

CHALLENGE
ACADEMY

REACHING COMMUNITIES
POST COVID-19

www.challengeacademy.co.uk



ACTIVATING PEOPLE AND SPACE releasing potential

We passionately believe in the power of the active environment to reboot, challenge, educate and empower so that people can find their purpose, focus mindset and unlock potential.



This document provides detail about the work that Challenge Academy CIC does now, what we want to do in the near future and how we want to do it by accessing funding from the National Lottery 'Community Fund'



ADVENTURE

Challenge Academy (CA) is based at 'Baggeridge Adventure' in the West Midlands. Our range of ropes courses, obstacle courses, ground-based challenge, classrooms and welfare facilities provide a perfect setting for our programmes. We also enjoy access to 250 acres of parkland for more expansive activities.

EQUIPMENT

CA has designed and produced a wide range of challenge resources and equipment. We focus on empowering professionals to be licensed practitioners in order to facilitate programmes to meet desired positive outcomes. CA equipment and effective facilitation brings spaces alive.

TRAINING

Our Continuing Professional Development (CPD) training courses are pitched at enabling fellow professionals to facilitate. Training has been formally accredited with the Institute of Outdoor Learning and AIM Awards. We have trained and qualified in excess of 1000 facilitators over the past 7 years.

LEARNING

Delivering programmes that focus on challenge, mindset, personal potential and team development. We design and deliver programmes to achieve the desired outcomes, however progressive or complex. Well trained and purpose-driven professionals will ensure that our passion, programmes and products can reach everyone

CONSULTANCY

Providing subject matter expertise and helping other organisations to maximise their offers and space. Partnerships are key and we take pride in our exceptional service and support. Our lead practitioners help with facility, operational and programme development. We are able to provide turn-key solutions for other organisations to progress their offers.

ACCREDITATION

Qualifications to suit trainers and learners at every level. We can design and offer a diverse range of programmes and accredited courses, from Student Entry level 1 to Level 3 Instructor qualifications. We use our own training locations but we are also mobile.

COMMUNITY ADVENTURE ON THE DOORSTEP



BAGGERIDGE ADVENTURE



TEAM CHALLENGE



HIGH ROPES ADVENTURE



OBSTACLE COURSES



ZIP WIRES + DESCENDERS



FOREST LEARNING



WOODLAND CHALLENGE



NETS ADVENTURE



CLIMBING + BOULDERING



Since 2016 we have worked hard to secure investment and grants to shift our facility Baggeridge Adventure from just a 'High Ropes Course', to an exceptional adventure day centre. We now provide a safe yet challenging environment for all groups and abilities within the Black Country Community. Key funders include Sport England, Enovert Trust and Resonance Ltd.

The 2 main customer groups are 'Challengers' and 'Learners', and serving the needs of these groups are central to the Challenge Academy facility mix and delivery philosophy.

We use all of our knowledge, skills and experience to facilitate learning opportunities in order to achieve desired outcomes within a stimulating and active environment. Key to success is moving customers outside of their comfort zones in a fun and secure environment.

We recognise that, post COVID 19, purpose-driven organisations such as Challenge Academy, have an opportunity and responsibility to expand its' offer.



ACTIVE ENVIRONMENTS SMART SOLUTIONS



RESOURCES AND TRAINING

Empowering Fellow Professionals

Challenge Academy resources and training have been developed and produced exclusively by CA Directors, with input from fellow professionals. CA Directors have now worked on a number of projects relating to the design, implementation, training and accreditation for challenge course activities and larger scale outdoor learning facilities and tasks. Work to date includes:

- Design of innovative activities to be used for personal and team development with a focus on outreach

and mobility.

- Gathering and collating input of subject specialists and lead trainers with extensive teaching, military instruction, personal training and management experience.
- Achieving CPD approved training and certification through the Institute of Outdoor learning (IOL) and AIM Awards.
- Key input with like-minded Youth Organisations, Leisure Trusts, Local Authorities and other like-minded organisations.



BAGS of CHARACTER

A 'Bag of Character' is a sturdy weatherproof holdall full of ideas and equipment required for over 80 warm-ups, team challenge, reviews, session planning and self-help 'mental toughness' exercises. Furthermore this resource includes a comprehensive operations manual and associated CPD Institute for Outdoor Learning accredited training. The resource is suitable for all ages and abilities. Your skill as a facilitator will bring it alive.

The resource and activities are suitable for all ages and abilities from KS2. The training focuses on facilitation skills, how to pitch the learning and achieve desired outcomes. Think of 'Bags of Character' equipment and activity as a playground for everyone, but with measurable and meaningful outcomes!



Our bigger kit can be assembled quickly and used to achieve a variety of outcomes in a wide variety of settings, indoors and outdoors. The kit is extremely robust but the key to success is about empowering leaders to take ownership and deliver high quality facilitation, in order that they may maximise potential. Challenge Kit XL can be used as a separate activity or as part of a progressive course of learning. Uses include Challenge Course, Obstacle Course, Fitness Rig....etc

CHALLENGE KIT XL



Permanent building of facilities might be difficult to fund and justify in the post-COVID world. Challenge Kit XL offers a substantial solution. When constructed this kit provides an informal, less structured environment with significant opportunities for experiential learning. If facilitation is effective then barriers to sport and activity are broken down - essential learning becomes incidental.

Portable obstacle, fitness and team challenge equipment. Ancillary equipment 'Add-Ons' can be fitted to the A-framework using 'Quick Fit Pins'. The course can then be placed in a number of configurations to achieve a variety of outcomes. Cargo Nets, Balance Bars, Monkey Bars, Pull-Up Bars, Push-Up Bars.....and loads more.

A number of large-scale challenges add value to any programme of active learning, all accompanied by a comprehensive manual and an initial CPD training package (IOL Facilitation Skills for Experiential Learning) to provide facilitators with the skills to inject life and meaning into any learning space.

Challenge Kit XL breaks down to fit into a twin-axle trailer so that it can be taken to any venue, taking adventure to the most 'hard to reach' doorstep. When on-site the kit can be assembled in less than 1 hour. Every care has been taken to ensure that the kit complies with all relevant safety standards.

CA EQUIPMENT MEETING LOCAL NEEDS

A complete and unique solution for CA trained facilitators to deliver meaningful challenge and team development anywhere. Developed to meet community needs in a post-COVID landscape.

'This equipment has become a leadership and team building 'game changer, for the RAFAC. The quality of training and equipment that is now available to our cadets as a result of the Mobile Challenge Course is in stark contrast to the splintered planks of wood and rusty oil barrels that went before it. Challenge Academy provide a highly professional service supported by high quality robust equipment that is fit for purpose alongside perfectly pitched facilitation training). Everyone that has experienced it has bought in to the concept and there is genuine excitement about the prospect of receiving a set of this equipment' **Training and Safety Supervisor RAF Air Cadets - Central Region**

LOCAL OFFER EXTENDING REACH

How can the Challenge Academy and offer be scaled up in the 'Black Country' to address the post-COVID challenge

'I saw Glynn P this morning (he attended the course in September) and he wanted you to know how he's progressed since. He really valued the course and activities and wanted you to know how much it has helped him to increase his mental health, confidence and general well-being!'
Jo Newsome - Case Manager HMPPS CFO3


COMMUNITY MOBILE OUTREACH

- CA Facilitators take kit to schools, clubs and community organisations to activate different environments for team development activities.
- Using Bags of Character and XL Activities to support programmes.




GENERAL PUBLIC AND COMMUNITY ACTIVATION

- Activation of Baggeridge Adventure.
- Funded build complete Apr 21.
- Provide something for everyone, all abilities.
- Clubs and Membership to reward 'Challenger' profile.
- Fixed low-price entry points for all.
- Philosophy that 'getting out of comfort zone' in safe and facilitated environment is key.
- Includes standard mix of schools, colleges, charities, youth organisations and general public.



'CHALLENGER + LEARNER' COURSES AT BAGGERIDGE ADVENTURE

- Work with Partners to fund a wide range of courses.
- Prioritise Mental Health and Well-being Courses.
- Social Prescribing, Community Reconnection.
- Nature-Based Therapy.
- Outdoor Courses to focus on Learning Development.
- Includes standard mix of schools, colleges, charities, youth organisations.




Our Offer fits the 5 Themes of the new Sport England Strategy

- Positive experiences children/young people**
- Everyone deserves positive experiences.
 - Remove gender-based barriers.
 - Provide informal, less structured opportunities (experiential learning).
 - Improving experience will require reform of education plus reliance on community plus local environments.
 - Children's barriers must not be assumed (needs to be learner led).

- Strengthening Communities**
- Improve social cohesion, community.
 - Build community resilience.
 - Think outside of the normal community 'box'.
 - Pay attention to inequality and prioritise.

- Active Environments**
- Less obvious ways for activities to be facilitated.
 - Doesn't always need new infrastructure.
 - Still a place for sport, stuff can be incidental.
 - Effective partnerships.
 - Design it around local people needs and preferences.
 - Address existing inequalities.

- Active Life for a Healthy Life**
- Preventative tool, solution to health issues (Social Prescribing).
 - Positive mental well-being.
 - Sport and physical activity part of solution - closer integration of SPA and health system.
 - Addresses deeper causes of inequality.

- Recover and reinvent**
- Address COVID 19 damage.
 - New ways of operating, innovation.
 - Opportunity to address longer term challenges/opportunities.



MENTAL TOUGHNESS

Mental Toughness describes the mindset that every person adopts in everything they do. It is closely related to qualities such as character, resilience, grit, etc. It is defined as: 'A personality trait which determines, in large part, how people respond to challenge, stress and pressure, irrespective of their circumstances'.

- Published research and case studies from around the world show that Mental Toughness is a major factor in:
- Performance – explaining up to 25% of the variation in performance in individuals
 - Agility - Positive Behaviour – more engaged, more positive, more “can do”, dealing well with change
 - Well-being – more contentment, better stress management, less prone to bullying
 - Aspirations - more ambitious, prepared to manage more risk.

Challenge Academy work closely with AQR International. Their research and measures form the basis of the programmes that we deliver and our resources reflect the principles of mental toughness and how to develop resilience and improve well-being. We choose MTQ48 and AQR guiding. We can. We can either help someone change their mental toughness or we can show someone how to adopt the behaviours that a mentally tough person would adopt. Either way, many of the benefits of developing mental toughness can be achieved. principles as a highly credible philosophy and measure for the courses that we deliver. Our licensed users can administer AQR's test



CONTROL

Life Control – I really believe in myself, I can do it
Emotional Control – I can manage my emotions and the emotions of others



COMMITMENT

Goal Orientation – I set goals and like the idea of working toward goals
Achievement Orientation – I do what it takes to keep promises and achieve goals



CHALLENGE

Risk Orientation – I stretch myself, welcoming new and different experiences
Learning Orientation – I learn from what happens, including setbacks



CONFIDENCE

In Abilities – I believe I have the ability to do it, or can acquire the ability
Interpersonal Confidence – I can influence others

MOBILE OUTREACH FOR EVERYONE

CA can get on the road to deliver a rich mix of challenge, teamwork and transferable skills but we can also empower others to do the same

The Post-COVID Challenge

It is essential that people are able to access the learning provided by organisations such as CA. But, post-COVID, cultural shift, combined with lack of transport, facilities and budget might be problematic, in turn preventing communities and organisations from moving forward. Our solution is already proven and scalable. CA trained staff can come to any organisation to deliver an active day of challenge, problem solving and team development. Our own 'Mobile Outreach' equipment is utilised for this purpose. We have the knowledge, skill and experience to meet your desired outcomes. Our programmes are geared to suit any age, any ability, anywhere.

Philosophy

Life experience, employment and relationships require people to be 'mentally tough'. Our outcomes will focus on the following:

- Developing 'Mental Health Awareness'.
- Realising pathways to Physical Activity and Sport.
- Building Resilience.
- Improving Mental Well-being.
- Building Confidence.
- Developing self esteem and positive self image.
- Understanding of social determinants of mental health.
- Goal-setting and achievement.
- Changing unhealthy thinking.
- Developing positive mindset.
- Improving physical health and well-being.

Our courses focus on 'Control, Challenge, Confidence and Commitment'. There will be focus on achieving all of the above outcomes throughout the course but in a 'non prescriptive' manner.

Mental Toughness for Life

Our programmes are designed to develop 'soft skills'. For example employers require their employees to be confident, controlled and resilient. Mental Toughness is about a person's ability to deal with pressure stress that they encounter on a day-to-day basis at work and at home. Delivered by CA senior facilitators, our innovative programmes deliver excellent outcomes. We use the MTQ48 benchmark to measure progress and our AIM Awards ofqual accreditation provides a nationally recognised qualification.



How do we do it

- We get ‘on the road’ and deliver in community spaces.
- We also use our own location and other engaging outdoor environments.
- We activate healthy pursuits, outdoor activities and use our expertise to inspire and bring about positive change for those who need it most
- Our highly experienced and qualified staff facilitate participant-led exploration of the teamwork and personal development in an engaging environment.
- Our focus is on improving physical and emotional wellbeing.
- We provide a sense of belonging.
- In turn participants are able to get outside into nature in a safe and supportive setting.
- Friendships and social contact is established.
- Participants learn how to enjoy the moment, acquire new skills and develop coping strategies for daily life
- We are developing a strategy to provide a supportive network of volunteering opportunities in and around our site to provide a legacy for participants post-programme.

Our Staff

We have a rich mix of staff to deliver our programmes. Registered nurses, ex-military instructors, senior outdoor facilitators and teachers. This means that we are able to deliver a rich mix of opportunities for participants.

‘BRANCHING OUT’

REACHING COMMUNITIES

Connecting people with engaging environments to improve physical and emotional health and wellbeing.

*I can't thank you enough for all you have done for me, you have been so supportive and encouraging and you have given me hope, confidence and self belief - **NE***

*Thank you for always listening, encouraging, cheering us on and giving us a safe place to be on Monday - we think you guys are amazing and we will never forget you - **AW***





COURSES TO IMPROVE MENTAL HEALTH AND PHYSICAL WELL-BEING

1-HIT PROGRAMMES engagement and focused outcomes

- Warm-Ups, ground-based activities and adventurous activities onsite.
- Activities will be non-prescriptive, geared to suit the needs of each group attending.
- Focus would be light-touch understanding of how to achieve outcomes and delivery of a number of engaging, practical and fun activities to focus on desired outcomes.
- 5-hr session at Baggeridge Adventure.
- Target audience is families from lower socio-economic backgrounds.
- Activity sessions will take place at weekends and during school holidays.
- Plan to hold 30 Programmes per year.



- 1-Hit programmes will engage and provide opportunities for further development on other courses as we recover from the negative impact of COVID 19.
- These programmes will provide an opportunity for people to learn, laugh and have a positive experience together.
- Think of 1-Hit programmes as 'Adventure Camps' for all ages and abilities.
- We want to target 1 community at a time, with the help of a robust referral process in partnership with Dudley voluntary services.

3-DAY PROGRESSIVE - connecting people, realising potential

INTRO/TRUST

- To be delivered in community spaces.
- Bags of Character Warm-Ups
- Trust activities and team challenges
- Focus would be light-touch understanding of how to achieve outcomes and delivery of a number of engaging, practical and fun activities to focus on desired outcomes.
- 5-hr session on-site.
- Intro to self-help activities.
- Target audience is individuals in need from low socio-economic backgrounds.

PRACTICAL

- Practical session at local facility using Challenge Kit XL if applicable to build on aspects of what has been achieved week 1 and 2 and celebrate success. Activities on a 'Challenge by Choice' basis. 5 hr session to also include focus work on personal health and wellbeing.

BUILDING/PRACTICAL

- Building Confidence
- Developing self esteem and positive self image.
- Goal-setting and achievement.
- Activity sessions will take place at weekends and during school holidays.
- 5-hr session at Baggeridge Adventure.



- We hope to recruit from 1-Hit Programmes those people who would like to embark on a longer journey of self-development.
- These programmes will provide an opportunity for people to develop their own personal qualities.
- The programme will be delivered by our senior facilitators and will have a focus on active outdoor learning.
- There will be significant reflective review throughout.
- We want to target 1 community at a time, with the help of a robust referral process in partnership with Dudley voluntary services.

COURSES TO IMPROVE MENTAL HEALTH AND PHYSICAL WELL-BEING

BRANCHING OUT - 6-SESSION OUTLINE creating social groups, changing behaviours

INTRO/TRUST

- Contract of Engagement
- Bags of Character Warm-Ups
- Trust Activities
- MTQ48 Initial Test
- 4hr session delivered in a community space.

CONTROL

- Tutorial Introduction 4C's Challenge, Control, Commitment, Confidence.
- Life Control – I really believe in myself, I can do it
- Emotional Control – I can manage my emotions and the emotions of others
- Bag of Character Challenges and Workbook to build 'Control' (Team and Individual)
- 4 hr session delivered in a community space.

CONFIDENCE

- Confidence in Abilities – I believe I have the ability to do it, or can acquire the ability. Trust Activities
- Interpersonal Confidence – I can influence others
- Team and Individual tasks from Bags of Character and workbooks.
- 4hr session on-site or in a community space where transport provides a challenge.

CHALLENGE

Practical session at Baggeridge Adventure. to build on aspects of what has been achieved week 1 to 3 and celebrate success. Activities on a 'Challenge by Choice' basis. If not practical then we can use some of our own larger mobile challenge activities on-site. 5 hr session to also include focus work on personal health and well-being.

COMMITMENT

- Risk Orientation – I stretch myself, welcoming new and different experiences
- Learning Orientation – I learn from what happens, including setbacks
- Team and Individual tasks from Bags of Character and workbooks.
- Focus session on fitness and improving physical health.
- 4hr session on-site.

CELEBRATE SUCCESS

- Team Challenge XL Activities on-site or at Baggeridge Adventure.
- MTQ 48 repeated, award ceremony for AIM Awards 'Personal Potential'. 5hr session.
- Where Next? Pathways for further development. facilitated by CA Trailblazer.

- We hope to recruit, from 1-Hit Programmes, and through local referrals from community partners, those people who would like to embark on our 6-session progressive course.
- These programmes will provide an opportunity for people to develop new skills and change behaviour. This will, in turn, improve their mental resilience and provide other skills required to improve their chances of being better versions of themselves.
- The programme will be delivered by our senior facilitators and will have a focus on active outdoor learning. MTQ48 measure will be in place.
- We want to target 1 community at a time, with the help of a robust referral process in partnership with Dudley Voluntary Services.

ACCREDITATION - PERSONAL POTENTIAL

Ofqual approved, this award adds credibility and value - the focus of the award is on the following:

- Dealing with Challenge (Emotional Resilience): Problem solving and managing change through making personal adjustments
- Learning and Exploring Skills: Creating the desire to Learn and Explore, the curiosity to learn. Being able to complete, review and recognise achievements of self and others
- Trust in Others: Recognising the role of others, particularly in team or group situations where trust is required to complete tasks effectively
- Working with Others: Accepting of different roles (in a learning environment) as well as in problem solving situations





**BAGGERIDGE
ADVENTURE**



**CHALLENGE
EQUIPMENT**



**OUTDOOR
LEARNING**

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