



Spring Newsletter



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Adventure, Challenge, Discovery & Opportunity

Rising to the challenges ahead

In common with local authorities across the country, Hartlepool is facing many challenges both now and into the foreseeable future. Greatly reduced funding from central government means that the council will have to make difficult decisions in the months ahead and Carlton will not be immune from this.

Fortunately, the centre has a broad support base in Hartlepool -indeed many councillors and council employees attended Carlton during their youth. However, whilst being greatly appreciative of this at Carlton, we in no way take this support for granted. With this in mind therefore, accompanied by a galvanized sense of purpose across the whole staff team 'to make it work', the centre is in a strong position.

As reported in previous newsletters, Carlton has started to diversify signifi-

cantly in the last couple of years. This is set to continue into 2011 and beyond. Already this year we have welcomed, amongst others, a self-catering group of adults who stayed at the centre over the New Year period, a youth group from Hartlepool who have visited us twice for weekend residentials, and a Duke of Edinburgh Award group from Redcar who have used the centre for teambuilding activities and expeditioning across four separate weekends. Alongside this we have catered for day visits from Hartlepool's Pupil Referral Unit, five separate weekend birthday party groups and Kirkby and Great Broughton Scouts who enjoyed an evening on the climbing wall. All this and more has been running concurrent with our standard -yet improving- residential courses for school

groups.

During the summer months we are once again looking forward to welcoming the Triumph Rocket III Motorcycle Club for a weekend as well as a sizeable group of St Johns Ambulance Cadets who intend to camp in the field and engage in Carlton activity sessions alongside their own programme. Additionally, we are once again remaining open throughout the school summer holidays and intend to run an interesting, exciting and diverse range of activities to suit both individuals and families. A flyer is currently in production detailing exactly what will be on offer during this period.

The unofficial Carlton motto is; quisquis est we'll planto is venio or, 'Whatever it is, we'll try to make it happen!'

Carlton News



Late November/early December 2010 saw unprecedented snow-fall at Carlton -as many places across the country did- which resulted in inevitable cancellations of residential groups staying at the centre. We are pleased that we were able to re-schedule two courses out of the three that were cancelled during that period.



During late January/early February significant disruption was caused at the centre by the necessary relocation of the gas tanks from their original location near the classroom to their new position on the east side of the main building. This was essential work driven by Health and Safety legislation. We would like to thank all of our visiting groups during this time for their patience and understanding.

Bushcraft, rivers, coasts and mountains

These days are proving to be increasingly popular with our visiting school groups. Bushcraft is usually incorporated into our existing 'Forest Adventure' day



and runs alongside shelter building.

However, it has also been conducted as a stand-alone

activity. It sees teams assembling stoves as well as using the brilliant 'Kelly Kettle' to make a hot drink to enjoy in their shelters. Some groups have even made hot dogs and gutted and cooked fresh mackerel! Under close supervision they are instructed in a variety of firelighting techniques including the use of a 'firesteel', a 'blastmatch' and the importance of safety in selecting a suitable natural material to burn.

Our established river and coastal study days have also seen increased uptake, with one school even opting to combine the two studies into one day.

Before Christmas, Rosewood Primary School specifically requested a day to tie in with their geography lessons in which they were studying mountains. The day started with a short presentation covering major mountain chains of the world, how they are formed and the processes which shape the mountains that we see today. The day out comprised of topics as diverse as mountain safety and essential equipment, nutrition whilst out in the hills, navigation and using an ice axe and/or crampons in winter conditions.

A post course thankyou letter to the centre from the

group leader stated that 'we are constantly referring to the information shared with us during our geography lessons in school'.



Mountain day, out in the snow

During a standard residential adventurous activity week or weekend at Carlton, these days provide a perfect counterpoint, offering plenty of cross-curricular support, enjoyment and learning in a safe environment.



Birthday celebrations!



Tired of hiring out the local swimming pool? Or an expensive trip to the cinema? Then come and celebrate your birthday at Carlton. No, seriously, do it! Our resident birthday celebration guru—aka Paul Godwin - has successfully hosted at least five of these events so far this year.

We can help you and/or your children celebrate your big day with a flourish. As well as a specially laid on birthday 'spread', including all the old favourites such as cake, jelly and ice-cream, oodles of balloons and even - yes even- triangular sandwiches(!), Carlton can also provide a heady mix of exciting, high octane adventurous activities.



The Wainstones -great for adventure

These have included, amongst other things, archery, climbing, leaping off the high ropes course, squeezing through boulders at the Wainstones, den-building and adventuring up waterfalls and through tunnels in a nearby gully.

Children involved (and parents) have enjoyed the

experience greatly leaving comments such as, 'best party we have ever had, and will definitely recommend it to all our friends. The kids had a brilliant time'. Indeed, Paul has been recovering from a recent birthday party where he insisted that excitement levels amongst the participants was so high that he lost his ability to hear anything for the next week!

We are pleased to be able to offer highly competitive packages at Carlton for celebrations of this kind. and are more than happy to tailor them to suit your needs. So, celebrate your special day in an original style. Please contact the centre for more information and to book.

need locking after a busy first day. Any doors which *they* then open can simply be re-locked when finished. Please mention at your induction if you feel this will help you.

Raising our profile

Having seen the surety of guaranteed income from local authority partners disappear, there is a much greater need to move away from our traditional schools market into new areas of work in order to generate income.

With this in mind, therefore, an ongoing marketing campaign has seen various members of Carlton staff attending events and open days in order to raise the profile of the centre. Notably, Graham Johnson -the Senior Assistant Manager- has represented Carlton at a couple of these events in Thirsk and Scarborough respectively. Complete with notice board and leaflets, he has been at hand to offer advice and information for prospective clients. He also appeared on Hartlepool FM in March to promote the centre.

Carlton news (Cont'd)

Thanks

We would like to extend our appreciation and gratitude to all those groups who complete all of the appropriate paperwork / administration before their arrival at Carlton. This invariably spares us -and more importantly, the visiting group- from logistical headaches when they arrive at the centre.

Changes

Responding to feedback from our school group customers we have significantly altered and improved our Monday/ Friday arrival routine. In order to maximize contact time with groups, they are virtually straight out on activities soon after arrival. Induction takes place piecemeal throughout the day in bite sized, digestible 'chunks' for the children. Thus the group are given essential information about their dormitory just before they make their beds, rather than three hours before!

This is a change which many groups have welcomed.

New Appointments

Following an ongoing staffing review -in line with other areas of service within the council- Nigel Horne has been appointed General Manager and Graham Johnson Senior Assistant Manager. Congratulations are extended to them both as well as support in dealing with the challenges ahead.

New Residents

Carlton now is home to some tropical fish—Located in the library, the tank adds (even more!) colour to the main building, as well as a nice distraction for visitors (and instructors...)



New fish tank in library area

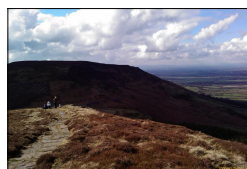
Rationalising procedures

Although we are constantly exploring new avenues and new ways of working in order to generate income - indeed it is now imperative that we do so- we still value enormously our existing school group customers. We do not and will not forget that these groups have formed the basis of Carlton's business over the years. As such, we are always looking for opportunities to improve their experience not only while they are at the centre, but also through the pre and post visit administration.

Thus, many of the forms required by groups prior to their visit are now available in the 'downloads' section of the website. This allows groups to complete their paperwork well in advance of their visit.

Also, whilst at Carlton we have rationalised certain procedures. Groups are generally out doing activities by 11.30 am on the Monday morning of their arrival. Induction into centre proce-

dures takes place incrementally throughout the day. This is far more time efficient and infinitely more practical, not to mention that it provides greater value for money. The visiting staff leader induction takes place in the afternoon whilst the children are receiving their dormitory induction. A group leader handbook is now available for reference and re-emphasises those routines covered in the walk-through induction.



Group on the hills

Following on from group leader feedback, we can now arrange for the Centre main buildings to be locked up by the housekeeping team at about 6.30 pm. This makes it easier for group leaders to remember which doors