





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



Bonnie Maggio
OWL Scotland Manager



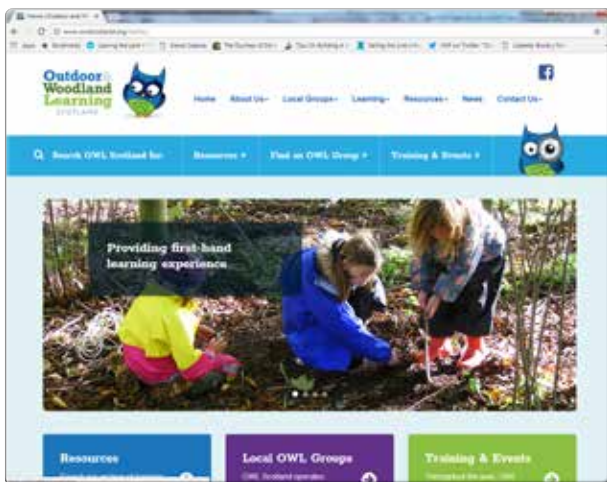
Argyll and Bute OWL Group under-9s

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 18,929 Unique Visitors to the site** between 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2017.

www.owlscotland.org



Our home page

Bulletin

The monthly OWL Scotland bulletin, produced in collaboration with Outdoor Learning Wales, provides 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 850 subscribers.



OWL Bulletins

Learning Resources

OWL Scotland works both alone and in collaboration with others to produce learning resources and guidance for practitioners. In 2016/17 new resources included *Scotland's Native Woodlands* (for senior phase), *The World Beneath Our Feet* and Guidance Notes on Tools Use and Fire.

A new leaflet was produced to market the full range of resources including posters and online resources.



The World Beneath Our Feet



Tool Use Guidance



Fire Guidance

Facebook

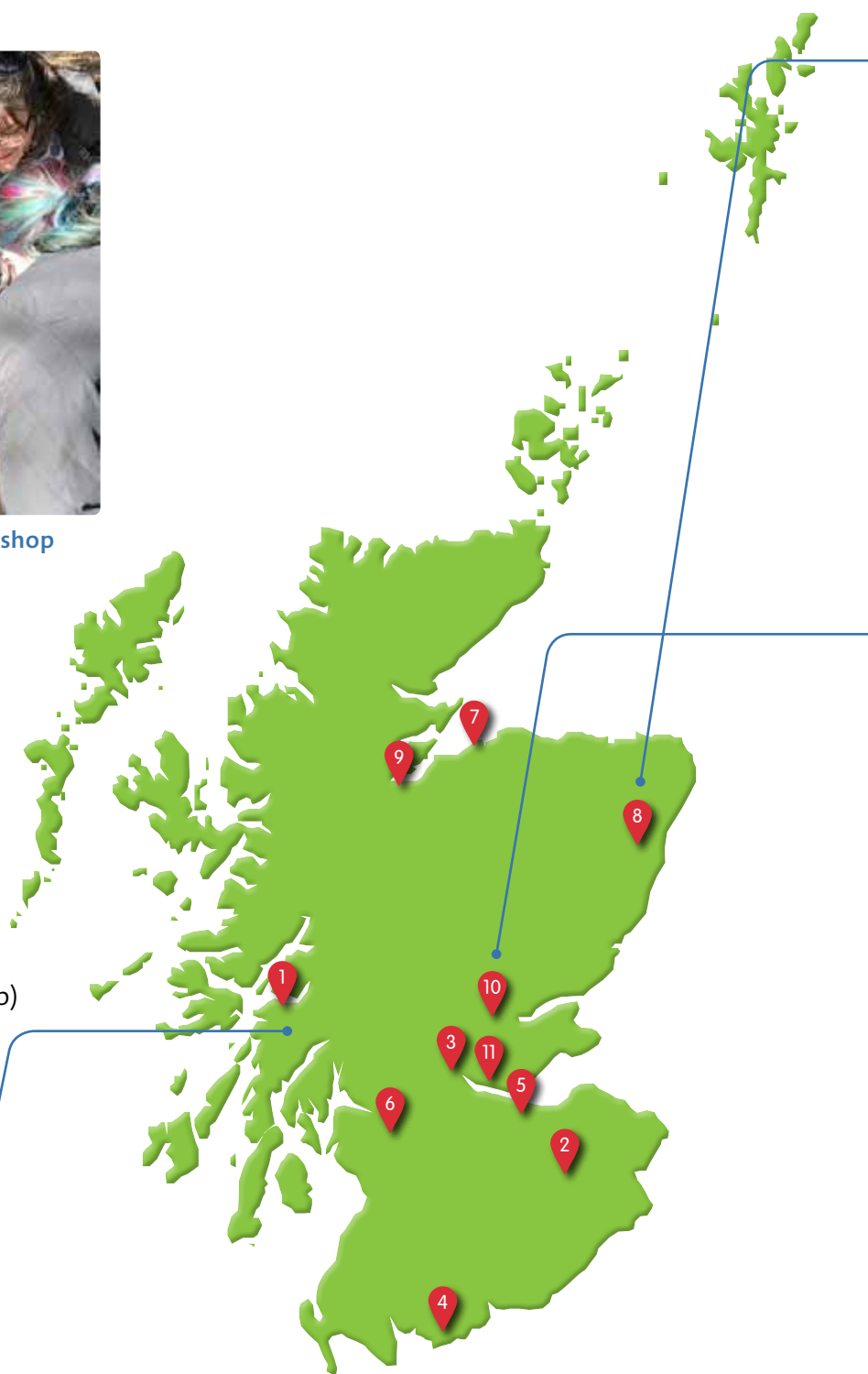
OWL Scotland operate an active Facebook Group which has **over 5000 members**.



Borders OWL Group pewter casting 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

The **Argyll and Bute OWL Group** have successfully delivered a number of projects over the years. However, the geography of Argyll remained a challenge to networking and supporting localized activities. The Argyll OWL Group applied for, and received, a Development Grant to tackle these challenges. As a result a number of satellite groups (little OWLS) have been established to offer practical support in local settings whilst feeding back into the main OWL group. Five little OWLS have been started in Lorn, Mid Argyll, Kintyre, Cowal and Helensburgh and Lomond.



Numeracy activities

The **Outdoor & Woodland Learning North East Group (OWLNEG)** collaborated with several partner organisations to run an outdoor learning event. In the spring they worked with Glen Tanar Estate and Highland Adventure on a **Scouts event**. 96 children took part over the two day event taking part in a variety of activities.

OWLNEG worked on a series of **Forestry days** with pupils from Aboyne Academy. The students worked in small groups looking at all aspects of forestry and its importance to the local economy and benefits to the environment.

In the summer OWLNEG ran nature connection activities at the **Wild about Aden** event.

A Science week **family forest school** event was organised at Crathes Castle with the NTS.

Tayside OWL Group ran a successful workshop on **Nature Nurture** concentrating on a better understanding of approaches to the nature nurture divide and teaching new skills to support resilience and emotional learning in children outdoors. This was building on a previous CPD event on Nature Nurture. The group also worked in partnership with Tayside Landscape Partnership to run a **Heritage Hero** day at Moncrieff Hill which comprised a series of workshops for families. The AGM was combined to good effect with a **Working with Willow** – lantern making workshop.



Autumn mandala



Wolf Brother activities at Abriachan



Dumfries and Galloway skills share event

Networking Events

4 Networking Events Held

OWL Scotland Networking Event

In February 2017 OWL Scotland ran a two day networking event at Kindrogan Field Centre attended by 63 people. The objectives were to give the participants an opportunity to increase their skills and knowledge of outdoor and woodland learning; and to encourage networking opportunities.

There were a variety of presentations and workshops including **Outdoor Learning Progression, Tracking, Soils, Paper making, Home Rocket Lab** and **Tools for Nature Connection**. Feedback was very positive with 99% of the participants rating the workshops excellent or good.

Local Networking Events

In April 2016 **Moray OWL Group** held an outdoor learning festival in Elgin. The event consisted of around 12 organisations setting up stands and running hands on sessions for families

to join in with. An estimated 180 families attended and some really great feedback was received.

In October 2016 **OWLNEG** held an Outdoor Learning Networking Event in partnership with the Glen Tanar Estate. 40 participants attended. The aim of this event for the participant, was to gain new skills and knowledge and to connect with like-minded individuals. Workshops included Connecting with Nature, Exploring Glen Tanar, Forest School Information and Tester and Needle Felting.

In May 2016 **South Highland OWL Group** held a launch event at Kinmylies Primary School in Inverness. 44 people booked onto this "OWL Fest" including 35 registered teachers. There was a mixture of practical workshops run by OWL Group members based on FCS resources (*Tree Stories* and *Wolf Brother*) and a workshop on Risk Assessment.

Number of Participants



147



The OWL Scotland networking event

Continuing Professional Development

CPD Events

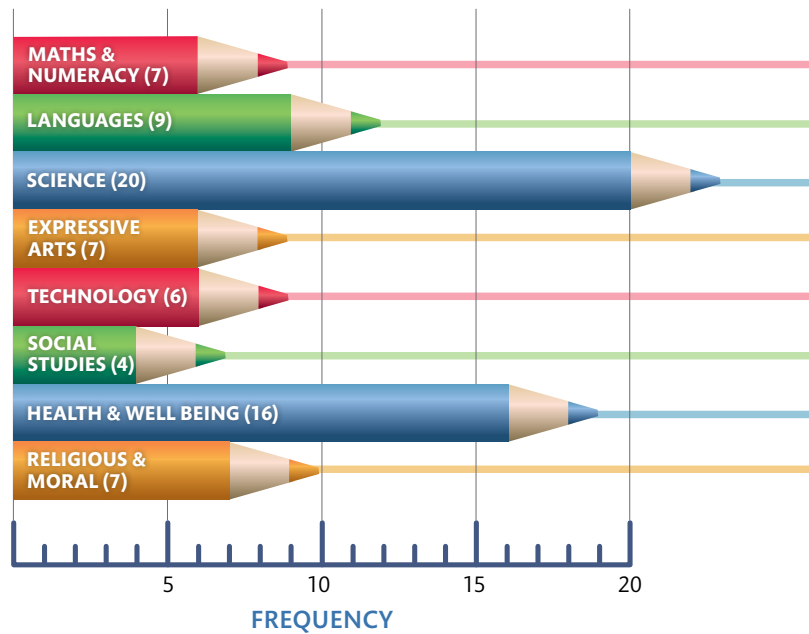
40 CPD Events were held nationally and locally.
Topics included:



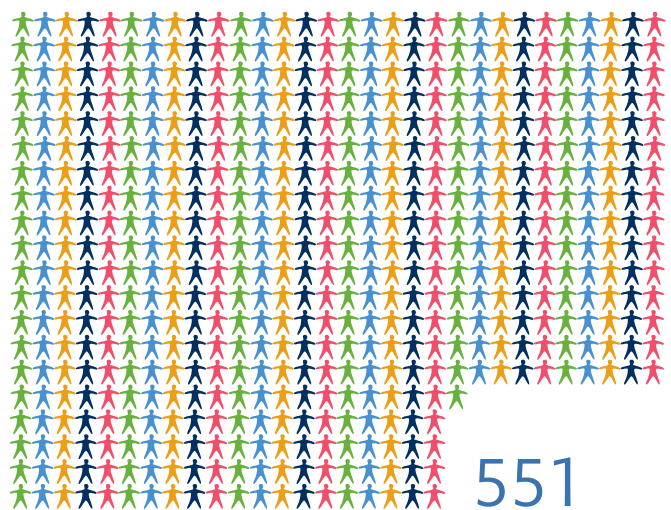
South Highland OWL Group outdoor music making

Curriculum Areas

All 8 curriculum areas were covered...



Number of people trained



Public Events

6 public and family events were contributed to by OWL Groups with over 5000 attendees.





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*



Hazel nut collecting

This report covers April 2016 to March 2017.