



## Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA)

The Rotary Club of Northallerton Mowbray has been working with Bedale High School this year on a number of programmes and some of you will be aware of the Young Chef Competition or may be taking part in our Technology Tournament in March. We are now looking for students in Year 11 who will be 16 by the time the course starts and who would like to be considered for a place on the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) programme. The aim of this page is to provide you with enough information to make an informed decision without revealing everything about the course. Part of the learning comes from having to respond to unexpected situations although there is certainly nothing to worry about.

### WHAT IS RYLA?

RYLA is a leadership development course. It is not a pass or fail course and you will get out of it what you are willing to put into it. There are no limits for your development. We aim to help you realise your leadership potential. It is not an outward bound course! A lot of the activities may take place outside but it is about using a variety of activities, both in and outdoors to develop you as an individual, as a team member and as a leader of a team in a safe and enjoyable environment.

It is a rare opportunity to experience and learn things about yourself, about working in a team but more importantly about leading and supervising other people and building your self-confidence. It will stand you in good stead as you continue your time in education and work.

There are two courses run on consecutive weeks in the Summer holidays for young people who are 16 and 17 years old. Typically about half of those who attend have just finished year 11, and the rest are half way through their sixth form or college years. The courses take place at a scout hostel called Hebden Hey on the outskirts of Hebden Bridge – [www.hebdenhey.org.uk](http://www.hebdenhey.org.uk) . RYLA has been running in the Yorkshire area for more than 20 years. This year's dates are Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> July to Friday 31<sup>st</sup> July and Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> August to Friday 7<sup>th</sup> August.

More information and some feedback from those taking part in a previous RYLA can be seen on this Youtube. Please watch it – we feel sure you will be inspired. <https://youtu.be/XUrO2s6q2xA>

### LEADERSHIP

We are aware that the majority of outdoor courses in the UK are run on an adventure activity basis and adopt a 'Leadership of Youth by Youth' approach. Although this may have some benefits, they are missing out on an important resource such as adult input and the knowledge and experiences of leadership/management in the real world of work.

The selected activities on the course are all based on elements of problem solving, communication, organisation, delegation and teamwork etc. Although the tasks are largely centred on outdoor activities which add a physical dimension to the problems you will face, it cannot be stressed enough that this is not an activity holiday!

The activity side of the course is used to highlight the problems of leadership in a practical situation and to allow each course member the opportunity to take on a leader's role. You will then be given feedback on individual and team performances, not only by our staff, but also by other course participants and your mentors. In this way you will learn how things were from a wider perspective and by taking this learning forward it allows you to set new challenges and adapt your approach for the next task.

## EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

RYLA is an experiential learning course and uses the KOLB Learning cycle – a task/experience followed by a review, learn from this, plan using what you have learned and start the whole process again. No exams, no assessment cycle, no pass or fail.

## WHO ARE WE?

The staff on RYLA are a mixture of Rotarians, professional instructors from an organization Awesome Adventures, and past RYLA participants. All of them have a lot of experience in leadership roles in either the public or private sector and they are all there to assist with development of your leadership skills.

Towards the end of the first day on RYLA you will be formed into five groups of eight who you will then work with for the duration. Each of the groups is assigned a Rotarian 'mentor'. Your mentor will be there to support you throughout the course, to deal with any issues that may arise within your group, and be the link between your-selves and the rest of the staff, should the need arise. They are not there to supervise you or to instruct you or to be a team leader, but to give you the benefits of their vast experience.

Your mentor will see your development in your leadership skills over the course and will do their best to make sure your whole group benefit from the experiences that you will all go through and provide continuity of your development through the programme. They are also there for you to lean on should you need it and they will be there to support you afterwards in the presentation you will give to your sponsoring Rotary Club.

You can of course go to any of the staff, should you need to and there are both males and females on the staff to help and assist you should the need arise, but your mentor will be the one closely available to you at all times.



## CHALLENGING AND EXCITING!

You will be challenged during the course, you will be tired, you will feel that you are sometimes being pushed to your limits but you will enjoy it – honestly!

We spoke to previous participants and asked them to sum up their RYLA experience in a few words. Here is what they said:-

Amazing,  
amazing,  
amazing!

Fun,  
exhausting,  
friendship

Best  
experience  
of my life!



Amazing,  
scary,  
brilliant!

Fun, hard,  
brilliant!

The parents of the young people often express their thanks too. *“ A huge thank you for the week my daughter has just had at RYLA. She has loved, loved, loved it. Just had the download of the week, it sounds incredible! Can adults go? Thank you and Rotary for investing in her. It is really appreciated, and she has had a wonderful week.”*

The two Rotary Clubs of Northallerton Mowbray and Northallerton have each sponsored a place on this year's programme and we are now seeking interest from young people in the Northallerton and Bedale areas to take up those places.

If you are interested please write a short application letter with up to 250 words with some background on why you would like to be considered for a place and what you think you would gain from the experience. This should be returned by no later than Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March. Please pass this to Miss Temple at the school, email it to her [templec@bedalehighschool.org.uk](mailto:templec@bedalehighschool.org.uk) or to Geoff Wall at the email address below. Rotary will shortlist and hold interviews at the school before allocating places.

If selected, the full cost of the week will be met by Rotary. We will also arrange for you to be transported to and from Hebden Hey.

If you have any questions about the course please contact Rotarian Geoff Wall of the Northallerton Mowbray Club [geoff.wall.northallerton@gmail.com](mailto:geoff.wall.northallerton@gmail.com) who is available to answer any questions or concerns you may have. Our aim is that each awardee leaves the course with a clearer understanding of their role as potential leaders and managers of the future, no matter what their chosen career paths.

