******Cambridgeshire DofE Open Award Centre and the**

**RAPTOR (Birds of Prey) FOUNDATION**

**Gold DofE Residential 2025**

**Sat 25th October to Weds 29th October**

**Cambridgeshire DofE Open Award Centre are pleased to offer an exciting and different residential opportunity to Gold Award Participants**.

* Would you like to learn how to care for and fly birds of prey (Raptors)?
* Would you like to help to repair aviaries, maintain the environment and look after the visitor site?
* Would you like to learn something about Raptor conservation and rehabilitation and help to support the work of this amazing charity?
* Are you interested in the care and conservation of animals?

We have these activities and more in our 5-day itinerary.

Cambridgeshire DofE Open Award Centre and The Raptor Foundation <https://raptorfoundation.org.uk/> will work together to deliver our Raptor care and handling experience. We will stay in the grounds of the Raptor Foundation and hear the wonderful calls of the birds throughout our stay. Learning about a wide variety of Raptors and their care whilst also helping to restore some of the grounds and aviaries for a better visitor experience. The Raptor Foundation also care for a “mob” of meerkats and a “creep” of tortoises, as well as a pond with a “school” of fish……Loving those collective nouns!!! A “kettle” of hawks, a “wake” of buzzards, you can of course use “flock”. 😊

All need careful care, handling and maintenance of their surroundings.

The Raptor Foundation are a member of BIAZA <https://biaza.org.uk/> (The British and Irish Association of Zoos and Aquariums) All members are dedicated to achieving the highest standards of animal care and conserving the natural world through research, conservation and educating and inspiring their visitors.

This residential is suitable for anyone interested in caring for animals and their environments, or anyone applying or already accessing courses in animal care and handling, or anyone interested in animal or small zoo work, or animal care and conservation.

The location has very easy access from the A1 and A14 via Huntingdon, Cambs or via St Ives, Cambs

**When**: Sat 25th October to Weds 29th October 2025

**Where**: The Raptor Foundation, The Heath, St. Ives Rd, Woodhurst, Huntingdon. PE28 3BT

**Arrive**: 11:30 DAY 1 **Leave**: 15:00 DAY 5

**Cost**: £210 (EARLY BIRD price…reduced to £195 if booked by Dec 31st 2024)

**What is included**: **ALL** meals, snacks and drinks from lunch on Day 1 to lunch on Day 5

Hot and Cold breakfast every day, sandwich lunch and the home cooked campfire food every evening is sumptuous and filling! We promise you will not be hungry.

Accommodation fees (Please bring your own tent)

Use of all tools required

Adult DofE Leadership support throughout

A selection of Raptor/small zoo activities and environmental care provided by Raptor Foundation staff

**Accommodation**: The course happens in October when it can be cold. We ask all participants to bring a tent and camping equipment, so that they have privacy for changing and somewhere to store all their equipment. We have access to a large barn and a smaller room for participants to sleep in, should the camping field be very wet and unusable. Everyone will need an “off the ground” camp bed for this (example link on kit list below). Try to borrow from friends or family if you don’t have your own. We regard this as an essential item to get a comfortable nights sleep. The campbed is in addition to the usual sleeping mat etc. Bring as many warm bedding items as you think you might need, nights can be cold. No need to carry anything anywhere, so bring enough items to be really really comfortable.

**How to apply?**

Fill out the online application form via the link. <https://forms.office.com/e/3AH6YRpE2a?origin=lprLink>

 You can also use the QR code to access the form.

Pay the fee by BACS, AND please send us the amount paid, date paid and payment reference on your application form

Please pay Cooperative Bank, 1 Balloon St, Manchester, M60 4EP

Amount £210 (or EARLY BIRD price £195 if paid by Dec 31st 2024)

Sort Code 08-92-99

Account Name Cambridgeshire DofE Open Award Centre

Account No 67215922

Quote Ref GOLDRES \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ (insert surname and initials)

We will send final joining details approx. 1 month prior to the course start date.

We have a maximum of 33 places available on the course.

**What should I bring**: Lots of energy and a smile! PLUS the following items.

You will get muddy and dirty so make sure you bring lots of old clothes.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Personal clothing | Camping/sleeping equipment | Personal equipment |
| Old trainers | Tent | Personal First aid kit |
| Wellington boots | Extra warm Sleeping bag(or bring 2) | Day Sack |
| Walking boots | Thick Sleeping mat(or bring 2) | Insect repellent |
| Waterproofs | Extra blankets | Handsan |
| Shirts | Pillow | Face flannel |
| Shorts | Torch + spare batteries | Small towel + toiletries |
| Underwear | Wristwatch | Small notebook + pencil |
| Trousers (not jeans) | Ear plugs (noisy road) | Pack of cards/small game |
| Hat/scarf/warm gloves |  | Camera |
| Warm pyjamas |  | 1 litre water bottle |
| Warm fleece fabric tops |  | Tea towel |
| Leather work gloves |  | Large Plate + large bowl |
| Gardening gloves |  | Mug |
|  |  | Dishcloth/scourer |
|  | Campbed eg <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Hi-Gear-Slumber-Camp-Grey-Size/dp/B08GPVKBTG/ref=sr_1_5?crid=3V7ARUAIQMD92&keywords=campbed&qid=1698748795&s=sports&sprefix=%2Csports%2C279&sr=1-5&th=1&psc=1> | Knife fork spoon |

**Raptor Foundation/DofE Gold Residential Project Programme**

Check out the outline plan below. Tasks will be decided when we arrive and depend on the weather.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Day |  | AM |  | PM |  | Evening |
| 1 |  | Participants arrive 11:30am | Lunch | Set up camp  Tour of the site  Introduction to Raptor Foundation, project work choices and staff | Dinner | Get to know each other.  Evening games  Nightline/Trust trail |
| 2 | Breakfast | Raptor Activities/DIYwork | Lunch | Raptor Activities/DIYwork | Dinner | Night flying demo?  Cutlery carving? |
| 3 | Breakfast | Raptor Activities/DIYwork | Lunch | Raptor Activities/DIYwork | Dinner | birdbox making |
| 4 | Breakfast | Raptor Activities/DIYwork | Lunch | Raptor Activities/DIYwork | Dinner | Pumpkin carving |
| 5 | Breakfast | Raptor Activities/DIYwork | Lunch | Debrief and feedback  Break camp and pack  Participants depart 3pm |  |  |

Accommodation by camping/in the barn. There are male and female toilets and an accessible toilet with a shower facility. Showers will be allocated by a rota system.

All mealtimes and evening activities are to be supported by DofE Staff

Daytime AM and PM Raptor project work to be supported by Raptor Foundation Staff.

**Possible Activities**

Activities may vary depending on the weather and the season and will include a mixture of DIY centre improvement activities alongside the Animal welfare activities, and evening activities. The list is not exhaustive and activities may be added when we have confirmed the skills of the staff supporting your residential experience and the tasks which need to be completed at the time…and the weather!!

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **ANIMAL BASED ACTIVITIES** | **DIY VISITOR CENTRE IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES** | **EVENING ACTIVITIES** |
| Flying Raptors | Clearing paths for accessibility |  |
| Preparing food and Feeding Raptors | Chipping dry branch wood for laying new paths |
| Cleaning aviaries | Cutting back brush wood and pruning |
| Repairing Aviaries | Painting | Bird box making |
| Demolishing old aviaries/sheds |  | Bat box making |
| Learning about Raptor conservation | Block paving repair and maintenance | Cutlery carving |
| Learning about the Raptor hospital | Building a wall | Whistle making |
| Owl pellet dissection | Raising a tree crown | Games |
| Bat box/bird box/nest box building | Debark willow tree | Campfire |
| Caring for Meerkats | Tree stump removal | Night line/trust trail |
| Caring for reptiles | Preparing flower beds/gardens and borders | Pumpkin carving |
| Cleaning the fish pond | Staining/preservative on fences and other woodwork |  |

If you need more information please email [tracy.grant@cambridgeshiredofe.co.uk](mailto:tracy.grant@cambridgeshiredofe.co.uk)

or call Tracy Grant on 07770222402

**Some Feedback from our previous participants**

* I had a great time.
* The food was good and I loved how much effort was put in regarding the meals
* It was a great experience
* The days were planned well
* I enjoyed meeting new people and trying new things.
* I got to do a lot of cool things
* I was pleasantly surprised by the consideration offered to those with dietary requirements, was all delicious and very well thought out.
* Very much appreciate all the staff for their support, time and effort throughout the residential.
* Everything was really good
* Just want to say thank you again for such an incredible experience!
* It was amazing!!
* All the staff were incredible thank you so much!