**Dumfries and Galloway Outdoor and Woodland Learning (DGOWL)**

**AGM October 23rd 2014**

**Mabie Forest Rangers Office - 4pm to 6pm.**

**Present**

Tom Henry, John Wheeler, Elizabeth Tindal, Robin Fuller, Lesley Smith, Phoebe Marshall, Jessica Shackleton.

**Apologies**

Cecilia Franklin, Jenny Stephenson, Wendy Smith, Linda Moorhouse, Pete Robinson (from Cree Valley Community Woodlands), Hilary Parke, Caroline Uchima, Keith Walker.

Judy Baxter (National Trust for Scotland) has requested to join the group.

## Chair’s Report

Robin read out the Chair’s end of year report for the Dumfries and Galloway Forest Education Initiative (DGFEI). See end of minutes.

It was formally noted that this was now the first AGM of the Dumfries and Galloway Outdoor and Woodland Learning group (DGOWL).

The new OWL Scotland leaflet was handed round for comment. Suggested contact details of the group stamped on the back - chair, address, email, tel and a QR code.

There are 4 sets of OWL Scotland pull-up displays, one for each objective. One set will be stored at Mabie for use across south Scotland.

**Treasurer’s Report**

Lesley reported that we have £514 in the bank on 23.10.14.

We have applied for and spent grant money this financial year. The money in hand goes to pay for meeting venues.

Last year the DGFEI had £520 in hand at the time of the AGM.

The 30th September will be retained by DGOWL as the end of the financial year. It fits with the AGM date.

**ACTION:**

* Change bank account name (LS/RF).
* Update bank account signatories (LS/RF).
* The last meeting (26th August 2014) was the official change over from DGFEI to DGOWL. Amend the end of year accounts to reference this change.

 There was a vote of thanks from Elizabeth to Lesley and to David Gibson for drawing up the end of year accounts.

## Election of Post Holders

**Chair:**

Robin stands down.

Robin proposed by John Wheeler and seconded by Phoebe.

Elizabeth proposed by Phoebe and seconded by Jessica.

Elizabeth and Robin elected as co-chairs.

**Secretary:**

Jessica and Caroline proposed by Robin and seconded by Phoebe.

Jessica and Caroline elected as co-secretaries.

**Treasurer:**

Lesley proposed by Robin and seconded by Phoebe.

Lesley elected as treasurer.

**Web page Administrator:**

Cecilia proposed by Lesley and seconded by Robin (in her absence).

Cecilia to be consulted. Now awaiting confirmation from her.

## Open Discussion

*Meeting times?*

4pm was designed for teachers to participate. Keith’s group now has that role. Volunteers find evenings better.

*Who are we trying to attract?*

There was discussion on how to attract more people to the group. Trainee teachers; professionals; individuals? Health and Well-being remit so could attract Drs, Nurses, NHS, Drugs and Alcohol and Mental Health practitioners along.

Trainee teachers and existing teachers will need to get experience for teaching outdoors.

We are no longer just a Forest remit but encompass Outdoors and can now involve other organisations like WWT and NTS who are interested. REEF was a hub for Environmental Education in the past, and perhaps something similar could emerge.

*Format of meetings?*

As before with skills sharing and paper meetings.

*How do we make meetings attractive?*

Learning in the Wild. Skills sharing.

*Partnerships?*

Keith Walker’s outdoor learning group for teachers.

*Proposed Projects?*

Suggested we all go away and think about it for the next meeting. Perhaps a link to Wild Seasons fesivals and EAFS (Environmental Arts Festival Scotland). Also, opportunities to run an event for potential new group members.

*Some ideas were:-*

Who/how to invite? Formal invite asking people to come and think about ideas, or - anyone interested coming along to meet each other?

Setting – Outdoors round a campfire?

Format- Ask questions to get them talking. Quest nature trail. Scavenger Hunt. Natural Art Event to support outdoor learning. Big spider’s webs. Hanging things from trees. Inconnections.

Venue – Dock Park, Threave, beach? Central area of the region not necessarily the best. Interesting venue may attract folk. Consider public transport, travel routes etc.

**ACTION:**

* Phoebe to get in touch with Matt Baker re EAFS. John and Phoebe on an Arts sub group for DGOWL and will invite other members to join their meeting. Date and venue to be arranged. Core of 2+

**ACTION:**

* Robin and Elizabeth to meet and discuss how to widen membership of group, and feedback to rest of group.

**ACTION:**

* Create dedicated email address for group. Name: DGOWL Group (JS).
* Seek dedicated mobile phone number for group. Tom to buy SIM card. Redirect number to Elizabeth’s phone.

## Date of next meeting

Thursday 4th December. 10 -12 Paper meeting Mabie Rangers Office and 12-3 Christmas outdoor social gathering.

# Chairs Report – 2013/2014

I’d like to thank everyone who has continued to support the group through the year, especially Phoebe and Lesley for taking care of the group’s finances, Jessica and Caroline for producing minutes, and Cecilia for managing the website. I’d also like to welcome those new members who have joined us.

There have been significant changes to the group over the last twelve months, with the Forest Education Initiative changing to Outdoor and Woodland Learning Scotland. Hopefully this will now open up our local group to individuals and organisations in the region who have an interest in outdoor learning outwith woodlands.

The year has been relatively quiet for the group, but there have still been plenty of projects on the go. Significant activities have included:

* Phoebes’s CPD event for teachers, held at Taliesin.
* Tom’s development and delivery of the ‘Outdoor Skills’ teacher training programme, with support from Keith Walker and myself.
* Phoebe and Lesley’s engagement with the Peter Pan Moat Brae Trust – delivering activities at the site to local school children.
* Cecilia’s continued delivery of forest sessions in Cally Woods, and significant work planning for a number of events.
* A series of stimulating skills share sessions allowing us to learn new ideas and visit different venues.
* Representatives from the group attending the national FEI networking day last autumn, and the European Forest Pedagogics Congress in Poland.
* Networking with D&G council’s Outdoor Learning co-ordinator and associated teacher forums.
* D&G Council, FC and Allanton supporting activities at the D&G Environment Fair.
* Collaboration with Bonnie on the transition to OWLS – attendance at meeting and feedback.
* Reviewing and updating group’s constitution, policies and aims on becoming D&G OWL.

I am sure the coming year will be very constructive for D&G’s OWL group, with great opportunities for new partnerships and initatives. It is the combination of so many different individuals and organisations, bringing together a wealth of skills and knowledge that creates a partnership that can really help support outdoor learning across Dumfries and Galloway. Thank you everyone – and good luck for the year ahead.

Robin