



## PENDARREN HOUSE NEWSLETTER

[www.pendarren.org](http://www.pendarren.org)

No. 22 March 2016

### NEWS



Spring has arrived and the plants are back in the **new pond** - along with a few enterprising bugs. The frogs, toads and newts have already been to inspect it. They seem satisfied so we will hopefully soon have tadpoles. We may even see our grass snake back again if there are enough toads to eat.



In early March the instructors participated in a **white water safety and rescue course** which trains them to identify hazards in rivers and rescue people in difficulty. The course involved lots of throwing of ropes and swimming in very cold water!



Much of **Pendarren's woodland** is covered by a Tree Preservation Order to protect the trees, wildlife and landscape. Most of it was planted over 100 years ago and some gaps are now appearing in the woods. We have been transplanting trees donated by the Woodland Trust. Originally, these came with free rabbit protectors but we have sheep which nip the tops off the saplings as soon as they poke over the top of the rabbit proof tube. Staff are replacing these protectors with longer stakes and tubes (about 500 of them) so that we will be able to let the sheep back in to our new wood when they return in April.

The **greenhouse** had reached the point where it was dangerous to visitors and something had to be done. We could not afford to have it repaired to its original state so staff have worked hard to make it safe and create a useable space for groups, whilst retaining the frame and look of the building.





The repairs to the roof of the Annexe and Main House were completed just in time to keep the winter rains out. There were lengthy delays whilst the bat surveys were completed.

In the **Countryside Study Centre** there are now wall mounted electric fan heaters so it can be used for evening activities, and also as a big warm space to work on large things like canoes..



There are currently over 20 options on the **evening activity** list including a 'Murder Mystery' which is based on the characters who lived at Pendarren in 1910 - including the infamous butler who, as we all know, is still lurking in the shadows .....



The Pendarren cooks have a nice **new oven** which is twice the size of the old one so portions will be even **BIGGER!!!!** (that is what the instructors are hoping). The previous oven had its limitations (to be fair it was over 20 years old) and this new one will give the cooks more scope for the menus.



It seems a while ago now but in December we produced lots of **Christmas dinners** for our visitors and a man in red suit and beard even joined us for the last Christmas dinner. He seemed to be covered in soot and said "Ho ho ho" a lot!

The **zip line** was replaced last year, and now has a take off platform.



Some of our tired-looking **chairs** have been re-covered and look very smart.



**Storyteller Daniel Morden** is recovering well and we hope to see him back at Pendarren soon.

### **Courses for instructors and teachers who wish to lead groups**

- |                                   |   |  |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| Mountain Leader (Summer) training | - | Brecon Beacons / Snowdonia 23-28 July 2016 |
| Single Pitch Award Training       | - | South Wales 16-17 April 2016               |
| Lowland Leader Award training     | - | South Wales 28-29 May 2016                 |
| Expedition Skills Module          | - | South Wales 20-21 April 2016               |

### **Bookings next year**

Thanks to all those who have booked for 2016 - 2017 and for your support ....

We are now open for bookings to out of borough schools as well. See the website for availability.

As you know Haringey Council are looking for a partner to take on the lease and the running of Pendarren House from this summer, and so we are unable at this moment in time to give any prices for 2016 - 2017. Bookings are provisional until we are able to confirm prices; at that point schools can decide if they wish to proceed and confirm the booking.

## VISITORS

### Mulberry Primary School 2 - 6 November 2015



A wonderful visit from the students and staff from Mulberry Primary School. They enjoyed a week learning about their environment and how to work together to solve problems; from making beds and keeping their rooms tidy to scaling mountains, high ropes and hunting for creatures at the seaside. As usual Mulberry managed to squeeze in a bonfire and some fireworks. The students and staff enjoyed themselves enormously and went home tired but happy.



as actors, actresses and ballroom dancers. The judges on Strictly Come Dancing would have been blown away with the dance moves in the Great Hall at Raglan during their re-enactment of life in the Middle Ages. And their cooking skills in the kitchen were pretty awesome too

.....



### Devonshire Hill Primary School 16 - 20 November 2015

Perfect Scenery

Enjoyable canoeing and climbs

Nail-biting story times

Daring activities each day we've sought

Achieving more than we'd ever thought

Responsibility growing

Respect showing

Exhilarating Caving

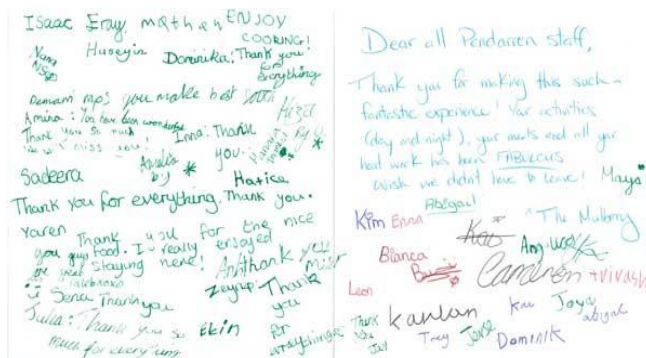
Not always behaving!

### Bicester School

#### A level and AS level Orienteering 24 - 25 November 2015

On this 2 day course students spent the days running a variety of orienteering courses in parkland, field and forest orienteering courses as they were assessed for their A level coursework.

'On Tuesday 24 November we set off from school at 7am, headed for Wales with Mrs Masterson and Mr Hume. We went directly to our first site in Pontypool where we met



### Highgate Primary 9 - 13 November 2015

Pupils of Highgate Primary School visited Raglan Castle and demonstrated their prowess

our instructor Neil and heard about the infamous and illusive Catherine.

First there was quick recap on how to use a compass then it was straight into the first competition. This was a timed course, which was new to most of us having only done points competitions previously. The course was quite a nice one to start with as it was not too difficult, however the leaves in the wooded area made it difficult to follow the paths.

Once this two hour competition was over, it was straight back in the mini bus to go to the next site in Abergavenny. This journey gave us an opportunity to eat lunch and muster up some strength for the next course. This course was a lot easier however, more focus was put on our route descriptions and compass capabilities. This course was done through gadgets and was almost like geocaching. We had little devices that we had to tap to the markers and they recorded our times.

After this course, it was time to head to Pendarren House, which is where we were staying. We stayed in an annex next to the main house where we had dinner and breakfast. In the evening we had a theory lesson during which we did detailed route descriptions for the following day's course. We got up the next day around 7am and packed our bags back into the minibus. We left around 10am for our final competition at Cannop Ponds in the Forest of Dean. This course was the hardest of the three, especially due to the dangerous wild life. The forest is home to many, extremely aggressive wild boar.

Once the competition was over we had lunch and headed back to school. We have all come back with good grades which will help towards our final grades.'

- Isobel

**Hereford 6<sup>th</sup> Form College**  
**DofE Expedition Training**  
**20 - 22 November 2015**

Hereford 6<sup>th</sup> Form spent a weekend at Pendarren House in preparation for their DofE expeditions. Various aspects of expedition work

and mountain walking were covered and workshops included Navigation and Camp-craft. Their ability to navigate under pressure (and their competitive spirit!) was tested with an orienteering event. After a route planning meeting on Sunday morning all participants and tutors ascended Sugar Loaf Mountain by various routes. The weather was great and it was a fitting end to the weekend.



**St Francis De Sales Junior School**  
**23 27 November 2015**

Going to Pendarren has changed my life because I saw a new side of the world I never seen before. I will never forget it. Keira

When I got to Pendarren I was scared but I finished all of my challenges. Isaiah

My time at Pendarren was enjoyable. The activities are fun, my favourite was canoeing. The instructors are friendly and it had been better than any holiday I have ever been on. Connor

When I got to Pendarren the people were very welcoming and I will never forget my time there. Troy

My time at Pendarren helped me realise that anything is possible when you have awesome friends beside you. Cole

My favourite part was horse riding it was utterly amazing and I absolutely loved the food. Arvin

**Alexandra Primary School**  
**30 November - 4 December 2015**

Pendarren is amazing and I would definitely visit again. It's the time of your

life and is unforgettable. I thought I wouldn't be able to conquer my fears on the crates, but I did it and it and felt great afterwards. Pendarren teaches you how to do the adventures of the outdoor life, which can be scary and daring, but you'll make it.  
Samira

I thought fears were impossible to overcome until I unlocked the mysteries of Pendarren. Pendarren teaches you to stop screaming and to get on with it.  
Iklas

I have learnt that Pendarren is all about trying and experiencing new things. Each course teaches you a different lesson in life. I personally have conquered my fear of insects and learnt to work as a team. Pendarren also brings you together as a class. You make friends with you didn't expect.  
Anon

In Pendarren I had a fun week, we went down the tunnel and went through the water. We saw a dead sheep, we saw lots of animal, we saw a skeleton of a dead animal. We did rock climbing and climbed up to the end and down. We went on canoes and had to chase toy ducks.  
Hamza

At Pendarren I had learnt to face my fears and trust my friends and take care of myself. I liked:

- Canoe
- Disco
- Caving at a mountain.

Things I dislike: NOTHING AT ALL

Ibrahim

**Earlsmead Primary School**  
**7 - 11 December 2015**

I loved going to sleep because we were then closer to the start of a new day's adventure. The experience at Pendarren has changed the way I see London.  
Deniz

I've enjoyed everything about Pendarren! The food is lovely, the countryside is peaceful and the mountains are enormous!  
Holly

Pendarren has given us experiences and opportunities we could never have in London. It was very good because we learnt to be away from house. We love Pendarren xx .  
Defne and Su

I enjoyed going inside the Big Pit and to know how coal is made. The trip to Pendarren was long but not so boring.  
Michelle

Now because of my Pendarren experience whenever someone asks me have you climbed a mountain I can say yes instead of no !  
Sarah

I love Pendarren so much it brings years 6 together. I love climbing the Sugarloaf mountain.  
Benedicte

I enjoyed my time in Pendarren because I experienced things that I have never of dreamed of doing before and achieving. I couldn't believe that I got to the top of massive rock climbing wall and getting to the top of a mountain and building my own shelter. It was really fun and I enjoyed so much fun.  
Fleur

My experience in Pendarren was awesome and I loved spending time with the lovely staff at Pendarren.  
Daniella

I loved it in Pendarren when we went to the Big Pit and when we were walking through the woods.  
Yucel

I loved Pendarren so much, you will overcome your fears and have the best time ever. There are lovely staff at Pendarren and they give you good accommodation. I liked lots of the activities, especially zip wiring.  
Khalani

It was the best money I spent and I'll do it again in a heartbeat.  
Khuri

I really enjoyed my Pendarren experience. It's given me more courage.  
Abigail

What a fantastic experience outdoors and in touch with nature ! We have all learnt so much . Thank you !  
James

I had so much fun I had a great great experience. There were three rooms upstairs where the girls were staying the rooms were called Table Mountain, Sugarloaf and Blorenge. My room was called Sugarloaf I had so much fun. I think if you go to Pendarren house you will have so much fun.

milia

I love Pendarren activities and I have experienced a lot of things what we do in Pendarren and it is one of the best places that I have ever been to and I had a lot of fun.

Bianchy

I think that the trip was quite a lot of fun and was worth the money and the effort but I think that five days were a lot for some year 6 children but I think that actually it was good idea for us year 6 and also I will tell every one I know to come here and everything was worth it. This trip helped me to get to know myself much better. Defne



### **Bounds Green Junior School 14 - 18 December 2015**

I learnt that I can now do is look after myself without help from adults. Baran

I like Pendarren, new experiences, new teachers and lots more, adventure. Havana

This experience has been amazing! I have done things I never thought I was able to do. I have learnt to be closer to my friends and how act with my fears. Mella

I love Pendarren because I did things that I haven't done before in my life. Hubert

I really enjoyed staying in Wales it was like we are a big family! Maia

We learned how to face our fears and pushed ourselves as far as we could. This is a once in a

lifetime chance to do things you can't do at home. Mehnaz & Jessie

I liked a lot of things here like the activities and the party. The things we done were unique and special, unforgettable! The only down side to me was the kit, slightly uncomfortable but it was worth it! Jessie

I didn't like Pendarren ... I LOVED IT!!!  
Aiden and Evren and Gabriel



### **Bancrofts School 18 - 20 December 2015 The 3rd's Rugby Tour to Wales**

On Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December at 6:00am, a 3rd's rugby team made their way to school, bags were packed and we were ready to go. It was a very long journey to South Wales, but when we got there we ate our packed lunches at a very nice school called Pen Y Dre. Finally we did what we came here for – to play them at Rugby. It was very muddy and wet but after a slow start we finally found our feet and we were off. We pushed until the last minute and then came out with a good 29-21 win. I was captain and they presented me with their school tie.

We then headed to where we were staying and offloaded our bags, ate dinner and went out to do night orienteering. The sky was pitch black and although we had torches, lots of people got lost. It was great fun. Then it was time for all of us to get some sleep as we had another big day ahead of us tomorrow.

On Saturday we did 3 activities: high ropes and zip wire in the morning, abseiling and high ropes in the afternoon and then we went to watch a professional Rugby game between Scarlets and Glasgow in the evening. Scarlets lost a tough match where there were no tries scored. It was a good chance to see how we can improve our own game. We all went back shattered having had a very busy but enjoyable day.

Sunday was the last day of our tour and we went out to play a club called Blackwood at the Gwent Dragons training ground. It was a great pitch with the latest artificial grass. Unfortunately we lost to Blackwood who were a good and more experienced team than us. We headed to their clubhouse for a presentation where we thanked them for the game and then we started our journey home. The Wales Tour was a great trip and I would recommend it to the new thirds for next year. Thanks to the teachers, we all had a fabulous time in Wales.

By Oscar King 3WA



### **St John Vianney RC Primary School 11-15 January 2016**

Although I miss my parents I like it here, it helps me to be independent. Ross

Pendarren was a great experience for me but I just want to say that caving could be longer. Simone

I would like Pendarren to last for 2 weeks. Raph

Pendarren was a very fun place where I learned a lot and had a very independent, muddy but extremely fun time. KL

I had such an amazing time in Pendarren, I did things I thought I would never achieve or do. Pendarren has been one of the best experiences ever! Sofia

I would like you to make Pendarren a bit longer. I really like Pendarren and I am going to miss it here quite a lot. I would give Pendarren 100 and a half out of 100. Laura

### **Belmont Junior School 11 - 15 January 2016**

Pendarren was a life changing experience for me. At the start I was finding it tough and was missing my family, but as the days went past I was building up my responsibility and self-confidence. The staff were very friendly and pushed us to our very limits as well as getting us to persevere and that definitely paid off! The food was good. My favourite activity was bushcraft and that needed teamwork and cooperation. My best evening programme was storytelling. Adam

The Pendarren Experience was packed with moments of "I can't's" and "I'm scared". But these few days have taught me a ton of things. I learnt to persevere, work as a team and support friends. I also learnt that when you fall, you should laugh, get up and try your best next time. What made it so amazing was that I had a chance of independence and getting to know people you didn't really talk to at school. The meals were elegantly made, delicious and the rooms were cosy and warm. This was the opportunity of a lifetime. Thank you for a fantastic experience. Noor





I learnt that when you fall you should laugh, get up again and try your best. Nora



Pendarren has taught me how to live independently with my friends. We helped each other when we were struggling and comforted each other when we were upset. I have had experiences that I wouldn't have had if I didn't come and probably won't ever have again. In Pendarren my friends helped me overcome my fears so I tried everything and had no regrets. I have enjoyed my time here so much and don't really want to go home. The food is delicious, the rooms comfortable and utilities clean. The staff are lovely. I hope lots of children continue to have as much of a good time as I have had. Thank you for a lovely week! Eva



## Campsbourne School 18 - 21 January 2016

I think that Pendarren was an amazing experience for me and I learned lots of things like how to coordinate and do teamwork. Zinar

It was a great time here and was a brilliant experience and I got to know and understand other children better. I think you should extend time a little bit more time here and add more activities to make it more exciting. I made new friends here and found out more about my friends I already had. The instructors were fun and kind. My favourite part was making new friends and doing the high ropes. The food was delicious and I enjoyed it a lot. The evening activities were fun especially the murder mystery because the grave creeped me out. The beds were very comfortable and the view was amazing. This place was amazing, fun, a good experience and helped me with life. Thank you for making this a brilliant time. It has been the best thing that has happened to me in my whole life, thank you. Luke



I think Pendarren was an amazing experience. I had a lot of fun and also spent a lot of time with my friends. I think the food was excellent. Overall staying at Pendarren was the best thing I did in my life! Taahir

I couldn't do the high ropes before, going to Pendarren helped me a lot so I tried to work my hardest and I achieved doing it. That is the experience i will remember the longest. Ceylan

I had the best five days of my life. PLEASE can I come back! Cheyenne

I will remember sleeping with my friends, going to the beach (getting soaking!) and going on the high ropes! I tried to work my hardest, it was a challenge! Daisy

These experiences will help me when I get home because at the beginning of the week I was sure that I wasn't going to do the caving because I don't like dark and small spaces but then I did it and it was one of the most fun activities I have done all week so I learned to always give something a go. Phoebe



**St Mary's CE Primary School  
25 - 29 January 2016**

I loved my time in Pendarren so much I didn't want to go home at all and I never want to leave I thought it was the best thing I have ever done it was really cool that we got to sleep with our friends. Josie

Pendarren was a great experience for me because there was a lot of things I couldn't not but I still did it anyway. I thought the high ropes was the most frightening but when I did it turned out to be fun. Deborah

The food was amazing! Also the staff were very kind, helpful and funny. The staff also encouraged me to do things that I couldn't do. Reegan

I LEARNED ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE IF YOU TRY  
- Lucy

My trip to Pendarren was amazing. Jackie

I have enjoyed Pendarren very much. It taught me that I can do things by myself. It

helped me to be confident, brave and not to give up. Jossrose

I loved Pendarren because we got to do loads and loads of new things, like climb 13 metre wall, abseil and read a map. This was the best experience EVER!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Theo

I liked Pendarren because I got to do things that I wouldn't be able to at home and learnt how to work in a team better. Destiny

Pendarren taught me how to believe in myself and everyone else, more than I already have. Gradie

**St Gilda's RC Junior School  
1 - 5 February 2016**

Thank you, you really encouraged me and the whole team. Thank you all, it was a once and life opportunity. I will treasure these memories forever. LISTEN CUFFILY! - Dana

This is an incredible experience for us to learn and get along with teachers, and my other year six pupils; and I never said 'I can't.' - Megan

My experiences will help me at home because it teaches me to persevere and be helpful to others. - Raf

I really liked how we all had to look after each other without parents. If we had to do something we would have to do stuff on our own. - AJ

I found that it is easy to FLY off the high ropes if you know how to flap your wings like a demented chicken. - Annie

My Pendarren experience was a big rollercoaster. I had ups and downs as I was homesick a few times. My friends cheered me up therefore I learnt to trust them even more. I think that the whole year six became closer because of Pendarren. I thought that Miss Fallon helped me a lot, and I became closer to her. - Lucia

My time in Pendarren helped me to trust others and to work as a team. I like the fact that all the instructors have faith in everyone. I learnt that I should never give up and always have a go. - Rose

I think this was the best experience EVER! I think we should go to bed a tiny bit later like at 11 o'clock to make it a bit more fun. Also I think the bell should be rung at quarter to eight (instead of seven o'clock). I will never forget this incredible and enchanting experience. I love Pendarren House !  
- Meibh

My favourite part of the Pendarren experience was the River Study because it was a once-in-a-lifetime experience and there aren't any caves close by in London. My funniest part of the Pendarren experience was singing really loudly in the minibus and falling into the canal when canoeing. I would recommend the Pendarren experience to people that want to step out of their shell.  
- Nina

The activities were absolutely thrilling. I would like to thank my instructor for his guidance and fascinating the whole of the group with his knowledge. He was extremely friendly and made me laugh. The Croeso was very welcoming and it was a great introduction to Pendarren. On the first day I found a whole new side to me. Within the hour, I was soaked to the bone and laughing when I found myself stood in the river.  
- Dana

I'm Morgan - you know, the one that kept on falling over stuff. Thank you for showing me and guiding me through the Pendarren experience. I liked the House system because it all fitted so well that we had enough time for everything and we could spend time together.  
- Morgan



**Charlton Athletic Community Trust  
National Citizenship Service  
13-16 February 2016**

Charlton Athletic Club brought a group of students participating in the National Citizenship Service (NCS) which is a voluntary personal and social development programme for 16-17 year olds. This programme is paid for by the government and is a bit like a fast track DofE. This was their Personal Challenge week and they undertook a variety of outdoor

activities designed to challenge them and help bond the group in preparation for the next stage of their NCS.

**'Building character and resilience in every child'** The government have just produced a white paper "Educational Excellence Everywhere" in which it is stated they intend to offer the NCS course to every child in Britain (as well as continuing pupil premium). Section 6.33 should you want to read it!!



**St Paul's RC Primary School  
3 - 7 March 2016**

Pendarren was very fun and I learned about myself and how to work better in a group.  
- Alexander

I had the best five days in Pendarren. I have conquered my fears of height.  
- Kenneth

It was really fun and I learnt a lot of new things about myself!  
- Precious

Have fun and I will guarantee you will have the best time ever.  
- Ricardo

It helped face my fears. We had to do the extreme. I recommend it to others, especially to those who don't go out that much.  
- Hana

**St Francis de Sales RC Junior School  
8 - 12 February 2016**

Pendarren is great it teaches you to be more independent and it taught me how to look after myself. I learnt that if you don't try new things you are never going to experience anything.  
Nichantae

I achieved lots of things but the thing I achieved the most was to be with the ponies. When I was struggling my friends helped me.  
Jeffrey

I was really happy here because I found my independence and I really do not want to go. Avie

I liked it when we went on the horses and they started to smell us. That meant they liked us. Noedy

I liked Pendarren a lot, it taught me many things about how to survive and not to always rely on other people. Kate-Lyn



*St Francis de Sales Junior School on stream study in St Mary's Vale.*

**Lea Valley Primary School  
17 - 21 March 2016**

After a very wet winter Lea Valley brought sunshine with them - all week.

My favourite time of this week was climbing up the mountain because it really felt like I had accomplished something when I got to the top and took some pictures of the view which was about 2000 feet in the air. – Tierre

I will remember going up the mountain and going back down. – Joseph

The achievement I was most proud of was canoeing. I have never done it before in my life because my mum never lets be adventurous but Pendarren did so much and I loved it. At first I drowned but then team work brought us to the lead and I can now go canoeing...THANK YOU PENDARREN!!!!!! – Ubix

Pendarren is so fun! you should take it all in – Haleem

Pendarren House is fabulous. It gives you a chance to do outdoor experiences that you thought you could never do. - Husna

I never thought that I can go 2/3 of the climbing wall and I felt proud of doing it, and the way I came back (down) was in style, it was like I was just super jumping down. - Ashir



***Happy Easter!!***

If there is anything you would like to see included in the newsletter, please let us know.



01873 810694



office@pendarren.org



Pendarren House OEC

Llangenny

Crickhowell

Powys

NP8 1HE