





OWL Scotland

OWL Scotland is dedicated to increasing the use of Scotland's outdoor environments for learning.

OWL Scotland evolved out of the Forest Education Initiative (FEI) which ran successfully for over 20 years in Scotland, England and Wales.

OWL Scotland is supported by Forestry Commission Scotland and operates through local OWL groups. These groups are locally managed and run by volunteers. The groups comprise teachers, rangers, educators, third sector and government organisations. Local OWL groups work together to run projects, events, network, and to share resources and good practice in outdoor learning.

The OWL Scotland Manager, Bonnie Maggio, supports the local groups at a national level through provision of

- grants
- resources
- advice
- training
- networking opportunities

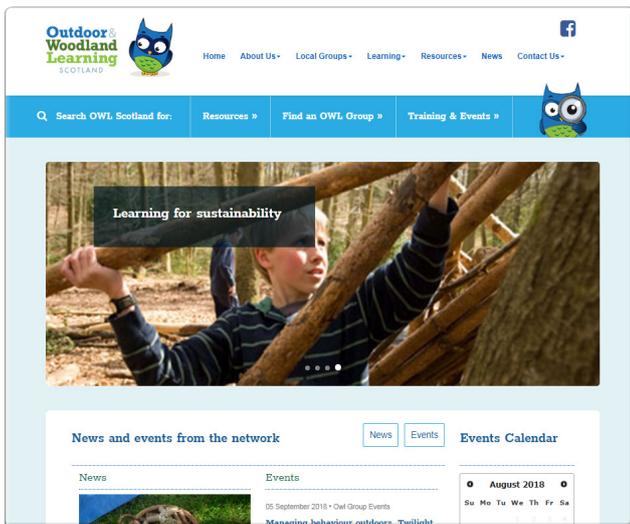


Communication and Resources

Website

The OWL Scotland website is the main portal into OWL Scotland, providing an extensive resource search tool, news feed, events programme and local group pages. **There were 18,485 Unique Visitors to the site** between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2018.

www.owlscotland.org



Our home page

Bulletin

The OWL Scotland bulletin, produced in collaboration with Outdoor Learning Wales, provides regular information from OWL Scotland, the local OWL groups and our partners on local and national events, education resources, funding, and news and topical information for teachers and practitioners. The bulletin is sent to 845 subscribers.

Learning Resources

OWL Scotland works both alone and in collaboration with others to produce learning resources and guidance for practitioners. In 2017/18 a new *Tree Measuring* resource was produced which presents a progression of learning – improving numeracy through tree measuring activities.



Facebook

OWL Scotland operate an active information sharing Facebook Group which has **5300 members**.



OWL Bulletins



Art as Therapy Mandala workshop

Local OWL Groups

1. Argyll and Bute OWL Group
2. Borders OWL Group
3. Clackmannanshire OWL Group
4. Dumfries and Galloway OWL Group
5. Edinburgh OWL Group
6. GROWL (Greater Glasgow OWL Group)
7. Moray OWL Group
8. OWL North East Group
9. South Highland OWL Group
10. Tayside OWL Group
11. West Fife OWL Group



Case Studies

West Fife OWL Group is comprised of teachers, nursery staff, Active Schools Coordinators, a local woodland group, the Forestry Commission and others outdoor practitioners. The group holds an annual Networking event and runs a programme of CPD courses. OWL Scotland grants have enabled the group to purchase equipment which has been made into “kits”: pond dipping; den building; fire & cooking; and bug hunting is coming soon. These are available for schools, nurseries or other interested groups to borrow.

The **South Highland OWL Group** had their second year of regular monthly Saturday workshops covering topics as diverse as natural cordage, creating writing and wildlife gardening. The group also held a Networking Event themed on Health and Well Being in September 2017. Members of the group also delivered a series



Numeracy CPD at Abriachan

of CPDs to primary teachers in their Associated School Groups on developing numeracy outdoors.

In 2017/18 **Moray OWL Group** ran a very successful networking event in collaboration with the **OWL North East Group** and **South Highland OWL Group**. We had a great turnout from all three groups and terrific feedback on the skills shared and networking opportunities. In May, we ran a Storytelling In The Outdoors CPD led by



Green Woodworking Skills workshop

one of our members. Another success in 2017/18 was the AGM which was run in conjunction with workshops attracting many existing and new members. Spring saw the group planning a special project to construct a timber shed through a series of events run in partnership with local organisations. The shed will then be used as a kit store for the group in the long term.



Moray OWL AGM and skillshare

OWL Scotland in the Himalayas

Lok Jeevan Vikas Bharti is a Gandian ashram in a remote valley in the Garwhal area of Uttarakhand in the Indian Himalaya. The ashram works on gender equality and health issues in isolated villages, campaigns on environmental issues and runs a community tree planting programme. It also runs a residential school for 80 girls from remote villages, all nominated by local outreach workers – around a quarter are orphans, some have health issues and others are at risk in various ways.

The girls learn self-sufficiency (including working in the ashram's fields) and are encouraged to get involved in local community issues.

Conditions in the school are very basic with no resources at all – so a parcel of OWL resources – pictures, stickers and transfers, and magnifying glasses – caused huge excitement! A whole week of teaching was based around a poster of a Scots Pine – and the magnifying glasses – used with every class – were treated with reverence and led



Girls in Uttarakhand show off their OWL Scotland tattoos

to endless discussions and discoveries. Walnuts, turmeric leaves, fruit partly eaten by monkeys, giant spider webs...

Thank you OWL Scotland!

Networking Events

7 networking events were held

OWL Scotland Networking Event

In July 2017 an informal networking event (and the OWL Group Chairs Meeting) was held in Fife.

Although attendance was low the event was highly successful and afforded many opportunities for skill sharing.

In February 2018 OWL Scotland ran a 3 day networking event at Kindrogan Field Centre attended by 70 people. The objectives of increasing participants skills and knowledge of outdoor and woodland learning were met through a variety of presentations and workshops including Numeracy Outdoors, Loose Parts Play, Physics of Fire, String Theory and Tick Awareness. The event was highly rated in feedback.

“This is one of the regular highlights of my year. Fantastic workshops, well led, interesting and enjoyable. A great opportunity to network, share skills and information” OWL Scotland member.

OWL Scotland Networking Event



Local Networking Events

Argyll and Bute OWL Group held a Networking Event in June 2017. Workshops included Biodiversity Gardening and “Using Soil as a learning resource”.

Outdoor & Woodland Learning North East Group’s networking event in September 2017 was run in partnership with Camphill School. Workshops included; Embracing Autumn and High Ropes and Hammocks.

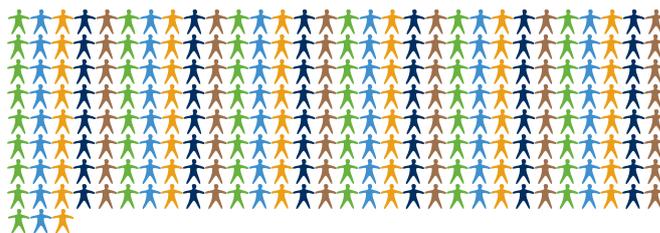
‘Great day! Learned lots of new ideas and feel more confident in working with children outdoors.’

South Highland OWL Group held a successful Networking Event themed on Health and Well Being in September 2017. 65 participants enjoyed the keynote speaker’s talk on promoting positive relationships and the workshops which included, Green Referring, Active Play, Using Art as Therapy and the Woodland Workout.

In September 2017 **West Fife OWL Group** held another Networking event. Representatives from many local groups attended and the turn out was excellent with over 70 attending.

Greater Glasgow Outdoor & Woodland Learning Group hosted a sunny networking event in March 2018 at Auchengillen. The workshops included Nordic Slings, Loose Parts Play, and Tool Use.

Number of Participants



243



Continuing Professional Development

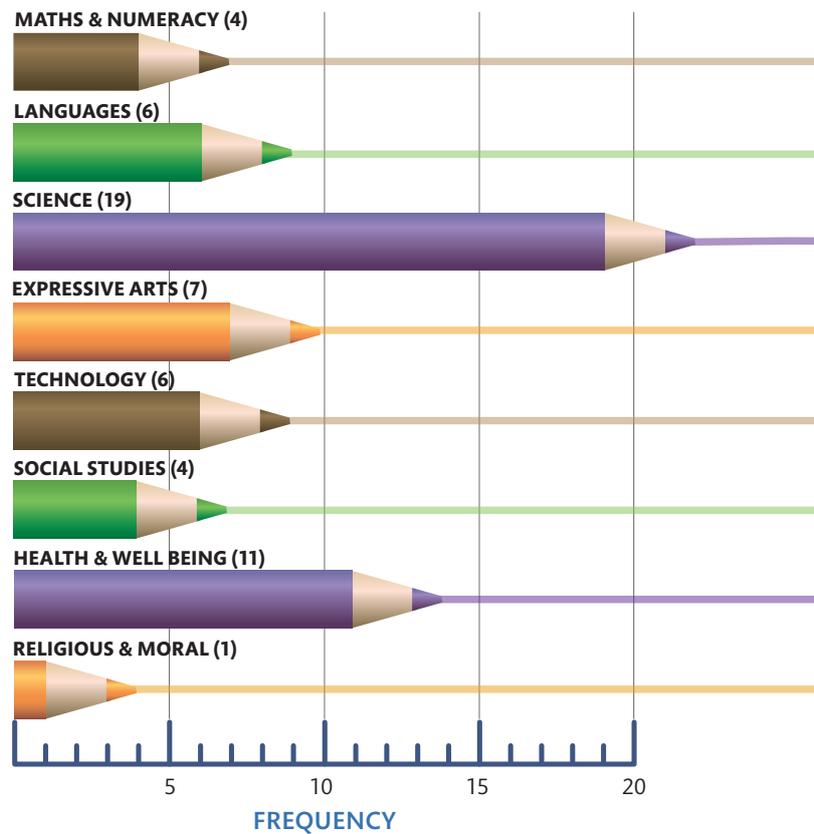
CPD Events

32 CPD Events were held nationally and locally. Topics included:

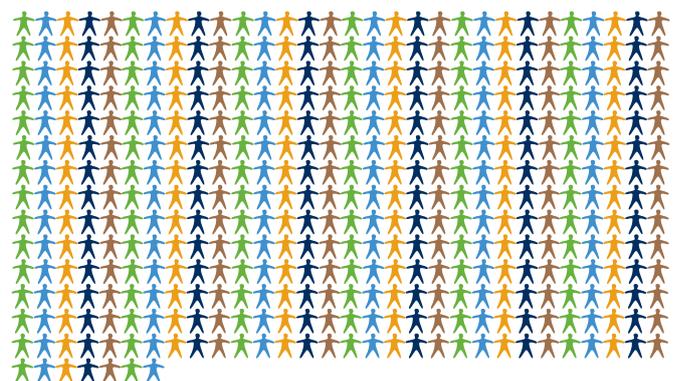


Curriculum Areas

All 8 curriculum areas were covered...



Number of people trained



427

Public Events

6 public and family events were contributed to by OWL Groups with over 7420 attendees.

3 Other events including an Early Years conference attracted 370 participants.





Outdoor & Woodland Learning Scotland – Increasing opportunities for learning outdoors

The Objectives of Outdoor & Woodland Learning Scotland are as follows:

First-hand learning experience

To increase the use of the outdoors for learning – discovering, exploring and connecting to the natural world.

Learning for sustainability

To increase opportunities to learn outdoors about the natural world and how it links to social and economic factors locally, nationally and globally.

Knowledge, skills and understanding of outdoor environments

To increase opportunities for adults to develop pedagogical skills for use in a range of outdoor environments to encourage depth, breadth and progression in learning.

Health and wellbeing

To increase understanding of the positive impacts of learning outdoors on health and wellbeing.

OWL Scotland Contact

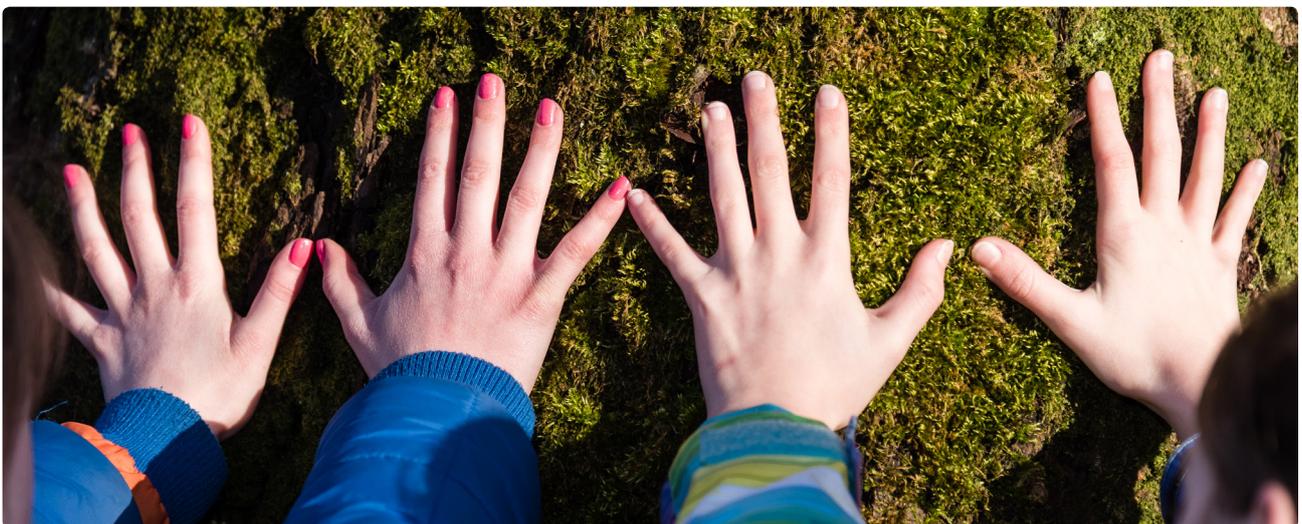
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Find your local group, information, advice and resources on the OWL Scotland Website:

www.owlscotland.org

*Thank you to all OWL groups
and their members*



Tree measuring activity

This report covers April 2017 to March 2018.