

čas Falcon Camps

Bulletin 24



I will provide grass in the fields for your cattle, and you will eat and be satisfied.

Deuteronomy 11:15, *NLT*



fun-packed, affordable, unforgettable holidays for 8-18s

cpas Falcon camps

locations



'So if you faithfully obey the commands I am giving you today – to love the Lord your God and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul – then I will send rain on your land in its season, both autumn and spring rains, so that you may gather in your grain, new wine and olive oil.' Deuteronomy 11:13-14, *TNIV*

I believe this summer the leaders on our Falcon Camps have been obedient to the commands of God – and their holidays have been blessed many times over. Thank you for the part you have played in enabling hundreds of children and young people to go on a Falcon Camp. Because of your help in praying, giving donations and leading, many children have heard about Jesus this summer. They have had the chance to hear and respond to the gospel message for themselves.

We are already fundraising for next year's programme, so please do consider how you can help. Perhaps by giving money yourself or by asking your church if they would like to make Falcon Camps one of their chosen charities.

Some people have gone to tremendous efforts to raise much-needed funds, such as the Hogg brothers who took part in a triathlon, or Rory Keegan who cycled the length of the country. We are incredibly grateful for their endeavours! However, you don't have to be so adventurous to support Falcon Camps! Every donation – big or small – goes to help young people have a place on a Falcon Camp next summer and that's got to be something worth supporting.

Jane Stephenson
Falcon Camp
Development Worker



An inspirational impact

Clive Marshall, the IT manager from CPAS head offices, visited Dean Forest Falcon Camp this summer – it made quite an impact.

'The cold wind blew spots of rain across the lake but that didn't seem to bother the 12 children kitted out in safety vests sitting in canoes. Shouting and laughing, they paddled furiously to avoid being targeted by their two friends who were endeavouring to throw a ball into their canoes thereby tagging them. Their screams of encouragement and yelps of enjoyment echoed across the lake.

'This was my first look at a Falcon Camp. There were 20 kids aged between eight and twelve. Some of them were from places and situations that can be very difficult to understand. Some live in poverty, some in broken homes and some live in a self-imposed isolation that puts up a barrier between them and what seems to them an uncaring world.

'But a Falcon Camp takes them away from those sad and frightening places. It puts them among people who will encourage them, talk to them, play with them and, perhaps most importantly, listen to them.

'The leaders were superb. I saw untiring devotion and hard work to ensure that these children enjoyed their holiday. There was discipline too – there had to be. The byword for that discipline was respect. I respect you, you

respect me and we will respect everyone else. And it worked. There were a couple of issues during the visit, but they were dealt with in a firm but calm manner – and with respect.

'These kids learnt about the Word of God and about the love of Jesus – for them. Sure, some may go away without thinking much about faith or God, but in the weeks and months to come when they might be cold, hungry or frightened, perhaps, just perhaps, they will remember what they heard this summer about the bloke with long hair and a beard who loved everybody, no matter what they had done and who will always listen to them.

'The amount of care, hard work and preparation that goes into getting these kids into an environment where they can hear about the Word of God (probably for the first time) and have a great time is something to be so proud of. Taking them out of their normal environment for a week's holiday of fun and Scripture teaching is fantastic.

'I have always felt that Falcon is important but now I am a full-on supporter for the holidays. I believe it is one of the most significant things that CPAS can do.'

We went pond dipping and mini-bug hunting, one child was so enthralled by it that they brought a frog back to camp.



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From the inner-city to a Welsh Farm

This summer Jane Simpkins led Treginnis 1. It was also her first ever experience of a Falcon Camp – nothing like throwing yourself in at the deep end!

'We took 24 children from the inner-city to Treginnis in Pembrokeshire. The camp was based at a working farm for city children, and is a wonderfully wild and spacious location.

'So why did I decide to co-lead this camp? The answer to this question is pretty easy to answer – you can't really say no to God's promptings and plans! Falcon Camps are such an important ministry to inner-city children – providing them with a fantastic holiday, the love and care of a superb team of leaders, new experiences, and memories that will last a life time!

'It was so humbling to see children experiencing the simplest things for the first time (things which I take for granted). One child had never been in the sea before, and it was amazing to see him having so much fun jumping in the waves!

'Some of the children came from quite dysfunctional families and had chaotic lives. Again it was very moving to see these children responding and benefitting from the Falcon Camp's caring environment. There was one very challenging boy who began to respond more and more to the love that he was experi-

encing. He gave me a pebble he had painted in the craft room which he wanted me to keep in order to remember him. I said I would pray for him every time I looked at the pebble, and he responded by saying he would like that. It might not sound like much, but for this boy – it was a very special moment.

'There were many other moments like this for the whole team – moments where we saw glimpses of the difference showing the love of Jesus to these children was making. Throughout the week we looked at the big question, "Is God real?" We tailored the teaching to the children so that it was appropriate for them, and had some really good conversations about God and faith.

'However, I think it was the way the team functioned with such love and unity towards each other and the children in our care which spoke volumes about the reality of our wonderful God and Saviour. My hope and prayer is that these memories and experiences will last a life-time for these children and God will use them to prompt and remind them of his reality, and that he will build on this in their lives.'



Everywhere we go,
people wanna know,
who we are and
where we come from,
so we tell them "we're
from FALCON CAMP"



That was the week that was!

'And a really good one it was too!' writes Sue Shrubbs, the overall leader on Halls Green 1.

'The weather was kind to us – not too hot, not too wet. We had a happy camp with lots of laughter but as in all camps a few tears as well with some of the youngsters giving us some challenges.

'The new leaders fitted in well and have even said they are up for it again next year. The pirate theme was a hit, especially as we had mostly boys. Some of the youngsters wore their bandanas and eye patches all week!

'Last year we had a lot of children who were 11. Some of them went to Falcon Camps for older children this year, and so we had mostly children who were new to us and were younger.

'Those giving talks in the evening meetings did an excellent job. Following the clues given by Heave-Ho and Yo-Ho the pirates, we traced our way around the treasure map to find the best treasure of all, Jesus! It was lovely to hear all the youngsters being able to recite the memory verse: Nothing is as wonderful as knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. I have given up everything else and count it all as rubbish. All I want is Christ. Philippians 3:8, CEV.

'The singing was fantastic. Never believe boys won't sing – they do! We pray that the words of our theme song will stay with them too. One line was: "And we're keeping going on towards the prize and we're keeping going never take our eyes off the treasure". Please pray that it might be true in their lives. One lad made a commitment and others showed a keen interest in following Christ. They all went home with some follow-up material. Please pray that they will look at it and respond to it.'



'A group of children spent time weighing out flour, sugar, butter etc. They rolled out the cookies, decorated them, put them on trays into the oven. Once cooked and given out, one child looked straight at me and said "Are they real ones you can eat?". He'd never done any cooking before.'



Sowing seeds in Blackpool

Hannah and Jon McCowen led on the Kingsmead 2 Falcon Camp. Hannah writes:

'This is the first year Jon and I have been Falcon Camp overall leaders, and we had a great time!

'During the camp we took the kids canoeing, bowling and to Blackpool Pleasure Beach. One of the favourite activities turned out to be the trip to the beach, just three minutes walk from the site. We walked down to find that the sand had turned into muddy slush because of the weather! They loved it and were soon exploring the pools of sea water and trying to catch crabs. They enjoyed it so much that we went to another beach the following day for more crab-catching excitement!

'There's no denying that we had to work very hard in the lead up to the camp and several times I wondered if it was really worth it or even possible to achieve! One thing I found encouraging was the trips that we made to invite some children to the camp who attend the Kidz Klub where Jon volunteers. Visiting the kids at their homes and seeing their excitement and their parents' happiness and relief that we were going to take their child on holiday for a week really showed me how much these young people were going to get out of a holiday – despite the fact that the site was only half an hour away!

'One of the most rewarding things about leading the camp for me was the fact that we'd been able to create a context for the rest of the team to connect with these kids. Many of the team would not meet these kind of young people in their everyday lives but through the camp we had a group of quality role models: father and mother figures interacting for a whole week with a group of amazing kids. What a privilege!

'These are young people that only have limited contact with church but look what is being sown through the summer camps!'



Cycling 950 miles for Falcon Camps!

Dismounting from his 23-year-old Brooks Leather saddle, Rory Keegan reviews the ecstasies and (occasional) agonies of his 950-mile Summer Cycling Saga from Land's End to John o'Groats – and beyond – for Falcon Camps.

Is the Queen ever prey to gloomy thoughts re the state of her realm?

Well, after pedalling the length of Britain, I'd have no hesitation in trumpeting: 'Cheer up, your Majesty: your kingdom is bursting with beautiful places and astonishingly kind and helpful people from every walk of life.'

For example, I'm pedalling early out of rainy Worcester. My gears crash. I limp back to a town-centre bike shop. Dan the bike man sees me waiting for him to open up, admits me – and fixes my bike in a trice. I thank him, explain about Falcon Camps and give him my card. He gently spurns my offer of payment and I wend my way. Later I check my online giving site. Dan has donated £50.

Multiply that by umpteen. Again and again, I mention the purpose of my trans-Britain grunt-athon (holidays for children and teenagers from tough backgrounds) and total strangers give me money: the elderly lady on the train to Penzance, the gent on the footbridge over the Severn, Steve and Stef who encourage me all the way up my first massive ascent to Garsdale Head, the hotel manager in the Scottish borders...

Then there is Angus. From Inverness I cycle 25 hilly miles north to Cromarty to catch the tiny ferry across the firth. But there's no ferry. The old one is defunct. The new one is yet to arrive. I'll have to turn back. A 55-mile day is about to expand to 85.

Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of its sponsors, Rory's Summer Cycling Saga raised a total of £7055 towards the work of Falcon Camps. Thank you very much.

Visit www.summerycyclingaga.blogspot.com to read about the ride and to listen to Rory's 'on location' podcasts.

Despair. Unaccustomed to seeing grown men weep, the kindly cafe lady counsels: 'Why not talk to one of the fishermen?' Fifteen minutes later my bags, bike and I are bobbing across the firth in a bathtub-sized boat navigated by Angus the crabman, possibly the kindest human being ever to don a sou'wester. Splashing ashore, I offer payment. He declines.

Each day brings its particular epiphany: the journey-long soundtrack of birdsong from skylark, cuckoo, curlew; the spirit-boosting power of out-of-the way cafes and pubs; the rare, rare moments when breeze, gradient and road-surface magically combine – and the bike briefly, exhilaratingly, grows wings.

At John o'Groats I encounter an American senior-citizen cyclist who's heading north to tour the Orkneys and Shetlands. I joke: 'Hey, why cycle? You could hire a car...'

'Oh please,' she says. 'There's no comparison. That way you just see. This way you connect.'

Exactly.

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Please tell me how my church could support Falcon Camps

Please send me some information on helping on a Falcon Camp in 2011

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