



Community Leadership Programme 2006/2007

Feedback from Thornes Park and Castleton Events
2 and 3 November 2006
4 and 5 December, 6 and 7 December 2006



delivering promises, improving lives

Community Leadership Programme 2006/2007

Feedback from Thornes Park and Castleton Events

Contents

Introduction.....	1
Outcomes	2
Future Actions	3
Appendix A: Pupils Feedback on Thornes Park.....	4
Quiz Feedback	4
Best thing about Thornes Park	4
Worst thing about Thornes Park.....	4
What did you learn at Thornes Park?	5
Did you have a good time at Thornes Park?.....	6
Would you recommend Thornes Park to your mates?	6
Appendix B: Castleton Feedback.....	7
Best thing about Castleton	7
Worst thing about Castleton.....	8
What did you learn at Castleton?.....	9
Did you have a good time at Castleton?	10
Would you recommend Castleton to your mates?.....	10
Appendix C: Focus Group Feedback.....	11
Appendix D: Mentors Feedback.....	15
Appendix E: Teachers Feedback	16

Introduction

The Community Leadership Programme (CLP), to be delivered in partnership with Outward Bound Limited, was agreed by the Board of Wakefield and District Housing (WDH) on 23 March 2006 as a commitment to underpin the vision of WDH.

WDH's vision is to create 'confident communities'. On 28 April 2006, WDH launched its '2020 Vision' including the principle that it will develop as a 'social enterprise' by specifically aiming to add value to local communities by

- Developing community leaders and role models of the future, from the district's young people of today.
- Enhancing sustainable living and respect for local communities.
- Developing pathways into employment and training.

The first events of the 2006/2007 CLP were held at Thornes Park, Wakefield on 2 and 3 November 2006, and at Castleton on 4 and 5 and 6 and 7 December at Castleton, Derbyshire. One hundred and fifty nine young people attended the events at Thornes Park, and one hundred and fifty three young people attended the events at Castleton. The participants at Thornes Park took part in a variety of activities designed to encourage teamwork, communication and leadership skills.



These skills were reinforced at Castleton, as the participants took part in activities including climbing, abseiling, weaselling (a cross between scrambling and low level climbing), and a night walk.

Two feedback sessions were held at Castleton with the participants to gather their views on both events. The responses regarding the Thornes Park event are shown at Appendix A, and the responses regarding the Castleton event are shown at Appendix B.

In addition to written feedback, focus groups were held in two of the participating schools, Knottingley and Ossett. Ten pupils attended the focus group at Knottingley, and 13 pupils attended the focus group at Ossett. This enabled more detailed responses to be obtained from the young people regarding the event at Castleton. These were facilitated by members of WDH Research Team, who ensured that a detailed and impartial discussion was held with the young people on how they felt the programme had assisted them so far. A summary of the feedback from these focus groups is shown at Appendix C.

Fourteen mentors from Wakefield and District Housing (WDH) and 15 teachers from the schools assisted the event at Castleton. Mentors were asked for their feedback upon returning to work, and the teachers were sent a questionnaire. A summary of the responses from mentors is shown at Appendix D, and a summary of the teacher's responses is shown at Appendix E.

Outcomes

The event at Thornes Park was certainly enjoyed by the participants, with 93% of them saying that they had had a good time, and 86% stating that they would recommend the event to their friends. Fifty four percent of participants stated that they learnt about teamwork, with a further 35% advising that they had learnt about confidence and communication. Fifty four percent of attendees felt that meeting new people was the best thing about the event, with 32% liking best the actual activities.

At Castleton meeting new people was again the best thing about the event (40%), although 46% of participants felt that that the actual activities undertaken were the best thing about the event. Many of the participants enjoyed learning the skills required to undertake the activities, however 47% of participants stated that they had learnt new skills relating to teamwork, improved confidence, trust, communication and friendship. No-one attending Castleton said that they hadn't had a good time, 98% of them said that they had had a good time, and only 2% stated that it was OK. Ninety seven percent of participants would recommend the event to their friends.



Feedback given during the two focus groups reinforced the views given during the feedback sessions. It is clear that the young people felt that the event has improved their skills relating to communication, determination, working with new people, overcoming fears that they may have had. The focus group responses also illustrate how these skills have been used back in school, such as having a go at things, having more confidence, and being patient, and how they may be used in future, such as to encourage less able people, and to meet new people. It is clear that both the Outward Bound instructors and the WDH mentors helped in this process. Some good ideas were also given by the young people on what WDH could do in the future to help them gain new skills, such as helping with youth clubs, work experience and apprenticeships.

Mentor feedback clearly shows that all WDH employees acting as mentors really enjoyed the experience, and were able to contribute to the outcomes experienced by the young people. They were also given the opportunity to greatly widen their experience by working in a completely different environment to their usual duties, one that has clearly been of benefit. Comments have questioned, however, the permission that the young people had received from Outward Bound to smoke, even in a regulated manner.

The teachers who have provided feedback have also found the programme to be extremely beneficial. They have reported that the young people's communication skills have improved, their confidence has improved, leadership qualities have been exhibited, and that they have something positive to talk and think about.

Future Actions

The next stage of the programme will take place at the Outward Bound Centre at Ullswater in the Lake District between 19 and 23 March 2006, and 16 and 20 April. Fifty young people will be attending at each event, accompanied by teachers and WDH mentors. They will be participating in activities such as canoeing and an overnight expedition. This will further enhance and reinforce the experience and learning achieved at Thornes Park and Castleton.

There will be other groups at the Centre at the same time, however they will be requested not to smoke. In future programmes it has now been agreed that all 100 young people from the programme will be attending Ullswater at the same time. This will mean that those attending the CLP will be the only people there, allowing for better management and supervision of the smoking ban.

Smoking will not be allowed on the programme at any time in the future, and schools have been advised to inform their pupils attending the programme of this. They have also been sent details of smoking cessation events being run currently by Wakefield Theatres in local Young Peoples Centres, to encourage their pupils, especially those on the programme, to attend.

53 pupils who attended Castleton have not been selected to attend Ullswater, and discussions are currently underway to explore other opportunities that may be available, in addition to other initiatives currently being delivered to young people. These include work experience opportunities, job application and interview training, and attendance at careers fairs.

Appendix A: Pupils Feedback on Thornes Park

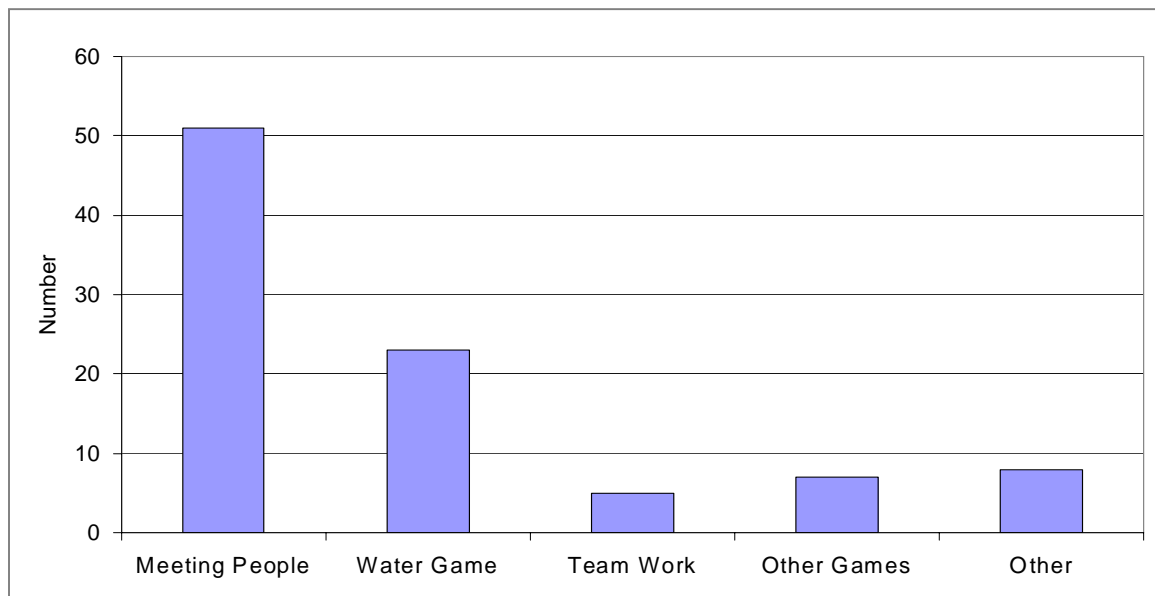
Quiz Feedback

During the quiz held during the evening of the residential at Castleton, questions were asked relating to the sessions at Thornes Park. Of the 153 young people present there were a varying number of responses for each question, as some did not answer all the relevant questions, whilst other answers were illegible.

Best thing about Thornes Park

There were 94 responses to this question, 51 of whom felt that meeting people was the best thing. 30 people liked the games best, 23 of which liked the water game most. Five stated Teamwork, and there were eight other various responses, including things such as 'learning new skills' and 'girls'!!

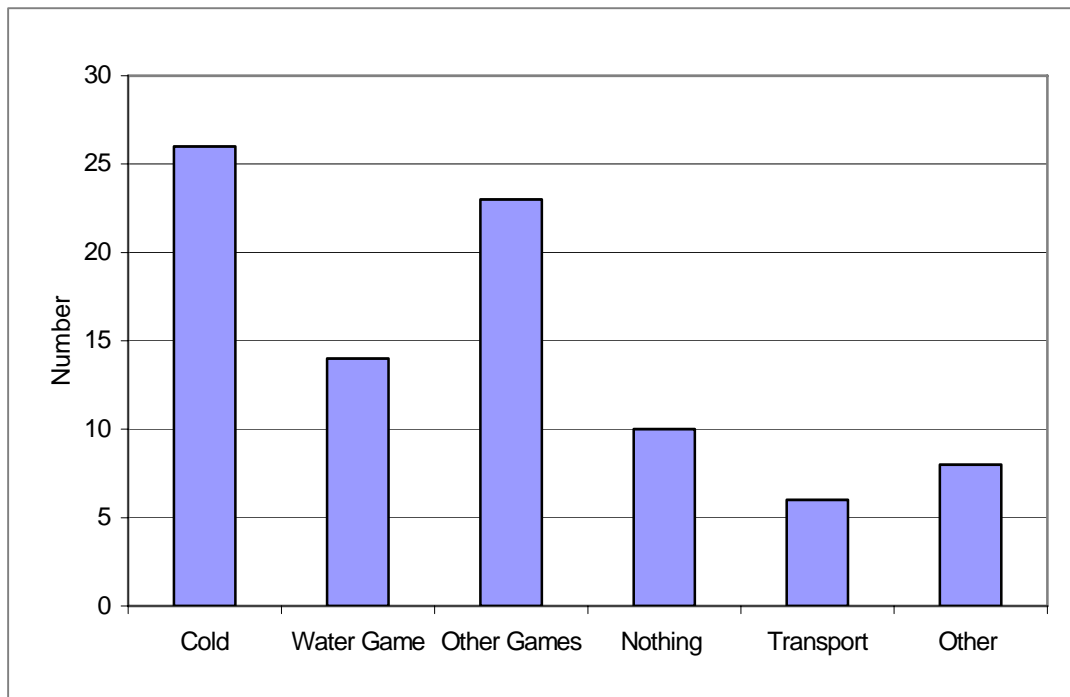
Figure 1 Best thing about Thornes Park



Worst thing about Thornes Park

There were 87 responses to this question, with 26 young people stating the cold weather, 14 stating the water game, and 23 stating a variety of other games. Six didn't like the transport arrangements, and eight gave other reasons, such as the toilets, being put into groups, and having to talk to people they didn't know. Ten people felt there was nothing wrong.

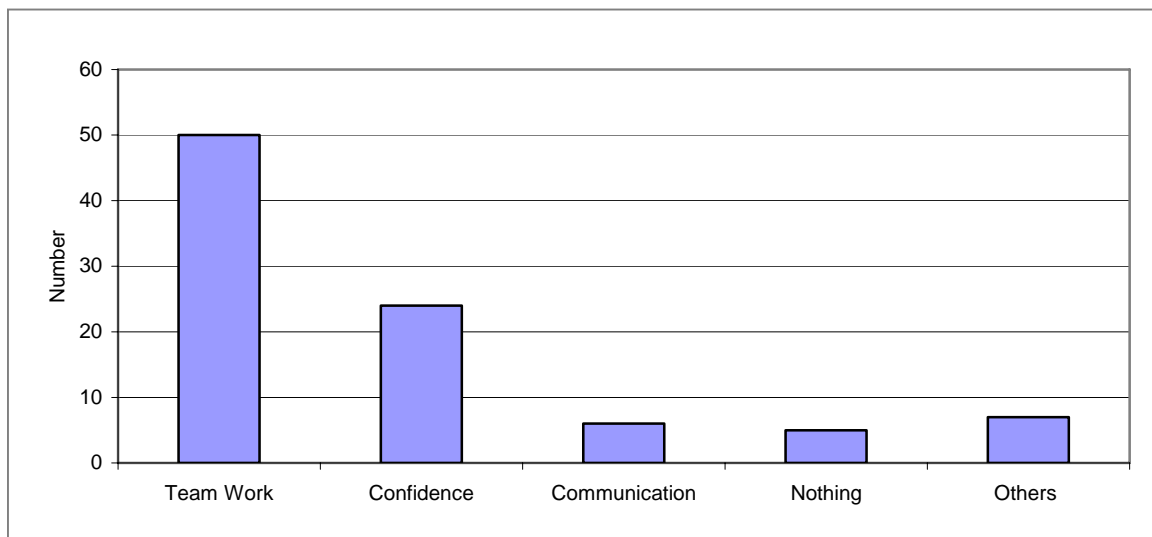
Figure 2 Worst thing about Thornes Park



What did you learn at Thornes Park?

There were 92 responses to this question, of which 50 stated teamwork, 24 confidence, six communication and seven other things, including having fun, how to solve puzzles, and how to get out of school! Five people advised that they had learned nothing at Thornes Park.

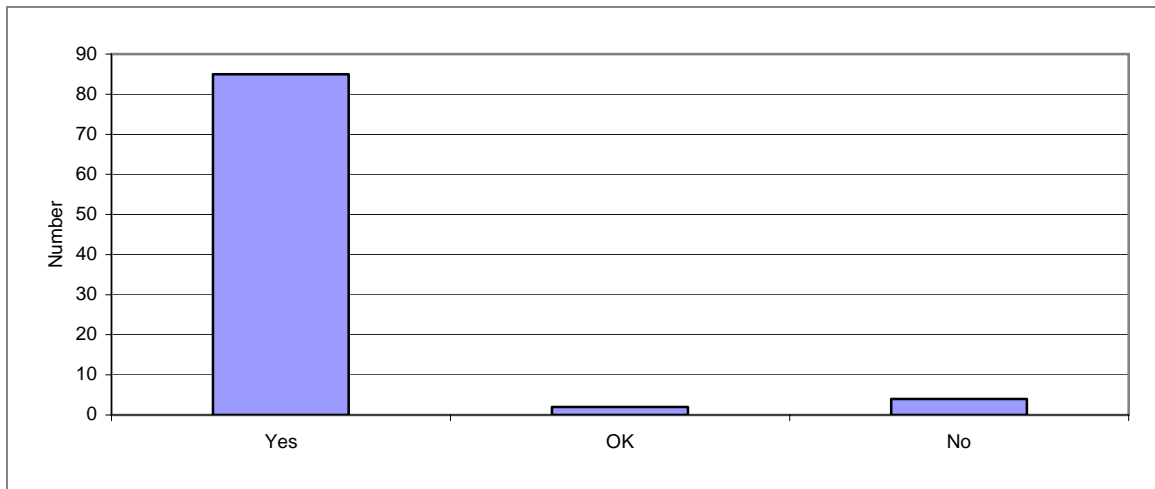
Figure 3 What did you learn at Thornes Park?



Did you have a good time at Thornes Park?

Eighty-five stated that they had had a good time; two said it was OK, and four said they hadn't.

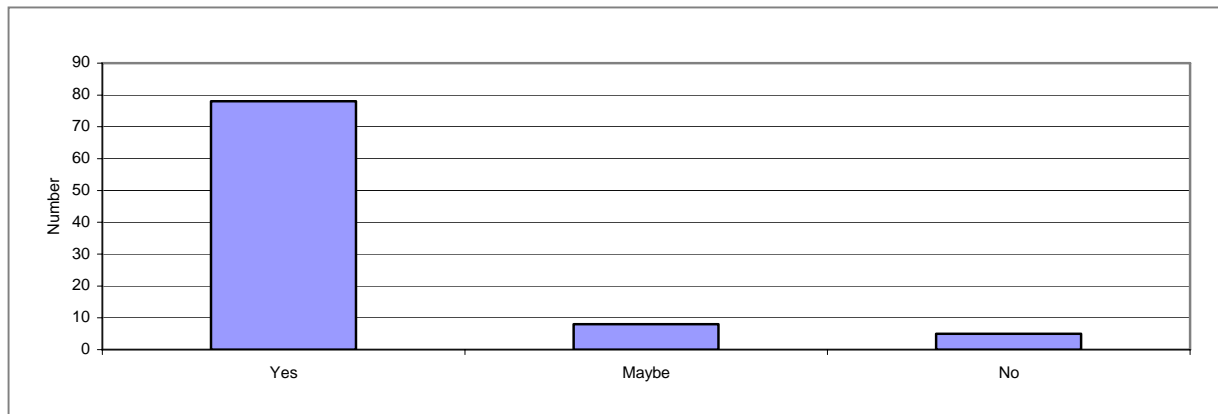
Figure 4 Did you have a good time at Thornes Park?



Would you recommend Thornes Park to your mates?

Seventy eight stated that they would recommend the day, eight said they might, and five said they wouldn't.

Figure 5 Would you recommend Thornes Park to your mates?



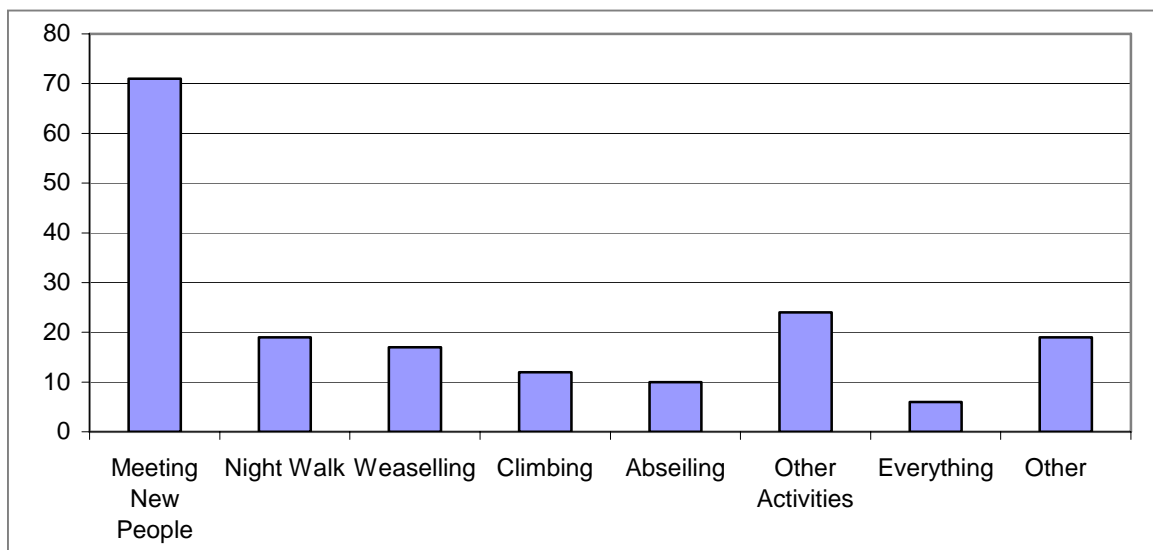
Appendix B: Castleton Feedback

The 153 participants completed feedback sheets at the end of the two days. Some of the people provided more than one answer to the questions, and they did not rank these in anyway; all responses were therefore recorded.

Best thing about Castleton

There was 178 responses given to this question, the most popular being meeting new people with 71 responses. Activities undertaken were the majority of the other responses given, including 19 for the night walk, 17 for weaselling, 12 for climbing, ten for abseiling and 24 for other unspecified activities. Nineteen other responses were given, including the food, the team leaders, the location and being away from home. Six people said everything.

Figure 6 Best thing about Castleton



Included in the responses, the following comments were made:

'Being pushed against my will to do something that I didn't think I would be able to achieve on my own'.

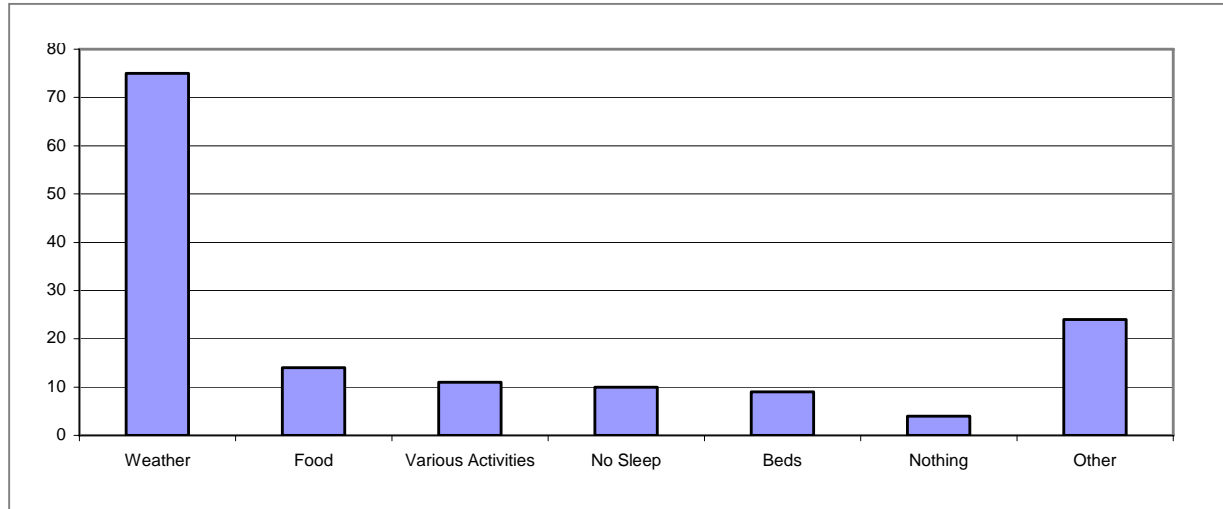
'Meeting new people and learning to trust'.

'I have learned new things, and challenged myself'.

Worst thing about Castleton

Not surprisingly, considering the poor weather during the courses at Castleton, 75 out of a total of 147 responses stated that the weather was the worst thing. Fourteen stated that the food was the worst, 11 various unspecified activities, ten that they got no sleep, nine the beds, and 24 other things, including the waterproofs, getting up too early, going to bed too early and being split up from friends. Four people said that there was no worst thing at all!

Figure 7 Worst thing about Castleford



Included in the responses, the following comments were made:

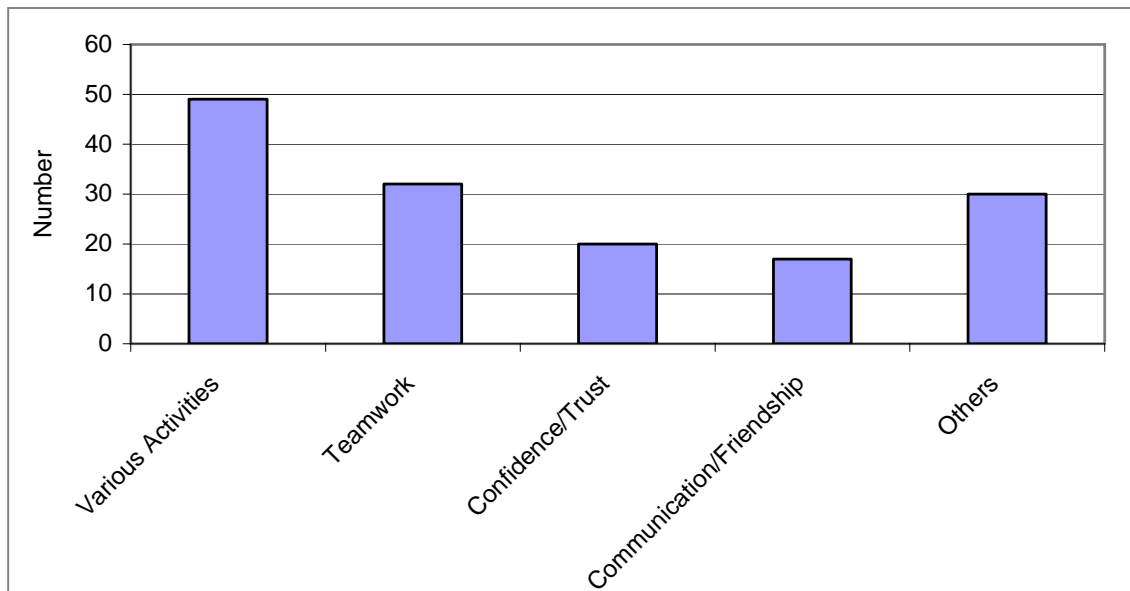
'The weather was miserable, and my nails were in a right state!'

'Not enough time to meet everyone else'.

What did you learn at Castleton?

Learning the various activities had 49 responses out of the total of 148, 32 people stated team work, 20 stated improved confidence and trust, and 17 communication with others, and friendship with new people. There were 30 miscellaneous other answers given, including determination, conquering fears, to try things, not to be afraid of heights, and the difference between walking boots and trainers!!

Figure 8 What did you learn at Castleton?



Many comments were made with the responses, several of which are shown below:

'I learnt to trust people I don't know and to use teamwork to help other people'.

How to work with others, achieve standards, and try different things'.

I learnt to do anything I want to'.

'To appreciate everyone in a team as an individual'.

'I can do things I am afraid of if I put my mind to it'.

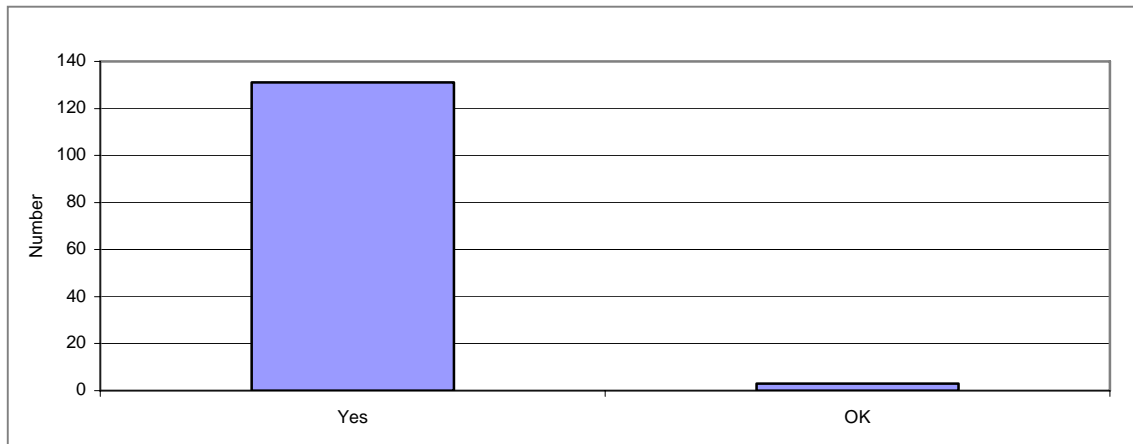
'I learnt how to trust people with my life who I did not know'.

'That I can do things that I would not normally do, and can challenge myself'.

Did you have a good time at Castleton?

One hundred and thirty one responses stated that they had a good time, and three said it was OK. No one said that they didn't.

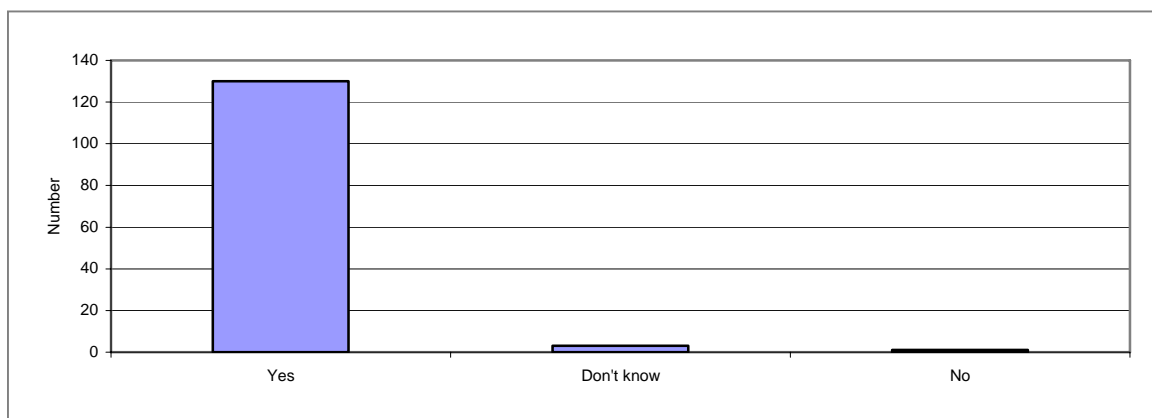
Figure 9 Did you have a good time at Castleton



Would you recommend Castleton to your mates?

130 of the responses said that they would recommend Castleton, three didn't know, and only one said they wouldn't.

Figure 10 Would you recommend Castleton



The following comments were made with the responses:

'I would seriously recommend Castleton to my mates because some people need to break barriers, life will challenge you in so many ways that you need that self-confidence to believe that whatever it takes, you'll eventually get through and the sun will shine. That's what Castleton did for me and I've learnt so much that I think others can do this'.

'I loved it because I made friends as well as learning and having fun'.

'We met new people and did activities we had never done before'.

'It's good for young people to learn new things and learn to be more responsible'.

Appendix C: Focus Group Feedback

In order to examine how the participants felt about the event at Castleton once they had returned to school, focus groups were held at Knottingley High School and Ossett School. These schools were chosen as they are at opposite sides of the district, and they attended the event at Castleton on different days. To ensure impartiality, they were moderated by WDH employees based within the Research team, neither of whom have had any involvement in the CLP. 10 pupils attended at Knottingley, and 13 attended at Ossett.

Knottingley High School

Q1 What was the reaction you got from your mates when you came back to school?

- Not interested because they are from Knottingley
- Jealous but didn't want to admit it, you could tell by way they were looking at you.
- Some bothered, some not. Some asked how I had got on.
- Great, mates asked what we did.

Q2 What motivated you to take part in the programme?

- Opportunity to meet new friends.
- Develop skills.
- To miss school.
- Good for college and for your CV.
- I was asked to attend.
- It was free.
- You have to take your opportunities.
- To extend existing skills.
- I felt apprehensive about participating.

Q3 Thinking back to the things you've been involved in, what skills have you learnt or developed?

- Socialising, making new friends.
- Abseiling and belaying and weaselling.
- Leadership, giving instructions.
- More confidence.
- Working together, trust in others.

Q4 Have you used any of those skills?

- Yes in basketball. I now find it easier to captain I use my leadership skills.
- No.

Q5 How do you think you might use those skills in the future?

- Would like to continue with outdoor activities.
- Not sure.

Q6 Did you learn anything from the adults (teachers/Outward Bound/WDH mentors) on the programme?

- Instructors spoke to you differently they were fun.
- WDH were friendly and they got involved.
- WDH mentors asked questions and talked to people.

Q7 Apart from Outward Bound activities and events like the one at Thornes Park is there anything else that WDH can do to help you gain new skills?

- Don't know.
- Nothing.

Q8 If you are selected to take part, what do you think you'll get out of the 5 day course?

- Learn new stuff, new activities.
- Away from home.
- Chance to build on skills
- Appreciate opportunity. Would go on course if it were in a school holiday.
- Teamwork skills.
- It would be something different.
- Communication skills.

Ossett High School

Q1 What was the reaction you got from your mates when you came back to school?

- Sounded good.
- Laughed because we were in the cold.
- Good reaction.
- Wished they had had two days off.

Q2 What motivated you to take part in the programme?

- Two days off school.
- Sounded good.
- Like sports and different activities.
- Wanted a challenge.
- Wanted to try rock climbing and weaselling.
- Dad said it sounded exciting and free.
- Mum said take the chance.

Q3 Thinking back to the things you've been involved in, what skills have you learnt or developed?

- Communication and team work.
- Determination to achieve something.
- Feeling better about yourself.
- How to work with new people.
- How to trust people, being held going up a cliff.
- Meeting new friends.
- I was a bit worried but I overcame my fears.
- Abseiling.
- I learnt to be more creative.

Q4 Have you used any of those skills?

- Teamwork in football. Carrying on if your loosing.
- Determination in rugby. Before when I might have given up I don't now.
- More outgoing.
- Try new things. Have a go.
- Push yourself more.
- More confidence.
- Patience. When you have to wait for other people you have to be patient.

Q5 How do you think you might use those skills in the future?

- Teamwork. When you get a job you have to work with new people.
- Meeting new people.
- Encouraging less able people.
- Trust, you sometimes have to trust others.
- Build on new skills to get more skills.
- To get good grades to put in your progress file so you can show that you have got involved in other activities.

Q6 Did you learn anything from the adults (Teachers/Outward Bound/WDH mentors) on the programme?

- Trust.
- Patience.
- Encouraged to take one step further.
- Could tell who mentors were because they wore different clothes.
- WDH employees got involved
- Teachers encouraged.
- Helped people who were nervous.
- Outward Bound employees more relaxed with us.
- WDH employees got involved in everything.
- Taught us to calm down.
- All got involved in stuff they didn't have to.
- Treated us as grown ups.
- Outward Bound employees experienced

Q7 Apart from Outward Bound activities and events like the one at Thornes Park is there anything else that WDH can do to help you gain new skills?

- More trips.
- Pay for trips.
- Come into schools and do an assembly.
- Run youth clubs.
- After school clubs.
- Project to renovate a house.
- Plastering club.
- Work experience for a week or longer. An afternoon every week or more. Would learn more and be more fun than normal work experience.
- Already got fire fighter modules.
- Could do early apprenticeship.
- Help from people who do counselling.
- Provide information to tell us what WDH do.
- Sports coaching.
- Sponsor people through university.
- Help people with disabilities providing ramps so that buildings are accessible for disabled.

Q8 If you are selected to take part, what do you think you'll get out of the five day course?

- Learn more skills.
- Do more challenging activities.
- Learn to cope more in certain situations.
- It will be tougher.
- Learn to trust more.
- Responsibility for equipment, for each other's life.
- It was fun, exciting. Meet new friends again and more new people.
- Challenge yourself more.
- Do different stuff.
- Take advantage of the opportunity.
- Try everything.
- I would try things even if I might fail.

Appendix D: Mentors Feedback

Brief emails were requested from the mentors asking how they felt things had gone in Castleton. Below is a summary of their responses:

'The group I worked with got a lot out of the course and changes were noticeable. John from Outward Bound was excellent – he tried to get everyone involved, and noticed when the young people were fed up. The teacher was good too'.

'Issues include smoking and how we deal with that in the future, and the absence of alternative activities on the second day, particularly where those in climbing groups were getting very cold. Outward Bound were otherwise very well organised'.

'I have nothing but praise for the Outward Bound employees, our instructor Craig was fantastic with the kids, and he, the teacher and I managed to keep the kids going in the cold, wet, windy weather'.

'We had a good group and mix of young people, who had a mixed bag of talents and various levels of confidence and ability. But what Craig did with the utmost subtlety was to mould them into a unit that understood the rules and worked within them. He was a natural and his methods and confidence in dealing with youngsters have given me a few tips. The group performed extremely well becoming proactive in actively supporting each other through the tasks both physically and vocally.'

'One of the boys in our group was very quiet and shy and a bit of a loner according to his teacher, but he excelled at climbing and suddenly, what a confidence boost!! He was one of the most popular boys in the group!! Speaking to his teacher on the second morning she could not believe how much more outgoing he was, how much more confidence he had, and the fact that he was joining in with all the other kids laughing and joking. For me if this is our only success story it will have been well worth it.'

'All the Outward Bound employees were very competent, although information about meal times and meetings, especially changes to them, could have been made a little clearer.'

'Matt was excellent, he was very good with the children, and managed to encourage all the kids to at least try all of the activities. The children got on very well with him, yet he still managed to ensure that instructions were listened to and followed.'

'I think that when we did the quiz we should have split them up into the groups that they were given, instead of them being with their school friends.'

'The thing that astounded me was that the kids were allowed to smoke. When we asked the teachers if they were allowed to do this at school, they said no and if caught were disciplined. So why are they allowed to smoke whilst away from school? They are not old enough to smoke legally, and as WDH are funding this initiative and encouraging the kids to participate, we will be seen as having over-arching control, and to allow them to smoke is like saying WDH condone kids aged 15 to smoke.'

'The Outward Bound employees were tremendous, especially Matt, Niv and Tony. They never seemed to tire and showed a high level of professionalism throughout the two days.'

Appendix E: Teachers Feedback

The teacher from St Wilfrids has advised the following:

'One of our students, D, has Aspergers Syndrome, and a trait of this is that he cannot see anyone else's point of view and will not listen to anyone else's ideas, when he thinks he is right then nothing you can do can change his mind. I saw a big change in him both at the one-day taster at Wakefield but more so on the two day at Castleton. He listened and took on board other people's ideas and also helped others to complete their tasks. This is a huge thing for him and I must say that so far he has brought all he learned back into school. I didn't tell anyone about his problems because he doesn't want to seem to be different, so I am very grateful. Another major success for me was M.... who is a 'looked after child' and he enjoyed his experiences. I am glad both D.... and M..... have been picked to go on the five day at Ullswater.

All school contacts were asked four questions to ascertain how they felt about the course so far, and the effect it was having, or not, on the pupils. A summary of those responses received is shown below.

Q1 What effect, if any, have you noticed in your pupils from participating in the programme?

- Increased confidence and self worth especially in working with people they don't know.
- Something to look forward to – an opportunity they wouldn't otherwise have had.
- Willingness to communicate with employees.
- Improved leadership qualities, awareness that they are perceived as potential leaders by employees, and that their conduct in and around school impacts on this perception.

Q2 Would you change anything about the programme so far?

- No, it has worked very well.
- Sessions before and after lunch a bit long to keep young peoples attention. Perhaps the afternoon could have had a different activity, for example, orienteering.
- Students would say don't do it in December – too cold.
- Earlier notification of date of induction day would have helped.
- Thumbnail sketch of which students should be targeted.

Q3 Would you recommend the programme to other schools? If so, why?

- Definitely – students have thoroughly enjoyed it, it is well organised, delivered professionally, stretches the pupils, offers new experiences, and help builds self esteem and confidence.
- Yes – encourages students to get involved with people they would not have.
- Yes - gives students opportunity to do something different, giving them something positive to talk and think about.
- Students discover and develop team building and problem solving skills.
- Learning about and appreciating the environment.
- Opportunities for pupils to value diversity through interaction with students from different communities.
- Students develop a sense of their own identity by making decisions about what they do and how they do it.
- Exploration of physical and mental challenges.
- Learning about suitable clothing, facilities and personal organisation.

Q4 Have you taken anything from the programme so far?

- Seeing the benefits to students.
- It has given me a better insight into how vulnerable students are when they are out of their comfort zone, and how they have dealt with it.
- The programme has helped me build a positive relationship with the young people involved, and has allowed me to be involved with a programme with community impacts.

Q5 Any other comments?

- Introduce zero tolerance on smoking.
- WDH to assist with 'lights out' responsibilities.
- First day at Thornes Park too long – consider restructuring afternoon activities.
- Level of contact, emails, visits, have been really useful, also notes for parents.
- A great start!
- Excellent programme. Things for deselected pupils should be in place.



Vision

To create confident communities

Mission

To inspire, transform and promote excellence

Values

To be creative, inclusive and work with integrity

delivering promises, improving lives