

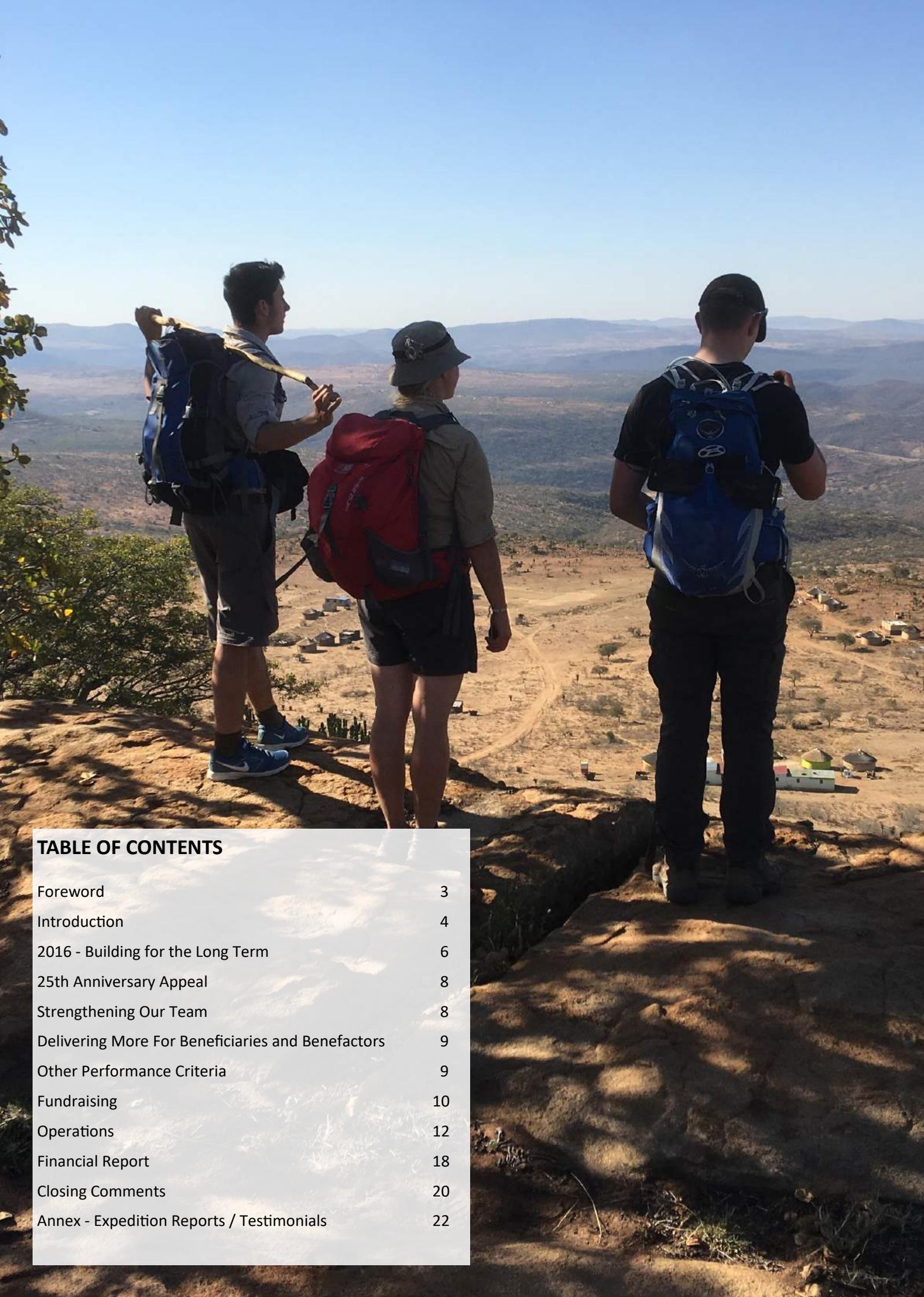


THE ULYSSES TRUST

Patron: HRH The Prince of Wales

# Annual Review 2016





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## THE ULYSSES TRUST

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### FOREWORD

Well, the Ulysses Trust has reached its 25<sup>th</sup> year, although celebration is perhaps better addressed in next year's Annual Report. It should not be lost though that the Charity has raised some £2.7m to help nearly 33000 individuals develop whilst participating in some 2600 expeditions; that is not a bad innings in anyone's book.

Looking back, where was I 25 years ago? Interestingly, I was having great fun navigating across the Hardangervidda plateau in Norway (photo right), a task made less than easy by the map contours being at 20m intervals, fairly featureless terrain and my mountain skiing was its normal 'could do better' self! However, it is worth considering what had got me there in the first place and my story is similar to most of the Ulysses Trust's team. It had started with school and cadet adventurous activities, followed by setting up an informal climbing club whilst I was an RAF apprentice and then on to unit expeditions. After my Norwegian forays, it was Service and Joint Service expeditions. So, without question, my enthusiasm for the outdoors, along with kick-starting my personal development, goes back to my school and cadet days. Hence, it explains my enthusiasm for the Trust and what it provides in its broader sense.

In terms of progress during 2016, the Charity has gone up a gear, with the appointment of a full time Development Director, conversion of the Trust to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (to recognise its increased activity) and a greater focus on outcomes being achieved. Whilst it is the early stages for our Development Director and outcome measurement activities, they will assist the growth of the Charity in no small measure. Both topics are covered in more detail later on in the Report.

It was with great sadness that we learned of the Duke of Westminster's passing in 2016; he was a long and active supporter of the Ulysses Trust. Indeed, as a Vice Patron, he set a very high benchmark for others to follow. He will be sorely missed by the Trust team.

Thank you to all our benefactors – your support is invaluable. Indeed, we would be very keen to engage with you in connection with our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Appeal, which is also addressed later on in the Report.



To those on the 'front line' we are here to support your expeditions and please do use us. Thank you to the home team – the Trustees, Officers and Advisers – your engagement and assistance is not taken for granted and is really appreciated.

Finally, I hope you enjoy reviewing the Trust's activities over 2016 and look forward to working with you during 2017.

Air Vice-Marshal N J E Kurth CBE FRGS  
Chairman of Trustees / Executive Chairman



## INTRODUCTION

2016 was the 24<sup>th</sup> year that the Ulysses Trust has been providing financial support and encouraging challenging expeditions and projects by units of the UK's Volunteer Reserve and Cadet Forces. In that time, we have raised £2.7m to help over 2600 expeditions to all parts of the world providing opportunity for almost 33000 young people of these organisations. Recognising that all have to start somewhere, and that first steps are often the hardest, we provide grants to support the spectrum of ambition, from the modest to major expeditions that take people to the limits of the possible – so long as the project aligns with our guiding ethos.

Our purpose is twofold: to help develop the character and potential of the individual participants – especially in respect of leadership, teamwork, initiative, confidence, self-discipline and judgement; and to enhance the morale, recruitment and retention of units that can flow from mounting these expeditions. This also benefits their local communities and society generally.

In 1992, when the Trust was established on the back of a Territorial Army attempt at the first British ascent of Everest in winter, support for Volunteer Reserve Forces expeditions did not exist and for Cadet Forces was largely confined to adventurous training activities as part of UK-based Annual Camp. An early challenge was therefore to encourage a change of attitude to such 'extra-mural' activity. The extent of activity that the Trust has supported over 24 years is testament to success here. That success, we believe, is also helped by four other factors that distinguish the Charity:

- Our highly experienced team of grant assessors supported by on-going investment in our proven Minerva grant management system.
- The ability to aggregate funds from numerous sources towards specific expeditions, enabling units and expedition leaders to focus on the project rather than its funding.
- The leverage achieved by directing grants for such opportunities through the Cadet and Volunteer Reserve Forces, themselves organisations with a proven track record in individual development and service to their communities.
- Our on-going work to better direct our grants to optimum effect, and more effectively measure the social impact.

Nevertheless challenges of a different sort still remain. First, scrutiny, in a society concerned with improving health and safety, has increased. This is to be welcomed, but a large point of such experiences is that there is some inherent risk. The aim of scrutiny should be to ensure that those involved learn to manage risk, not totally to avoid it.

Different standards of scrutiny exist across the Services, and between the Services and other public bodies, and this does prove to be a frustration, sometimes even a disincentive, for some planning expeditions. Scrutiny should be constructive and supportive – never obstructive – or it has the potential to encourage self-defeating 'work-arounds.' This is more true of Cadets, where the resources of experience and instructors are less readily available than to adult Reserve Forces, and the needs of supervising minors adds to the challenges.

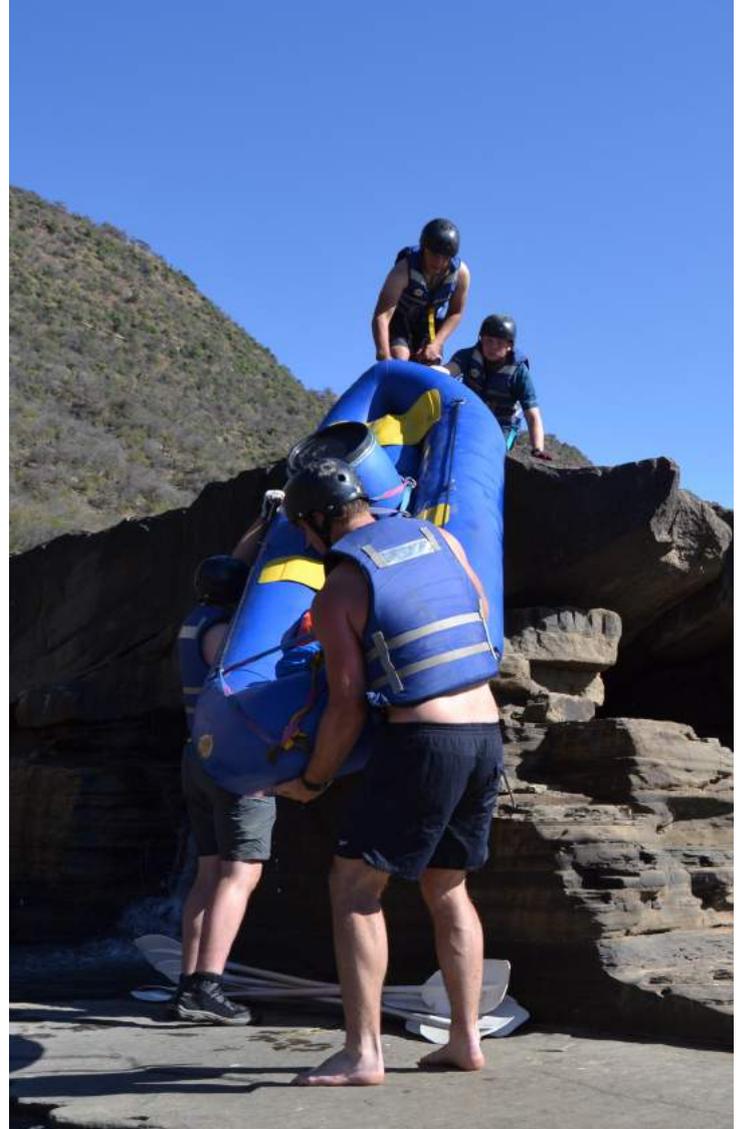
The second links to the first, and is directly pertinent to Cadets - inclusivity. The availability of resources, and the additional supervisory needs for minors, adds significantly to the costs of Cadet Force expeditions compared to adult Service expeditions. Their access to financial support is also relatively constrained. Despite our best efforts, this leaves the Cadet participants personally having to contribute some 55% of expedition cost, or £497 each on average.



These factors potentially deny many cadets such extra-mural opportunities – and arguably those who might benefit most. The first, we cannot directly solve but try to influence. The second is the focus of our current Business Plan. We have and are taking steps to better direct our grants to where most needed, which are outlined later. But we are also determined to significantly increase the size of grants we can make to Cadet Force expeditions. To this end, as we approach our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2017, we are planning to launch a 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Appeal.

We believe that the opportunities we support have the potential to transform the Cadet experience, indeed to transform lives. Many years ago, one runty young adolescent, shy and rather solitary, concealed by an oikish, rebellious manner, was introduced to climbing on the Isle of Skye by his school's Combined Cadet Force (CCF). From going nowhere, the opportunity changed him and changed his life. In climbing, this lost soul found self-esteem, an identity and purpose, which then helped open other doors. He acquired friends, went on to a career in the Army and pursued his passion across the world – even to Everest.

That young person was doubly fortunate. Not only was his CCF in a position to mount the expedition to Skye, but his parents were prepared to pay the cost. We have a number of long-standing benefactors to whom we are hugely grateful, and who have helped us improve many lives. Our 25th Anniversary Appeal aims to go further and enable all cadets, regardless of their family backgrounds and means, to explore, grow, discover and develop their potential – like the great warrior and adventurer of Greek mythology in Tennyson's inspiring poem, not "to rust unburnished, but to shine in use!"



***"How dull it is to pause, to make an end  
To rust unburnished, not to shine in use!  
As tho' to breathe were life...  
..... my purpose holds  
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to  
yield."***

***'Ulysses' by Alfred, Lord Tennyson***



## 2016 – BUILDING FOR THE LONG-TERM

### SUMMARY OF 2016 OUTPUT

2016 has been a mixed year. Overall, our income was almost £219,000, but expenditure on expedition grants of £194,458 (after refunds and returns) was down some £10,000. This was for two reasons. First, it was a relatively unambitious year for University Officer Training Corps (UOTCs), where numbers participating were up, but the projects were rather modest compared with previous years; secondly, one major grant was made in 2015 for an exceptional expedition actually deploying in 2016. This was SPEAR 17, an ambitious Army Reserve expedition that succeeded in an unsupported trek of Antarctica.

In respect of Cadet Forces, however, the numbers supported were up by 6 % to 1088, and grants to their expeditions (including support for adult instructors) increased by 19% to £102,440. This aligns with the main focus of our present Business Plan, which is to achieve greater inclusivity of cadet participation and extend the reach of the Trust by increasing the size of grants we make to Cadet Force expeditions. Nevertheless, there are still challenges in respect of cadets: our reach remains less than 1%, and the proportion of expedition costs that has to be met by participants has dropped slightly, but is still over 50% which will discourage many from poorer backgrounds. Of most concern, however, there was a 22% drop in Combined Cadet Force (CCF) activity allocated grants – against a backdrop of increasing numbers of CCFs (100+ to date) in State schools. This has to be worrying, and is discussed in more detail in the Operations Report on Page 14.

### LOOKING TO 2017

There has been a stronger start to this year – particularly amongst the Volunteer Reserve (VR), Air and Sea Cadets. CCF bids remain slack and UOTC bids below long-term average, but it is early days.

One Cadet Force expedition worthy of mention is Ex STIRLING VENTURER, being mounted by Training Ship (TS) Stirling from Birmingham. This Sea Cadet unit has just partnered with the Tile Cross Academy, a comprehensive school, under the Government-sponsored Cadet Expansion Programme, to form a Cadet contingent within the school. 55% of Tile Cross Academy's 700 pupils are entitled to Pupil Premium as a result of household deprivation. For the same proportion, it is also their first UK school, with 35 community languages spoken. In June, 10 Sea Cadets and 4 instructors, half from TS Stirling and half from the new School contingent, will depart for the US to take part in a programme of Adventurous Training as part of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Army League's 'Junior Cadet Leadership Challenge.' The Ulysses Trust is proud to help such an excellent initiative.

Another expedition that we are particularly excited about supporting is Ex ICE MAIDEN – a female Army expedition attempting the first coast-to-coast traverse of Antarctica by an all-female team. Barring mishaps, the final 5-strong team, following a number of training and selection expeditions over the last year, includes potentially 3 Reservists. The expedition deploys in November, almost 25 years to the day since EX DARC STAR, the TA attempt at a British first ascent of Everest in Winter that was the first expedition to be supported by the Ulysses Trust.

In other respects, we continue to invest for the long term, determined to build on our first 25 years, to ensure that, as the Founders of the Charity move on, in 25 years' time its contribution to the development of Cadet and Reserve Forces and their members makes an increasing and sustainable difference to them and society.



## 25TH ANNIVERSARY APPEAL

We believe that with the unstinting support of the Nuffield Trust for the Armed Forces of the Crown, we largely meet the needs of Volunteer Reserves and University Cadets. Our impact on the young of the Cadet Forces is more peripheral than we would wish, however, whilst progress here promises the greatest social return on investment. To do more depends upon significantly increasing the financial resources that we can direct towards Cadet Forces. To mark our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, therefore, we are launching this year a 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Appeal to enable us by 2020 to meet at least one third of the cost for 3500 cadets per year to participate in expeditions. The formal launch for this Appeal will be at a reception in late 2017, but the search is on now for lead donors. At this launch, we will also be presenting the Prince of Wales's Awards for Best Expedition 2016 conducted by the VR, UOTCs and Cadets, and launching a new Photography competition, which we hope to get sponsored.

### STRENGTHENING OUR TEAM

To date, we have achieved what we have largely with a volunteer staff, whose efforts have been remarkable. But we have concluded that to sustain our present level of activity, let alone to grow it, and to ensure the long-term health of the charity, has got beyond their capacity. Last year, following a detailed external review of our needs, we therefore decided a step change was needed and at the start of 2017 employed Brenda Allanson as a full-time Development Director. She will have already engaged with a number of readers of this review.

Raising the funds needed for our work, of course, is not the only challenge. We recognise that donors rightly expect us to deploy their gifts to optimum effect, and wish to see the difference that we make with their support. To that end, we have strengthened our volunteer Operations Team which runs our grant-making activity. Group Captain Matt Stowers, with a strong and current

record of planning Service expeditions, has taken over as the Trustee responsible for this, supported by Roy McCluskey as Operations Director who manages the process of reviewing some 200 applications a year. He is supported by David Preston who designed and maintains our Minerva on-line review and data management system which enables us to respond quickly and flexibly to requests for our help. The Grant Applications Committee has also been strengthened with 6 newcomers, 4 of whom from both the Army and RAF have extensive backgrounds in Cadet expeditions, and one of whom has a PR background.

With this strengthened team, we plan to put more effort into better directing Cadet grants to where they are most needed, and more effectively capture the outcomes of our grants and their impact. This has some challenges. The Ulysses Trust is, effectively, a grant provider, whilst it is the Cadet units who are the Service Providers. So we rely heavily on units mounting expeditions both to identify their needs effectively when applying for grants, and to think carefully about the benefits sought and gained in their post-expedition reports. Some units are better at this than others, but it is often those in poorer areas, who struggle for staff, experience and resources, that are most challenged here. We need therefore to get closer to our Cadet unit 'service providers.' Communication is the key, so alongside our Operations Team, our Head of Communications will have an essential role to play. Moreover, we have now started to build a Regional Representatives Network which, in the longer term, we intend should not only help spread the word about the Ulysses Trust, but also help guide units at a local level in their applications and post-expedition reports.



## DELIVERING MORE FOR BENEFICIARIES AND BENEFACTORS

Regarding better directing of our funds, our purpose is to encourage and support all cadets regardless of background, but clearly some are in less need of our support than others. Last year, we started to track and monitor the grants we make to unit expeditions, retrospectively on an annual basis, against Government Indices of Mean Deprivation (IMD). This is not a precise exercise since it is based on the unit's address, and its catchment can be from 'Output Areas' of differing deprivation. Another measure is that we now ask applicants to identify the number of expedition members who are in receipt of free school meals. Again, this is not used as a definitive yardstick, recognising that there are many cadets not in receipt, whose parents will still be sorely stretched to meet the cost of some opportunities. Combined, however, in an imperfect world, these measures should help us bias funds to greatest need, whilst we allow the unit or expedition leader also some discretion as to how to deploy the grant most fairly.

Our Grant Application Process makes clear the benefits outlined above, that we seek to derive for units and their members undertaking expeditions. We ask applicants to explain how the expedition will help to achieve these benefits, and to indicate in their post-expedition report the extent to which these have manifested themselves. These are invariably subjective assessments, the benefits themselves difficult to measure, sometimes take a while to emerge, and when they do, may be the result of a number of factors. Therefore the best indication of impact is likely to be a mix of quantitative and qualitative evidence, and we are investigating whether this is best achieved by means of an annual survey of beneficiary units. This remains a challenging and interesting area; we are therefore working with Volunteering Matters and the Coalition for Efficiency on their Measuring the Good programme to examine how we can more rigorously demonstrate the difference that we make. We are also exploring working in alliance with other charities and stakeholders on further research as to the benefits of outdoor challenging pursuits. Meanwhile, concentrating unit and expedition leaders' minds on these points at key stages of the expedition process will also add value.

## OTHER PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

We have also recently reviewed the other Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) against which to track the Trust's progress, quarterly. Those for 2016 are in the table below:

OUTPUTS	2016	Last Year
Applications received	174	177
Expeds supported	102	112
Participant Nos.	1914	1719
Grant Expenditure	£195,557	£204,834
Grant per person	£103	£119
Grant/Cost Ratio	10.4%	9.7%
Personal Contribution/Cost Ratio	42.2%	39.5%
Market Penetration (End Year only)	0.97%	0.88%
FINANCIALS		
Income	£217,500	£462,716
Grant expenditure	£194,458	£204,834
Overheads	£59,540	£41,582
<i>O'Head/Expenditure Ratio</i>	<i>23%</i>	<i>17%</i>
Net Movement of Funds	-£36,498	£216,300
Total Assets	£376,982	£412,296
Realisable Reserves	£127,826	£175,681
<i>Months of Reserves (on historic spend)</i>	<i>6.0</i>	<i>8.6</i>



## FUNDRAISING

The Trust's ability to raise funds is the bedrock of its existence and the essence of our service to our communities is to do that on their behalf. In 2016, we put considerable effort into reviewing our fundraising strategy, with a view to putting in place plans and resources that could not only deliver on our Business Plan through to 2020, but also sustain the Trust indefinitely thereafter. After considerable deliberation, Trustees concluded that we should appoint a professional major gifts fundraiser to focus on donations from individual philanthropists, trust and foundations, and corporate donors, but that we should also continue to improve our communications with all stakeholders which has been fundamental to the Trust's recent progress. In late 2016, therefore, we commenced a search for someone with experience of major gifts fundraising, appointing Brenda Allanson as Development Director in January 2017, supported by Jeremy Hurst who continues as our Head of Communications.

This, trustees recognised, was a significant step, but one that most charities need to take at some stage, if they are to sustain their work in the long term. Timing this step is the critical decision, and given the growth in the Trust's activity and its ambition particularly for Cadets alongside the

Government's Cadet Expansion Programme, our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary seemed the appropriate moment. Detailed plans are still being developed by the new Development Director, but critical to them will be the launch of the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Appeal to deliver on our objective of being in a position to put some £400,000 into Cadet expeditions annually by 2020. To maintain this, an ingredient of the Appeal will be to increase significantly the number of donors prepared to make a long-term annual commitment to the Trust.

Our supporters and donors are listed opposite, but we are particularly encouraged by long-standing benefactors continuing to increase their support, in some cases substantially – notably the Nuffield Trust for the Forces of the Crown and the RAF Charitable Trust. The increasing number of on-going termed commitments now also assists our longer term planning; these include BAE Systems, the Army Sports Control Board Charity, the Macrobert Trust, the Sir John Knott Trust, the Worshipful Company of Dyers, several Reserve Forces and Cadet Associations, the Berlin Infantry Brigade Memorial Trust, Paul Orchard-Lisle, Julian Radcliffe and the Clive and Sylvia Richards Charity. Donations were also received from a wide range of other individuals and trusts, including repeat gifts



from the Lord Faringdon Charitable Trust, the Worshipful Company of Armourers and Brasiers, and what can perhaps be best described as the 'Friends of Colonel David Benest's newspaper round' in the Vale of Pewsey.

We are enormously grateful to all our donors and supporters. The life challenges facing young people today become ever more acute and complex. We have no doubt that the opportunities we encourage help develop the physical, mental and moral attributes to meet these challenges successfully.

## SUPPORTERS AND DONORS 2016

The following is a list of supporters and donors who made grants and donations to the Ulysses Trust in 2016. We are enormously grateful to our supporters and value your commitment to our purpose. We continually strive to ensure that we optimise that commitment in making a difference.

2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles  
Army Cadet Force Association Charity  
Army Sports Control Board  
BAE Systems  
Colonel David Benest OBE  
Vivian Benest  
Berlin Infantry Brigade MTF  
B J Press  
David Blanchard  
Ellen Clarke  
Clive and Sylvia Richards Charity  
Cotswold Outdoors  
Derbyshire Army Cadet Force  
Peter Alan Dickson Foundation  
The Friends of the Ulysses Trust  
Google  
Major Nicholas P Holder  
The Lennox Hannay Charitable Trust  
Jeremy Hurst FRSA FCIM  
The Lord Faringdon Charitable Trust  
The MacRobert Trust  
Keith Miller  
Nuffield Trust for the Forces of the Crown  
Brigadier Paul Orchard-Lisle CBE TD DL  
Paul Pelham  
Pewsey Vale U3A Military History Group  
The Prince of Wales's Charitable Foundation  
Col Julian G Y Radcliffe OBE QVRM TD  
RAF Charitable Trust  
RFCA for Greater London  
Sir James Knott Trust  
Colonel Rex Stephenson CBE  
Support Command Ltd



THE ULYSSES TRUST

The Rt Hon Sir Desmond A Swayne TD VR MP  
Wessex RFCA  
The Worshipful Company of Armourers and Brasiers  
Gauntlet Trust  
The Worshipful Company of Dyers Charitable Trust  
Colonel Edward C York TD DL  
Zestia Ltd

## OPERATIONS



## THE ULYSSES TRUST

### Expeditions 2016

The table below summarises the expeditions supported by the Trust that deployed in 2016 (a number of which were actually funded in 2015):

Expeditions Deployed from 1 Jan16 to 31 Dec 16								
Unit type	Expeditions	Adults	Cadets	Total	Grants	Per person	Per exped	Av Nos.
Cadets - ACF:	12	100	300	400	£30,500	£76	£2,542	33
Cadets - Sea:	1	5	5	10	£800	£80	£800	10
Cadets - ATC:	12	81	209	290	£23,120	£80	£1,927	24
Cadets - CCF:	15	41	256	297	£26,820	£90	£1,788	20
<b>All Cadets:</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>770</b>	<b>997</b>	<b>£81,240</b>	<b>£81</b>	<b>£2,031</b>	<b>25</b>
University/DTU:	22	337	0	337	£22,800	£68	£1,036	15
Army Reserve	44	460	0	460	£96,065	£209	£2,183	10
RNR/RMR	2	2	0	2	£675	£338	£338	1
R AuxAF	0	0	0	0	£0			
<b>All Reservists:</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>462</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>462</b>	<b>£96,740</b>	<b>£209</b>	<b>£2,103</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>1026</b>	<b>770</b>	<b>1796</b>	<b>£200,780</b>	<b>£112</b>	<b>£1,859</b>	<b>17</b>

This represented 4 more expeditions deployed than in 2015, with the number of participants increasing by 197 to 1796. This was largely due to an increase of 9 VR expeditions – continuing the trend expected following the drawdown from operations. There was a decline in both UOTC and Cadet expeditions, although the number of cadets deploying increased by 84 – reflecting a trend amongst the Army Cadet Force (ACF) and to some extent the Air Training Corps (ATC), towards large county-led rather than unit expeditions.

Mountain-related activities accounted for just under 50% of expeditions, with trekking and exploration expeditions accounting for 26%, ski expeditions 15%, scuba diving 14% and canoeing 10%. 9% of expeditions took place in all parts of the UK both in summer and winter, a further 55% deployed to all parts of Europe from Arctic Norway to the Canary Islands. 11% went to the Americas, 8% to Asia and the Himalayas, 6% went to Greenland or Iceland, and 5% to Africa. One expedition went to Antarctica.

The Antarctic expedition, SPEAR 17, was the outstanding project – an unsupported crossing by a 6-man team from the Army Reserve of the Antarctic continent from coast-to-coast, via of course the South Pole – deploying in 2016, and completing in February 2017. This team (pictured opposite) was selected from an initial 50 applicants and followed extensive selection and training in Norway and Iceland. This amazing feat was a British Military first.



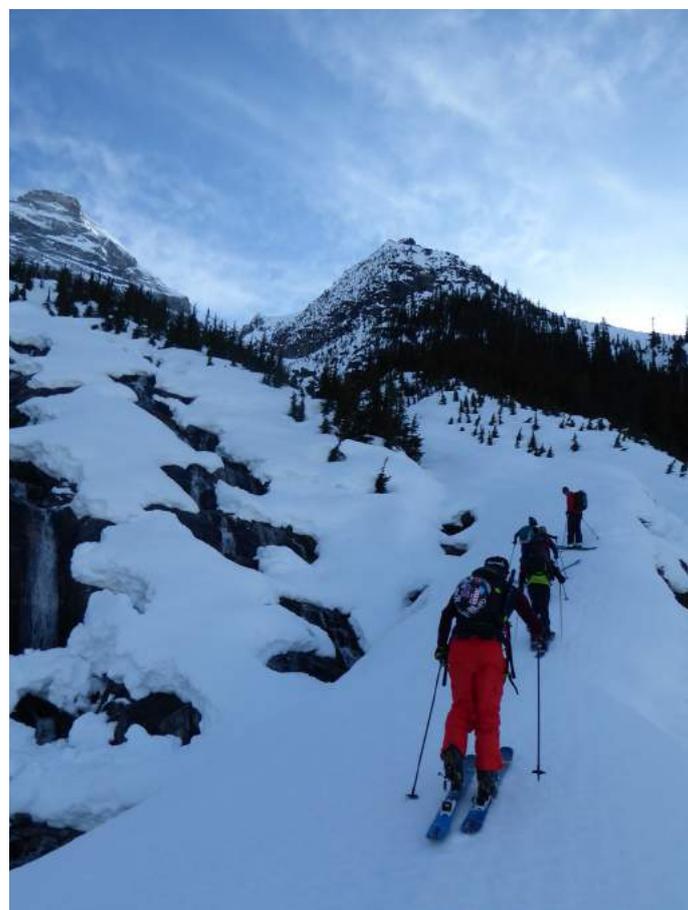




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### GRANTS 2016

Grants approved in 2016 totalled £195,557, a 5% decrease on 2015, but this is more than accounted for by the early pump-priming grant to SPEAR 17 made in 2015. These grants helped or will help 102 expeditions (some of which will not actually deploy until 2017) - a small decrease in the number for 2015, although an increase in the number of participants by 11% to 1906. 70 applications were rejected as not meeting our criteria. Our support reached across the UK as shown below. These comprised:



Region	No. of Expeditions	Eligible numbers	Grant
Yorks & Humber	9	217	£13,070
Wessex	13	252	£31,110
Wales	5	57	£4,915
NW England & IOM	11	233	£30,008
N England	9	251	£23,490
Greater London	9	139	£14,875
SE England	11	120	£16,710
W Midlands	7	116	£19,360
E Midlands	10	179	£15,425
Highland	3	38	£4,400
Lowland	3	41	£3,644
N Ireland	4	73	£8,300
E Anglia	8	190	£10,250
<b>Totals</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>1906</b>	<b>£195,557</b>

Unit type	Expeditions	Adults	Cadets	Total nos	Grants £	Per person	Per exped	Av nos per exped
<b>Cadets - ACF:</b>	12	112	356	468	£36,990	£79	£3,083	39
<b>Cadets - Sea:</b>	2	10	20	30	£5,800	£193	£2,900	15
<b>Cadets - ATC:</b>	11	83	218	301	£23,090	£77	£2,099	27
<b>Cadets - CCF:</b>	15	33	256	289	£36,560	£127	£2,437	19
<b>All Cadets:</b>	40	238	850	1088	£102,440	£94	£2,561	27
<b>University / DTU:</b>	21	327	0	327	£23,800	£73	£1,133	16
<b>Reservists - TA:</b>	38	476	0	476	£58,642	£123	£1,543	13
<b>Reservists - RNR / RMR:</b>	3	15	0	15	£10,675	£712	£3,558	5
<b>Reservists - RAuxAF:</b>	0	0	0	0	£0	£0	£0	0
<b>All Reservists:</b>	41	491	0	491	£69,317	£141	£1,691	12
<b>Totals:</b>	102	1056	850	1906	£195,557	£103	£1,917	19

## Volunteer Reserves and University Officer Cadets

Following 2015's 50% increase in the number of Reserve Forces expeditions, there was a 10% decline in grants approved to Reserve Forces in 2016, with the most notable being a major grant for a Royal Marine Reserve (RMR) winter mountaineering expedition to the Khumbu region of the Nepal Himalaya. It is a while since we have supported a RMR expedition, and it was encouraging to see them active again with this ambitious project. The number of grants to University Cadets has remained the same, although the numbers involved have increased, but there were no applications for serious major projects in 2016 reflected in a decrease in the value of grants made to them.

**Cadets** Again, there was a decline, albeit small, in the number of Cadet expeditions receiving grants in 2016, although more cadets took part than in 2015 due to a significant increase in ACF and ATC numbers. This reflects an apparent trend for more expeditions within the ACF, and to a lesser extent the ATC, towards large, county or wing level rather than unit level expeditions. We suspect that this reflects the difficulty sometimes encountered in finding the required instructors and getting appropriate approvals. This is a little disappointing, since large does not necessarily mean better, and much of the benefit of an expedition derives from being involved in the planning and mounting, not just taking part. The Applications committee therefore takes a favourable view on unit-mounted expeditions and those focussing on instructor development. The importance of this is perhaps well-illustrated by a comment from one participant on an HQ Air Cadets expedition for adult instructors to the French Alps: *"I can confidently say, this course has instilled in me the belief that running overseas expeditions for my cadets can be a reality."*

Much more worrying is a 21% drop to 15 CCF expeditions (3 of which were from grant-maintained schools), this against a background of 100+ new CCFs established in state schools over the last few years. Anecdotally, it seems that a number may be abandoning CCF expeditions in preference to having cadets take part in school trips, which seem to face fewer bureaucratic hurdles. This is difficult to quantify, as these projects are not transparent to the Trust, but we wonder whether the different needs of adult



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service units and young Cadet organisations are fully appreciated by all involved in the Joint Service Approvals process. We are investigating further.

### PERFORMANCE

We have recently revised the Key Performance Indicators to track performance. These have been summarised above. To these we will be adding Cadet statistics, particularly tracking the number of cadets in receipt of Free School Meals, and the proportion of funds granted to the lowest quartile of Government Indices of Mean Deprivation (IMD). In 2016, 20% of Cadet expeditions were mounted by units in the bottom quartile, but 31% of our Cadet grants were directed to these. This is a healthy bias in favour of units from deprived areas; the challenge, touched on above, is to encourage and enable more Cadet units from such areas to mount their own expedition – however modest.

Because of higher supervisory needs and a greater need often to hire civilian instructors to assist, the average cost of a Cadet expedition exceeds that for the VR. Moreover, the VR units have access to a wider variety of other funds. The implications are seen by breaking out KPIs for Cadets from the overall figures:

KPI - 2016	Cadets	Overall
Grant P/P	£94	£102
Grant/Cost Ratio	10.4%	10.4%
Contribution P/P	£497	£415
Pers Contribution / Cost Ratio	55.1%	42.2%
Market Penetration (End Year only)	0.69%	0.97%

On average cadets each contribute £497 to take part in an expedition - markedly higher than Volunteer Reservists, and doubtless too high for all to partake. Our reach, proportionally, into the Cadet market is still half that of the VR. Surveys of Cadet units reinforce the challenges – affordability, access to qualified instructors, and coping with the planning and approvals process. Whilst our figures are moving in the right direction, comparison with across the board KPIs shows that we still need to do much more for Cadets.

## BEST EXPEDITION 2015 AWARDS

Awards for The Prince of Wales's Awards for best Volunteer Reserve, University Officer Training Corps and Cadet expeditions of 2015 were presented during 2016 by county Lord Lieutenants at regional events organised by respective Reserve Forces and Cadet Associations. The winners were:

### VOLUNTEER RESERVE AWARD

#### Exercise ALPINE ARC—Joint Service

Led by an Army Reserve captain, sponsored by Oxford University Officer Training Corps, with participants from across the Regular and Reserve Forces.

Exercise Alpine Arc was a ski-traverse across the entire chain of the European Alps from Puchberg am Schneeberg in Austria before winding its way through 1100kms of snow-locked mountains, accumulating almost 80000 metres of ascent and descent before arriving in Menton 82 days later.

Led by Captain Noakes, an Oxford University Officer Training Corps Training Officer, the aim of the expedition was for a British Army team to traverse the entire European Alpine chain on skis during a single winter season. Although similar expeditions had been completed before by other groups, it had not been undertaken by a military team. The route was divided into 11 stages, with each stage completed by a different team of 6 skiers, sometimes from the same unit but mostly individuals from different units. A total of 58 British military personnel took part in the expedition: 29 Regular Army, 27 Reservists and 2 from the Royal Air Force.

The expedition highlights the desired outcomes of The Ulysses Trust, but it is the closing sentences of Captain Noakes' report which reinforce the importance of supporting expeditions such as this: *'[a]lthough I had many enthusiastic supporters who backed the project there were also many individuals who were very negative and saw the project as overly ambitious and destined to fail. This is true to all ambition and all challenges in life. Those people who listen to these detractors and are not prepared to take the risk that they may fail to reach their goal accept immediate defeat by not trying. I, for my part, am very glad that we tried and even more satisfied that we succeeded.'*



### UNIVERSITY CADET UNIT AWARD

#### Exercise ROLLING EAGLE - Exeter University Officer Training Corps

This unique expedition over the summer of 2015 saw 3 Officer Cadets of Exeter University Officer Training Corps undertake a trans-American cycling challenge cycling from West to East across the continent of North America. This was an entirely self-sufficient expedition with the team carrying all their equipment for the duration. The route took the team through all of the Northern States between Seattle and New York City, and briefly into Canada; this took the team 59 days and saw them cycle 3743 miles.

This expedition was entirely cadet conceived, planned and executed, and the unique nature of the expedition makes it an extremely worthy recipient of this year's Award.



## BEST CADET AWARD

### Exercise FISTRAL FOLLY - Durham Army Cadet Force

This unique expedition saw 105 cadets and 19 staff from the Durham Army Cadet Force make use of Royal Air Force St Mawgan during the October half-term to undertake a junior Cadet camp which focused on expedition and adventurous training.

The cadets, many from social backgrounds that would not normally expose them to such activities, took part in a varied and robust training programme, which was designed to develop their personal and social skills in order to build confidence in their own abilities, demonstrating that they had the ability to succeed.

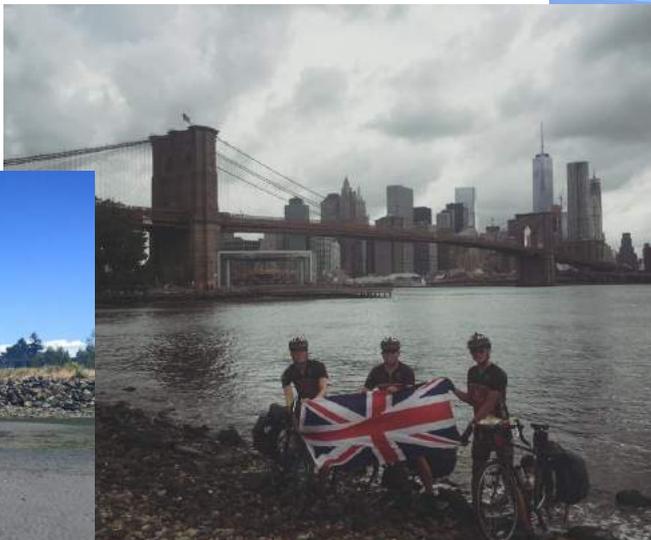
The training included survival training and an adventure training package around the local area, which included coastering - a combination of climbing, traversing and swimming around the sea coastline.

Durham Army Cadet Force has invested significantly in both resources and staff to allow it to run effective and challenging mountain bike packages for its cadets and this camp allowed the staff the opportunity to put the training into practice.

Exercise Fistral Folly highlights the opportunities available within the United Kingdom for cadets to undertake meaningful adventure training and is thoroughly deserving of this year's award.



THE ULYSSES TRUST



*Ex Rolling Eagle - wheel dipping in the Pacific (left) and the Atlantic (above). The image on the right is indicative of the 3743 miles in between!*



# FINANCIAL REPORT

## Income & Expenditure 2016

A summary of the Ulysses Trust's financial status at end-2016 (based on as yet unaudited accounts) is summarised in the table opposite.

The Trust's income amounted to £218,682 in 2016, £188,586 from donations. Other income included dividend contribution and capital gain from the Army Cadet Fund, established in 2015 with the major gift of £250,000 from the Army Cadet Force Association Charity for the long-term benefit of Army Cadets; the residual capital is invested in the Armed Forces Common Investment Fund (AFCIF) managed by Blackrock.

The largest source of in-year support again came from the Nuffield Trust, which continues generously to underwrite grants to Volunteer Reserve and University Cadet expeditions to an agreed level. This income shown from the Nuffield Trust was less than the expenditure on VR and University Cadet expeditions in 2016 because of a carry forward for cancelled expedition / returned funds from previous years. The RAF Charitable Trust also continued their much valued support for ATC expeditions, down on the previous year due to a drop in ATC activity commented on elsewhere. Few new donations were received but an increase in termed commitments, notably from BAE Systems, the Army Sports Control Board Charity, the MacRobert Trust and the Clive and Sylvia Richards Charity are particularly welcome for our longer term stability.

The Trust expended £194,458 (after refunds and returns) on charitable activities in 2016 with grants approved for 102 expeditions. This decline on 2016 was mainly due to the drop in applications from University Cadet and CCF outweighing the increase in VR and ACF grants.

Overheads of £59,540, although less than budgeted, increased due to a review of fundraising strategy and subsequent recruitment costs of the Development Director, and legal fees incurred in converting the Charity into a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). This latter step was considered by Trustees to be an essential measure as the Trust expands.

Excess of expenditure over income was therefore £35,315, less than budgeted in this year of change, but reducing the net assets of the Trust to £376,981. Of these, £249,156 is held in long-term investments for the Army Cadet Fund which has historically generated a total return of 8% pa. The balance of £127,826 is held as Reserves - £53,223 restricted in the Cadet Reserve and £74,603 held as a General Reserve – equivalent of 6 months historic operating expenditure.

### Budget 2017

The Trust is budgeting £237,000 on charitable activities in 2017, the uplift on 2016 accounted for by grants of £142,000 for Cadet expeditions in line with the thrust of our Business Plan.





**SUMMARY INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNTS 2015 (Unaudited)**

<b>Income</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2015</b>
Voluntary Income / Donations	£188,586	£456,618
Bank Interest and Dividends	£9,937	£3,272
Growth in Investments	£19,028	£128
Gift aid Tax Recovery	£1,131	£2,698
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>£218,683</b>	<b>£462,716</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
VR Grants (incl those on Cadet expeditions)	£82,235	£92,384
University Cadets	£21,073	£29,350
Cadets (excluding VR Instructors)	£91,150	£83,100
<b>Total Charitable Activities</b>	<b>£194,458</b>	<b>£204,834</b>
Cost of Grant Making	£4,026	£3,601
Cost of Generating funds	£44,788	£33,406
Governance and Administration	£10,726	£4,575
<b>Total Overheads</b>	<b>£59,540</b>	<b>£41,582</b>
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>£253,998</b>	<b>£246,416</b>
<b>Excess of Expenditure over Income</b>	<b>-£35,315</b>	<b>£216,300</b>

**BALANCE SHEET - 1 Jan 2017**

<b>Assets</b>		
Investments (AFCIF)	£249,156	£230,128
<i>Current Assets</i>		
Cash	£147,006	£187,146
Debtors	£29,858	£40,302
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>£176,864</b>	<b>£227,448</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>£426,020</b>	<b>£457,576</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Creditors: falling due within one year	£49,038	£45,280
<b>Net Current assets</b>	<b>£127,826</b>	<b>£182,168</b>
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>£376,982</b>	<b>£412,296</b>
<b>Made Up of:</b>		
Army Cadets Endowment Fund	£249,156	
Cadet Reserve	£53,223	
General Reserve	£74,603	
	<b>£376,982</b>	<b>£412,296</b>



## CLOSING COMMENTS

As we look back 25 years, the founders of the Ulysses Trust and enthusiastic volunteers had the vision of helping a few Volunteer Reservists, and a short while later University Officer Cadets and the Cadet Forces to mount a limited number of expeditions a year. Its formation, alongside encouraging the Services to take a more constructive view of the possibilities for these groups, unlocked an unexpectedly enthusiastic response. After steady growth, demand began to accelerate and the Trust granted over £100,000 benefitting over 1000 participants for the first time in 2005. Since then, the Trust has intermittently engaged with professional advisors to help raise the necessary funds to meet demand that now stands at some £200,000 for just under 2000 beneficiaries. By 2014 Trustees identified that to raise the necessary funds to meet the growing demand and continue to make a difference in the

long-term, the following needed to be addressed:

- Improved and transparent governance and business planning;
- Better communication with all our stakeholders;
- More effective direction of limited resources to greatest need;
- Evidence of the beneficial outcomes that our grants – and our donors' gifts – deliver.

They also recognised that a more robust and professional organisation was required to make this happen. The last 3 years have seen steady progress in all these areas, although some solutions are far from simple and continue to absorb much attention. Measuring impact more meaningfully presents a number of interesting challenges which we have outlined and hope to



tackle with others. The tools for directing grants to best effect are not perfect, and it would be easy to disadvantage some individuals at the expense of others, when our principle is to help make opportunities available for all. Nevertheless, we believe that we have prepared the ground well for the most recent and daunting step – moving from a largely volunteer organisation to now appointing a full-time paid member of staff.

Service Cadets are the prime concern of our present Business Plan and of our Anniversary Appeal, and we remain convinced that we achieve the greatest bang for the buck by directing our support for outdoor development through the Volunteer Reserve and Cadet organisations. We continue, however, to keep our options and the possibilities of achieving more through alliance with others as well under review.

The early days of planning any expedition, and translating an idea into a project that happens, can be fraught – research, selecting a team of like-minded souls, obtaining the clearances, getting the equipment, finding the time – and raising the

money. It can be a bit like building a house of cards - on water! So, through all the changes made in the last three years, we have stuck to an early principle, that our processes for applying for grants remain simple, and our responses pragmatic, flexible and above all speedy.

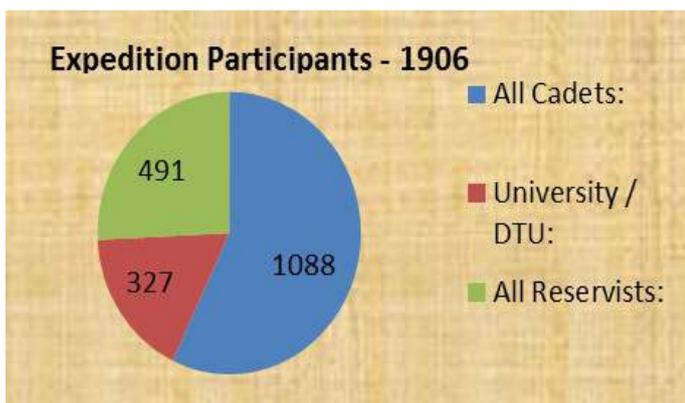
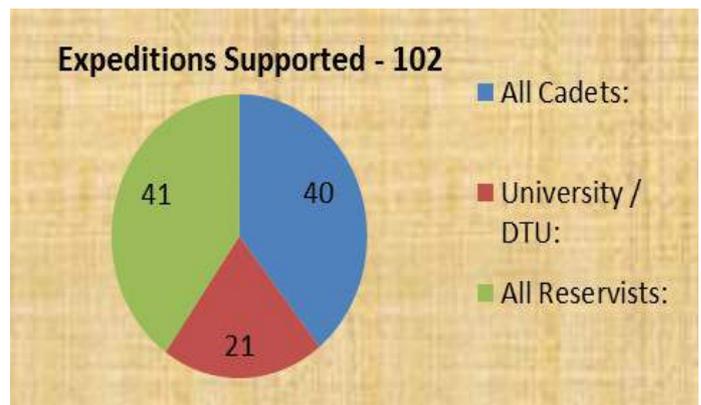
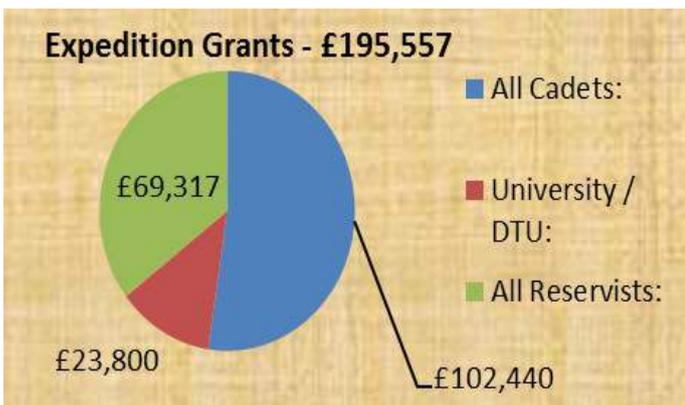
These factors make us quite distinct from most Service-orientated charities. We have talked of building a strong future for the Ulysses Trust, but our purpose, we do not forget, is to help young people fulfil their potential and move them to a better future – *‘To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.’* Or, as one young Air Cadet wrote more prosaically after a canoe expedition through the Tarn Gorges in France: *“I loved the feeling of independence we were given - trusted to make our own decisions, find our own way, cut our own path and make the expedition what we wanted.”*

Please direct any enquiries about this Review to:

Philip Neame, Deputy Chairman

[philip.neame@ulyssustrust.co.uk](mailto:philip.neame@ulyssustrust.co.uk)

### Ulysses Trust - At A Glance





## ANNEX - EXPEDITION REPORTS

The following expedition reports are a cross-section of activity supported and are in the participants' own words. The full range of expedition reports can be found on the Ulysses Trust website at [www.ulysses-trust.co.uk](http://www.ulysses-trust.co.uk).

### EX DRAGON GOZO EAGLE— BRITISH ARMY

On the 4<sup>th</sup> June 2016 11 divers set off for the small Island of Gozo. The expedition was made up of various ranks from Private to Captain. All of which were looking forward to progressing their diver training, refresh their skills or just get back in the water.

The team departed Luton airport for Malta where after an evening arrival and bus transfer boarded the ferry for the quick hop over to the small island of Gozo. Our stay for the duration of the trip was the small fishing village of Marsalforn where we would be diving under the guidance of the Calypso diving company.

The main purpose of the trip was to progress 6 of the team members from BSAC open water divers to Sports Divers. Most of the 6 had only just in the week previous qualified as open water divers so were all fresh and ready for the challenges of the next few days.

The first dive of the trip the next afternoon was taken at the small and sheltered Xwenji bay. This was to be a shallow shakeout dive to test equipment and to ensure everyone was on the same page for some adventurous diving. The next three days diving consisted of getting all the students through all the skills, drills and lessons needed to undertake their final assessments and exam. A number of theory lessons took place after the days diving, mostly fuelled by caffeine with the students soon realising that diving can be quite tiring, or perhaps it was the smooth tones of Daves delivery!

Mid way through the week with the written exam completed and the open water rescue skills test passed all the open water students were now fully qualified BSAC Sports Divers. This was not only a good thing for the students to achieve but also meant the last two days we could progress with some more challenging diving. On the Thursday of the trip we boarded en masse a local dive charter boat and left Marsalforn with the wreck of the P31 in our sights.





## THE ULYSSES TRUST

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The P31 was a former German minesweeper/ patrol boat decommissioned in 2004 and bought by the Maltese tourism authority. She was cleaned and scuttled on the 25<sup>th</sup> August 2009 off the Maltese island of Comino at a depth of 18 meters (59ft) to serve as a dive site and artificial reef.

This for many was their first experience of wreck diving and for some turned out to be their most favourite dive of the week. The nature of the wreck allows divers to swim through corridors and rooms to explore its interior including the bridge and the lower holds. It is also home to quite a variety of marine life such as schools of Damsel fish, a very poisonous and grumpy Scorpion fish and some Morey eels. After a break at a local bay called the blue lagoon we then moved around the coast to an area known as Comino caves. Due to the prevalence of limestone rocks this dive involves

many swim throughs through natural arches and caverns and gave sight to some very impressive light displays from the sunlight piercing the holes in the rocks above. Towards the end of the dive we also had the opportunity to feed some of the local fish life from the bottom of the bay, this brought hundreds of hungry fish in to feed from the divers below.

The final day's diving loomed and with some despondent (and by now quite tired) looks we set off by minibus for our last two dives of the week. Unknown to many these would prove to be the icing on the cake for a great weeks diving.

Our first dive of the final day was at a site known locally as, the Inland Sea, or Qawra in Maltese. This is a lagoon of seawater on the island of Gozo linked to the Mediterranean Sea through an opening formed by a narrow natural arch. Jacques Cousteau himself said the Inland Sea was among his top ten dives! This was a challenging dive with some of the deepest depth progression thus far which divers had to be aware of for possible decompression penalties if not carefully dived.

The dive was a "wall dive" where you follow the sea wall along and observe the fish life around it. There was an abundance of fish life through the dive including some medium sized jackfish (like small tuna) and two large octopus also. The dive was also made slightly more difficult due to having to return into the sea current which meant a little bit more energetic finning was required from all divers.

The final dive of the week was my personal favourite dive and a bucket list dive also. An iconic Gozo dive, the Blue Hole is reached by walking over ancient coralline limestone rocks.

The divers entered the water just around from the Blue Hole itself and descended through a natural chimney down through and out into approx 18 metres of water, the divers then moved over some spectacular rock formations with many fish such as parrot fish, jacks and more swimming around them. We then ventured around the back of the Azure Window and were greeted with some spectacular light displays breaking through



the natural arch above, as we progressed over to the seaward side entrance of the blue hole at around 10 meters, once in the blue hole we explored a large cave that formed at the back of the hole where more fish and one very large moray eel greeted us as we moved around and back to the hole to begin our final ascent of the week.

Our last few minutes ascending were spent coming up through the blue hole where we could see the tourists and fellow divers above all swimming and looking down at us below. This gave us all a time to reflect on the challenges that we faced during 5 days of diving. Much was achieved with 1 Ocean Diver, 5 Sports Divers and 1 Dive Leader qualification as well as my both practical and theory lessons towards Advanced Diver completed.

*Report written by Pte John Parsons RAMC*

## EX DRAGON CENTURY CLIMB - TROJAN SQUADRON

Ex DRAGON CENTURY CLIMB took 17 Trojan Squadron bursars on a challenging rock climbing and klettersteig expedition to the Dolomite Alps to develop mountaineering and rock climbing skills.

This exercise enabled DTUS bursars to participate in more challenging and exciting training to develop personal and leadership qualities that are important to future officers in an operational environment. In particular this means a controlled exposure to risk, which can only be achieved through high quality adventurous training. Additionally, klettersteig is an unusual form of mountaineering with historical significance that cannot be undertaken in the UK – and which would be a unique experience for all.

will allow bursars to move onto instructor level qualification in the near future. This will subsequently allow them to deliver AT themselves both at unit level and in their futures as Officers after Initial Training.

The original deployment from HMS Calliope to Cortina d'Ampezzo was broken up into 3 days. The first day was used to travel from Newcastle to Folkestone, stopping in a local Officers Mess overnight. The following day saw the group travelling from Folkestone to Strasbourg, France, before arriving in Cortina on the third day of travelling, to the delight of setting up tents in the rain. After setting up the campsite, a day of preparation allowed the group to meet their instructors and issue equipment required for AT activities to begin the following day.



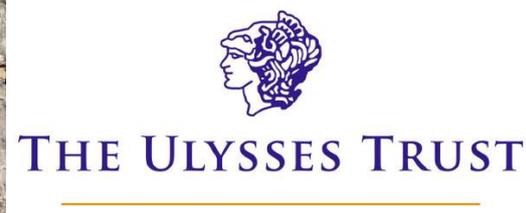
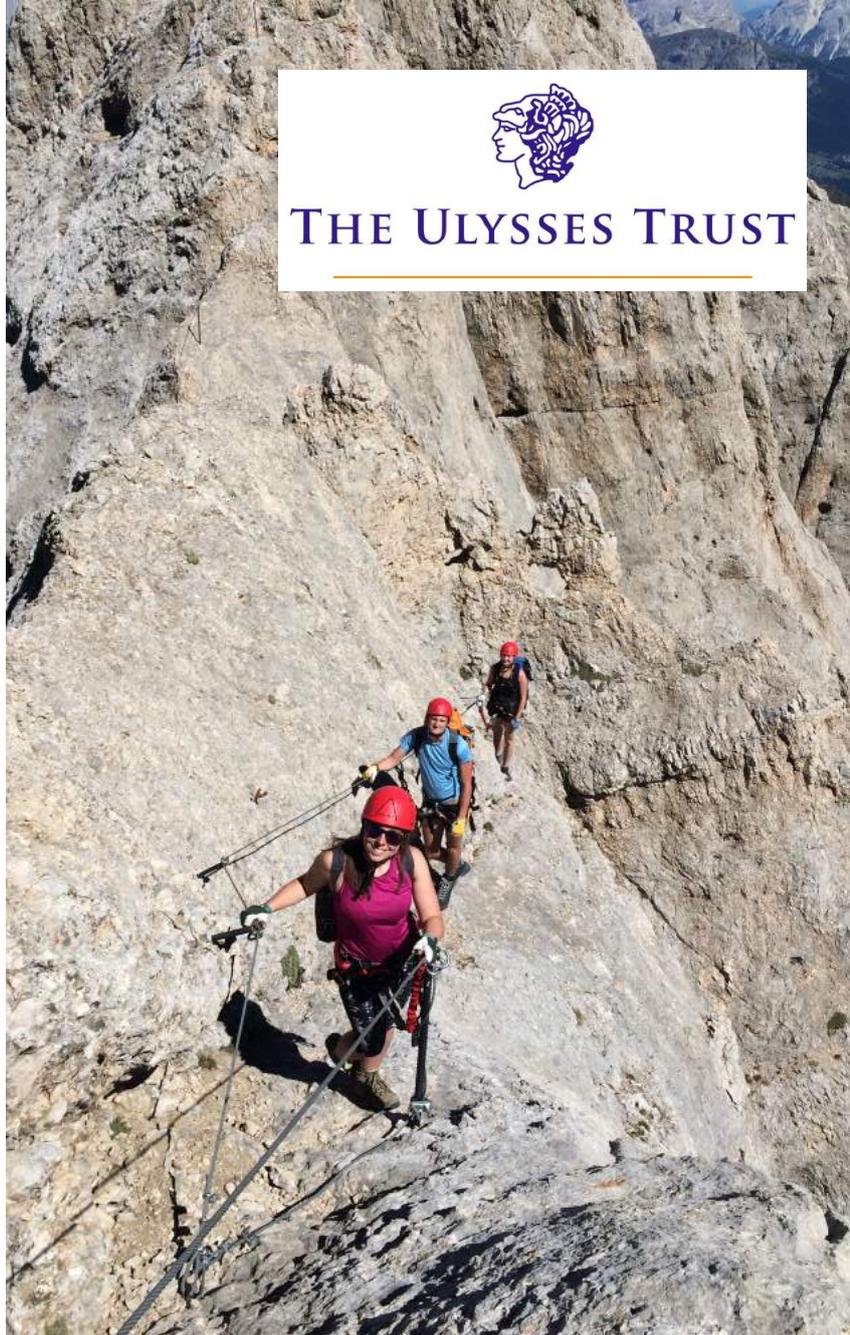
As potential Naval, Army and RAF Officers, it was up to the bursars to fully engage in the planning, administration and delivery of the exercise. An IC was appointed and they were in charge to plan the expedition accordingly. Constraint with an extremely tight budget, this exercise demonstrates how high quality and exciting adventurous training (AT) can be delivered overseas at minimal cost to the public. Additionally, the delivery of the Rock Climbing Foundation Qualification

The exercise was split into two activities. Rock climbing and Alpine Klettersteig, which is a form of travelling across rough terrain, using pre-fixed rope climbing routes. The exercising troops were split into two groups, with each group swapping over activities at the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> day. This allowed each group to experience both disciplines of mountaineering.

With the vast experience that the instructors had, everyone pushed their limits and progressed their abilities to a higher level. Many members completed difficult multi pitching rock faces of at least 8 pitches, whilst members of the Klettersteig group completed several difficult grade E routes, pushing their physical and climbing abilities to the edge.

Halfway through the exercise, a rest day was permitted to allow the exercising party to recover from the challenging climbing and klettersteig. The time was allocated wisely with the completion of a battlefield study. This involved a trip to Museo della Grande Guerra in the Falzarego Pass, which gave a valuable insight into the hardships of daily life for the Austrian and Italian soldiers, fighting in the Dolomites. This proved very insightful, as many of the routes that the klettersteig groups took were once routes that soldiers would use during the Great War. Some of the routes passed through destroyed field hospitals and through the tunnels that would be actively used 100 years ago. While it can be very hard to imagine what life would be like fighting in such conditions as these, travelling the routes can help us understand the sacrifice that these soldiers gave. After this, AT continued with the bursars pushing themselves even further than the previous week.

After several days of thrilling mountaineering and climbing, the exercise had to eventually come to an end. The next few days involved making the long journey back to Newcastle and following that the de-kitting process to sort through the large amount of kit issued throughout the exercise. We like to thank Ulysses Trust, whose heartwarming generosity enabled this expedition to succeed.



## EX ICELAND 2016—ESSEX WING ATC

The Air Training Corps' motto 'Venture, Adventure' proved prophetic for the challenges that Iceland threw at the 12 cadets and 8 staff from across Essex who took part in an expedition to mark the Air Training Corps' 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

Iceland located in the North Atlantic Ocean and on the Mid-Atlantic Ridge, also sits above a mantle plume which makes it volcanic and provides significant geothermal energy. The opposing forces of fire and ice produce deep fjords, black volcanic deserts, snow-capped mountains and waterfalls, which were encountered to provide joy and challenge in equal measure.

The expedition formed part of the Cadet's Gold Duke of Edinburgh award, necessitating a self-sufficient 4 Day expedition through wild country with 8 hours of activity per day; their aim was to study the geo-thermal activity within Iceland's highland interior.

Following a late night arrival, 12 slightly shocked Cadets emerged into the busy communal cooking and washing area of the Reykjavik campsite. This cultural melting pot provided ample opportunity to meet people from a wide range of backgrounds and nationalities. However, the tasks of shopping for supplies and packing were the day's priorities.

The journey to Landmannalaugur and Iceland's interior incorporated visits to the Strokkur geyser and the highly impressive glacial outflow waterfall of Gullfoss. Iceland's roads are either paved or gravel. Gravel 'F' roads can only be crossed by 4x4 and interestingly, the minibus and trailer which arrived to collect us wasn't! It just about coped with the road, however, the river crossings into the campsite proved too deep and we were required to carry our equipment on foot.

The Cadets were presented with another crowded campsite although with support, tents were pitched and meals prepared, with the opportunity for a late night dip in the geothermal pool.



Except water, everything had to be carried, food, fuel, clothing, camping equipment and tents. The resulting rucksacks weighed 18-20kg and made travelling across the terrain hard going, although an acclimatisation day helped prepare us for the expedition.

Day 1 incorporated climbs taking us to the highest part of the route at Hrafninnusker. We travelled through valleys with boiling mud, steam vents and ice caves. A cold night was spent camping on bare rock, which was comprised of a hard, sharp glass like material, obsidian, which easily cut through ground sheets, clothing and tents!





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Day 2 consisted of gentle undulations followed by a descent to the Alftavatn hut. We had the most incredible views of a land that could have been taken straight from Lord of the Rings. At the hut both cadet groups undertook a number of hours of voluntary work; marking out a car park, digging a pipe trench for shower drainage and constructing a river crossing bridge. The Wardens were extremely grateful as the Cadets completed in an afternoon a month's work.



Route finding proved challenging as the descents were steep and snow covered. Once on the valley floor we were presented with a deep and fast flowing glacial outflow, which necessitated 23 icy cold crossings! The sun having set after 17 hours of trekking, we were all dry, fed, hydrated and in bed sound asleep.

Day 5 presented a short walk back to Landmannalaugur for showers, fresh clothes, breakfast and a few treats from the shop, prior to the return coach journey via a service station and the devouring of hotdogs, missed calories and wi-fi!

Rest day opportunities were either a walk through a lava tube or experience lava fields via Icelandic horseback, followed by a dip in the geo-thermal swimming pool and hot tubs.

This most incredible expedition, took place through a land shaped by volcanoes and glaciers. Each twist and turn, each climb and descent presented other worldly views, lavas, mosses, flowers, clouds, glaciers, rivers and waterfalls. Everyone agreed that there are

Day 3 featured a less well travelled route including minor river crossings and a black volcanic desert. The unusual camp site sat above natural hot pools whose water temperature was controlled by using a rake to move stones.

Local wardens and guides advised us that there were 2 routes back to Landmannalaugur; both of which had caused a Canadian and a French team to turn around. A deteriorating weather forecast added to the mix as did 2 Americans who joined us for this return leg. The afternoon proved more challenging as the Torfajokell glacier had washed away the path and most of the mountain side!



probably few Gold Duke of Edinburgh participants who can claim to have crossed volcanoes, lava flows, snow, geo-thermal areas and glacial outflow rivers. It was a privilege watching the Cadets overcome the varied challenges and pull together as a team. Without doubt and in the best traditions of the Air Training Corps, this Adventure required all to Venture into unknown territory to succeed.

**'LOCH SHIEL WILDERNESS OPEN CANOE 2016' -  
MSSC PADDLESPORT TEAM**

The 2016 Scot-Paddle with the Sea Cadets aimed to Open Canoe the reverse route taken by Bonnie Prince Charlie on his return to Scotland in the year 1745, by journeying from Glenfinnan to the sea. The objective was to take a group of cadets and let them work as a team to develop self-sufficient expedition skills. We also introduced them to experiences such as cooking over an open fire, catching their own food, how to set up wild camps, simple survival skills such as carving tools; but most importantly we wanted to have a great time in the wilderness. This is their story, in their own words.

**Dani**

Throughout the week I have gone from wet to dry, hot to cold, from tired to energetic; but over all I have had an amazing time! Trying something new has helped me develop skills I thought I'd never experience; such as wood carving and open fire cooking. The weather wasn't always on our side, but we kept our paddles deep in the water and the smiles wide on our faces. I thoroughly enjoyed the peace and quiet and just the sound of nature all around. The views were spectacular and I was in awe for most of our journey. My paddling technique has improved immensely and I am very proud of all my achievements this week (this includes the knife I carved from scratch). I would recommend wild camping and expedition to anyone who is looking for a thrill, challenge and an overall fun week.



**Dave**

I have been to Scotland a few times before but have never been on an expedition with Cadets. This was a whole different experience and I enjoyed sharing knowledge with the Cadets, as well as gaining more knowledge and experience myself. Despite the weather being against us on a couple of occasions, it was one of the most enjoyable expeditions I've been on. Over the course of the week I think everyone bonded and worked together to ensure that we were all safe and all fed and watered. We had a really nice day the day we paddled out to the beach and I think this was a highlight for most people. Getting up close to seals was a real treat.

**Emily**

During this amazing week I have learned so many new things, like how to make a knife and spoon out of wood; I was very proud of myself for once. I also learned how to make fires for cooking, and for light; and how to cook Pollock and Mackerel on the fire that I caught when we went to the sea. It made the best scrummy and tasty best fish ever. I also really liked when we rafted four canoes and made a sailing boat, I thought this was excellent and a really enjoyable way to take in the amazing scenery. I would recommend it to all my friends at my unit as it is a really good experience.

**Sam**

Over the week, we travelled from Loch Sheil to Loch Moidart. This consisted of many interesting memories that will stay with me for the rest of my life. One in particular was when Simon and I were sea fishing for food to eat later that night; we caught a rather large Mackerel that just didn't want to be the group's dinner. It kept wriggling and putting up a fight but it eventually stopped when Simon hit it on the back of its head. Overall it was a great trip and would definitely do it again.



**Jack**

Over the week I have learnt a lot like sailing with the boats down Loch Sheil. I have also learnt how to use a saw and how different types of tree wood burns better; I have met some amazing people we all have had fun together and

### Big Sam

I have been to Scotland several times before, but this was the first time I have been here in the summer months. This is also the furthest west I have ever been as I am usually visiting the Cairngorms. There are so many things to take away from this expedition and some have been on my wish list for many years. The wildlife we encountered was splendid and included the first time I have seen seals up close, the first sighting of loons and the first fish (a sea trout at that) I have caught from a canoe despite many previous attempts.

Other firsts for me on this trip were carving a spoon from scratch and making fire by friction with a bow drill. The fire aspect has been a long standing goal of mine, and despite the perpetual rain and driving winds I was able to create an ember and turn it into flames after only a few failed attempts. I love being in Scotland and this expedition took me to some of the most beautiful and remote parts of the land. The crystal clear waters and white sand beaches, coupled with the abundance of wildlife and feeling of solitude have left me with a set of memories that will last a lifetime.

### Casey

I have been in cadets for six years, but I have never been on an exhibition before. After this I wish I had done this a lot sooner as it was one of the best experiences I have ever been on. Setting off from Glenfinnan on the first day it barely felt like we had done half a kilometre by the time we had our first brew stop, but in fact we had done nearly 3 kilometres! I enjoyed sitting around the open fire cooking fish that we had caught and filleted earlier that day. In the entire week I didn't have one dull moment, or a moment I didn't enjoy, even when we were paddling into Force 5 wind.



### Simon

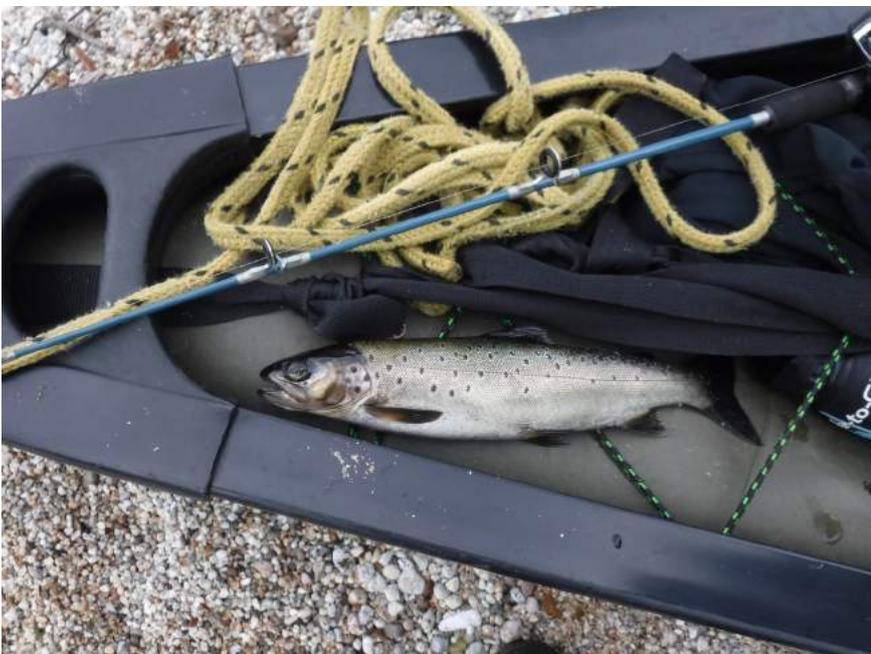
The week started off wet and carried on being wet with the added touch of wind until the last 2 days when the sun shone and it actually became warm. As much as I enjoyed paddling into a head on wind for a few days, wearing a midgie net and trying to take my tent down in the odd dry spell in the mornings, I most enjoyed the sea fishing we did on the last full day. We paddled off of our island and headed out to sea with the sun shining and our foulies in our day bags. Heading out we saw the seals popping up behind other boats, almost taunting as if to say that we can't see them and that they were smarter, and trying to get a picture of them was a challenge.

### Vicki

When I first booked on for the expedition I was filled with trepidation, but now after completing my week in the wild I am so glad that I did. What a fabulous week learning lots of new things whilst paddling through some of the most glorious countryside. I have learnt a whole plethora of new skills during the week. 'I made fire' on one day, carved a knife and even sailed and that is to name just a few. Although some of the conditions during the week were a little challenging, with heavy rain and wind along with swarming midgies, it didn't detract from the experience as a whole. I come away from the week with a lot more experience and a lot more confidence in my abilities both on and off the water.

### Gareth

A fantastic week, getting away from it all and into the Scottish Wilderness. Some spectacular views and natural beauty. I loved the chance to get away and get back to nature, swimming in the Loch and having a loo with a view. It was great to see the young cadets grow in confidence and develop as the week went on. We had fun learning bush craft skills, like collecting wood, building a fire and carving things out of wood, like spatulas, spoons and knives. It was great exploring the history of the area with the Burial Island and Castle, as well as exploring the sea loch with the variety of marine birds and seals. A fantastic expedition that won't be forgotten.



## TESTIMONIALS

If we published all of the positive feedback received from the expeditions that we support, we would need a publication twice this size. All comments can be found within the expedition reports published on our website, but the following selection will provide the reader with the overall sentiment, and will go towards illustrating the difference that our support makes to young people throughout the UK.

*"Overall this was a fantastic week for all the cadets. I especially enjoyed it as I was the senior cadet and had the job of organising the junior cadets in the morning and when we were back in camp in the afternoon. The great thing is I passed my 1 star award. I certainly hope Lt Col Balmbra organises another trip like this, as I will definitely put my name down."*

*"We loved it so much because it was an opportunity to do something not many people get the chance to do. Everyone had to overcome mental or physical challenges whilst in the caves."*

**"The Zulu reaction to the sight of white people walking and not travelling by car plus visiting their communities was one of initial bemusement. Friendly greetings quickly followed. They were pleased that outsiders were taking an interest in their way of life."**

**"At the end of the trip after a much appreciated barbecue on the beach of the fjord, the boys reflected on the importance of working together as a team and encouraging and looking out for each other. It was gratifying to observe a genuine care for one another amongst the cadets. We reinforced the importance of compassion and support regardless of the walk of life the cadets end up in."**

**"The best experience I have ever had with Liverpool University Air Squadron and challenges that I will call on for motivation in my future Royal Air Force Career."**

*"Strangers at the start and a family by the end."*

**"It was going to be one of the most exciting things I have ever done, or will ever do."**

**"Only the final exam was left now....we all passed with flying colours and were pronounced to no longer be tadpoles.....we were fully fledged frogmen!"**

**"I cherished the moments we had in the desert. For me it was a moment to think and relax, to look back at my life in the UK and compare it to here in India. It was emotional at times, thinking about home and what we are doing here, but I am very proud".**

**"I've done things I never thought I'd be able to do in a sport I never thought I would have had the chance to learn. Opportunities like this don't present themselves too often, I'm glad I had it."**



“For me, the most memorable moment of the camp was white water rafting and experiencing cliff jumps, both being some of the best things I have ever done.”

*“It had been tough, very tough, which for us aged 14 – 15 was a real challenge, but to embark on an expedition into the icy wastes of the Hardangervidda and survive was no mean feat and driving away on the final morning to return to Canford the hills that we had survived in certainly looked grey and foreboding – did I go there and survive was the simple question which we could not really quite believe. But we all learned much more than doing just that; pushing oneself, supporting and encouraging others, determination, courage to push on, what it is like to have someone in the group who does not contribute and what respect others get by selfless commitment and generosity were amongst our other lessons. Yes, and learning to ski too, but it was all a truly great experience and our thanks go to the Ulysses Trust for their generous support.”*





# THE ULYSSES TRUST

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Patron: HRH The Prince of Wales

This Report is an overview of the support that we provide that makes adventurous training possible for almost 2000 young people throughout the UK every year. Without the support of the Ulysses Trust, many of these expeditions would not have got off the starting blocks. The majority of our income comes from donations from generous benefactors like you and we make every penny count.

If you, your organisation, or your unit, are able to make a donation, organise a fundraising event, or support the Ulysses Trust in any way then we would be delighted to hear from you. Your contribution will make a difference, particularly to those individuals who, without the support of the Ulysses Trust would be financially unable to participate.

Visit our website to find out how you can help to inspire a generation.

[www.ulyssustrust.co.uk](http://www.ulyssustrust.co.uk)

Contact Address:

Colonel Nigel Thursby  
Honorary Secretary  
The Ulysses Trust  
c/o The Cottage  
Patney, Devizes  
Wiltshire SN10 3RD

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