

The 54th Rural Youth Europe Rally –

Theme: **“Beware, Active Youth!”** Host Country: **Estonia**



The Team

Front Row Left to Right:

Christine Hope (Leader) – Herefordshire

Jenni Thompson – Oxfordshire

Faye Clayton – Yorkshire

Back Row Left to Right

Craig Hall – Leicestershire

Steven Hill - Staffordshire

It is important to meet up as a team to discuss preparations for the European Rally

Rural Youth Europe (formerly known as ECYF4HC - European Committee for Young Farmers and 4H Clubs) is a European Non-Governmental Organisation for Rural Youth.





ESTONIA!



*Did you know?
Thanks in Estonian is Tänan or Aitäh..but in Latvian Aitäh means 'sheep'!*

FACTS:

- Estonia is in **Northern Europe** bordered by Latvia & Russia as well as the Gulf of Finland and the Baltic sea
- Estonia became **independent from Russia** as a result of the Singing Revolution in 1988 the country is now governed by a parliamentary democracy
- Estonia has a long and varied history full of **traditions**
- The Estonian currency is the Estonian **Krooni** – there are approx 17 krooni to £1 sterling
- The Estonian **capital** city is **Talinn** – the oldest capital in Northern Europe, the Old Town is now a UNESCO World Heritage site
- Estonians invented **Skype!**

*Other useful phrases:
Hello - Tere! Yes - Jah No - Ei Cheers - Terviseks! I love you - Ma Armastan
sind!*



Buildings old & new



Train station



Janeda



Traditional Folk Dance



Rally venue



Swimming lake



Estonian Freedom monument



Typical Lake scene



Rakvere Castle



Old Talinn

The 19 European Countries In Attendance at the 2009 Rally



Armenia



Austria



Bulgaria



Denmark



England



Estonia



Finland



Germany



Hungary



Ireland



Latvia



Northern Ireland



Norway



Poland



Scotland



Slovenia



Sweden



Switzerland



Wales

JANEDA - The venue for most of the Rally

Tallinn, the Capital

Janeda



Our Trip

We flew from Manchester Airport to Helsinki then caught a connecting flight to Tallinn Estonia – From here we were directed to a former Russian train to Janeda



Janeda the venue

We stopped in a former agricultural collage in Janeda that had been converted to a youth hostel. Rooms were allocated on arrival and teams were split up so everyone got to know each other. The hostels were simplistic but did have sauna facilities as well as a huge lake to swim in. It was a short walk across the former Campus to the dining facilities and meeting rooms.



Team Building

The whole week featured a full programme of activities, from team games to focus groups, social evenings to site visits, swimming in the lake to squeezing into a hot tub made for 8 (fits 15 before the water starts to run out!). But the point is, at the start of the week we as a team hardly knew each other, by the end we had a strong bond not just with own team members but also with the other 100+ guests of the rally. In doing all these activities we also learnt some very important skills.



Focus Groups



As the main theme of the rally was Beware, Active Youth!, we were expected to participate in Focus Groups and Workshops where we discussed the different issues surrounding Youth Participation, Involvement and Rural Development.

These Focus Groups took different forms and used different types of techniques to extract the information from the participants, including World Cafeteria, open space discussions and role play where we were acting as youth policy councillor lobbying for support for our ideas.

It was interesting to see how similar the issues were with all the different countries and how different approaches to solving the problems were implemented.



Visiting Youth Centres

As part of our trip we went on several excursions to the local area to see what the Youth of Estonia were up to. There were three trips to Youth Centres - one in Paida, one in Tapa and one in Kehra.

The trip to Tapa involved a visit to a youth centre/after school activity club. The youth had free run of the house and were allowed to do as they pleased under supervision of a responsible adult. We were shown artwork the youth had produced and got to meet some of the students.



Home Stays

As part of the Rally trip we all left the camp for 2 days and 1 night, to stay with a host Estonian family. This was our chance to experience the 'real' Estonia and make even more friends.



Whilst on the home stay we were able to sightsee in and around Estonia, experiencing it's culture It was also a good opportunity to learn and put into practice the Estonian language.



We all stayed with different families, and therefore experienced a variety of things. These ranged from the everyday like swimming and partying, to singing karaoke in a Tallinn bar, to a massive 600km road trip to the Russian border.



The home stay can arguably be one of the very best parts of the whole trip!

Evening Entertainments

Throughout the week we stayed up until the early hours doing various activities and entertainments. A week of 3am finishes and 8am starts required some stamina!



The rally bar was open until 4am every day.



The International buffet was a brilliant night. Each representing country provided food and drink for everyone to try. It was a great ice breaker and brought the whole group together.



The Karaoke evening was fantastic. The Home nations taught Europe how to sing.



The lake was great for a swim in the evening or 5am!

Each team performed a 5 minute entertainment sketch.



On the final night there was a closing ceremony and meal, everybody dressed in formal or national dress.

What Did We Gain?

One of the official aims for the European Rally 2009 was to give young people from different rural areas in Europe an opportunity to come together to share their ideas and experiences of rural youth development.

But everyone will no doubt say that they got so much more than that from the experience!



Sightseeing



Making Friends



Making Connections



Having Fun!

Learning about different cultures



Learning that Health & Safety does not rule the world!



Being brave enough to give anything a go!!



Why not apply for the European Rally or any Discovery Trip – and fly the flag for England!