

There is a presumption in favour of public access to the Defence Training Estate, on Public Rights of Way, balanced against the over-riding national requirement for safe and sustainable military training and conservation. Public access is not permitted to the camps and training areas at Caerwent. At Sennybridge, red flags fly continually along the range boundary and indicating that the area is subject to Military Bylaws. Within this area is situated the newly created Epynt Way circular permissive bridle path which runs along the boundary of the Training Area. The path links in with all the rights of way that come to the edge of the Training Area and allows access to be gained along the circular route. The path is some 60 km long and is extensively waymarked. Public access is actively encouraged along its route, with people on foot, horseback and on bicycles being the likely users. Co-located with this centre are walks for the disabled and able-bodied, with magnificent views across the Epynt. When on such a public Right of Way across a training area follow the Country Code:

The Country Code

- Enjoy the countryside and respect its life and work
- Guard against all risk of fire
- Use gates and stiles to cross fences, hedges and walls
- Leave livestock, crops and machinery alone
- Take your litter home
- Take special care on country roads
- Make no unnecessary noise
- Keep to the public paths across farmland
- Fasten all gates
- Keep dogs under close control
- Protect wild life, plants and trees
- Help to keep all water clean

Great care is taken to ensure the safety of these walks, although areas used by the armed forces for training can obviously be dangerous. Anyone walking on MoD land must obey all signs and byelaws relevant to the area being visited.

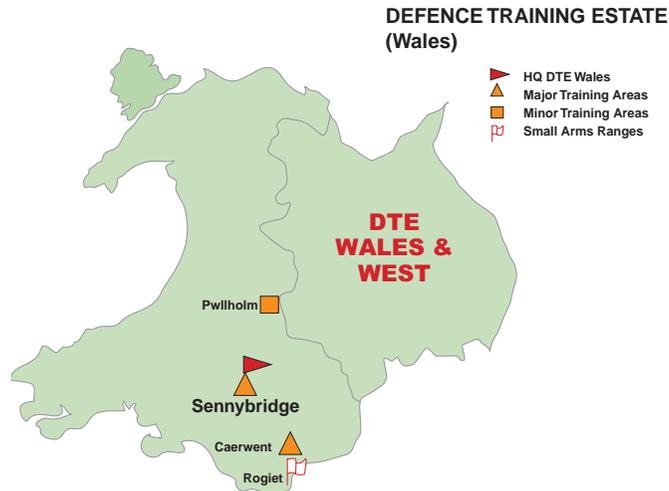
Remember! Unexploded Ordnance: Do not touch any unidentified object. Always comply with the following safety rules:

Safety

- Do not approach, touch, or pick up any metal objects lying on the ground
- Keep to the footpaths and do not deviate from them
- The use of metal detectors is prohibited
- Keep away from all buildings, bunkers and military installations except where it is clearly shown that public access is permitted
- No camping or fires are permitted



Photos courtesy of HQ DTE W, Defence Estates and ITC Wales



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In addition to this Public Information Leaflet for DTE W, the Defence Training Estate and Defence Estates (DE) both produce more literature: the DTE Annual Report summarises yearly progress by the DTE organisation; DE's Walks on MoD Land details a number of walks on 10 DTE areas including Salisbury Plain, Castlemartin, Catterick, Dartmoor and Otterburn. DTE also produces In the Field magazine, published annually, which contains news from training areas around the country, as well as updates on developments in management techniques. Finally, DE's annual publication Sanctuary contains articles about the Defence Estate across the whole country. All these publications are free and can be obtained from the respective addresses below.

USEFUL ADDRESSES

DTE Wales & West (WM)
HQ DTE W&W Sennybridge Brecon Powys LD3 8PN
Telephone: 01874 635405

Headquarters Defence Training Estate
Land Warfare Centre, Warminster, Wiltshire BA12 0DJ
Telephone: 01985 222856

Defence Estates
Blakemore Drive, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands B75 7RL
Telephone: 0121 3112000

Epynt Way website: www.defence-estates.mod.uk/epyntway
Epynt Way dedicated telephone no: 01874 635531

PUBLIC INFORMATION LEAFLET



Wales & West (DTE Wales)

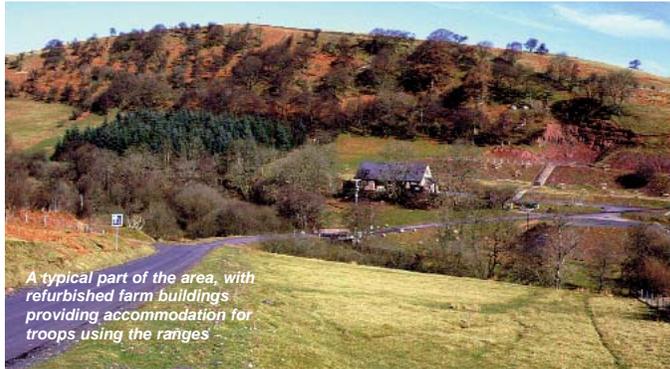
Hyfforddiant Amddiffyn
Cymru a'r Gorllewin

WHY THE BRITISH ARMY NEEDS TO TRAIN

The British Army is held in the highest regard around the world. This respect has been hard-won over recent years in Northern Ireland, the Falkland Islands, the Gulf, the Balkans - and countless peacekeeping operations throughout the world. But such professionalism does not happen by chance. It is attained by constant, thorough and tough training, in realistic conditions. The Defence Training Estate (DTE) provides the principal facilities to achieve this.

ORGANISATION

The DTE is controlled by Headquarters DTE, based at the Land Warfare Centre in Warminster, Wiltshire (see address on the back of this leaflet), and is subdivided into 10 regionally-based areas, each with its own headquarters and staff. Defence Training Estate Wales (DTE W) was formed in April 1999 and consists of a training area at Sennybridge, the third-largest in the UK and home to HQ DTE Wales & West, and 1 other training area Caerwent near Chepstow. The 2 sites cover over 38,000 acres (15,400 hectares) and offer unique and sophisticated training facilities for both live and 'dry' (i.e. without live firing) training for the Armed Services' regular, reserve and cadet units.



TRAINING IN WALES

The firing ranges and other areas satisfy a wide demand, with annual usage around 370,000 man-training days in all, with some form of training on 350 days each year. The Sennybridge ranges have long been used for artillery firing, and there is still substantial use by shorter-range artillery: live firing takes place at Sennybridge on around 260 days a year, with artillery firing on 40 days. There is also some live firing by ground-attack fighter aircraft, as well as use of airdropping zones. But infantry are now the area's predominant users, firing mortars, anti-tank weapons and machine guns. There are also small-arms ranges for groups of infantry and for individual shooting. Of the 30,000 acres (12,150 hectares) of the main training area, almost half is taken up by the common impact area into which all the ranges fire.

Caerwent is a major training area covering over 1,500 acres (600 hectares), capable of sustaining up to 1,000 troops. There are not only over 400 buildings and bunkers on the site, but also an operating railway and a comprehensive road system, for logistics exercises and driver training.



HISTORY

Sennybridge, DTE W & W main training area, was requisitioned in 1939 and taken over as a Royal Artillery Practice Camp in 1940. Most of the area is situated on the Mynydd Epynt, a wild plateau covered largely by blanket bog and grass, but intersected by several stream valleys containing woodland and meadows. The surrounding area is thinly populated. Of the other 2 training areas, Kinmel Park, near Rhyl, is the surviving element of a huge facility constructed during the First World War; while Caerwent was once a Royal Navy armaments factory where many of the buildings and bunkers survive, and are still in use today.

CAREFUL CONSERVATION OF A UNIQUE HERITAGE



At Sennybridge, the use of Mynydd Epynt as a military training area has enabled DTE W & W to preserve a substantial landscape - still a home to a wealth of fauna and flora already lost in other parts of the country. It also has interesting archaeological remains. The MoD therefore gives careful attention to managing this special heritage to preserve it for generations to come. The vegetation is typical of upland moorland and peat bogs, although sheep ensure that the only heather is inside the forestry and hedgerow enclosures. The stream valleys harbour more lowland species however, and most of the ancient woodland is to be found here. About 28 miles (45 kilometres) of original hedgerows have been re-laid and enclosed. Bird-life is fairly typical of upland moorland. Over 100 species have been recorded, by no means all breeding. For rarity the most interesting species is the magnificent Red Kite, frequently seen hunting over the moors, with up to 9 together. They are not known to be nesting. Other birds of prey have bred, including Goshawk,

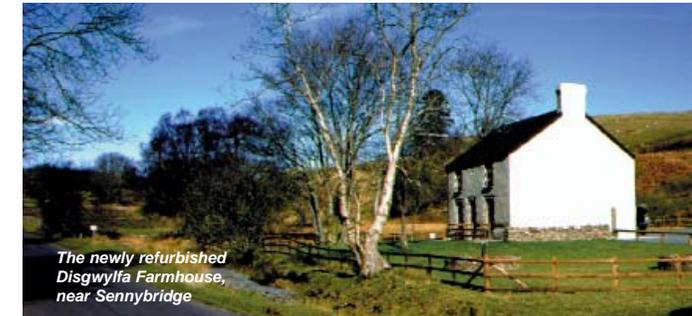
Peregrine Falcon and Merlin. The lack of heather makes game birds scarce, Red Grouse in particular. The new plantations and hedgerows provide habitats for many small birds and encourage small mammals. The areas of enclosed original woodland also attract birds such as Warblers and Spotted Flycatchers.

Waterfowl are fairly limited, although Heron can often be found fishing the streams, particularly in the Impact Area.

Larger animals are limited, but include fox, rabbit, hare, badger and squirrel. A great threat to fish and waterfowl has been the appearance of wild mink. Red squirrels are sighted quite frequently in the Crychan Forest.

Insects are numerous in the summer, although butterflies and moths are not quite as common. Amphibians, in particular frogs and toads, are commonplace on the Epynt. Fish are plentiful in the streams - mainly brown trout, bullheads, eels and salmon have been seen. Common lizards have been sighted and various newts are also found.

Nearly 200 sites of archaeological interest have been identified; from a



Bronze Age stone circle to the sites of old farmsteads, some dating from medieval times. Fifteen sites have been scheduled by CADW (Welsh Historic Monuments).

A number of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) have been identified in DTE W & W, and the Integrated Land Management Planning process is designed to ensure the twin imperatives of sustainable military training and environmental protection are accommodated.

CONSERVATION GROUP

Within the UK there are nearly 200 military conservation groups. In Wales, along with the rest of the UK, the Army takes its role in conservation very seriously. Conservation interests are safeguarded by management agreements with statutory bodies such as the Countryside Council for Wales, and with further help from the Sennybridge Conservation Group, which meets twice a year.

This involves a partnership between the Commandant and his staff, Defence Estates, the Countryside Council for Wales, local farmers and groups representing archaeologists, botanists, geologists, ornithologists, and several other interests. There are also many informal contacts throughout the year.

