



GENERAL INFORMATION

Plas Pencelli was established as an outdoor education centre more than 40 years ago and has been a base for outdoor courses since then. It has a reputation for quality, "real adventure" and the professional and caring approach adopted by staff. For many young people from Swindon and Wiltshire, Plas Pencelli has been their first experience of outdoor activities and of living and moving in and around a wild country area. The Brecon Beacons National Park is a stunning example of this.

The Centre's main visitors are primary and secondary children from Swindon and Wiltshire schools, though increasingly groups are choosing to visit from wider afield. Apart from our general week courses in outdoor education the Centre runs a wide variety of other types of course. These include young people's adventure courses, activity weekends for a range of participants and national governing body award courses. Over the years the Centre has organised a number of expeditions to many locations, including Canada, Norway and France. Plas Pencelli is open for 50 weeks of the year and courses usually run from Monday to Friday.

Location

Plas Pencelli (Map Ref: 141-090248) is ideally placed for running outdoor education courses. It is situated in a rural setting within the Brecon Beacons National Park, on the southern fringe of the village of Pencelli. From an activity perspective, Plas Pencelli is ideally placed with some top class outdoor venues no more than 20 miles away. The River Usk flows close to the Centre, the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal is within 200 metres and the River Wye is also within easy reach. This allows a full range of canoeing and kayaking ventures to be provided. The Centre has access to excellent terrain for hill and mountain pursuits, the land rising up from the grounds to the south west to the Brecon Beacons and to the east to the Black Mountains. These provide a wide variety of hill walking objectives and some excellent mountain biking for all abilities. With some of the longest caves in Europe within the region there are naturally numerous suitable sites for novice caving also. This includes Porth yr Ogof, probably the world's most popular introductory cave. The Gower Peninsular is little more than an hour away and this beautiful coastline provides excellent venues for climbing, sea-level traversing and surfing.

Premises

The Centre has at present 114 beds. These are distributed between the main house, the "Beacons Suite" annexe and the separate Lodge. The latter has recently been extended as part of a half a million pound refurbishment plan. The Lodge has self-catering facilities and can house up to 30 people on a self contained basis. During the summer months the fields are also used for camping by various groups. The Centre is set in its own attractive grounds covering 17 acres. These offer good areas for many different activities, including problem solving, orienteering, "night lines" and fieldwork studies.

Activities

Plas Pencelli provides residential courses for primary and secondary school students and also youth and adult groups. Courses for school students are designed to fulfil a variety of areas of the national curriculum along with contributing to general personal development. Most weeks will include a combination of activities including hill walking, caving, canoeing, kayaking and rock climbing. Other courses will be supplemented with mountain biking, surfing or sea-level traversing. Some schools choose to specialise in field studies. A full range of evening activities is provided by Centre staff. These usually involve an activity within the grounds and a review of the day's events via staff meetings and classroom sessions. Overnight security cover is also provided.

Staff

Outdoor

Head of Centre, Deputy Head, 2 Outdoor Education Instructors, 2 Centre Assistants and a Supply Panel of Instructors.

Administrative

2 part-time Secretaries

Site

Temporary handyman, 2 part-time cleaners and Centre Assistants 1 day a week

Catering

Head Cook, Assistant Cook and 2 part-time Cooks

Mission Statement

"Plas Pencelli strives to promote learning and achievement through the use of the Outdoors by focusing on personal development, effective relationships, social skills and appreciation of the natural world within a suitably safe, inclusive and challenging environment. This is promoted by maintaining good levels of staff training, welfare and health and safety."