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Adventure Expeditions

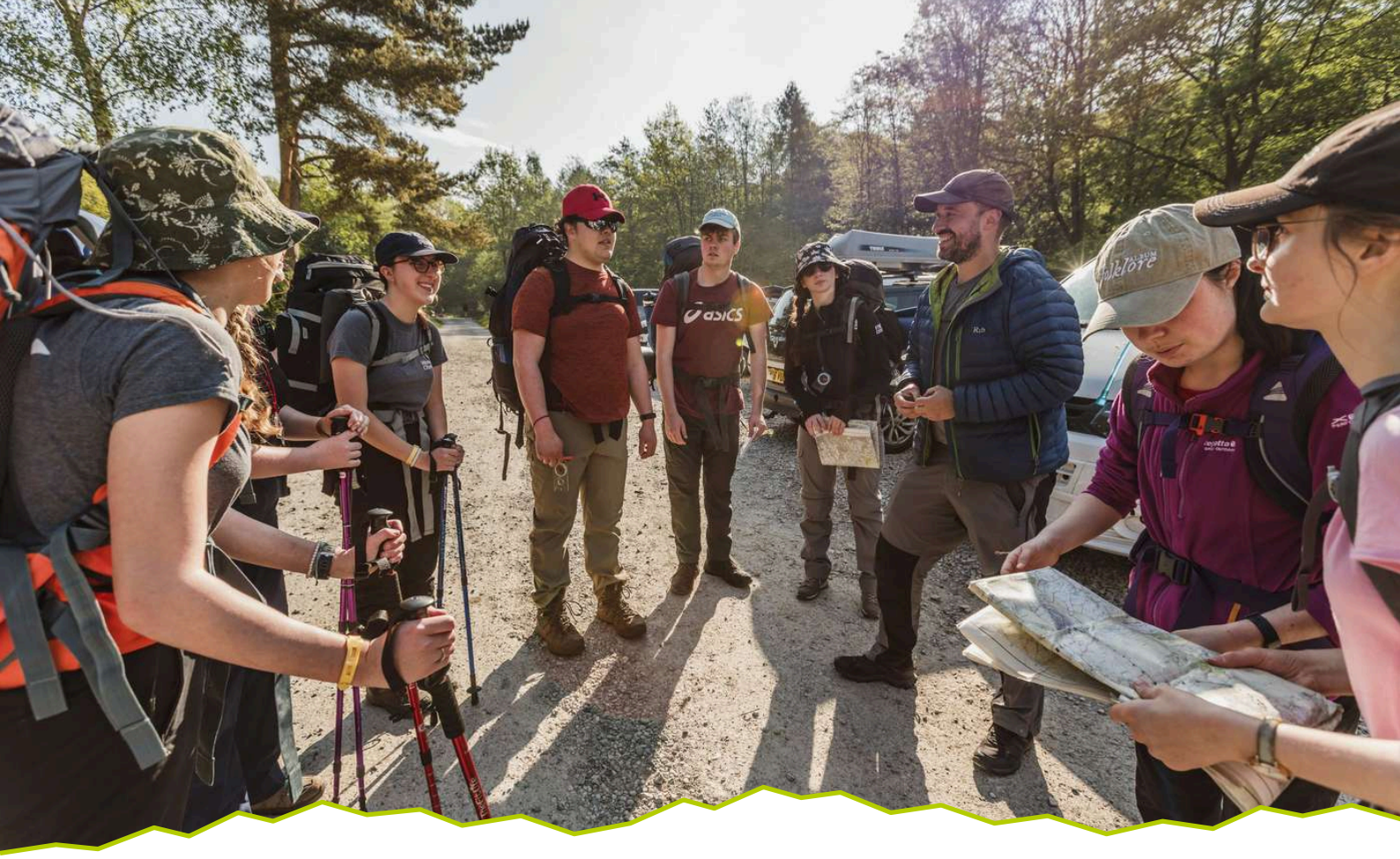
Adventure Expertise

Appointment Details

Non-Executive Directors

October 2026

For a conversation about these roles, please contact
Cat Charlton, Managing Director cat@adventure-expeditions.net



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Letter from our Founder

Thank you for your interest in joining AE as a Non-Executive Director.

This is an exciting time to be part of AE. Thanks to the dedication of many talented and experienced people across our community, AE has grown and matured — both in size and in the impact we have for young people and adults through delivery of tailored programmes in outdoor environments and authentic adventurous outdoor activity provision.

As we move into 2027, our mission and vision for future impact are clearer than ever and significant opportunities to further our aims are within touching distance — including establishing a charitable arm to widen our reach. We are focused on long-term stability and have a keen eye on developing our systems and structures in step with demand so that we deliver maximum impact at every level without burnout to our team.

We are implementing strong strategic priorities to ensure that our operational structure remains efficient and stable as well as being cohesive and inclusive for those we exist to serve. Our aim is to harness the power of outdoor environments and adventurous activities to bring positive change to the communities of young people and adults that we work with as well as the communities that support them in turn and the people who work hard every day to make AE a success.

Our leadership and management teams have a solid foundation to build upon and our systems and processes continue to strengthen around the goal of allowing us to facilitate sustainable growth and keep evolving in line with demand. We are now seeking to appoint four Non-Executive Directors to join AE's Board and support the next stage of our impact.

We welcome applications from people who share our belief in the power of the outdoors to change lives and who bring strategic insight and challenge, sound judgement and a collaborative approach to governance. We are committed to being representative of the communities that AE serves and we particularly welcome interest from those who would further strengthen the diversity and lived experience of our Board (prior Board experience is not necessary and full training will be given to support all Board members to undertake their role as effectively as possible).

Our North Star is simple: the outdoors has the power to change lives and our job is to harness that power for as many people as possible. If you have a passion for learning outside the classroom, social justice and equity in opportunity, supporting people to effect change and transformation in their own lives or for using the outdoors to help others live the fullest life possible, we would love to hear from you.

Yours sincerely,

Cat Charlton
AE Founder & Managing Director

"The outdoors has the power to change lives and our job is to harness that power for as many people as possible."



Executive Summary

AE is a not-for-profit outdoor education organisation based in the Peak District but reaching more than 5,000 young people and 500 adults every year throughout the UK.

Founded
2010. A not-for-profit (company limited by guarantee) since 2016

Based
Hathersage, Peak District (Derbyshire)

Reach
5,000+ young people and 500+ adults a year. UK wide plus programme delivery in Europe. Welcoming a range of international students to the UK

Board vacancies
Four Non-Executive Directors

Two strands, one mission
Adventure Expeditions (young people) and Adventure Expertise (adults)

Where we work
Across the UK, plus overseas programmes in Europe and welcoming international young people to the UK to work with us

Our team
16–18 core staff, plus a freelance instructor team (approximately 100 freelance instructors engaged per year)

Adventure Expeditions works with more than 5,000 young people each year across a range of development-focused outdoor education programmes. From Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) expeditions and residentials, to alternative-provision-style delivery in schools across Sheffield, to developmental residentials throughout the UK and overseas, Adventure Expeditions has established itself as an industry-leading delivery partner for schools, development organisations, national workplaces, government departments and families. Our work is built around developmental, emotional intelligence (EQ) and non-clinical therapeutic themes, with connection, inclusion, belonging and fun at the forefront of everything we do.

Adventure Expertise delivers work on similar themes for adults. It works with more than 500 adults each year across charities, schools and workplaces, and delivers Mountain Training instructor (NGB) training and assessment courses. Key partners include Climb2Recovery (C2R), with whom we have developed non-clinical therapeutic outdoor programmes for C2R's community of wounded, injured and sick (WIS) military veterans and these are continuing to evolve and grow year on year.

AE was founded in 2010 and became a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee (CLG) in 2016. "AE" covers both Adventure Expeditions and Adventure Expertise meaning that all of our work is devoted to the same mission and vision.

AE is both industry-leading in standards of provision and one of the largest outdoor providers in the UK. Demand for our services means we are ready to expand our impact-driven delivery and widen the reach that we can have day-to-day. We are seeking to establish a charitable arm within our structure so that AE can deliver more work that targets need and makes a real difference — particularly non-clinical therapeutic delivery, community building and reducing the risk of teenagers and young adults becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training).

As a Learning Organisation, AE will keep working to evolve in line with our aims and ethos as well as continuing to strengthen our leadership and governance — Board level input is central to that.

Non-Executive Directors therefore play an essential role: in developing strategy that brings AE's mission, vision and values to life and via governance and holding our team to account. Joining our Board is a chance to shape our direction of travel at the highest level.

Our new Board members will have a keen eye for detail, will not be afraid to challenge the status quo or ask difficult questions and will take a collaborative approach to working that values compassion in organisational leadership.

An Introduction to AE

AE is one of the largest outdoor providers in the UK. In 2026, our achievements include:

- Delivery to more than 5,000 young people in secondary schools across the UK.
- Delivery and expansion of the Department for Education-commissioned SAFE Taskforce project, working with young people from City of Sheffield schools who are at risk of, or involved in, serious youth violence.
- Appointment as sole provider of DofE Workplace provision — the culmination of a 10-year delivery history with an estimated 160 participants from UK workplaces joining developmental expeditions and residentials in 2026–27.
- Key delivery partner to Climb2Recovery (C2R), the military veterans' charity providing skills courses and a non-clinical therapeutic recovery model for wounded, injured and sick (WIS) personnel. AE provides systems and foundational development to provision as well as residential courses and various pathways beyond course provision rooted in community, belonging and professional development as a key part of non-clinical therapeutic support.
- More than 1,500 individuals booking places on our open expeditions, residentials and Adventure Days across the UK.
- Designing and delivering an Invictus Games flag-bearing expedition, including a film highlighting the importance of C2R's work for the WIS community.
- Designing a new progressive residential framework for secondary-age participants across five school years, linking eight residential programmes to staged outcomes, with inclusion and choice as key drivers.



Our credentials

Our quality and safety credentials are rooted in a senior staff team that is among the most experienced and highly qualified practitioners in the UK. AE's certifications include an HSE Adventure Activities Licence (AALS), DofE Approved Activity Provider status, the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge, the AAIAC Adventure Mark and the AHOEC Gold Standard. AE is also a member of the Institute for Outdoor Learning.

Looking ahead to 2027

AE's systems are built to an industry-leading specification and we aim to build on every area of our delivery to ensure that they remain so, including refining systems for consistency and scalability in line with AE's aims and demand from the communities we work with. A key part of our 2027 plan is establishing a charitable side to AE to really accelerate wider impact. From December 2026, AE is taking over the Foundry Adventure Centre in Great Hucklow, giving a residential centre of our own and a second working site to operate.

Our North Star

The outdoors has the power to change lives. Our job is to harness this power for as many people as possible.

Everything AE does is orientated toward one fixed point: our North Star.

What we do

We are committed to inspiring people to realise their potential through authentic outdoor experiences, using the unique power of the outdoors to build confidence, resilience and a genuine sense of possibility.

How we do it

Adventure belongs to everyone, and everyone has a place in the outdoors. We widen participation and actively remove barriers: we adapt programmes to individual needs, adjust the level of challenge to suit everyone, fund access through our bursary programme and work alongside communities so that adventure is genuinely available to all — regardless of background, circumstance or financial means.

Not-for-profit by design

We have no shareholders and pay no dividends: every pound of operating surplus is reinvested in our mission.

Bursaries and awards

Since 2016 we have supported young people, leaders, teachers, schools and organisations with bursaries, training, equipment and guidance.

Local fundraising

Each year we design and deliver a challenge event for a chosen charity or local group free of charge so that every pound of sponsorship goes to the charity and we donate the costs of provision and delivery.

Conservation

Our core team supports conservation and environmental work across the Peak District — we support and join with projects such as clearing litter and fly-tipping, repairing footpaths and dry-stone walls, planting and surveying wildlife.

Inspiring the Future

Our team volunteers in schools across the East Midlands and Sheffield, talking to pupils about careers in and beyond the outdoors.

What We Value

Our values are grouped under three principles — Adventure, Belonging and Responsibility — and they describe who we already are at our best, and who we commit to being, even when it is difficult.

Adventure

The experience we create — with expertise, integrity and excellence

- **Professionalism**
- **Operational Excellence**
- **Integrity**

Belonging

The community we build — where everyone feels seen and valued

- **Respect**
- **Inclusion**
- **Perseverance**

Responsibility

The commitments we keep — to each other, our community and the planet

- **Sustainability**
- **Courage**

How we lead

Leadership at AE is a responsibility, not a title. Our seven leadership values — Facilitation, Accountability, Development, Individuality, Connection, Proactivity and Challenge — apply to everyone who leads at AE and this covers leading from within your own role. We look to our Senior Management Team (SMT) and Board to model these values.

How we measure it

We track whether our culture is working in practice through benchmarking against recognised frameworks (Investors in People), quarterly pulse surveys and an annual engagement survey, measured against a nine-pillar Human Capital Index with a long-term target of 75+. Our values are set out in full in AE's Compass & North Star, our ways-of-working guide for every core team member and freelancer; a copy is available to applicants on request.





What We Believe

Five beliefs sit underneath our values and do not change, however much AE grows.

Safety enables all else.

Authentic adventure and genuine safety are partners, not opposites. We set high standards for outdoor risk management because they protect the very opportunities for development we stand for.

Every person deserves a chance.

Whether someone joins us on a full bursary or pays full price, they get the same experience, the same care, the same AE.

Challenge yourself, support others.

We push personal limits — in participants and in ourselves — but challenge always comes with genuine support. We don't leave anyone behind.

The outdoors creates conditions for growth that nothing else can.

We use the natural world with deliberate educational intent; it teaches things a classroom often cannot.

We are a business for good.

Every decision considers its impact on the people we serve, the communities we operate in and the natural environment.

> *"We don't manage risk in order to eliminate it. We manage risk in order to understand it, respect it and use it — because that's where the growth is."*
>
> From AE's Compass & North Star



How AE Is Governed

AE's Board is responsible for driving the strategic direction of AE and is ultimately accountable for the organisation.

AE is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee, so Board members are company directors with legal duties under the Companies Act 2006. The Board is currently looking to recruit into the role of Chair of the Board and we also recognise the need to grow beyond the Board's current membership to provide secure governance and wider insight as a growing operation. It meets quarterly and receives regular reports from the Managing Director and SMT who run AE day to day. The Board governs AE as a whole, covering both Adventure Expeditions and Adventure Expertise divisions.

Our governance is growing — future charitable status. Alongside appointing four new Board members (including a Chair), AE plans to establish a charitable arm in 2027. New Board members will help shape how that charity is set up and governed and we hope that Board members will be instrumental in recruiting a strong group of trustees (or consider becoming a founding trustee themselves) and have input in this exciting new phase from the beginning.

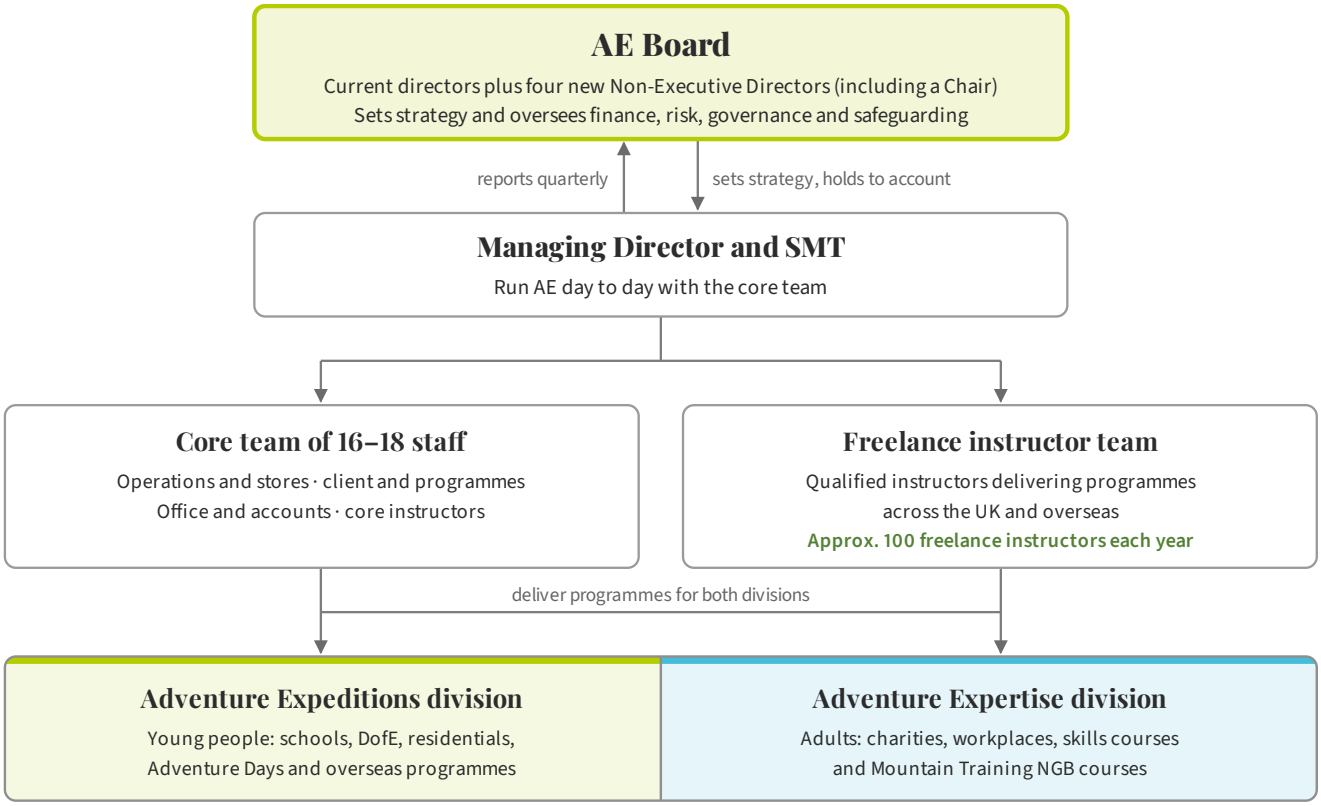
How the Board works. The Board acts collectively: no individual member makes decisions alone. Board members provide independent oversight, support and challenge, and do not manage day-to-day operations. Each new Board member will also take a lead area of oversight matched to their experience.

Proposed lead areas for new Board members

- Finance & Risk
- Impact
- People & Culture
- Charity Development, Lived Experience, Partnerships & Consortiums

AE Structure

AE's Board oversees the Managing Director and SMT who run AE day to day with a core employed staff team and a wider freelance instructor team.







Role Description

Our Board members are the guardians of AE's North Star, and they are collectively accountable for how AE uses its people, money and reputation to pursue it.

Role purpose

To provide strategic leadership, oversight, support and challenge, so that AE's strategy, performance and use of resources stay directed at its not-for-profit purpose. Board members are expected to act in line with ss171–177 of the Companies Act 2006, AE's Articles of Association, sector regulation and the values of AE's Compass. Further, AE's Board voluntarily adopts the Nolan Principles as part of setting our Board culture.

Lead area

Each Board member will also take a lead area of oversight, acting as the Board's link with the relevant staff lead between meetings.

General responsibilities of a Board member

- Help shape AE's strategy, approve plans and targets and monitor performance against them.
- Ensure AE applies its resources in pursuing its not-for-profit purpose.
- Oversee AE's financial health: approve budgets, review management accounts and ensure proper financial controls and sustainable growth.
- Oversee risk, safety and safeguarding, making sure AE's risk management, safeguarding arrangements and regulatory compliance are robust.
- Hold the Managing Director and SMT to account, with the right balance of support and challenge.
- Help design and establish AE's charitable arm, including its purposes, governance and funding model.
- Uphold AE's values, culture and reputation, and act as an ambassador for AE.
- Declare and manage any conflicts of interest.
- Keep informed about AE's work and the wider issues affecting the outdoor, education and third sectors that interface with AE's work.

Independence

Board members bring independent judgement. They do not step into day-to-day operational management, and they do not act as representatives or conduits of influence for any outside interest.

Legal duties

As company directors, Board members must act within AE's constitution, promote its success for its purposes, exercise independent judgement and reasonable care, skill and diligence as well as avoid conflicts of interest.



Terms and Time Commitment

We expect the role to take the equivalent of 6–8 days per year.

Commitment	Detail
Term of office	Three years, renewable for one further three-year term
Board meetings	Four a year (quarterly), around 2–3 hours each, at our Peak District base or local to the Hathersage area with the option to join online for up to 2 meetings per year
Preparation	Reading Board papers and associated documents before each meeting, typically 1–2 hours (or dependent on matters arising)
Strategy day	One annual strategy day with the Board and key AE staff
Lead area	Regular contact with relevant AE staff lead between meetings
Seeing our work	At least one visit a year to see an AE programme on the ground
Induction	Time with the Managing Director and SMT or key staff in the first three months of your appointment

Board members who cannot meet the commitment, or who develop a long-term conflict of interest, will be expected to step down. We will review the Board's effectiveness annually to ensure that we are optimising our individual and collective roles.

Person Specification

We are looking for four people who share our belief in the power of the outdoors and will bring strategic insight, constructive challenge and compassion to AE's Board.

Every Board member will bring

- A genuine commitment to AE's North Star and values, and to widening participation in the outdoors for the transformational benefits it can bring.
- The ability to operate at a strategic level and offer insight into AE's development.
- A keen eye for detail, and the ability to analyse information critically and assess AE's position constructively.
- The confidence to challenge the status quo and ask difficult questions, acting as a critical friend with the right balance of support and challenge.
- Sound, independent judgement and political impartiality.
- A collaborative approach, a willingness to reflect and learn and an approach to leadership rooted in compassion.
- A demonstrable commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- A willingness to champion AE as an ambassador and open doors on behalf of the impact we can bring together.
- An understanding of the legal responsibilities of a company director and charity trustee, or a willingness to learn them.

Skills and experience we particularly need

We are seeking a balance across the four appointments, and would especially like to hear from people with experience in one or more of these areas:

Chair of the Board
Previous non-executive director / Chair experience, including holding a CEO/MD to account

Charity development
Setting up or governing a charity; trusts, foundations, grants and income diversification

People and culture
HR leadership, employment law, organisational development, culture change and wellbeing

Growth, partnerships and consortium working
Business development, corporate partnerships and consortium working (private and public organisations), social outcomes partnerships

Finance, audit and risk
Qualified accountant or senior finance leader; financial oversight of a growing SME, social enterprise or charity

Safeguarding, education, non-clinical therapeutic provision
Safeguarding leadership for children and vulnerable adults; schools, alternative provision or youth work, social green prescribing, building non-clinical therapeutic provision

Impact and communications
Measuring impact and communicating impact with the world; marketing and digital / social media use

Lived experience
Of the communities we serve — for example young people at risk of becoming NEET, military veterans, people with SEND or groups under-represented in the outdoors

> You do not need previous board experience or a background in the outdoor sector: we will provide a full induction. We would particularly welcome applications from people who would strengthen the diversity and lived experience of our Board.

Terms of Appointment and How to Apply

Terms of appointment

The role is unpaid, with reasonable travel expenses reimbursed. Appointments are for a three-year term, renewable for one further term. All appointments are subject to satisfactory references, an appropriate DBS check and a signed declaration that you are not disqualified from acting as a company director or charity trustee.

How to apply

Please send a full CV, including details of your key achievements and responsibilities and a covering letter addressed to Cat Charlton, to **cat@adventure-expeditions.net**. Your letter should explain how you meet the person specification and which lead area most interests you. We would welcome an informal conversation before you apply — please contact Cat to arrange one.

The closing date for applications is **Friday 18th December 2026, 15:00**.





Adventure Expeditions

Adventure Expertise

For a conversation about these roles, please contact
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cat@adventure-expeditions.net
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