

Gold Award Residential Experience, Stainforth, August 2008

What was it?

The residential event (15 participants) took place along-side the Yorkshire Dales 'Open Gold' expeditions (17 participants), using Hornby Laithe bunk-house barn, near Stainforth, as their base. Residential participants arrived on Saturday afternoon and after a short 'ice-breaker' session, were allocated to teams for domestic chores, briefed on the week's activities, introduced to the John Muir Award and taken on a short walk to the Hoffmann Kiln. Sunday was given over to an exploratory walk from Langcliffe to Malham Cove and Gordale Scar, followed by a quiz session. The practical projects were: Monday – clearing ragwort from Ribblehead Quarry, visit to Scar Close (part of Ingleborough NNR), then to CRO Depot, Clapham, and more ragwort clearance from Lord's Pasture, Giggleswick; Tuesday – dry-stone walling, with Dales Volunteers, at Selside (Ingleborough NNR), for Natural England; Wednesday – digging in a walled garden near Tarn House (for a Food & Farming project) and cutting willows on Tarn Moss, at Malham Tarn, for National Trust; Thursday – beech felling and cutting up at Cleatop Park LNR, Settle, for Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority. To relieve the catering volunteers, everyone 'ate out' on two evenings; any evening 'spare' time was spent on JMA log-books or preparing for Thursday evening, when expeditioners and 'residents' shared and illustrated their experiences. All set off home on Friday morning.

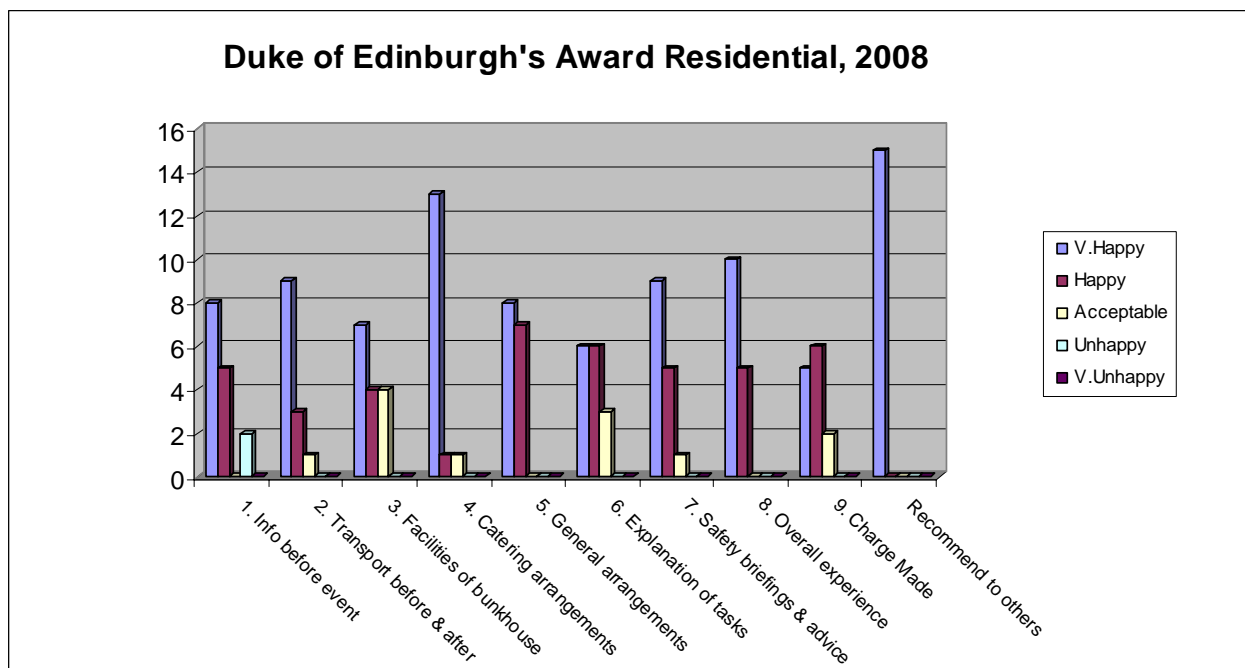
What did participants say?

15 responses (i.e. 100%)

Chart summarises responses on

- 1 Admin. / Info. provided before event
- 2 Transport arrangements before / after
- 3 Facilities / conditions at bunk-house
- 4 Catering arrangements
- 5 General arrangements during stay

- 6 Adequacy of explanation of purpose of tasks
 - 7 Adequacy of safety briefings and advice
 - 8 Overall residential experience
 - 9 Charge made
- Also: 'As it was run, would you recommend this to others?'



Which of the day-time activities should we definitely **keep in** a future programme?

beech-felling 13, walling 8, CRO visit 1, digging 1, ragwort pulling 1.

Which of the day-time activities should we definitely **cut from** a future programme?

'nothing' 6, digging 3, one of tree-felling activities 2, guided tours 1, ragwort pulling 1, walling 1, willow removal 1.

What new, relevant, day-time activities should be added?

no suggestion 4, path repairs 3, pot-holing 3, canoeing 2, one day of walking, kayaking, climbing or caving 1, caring for plants or sowing seeds 1, swimming to the destination 1.

How did you feel about the John Muir Award element of the residential?

'Good', 'Happy', 'Very good', 'Very good idea',
'I felt more motivated', 'Good idea, adds purpose to stay',
'Happy, as it is a good award to have', 'A great idea – nice to have another certificate',
'Good idea, can be completed easily during the residential',
'I'm glad I could take part in it, because I hadn't heard of it before',
'It made me take more notice of the environment, which was good',
'Thought it good that we are able to achieve something else in the six-day programme',
'Well organised, but I would have preferred to submit the book after the event, having had time to reflect',
"Good, 'two birds with one stone' – doing residential and getting JMA." (*Not sure that that is an appropriate figure of speech for a conservation education award? R.L.*)
and one left blank.

How did you travel to the event?

With family, by car (both ways)	4	Public transport (both ways)	4
Arrived by family car, lift back	2	Arrived by public transport, lift back	1
Alternated car-sharing	2	<i>Left blank – i.e. not stated</i>	1
Drove self	1		

As it was run, would you recommend this residential to others, if it ran next year?

Yes 15 No 0

List of responses to invitation to make other (helpful) comments:

left blank (x 4)

need toilets in the (non-accomm.) barn (x 5)

need personal drawer or locker ;

showers flooded a bit, but otherwise the facilities are good;

more showers in main building;

male participant bedroom a bit cramped (x 2)

drying room was very useful

facilities basic, but sufficient

hand-wash / towel in upstairs WC (x 4)

DVD or video player (x 2)

team games in evening e.g. cards, board games, more quizzes (x 2)

(One added 'the quiz was fun and a good way of building team spirit!');

spare ping-pong balls;

football / tennis balls

food excellent / really good (x 4)

the food was very good and the staff are very friendly;

I really enjoyed the pub dinners, too, that was a good idea and good food

"The food was fantastic & I was treated really well." (*from a participant stated as 'vegetarian, but eats fish'*)

came by train, but very expensive

need comprehensive kit list, not just suggestions;

to know what we are doing before we arrive (e.g. a week before)

it was very useful to have the e-mails & names of the groups sent out, because my D of E Gold

Expedition (with another group) was much less organised
a little bit more explanation needed (tasks)

really enjoyed it and proved to be a really enjoyable experience