Anti-social behaviour on buses is being targeted with a new multi-agency operation with the help of West Yorkshire Police.

The operation, which started on Tuesday, April 14 in the West Leeds area, is set to target ongoing anti-social behaviour and damage to buses at Pudsey and Bramley bus station by young people.

The Leeds Anti-Social Behaviour Team is working with First Bus, West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA), BARCA, a Leeds based charity who work with children and young people, and Leeds Watch, who operate and monitor the CCTV within all West Yorkshire bus stations.

An out of service Trojan bus was deployed with neighbourhood officers, the anti-social behaviour team, First Bus, WYCA, Leeds Watch and BARCA on board.

More than 40 young people were spoken to along the designated bus routes and were offered alternatives to wandering the streets.

PC Dave Stephens, the Force's Safer Travel Officer said: “People are always surprised to see police officers and others getting off a double decker bus to speak to them but it is a very effective means of engagement which clearly sticks in their mind. The Trojan bus is however just the visible part of the operation with much work being done behind the scenes with partner agencies, who we value very highly for the contribution they make to enabling people to feel safe on the bus network.”

Cheryl Fixter, the WYCA Police liaison and CCTV officer, who provided the bus on behalf of First Bus said: “A bus taken out of service due to damage can have a real impact for people and cannot just be measured in financial terms. Many people rely on buses as their only means of transport so we have a duty to them to maintain this necessary service. Two CCTV operators took part in the operation in order that they could observe at first hand the issues faced by drivers, passengers and the police when confronted by these issues.”

Similar operations are run regularly throughout the county where there is are ongoing issues affecting the bus network.