

The Apex Challenge is considered to be among the toughest of all the UK's adventure competitions. Each year we run several events for explorer scouts and scout network members aged 14-25.

Combining challenging outdoor activities with navigation and teamwork, our events offer a unique adventure experience.

Our dedicated team of volunteers is working to modernise and energise the whole Scouting movement with dynamic events and activities.

EVENT CENTRE



Legal information

The **Apex Challenge** became a registered charity in 2004 and is governed by its own declaration of trust. The charity operates throughout England and Wales. It is also part of the Scout Association and operates under its rules and guidelines. Its aims are 'to promote the development of young people in achieving their full physical intellectual social and spiritual potentials, as individuals, as responsible citizens and as members of the local, national and international communities particularly by the provision of specialised outdoor activities'.

The Apex Challenge currently has three trustees. These first trustees are permanent appointments:

- Matthew Richards: Field Head Lodge, Sandhills, Thorner, LS14 3DN. (Registered charity address.)
- David Pape: 6 Martindale Drive, Bramley, Leeds, LS13 2HB.
- James Webster: 5 Farrar Court, Bramley, Leeds, LS13 3SP.

New trustees may be appointed by the existing trustees for a term of one year by a resolution passed at a special meeting called under clause 15 of the Apex Challenge declaration of trust.

From the trustees...



Matt Richards - Event Director

Who would have thought so much could have been packed into just 12 months? The Apex Challenge has continued to flourish in 2011 with massive developments in all areas of the operation.

Demand for our events has reached unprecedented levels. With a new online registration system for the competitions places have been snapped up at incredible speed. The spring event sold out in just a few days, and our October event was full in less than two hours. This is an incredible situation, which is testament to the incredible dedication of the Apex Challenge team in putting on hugely desirable events.

We have continued to develop the volunteer team who come together to run the events with several new faces joining us this year. We're keen to discover and develop new talent in all areas of the operation and it's been great to see new volunteers arriving in our technical, catering and medical teams throughout 2011. We've also been investing in the training and professional development of our team which is having a direct effect on our capabilities.

This year has also seen us develop the events themselves with new game elements, adventurous activities and new locations meaning the Apex Challenge is continuing to evolve. It's been a huge privilege being able to work throughout the year with such a dedicated team of volunteers who are continuing to deliver top-class events, right at the forefront of modern adventure competitions.





David Pap<mark>e – Assistant Event Organiser</mark>

It is amazing to see such demand for our events and more scouts competing than ever before.

Technology is helping us meet the challenges this increase in teams creates. The electronic scoring system we already have gives accurate results in a timely fashion and our new smartphone app that was piloted this year provides exciting opportunities for the future of the Apex Challenge.



James Webster - Assistant Event Organiser

The Apex Challenge is all about thrilling activities that build weekends to remember for hundreds of scouts. Behind the scenes there's a huge number of mundane tasks that are needed to ultimately create our spectacular events. It's been great this year to automate more of those tasks, such as the entry and payment process to give us more time to spend on the fun things that really matter!

Review of the the year.

- Opened up and promoted the event online to young people of all abilities.
- Developed a new electronic payment system to speed up entry payments.
- Created spaces for an extra 24 teams to take part in our events across the year.
- Begun making plans for events to mark our 10th anniversary.
- Introduced new and innovative activities for teams to tackle.
- Included more people in the event planning process to generate new ideas.
- Refocused the prize strategy on one-off experiences.
- Further improved the quality and quantity of food in the Apex Cafe.

In early 2011 the charity set eight aims for the 12 month period which are detailed here:

1. To ensure the event is promoted as an allinclusive competition particularly through explanation on the website of possible adaptations.

The Apex Challenge is a tough outdoor adventure event, but that doesn't mean it should be out of reach for those who lack full mobility. Online, we now promote how the event can be adapted to suit those young people of all abilities who would like to take part and it has been great to welcome scouts with specific needs. We regularly cater for those with dietary requirements that can at times limit their physical capabilities. Also in the spring we were approached by the parent of an explorer with cerebral palsy and we came up with a way he could take part with his dad. They both enjoyed it so much they returned for our longer event in the autumn and are already planning to join us in 2012!

AIM SUCCESSFULLY ACHIEVED.

2. To introduce online payment for events using credit and debit cards.

Since 2002 cheques have been used by teams to pay for their places in their Apex Challenge. We have now built a new entry system backed up by Paypal and after a successful trial alongside traditional payments in the spring we have moved to an entirely electronic solution for teams wishing to take part. (More on p10.)

AIM SUCCESSFULLY ACHIEVED.

3. To increase the number of teams taking part. We've always been keen to increase capacity at Apex Challenge events without diluting the experience for those taking part. We continued to grow the competition in 2011 with the spring event attracting 88 teams (75 in

2010) and the autumn event having 89 teams taking part (78 in 2010) . **AIM SUCCESSFULLY ACHIEVED**.

4 To begin planning events to mark the 10th anniversary of Apex Challenge in 2012.

We have already started to make plans for some dramatic new events in 2012. We are particularly keen to use new locations and include a range of new activities. We are also considering possible changes to the format of the events to keep them feeling fresh and exciting. AIM SUCCESSFULLY ACHIEVED.

5. To increase the quality of activity bases at events through better guidance.

Adventure activities are right at the heart of Apex Challenge events so it is critical that we continue to provide high quality, innovative challenges for the competitors. This year we have continued to develop these and have introduced some brand new activities such as grass sledging, bouldering and slack lining. We have also refreshed some of our other activities and encouraged volunteers to come up with bizarre new games. The pizza-making water slide at the autumn event is just one example of real Apex creativity in action. (More on p6-9.)

AIM SUCCESSFULLY ACHIEVED.

6. To involve more people in the planning of events.

2011 saw our first ever 'Adventurous group mission'; a weekend away for the organising team where a planning and review meeting was combined with a series of outdoor challenges, just for the adults. This led to some great new ideas for us to work on throughout the year. We have also attracted several new volunteers to the event's technical, catering and event

meaning we now have an even wider skill base to draw upon to enhance the competitions. **AIM SUCCESSFULLY ACHIEVED.**

7. To refresh the prize strategy for our events.

The last year has seen us radically change the range of prizes for our competitions. In the past we have relied on donations of outdoor equipment from retailers and manufactures for winning teams. Quality products were becoming increasingly difficult to source, with companies having less money for charitable donations, so we now offer experience prizes. These have included days out climbing, caving, on high ropes courses, water skiing and even virtual–sky–diving. We have also been able to provide the winning teams with canal boat holidays and camping trips. This new prize offering has already attracted positive comments from our winning teams.

8. To increase satisfaction levels for our event catering.

AIM SUCCESSFULLY ACHIEVED.

Catering on such a large scale has always been a real challenge and our dedicated catering team have continued to adapt to the increasing numbers year on year. We have also been keen to improve the overall quality of the menu and this year spent considerably more on food and catering equipment. (See accounts on p13.) This resulted in a marked improvement in the satisfaction levels recorded in the post-event survey, a great endorsement of the incredible work our team put in. AIM SUCCESSFULLYACHIEVED.



Spring 2011 Overnight Challenge

It couldn't have been hotter for this year's Apex Overnight Challenge as more teams than ever before descended on **Sherwood Pines Forest Park for** a night of action-packed adventure in the woods.

As teams from across the UK checked in with the sun shining, already plans were being hatched. Explorers were desperate to avoid the cunning Apex chasers, Teams of scout network members were frantically trying to work out the best sequence of bases to secure victory.

Then after more than 400 people had packed into the event briefing, the event began. From archery in the dark to water catapults and a massive inflatable assault course,

there were 14 tough activities to test teams to the limit.

Six hours passed as everyone was out scrambling for those soughtafter Apex points. But also out were the Apex chasers, keen to track teams down and take points

As the 88 teams started to arrive back at the event centre marquee it was clear there had been some impressive performances. Instantly the maps appeared, showing where teams had been and who had been tracked down by those eager chasers.

Then as the sun rose on Sunday morning, it was time to find out which teams were leaving with the big prizes, and the coveted Apex

Winning teams: Hannah And Her Merry Men (Explorer) ICBINV Network (Network)









Explorer scout: "I enjoyed it a lot as it was a great challenge yet it was fun as the activities were very inventful." If you've ever wondered what activities teams tackle at our events, here's a rundown of the spring 2011 activity bases.

Dirtu bombs

It took great teamwork and skill to fire the water balloons at the target. But could you find the right trajectory with your catapult to knock over the tower of cans?

In a spin

Your team had to get the forces working in your favour as you took on the might of this spinning carousel. Did you manage to get enough power to swing right out to the target?

On the ropes

This adventure course felt a lot more exposed than usual when you were plunged into darkness. Teamwork was critical to succeed.

On target

Archery can be hard enough in the daylight, but when it's all happening under torchlight your team needed a very keen eye and a steady hand to hit the targets.

Mega assault

It was our longest ever Apex inflatable assault course but things got much more tricky when your team had to carry one of your members through it.

Powerboats

Take to the water in the exclusive Apex speedboats at this pond-side base. But could you control your vessel through the course to access that crucial punch?

A bizarre challenge in the

faced with an empty activity, the challenge was to find the organisers hidden in the undergrowth. But things weren't quite as they

Go ape(x)

It's like the famous Go Ape courses, but with an Apex twist. High in the trees it took real nerve and skill to cross the high ropes course to release the punch.

The climb

With the control hanging high above you, the only way to get to it was up the wobbly metal ladder. With it twisting with every step, did you have the nerve to reach the top?

Bouncy coconuts

It was a human coconut shy deep in the forest. But when your targets are bouncing on a bouncy castle, the challenge takes on a whole new dimension.

Giant ienga

This tested your team's construction skills. Could you work out how to build the tower, when your team-mates are blindfolded?

Blood, sweat and gears

Mountain biking, Apex style! This was a tough graded course in the woods with the added extreme hazard of almost zero visibility. It needed a strong sense of balance to stay on

Go ballistic

It was time to take on the role of a firearms officer as you shot at the targets with your pistol. Calm nerves and a steady hand were critical here to make your mark.

Down the drain

It was like a giant marble run but on a massive scale. Could your team work out how to get the balls where they needed to be down the endless series of gutters?



Explorer scout: "Worth the journey!! Great weather, we had so much fun getting lost and taking part in the awesome challenges."

Hide 'n' seek

forest. When your team was

Autumn 2011 Apex Extreme

This event was always going to be a real challenge, not just for those taking part, but for the ever-growing team of volunteers who had been working throughout the year to make it happen. With more team places than ever before, and a brand new playing area, there was plenty to organise, but once again the team pulled it off with another spectacular Apex Challenge event.

The huge demand for these events was demonstrated as soon as the online entry system opened for business. Incredibly, all 90 team places were snapped up in less than two hours. Those fortunate enough to get a place could then start planning for the big weekend, and what a weekend it was, in such incredible weather.

It all started with the manic and energetic 'Apex super-sprint' on Friday evening where teams had to think quickly to locate as many controls as they could, cunningly hidden in the darkness. With nothing on their maps to help this was a search in the pitch black of

As Saturday dawned, the main stage of the event got under way. With the sound system reeling off dozens of bizarre team names, the staggered start began and teams were heading off for their sevenhour adventure. More than a dozen activities were located in the huge



playing area. From ropes courses high in trees to archery, grass sledging and our toughest ever rock climb, there was a seemingly endless series of challenges to test teams to the limit.

As the hours passed, many were making their way to the Urban Zone, a new element of the event where finding your way through streets and footpaths was as important as navigating through the hills and forests. Controls had been cunningly hidden in garages, on river banks and even in a sweet shop! Solving the cryptic clues to find them was yet another tough challenge for the teams in this brand new environment.

Soon teams were returning from

Explorer Scout: "We enjoyed ourselves so much we couldn't help but laugh. It was really thrilling and exciting so thank you for creating such a fun event."

Winning team: Hannah And Her Merry Men (Explorer)



Winning team: Peeping Tom's Network (Network)



points. They were greeted with an instant display of their route on the Apex big screen and finally a chance to relax after the intensity of the day.

The evening briefing brought a chance to reflect on the achievements so far, but also introduced the next stage of the event, the 'Apex apocalypse' that was due to arrive on Sunday. But the Apex Challenge isn't just about relentless activity and action, and the vibe throughout the site on Saturday night was one of relaxing and partuing as the 'Apex superclub' and chill-out campfire went on well into the night.

On Sunday the apocalypse swung into action; an intense game where our teams had to track down 20 escaped fugitives, all behaving differently in the three escape zones. From those hiding in the bushes in 'Death valley', to others manically running through the 'Forbidden forest', finding all 20 proved to be a tough challenge for most of the teams.

Then there was the 'Final assault'. our longest and best ever assault course. After months of planning, and days of building, the course was packed with an incredible series of obstacles to test the teams to the limit. Energy was quickly being zapped, but with so many Apex points up for grabs for the fastest teams it was clear to see the determination on the faces of so many competitors.

As Sunday's lockdown came and went, the event was winding down and lunch was a welcome sight back at event centre. Then anticipation was growing ahead of the final results presentation. With more than 400 people packed into the marquee, the result of all the hard work of the last 48 hours became clear. First the event video showed off Apex at its best, then the results and the nail-biting reveal of which teams were being crowned the winners.

Yet again, some were leaving with the trophies and top prizes, but all went home with some cracking memories of yet another intense Apex adventure.



Running two flagship events isn't all that's kept the Apex Challenge team busy this year. Here are some of the other things you might not have noticed...

Backstage action at the Apex!

Apex in your hand

The Apex Challenge has always been about using the latest technology to enhance the outdoor adventure experience and this year the team took another leap forward with the development of a new smartphone app.

The system, which was trialled during 2011, uses competitors' own handsets to gather and interpret their team's event score. It reads special QR codes in the playing area and gives the teams a live tracker showing their total score and time remaining. The app automatically connects to a wireless network at event centre to download those details.



Currently the events use an expensive sustem of microchips and remote boxes. The problem with this is they are costly to replace if they become lost or stolen.

It is hoped our new software can be further developed in the future to include live maps and more detailed route plotting to ensure the Apex Challenge remains at the forefront of outdoor technology. Trials of the system will continue in 2012.

them."

Explorer scout: "We

tested the app. It

worked really well

and we loved the

idea that you could

up as you collected

see your points build

Updating the Apex brand

After eight years of service, in the summer we took the opportunity to refresh the Apex Challenge logo and branding to see how it could be improved.



After considering several different designs it was decided that the principles of the existing logo were still good. We didn't want to lose the recognition and identity we have worked so hard to build up. But the previous logo was created in a now-defunct piece of software and providing high-quality artwork to professional printers for branded items was becoming more and more difficult.

The re-drawn logo features subtly larger text to enable the logo to be read more easily and is now easier to work with. It is deliberately just a small evolution from what was used before, but from those who can tell the difference there has only been positive feedback!

A new way to pay...



Since the Apex Challenge began in 2002, teams have paid to take part by putting cheques in the post and occasionally a cash payment on the event day. It's a system that takes several days and creates a lot of behind -the-scenes administration to update team details on the live website pages.

As the competition has become more popular, not only has the number of teams Scout leader Odette Smyth:

"It was so much easier and quicker with an instant answer for the Explorers waiting to find out if they'd got their place. I had to type like a demon to get them all in!"

taking part increased, but also the competition for the limited number of places that are available. Team members want to be able to quickly confirm their place in the event and it's important for the organising team that the system requires as little manual intervention as possible.

During 2011 the behind-the-scenes part of the online entry system has been completely rewritten and automated. Teams can now log on to the website, pay for their places immediately using credit or debit cards, print out a receipt (something which was previously not possible) and their details are instantly displayed online. Further development has since allowed them to edit their team details in the weeks before the event as well, further reducing the amount of manual admin required by the organising team.

The speed at which the system operates illustrated the huge demand for our event. The spring competition was full within 36 hours and the autumn competition filled up in less than two hours. This brings new challenges which will be addressed next year, along with further enhancements to the system.

Making a splash!

The Apex Challenge team has once again been happy to support the huge Splashdown watersports event which takes place every summer in Sheffield.

The wet activity weekend attracts hundreds of scouts from across the area, and the Apex team continues to provide a radio station at the event. Making the most of the volunteers' technical, production and presentation skills, we have been able to provide a professional soundtrack for the event, combining live requests from the participants with news and weather updates, and live commentary from the water during the weekend's competitions.

Event organiser Richard Oliver: "Splashdown Radio gave the event even more of a positive atmosphere. I can't stress enough how impressed we were with the Apex team's professionalism and enthusiasm."



Accounts summary



David Pape - Treasurer

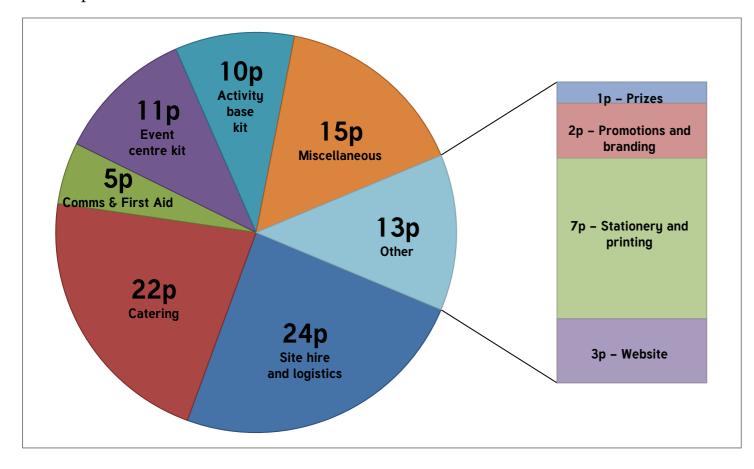
In 2010 we invested in equipment to enable us to create better Apex events, but this meant that we spent more money than we received in income. At the start of 2011 the Apex Challenge was in a healthy financial situation with enough cash funds in reserve to ensure financial stability.

The aim for 2011 was to cover the costs of the events, refrain from making any significant purchases and therefore maintain a similar level of reserve cash funds.

2011 was a good year as we fulfilled our financial aim of covering the costs of the events, resulting in a modest profit. This means that we have a slightly increased reserve of cash funds that is at a suitable level to provide security in the coming year.

An increased number of teams and a general increase in prices means that we have spent more this year. Over and above this we decided to spend more money on food for teams to enable our catering team to buy better quality ingredients. There has also been an increase in the money spent on event bases and activities, which has allowed us to create better events. The new online payment system has introduced an extra cost in the 'website' category due to commission taken by PayPal, but we consider the benefits of a much more streamlined entry system to be worth this extra cost.

Every Apex Challenge event is different and each has different costs and expenses. The graph below gives a rough idea, based on this year's accounts, of how each pound of a team's entry fee is spent.



Section A: Receipts and payments

Receipts	Unrestricted funds (to the nearest £)	Restricted funds (to the nearest £)	Last year (2010) (to the nearest £)
Entry fees (Spring event)	£ 5280	£0	£ 3750
T-shirt sales (Spring event)	£ 1488	£0	£ 815
Event day cash (Spring event)	£ 718	£ 0	£ 801
Entry fees (Autumn event)	£ 9600	£ 0	£ 7200
T-shirt sales (Autumn event)	£ 440	£0	£ 695
Event day cash (Autumn event)	£ 522	£ 0	£ 444
DVD sales (Autumn event)	£ 192	£0	£ 0
Apex Intense	£0	£0	£ 500
Sponsorship donations	£ 650	£0	£ 0
Miscellaneous income	£ 119	£0	£ 64
Sub-tota	£ 19009	£0	£ 14269
Assets and investment sales	£0	£0	£ 0
Total receipt	£ 19009	£0	£ 14269
Payments			
Accommodation	£ 3125	£0	£ 2960
Catering	£ 3649	£0	£ 2797
Clothing	£ 1647	£0	£ 2464
Communications	£ 747	£0	£ 503
DVDs	£ 25	£0	£ 69
Event day equipment	£ 1468	£0	£ 1746
Event bases	£ 1617	£0	£ 494
First aid	£ 91	£0	£ 134

Sub-total

Cash funds this year end

Sub total	£ 10130	2 0	L 13004
Assets and investment purchases	£ 559	£ 0	£ 1998
Total payments	£ 18715	£ 0	£ 17062
Net of receipts/payments	£ 294	£ 0	- £ 2793
Cheques written but now expired	£ 49	£ 0	£ 0
Cash funds last year end	£ 4609	£ 0	£ 7402

£ 18156

£ 4952

£ 4609

£0

£ 1782

£ 46

£ 336

£ 1072

£ 460

£ 44

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Section B: Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of this period

Cash funds	(to the nearest £)	(to the nearest £
Cash in hand	£ 0	£
Bank account balance (as at 31st Dec 2011)	£ 5039	£
Sub-total	£ 5039	£
Less cheques written but not cashed	£ 87	£
Total cash funds this year end	£ 4952	£

Fund to which asset belongs	Cost at purchase
Unrestricted	£ 3582
Unrestricted	£ 50
Unrestricted	£ 186
Unrestricted	£ 179
Unrestricted	£84
Unrestricted	£ 60
Unrestricted	
	Unrestricted

	Fund to which	Amour
Liabilities	asset belongs	du
Website hosting	Unrestricted	£ 13

Declaration

This annual report and summary of accounts is signed to certify it is a true and accurate record of the Apex Challenge's activities for 2011. To the best of our knowledge all details contained within this document are correct and no essential details have been deliberately omitted.

flatthew Richards (Trustee)	Date:
avid Pape (Trustee)	Date:
ames Webster (Trustee)	Date:

Independent examiners' report

This report to the trustees of Apex Challenge (Registered charity number 1102633) is for the accounts for the year ended 31st December 2011 shown in this annual report.

The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the Act), as amended by s.28 of the Charities Act 2006) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts (under section 43 of the Act, as amended);
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 43(7)(b) of the Act, as amended); and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

My examination was carried out in accordance with general directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the accounts.

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect, the trustees have not met the requirements to ensure that:
- proper accounting records are kept (in accordance with section 41 of the Act); and
- accounts are prepared which agree with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Act; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed (Independent examiner)	Date:
Sarah Harris - Solicitor of England & Wales (Non-practising),	
Inglewood House, Lingards Road, Slaithwaite, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, HD7 5HY	

Many thanks...

A huge thanks to everyone who has worked so hard during the past 12 months to make the Apex Challenge possible:

Ben Abell, Simon Atha, Matt Atkinson, Andrew Batley, John Batley, Rob Batley, Martin Bennett, Andrew Billington, Duncan Blakeley, Ian Brannan, James Brown, Nick Bryan, Ruth Bullivant-Layton, Stewart Butler, Jake Carpenter, Tony Casson, John Clay, Darrell Coates, Sara Davidson-Cowen, Sarah Davidson-Cowen, Julie Driskell, Owen Driskell, Rachel Edwards, Lee Farrow, Martyn Foster, Jo Fulton, Richard Galliford, Richard Garrett, Phillip Gillingham, Fran Glew, Rob Godfrey, Tim Hague, Tom Hague, Steve Hall, Sarah Harris, Ricky Harrison, Simon Harrison, Graham Harrop, David Havenhand, Russ Hirst, Duncan Hocking, Richard Hollingworth, Nikki Hopkins, Gaz Hopkins, Emma Hunter, Jez Ince, Andy Jackson, Colin James, Marcus Jenkinson, Nigel Lee, Kristian Lucas, Maria Mahon, Ross Masters, Rebecca Meers, Andrew Melleney, Andy Moore, Lynn Moore, Dave Mott, Phillip Norton, Richard Oliver, Andy Pagett, David Pape, Gordon Parkinson, John Parkinson, Marion Parkinson, Keith Partridge, Simon Peers, Andrew Phipps, David Platts, Andrew Plummer, Lee Plummer, Sue Raffo, Matt Richards, Brian Robinson, Bev Rothery, Mark Rothery, Mike Sharp, Sian Sheeran, John Skipper, Tom Smith, Odette Smyth, Nadine Snowdon, Tom Spreyer, Mike Squires, Dave Stern, Ben Stevenson, Pete Stevenson, Sian Stockham, Jason Stubbs, Bob Teasdale, Hayley Toseland, Amanda Ward, Andrew Ward, Edward Watchorn, James Webster, Carolyn Welborn, Kevin Welborn, Luisse Whiting, Jon Widdup, Jim Wild, Steve Winks, Susan Wragg, Julie Wright, David Yates, Mark Yates.





For further details: Log on to our website: www.apexchallenge.co.uk or scan the QR code with your smartphone.

