will be a useful tool to anyone planning their time in the Chase and, to this end, would appreciate information on any additions or amendments that you feel need making. Please do not hesitate to get in touch with the Cannock Chase team at cannockchase@staffordshire.gov.uk.

We hope that your participants have a wonderful time enjoying Cannock Chase and that they feel inspired to always look after it and protect it! We are always delighted to receive information on the projects and presentations they have made during their DofE, which can be sent to the address above.



Cannock Chase



Cannock Chase - at a glance

Cannock Chase is one of England's finest landscapes - protected since 1958 for its outstanding natural beauty.

Small but beautiful - covering just 69 km² (26 sq miles) Cannock Chase is mainland England's smallest AONB.

Around 20% of Cannock Chase is legally designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for its heathlands. The highest legal environmental protection in the UK.

The Cannock Chase SAC is one of the best remaining areas in the UK for European dry heath and has its own rare flora species - the Cannock Chase Berry. It is also home to several protected wildlife species

There are 30 designated wildlife sites, covering 20% of the Chase.

Cannock Chase was designed as a medieval hunting forest 1000 years ago.

58% is open access land where the public has the right to roam on foot. It offers 157 kilometres of public rights of way, including sections of long distance paths such as the Heart of England Way and Staffordshire Way.

63% of Cannock Chase is forest and heath; 37% is farmland and other land uses.

9,200 people live in the Chase.

Cannock Chase is an escape for over 2.5 million annual visitors, with an array of site users enjoying its natural beauty, peace and tranquillity. Unfortunately, with that comes increasing recreational pressures, leading to a degrading environment. It is in our hands to be the future guardians of Cannock Chase.

Cannock Chase boasts over 1,000 cultural heritage assets including two of the largest Great War training camps in England.

It has a proud industrial history of mining, charcoal and glass and iron making.

Within Cannock Chase, you can find 7 scheduled monuments; 66 listed buildings; 2 registered parks and gardens, and 5 conservation areas covering historic villages and canals.



A lived-in, working landscape

Cannock Chase is a popular tourist destination, and it is also home to 9,200 people. When walking through the Chase, participants may well walk amongst areas of lowland heathland, much of which is designated a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for its significant ecological value and vulnerability. Environmental degradation and loss of habitat and wildlife are increasing due to rising recreational pressures from the public. Cannock Chase also has 5 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) which are already at risk of becoming damaged and require sensitive management. Walkers and cyclists straying from marked paths can present a serious problem in these already fragile ecosystems, leading to erosion and eventually loss of important habitat, such as the heathland.

This is also a working landscape with active quarries, several farms and 2,700 hectares of forest that provide 19,000 tonnes of timber each year. Gates left open can cause livestock to escape and signs ignored might lead to an encounter with machinery - or a falling tree!

In short, this is a beautiful place for participants to carry out their expedition. However, it is exceptionally important that they are mindful of the need to respect this unique environment. Please remind all participants to respect the wildlife and habitats of Cannock Chase, to be considerate of other people they encounter, and to be aware of the potential dangers inherent in certain parts of the landscape.

Please keep to public rights of way when crossing Cannock Chase. Maps of these for Staffordshire are available here: <https://map.staffordshire.gov.uk/PublicWebmap/Map.aspx?mapName=RightsOfWay>



Litter

If you want to help Cannock Chase and its wildlife, please pick up litter you come across and take it home and dispose of appropriately. Visitors are encouraged to take home and recycle their litter. If necessary, bins are provided at the main car parks and visitor centres/hubs.

Car parking

Car parks that can be used by supervisors needing to park for longer periods are marked on the attached map. Some of these sites also offer refreshments, but there may be charges to park, which you are advised to check prior to arrival.

A key component of the visitor management strategy for Cannock Chase is to encourage visitors to park in the main designated car parks. So, please do not park on laybys.

As the Chase is a working forest, it is important that your teams stay on the main paths. The landscape will quite often be different to what is recorded on the most up to date OS mapping. The A460 cuts through the Chase, and teams may require extra supervision when crossing.

Proud to protect Cannock Chase

The Cannock Chase Partnership and SAC Partnership work together with local authorities, landowners, statutory advisors and representatives of local communities and user groups to look after this nationally important landscape and SAC. We do this through conservation projects, education and awareness raising. We want everyone to be proud to protect the Chase. It is fragile, however, and some behaviours can cause accidental but significant harm.

A short video produced by Sustainability Matters with ecologist Mike Dilger describes the issues: [Sustainability Matters with ecologist Mike Dilger - Cannock Chase AONB, are we loving it to death? - YouTube](#).

The Cannock Chase Code (see page 22), with its 12 key messages, has been developed to help everyone's visit across Cannock Chase to be safe and enjoyable. For educational purposes, please also read the Cannock Chase SAC Partnership Code [Cannock Chase Code - Cannock Chase](#).



Camping

Wild camping is not permitted anywhere on Cannock Chase without prior permission from the landowner. Legally, wherever you camp you must have the permission of the landowner to camp on their land. You can book a pitch at one of the designated camping and caravanning sites on the Chase.

The main campsites serving DofE Expeditions in Cannock Chase are **Beaudesert Outdoor Activity Centre, Marquis Drive, and Springslade Lodge.**

Beaudesert Activity Centre offers 38 different campsites making it suitable for large and small groups. There are also a range of accommodation buildings available for hire, sleeping between 2 and 40 people (with a total of 130 beds).

Three toilet blocks are available, with some campsites in easy reach of them, and others in more secluded areas, better suited to a bushcraft style of camping.

Walking off the Chase, organisers should aim their groups to Castle Ring Car Park. From there it is a 5 minute walk along the road to a track which reads “Castle Lodge Only”. Continue into the campsite and then in a straight line to the camp centre. Groups can also arrive via the main entrance. Ample parking is available adjacent to most of the sites.

Costs:

£7.50 per person in 2022 (£8.50 from 2023) inclusive of VAT, for teachers booking direct and delivering the course via their schools.

For commercial suppliers who deliver to schools and youth groups the costs are £8.35 per person (£9.50 from 2023).

The site books up well in advance, so you are advised to get in touch as soon as possible regarding your booking. All bookings require a deposit at time of booking (usually 20% of the fee) and final payments must be made at least two weeks prior to arrival.

Beaudesert Activity Centre
Cannock Wood, Rugely, WS15 4JJ

Bookings@Beaudesert.org.uk

01543 682 278



There is a small campsite near the Cannock Chase Visitor Centre on **Marquis Drive** that is available for use by DofE groups. This is a basic campsite, with no onsite facilities. Leaders can park in the public car park.

There are public toilets nearby (approximately 200 metres from the campground) and a key is available to leaders for out of hours use. Please get in touch for pricing details and advance booking.

Cannock Chase Visitor Centre, Marquis Drive, Cannock Chase, WS12 4PW

Contact: Steve Archer, Staffordshire County Council Ranger Service 07817 863303
Email: steven.archer@staffordshire.gov.uk

Springslade Lodge has a range of secure fields and can support groups of up to 70 participants, plus their leaders.

There is a toilet and shower block for use by participants, but no washing up area, though bowls can be provided for this. Leaders can camp, or, alternatively, can be housed in the Tree Top Room. This has a kitchen and shower.

The Tree Top Room may also be appropriate for use by certain participants with additional needs. Please contact the site to enquire about this.

Ample parking for mini buses will be provided, but buses must be parked in designated areas as arranged with the owner of the site.

Please note that the site requires arrival by 12 noon. Leaders must have a list of all those staying on the site.

Costs:

£7.50 + VAT per student.

£100 per night for use of the Tree Top Room

Payments for each group must be made six weeks prior to arrival, unless it is a last minute booking authorised by the manager or owner of the site.

Refunds are only available until four weeks prior to the booked date of arrival.

Springslade Lodge, Camp Road, Cannock Chase, WS12 4PT

Contact: Kaye Le Page 01785 715 091

Mobile: 0780 850 0330

Email: Kaye@springsladelodge.co.uk



The Cannock Chase Code

In order to support your participants with remembering to keep to the 12 key messages of the Cannock Chase Code whilst on their Expedition, it would be helpful if you could show them the introductory powerpoint www.DofE.org/expeditionareas and then also let them explore the Cannock Chase SAC Partnership Code: [Cannock Chase Code - Cannock Chase](#) which provides further information on how to protect this special area.

You could do this as part of your pre-expedition meeting. Please ask participants to take part in the following quiz (individually or in their groups) then sign the pledge to say they'll commit to protect, respect and enjoy Cannock Chase!

Quiz Questions

1. Why is it important to keep to the footpaths when you visit Cannock Chase?

A: So that you don't disturb wildlife / don't damage habitats / don't create new paths

2. What happens to the heathland when dog mess is left on it?

A: It adds nutrients to the soil and makes the heather ill / harms the heather / harms the soil

3. You need to pay attention to safety signage on Cannock Chase. What might it be warning you about?

A: Work being carried out in forests / on farms / danger from vehicles or machinery / road closures / risks of trip hazards

4. Name one important historical use of Cannock Chase over the years.

A: Hunting (or being a Royal Forest) / mining / quarrying / war training camp / farming (or agriculture) / forestry

5. Lots of different people and animals use Cannock Chase and we need to help look after everyone's needs. Which word beginning with C describes how we should be during our visit?

A: Considerate!

6. How many visitor centres are there associated with Cannock Chase?

A: Six (Extra point if you can name one!)



The Cannock Chase Code

Before your DofE Leader reads out the questions for this quiz, you should have had a chance to watch the introductory powerpoint about Cannock Chase, understand the 12 key messages of the Cannock Chase Code (see page 22) and learnt more about how you can help to protect this special place Cannock Chase Code - Cannock Chase. Before visiting the Cannock Chase on your Expedition, please sign and date the pledge at the bottom of this form to commit to keeping the code!

Quiz Answers

1. It's important to keep to the footpaths when you visit Cannock Chase so you don't:

2. When dog mess is left on the heathland it:

3. Safety signage on Cannock Chase might be warning you about:

4. Name one important historical use of Cannock Chase over the years:

5. The word beginning with C that describes how we should be during our visit is:

6. How many visitor centres are there associated with Cannock Chase?

I understand the importance of keeping to The Cannock Chase Code when I am visiting Cannock Chase.

I commit to being a Chase Champion on my Expedition by following the code.

Signed _____ Name _____ Date _____



Expedition Aims

An essential part of your expedition will be its aim. The idea of having a specific aim is to give your Expedition a sense of purpose. It can shape the route that you take and the places that you choose to visit. You might already have built an idea of your aim from an existing interest in the Cannock Chase area - perhaps you will be following up on something you learned about as one of your skills.

Your aim should involve you observing, measuring or creating something during (or as a result of) your Expedition. It should be something that will keep you interested and focused. You should plan to spend a bit of time each day on your aim.

The following are just a few ideas that you might want to consider as possible aims for your Expedition on Cannock Chase.

Nature

Perhaps you are passionate about nature and wildlife. Containing the largest remaining area of lowland heathland in the Midlands, as well as other important habitats, Cannock Chase is a haven for many kinds of animals and plants. From herds of fallow deer that are likely the ancestors of those hunted in the forest a thousand years ago, to unusual species such as the nightjar, many species make this wilderness their home. You can plan a route that passes through very different and distinctive landscapes, from forests and farms to heathland and ancient woodland. It really is the perfect place to go on an expedition with a nature based aim!

Keen botanists might like to research the historical uses of local plants in advance of the trip (eg. the uses of plants for food or medicine) and note down, or map the places you spot these species. You might like to refer to a spotters field guide from the fields studies council at www.field-studies-council.org.

You could research specific butterflies or moths from the area using this sheet as a guide: <https://www.cannock-chase.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Butterflies-and-moths-of-Cannock-Chase.pdf>. See which species you can spot, sketch or photograph them and note the location where you saw them.

You might like to research plants, birds or other wildlife from different habitats (eg forest, heathland, wetland) and plan a route that encompasses multiple habitats, noting differences in the types of species spotted in each habitat. Each member of your team could become an 'expert' about a different type of habitat.

Pay attention to the changing views each day by planning a route that covers different types of landscape noting, sketching, or photographing the particular scenery that you notice in each.



Another idea might be to create a nature guide of your route for future participants on an expedition. Design “nature spotter sheets” or highlights to watch out for. Teams could aim to compile a multi-season version of this guide in collaboration with other participants over the course of different seasons!

If you see yourselves as future media stars, why not try to make a documentary or social media campaign explaining the importance of the Chase? You could inspire others to visit and explain why it’s important to protect the landscape by keeping to the Cannock Chase Code.

Help save endangered creatures by investigating a rare, or “at risk” species from the area and the reasons for its vulnerability or decline, then creating a report or a guide to protecting it.

History

When you visit Cannock Chase, you have the opportunity to walk in the footsteps of your ancestors. With evidence of settlements dating back 2,500 years, a rich industrial legacy and many fascinating military landmarks to visit, there’s bound to be an expedition aim suited to any history fans amongst your team. You might like to research [The Chase Through Time project](#), ahead of your expedition to give you ideas.

If you are interested in archaeology, your team could visit Castle Ring, the largest Iron Age hillfort in Staffordshire. You could find out about Iron Age settlements and give a presentation explaining the significance of basing a hillfort at this location.

Cannock Chase has provided rich natural resources such as ironstone, coal and timber for centuries. Glass was also produced in the area and historic canals flow through the landscape. Your team could investigate the importance of industry, looking for evidence of mining or quarrying on the landscape.

Cannock Chase played an important role during both the Great War and WWII. Your team could investigate the training that took place at Brocton and Rugeley camps, or at RAF Hednesford, and you could visit these sites. You could also visit The Great War Hut at Marquis Drive to study real artefacts. You might also plan a route that allows you to see the Commonwealth War Graves and German Military Cemetery.

The famous author J.R.R. Tolkien was one of thousands of military personnel trained on Cannock Chase during the Great War. It’s believed that some of the local landscape gave him inspiration for settings in books such as *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*. Your team could find out more about Tolkien’s time on Cannock Chase and you could make sketches, or take photographs of the landscape that you pass through, linking these with scenery from his work.



Peace and Tranquillity

Cannock Chase is a peaceful wilderness, especially compared with the busy towns and cities that surround it on all sides. Many people come to visit because being in nature makes them feel so calm. It's known that spending time being active outdoors is great for both your physical and mental health.

Why not try to map the mood of your team mates at different points of the expedition, noting any places that you all felt especially calm? You could plan a route that covers different habitats and notice the feelings that you have in each place. Come up with a way for your team to measure which places you found the most calm and tranquil, record this on the expedition and report back at the end.

As Cannock Chase has very low levels of light pollution compared with the surrounding areas, it makes for a great place to look at the stars. Its dark night skies not only mean that it provides vital habitats for nocturnal wildlife, but also makes the area ideal for observing different constellations. Many stars and planets are visible to the naked eye and don't require specialist telescopic equipment to see. You could aim to observe and record some different constellations each night, though you'll need a plan B for cloudy weather!

Conservation

Cannock Chase is a popular destination, with over two and a half million people visiting each year! Everyone should have the opportunity to enjoy spending time in this beautiful place, but it's important to consider the impact people can have on the environment. You might want to base your expedition aim on a topic linked to sustainability.

Consider the impact of tourism on your surroundings. You could carry out surveys in different locations to find out why people have chosen to visit, how they arrived (by car, train, bike etc.) or look for evidence of tourist impact on different areas. Produce a report on your findings at the end of the expedition.

Notice the impact of vehicles on the environment along your route. How many cars pass you? How many bicycles? Are people keeping to the correct paths? You could come up with a campaign to encourage responsible use of vehicles in the area. Maybe people could be encouraged to use more sustainable forms of transport.

You could carry out a litter survey and litter pick of a section of your route. Note the types of litter found, consider who may have left it and perhaps create a campaign to prevent people from leaving litter behind them. What might convince them?

Choose an audience (eg, young children, teens, cyclists, older tourists) and invent a way to help them remember to keep to the Cannock Chase Code. Team members could take responsibility for different parts of the code. Come up with slogans and appropriate ways to deliver the message.



Physical Activities

When considering the Physical section of your DofE, there are a range of options that you can undertake in the Chase. Cannock Chase is a brilliant place to get active outdoors. Over half of the the Chase is open access land, meaning that the public has a right to roam on foot. There are cycle trails that increase in difficulty, from gentle rides to truly challenging routes suitable for experienced sportspeople. A network of bridleways provide stunning off-road horse riding opportunities. Cannock Chase is easily accessible by car from the surrounding towns and cities, though it's obviously preferable to protect the environment by travelling more sustainably if you are able. There are train stations at Cannock, Rugeley and Hednesford. Stafford and Penkridge stations are within cycling distance.

Remember, whatever activity you choose, you are looking to show improvement over time, so work with your DofE Leader to plan in some goals. Don't forget to take some photos or videos to update to your eDofE profile.

Cycling / BMX / Trail riding / Mountain Biking

If you are interested in working on cycling as your Physical activity, there are various options based on your existing skill level. You might choose to improve your overall distances using an app such as Strava to map the routes that you take. Alternatively, you may decide to set yourself the challenge of learning to ride mountain trails. You will need to seek suitable training for this and you must always make sure that you keep to the designated trails.

Cycle routes covering Cannock Chase can be viewed here: <https://cyclemap.staffordshire.gov.uk>.

Cannock Chase Forest offers different levels of trails on which to test your skills. See the map on the next page or visit https://www.forestryengland.uk/sites/default/files/documents/CC_mtb_map_2016.pdf.

Perry's Trail is a 'blue' trail (a moderate graded trail suitable for those transitioning from from easier beginner level rides).

Dog Trail and Monkey Trail are challenging 'red' trails (suitable for proficient mountain bikers with good off-road skills).

Cannock Chase Forest, Birches Valley, Rugeley, WS15 2UQ Tel: 01483 238 300



Walking / Hiking

Most of the Cannock Chase visitor centres have short walking trails to explore, but for improving your skills, you'll need to show that you have undertaken some longer routes. There are 157 kilometres of public rights of way on Cannock Chase, so you will be able to increase the distance that you walk over time. It is important that you keep to these rights of way and stick to designated paths.

You may want to challenge yourself to complete some of the long distance walking trails that cut through Cannock Chase, such as:

The Cannock Chase Heritage Trail: <https://www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/custom/HeritageTrail/menu.html> .

The Heart of England Way: <https://sites.google.com/view/heartofenglandway> .

The Staffordshire Way: <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/environment/RightsofWay/distancewalks/ROWPromotedRoutesMonthlyWalks.aspx>.

The Way For The Millennium: <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/environment/RightsofWay/distancewalks/ROWPromotedRouteMillennium.aspx> .

Sabrina Way: https://ldwa.org.uk/ldp/members/show_path.php?path_name=Sabrina+-Way.

Many sections of trails on Cannock Chase are accessible for wheelchair users, so do check this with the visitor centres and your course leader.

Keep a record of your distances using an app such as Strava, or update photos and routes to your eDofE account.

Please note that it won't be appropriate for you to carry out your Expedition over terrain that you have already covered as part of the Physical section of your DofE. If you are going to be doing your Expedition on Cannock Chase, you'll need to select a different place to practise walking or hiking.

Cross Country Running

If you're interested in improving your running, a 5 kilometre Park Run runs weekly, on Saturdays, starting at 9am at the Cannock Chase Visitor Centre, WS12 4PW. It's free to take part, but you do need to register at parkrun.org.uk to set up a profile.

You could use your consistent commitment, or your improved race times as evidence for your DofE.



Horse Riding

There is a network of bridleways across Cannock Chase, though it is requested that riders keep away from busier areas around the main visitor centres and avoid any designated cycle paths. When horse riding on the Chase, you must keep to bridleways or designated horse riding routes.

Some suggested routes can be found by following the link to “horse riding” on this page: <https://www.cannock-chase.co.uk/walking-and-exploring/guidance-for-your-visit/>.

Whilst the Cannock Chase Trekking Centre doesn't provide lessons for over 12 year olds, it does offer a range of off-road rides where older riders can develop their skills over time. You'd need to discuss with your course leader the ways that you would show progress over the duration of your DofE.

Cannock Chase Trekking Centre, Chase Sides Stables, Teddesley Coppice, ST19 5RP
Tel: 01785 711 177 Web: www.cannockchasehorsetrekking.com

Orienteering

The aim of orienteering is to navigate between checkpoints or 'controls' that are marked on special maps. This can be an excellent way to practise your skills of navigation, as well as great exercise! There is no set route to follow, so the fun comes from trying to decide which is the best way to go.

At Cannock Chase Forest, there are four different permanent courses that you can try, all accessed via the Cannock Chase Forest Centre. These range in difficulty from a beginners route, the White Course, which is used by younger children, up to the Orange and Green courses, which require understanding of a compass and contours.

Progression through these courses would be good evidence of you improving Physical activity.

Resources for these courses can be found at: <https://www.forestryengland.uk/cannock-chase-forest/orienteering-cannock-chase>.

Please note that forestry work may sometimes necessitate temporary closure of some courses, so it's worth checking the above website for details.

Cannock Chase has an orienteering club that you can join called The Walton Chasers. You can find information on their website at: <http://www.walton-chasers.co.uk> or email: secretary@walton-chasers.co.uk for information on how to join.



Bike trails

Birches Valley Forest Centre



Trail information

From Birches Valley Forest Centre

▲ Follow the Dog ▶▶▶▶▶
10.8km/6.7 miles 75% singletrack
One way MTB trail

Cannock Chase's original and much loved dedicated mountain bike trail. A technical singletrack mountain bike trail which includes technical trail features. Built and maintained by volunteer group Chase Trails, Follow the Dog is constantly evolving and being improved. Current highlights include the 'High Voltage', 'Bomb Hole' and 'Son of Chainslapper'.

▲ The Monkey Trail
▶▶▶▶▶
22.8km/14.2 miles 80% singletrack
(Distance includes Follow the Dog)
One way MTB trail

The Monkey Trail start is reached via the Follow the Dog Trail. More physically and technically demanding than Follow the Dog, this singletrack mountain bike trail contains technical trail features and several black options (all black options and technical trail features rejoin the main trail). The Monkey Trail was built and designed in partnership with Chase Trails and features technical rock gardens, boardwalks, jumps and drops. The trail finishes with the awesome 'Lower Cliff' descent.

I Stile Cop Bike Park
Stile Cop features several extreme/bike park graded downhill trails. Expect large, unavoidable technical trail features which require commitment and are not suitable for inexperienced riders. Stile Cop has been developed and managed in partnership with Chase Trails.

Key

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| Pay car park | Play area |
| Toilets | Walking trails |
| Information | View point |
| Visitor centre | Camp site |
| Cycling facilities | Caravan site |
| Cycle hire | Refreshments |
| Cycle wash | Water |
| Picnic area | |
- ▶▶▶▶▶ Singletrack (One way MTB only) Forest road
 ●●●● Shared Trails Bridleway
 M3 Numbered posts



Waymarkers



- | | | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|---|---|
| Green Easy
Suitable for: Beginners in good health with basic bike skills. Most types of bike. Trail: Relatively flat and wide. | Blue Moderate
Suitable for: Riders in good health with basic off-road riding skills. Basic mountain bikes. Trail: Some 'single-track' sections & small obstacles of root & rock. | Red Difficult
Suitable for: Proficient mountain bikers with good off-road skills & fitness. Good mountain bikes. Trail: Challenging climbs, tricky descents & technical features such as drop-offs & large rocks. | Black Severe
Suitable for: Expert mountain bikers with high level of fitness. Quality off-road mountain bikes. Trail: Greater challenge & difficulty. Large & unavoidable features. | Orange Extreme
Suitable for: Extreme level riders with expert technical skills & good fitness. Technical bike skills important. Jumping ability obligatory. Trail: Extreme levels of exposure & risk. Large features. | Forest road & similar
Suitable for: Cyclists in good health. Map reading useful (routes not always marked). Most bikes. Trail: Gradients can vary. Surfaces may be uneven or potholed in places. Look out for vehicles & other users. |
|--|--|---|---|---|---|

Skills

Cannock Chase is a fascinating place filled with internationally important wildlife habitats and historic sites. There's sure to be something to spark your interest and make you want to explore! You may want to consider basing your Skills section of your DofE on a study of local ecology or places of cultural interest. If your Expedition is going to be based on Cannock Chase, then there may be the opportunity for you to link your Expedition Aim to some of the skills you have been developing over the previous months.

A visit to one of the visitor centres, a nature reserve, or the Museum of Cannock Chase, could be a great 'jumping off point' for finding a subject you'd like to base your Skills section on.

The following is only a short list of possibilities. Have a discussion with your DofE Leader to see if they might be suitable for you.

Ecology / Conservation - If you enjoy learning about the environment and are keen to protect it, you might like to study some of the habitats or wildlife of Cannock Chase. The lowland heathland areas of the Chase are designated 'Special Areas of Conservation' because they are very rare. They are also Sites of Special Scientific Interest, which makes them ideal for further study. You might become especially interested in a particular species or ecological issue and want to become more of an expert on it.

Botany - There are some fascinating plant species thriving on Cannock Chase, some of which can't be found elsewhere, such as the Cannock Chase berry. You might like to find out about some invasive species that are becoming a problem in the Chase and what is being done about them.

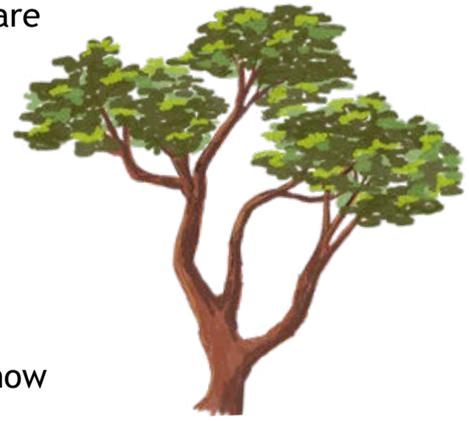
You can find an overview of Cannock Chase's unique habitats here:
<https://www.cannock-chase.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Nature-Conservation.pdf>.

Entomology - The landscapes of Cannock Chase provide habitats for plenty of insects including the rare Welsh Clearwing Moth, which was thought to be extinct in the area until spotted recently!

A useful guide to the butterflies and moths of Cannock Chase can be downloaded here:
<https://www.cannock-chase.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Butterflies-and-moths-of-Cannock-Chase.pdf>.



Forestry - The 2,700 hectares of Cannock Chase Forest are managed by Forestry England and provide an excellent location to learn about the skills needed to care for a forest. Participants at Gold level may be interested in applying to the Forestry Shadow Volunteer Scheme (see volunteering section).



Agriculture - 37% of Cannock Chase is made up of farmland and land used for other industrial purposes. If you are interested in learning about food production, now and through the ages, there's plenty to discover.

Archaeology / History - If you have a keen interest in history, it's likely that you'll be able to find a linked skill to practice on Cannock Chase! If you're carrying out your Expedition in the Chase, it's also a great opportunity to tie in your Expedition Aim with your skill by visiting some relevant historical sites.

Particular skills you might explore include studying archaeological sites in the area and the way that remains from the past help us build a picture of peoples' lives from long ago. You may be interested in heraldry - the systems of coats of arms used by wealthy families, or finding out about family trees. You may have an interest in military strategies or weaponry, or want to explore other occupations that Cannock Chase has been famous for, such as mining or glass making. You could explore some of the varied products that the area has provided for people to use over many centuries, from bracken and berries to timber and coal. You might want to learn about a famous person from history with a connection to Cannock Chase. For example, did you know that J.R.R Tolkien, the author of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord Of The Rings* was stationed here during The Great War and that it's believed he may have based some of the scenery in his novels on the landscape and features found on Cannock Chase?

Astronomy - Cannock Chase has lower levels of light pollution compared with the surrounding towns and cities. Its dark night skies not only mean that the Chase provides vital habitats for nocturnal wildlife, but also makes the area ideal for observing the stars. Many constellations and planets are visible to the naked eye and don't require specialist telescopic equipment to see.



Volunteering Opportunities

Taking care of Cannock Chase is a full time job for many people and there are lots of organisations that need the help of volunteers. There are many benefits to becoming a volunteer. Not only can you help look after Cannock Chase and pick up valuable skills that can help your future employment chances, volunteering can also be really fun and make you happier! Many people find that it improves their self esteem and sense of community when they get involved with a worthwhile cause.

The organisations listed below may only have seasonal work available, or may meet at times that fall inside a school day. You will need to get in touch with any groups that you are interested in to make sure that you are able to attend at the necessary times, and that there is someone available to sign off your volunteering sessions for your eDofE record.

When carrying out your volunteering, please remember that the work you are doing is really important and needs to be taken seriously. Remember too, that you will be representing DofE participants more generally. If you leave a good impression, it's more likely that organisations will want more DofE volunteers in the future!

The Chase Trails Volunteer Group meets on most Sundays at 10am at the Birches Valley cycle centre. Work mainly involves maintenance of the cycle trails and paths and under 18 year olds must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. You can check the Chase Trails Facebook page for more information, or visit chasetrails.co.uk.

Shugborough Hall may have some volunteering roles suitable for older participants. Contact: kate.gibbon@nationaltrust.org.uk or nationaltrust.org.uk/support-us/volunteer/duke-of-edinburghs-award to enquire about possible roles.

The Countryside Volunteer Group carries out a range of tasks from small tree clearance and repairing fences, to looking after a herd of Dexter cattle. The group is open to over 16s on any day of the week. It also hosts a Friday volunteer day from 9.30am at Deavalls Farm, Hawks Green Lane, Cannock, WS11 7LP. Younger volunteers can attend on this day if accompanied by an adult. Contact: **01543 450018** for more information, or email countryside@cannockchasedc.gov.uk

Forestry England invites applications twice a year from keen environmentalists to join a Shadowing programme. This might be suitable for Gold participants able to manage the significant time commitment involved.

Visit <https://www.forestryengland.uk/article/shadow-volunteer-scheme> for details.

Staffordshire County Council has a range of volunteering opportunities available from litter picking to helping at events. To find out more, contact Steve Holford on **01543 425 758** or email countrysidevolunteers@staffordshire.gov.uk



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Be a Chase Champion – Follow the Cannock Chase Code

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Find out more

Cannock Chase AONB Partnership www.cannock-chase.co.uk

Cannock Chase SAC Partnership www.cannockchase.org.uk

Cannock Chase Visitor Centre, Staffordshire County Council,
Marquis Drive, Hednesford WS12 4PW

Tel: 01543 876741

www.staffordshire.gov.uk

The Museum of Cannock Chase, Cannock Chase Council,
Valley Road, Hednesford WS12 1TD

Tel: 01543 877666

www.museumofcannockchase.org

Shugborough Estate, National Trust,
Milford ST17 0XB

Tel: 01889 880166

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/shugborough-estate

The Wolseley Centre, Staffordshire Wildlife Trust,
Wolseley Bridge ST17 0WT

Tel: 01889 880100

www.staffs-wildlife.org.uk

Cannock Chase Forest, Forestry England,
Birches Valley, Rugeley WS15 2UQ

www.forestryengland.uk/cannock-chase-forest

Cannock Chase War Cemetery
and German Military Cemetery

www.cwgc.org

Enjoy Staffordshire

www.enjoystaffordshire.com

Bus and train timetables

www.traveline.info

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