



Annual Report

Financial year: January - December 2013

Charity number 1102633

www.apexchallenge.co.uk



The Apex Challenge is considered to be among the toughest of all the UK's adventure competitions with several events each year 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.

From the trustees...



Matt Richards - Event Director

From ambitious new obstacles to a whole military themed event, 2013 has been another year of firsts for the Apex Challenge, and we're glad so many of you have been with us on that adventure!

After we celebrated our 10th year in 2012, we knew we had to keep up the momentum into our second decade, and the Apex team once again took up that challenge with another two outstanding events.

Sherwood Forest is the venue we have been to most, but this year we were able to integrate brand new ideas and activities including our giant Apex Mountain to give the event a new and dynamic start. Then in October we ran our first ever themed event, where the Strensall army training centre proved to be the perfect backdrop for our 'Apex Special Ops' military-themed competition. With enemy forces, dangerous landmines and a heavily guarded fort, this theme enabled us to offer a new style of competition which tested the teams in brand new ways.

Our Apex Challenge team has continued to grow with more people than ever now helping with catering, technical facilities, activities, events and site support. Over the years we have formed a truly amazing team of volunteers who all give 100% to achieve the Apex vision. We are so grateful for everyone's contributions and we look forward to delivering even greater adventures in the future!



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:** The Old Barn, 11B The Cross, Barwick-in-Elmet, Leeds, LS15 4JP. (Registered charity address.)
- **David Pape:** 45 Old Road, Stanningley, Pudsey, LS28 6BG.
- **James Webster:** 45 Old Road, Stanningley, Pudsey, LS28 6BG.

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.



David Pape - Assistant Event Organiser

I am happy and proud to have been involved in this year's successful events. Thanks to everyone who helped and I hope they enjoyed themselves. We reached maximum capacity for both events which reflects on the hard work involved and the quality of the events delivered.



James Webster - Assistant Event Organiser

After ten years of organising events it was great to look at ways this year of revamping what we do and giving our competitions a new look. It means teams who return time after time get a new experience and it is more interesting for us to put together.

2013 - a year in review

- Two thrilling competitions with a new theme and live entertainment.
- Redesigned website to display consistently across mobile devices.
- Better engagement of leaders bringing teams to our events.
- Greater geographical spread of teams taking part.
- Increased participation in the Network competition.

In early 2013 the charity set seven aims for the 12 month period which are detailed and reviewed here:

1. To redesign the Apex Challenge website to respond to different devices including mobile phones and tablet computers.

The Apex Challenge website was redesigned over the summer. Its layout now responds to the device being used to view it and reformats content accordingly. Further work will be carried out to enhance our online presence during 2014, especially on mobile phones and tablet computers.

AIM SUCCESSFULLY ACHIEVED

2. To work on developing a new format for an Apex branded event which could be launched in 2014, with fewer demands on organisers and capable of attracting more competitors.

Time was spent during the year considering ideas for new Apex Challenge events. Many possibilities have been suggested and further work is now needed to develop these ideas to see if there is an appetite to take any of them further.

AIM PARTIALLY ACHIEVED

3. To relaunch the Apex Challenge app as an added value element to our autumn competition allowing teams with smartphones to interact with the event and each other.

Time pressures this year did not allow further work to develop this aspect of the competition and it was decided during the year to rest this idea and revisit it when a more concrete idea for the app was developed.

AIM NOT ACHIEVED

4. To make better use of cloud hosting to streamline our internal workflow including the sharing of documents and electronic files.

The Apex Challenge team now makes extensive use of cloud-based storage solutions for documents which need to be shared and collaborated on by different people. Further work is needed to organise the files and who can access which folders reliably but the system has already proved easier to use than sharing items via emails with attachments.

AIM SUCCESSFULLY ACHIEVED

5. To aim for an 'open laptop' event where all preparation is completed pre-event, freeing up more time during the competition for organisers to test systems and enjoy the weekend.

This was always an ambitious aim considering how much work is needed to put on an Apex Challenge event. Other commitments away from Scouting this year meant this was not possible and there was still much preparation to be completed during both events. Changes are already planned for future years to make this aim a more realistic prospect to achieve.

AIM NOT YET ACHIEVED

6. To make leaders visiting our events feel more involved with emails in advance.

For the first time this year we emailed leaders ahead of our spring competition to explain more about the weekend and what opportunities there were for them to get involved. This meant that they were better prepared when they arrived at the competition and hopefully felt more involved throughout the weekend. Plans to make this a regular part of the pre-event planning are now in place.

AIM SUCCESSFULLY ACHIEVED

7. To analyse the geographic spread of teams who have attended recent competitions and target those areas under-represented with marketing material to attract new teams.

Our analysis of where teams travel from to get to our competitions highlighted several counties who are within easy travelling distance of the event which have sent a disproportionately small number of teams to previous competitions. Posters and emails were sent to contacts within those counties, generating new interest in our event in the autumn and new entries were received from areas that were previously not represented.

AIM SUCCESSFULLY ACHIEVED



In addition to our aims for the year, we were able to work on other projects to further enhance the event:

1. Improvements to online entry system

The entry system for our events has been changed to allow teams to pre-register, making the process less stressful to teams trying to enter in a hurry. The behind-the-scenes system to allow this has been improved to make this easier to manage.

2. Increased Network participation

It has sometimes been difficult to attract teams to enter the Network competition with some events having fewer than six Network teams competing. Due to more targeted marketing and increased exposure among the older age groups, this year we had 10 Network teams in the spring and 14 in the autumn which made for a more competitive atmosphere.

3. Entertainment at the autumn event

Apex is all about the adventure, but we know a big part of the event's appeal is the chance for teams from different groups to meet and get to know one another and this year we hired a great band, 'Bright Young Things' to entertain the crowd on the Saturday night of our autumn competition.



Spring 2013: Overnight adventure returns to Sherwood

After last year's 10th birthday celebrations at the Apex Challenge, we knew we had to start the next decade with something special. The Apex team pulled out all the stops in April to run our biggest and most dramatic ever overnight adventure competition, in one of the country's most famous forests.

As teams started to arrive at Sherwood Pines it was clear this event was going to be a real challenge. Even before they had put up their tents, competitors from across the UK were coming face to face with Apex Mountain, a huge towering obstacle which would stand between them and the start of the event.

All of that was yet to come though as first there was plenty of planning, eating, meeting and socialising to do as the anticipation grew.

The field started to turn into a sea of pink as this year's distinctive (and exceptionally bright) T-shirts were being worn straight from the shop. It made for quite a sight, but teams were soon realising the colour may not be all that helpful for their night trying to avoid the chasers in the forest.

As the 400 eager teenagers packed into the marquee for the briefing, plans and strategies were already being devised. There were many recognisable faces – people for whom this was their fourth or fifth

Apex Challenge event. But for others this was their first Apex experience, and as the presentation started, it was clear they were beginning to realise what they had let themselves in for.

No sooner had the briefing ended, than the event began. Minute-by-minute the teams were racing from the start, heading straight for Apex Mountain. This seven-metre high obstacle was a real challenge where only those who used teamwork, strategy and skill would succeed. Then after a dramatic descent they



were off on their six-hour adventure in the forest.

Teams started racing to the four corners of the playing area. They were hunting down the control points, hastily running away from the Apex chasers, but most of all trying to locate the 12 intense activities to increase their score.

From assault courses, to strategy games and inflatables, the activities ranged from the exhausting to the bizarre. Teams were having to race giant caterpillars, attack an armoured fort, take on the wild-west horses and even pop balloons on space hoppers to be rewarded with their Apex points. Elsewhere they were scaling ladders suspended from a disused railway bridge, and taking on a giant inflatable assault course. But wherever it was that they were gathering these points, it was taking real determination and teamwork to succeed.

Six hours is a long time to be flat-out, so it was clear why so many teams looked so exhausted as they headed back to event centre. But before they could download their well-earned points, Apex Mountain still stood in their way. This time the mountain had to be scaled in reverse, but the giant slide down the north face led to a dramatic and memorable end to their adventures in the forest.

By now the Apex software was

working at full pelt.

Announcements welcomed each team back, before an animated map showing the route of each team animated on the big screen. Competitors from the first-timers to the old hands were sharing stories of their night in the forest, as they compared their performance with those just arriving back. Despite the chilly April weather, the atmosphere was warm and welcoming with the Apex vibe filling the marquee. Everyone was tired, but few wanted to go to bed. The Apex family was enjoying another night together.

By morning the limbs were aching but the sun was shining and as hundreds of bacon butties were being scooped, the results were being prepared. Then as everyone packed back into the marquee it was time to reveal how everyone had done. As the countdown ran, and the team names were called out, cheers filled the tent as everyone became increasingly impressed with each others' performance. Then it was time to reveal the winners, and with a dramatic final that wouldn't look out of place on the X-Factor, the champions were named. With prizes for the top three teams in each category, there were plenty of people leaving with solid reminders of their victory at Sherwood. But everyone was heading home with unforgettable memories of their time at the Apex Challenge.



Autumn 2013: New mission with Apex Special Ops

The Apex Challenge event in October 2013 was a completely new departure for the organising team. The entire weekend was, for the first time, completely built around a themed back story.

'Apex Special Ops' was launched with a backdrop of a fictional enemy attack on the event location at a military training centre in York. Complete with rolling news style updates teams were told they must hold back the enemy and work as a team to complete the mission. And they did!

The enemy is approaching. The area is in lockdown. We are under attack. This is Apex Special Ops.

This year's event had a very different feel to previous years as the event became Apex Special Ops, a three day campaign to take down the enemy and reclaim lost ground. Hundreds of young people from across the UK descended on the Strensall Common military training facility to take part in this weekend-long test of endurance; fighting the enemy while also competing against everyone else.

From the moment the teams arrived it was becoming clear this was no ordinary adventure. As they picked up their intelligence files, the dramatic searchlights crossed the field. Distant gunfire could be heard as teams gathered for their first briefing.

The Apex army was stunned into silence as the breaking news reports showed the scale of the situation. Strensall was being quickly taken over by enemy forces. It was clear our teams had to act quickly. No sooner had the briefing finished the first stage of

their mission began. They had exactly 60 minutes to find and stun the enemy beacons, stopping vital transmissions to the other side.

It was clear though this wasn't going to be easy, with the enemy patrols still out trying to capture our teams before they could download their data. But this first mission was deemed a success – the beacons had been stunned for now. It meant the Apex Army could get some crucial rest before the



Richard (Explorer Scout):
"Great weekend! Thanks for making the weekend amazing!"

Alex (Explorer Scout):
"Thank you for everyone who made this weekend an Apex weekend! It has been amazing. Bring on the next Apex!! "

main task in the morning.

Saturday dawned bright and clear as the Apex recruits awoke contemplating the day ahead. They knew the enemy had advanced and this was the day to start taking it back. So minute after minute, teams left base camp, heading out into the wilderness with six hours to reclaim as many locations as possible.

At some that was a simple job – one download and it was done, but at a dozen other sites there were tough challenges to overcome. Teams had to cross high ropes courses, take on demanding team tasks or prove themselves as archery experts in order to succeed.

And throughout it all the enemy were still there, tracking teams down and regaining the territory they so passionately thought was theirs.

But again the Apex army achieved great things. So much so Saturday night brought a time to relax. With live music courtesy of a talented young band, dancing and unlimited popcorn, there was a real sense of

achievement and victory. But this battle was far from over.

Sunday brought news of a dangerous legacy from this weekend of war. Apex intelligence officers had heard that 30 land mines had been placed in the area and it was down to our teams to find and disarm them. Some of the locations were known but others were still to be found. Only cryptic deciphered clues could lead them to the right spots.

There was even more danger too. Overnight the enemy had built a heavily guarded fort – one guarded by a relentless series of obstacles. Our teams each had their time to storm the fort, and after four hours of onslaught the enemy was finally defeated.

Our battle-weary warriors could then return to base camp to debrief their efforts. It had been a weekend like no other, but the Apex army had triumphed. Some teams ended up on top, some came further down the rankings, but all had achieved amazing things, and are even stronger now for whatever challenges our future events can throw at them,

Accounts summary



David Pape - Treasurer

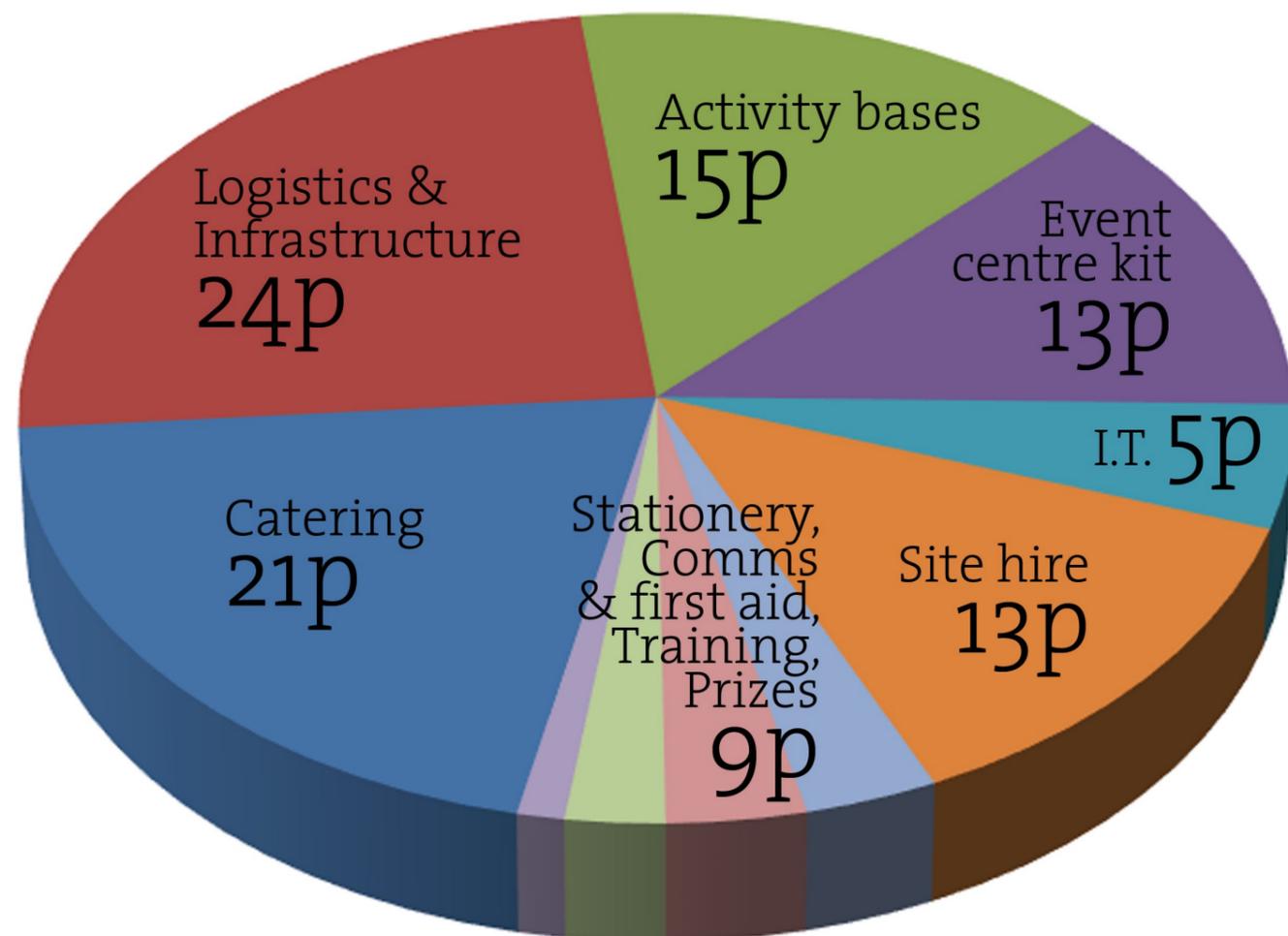
This has been a successful year with both events reaching capacity, allowing us to offset the fixed costs of events.

We have made a slight loss, but it was expected and controlled. This is partly due to not receiving any grants or sponsorship as we did last year, while spending a similar amount on the events and investing in equipment that was used this year and will be used in future years.

Thanks to the hard work and goodwill of all the volunteers that help at the Apex Challenge I think that we deliver exceptional value for money to people taking part.

The end of this year sees us with a healthy bank balance that will give us a sure foundation for future events.

Every Apex Challenge event is different with varying 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.



We always endeavour to spend money within Scouting where possible to keep funds within the Movement. Of our total expenditure this year the amount remaining in Scouting was:

£ 2540

Section A: Statement of receipts and payments

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

	Unrestricted funds This year (2013) (to the nearest £)	Restricted funds This year (2013) (to the nearest £)	Unrestricted funds Last year (2012) (to the nearest £)	Restricted funds Last year (2012) (to the nearest £)
Receipts				
Entry fees (Spring)	£ 7650	£ 0	£ 7650	£ 0
T-shirt sales (Spring)	£ 1726	£ 0	£ 2016	£ 0
Other merchandise sales (Spring)	£ 259	£ 0	£ 478	£ 0
Entry fees (Autumn)	£ 12360	£ 0	£ 12360	£ 0
T-shirt sales (Autumn)	£ 1222	£ 0	£ 798	£ 0
Other merchandise sales (Autumn)	£ 672	£ 0	£ 927	£ 0
Income for activities at other events	£ 177	£ 0	£ 800	£ 0
Sponsorship donations	£ 0	£ 0	£ 530	£ 3644
Miscellaneous income (incl. interest)	£ 228	£ 0	£ 5	£ 0
Refunds for withdrawn teams	- £ 600	£ 0	- £ 629	£ 0
Sub-total	£ 23694	£ 0	£ 0	£ 0
Assets and investment sales	£ 0	£ 0	£ 0	£ 0
Total receipts	£ 23694	£ 0	£ 24935	£ 3644

Payments

Activity bases	£ 3211	£ 0	£ 1885	£ 1922
Catering	£ 4497	£ 0	£ 5113	£ 0
Communications and first aid	£ 745	£ 0	£ 867	£ 0
Event centre kit	£ 2789	£ 0	£ 2179	£ 33
Information technology	£ 1085	£ 0	£ 1036	£ 0
Logistics and infrastructure	£ 5321	£ 0	£ 3747	£ 1045
Merchandise	£ 2245	£ 0	£ 3390	£ 0
Prizes	£ 252	£ 0	£ 94	£ 0
Site hire	£ 2850	£ 0	£ 1140	£ 0
Stationery and printing	£ 708	£ 0	£ 1933	£ 0
Training	£ 529	£ 9	£ 0	£ 636
Sub-total	£ 24232	£ 9	£ 21384 ^a	£ 3635
Assets and investment purchases	£ 1059	£ 0	£ 0	£ 0
Total payments	£ 25291	£ 9	£ 21384^a	£ 3635
Net of receipts/payments	- £ 1598	- £ 9	£ 3552	£ 9
Cheques written but now expired	£ 45	£ 0	£ 20	£ 0
Cash funds last year end	£ 8523	£ 9	£ 4951	£ 0
Cash funds this year end	£ 6970	£ 0	£ 8523	£ 9

NOTES

Column totals may not sum correctly due to rounding.

^a - These totals differ from those reported last year due to a typographical error in the 2012 report which is corrected here. The summed calculations from 2012 are unaffected.

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	£ 223	£ 0
Bank account balance (as at 31 Dec 2013)	£ 7468	£ 0
Sub-total	£ 7691	£ 0
Less cheques written but not cashed	£ 720	£ 0
Total cash funds this year end	£ 6970	£ 0

Assets retained for the charity's own use	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost at purchase
Total value of assets purchased before 2012	Unrestricted	£ 4141
GoPro camera	Unrestricted	£ 233
Projector	Unrestricted	£ 600
Smoke machine	Unrestricted	£ 226
Merchandise stock	Unrestricted	£ 382

Liabilities	Fund to which liability belongs	Amount due
Software order	Unrestricted	£ 192
Website security certificates	Unrestricted	£ 59
Printer toner cartridges	Unrestricted	£ 469

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 2013. 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

I report on the accounts of the Apex Challenge for the year ended 31 December 2013 which comprise the 'Statement of receipts and payments' and 'Statement of assets and liabilities' set out on pages 13 and 14.

This report is made solely to the trustees in accordance with Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011. My work has been undertaken so that I might state to the charity's trustees those matters I am required to state to them in an Independent Examiner's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's trustees for my examination work.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

The Apex Challenge trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. They consider that an audit is not required for this year (under Section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act)) and that an independent examination is needed. It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts (under Section 145 of the Charities Act);
- Follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under Section 145 (5)(b) of the Charities Act); and
- State whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Apex Challenge 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 you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent Examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 130 of the Charities Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act have not been met; 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, Joanne Alflat, Simon Atha, Matt Atkinson, Andrew Batley, John Batley, Rob Batley, Abby Baxter, Grace Baxter, Darren Bell, Martin Bennett, Andrew Billington, Duncan Blakeley, Steve Booth, Ian Brannan, James Brown, Nick Bryan, Ruth Bullivant-Layton, Kevin Bumbly, Stewart Butler, Jake Carpenter, Tony Casson, Julia Charlesworth, John Clay, Darrell Coates, Ian Cook, David Cooper, Steve Culmer, Tracey Dixon, 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, Isabelle Handley, Ben Harding, Hannah Harper, Sarah Harris, Ricky Harrison, Simon Harrison, Graham Harrop, Russ Hirst, Duncan Hocking, Richard Hollingworth, Nikki Hopkins, Gaz Hopkins, Emma Hunter, Jez Ince, Andy Jackson, Colin James, Marcus Jenkinson, Alison Lamb, Nigel Lee, Jen Lowthrop, Kristian Lucas, Maria Mahon, Ross Masters, Neil McKay, Bruce Meek, Rebecca Meers, Andrew Melleney, Jon Mitchell, Andy Moore, Dom 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, Nicky Phipps, David Platts, Andrew Plummer, Lee Plummer, Lynne Plummer, Sara Plummer, Matt Richards, Nigel Redfern, Susie Roache, Brian Robinson, Bev Rothery, Mark Rothery, Mike Sharp, Dom Sharpe, Ben Sheldon, John Skipper, Tom Smith, Tom Spreyer, Mike Squires, Dave Stern, Jon Stewart, Ben Stevenson, Pete Stevenson, Sian Stockham, Becky Stone, Jason Stubbs, Nadine Sweeney, Bob Teasdale, Haley Toseland, James Tucker, Sam Turnbull, Amanda Ward, Andrew Ward, Edward Watchorn, David Webster, James Webster, Carolyn Welborn, Kevin Welborn, Jim Wild, Susan Wragg, Julie Wright, David Yates, Mark Yates.



If you would like further copies, please contact:

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



For further details go online:

www.apexchallenge.co.uk

or scan the QR code with your smartphone.