

A person wearing a red t-shirt, dark trousers, and a bright yellow helmet is ziplining through a dense forest of evergreen trees. The person is suspended from a thick rope and is holding onto it with both hands. The background is filled with the green foliage of the trees.

apex
challenge

annual report 2008

Financial Year: January 2008 - December 2008
Registered Charity No. 1102633



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apex challenge

Registered Address: 14 Sanderson Close, Hull, HU5 3DE.

The **Apex Challenge** is a registered charity and is governed by its own Declaration of Trust, agreed and signed by its trustees on 11th December 2003 and received by the Charity Commission on 20th January 2004, and amended by Supplemental Deed, agreed and signed by its trustees on 22nd February 2004 and accepted by the Charity Commission on 15th March 2004 on which date the charity was accepted in the Central Register of Charities.

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:** 53 Clumber Street, Hull, HU5 3RH.
- **David Pape:** 6 Martindale Drive, Bramley, Leeds, LS13 2HB.
- **James Webster:** Apartment 55, Lake House, 66 Ellesmere Street, Manchester, M15 4QT.

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. In selecting individuals for appointment as trustees, the existing trustees must have regard to the skills, knowledge and experience needed for the effective administration of the charity.

OUR MISSION



“

We believe that through adventure, we challenge individuals so that they learn and experience new things that enrich their lives. The Apex Challenge provides national activity competitions for Scouts aged 14-25, offering a unique adventure experience.

”

2008 AIMS & OBJECTIVES

1. To make the May 2008 Apex Overnight Challenge distinctive and improved from the last two events held at Sherwood Pines Forest Park.

The main change to separate the May 2008 event from those previously held at Sherwood Pines was the introduction of electronic scoring. This created a real buzz among the teams who had never seen it before and who were impressed to see their event data displayed in new and engaging ways. We also successfully added six brand new activity bases to the events including using an X-box computer game, radio controlled boats, gas-propelled rockets, new physical challenges and even karaoke. This keeps the event feeling fresh and new, even for those competitors who return year after year.

AIM SUCCESSFULLY ACHIEVED.

2. Develop a plan for the next three to five years to give the charity a direction to be moving in.

Discussions of different ideas for taking the Apex Challenge forward have been held though these have not yet been formalised into a three to five year plan.

AIM NOT ACHIEVED.

3. To look into the costs of introducing electronic scoring and integrating it into our systems.

Not only were the costs investigated but electronic scoring was introduced with great success at both events during 2008 and was easily the year's biggest achievement with further scope for development.

AIM SUCCESSFULLY ACHIEVED.

4. To increase brand awareness.

While the May 2008 event did not reach capacity, the Apex Extreme in October was once again oversubscribed. Statistics show more than 80 teams applied for the 70 places. This was an increase from the previous year. There were also entries from new counties including Birmingham, Cheshire, Humberside, Lanarkshire, Norfolk and North Yorkshire

showing that our publicity is reaching new areas.

AIM SUCCESSFULLY ACHIEVED.

5. To further develop a core organising team through the appointment of a Sponsorship and Prize Coordinator.

While we do now have a dedicated Entries Coordinator, no suitable candidates have yet been found to work on Sponsorships and Prizes.

AIM NOT ACHIEVED

6. To reduce further the event's carbon footprint.

Car sharing is now actively encouraged for both teams and organisers on the event website. In addition we have significantly reduced paper consumption through increasing the amount of printed material which is double sided. All waste paper from each event is also now recycled.

AIM SUCCESSFULLY ACHIEVED.

7. To invest more money in key areas of the event that have previously been underfunded including catering and activity bases.

Comparing October 2008 with the previous year, an extra £163 was spent on catering for the same number of people and activity base expenditure also rose by £28.

AIM SUCCESSFULLY ACHIEVED.

8. To develop the website to include more multimedia use.

While the event website underwent significant backstage work to convert it to a CSS-based layout which is easier to manage and redesign, the length of time this took meant there was no time to significantly increase the site's use of multimedia. So while the website has been developed to make this possible, the actual front-end upgrade and redesign is yet to take place. Facebook and MySpace pages are now updated and are generating some interaction.

AIM PARTIALLY ACHIEVED.

THE YEAR IN BRIEF

- Integrated electronic scoring with both events.
- Organised two successful competitions.
- Added several brand new activities to the event line up.
- Reduced the event's carbon footprint.
- Made a financial profit to allow future investment.
- Prepared website for more multimedia content.
- Attracted entries from new areas of the UK.



MAY 2008 OVERNIGHT CHALLENGE



rope bridge suspended way up in trees. It took a team captain with a lot of nerve and bottle to head up into the darkness. Elsewhere though driving skills were being put to the test at Mower Motors while it was skills on two wheels that needed to be shown for success at Blood, Sweat and Gears.

The disused railway bridges were the home for two other impressive bases - one involved scaling a wobbling wire ladder to reach the punch - the other led to an unnerving aerial runway back to the ground. Then there

What a weekend! It was by far the hottest Apex Challenge event we've ever held - and that boiling weather was matched by a hot line up of great activities right through the night. From our highest ever rope bridge to our most musical base; this was a night packed with surprises.

As teams arrived at the spectacular Sherwood Pines Forest Park, the sun was shining and the mood was exciting. Teams began to receive their event packs and routes were being planned, as the sea of tents began to expand in front of the massive Apex marquee.

Soon it was time for all 56 teams to pack inside that marquee for the event briefing. A sea of red filled the space as everyone squeezed inside, proudly wearing their new Apex t-shirts. The main feature of the briefing was the first look at our brand new scoring system. The soggy control cards and plastic punches had been left in the Apex history books - now we had a totally digital microchip system. As all the new rules were explained, all the behind-the-scenes staff had their fingers securely crossed that this new technology would do what it should.

So as the sun began to set the teams started to leave for their night of adventure in the forest. Six hours to collect as many apex points as possible. Over at the bouncy castle base Explorers began flinging themselves through the suspended hoops, while further into the forest a complex electrical circuit was being devised to release the crucial punch.

Certainly the high point for many was our tallest ever

were the skills game - some with barrels, others with pancakes, but it seems one of the most popular was testing all the teams' musical coordination. The sound of the Guitar Hero base could be heard from quite a way off as everyone put all their concentration into playing along with the rock classics!

So as the hours passed, the number of bases each team visited increased, as did the number of teams being caught by our fearless 'catches' - patrolling the tracks to steal those hard-earned points from those who failed to hide in time.

But soon the six hours were up and the marquee began to fill once again. Instantly everyone could see how they'd done and exactly where they went. Crowds were gathering round the big screen to compare the digital maps of each team. The soup and hotdogs were going down well, and steadily everyone headed off for a very well-earned rest.

Sunday seemed to be even hotter than Saturday. As the smell of bacon butties began to waft from the Apex Marquee, the results were being finalised and soon everyone was back in to hear exactly how they'd done. The computerised scoring system had worked perfectly and everyone's personalised results had been running off the printer all night. Now it was time to find out where they'd come.

Soon all the prizes had been given out and teams were heading home with sleeping bags, rucksacks, vouchers and tents. Others were just heading home with memories of a great night out in the forest. It had been the hottest Apex on record - and the weather wasn't bad either!

OCTOBER 2008 APEX EXTREME

There was mud, mayhem, mountains and madness at the 2008 Apex Extreme which built on the event's history but created a whole new format.

While it's always important teams know what to expect at an Apex event, we were keen to introduce some new elements to the Apex Extreme. We devised new activities, new formats and new challenges.

It was our most Northerly location ever, but it seemed no-one was put off by the remote location on the edge of the North York Moors. We'd found a great new Scout site to base the event and Birch Hall proved to be ideal. As teams began to arrive from across the country the stage was set in Langdale Forest for this three-day event test of teamwork, agility and skill.

Tents were being put up in the camping areas while teams began to compose their strategies. After the event briefing in the shiny new Apex Marquee teams had just ninety minutes to collect as many points as possible in a mini, sprint version of our legendary Apex Overnight Challenge.

It was a mad rush for points as the fresh and eager teams scrambled to find controls in the darkness – from those hanging precariously above a misleadingly steep mud slope, to those tucked away under footbridges – a fair run from the centre. Teams had to return and bank their well-earned points to keep them safe from the Apex chasers who'd been doing all they could to track these competitors down.

The next morning the enthusiastic Explorers and Network members began heading off into the immense Langdale Forest for their seven-hour adventure. There were a total of 14 main activity bases to test nerve, agility and teamwork – as well as many more control points hidden in the woods, stretching the team's navigational skills.

From challenges involving radio-controlled boats, to those catapulting eggs, and others racing lawnmowers – the area soon filled with shouts of



excitement, encouragement and fear. Many team members were having to face up to an unfeasibly high ropes course, while others were finding themselves caked in mud on the riverside scramble course.

As the evening drew in, teams returned to Birch Hall, where the Apex Cafe was open for business. This year we'd responded to requests for a more 'toned down' Saturday evening so held an informal briefing and followed that up with the glow grab challenge. A simple – but highly visual and entertaining way for teams to top up their overall score.

Sunday brought us more fine weather and ideal conditions for the event finale – The Sunday Scramble. This was designed to test every element of the team's skill – from the observational skills finding the somewhat bizarre out-of-place items, to the logic and navigation puzzle of tracking down the individual colour codes at the Apex Accumulator. Then it was off to meet the army for the Final Assault. This was, as planned, a truly exhausting challenge, led by the Yorkshire Regiment which made sure every last bit of energy was consumed.

It was then time for our new fully automated scoring system to swing into action – totalling the scores from all of the weekend's elements. Soon the leader board was finalised and the prizes and trophies were given out to rapturous applause. Another great event with a new area and a new dimension for the Apex Extreme.

TRUSTEE REPORTS



Matt Richards - Event Organiser, Chairman.

It's been another very busy year for the Apex Challenge. Our biggest challenge was taking the October event to a brand new area, and our most Northerly location ever, but this gave us great benefits.

We were able to take advantage of a superb site with excellent facilities and also gave us access to a new and intriguing playing area within Langdale Forest. But perhaps more importantly this shift Northwards helped us attract teams from new areas, and also new helpers and instructors who are crucial to the smooth running of the event. We hope these new recruits are encouraged to stay with Apex as we continue to explore new areas and allow more young people to benefit from the events.

We've also been able to increase the general brand awareness of the Apex Challenge. The event details now routinely appear on all national Explorer and Network websites and we've also now had several mentions in Scouting Magazine which has led to new enquiries from right across the UK.

2009 will see us return to familiar venues, but with a stack of new ideas to make these events the best ever. Thanks for your support over the last seven years – we're sure the best is still to come!



David Pape - Assistant Event Organiser, Treasurer.

2008 was a successful year financially. For the second year running the Apex Challenge was self funding (the income gained from entries covered the costs of running the events). This provides financial stability for subsequent years and gives us the opportunity to invest money in future events.

The biggest change this year was the introduction of electronic scoring equipment. Each team was given an electronic card which registered the controls and activity bases they visited. When teams returned to the event centre the data was downloaded into our custom written event software. This helped to reduce potential human errors, saved time and allowed us to get detailed timing information showing where they had been and when. Due to the success of this scoring system we are planning to use it again in our events in 2009 and further develop our use of the data it provides.



James Webster - Assistant Event Organiser, Secretary.

Developing ideas for exploiting the new opportunities of the electronic scoring system was a major highlight of 2008. The extra data available and the accuracy with which it is held coupled with the speed it can be downloaded give us so much more freedom to find new ways to impress our teams.

Much of my work during 2008 was on rewriting the code behind the scenes of the website. It was a largely thankless task; the main aim being that outwardly the site did not change, but because of cleaner code it loads more quickly and makes future development and redesign much quicker and simpler. It is that which will be a focus for 2009 - a newer looking website with more sophisticated multimedia features and interactivity which our teams are used to seeing on other sites. Our aim is to stay one step ahead of other events and making sure our website does this is a key aim.

ACCOUNTS SUMMARY

SECTION A: RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS

A full list of receipts and payments, from which this summary has been prepared is available on request.

RECEIPTS	Unrestricted funds (to the nearest £)	Restricted funds (to the nearest £)	Last year (to the nearest £)
Sponsorship donations	£ 300.00	£ 0.00	£ 825.00
Entry fees (Spring event)	£ 2160.00	£ 0.00	£ 0.00
T-Shirt sales (Spring event)	£ 710.00	£ 0.00	£ 0.00
Event day cash: (Spring event)	£ 415.00	£ 0.00	£ 0.00
Entry fees (Autumn event)	£ 5595.00	£ 0.00	£ 3720.00
T-Shirt sales (Autumn event)	£ 570.00	£ 0.00	£ 1275.00
DVD Sales (Autumn event)	£ 170.00	£ 0.00	£ 115.00
Event day cash: (Autumn event)	£ 270.00	£ 0.00	£ 0.00
<i>Sub-Total</i>	£ 10190.00	£ 0.00	£ 5935.00
ASSET AND INVESTMENT SALES	£ 0.00	£ 0.00	£ 0.00
TOTAL RECEIPTS	£ 10190.00	£ 0.00	£ 5935.00
PAYMENTS			
Accommodation	£ 2210.00	£ 0.00	£ 979.00
Catering	£ 1361.00	£ 0.00	£ 947.00
Clothing	£ 1304.00	£ 0.00	£ 811.00
Communications	£ 513.00	£ 0.00	£ 170.00
DVDs	£ 183.00	£ 0.00	£ 52.00
Event day equipment	£ 938.00	£ 0.00	£ 398.00
Event bases	£ 512.00	£ 0.00	£ 237.00
First aid	£ 50.00	£ 0.00	£ 49.00
Fuel	£ 202.00	£ 0.00	£ 84.00
Miscellaneous	£ 28.00	£ 0.00	£ 7.00
Prizes	£ 20.00	£ 0.00	£ 66.00
Promotions and branding	£ 90.00	£ 0.00	£ 0.00
Stationery	£ 366.00	£ 0.00	£ 250.00
Transport	£ 201.00	£ 0.00	£ 0.00
Website	£ 30.00	£ 0.00	£ 0.00
<i>Sub-Total</i>	£ 8008.00	£ 0.00	£ 4050.00
ASSET AND INVESTMENT PURCHASES	£ 422.00	£ 0.00	£ 92.00
TOTAL PAYMENTS	£ 8430.00	£ 0.00	£ 4142.00
<i>NET OF RECEIPTS/(PAYMENTS)</i>	£ 1760.00	£ 0.00	£ 1793.00
TRANSFERS BETWEEN FUNDS	£ 0.00	£ 0.00	£ 0.00
CASH FUNDS LAST YEAR END	£ 3789.00	£ 0.00	£ 1996.00
<i>CASH FUNDS THIS YEAR END</i>	£ 5549.00	£ 0.00	£ 3789.00

ACCOUNTS SUMMARY (CONTINUED)

SECTION B: STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AT THE END OF THIS PERIOD

CASH FUNDS	Unrestricted funds (to the nearest £)	Restricted funds (to the nearest £)
Cash in hand	£ 0.00	£ 0.00
Bank account balance (as at 31st Dec 2008)	£ 5989.00	£ 0.00
<i>Sub-Total</i>	£ 5989.00	£ 0.00
LESS CHEQUES WRITTEN BUT NOT CASHED	£ 440.00	£ 0.00
<i>TOTAL CASH FUNDS THIS YEAR END</i>	£ 5549.00	£ 0.00

ASSETS RETAINED FOR THE CHARITY'S OWN USE	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost at purchase
Floodlights (x5)	Unrestricted	£ 146.00
Long arm stapler	Unrestricted	£ 18.00
Sound system (joint purchase with Woodseats Scout Unit)	Unrestricted	£ 220.00
Laminator	Unrestricted	£ 30.00
Laser printer & USB cable	Unrestricted	£ 186.00
Sodium lamps	Unrestricted	£ 110.00
Projector (joint purchase with Woodseats Scout Unit)	Unrestricted	£ 300.00
Petrol generator	Unrestricted	£ 45.00
Mixing desk	Unrestricted	£ 92.00
Compressor	Unrestricted	£ 59.00
Paper trimmer	Unrestricted	£ 20.00
SportIdent electronic scoring equipment	Unrestricted	£ 343.00

LIABILITIES	Fund to which asset belongs	Amount due
Stationery (A4 Laminating pouches)	Unrestricted	£ 4.00
Stationery (Inkjet labels)	Unrestricted	£ 7.00
Stationery (A3 Laminating pouches)	Unrestricted	£ 8.00
Stationery (Toner cartridges)	Unrestricted	£ 64.00
Event day equipment (Pens)	Unrestricted	£ 4.00
Miscellaneous (Thank you gift for voiceovers)	Unrestricted	£ 20.00
Website (Hosting)	Unrestricted	£ 30.00

This annual report is signed to certify it is a true and accurate record of the Apex Challenge's activities and accounts for 2008. To the best of our knowledge all details contained within this document are correct and no essential details have been deliberately omitted.

Matthew Richards (Trustee) _____

Date: _____

David Pape (Trustee) _____

Date: _____

James Webster (Trustee) _____

Date: _____

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

This report to the trustees of Apex Challenge (Reg. charity no. 1102633) is for the accounts for the year ended 31st December 2008 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), Ramsdens Rice Jones, 6-8 Harrison Road, Halifax, West Yorkshire, HX1 2AQ.

www.apexchallenge.co.uk

If you would like further copies of this annual report, please contact:

Apex Challenge, 14 Sanderson Close, Hull, HU5 3DE.

A small charge to cover printing, postage and packing will be required.

