

Secondary school residential



KS3, GCSE and A Level guide

Hello, and welcome to YHA

Over the next few pages we're going to tell you a lot about the memorable, perspective-shifting residentials that we offer, and help you discover which one is right for you. But first, we'd like to tell you a bit about YHA and how we came to be one of the lead education providers in the UK.

YHA officially formed on 10th April 1930. We were established on a shoestring by a band of passionate volunteers. Our founders gave ordinary young people in Britain the opportunity – for the very first time – to escape to the countryside and enjoy leisure pursuits on a scale only previously possible for the wealthy.

Our founding purpose still goes to the core of what we stand for. Today, YHA has more than 60 Learning Outside the Classroom accredited sites, more than any other residential provider in the UK. Our diverse network of hostels is full to bursting with knowledgeable staff who make every school trip memorable and rewarding.

Our action, adventure and activity packages are national curriculum-linked and can be tailored to meet the specific requirements of your group. We offer self-led residentials as well as day activities. And everything we offer is set against a backdrop of inspiring surroundings in the natural environment.

We've spent decades perfecting what we do. And we'd love to share it with you. So, let's get started.

Our charitable object

To help all, especially young people of limited means, to a greater knowledge, love and care of the countryside, and appreciation of the cultural values of towns and cities, particularly by providing youth hostels or other accommodation for them in their travels, and thus to promote their health, recreation and education.



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Access for all

We create unique opportunities for people from all backgrounds to experience amazing places, share extraordinary journeys and take a different path through life.

YHA offers support to educational groups where members of the group are eligible for pupil premium and where children and young people face additional social challenges. We are particularly keen to support groups of young people who have not undertaken a residential activity previously.

Take your school to any one of our 100+ hostels

With a YHA school trip you can be assured of a safe, fulfilling and unforgettable residential that will stay with students long after the coach journey home.

Working together with teachers and experts in their fields, we've prepared a range of fully flexible residential options for school groups of all shapes, sizes and abilities.

Your pupils could be scrambling up a rock face, abseiling down a viaduct or canoeing on a real lake. They could be connecting with nature and discovering how to help protect the natural environment.

You can enhance your stay by adding on options such as searching for life on the seashore, taking part in medieval banquets or learning the art of teamwork.

Our flexible approach to planning your residential sets us apart from other providers. Whether you want a self-led adventure, the whole place to yourselves, activities and meals provided, or a bespoke combination, our experienced staff will create a tailor-made residential to meet the educational needs of your class and offer exciting ways to engage, challenge and inspire every member of your group.

Why choose YHA

- 100+ locations across England and Wales by the coast, in the countryside and in cities
- Over 60 LOTC accredited sites and counting – the most of any provider in the UK
- A wide range of properties from 10s to 100s of beds
- Sole use of hostels available
- Free planning visits and free leader places
- Tailored, affordable packages
- Support for schools available
- Expert, friendly staff
- Delicious food catered to your group's requirements
- Classroom spaces available at some hostels



We want to be as green as our logo

We have a long history of caring for the natural world. And we know just how vital it is to be aware of our environmental impact.

Since September 2019, we no longer provide single-use plastic bottles in packed lunches at any hostels. Thanks to a successful bid for grants from Waitrose and Partners and Hostelling International, we have been busy rolling out water refilling stations across our network. This will remove 500,000 plastic bottles from our network every year.

Some of our green initiatives:

- We've increased on site recycling by 8%, saving 888 tonnes of carbon in the first six months
- We've saved 22 tonnes of carbon per year by installing LED light bulbs at our National Office
- We swapped our membership cards from plastic to cardboard
- We've removed single-use plastic straws and drinks stirrers from our cafés and bars, saving 100,000 per year



Gyda chefnogaeth Waitrose & Partners, nod YHA yw arbed hyd at hanner miliwn o boteli plastic bob blwyddyn

With support from Waitrose & Partners, YHA aims to save up to half a million plastic bottles every year

Our network

Key shows how many beds available at each hostel

- 25-50
- 51-75
- 76-100
- 101-125
- 126-150
- 151+



Spotlight on YHA Chester Trafford Hall

We're delighted to highlight YHA Chester Trafford Hall which is perfect for hosting groups. The hostel is located just outside the historic city of Chester. This hostel combines the grandeur of a Georgian mansion house with excellent facilities. It has 53 en suite bedrooms, which sleep between two and five guests, plus eco-friendly chalet accommodation behind the main house. The hostel has four large meeting rooms, as well as classrooms available making YHA Chester Trafford Hall a great option for your next residential, be it

a self-led stay or taking the opportunity to enjoy one of our popular activity packages. The site has fantastic environmental credentials. It's heated by 100% renewable energy, has a stable annexe that's carbon neutral, and has its own organic kitchen garden. There are 14 acres of beautiful grounds complete with mature woodland and landscaped gardens to explore. The Grade II-listed hostel is perfectly placed, situated just four miles from the city of Chester, in the village of Wimbolds Trafford. It's close-by to the many attractions of rural Cheshire and the historic walls of the Roman city as well as Chester Zoo and Blue Planet Aquarium making YHA Chester Trafford Hall a great option for your next group trip.

Check out our full range of discovery, multi-activity and Alex Rider packages online at yha.org.uk/hostels/yha-chester-trafford-hall.





Activities:

Multi-activity package

Access to great locations for climbing, abseiling, and a variety of water sports. You can add these to our onsite sessions for an adrenaline filled multi-activity stay. (see page 17)

Connecting to Nature

Engage young people with fun, nature-based activities designed to connect them with the environment and teach a range of mindfulness techniques. (see page 22)

Bolt-on activities

Our YHA led onsite sessions and off-site adventurous activities can be added to your stay as either a half day or full day bolt-on. (see page 24)

Winter residentials

We know the dramatic impact residentials can have on young people and we are committed to making them as accessible as possible.

Booking a winter residential with YHA provides the chance to get more children away at the very best prices as well as setting up friendships and learning for the year ahead.

From 3rd November 2024 to 28th February 2025 and 2nd November 2025 to 28th February 2026, (excluding 30th December to 1st January), we are offering 25% off midweek stays (Sunday to Thursday) for school groups of more than 15 people.

We'll help you explore the best that England and Wales have to offer during the colder months. Enjoy great value accommodation, dedicated facilities and tasty catering options.



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We've taken our Year 12 Geographers in February for a number of years now. The students love it! Going earlier than traditional times allows students to experience many different fieldwork techniques that they can then decide to use for their NEA (independent investigation / coursework) during the latter part of the academic year.

Lyndon Cowlard, Head of Humanities, Kesteven and Grantham Girls' School

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Self-led residential

Our self-led options give you the freedom to run your own residential whilst enjoying a wide range of accommodation options and group-friendly facilities. In addition to hostel accommodation, please ask about our camping barns, pods, cabins and campsites as a stay that's a little out of the ordinary may be perfectly suited to your group.

Contact us

Email
groupreservations@yha.org.uk

Call
[01629 592 637](tel:01629592637)

Our facilities include:

Meeting/classrooms,
games rooms, drying
rooms, hostel grounds,
great social spaces,
outdoor grounds,
self-catering kitchens,
restaurants serving
breakfast, picnic lunch
and evening meals, WiFi.

Our experienced and friendly team are always here to support you with every aspect of planning your visit. Our flexible approach means that we can provide you with a break that's tailored to your needs and delivered at the low prices group leaders expect from YHA.

Make your own itinerary

Our flexible package building means that you can choose what you want to do, when.

We can tailor your stay to be exactly what you need it to be so that it meets the needs of your class and helps you reach your learning objectives.

Time	Day one	Day two	Day three
8.30am - 9.30am		Breakfast	Breakfast
9.30am - 12.30pm		Activity choice	Activity choice
12.30pm - 1.30pm		Lunch	Lunch
2.00pm - 5.00pm	Activity choice	Activity choice	Departure
5.00pm - 7.00pm	Dinner	Dinner	
7.30pm - 8.30pm	Evening activity	Evening activity	





Activities available*

- abseiling
- archery
- canoeing
- caving
- climbing
- crate tower
- find the double agent
- guided walk
- map skills and navigation
- raft building
- shelter building and fire lighting
- team challenges

Alternative lengths of residential are available.

*Activities may be site specific, please speak to our advisors for details.

Evening activities

- egg rocket launch
- fire building
- night hike
- night line
- orienteering

Action adventure package

Designed to make the most of the natural world around us, this package really takes the challenge up a level.

Forget simulated experiences indoors and instead engage your pupils with exhilarating activities in the great outdoors. You'll see the difference that a genuine experience makes as your group tackles the thrills of natural rock surfaces or man-made structures including bridges and viaducts, breathe in fresh country air as they prepare to take a leap of faith, or paddle down the river as cool water slaps against the side of their canoe.

Teamwork is key as the adventure begins. Our experienced staff encourage students to step out of their comfort zones to try different things and take on new challenges. Students will tackle a wide range of activities, each one intended to improve their skills and self-confidence, strengthen friendships and help them grow as team players.

This package is perfect for PE students or those wishing to push themselves through enrichment and transition programmes.

Activities include:

Caving, weaselling, high ropes, abseiling, canoeing, raft building, leap of faith, night hike.

Available at:

- YHA Edale Activity Centre
- YHA Okehampton
- YHA Okehampton Bracken Tor





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Experiential learning promotes
a deeper approach to learning...
Students are more likely to remember
and apply what was learnt in future.

Sam Cooley, Victoria Burns & Jennifer Cumming*

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*(2015) The role of outdoor adventure education in
facilitating group work in higher education. Higher
Education. 69:567-582



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It all seemed really difficult, but when you give it a go it's good.

Student, St Mary Redcliffe and Temple School

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NINE
YEAR!
ADVENTURE

yha.org.uk/school-trips



Multi- activity package

Our multi-activity package offers a mixture of adventurous and on-site activities that make the most of the great outdoors and the hostel locality, whilst offering something for all abilities.

Led by both YHA staff and specially selected external providers, we combine activities including team challenges and fire lighting with a spot of weaselling and climbing. Our residentials are packed with morale boosting, team building exercises that aim to provide a genuine sense of achievement and discovery whilst giving pupils the adventure of a lifetime.

Activities include:

Guided walk, archery, abseiling, caving, canoeing, climbing, night hike, fire lighting, shelter building, coasteering.

Available at:

- YHA Castleton Losehill Hall
- YHA Chester Trafford Hall
- YHA Grinton Lodge
- YHA Ilam Hall
- YHA Langdale
- YHA Malham
- YHA Ravenstor
- YHA St Briavels Castle
- YHA Wye Valley

Geography, geology and ecology

With the requirements for fieldwork days at GCSE, AS and A level, now is the ideal time to rethink your options for geography school trips. Whether it is an AQA, Edexcel, OCR or Eduqas opportunity you are looking for, we probably have more great geography and ecology options available to you than you realise.

We know that for many schools, parents and students, the cost of this integral fieldwork can be off-putting. But, have you considered a self-led fieldwork residential at YHA? It may be the perfect solution. We have hostels located across England and Wales, including all the National Parks and deep in the hubs of some of the UK's major cities.

Our hostels feature comfortable communal areas and many have dedicated classroom space, great for a little evening work and follow-up. So, whether you're planning on heading to the Lake District for a little glaciation, dropping in on one of our coastal locations to check out some landforms and carry out some beach profiling, or maybe heading to Liverpool for a touch of urban regeneration or a trek out on the sand dunes nearby. We are sure to have a hostel perfect for you needs.

Our self-led fieldwork residentials offer stunning locations at great value, affordable prices.





Here's some ideas:

- **YHA Swanage** is a great base for exploring the Jurassic Coast
- **YHA Broad Haven** is the perfect residential to study coastal processes and landforms
- **YHA Conwy** is a fantastic location to explore Snowdonia, Llandudno, Great Orme and Anglesey
- **YHA Ravenstor** has everything covered for a multiple day coursework trip as you are close to woodland, meadows, streams and quarries
- **YHA Malham** is the place to study stream ecology, the impacts of tourism, inspirational physical landforms
- **YHA Borrowdale** and **YHA Eskdale** are great hostels in the Lake District for geology and geography trips
- **YHA Sheringham** is the perfect place to explore the Norfolk coast line and rivers

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award

We offer fantastic opportunities for Duke of Edinburgh participants to complete both the volunteering section (Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards) and the residential section (Gold Award) of the Duke of Edinburgh Award. Your students can pack a bag and enjoy the experience of a lifetime as they make new friends, learn new skills and get fully involved with everything YHA can offer.

YHA DofE Gold Residentials

YHA is the UK's leading provider of cost-neutral DofE Gold Residentials, enabling participants from low-economic backgrounds to complete their Gold award. Participants undertake practical indoor and outdoor tasks including painting, fence-making, and gardening which develop valuable DIY and team-working skills as well as leaving a lasting impact after they leave.



yha.org.uk/school-trips



**YOUTH
WITHOUT
LIMITS**



Virtual volunteering opportunities

YHA have developed a range of virtual volunteering options for young people to gain valuable skills and experience.

Available for 14-year-olds and over, the 12-week placements can be completed entirely online and have been designed to meet the requirements for Duke of Edinburgh Award participants. The opportunities available are:

Social media volunteer

Volunteer videographer

Virtual fundraising volunteer

Connecting to Nature package

Pupils get the chance to combine nature-based activities with ways to develop mindfulness skills in the great outdoors with this package designed to encourage students to embrace the natural environment. Days are filled with exploration, nature-based treasure hunts, environment-inspired art and den building. Evenings are spent around the campfire, toasting marshmallows, telling stories and singing songs beneath the stars.

Activities include:

Campfire, environmental art, fire lighting, guided walks, mindfulness, nature craft, nature's mud kitchen, rock pooling, scavenger hunts, seashore safari, shelter building, stream or pond dipping, woodland explorers.

Available at:

- YHA Boggle Hole
- YHA Castleton Losehill Hall
- YHA Chester Trafford Hall
- YHA Grinton Lodge
- YHA Ilam Hall
- YHA Langdale
- YHA Ravenstor
- YHA Wye Valley

yha.org.uk/school-trips





Bolt-on activities

Perfect for filling free time, our bolt-on activities offer challenging and rewarding activities that can easily be added on to your YHA stay. Available as half-day and full-day options, we offer an exciting range of activities designed to entertain and engage pupils of all ages and abilities.

So Sussex

So Sussex are experts in using the natural environment for all kinds of learning outside the classroom. YHA works with So Sussex to provide a range of engaging activities designed to stimulate young minds to explore nature in a different way. This bolt-on is available at either YHA South Downs or YHA Truleigh Hill.

Activities include:

Team building, pond dipping, mini beast hunts, natural art, trips to the beach (YHA South Downs only), bushcraft, guided walks and dark skies activities.



YHA bolt-on

YHA delivered bolt-ons are available at all of our sites that offer YHA packages, so you can be rest assured that you have well trained and experienced staff engaging and challenging your pupils.

Activities include:

Team challenges, shelter building, archery, guided walk, fire lighting, and more.



Adventure bolt-on

The British countryside offers a near endless number of opportunities to explore, discover new things and try unusual activities. From fell walking in the Lake District to canoeing in the Peak District or climbing and abseiling in Wales, every outdoor activity you can think of – and many you can't – is catered for somewhere.

Activities include:

Climbing, abseiling, coasteering, canoeing, kayaking, mountain walk, ghyll scrambling, and more.

Meet the manager

Laura is the hostel manager at YHA Malham in North Yorkshire.

Our hostel staff are pretty special. With backgrounds ranging from education to hospitality, travel to outdoor adventure, each member of staff is as unique as our hostels. They do, however, have one thing in common – an absolute passion for helping young people discover skills and abilities they never knew they had. They're the secret superheroes of our hostel network, and they'll go out of their way to make your experience incredible.

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There are so many fantastic fun activities and being a big kid myself it's hard to choose. My favourite curriculum based activity it has to be one of the guided walks around such stunning scenery, or the stream studies because at the end of the session we get to have a paddle in the water. My favourite adventurous activity is kayaking.

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Can you tell us a bit about your background and experience with YHA?

My life before YHA was just as exciting as it now. I spent 17 years working in tourism overseas. My winter seasons were spent skiing and snowboarding in the Italian Dolomites, I was living the dream!

I moved back to the UK and to the gorgeous village of Malham in the heart of the Yorkshire Dales and I've been here five years. I'm now lucky enough to be living a different dream. I love living and working in such a beautiful place.



What is your favourite part about hosting YHA residentials?

My favourite part of hosting residentials is seeing the smiles and delight on children's faces.

For some children, being away from home for the first time really does take them out of their comfort zone. Seeing how they embrace and enjoy the change really is amazing.



What is your most memorable YHA residential experience?

Each residential is memorable for different reasons. But one thing that does stand out is a child who was dependent on a wheelchair that did all the activities along with their friends, who overcame any challenge that got in the way.



What makes your hostel the perfect base for school trips?

YHA Malham is the perfect base for school trips as we are set in the rural village of Malham in the heart of the Yorkshire Dales. The hostel has 81 beds split between the main building, which sleeps 47, and the annexe, which sleeps 34 – ideal for school groups who prefer their own space. Room sizes vary from two to eight beds, some of which are en suite. The classroom is perfect for indoor activities, but we prefer to be outside discovering the great outdoors. The local area has so much to offer from the limestone pavement of the iconic Malham Cove to the enchanted mystery of Janet's Foss. From the mighty Gordale Scar to the gorgeous glacial lake of Malham Tarn.





Support for schools

Our unforgettable school residentials inspire pupils to achieve extraordinary things while improving teamwork, communication, personal achievement and life skills.

Our residentials create an inclusive space for young people to thrive through hands-on experiences in breath-taking places.

We believe every child should have the chance to connect to nature, the outdoors, culture and heritage. That's why we're committed to providing bursary support for eligible schools in an effort to break down barriers to participation and open up access equitably.

Eligibility criteria

If either of the below criteria apply to your school or college then you may be eligible for a bursary:

- Based in area of high social deprivation.
- Have high numbers (upwards of 30%) of children receiving pupil premium or free school meals.

For more information and to apply, please visit yha.org.uk/support-programmes/support-for-schools

Enriching the lives of young people since 1930

Our friendly and knowledgeable team are here to help with every aspect of your residential experience, from finding the perfect National Curriculum linked activities in the best YHA accommodation, to arranging bursary support, and ultimately making sure you have everything you need to enjoy an inspirational and unforgettable school residential.

Get in touch

call: 01629 592 637

visit: yha.org.uk/group-bookings

email: groupreservations@yha.org.uk

We are YHA.

We transform young lives forever through travel and real adventure.

Because where you go changes who you become.

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Company No. 282555

Reg. Charity No. 306122