

Spring 2011



[Courses](#) at Thornbridge – visit our website for further details on:

[First aid](#)

MLTE walking ([ML/WGL](#)) / climbing ([CWA/SPA](#))

[CTC Mountain Biking](#)

>Leadership
>Maintenance

Duke of Edinburgh's Award Gold
Residentials ([Green Action](#) / [Rock Action](#))

Thornbridge [Familiarisation](#) and [Low Ropes Training](#)

[EVC and Group Leader Training](#)

Bespoke courses also available – talk to us about your requirements

Need a venue for your meeting? Consider Thornbridge Outdoors:

- **Good food**
- **Good I.T.**
- **Low cost compared to a conference room**
- **Pleasant surroundings**
- **Option of activities if required.**

Less than 30 minutes from the edge of Sheffield

Newsletter



Changes at Thornbridge Outdoors

With the changes in Government funding to Local Authorities, Thornbridge Outdoors are expecting to have to become **100% self-funding** within a short period of time. We believe that we can achieve this and continue to offer a great value-for-money residential experience to young people, but to do so will require some changes to how we operate.

It is not possible to be precise about how the financial pressures will impact on our service at this stage, but we can expect some or all of the following:

- *Free school meal subsidy ceases – currently replaced by 'Count Me In' funds in 2010/11 (see below), and potentially through the 'Pupil Premium' in future years.*
- *Programme negotiations changed to help us utilise staff and other resources to the best advantage and to control costs. We have already begun this by offering a programme framework rather than a completely blank sheet of paper. Programmes will continue to be tailored to your requirements.*
- *Increased charges to reflect the true operational costs. Our charges will need to be revised to reflect the true cost of delivery – and we will continue to raise funds for development and maintenance of the centre through commercial activity with non-Sheffield groups.*
- *The establishment of a charitable group – the objectives being to raise funds to support the disadvantaged in accessing residential education experiences at Thornbridge Outdoors, as well as to support specific development projects.*
- *Increased use of the Centre by non-Sheffield groups during off-peak periods and at times of low demand from Sheffield schools.*

Despite the threats posed by the funding pressures, we shall continue to provide a high quality educational experience and believe that the strong support we have always experienced from Sheffield schools will continue. Please visit our website for last minute availability and up to date news items.

Count Me In!



As you will know, 'Count Me In' funding has been allocated to schools this year to support certain children in accessing extended opportunities. It has been agreed that this funding can be used to support residential visits such as a visit to Thornbridge Outdoors.

In the past we have offered a 50% reduction in the residential charge for children on free school meals, but unfortunately in response to rapidly declining central funding this subsidy will no longer be available. More details on the 'Count Me In' scheme can be found at:

www.sheffield.gov.uk/education/services-to-schools/extendedservices/countmein

Note – if you are visiting Thornbridge Outdoors in Summer 2011, be sure to set aside some of the 'Count Me In' funding for this visit.





The NEW Thornbridge 'tunnel system' has been named

There were a total of 110 entries in the competition from children and staff – thank you to everyone for all the great suggestions. The two winners were Joseph from Wharncliffe Side Primary and Sarah from Westways Primary School who have received a Thornbridge T-shirt and lots of other goodies. Why not explore the 'Mole Hole' on your next visit to Thornbridge? Group leaders should contact Sharon, Ed or Jill Whittaker at Thornbridge so that it can be included in your programme

Develop Your Cycling Skills at Thornbridge Outdoors

Some of you may know that Thornbridge has a fleet of new mountain bikes with sizes to suit Y5 through to adults. We have improved the tracks around the grounds and created an exciting NEW skills park.

Get more from your biking session - why not book a **British Cycling Coach** and provide the opportunity for your group to develop their cycling skills whilst at Thornbridge, on our cycle tracks and on the Monsal Trail. The cycling coach is able to work with groups of varying abilities – from beginners to advanced, and in fact many children this year have learnt to ride a bike for the first time.

Following a coaching session, the enthusiasm and motivation from pupils has prompted some schools to book a series of day visits for pupils to continue developing these skills. Contact us to find out more.

COMING SOON: Exciting New Cycling Route on the Monsal Trail – From Bakewell to Buxton

The £3.75 million 'Pedal Peak' project is being managed by The Peak District National Park Authority in partnership with Cycling England. Phase 1 of the project is to re-open the 4 tunnels, which were all closed when the rail route was axed in the late 1960s. The tunnels are all approximately 400m long and it is planned they will be re-opened in 2011; accessible for cyclists, walkers and horse-riders. For updates, go to:

www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/index/visiting/cycle/cycling-information/pedalpeakdistrict-fags.htm

Y12 Induction / Team Development

In September, Thornbridge Outdoors worked with several secondary schools and colleges to deliver induction / teambuilding programmes for over 600 Y12 pupils. The programmes provided the opportunity for pupils and staff to get to know one another, and to develop teamwork and communication skills in the outdoors. The induction programmes were delivered at Thornbridge, Underbank and at school sites. Talk to us if you want to start your academic year in a positive, exciting and constructive way!

Note - these team development programmes are not just for Y12 they have also proved popular with Y11 and Y7 'transition' groups.





Abbeydale Grange Clean- Up!

Pupils from Abbeydale Grange Secondary School have helped to clean up some of the popular activity sites used by groups at Thornbridge Outdoors this year.



The group of volunteers carried out a litter sweep of caves within the area of Stoney Middleton. This was followed by a visit to Miller's Dale, where a litter sweep was conducted from the station to the viaduct over the River Wye.

The group were rewarded for their hard work by caving and abseiling at these sites.

Thanks to everyone involved for all your efforts!

Climbing Facilities at your School

Do you have a climbing wall / boulder at your school? OR thinking of installing one? We can help provide:

- Advice on the design and management of the facility
- Training for staff supervising the activity
- Ideas for activities / games to develop confidence and climbing skills

Contact us to find out how we can help you get the best out of your climbing facility.

In Partnership with Inspire

Thornbridge Outdoors is continuing to work closely with Inspire, (formerly Sheffield Arts Education), including the design and delivery of some NEW creative sessions to support the 1-2-1 tuition offer.

Thornbridge Outdoors at Underbank

Following a successful year at Underbank Outdoor Activity Centre near Stocksbridge, Thornbridge Outdoors will continue to manage this site in 2011. Located to the NW of Sheffield, Underbank offers a range of watersports and land based activities for groups for half day, full day and evening sessions. Contact underbank@thornbridgeoutdoors.co.uk or call us on 01629-640491 for further information and availability.

First Aid / Team Development Days

A number of schools and departments within Sheffield CC have chosen to use Thornbridge Outdoors as a base for their training / INSET days this year. These days have included team development activities and experience of creative outdoor learning - ideas that can be transferred back to the school environment.

Many schools opt for a first aid and team development day, where we deliver a 4 hour first aid course in the morning, followed by some team activities in the afternoon. If you are interested in finding out more about these INSET / training days, please contact us to discuss your requirements.

View the Latest Availability at Thornbridge On-Line

Looking for a residential visit? You can now see for yourself if Thornbridge is available. Go to www.thornbridgeoutdoors.co.uk and click the button next to the Sheffield City Council logo to see the latest availability, then get in touch with [Jill Lomas](mailto:Jill.Lomas@thornbridgeoutdoors.co.uk) to make the booking.

Don't forget – Thornbridge Outdoors can be an ideal venue for a birthday celebration, reunion, wedding, club meet, training course, INSET days / team development, or a gathering for family and friends.

Talk to us about your requirements so that we can provide the help and support you need - whether it's a room, catering, activities, instruction or advice. Note: For short notice bookings the minimum charge may be waived for Sheffield groups.

What's new at Thornbridge?

Wildlife Garden Developments - Meet your group in the new 'Enviro Den' for environmental activities / pond dipping etc. Use the handy 'Scavenger Hunt Bags' to collect materials from around the grounds and star gaze on the patio at night. A millstone has been mounted in the centre of the wildlife garden which provides a focal point to the colourful surrounding flower beds.

Bedtime Reading - In support of **ESCAL** (Every Sheffield Child Articulate and Literate by the age of 11), a range of reading books have been supplied for Sheffield children to use whilst staying at Thornbridge Outdoors (giving 12,000+ Sheffield children bedtime reading opportunities this year!).

I.T Room – Record your experiences at Thornbridge and create presentations to show back at home / school. Can be used in the day or evening and internet access available.

New Wide Screen TV and DVD Player - Now available in the Farm and Lodge – display your photos directly from your memory stick and remember to bring your favorite DVDs for those quiet evenings!

Ceiling Mounted Digital Projectors - The Camp building and Discovery Room now have projectors which can be used for displaying photos / presentations etc during your visit.

New Suspended Ceilings - The new ceilings and lights have transformed the Camp, Recreation and Discovery rooms as they feel much warmer and of course have helped immensely in reducing our heating costs.

New Climbing Boots (for children and adults) – These can be used on the rock as well as the climbing wall and boulder.

Hard Standings for Tipis – After a few wet summers, we have built hard standings for our tipis, to help the campers (and tents) stay clean!

Rubbish / Recycling Area – This has been relocated across the car park. It costs us to provide this service, but hopefully contributes to a bigger (global) saving, so please help by recycling as much as possible during your visit.

Postcards - Many groups enjoy sending a postcard home whilst on a residential at Thornbridge. We can provide our unique **Thornbridge postcards** at 20p each and first class stamps if required.

Shelter – A new shelter has been built by our 'Green Action' course participants. Located near the camp fire – this is a quiet place, ideal for reviewing and environmental activities.

The Mole Hole – an exciting new underground activity. This will be one of the activities included in a new 'Thornbridge Group Challenge'. Talk to us if you are interested in finding out more.

New Cycle Track for Wheelchair Users / Trikes – a new 1km cycle track is being built around the grounds which will be accessible to wheelchair users and trikes. Keep up to date with developments by visiting our website www.thornbridgeoutdoors.co.uk

