

Growing Up Outdoors

2008 Seminar Proceedings of the
Countryside Recreation Network

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Countryside Recreation Network Conference

"Growing Up Outdoors"

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Dr Caro-Lynne Ferris
Countryside Access and Activities Network (N.I.)

Most adults will remember their favourite play areas from childhood and for many it will be simply the fields near the house in which they grew up, the local forest, beach or meadow, but for many of these adults, now parents, allowing their children to play in the outdoors as they used to, is an entirely different matter with fears particularly concerning safety, often leading to parents discouraging their children to enjoy the outdoors.

Conference delegates heard experts and practitioners explore the benefits and challenges derived from encouraging children and young people to be active in the outdoors. Delegates were first challenged by representatives of the Scouting Association who emphasised that although participating in the outdoors has many positive experiences, there are also many barriers for young people when trying to access the natural environment. Delegates heard in particular how the poor image of traditional outdoor recreation activities makes outdoor adventure seem boring and unattractive to young people today; the lack of welcome which many young people experience in the outdoors and the over emphasis on health and safety issues which seem to dominate any outdoor activity.

The conference's key speakers outlined the enormity of the challenge facing those responsible for providing outdoor recreation opportunities in the widest sense, the need to listen to the concerns of young people today, a reminder for adults to reflect on how much enjoyment and personal development they received from playing and having adventures outdoors when they were young, the need for a common sense approach to provision and most importantly the need to create a culture that not only believes that young people should be outdoors, but also takes joy in seeing them do so.

Workshops in the afternoon provided an opportunity for delegates to consider how the challenges presented in the morning session could be addressed at a practical level and in the final session the representatives from the Scouting Association reported back on potential solutions to the issues faced including getting young people involved in designing and planning natural play space, challenging the adult intolerance to children being outdoors, the need for a common sense approach to health and safety in the outdoors and establishing Play Rangers associated with open spaces.

Without doubt, the conference provided an excellent platform for raising awareness of the benefits and issues faced in encouraging children and young people to be active in the outdoors, but more importantly it is hoped that the conference genuinely challenged many delegates sufficiently to make them return to their organisations asking one question. What changes are needed in my organisation to help ensure that today's young people can experience the benefits of being active in the outdoors ?

Countryside Recreation Network Conference

"Growing Up Outdoors"

Morning Plenary Presentations

"11 Million Reasons": A Happy and Healthy Childhood

Sir Al Aynsley-Green
Children's Commissioner
England

www.11MILLION.org.uk



11 MILLION reasons to listen
seriously to the voices of
children and young people

Professor Sir Al Aynsley-Green
Children's Commissioner for England
General Teaching Council for England, Nov 2008



"The 11 MILLION children and young people
in England have a voice"
Children's Commissioner for England,
Professor Sir Al Aynsley-Green

The Children's Commissioner for England

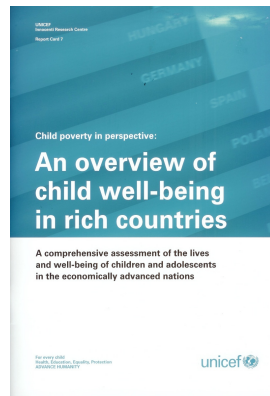


- Created by Act of Parliament 2004
- Independent
- Promote the views and interests of **all** children and young people
- Must have regard for the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and *Every Child Matters*
- Powers include power of entry and Inquiry
- Report to Parliament

'As a nation England is failing too many of its children and young people!'



11 MILLION



UNICEF 2007
40 separate indicators in
6 groups:

- Material well being
- Health and safety
- Education
- Peer and family relationships
- Behaviours and risks
- Subjective well being

The evidence

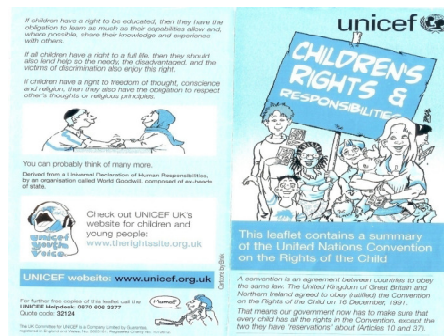


11 MILLION

The UK is **bottom** of the table overall

Bottom for 5 of the 6 groups of indicators

- High poverty
- Poor health - high infant mortality & low birth weight
- Poor family and peer relationships
- Risky behaviour – alcohol, early sex & teen pregnancy
- Low expectations and high NEETs
- Low self-assessed well being



11 MILLION

The UNCRC is an international treaty; Governments give promises to children for *Protection, Provision and Participation* through its 42 key Articles.

The UNCRC 5-yearly Periodic Review

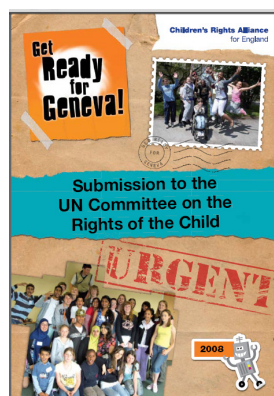


- Reports from:
 - UK Government
 - UK Children's Commissioners
 - Non-Government Organisations
 - Children and young people
- June 2008: all four UK CCs in Geneva to meet UN Committee with NGOs and young people
- September 2008: the UN Committee held UK Government to account
- October 2008 Concluding Observations published



In 112 recommendations the UKCCs expose deep concern over the **ongoing failure** to give Children and Young People full protection of civil rights and freedoms and the promises of provision and participation Under the 42 Articles of the UNCRC

The UN Pre-Sessional meeting June 2008



UN Concluding Observations Friday 3rd October 2008



- The UN Committee commends Government for progress since 2002

BUT:

- Defines more than 120 concerns including key issues over leisure and play.

Government should do better!

Awareness of the UNCRC



- In England <25% children and young people have heard of the UNCRC
- Only a minority of professionals working with children have read and understood the UNCRC
- Few official plans or programmes refer to it

The Committee welcomes recent efforts for training and implementing the UNICEF Right Respecting Schools programme,

It is concerned there is no systematic awareness raising with low level of knowledge

It recommends strengthening of efforts in schools, in the National Curriculum and in training **all** professional groups

Non-discrimination




The Committee is concerned


- certain groups of children continue to experience discrimination and social stigmatisation.
- at the general climate of intolerance and negative public attitudes to children especially adolescents

It recommends

- urgent measures to address intolerance and inappropriate characterization of children, especially adolescents in all sectors of society including the Media
- action for benefit of vulnerable groups
- all appropriate measures to ensure **best interests of the child** integrated into legislation and policies




Breaking the cycle
Believe in children
Barnardo's



Barnardo's
report
Breaking the Cycle Believe in Children
November 2008

Key findings from Barnardo's YouGov survey November 2008 :

- 54% believe children behave like animals
- 45% agree they are feral
- 49% believe they are a danger to each other and to adults
- 43% agree something has to be done to protect us from children
- 35% feel the streets are infested with children
- Believe that 50% crime is committed by children, (reality 12%)
- 49% disagree that troublesome children are misunderstood and in need of help







The **unprecedented** demonisation of children & young people

Society's intolerance to children and young people



No Dogs
No Children
No Ball games
You are being watched!



'The 'Mosquito' ultrasonic deterrent is the solution to the eternal problem of teenagers in shopping malls and anywhere else they are causing problems'

www.compoundsecurity.co.uk

Children have the right to meet together
Article 15 UNCRC

Respect for the views of children



The Committee is concerned

- there has been little progress to enshrine Article 12 in education, law and policy
- participation of children in all aspects of schooling is inadequate

It recommends

- Promote, facilitate and implement in legislation and practice.... the principle of respect for the views of the child
- support forums for participation
- increase opportunities for meaningful participation.

The right to participation UNCRC Article 12



Children have the right to say what they think should happen when adults are making decisions that affect them, and to have their opinions taken into account.

Participation, **not** consultation!



- **Consultation** implies that adults ask questions and adults decide
- **Participation** means that children and young people are *seriously* engaged in making decisions that affect their lives

What does 11MILLION do?



Designing our premises

Working with 5-8 yr olds





Appointing all members of staff



We get on the road!

85 of the locations
visited to listen to
children and young
people

Getting the views of young children



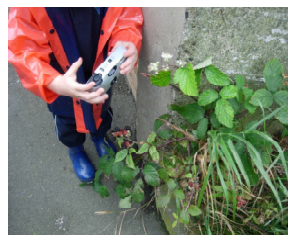
'Through the eyes
of the child'
– using cameras



Celebrating their
work



Fascination with
being outside



'Through the eyes
of the child' – using
cameras



Unstructured play

11
MILLION



Experiencing managed risk

The constriction of childhood

11
MILLION

Distance children played from home:

- 1970 ~ 840m
- 1997 ~ 280m
- 2007 in back garden

Never been to shop or park by themselves:

60% 8-10yr olds
25% 11-15yr olds

Rosemary Bennet The Times
4th August 2007

Very young children tell us:

11
MILLION

- Family and friends matter
- Being outside, exploring, and risk
- Starting school
- Health behaviours with food
 - Understand concept of 'good food'
 - Brand recognition
 - Peer pressure
 - Sweet and fizzy preferences
 - Reluctance to explore new tastes

Getting older children and young people's views



Listening to those with physical and learning disability



Children with disabilities



The Committee welcomes initiatives to improve situation of children with disabilities

It is concerned there is no national comprehensive strategy for inclusion into society... Face barriers in enjoyment of their rights including access to health services, leisure and play

It recommends all necessary measures; National strategy for inclusion; provide training for all professional staff



Listening to
children on
their territory



Listening to children in
many schools!



Young people want:



- To be asked, listened to, heard and respected
- Security and safety
- End to violence & family breakdown
- School life
 - Better transition to secondary school
 - End to bullying and racism
 - Less anxiety and stress
 - Better school environment – to enjoy school more
 - Knowledge and help in dealing with alcohol and drugs and non-judgemental information on sex and sexuality
- Someone to turn to

What about rural children?



- ~2m children live in rural England
- Myth of the rural idyll
- Challenges:
 - Access to services
 - Transport
 - Poverty
 - Employment
 - Health including mental health, alcohol and substance misuse
 - Friendships
- Lack of safe accessible play and recreation facilities – focus on hanging out coupled with local intolerance

So, what's to be done?



- Recognise the importance of the challenges for rural children
- Advocate effectively for their needs
- Look out of the box!
- Look to best practice eg Pewsey
- Listen to what they have to say!

Right to leisure and play



The Committee **appreciates** that England's Children's Plan provides for the largest ever central government investment in children's play; ...is **concerned** that except in Wales the right to play and leisure is not enjoyed by all children due to poor play infrastructure notably for disabled children.

It **recommends**strengthen efforts to guarantee the right to engage in play; particular attention to those with disabilities;...adequate & accessible playground spaces

Growing up outdoors



- Opportunities for
 - Adventure
 - Managed risk
 - Understanding the natural world
 - Physical fitness, health and wellbeing
 - Learning outside the classroom
- Listen to children and young people's views

Waldkindergärten: the forest nurseries where children learn in Nature's classroom



Padding and playing in the lake

Rediscovering the philosophies of Friedrich Wilhelm August Froebel.
- The originator of the word 'Kindergarten' in 1840



Conclusions

- Growing up outdoors is more than just recreation
- Remember the needs of rural children
- Be aware of the constraints on childhood and increasing intolerance
- Seize the opportunities provided by the UNCRC
- Learn from other countries
- Listen to what children and young people have to say!



Countryside Recreation Network Conference

"Growing Up Outdoors"

Growing Adventure: A Case Study in a Woodland context

Tim Gill

Rethinking Childhood

If you go down to the woods today...



Children's play & the Forestry Commission

Daily Mail 24 HOURS A DAY

« Back to home Login » Register » 3 July 2007

Main sections: News, News headlines, World news, City news, Mail comment, Peter Hitchens, Photos & video, Mac cartoons, Joe Martin, News alerts, E-editions, Message boards, TODAY'S POLL

How children lost the right to roam in four generations

By DAVID DERBYSHIRE - More by this author »
Last updated at 01:03am on 15th June 2007

Comments (23)

When George Thomas was eight he walked over the moor to the swimming pool alone half a mile away.

It was 1926 and his parents were unable to afford a bike and he regularly walked six miles to his supervision.

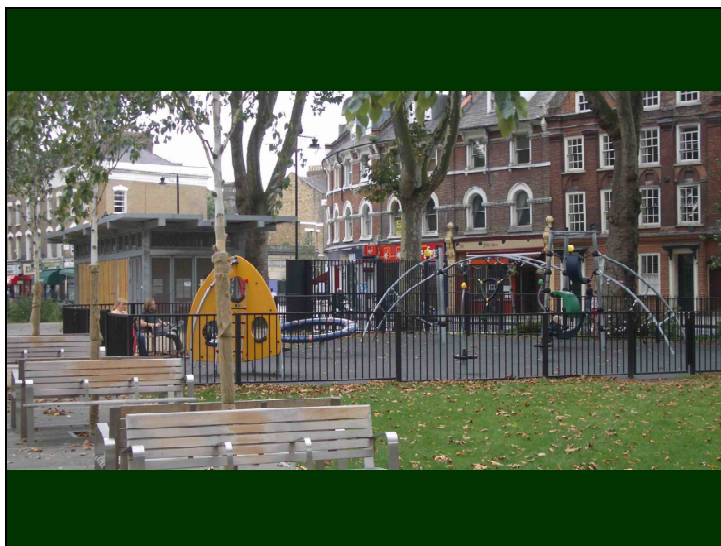
Fast forward to 2007 and Mr Thomas's eight-year-old son is only allowed to walk on his own to the end of his street (300 yards).

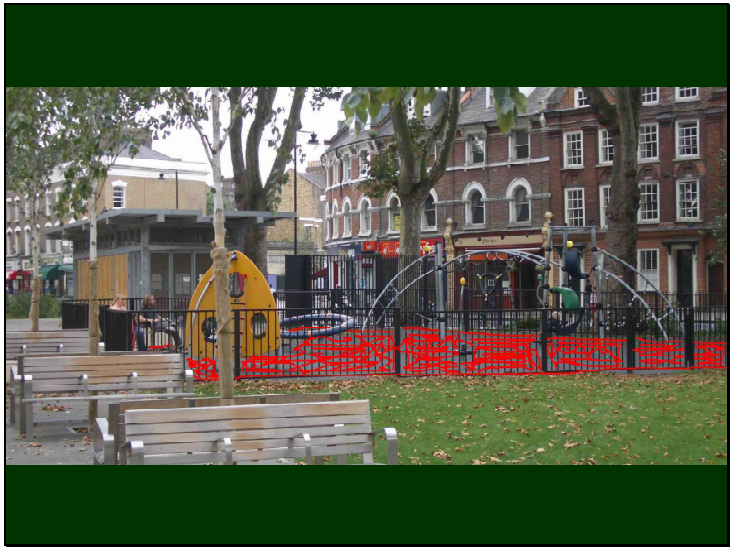
MOTHER: Vicky aged eight in 1979 was allowed to walk to the swimming pool alone half a mile away.

SON: Ed, now eight is only allowed to walk on his own to the end of his street (300 yards).

GRANDFATHER: Jack aged eight in 1950. Able to walk about one mile on his own to the woods.

GREAT-GRANDFATHER: George aged eight in 1919. Allowed to walk six miles to go fishing.

A map of Sheffield, UK, showing the area around the swimming pool and the woods. The map highlights the locations of the children mentioned in the article: Vicky (1979), Ed (2007), Jack (1950), and George (1919). The map also shows the locations of the swimming pool, the woods, and the swimming pool.



What's missing?

Camden consultation



Forestry Commission



Leisure a growing
business area

Self insures

Develops own policies
& strategies for
managing risk

FC & children's play



- Play spaces & trails
- Playschemes
- Family activities
- Forest schools
- Leisure offers: cycling, 'Go Ape'
- Contact with informal users
- Independent play

Why Growing Adventure?

- Funding available
- Equipment rethink
- Link with woodlands
- Success of play trails
- Wish to recognise value of play



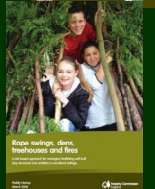
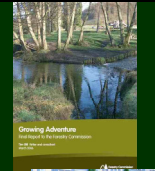
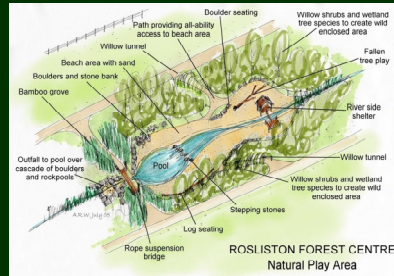
Growing Adventure process

- Year-long consultancy 2005-6
- Internal discussion, visits & pilots
- Play memories
- Freiburg, Stirling and 'Wild about Play'



Outputs

- Report to Forestry Commission
- FC design guidance for play spaces
- FC guidance on fires & self-built structures
- Pilot projects

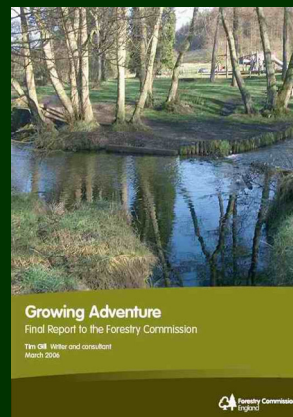


Growing Adventure report

2 connected ideas:

Nature and challenge are part of the essence of woodland sites and make them ideal places for children to play

Free play is a valuable developmental and learning process



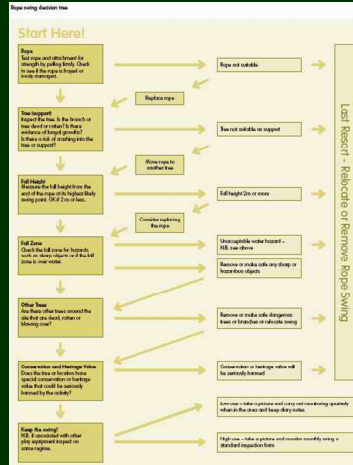
Managing risks: dens

Managing risks associated with dens and tree houses

Table 1: Managing risks associated with dens		Construction		
Location and use	First of all identify the level of risk associated with the structure then the required action.	Low Risk	Medium Risk	High Risk
		Dens made from natural materials found on site such as branches, broom, leaves and other vegetation. No tools being used to create the shelter. Little risk of collapse causing injury.	Some materials being brought to site such as old kitchen units, pallets etc but no harmful materials. Some evidence of hand tools being used. Minor excavations to create hollows or partial caves. Little risk of collapse causing injury.	Hazardous materials being used such as sharp metal and asbestos, or old cars. Evidence of power tools being used. Deep excavations creating tunnels.
	Low Risk Den is in a good location away from any quarries or busy roads and deep-water bodies. Little evidence of anti-social behaviour such as drugs, graffiti and litter. Little disturbance to neighbours or other forest users. No impact on sensitive nature conservation areas.	Informal monitoring of the site when staff are nearby. Record any inspections in diaries.	Take pictures of the den and carry out quarterly inspections of the area to check on changes.	Take pictures of the den and carry out monthly inspections of the area to check on changes. Remove hazardous materials and litter. Collapse any tunnels.
	Medium Risk Den is in a reasonable location may be close to busy roads but away from any quarries or deep-water bodies. Some evidence of anti-social behaviour such as, graffiti and litter but no serious issues such as drug abuse. Potential for some disturbance to neighbours or other forest users due to proximity to other use. Little impact on sensitive nature conservation areas.	Take pictures of the den and carry out quarterly inspections of the area to check on changes. Remove litter during inspections.	Take pictures of the den and carry out quarterly inspections of the area to check on changes. Remove litter during inspections. Consider making contact with kids providing safe materials or running shelter building days.	Take pictures of the den and carry out monthly inspections of the area to check on changes. Remove hazardous materials and litter. Collapse any tunnels. Make contact with kids and consider providing safe materials or running shelter building days.
	High Risk Den is in a poor location may be close to busy roads, quarries or deep-water bodies. Evidence of serious anti-social behaviour such as drug abuse. Complaints about disturbance from neighbours or other forest users. Serious impact on nature conservation areas.	Take pictures of the den and carry out quarterly inspections of the area to check on changes. Remove litter during inspections. Make contact with kids and try to identify a better location. If progress cannot be made remove den.	Take pictures of the den and carry out quarterly inspections of the area to check on changes. Remove litter during inspections. Make contact with kids and consider providing safe materials or running shelter building days. If progress cannot be made remove den.	Remove den. Make contact with kids and try to identify a safer site. Consider providing safe materials or running shelter building days in another location.

Managing risks: rope swings

“In most cases
there will not be a
need to intervene”



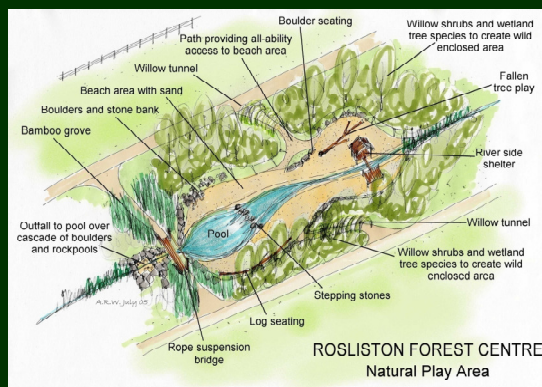
New play spaces



Haldon, Devon



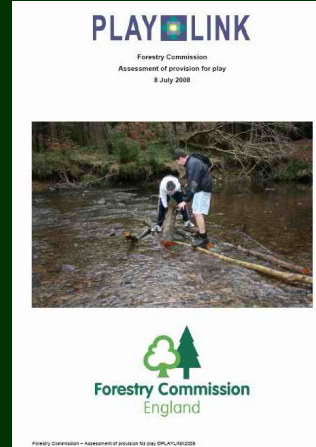
New play spaces



Rosliston, National Forest

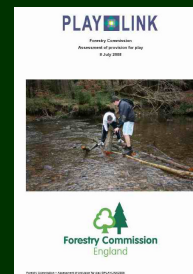
PLAYLINK evaluation (2008)

- Does FC walk the talk?



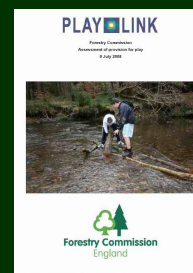
Progress

- Clear policy framework & guidance
- Good process
- Creative use of staff, volunteers & resources
- Strong support at all levels



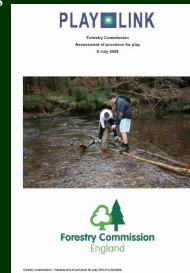
Issues

- 'Springboard' approach patchy
- Teenagers
- Risk management
- Process & organisational structures



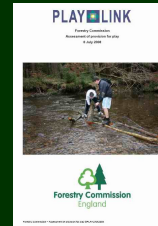
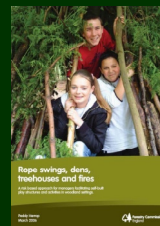
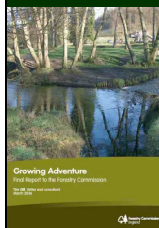
Recommendations

- Continue to develop nature play offer
- Develop design approach
 - older children
 - children with disabilities
 - move away from age specific play areas
- Develop a formal play policy



Recap

- Play & childhood
- FC & Play: Growing Adventure
- Lessons & future plans



www.rethinkingchildhood.com

Countryside Recreation Network Conference

"Growing Up Outdoors"

What Makes a Good Adventure

Jim Davis

The Children's Society

Growing up outdoors: How to have a great adventure

Great adventures, they speak of risk, challenge, nail biting moments, hanging on by finger tips and ending up with scraped knees.

An adventure isn't an adventure unless it involves the application of at least one plaster.

Currently Channel 5 are showing a series called Dangerous Adventures for boys, following the books of the same name. The focus is on celebrities and their sons embarking on adventures such as sailing tall ships and flying WW1 fighter planes, a throw back to danger and real boys adventure. For the famous and wealthy that is.

But key to any adventure is the element of the unknown, or at least the not experienced before. The first time experience is one that brings adventure, if it becomes frequent and regular then it might still be exciting but not quite the adventure it once was.

Perhaps why famous adventurers tend to find new challenges rather than repeat old ones, and why the stakes seem to get higher!

Do you remember the first time you climbed a rock, abseiled down, clambered in a canoe, hurtled a mountain bike down a track, the adventure of the first time.

That's what I like, the idea that adventures come from trying something for the first time, it opens up the possibilities, anything can be an adventure, the beginning of something more.

Last year I took a group of young people to Capetown, staying in a township, walking through the unofficial camps, climbing Table Mountain past the sign saying dangerous path, standing on the cantilever stone. All visibly an adventure.

A few weeks ago I took a group of young people abroad for their first time, everything was a new experience, going on a metro, trying croissant, staying in a different bed not in the same room as Mum. No less an adventure, just less visible and less obvious.

This is one of the first lessons for us to understand, it is not the scale of the activity that makes the adventure but the significance of an activity to a young person.

But the trouble is we are starting to limit the number of activities that we think are appropriate for children and young people, some things are potentially lost to children now. Earlier this year I worked with groups of 11 year olds on the ideas they have about playing outdoors. I ran workshops that involved children with their teachers in attendance, before I asked children I asked the teachers to describe how they played when they were children.

One Headteacher described what he did as a child, he talked about coming home from school, leaving his bag and then going into the hills with either a knife, crossbow or gun.

What adventures he had, and that was the thought of his schoolchildren. But, his thought was that now he would be greatly concerned about any child he knew who might do the same. The idea of a child owning a knife is now anathema. It is too risky, too dangerous, too much a sign of bad behaviour or poor parenting.

At the same event we presented children with 3 options for places to play.
A designated play park with climbing, sliding, swinging things
A landscaped space for bikes, skateboarding and playing
A wood with a stream

Children were asked to say where they would most like to play and where they could have an adventure. You will be pleased to know that the majority of children said it was the woodland. They said they could build dens, climb trees, play games, build dams and hide from grown ups.
But, when questioned virtually none of the children actually played in woods, most said they played in the park or in their gardens. The woodland was an adventure as much because it was out of reach as it was because of what it offered.

Why? They didn't feel they had permission, first they didn't think they were allowed to be in someone's wood, they might get into trouble, but more often it was because their parents wouldn't allow them.

We support a Play Rangers scheme, a scheme that encourages children outdoors to play. But, in one Somerset village the scheme started out well with lots of children joining in but numbers tailed off as parents said behaviour was too bad and they didn't feel that Play Rangers controlled poor behaviour enough.

First parents rule: If in doubt withdraw your child Second parents rule; If it goes wrong, look for someone to blame

The Children's Society have been conducting an Inquiry into a **Good Childhood** over the last 2 years, the results will be out in February, but along the way I have talked to many parents and seen many submissions from them. There is an overwhelming desire to see children play more and to play in ways that adults recognise from their own childhood. People believe in the idea of children playing outdoors.

But, there is a huge reluctance to apply that belief to our own children. We all contribute to that reluctance, when we hear about being run over or being involved in an accident, or worse an incident with a stranger. We ask, where was the parent, what were they thinking of letting that child be alone, climb that wall, I wouldn't let my child be in that situation.
Look what happened to the parents of Maddy McCann, did the thought ever cross your mind that they shouldn't have left their children alone, did you ever voice that criticism?

Do you look at 3 kids wading in a stream dragging logs as vandals or adventurers? Do you look at a child wildly swinging from a branch on a hastily constructed rope swing with joy in your heart or a sense of dread?

Do you see two lads pushing an old scooter down a by lane and think I should call the police or I should ask for a ride? Do you see a teenage girl walking a dog alone through woodland as a free spirit or asking for trouble?

The greatest adventure is this:

That we create a culture that not only believes that children should be outdoors but takes joy in seeing them do so, a society that not only idealises the vision of children growing up in natural surroundings, but actively encourages our own to do so.

It is applying this to our own situation that brings the greatest challenge and adventure. I have a daughter who is in her gap year and planning all kinds of travel, with the help of Dad of course. She recently came home from the travel agent having booked her 5 weeks in Northern Australia including a skydiving event. I can't say that I was thrilled with the idea of my daughter jumping out of a plane thousands of miles away, but she is excited and that is the adventure.

When our children take bold steps, we need to be encouraging them, when they take risks, we need to practice what we preach and applaud them. Even if we rather wish they didn't! That's the adventure.

Countryside Recreation Network Conference

"Growing Up Outdoors"

Afternoon Workshop Sessions

Workshop Session A: Natural Play Space

Hosted by Forestry Commission

Facilitating Children's Natural Play: playing with sticks

Dr Martin Maudsley, Playwork Partnerships, University of Gloucestershire.

Play Memories

Participants were asked to choose a wooden stick, which had been collected from woodland and provided for the workshop. Each person was invited to recall a memory of playing with a stick as a child and share with the rest of the group. This helped to re-connect us with our own childhood and engage with a child-centred approach for facilitating play. Sharing memories of play also engenders a reservoir enthusiasm, inspiration and motivation.

Play Affordances

The concept of 'affordance'¹ refers to the idea that an individual actively perceives what the environment has to offer, eg available food resources for someone who is hungry. For children, with their instinctive drive to play, affordance relates to what play possibilities are *afforded* by the outdoor environment. Play affordances may be thought of as invitations to play that arise when a child intentionally encounters a physical space.

We explored the concept of play affordances kinaesthetically: small groups were asked to discover and then demonstrate play activities using their own sticks. Understanding the concept of affordance, as demonstrated through sticks, has important implications in relation to outdoor play provision:

- *Every stick is unique* - children, when left to their own devices, often find their own individual ways of playing and interacting with outdoor environments.
- *More sticks the better* - the number of play affordances increases with complexity of the environment, and the looseness and flexibility of its constituents. Woodlands or beaches, for instance, are high affordance environments.
- *Sticks as play tools* - play affordances arise where children are able to sense and act at the same time. For instance, children instinctively hold sticks and then use them to discover and extend their playful environmental interactions: poking, tapping, twirling, scraping, marking etc.

¹ Gibson, J. (1979). *The Ecological Approach to Perception*. Houghton Mifflin: Boston, MA.

- *Sticks have a hundred uses* - sticks, and other natural props, do not have a predetermined function. Therefore they can be used by children in many different ways, for many different purposes, at many different times.
- *Sticks don't last forever* - through playing outdoors children interact with and change the environment, creating their own play spaces. Through being able to manipulate outdoor environments children detect new play affordances.

Play Springboards

Sometimes structured activities or adult-led opportunities are valuable to stimulate playful experiences outdoors, especially in unfamiliar environments or scenarios. These can be thought of as *springboards* for children to then develop their own free play. Play springboards should be facilitated in a way that is sufficiently open-ended and flexible to allow personally directed, freely chosen play to naturally develop. Adults need to be sensitive, flexible and dynamic in using springboards for outdoor play which may involve adapting, or even abandoning, prepared plans as children begin to explore and playfully interact with natural environments for themselves.

In small groups, participants were given a prop (toy bird, small doll or plastic fly) and invited to create a den/nest/home for their character. From this springboard many weird and wonderful features were created, incorporating individual imagination and group dynamics...

Paddy Harrop -Recreation and Public Affairs Manager - Forestry Commission England

Play is a fundamental human right enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989).

Play is important for the health and wellbeing of children and young people and some studies suggest that it is also important for the wellbeing of adults later in life. Play also allows children and young people to learn about their world, their relationships with other people, to understand risk and to develop their skills.

Play should be a natural activity but research indicates that more and more time has become structured for children and young people and that they have less 'free' or unsupervised time for their own choices. School, 'parent time', structured 'club' activity, fears about traffic (and strangers) and lack of accessible space all combine to reduce free time and increase time sat in front of a computer or TV.

Natural play offers a opportunity for people to engage with nature

Nature play has become a term used to describe the creation of simple play opportunities in the natural environment offering people the chance to interact with nature. It can be characterised by

- Using natural materials such as wood sand gravel.
- Secret places and dens, to build, play talk with friends and imagine!
- Vegetation can be left in a wild state rather than a normal park condition
- Mounds and logs as part of a play providing opportunities for games, climbing and balancing.
- Loose parts provide materials for children to invent their own games and play spaces and develop skills through co-operating with each other
- Climbing and swinging can be provided in a more natural way.

Benefits from nature play can include:

Lower capital costs - using material won on site can help to keep costs down. Also less equipment and less surfacing reduce overall budget costs. But you will need more planning time and engagement with young people and communities to make it work.

Focus on natural environment - For outdoor managers this is a huge benefit - linking play to everything else we do.

More robust in urban settings - Natural play seems to attract less vandalism and also mounds, rocks and logs are harder to break than traditional play equipment

Greater play value - loose parts, sand, gravel and bark provide more opportunities for play than fixed equipment and rubber surfaces.

More social interaction - co-operative play on hammocks, basket swings, building dens and using loose parts encourages more social interaction than traditional play spaces.

Health benefits - Children are more active and also more stimulated in natural play areas and they learn more about risk than in traditional play spaces.

Children choose - More opportunities through loose parts and unfenced areas for children to choose their own activities. Also less restrictions on what they can do. Less RULES.

More information on the Forestry Commissions work on play www.forestry.gov.uk/england-play

Roger Worthington -Forestry Commission

Woodland 'Nature Play' is a term being used to describe the creation of play opportunities in the natural environment that encourage children and parents to view the whole forest as a place of exploration and adventure. Current research and experience shows that in past generations the most memorable and formative play experiences were in unsupervised, unformalised and unstructured outdoor environments. Yet managers of this outdoor play environment can often be anxious about the risk and cost of providing play opportunities.

Over the last few years the Forestry Commission has been pioneering ideas on children's play, through policy, guidance and practice. Being the largest owner of open access land in England the Forestry Commission is well placed to deliver a wide range of play opportunities for children. In a continuing effort to improve these play opportunities on FC land, and to support other land owners and managers seeking to deliver the same the recent publication of 'Nature Play: Simple and fun ideas for all' is available to download at

<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-7LSEHW>

The guide is set out in the format of a brochure illustrating 34 ideas with notes on 'how to build', how to modify the ideas for alternative options, what safety issues to watch out for and when to involve an expert. It covers play ideas such as things to climb over, paths to follow, opportunities for play provided by landform and vegetation and questions through signs. The appendix gives guidance on safety, useful resources, references and contacts.

Many of the ideas have been shaped by observing children at play, through conversation with young people and from childhood play recollections. The ideas have been selected so that they are accessible to people of all abilities and have reduced the danger that might be caused by moving parts and high fall heights. The brochure has also been looked over by an RPPI accredited inspector and a play designer/manufacturer to check for safety and constructability.

In addition, this practical guide is illustrated with many photographs to show clearly to practitioners, partners and funders what is meant by nature play. It is hoped that this guide will encourage and inspire people to allow more natural play areas to develop and that many children will discover the joy of simply exploring the great outdoors.

Countryside Recreation Network Conference

"Growing Up Outdoors"

Workshop Session B: Wellbeing *Hosted by Countryside Council for Wales*

James Parkin- Countryside Council for Wales

According to developmental psychologists, people have five developmental needs: fun, freedom, power, belonging and survival. Those developmental needs could also be interpreted as those necessary for the health, mental and social well-being of children and adolescents. Our paper at the CRN workshop concentrated on how young people could benefit from their contact with the outdoors to meet their developmental needs. Our research on young people at OPENspace has shown that the benefits from the engagement with nature and the outdoors are multi-faceted. The main health and mental benefits of young people's contact with nature and the outdoors are the following:

- Development of positive self-image;
- Reduction of obesity;
- Improvement of concentration in children/young people with ADHD;
- Reduction of stress and anger;
- Improvement of mood in young people with or without behavioural problems;
- Evidence of mental equilibrium between groups in the natural setting

We could also argue that natural settings have a positive influence on young people's social well-being. In particular, they offer:

- Opportunities for socialising
- Opportunities for temporary escape
- Opportunities for (physical) activity
- Opportunities for autonomy and privacy .

However, there is still a lot of controversy towards young people's presence in the outdoors as well as inequalities of access including the following:

- Social exclusion
- Concerns about risk
- Lack of adequate resources
- Societal pressures
- Cultural barriers
- 'Demonisation' of teenagers

To overcome those barriers and meet young people's developmental needs, policy-makers, planners and designers should create outdoor spaces that offer:

- Social integration
- Safety and free movement
- Peer gathering places
- Varied activity settings
- Safe green space

Countryside Recreation Network Conference

"Growing Up Outdoors"

Workshop Session C: Access to Nature

Hosted by Natural England

Duncan Mackay- Natural England Principle Specialist- Access and Recreation Policy

Opening speech

Our subject area bears the same name as Natural England's BIG Lottery funded grant scheme of the same name but our focus today is to start to reverse some of the sad societal trends that affect children's development in their use of the outdoors. This workshop wants you to devise **3 revolutionary ideas** so that our youth reporter Becky can feed back to the conference.

My our children have been dragged off camping, taught to light fires, walked up and down endless hills, fed on winkles and pushed out to sea on dinghies simply because I had the skills to show them the joys of access to nature. They in turn now bring their teenage and twenties friends and show them how to light beach driftwood fires responsibly, play guitars by night under the stars, drink lager (and clean up) and when warm enough skinny dip in the bioluminescent waters. I know they will do the same for their children. But we are the privileged minority in society. Most children don't have either access to nature nor Nature close enough to them and are without knowledgeable adults to help them learn. This is today's challenge for you...and also to have fun and a sense of freedom (Becky launches the pop up cow tent into the air).

I am the product of the privilege of growing up outdoors and I want to briefly illustrate the sub-themes of the Access to Nature Workshop before handing over to your group leaders.

Taking Risks

When I was 7 I spent a year in a pig field with an old manorial fishpond. I had to learn how fast I could run to avoid being gored by irate farrowing sows. Nobody taught me how to do this and my parents just let me get on with it.

Finding yourself

I found myself in this pig field and made it 'my world' and explored it endlessly giving names to its features and felt it change through the seasons. My father helpfully built me a ladder over the chain-link fence so that I could access it and merrily trespass to my heart's delight. It was my first taste of 'freedom'.

Understanding

I delighted in the natural features of my field: from freshwater springs that you could stick your arm down up to your elbow and feel the cool water bubble around your skin; to catching sticklebacks and great crested newts in jam jars. Nature was my friend and I was its. I was helped to understand all this by having a bird nut for a father who knew his natural history and was enthusiastic.

The successful ingredients for children having access to nature therefore seem to be: having accessible natural places very close to where you live; the chance to explore and have adventure without parental intrusion aided by benign landowners; someone to enthusiastically aid the learning process by passing on knowledge.

PLENARY SESSION

At the end of the 3 sub-groups the 3 big ideas from each theme were presented to Becky, our youth adviser. These were:

- Create opportunities for outdoor play but within a parental 'comfort zone'
- Formalise a commonsense approach to outdoor play (FC book)
- Install 'child champions' to teach/instruct in the outdoors
- Issue 'outdoor vouchers' to experience outdoor pursuits
- Make children stakeholders in their local environment and allow them more freedom and access
- Get all youth workers/teachers to have outdoors experience and have outdoors as a daily activity in schools etc
- More campsites for children (with compulsory campfires!)
- Describe risk as a challenge not as a negative
- Challenge the risk culture

After due consideration Becky decided that she would select the following as her **3 revolutionary ideas**.

1. More wild campsites (with fires) for young people to learn and experience nature and to share each others company
2. More freedom of access to land and water for young people through constructive abandonment of land and other measures
3. Challenge all people who tell us that "Health and Safety will not allow it"

At the end we spent a learning moment (or 6) trying to put the pop up cow tent back in its bag and presented it to Becky as a gift from Natural England for her enthusiasm and skill in our workshop.

Rob Garner - Workshop within Duncan MacKay's workshop

The workshop discussion on 'Learning about the Outdoors' threw up many ideas and questions including:

- role for schools in familiarising kids with the outdoors, both in school grounds and further afield, across all subjects, as a transition to them exploring for themselves
- role for countryside rangers, play rangers, etc in same transitional process
- need for parents to learn about the needs and benefits for kids (and themselves!) of being outdoors, through involvement themselves, or subtle forms of supervision, or through group involvement (eg scouts, community projects, etc).
- children need to create 'their' learning spaces. Organisations must back up land managers in running such spaces (dens, swings, 'benign neglect', etc)
- Utilise older kids in teaching younger kids. That helps in making the outdoors seem desirable/cool from a young age.

APPENDIX A

Countryside Recreation Network
Growing Up Outdoors
3rd December 2008

PROGRAMME

- 09:30 Arrival and coffee, visits to the *Outdoor Recreation Market Place*
- 10:15 **Welcome from the Conference Facilitator**
Caro-Lynne Ferris, Director of Countryside Access and Activities Network, Northern Ireland
- 10:20 **The Voice of Youth: Setting the Challenge for the Day**
'Young People'
- 10:35 **Government's Approach on Youth and the Outdoors**
- 11:00 **'11 Million Reasons': A Happy and Healthy Childhood**
Sir Al Aynsley-Green, Children's Commissioner, England
- 11:25 **Growing Adventure: A Case Study in a Woodland context**
Tim Gill, Rethinking Childhood
- 11:45 **What Makes a Good Adventure**
Jim Davis, The Children's Society
- 12:05 **Question and Answer Panel Session**
- 12:30 Lunch, visits to the *Outdoors Recreation Market Place*
- 13:45 Workshop Sessions
Workshop A: Natural Play Space
hosted by Forestry Commission
- Exploring natural play space
 - Understanding natural play space
 - Creating natural play space
- Workshop B: Wellbeing**
hosted by Countryside Council for Wales
- Valuing community wellbeing
 - Being well in the outdoors
 - Improving environmental wellbeing
- Workshop C: Access to Nature**
hosted by Natural England
- Finding yourself in the outdoors
 - Learning about the outdoors and how to use it
 - Taking risks in the outdoors
- 15:45 Refreshments
- 16:05 Feedback on Key Workshop Outcomes from Youth Perspective, final Q&A Panel Session and conclusions
- 16:30 Final visit to *Outdoor Recreation Market Place*
- 17:00 Close

APPENDIX B

Growing Up Outdoors
3rd December - The Oval, London
Biographies of speakers

Main Speakers

Caro-Lynne Ferris

Director, Countryside Access and Activities Network

Caro-Lynne studied Geography and Sports Science at Chester College, Liverpool University and graduated in 1990. She qualified as a PE and Geography teacher from Exeter University in 1991 and taught for 6 days! Caro-Lynne returned to Northern Ireland to undertake a PhD in the School of Geosciences, Queen's University, Belfast, on 'the management of recreation induced erosion in granite uplands in the UK'. She graduated in 1994.

Following completion of her PhD Caro-Lynne worked on a consultancy basis for Northern Ireland Environment Agency (formerly Environment and Heritage Service), the Northern Ireland Tourist Board and Sport Northern Ireland on a variety of access and outdoor recreation related projects including a Footpath and Visitor Management Strategy for the Giant's Causeway and the preparation of Northern Ireland's first Countryside Recreation Strategy.

In 1997 Caro-Lynne was appointed the Area Based Strategy Manager for the Mourne Heritage Trust to deliver a £1 million Dept of Agriculture and Rural Development area based rural development programme.

In 1999 Caro-Lynne took up the position as the Director of the Northern Ireland Countryside Access and Activities Network.

Caro-Lynne obtained a MBA in Public Management from the University of Ulster in 2001. Since 2005 Caro-Lynne has sat on the Board of the Irish Heritage Council.

Away from work Caro-Lynne spends most of her time in the outdoors mountain biking, fell running and hill walking.

Professor Sir Albert Aynsley-Green

Children's Commissioner for England, 11 Million

Professor Sir Albert Aynsley-Green was appointed to be the first Children's Commissioner by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, The Rt Hon Ruth Kelly MP on 1st March 2005.

On 30th June 2005 Sir Albert stepped down from his roles as the first National Clinical Director for Children and Chair of the Children's Taskforce at the Department of Health as well as Nuffield Professor of Child Health at Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children and at the Institute of Child Health, University College London.

On 1st July 2005 he became full-time Children's Commissioner, acting as an independent voice for children and young people, championing their interests and bringing their views and concerns to the national arena. Sir Albert was an Executive Director on the Great Ormond Street Hospital NHS Trust Board as well as the Director of Clinical Research & Development at the Institute of Child Health/Great Ormond Street Hospital from 1993 until September 2003. Prior to this, he was a Clinical and then University Lecturer and Fellow of Green College at the University of Oxford, Professor of Child Health and Head of the School of Clinical Medical Sciences at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne and has held many advisory posts in relation to child health and children's services.

Sir Albert trained at Guy's Hospital Medical School, University of London; Oriel College, University of Oxford and the University Children's Hospital, Zurich, Switzerland.

Sir Albert has a keen research interest in the history of children and childhood and their standing in contemporary society.

Sir Albert is also a proud grandfather with six young grandchildren.

He has received many national and international markers of esteem and was knighted for his services to children and young people in Her Majesty the Queen's 80th Birthday Honours list in June 2006.

Tim Gill

Writer and Consultant, Rethinking Childhood

Tim Gill is one of the UK's leading thinkers on childhood. His work focuses on children's play and free time. Tim's book *No Fear: Growing up in a risk-averse society* was published in 2007. He appears regularly on radio and television, and writes for the mainstream and specialist press.

Tim has advised political parties and thinktanks across the political spectrum, and has carried out consultancies for major NGOs and public bodies including the Mayor of London and the Forestry Commission. In 2002, while Director of the Children's Play Council (now Play England) Tim led the first ever Government-sponsored review of children's play. Tim's website is www.rethinkingchildhood.com.

Jim Davis

Programme Manager, The Children's Society

Jim Davis is a Programme Manager for the Children's Society and manages projects that work in Somerset, Dorset, North Somerset, South Gloucestershire and Bath & North East Somerset. The projects promote the inclusion of disabled children in decision making, provide support for children in the Traveller community and enable rural communities to overcome their fears of anti social behaviour and young people.

Jim has worked for the Children's Society for 27 years in community work, youth work and social work. Jim has published research into the experiences of children experiencing poverty in rural communities and on work with New Age Travellers. He represents The Children's Society on European projects exploring the participation of socially excluded young people in society.

Jim was a panel member of the Good Childhood Inquiry, an independent inquiry commissioned by The Children's Society to identify what makes for a good childhood in the 21st century. The Inquiry report will be published in February 2009. In his capacity as Chair of the Coalition for Rural Children and Young People he is a member of the DCSF Children and Families Stakeholder Board. Jim is married with 4 daughters.

Workshop Speakers

Adam White

Principal Landscape Architect, Groundwork

Adam White is a multi award winning chartered landscape architect who has worked in the North West, Yorkshire, and Lincolnshire and is now the Principal Landscape Architect for Groundwork London. Adam is the pioneer of the Playscape design approach which promotes challenges, nature and risk in a playful landscape environment. During 2007 he won a RHS Gold Medal, BBC Peoples Choice Award and was overall winner for Presentation & Communication at the Landscape Institute Awards for his Playscape show garden.

Along with his role as a Landscape Institute Award judge he is a Green Flag judge, Horticultural Week Award judge and BIFFA Design Award judge. Adam has featured on national and regional BBC television and has recently completed a series of design masterclass workshops across the UK in partnership with designer Wayne Hemingway. He has written a number of articles on the role of landscape architecture in creating challenging places to play for national and professional press. Adam has been listed in the Sunday Telegraph as one of the 5 must see designers of the year. In his spare time he is a bingo caller, DJ, dedicated rower and novice squad coach at Kingston Rowing Club.

Phil Doyle
PLAYLINK Associate

Phil is a PLAYLINK Associate. He has over 30 years experience working in the statutory and voluntary sectors. He has been responsible for developing play opportunities for children and young people in both public realm spaces and in supervised play environments.

Phil has initiated and project managed the development and design of play spaces in parks and open spaces, housing developments, regeneration areas. His experience covers the range of provision including, children's centres, nurseries, play centres and adventure playgrounds. He has also been involved in developing new spaces including wheel parks, ball games areas, and seating/shelter areas. He has extensive experience of the practicalities of bringing projects to completion, and a real appreciation of the maintenance implications of schemes.

Roger Worthington
Senior Landscape Architect, Forestry Commission

Roger works for the Forestry Commission across the south half of England as a landscape advisor and planner, an area that includes the National Arboretum, Westonbirt and the National Pinetum, Bedgebury. The majority of his work is focussed on designing recreation facilities in existing Forestry Commission forests and the creation of new community woodlands. Recently he has been involved in the development of FC nature play guidance and has worked on the planning and design of a number of innovative play projects.

Martin Maudsley
Outdoor Play Development Officer, Playwork Partnerships

Martin works part-time for Playwork Partnerships as their Outdoor Play Development Officer - championing opportunities for children to play in outdoor spaces and with natural elements. In 2005 he put together *Playing on the Wildside* - a best practice guide providing information, ideas and resources on environmental playwork. In 2006 he jointly authored (with Stuart Lester) a comprehensive review of children's natural play: *Play, Naturally*. He has recently developed and written a new playwork training course 'Playing with the Elements'. Martin also works regularly outdoors as a professional playworker, trainer and storyteller, and has an enduring childhood passion for wild adventures in wild spaces.

Helen Townsend
Social and Community Programme Manager, Forestry Commission

Helen is the Forestry Commission England's Social and Community Programme Manager, responsible for influencing wider policy development and the direction of delivery through the public forest estate; grants and regulations; and through partnerships. Her specialist lead areas include diversity and inclusion; health and well-being; and education and learning. All of which feature children and young people in some form or another. She has a soon-to-be 6 year old son and lives with her husband, just outside Reading. Helen has worked previously with ILAM (now ISPAL) as their Director of Policy which included chairing ILAM's Play conferences, managing ILAM's Play Panel and ILAM's bookshop and information centre which commissioned, at the time, a number of leading play publications.

Paddy Harrop
Recreation and Public Affairs Manager, Forestry Commission

Paddy has 18 years experience of leisure and forestry management and is currently the recreation and public affairs manager for Forestry Commission England. He has led the development of mountain biking, play and dog access policy and has particular expertise in managing visitor safety and civil claims. Paddy also takes a lead role managing the Forestry Commission's live music programme. Based in North Yorkshire with Rachel and their three daughters Paddy enjoys live music, mountain biking, climbing and skiing in his spare time. Paddy's voluntary work includes chairing the local village playing field association, acting as a trustee of the Forest of Galtres community festival and treasurer for The International Mountainbiking Association (IMBA) UK.

James Parkin
Health & Recreation Policy Officer, Countryside Council for Wales

James joined the Countryside Council for Wales in April 2007 as a member of the Recreation Team based in Cardiff Bay. James' background is in community regeneration with a specific focus on engaging local people in physical activity programmes. Prior to joining the Countryside Council for Wales James worked as an Environmental Regeneration Manager for the Groundwork Trust where he was responsible for managing a range of EU funded landscape improvement projects, primarily in disadvantaged areas of Wales.

James is presently involved with a variety of Wales-wide initiatives linked to mental health & well-being including the Lets Walk Cymru and Mentro Allan programmes delivered in conjunction with the Sports Council for Wales. James also sit on a number of national Welsh Assembly Government sponsored forums including the 'Physical Activity and Nutrition Network' and the 'Well-Being Wales Network'. James is also a member of the UK 'Outdoor Health Forum' which aims to promote the public health benefits supported by the natural environment.

Mark McKenna
Director & Co-founder, Down to Earth Project

Mark McKenna co-founded Down to Earth Project in 2005 based on a long track record of developing highly successful educational programmes for 'hard to reach' young people using the outdoors, and exploring Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC) through hands-on activities.

His MA thesis focussed on the common ground between good practice in ESDGC and good practice in working with 'disaffected' young people.

Down to Earth Project has rapidly established itself as one of the leading projects in working with excluded young people and adults through the outdoors in Wales, and has recently been awarded three year funding by the Big Lottery to offer Wilderness Therapy and traditional/natural building programmes for young offenders.

For more information: www.downtoearthproject.org.uk

Jenny Roe
Research Associate, OPENspace

Jenny is a Landscape Architect and a Research Associate in OPENspace with particular expertise in researching the restorative health benefits of natural and built environments. She currently has a key role in a new OPENspace project for the Scottish Government on the contribution of green and open space to public health and well-being. She is also collaborating with Heriot Watt University on a recently commissioned project for CABE exploring the relationship between deprivation, race and the quality of urban green space. Jenny's PhD explored the effects of natural settings on psychological well-being and, in particular, the impact upon mood and personal development in adults and young people with good and poor mental health.

Penny Travlou
Research Associate, OPENspace

Penny is a cultural geographer holding a PhD from Durham University, and works as a Research Fellow at OPENspace Research Centre (Edinburgh College of Art). Her research focuses on young people's uses, experiences and perceptions of public space and she is involved in various projects including Wild Adventure Space for Young People, a scoping research for Natural England. She was also one of the primary investigators in a project on the perception and use of public open spaces by teenagers in Scotland and United States. For this research, she was awarded an Early Career Research Grant (Edinburgh College of Art), a Small Research Grant (The Carnegie Trust) and with Professor Ward Thompson a Joint Activities Award (The British Academy). She has presented her research work in numerous international conferences. She also works as a Lecturer in Cultural Geography at the Centre for Visual and Cultural Studies (Edinburgh College of Art).

Jo Barton
Senior Research Officer, University of Essex

Jo is a senior research officer for the Centre for Environment and Society and a lecturer in Sport and Exercise Science at the University of Essex. For the past five years, she has been the leading researcher of the Green Exercise programme. This involves analysing the synergistic health benefits of participating in physical activities whilst being directly exposed to nature and greenspace. The catalogue of expanding research acknowledges both the physical, social and psychological health benefits of a range of green exercise activities. Jo has spoken at numerous local and international conferences and has published papers in a variety of journals. Her research continues to highlight the impacts on both physical and psychological health measures, emphasising the value of urban parks, green space and rural countryside to the nation's health.

Judith Hanna
Social Sciences Principal Specialist, Natural England

Judith is Social Science Principal Specialist in Natural England's Evidence team. She became Social Policy Advisor with English Nature after working on a range of social and environmental issues: as Head of Policy with National Centre for Volunteering, Assistant Director of Transport 2000, with Commission for Racial Equality, New Economics Foundation, Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, and with Local Agenda 21 community environmental networks particularly in Tottenham, where she lives. She grew up in Australia and New Guinea, with her academic background in social anthropology and sociolinguistics. Judith is partially deaf, so please speak up.

Andy Beer
Head of Learning, National Trust

Andy has recently started work for National Trust as Head of Learning. Prior to that he worked in a variety of roles for the Woodland Trust, including leading the Tree for All campaign, which involved a million children in planting trees. A geographer and environmental scientist by trade, he has also worked for two years in New Zealand for a small sustainable energy pressure group and prior to that as an environmental consultant on a range of UK and international projects. Despite leaving the Woodland Trust, trees continue to play a major part in his life, most recently manifested through building a timber framed house and some industrial scale cider pressing.

Rob Garner
Policy and Advice Officer, Scottish Natural Heritage

Rob Garner works for Scottish Natural Heritage in Edinburgh, as Policy and Advice officer in the SNH recreation and access group. He is as a chartered planner, who since postgraduate study at Aberdeen University has worked in local authority planning and in a range of national agencies and environmental organisations in Scotland. Over recent years he has been closely involved in the implementation of outdoor access rights and responsibilities under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003, and the Scottish Outdoor Access Code. He has prepared advisory publications about various aspects of this legislation and of relevant good practice, including on outdoor access strategies, occupier liabilities, and core paths planning.

Phil Burfield
Outdoor Education Policy Officer, RSPB

Phil graduated from Imperial College, London, with an MSc in Environmental Technology. He specialised in environmental economics and policy, and researched the educational backgrounds of staff at English Nature, and how these influenced their skills development and attitudes towards sustainable development. Phil started work at the RSPB in September 2005. He has produced consultation responses on the Manifesto for Learning Outside the Classroom, and also produced the Real World Learning Partnership's Out-of-Classroom Learning guide and arranged its distribution to every primary and secondary state school in England. Over the last year, Phil has also worked with colleagues on education policy in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Duncan Mackay
Principal Specialist, Natural England

Duncan is currently Natural England's Principal Specialist in Recreation and Access Policy. He was formerly: Director of the South East region of the Countryside Agency; an environmental Technical Director in the private sector Babbie (now Jacobs) Group; Environmental Manager for Berkshire County Council; and, Deputy Secretary of the Commons, Open Spaces and Footpaths Preservation Society (Britain's oldest national conservation body, founded in 1865).

Duncan is a former Commodore of Henley Sailing Club; winner of the Henry Ford European Conservation Award; Millennium Award fellow and author of '*The Secret Thames*' and '*Apples, Berkshire, Cider*'. He is currently writing a book on wild food, and '*Long, Slow and Wiggly*', the story of his journey through Britain on a folding bicycle following the longest straight line from the Isle of Wight to Cape Wrath. He confesses that he spent most of his 7th year in a pond catching great crested newts in jam jars.

APPENDIX C



Countryside Recreation Network

Growing Up Outdoors

3rd December - The Oval, London

Full Delegate List

Mr David Robinson
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Mr Mervyn Hill
Council Member
The Council for Nature Conservation and
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APPENDIX D

CRN Challenges

At the end of the final session, all delegates were asked to leave notes on their table outlining specific actions which they felt the agencies of the Countryside Recreation Network should consider further. These actions are listed below, and will be considered by the CRN at its future meetings.

- CRN to collect evidence about the benefits for children and disseminate this throughout the sector, and to other sectors (e.g. education).
- CRN to collect good practice on risk benefit assessment and disseminate this throughout the sector.
- Would like to see CRN sharing evidence group, possibly joint research.
- Ideas for future research: Effects of natural play on other big agendas e.g.
 1. Educational attainment
 2. Climate change behavioural changes
 3. Connection with nature
 4. Health and wellbeing
- Also longitudinal research: Following cohorts.
- Could you establish a network to share research, practice etc beginning with the people here today? Coordinate the work of all these organisations.
- Would it be possible to share powerpoint from presentations on website(to allow more reflection time on presentations) Look at initial Teacher Training Institutions to train future teachers to use organisations expertise and feel confident re LOTC.
- Look into all of the work that organisations and volunteers group links in with mainstream Education and encourage more working together.
- Get the services of a good advocate to tear down what we think are good reasons for Outdoor Recreation, and then to re-construct these(as unbeatable) and present them to government and the judiciary.
- How to link Education, Health and the Environment through funding streams to make projects happen.
- To hand over a future issue of the CRN journal to young people so that they determine the content/design/articles/images, could coincide with the 60th anniversary of the National Park Act 1949.
- Challenge the media habit of portraying children and particularly young people as negative and troublesome.
- Promote positive, young people led activities in the National Press.
- Promote Natural play through existing channels and work that is already being done: Jamie Oliver's work on Healthy eating for children, get him out to a campfire and cooking food for children in a natural setting, put it on TV
- Play Trails of 1.5 miles cost 20K! (Roger Worthington).
- CRN continue this forum which allows people from all areas which use or can utilise play as a tool. Perhaps invite Education services next time, Health and Safety to have different sides of story. The conference I feel was preaching to the already converted.

- How to convince local authorities and community groups that play equipment does not have to be metal to be durable and the benefits of natural play scopes over the `KFC` playgrounds.
- Try to involve the education authorities in future work and events.
- Look at how barriers between the different elements of society and their views of children and young people can be influenced to improve everyone quality of life and their enjoyment/fun for life.
- CRN could employ expert witness/legal team to help challenge insurance claims
- Stop organisations being intimidated by H&S legislations and constraining attempt to use the Outdoors because of perceived risk.
- Re-educate parents on how to play Outdoors and the importance/necessity of Outdoor play to children and adults.
- Future work to focus on parents who have experienced a mental health problem, effects of being outdoors on the whole family- please contact to discuss further neil@palygloucestershire.org.uk, 07866929598.
- I would like for CRN to put on a joint conference with for example Play link, Play England, University of Gloucester, Play work Partnerships to educate members such as those here today on existing play models and principles that could extend or enhance CRN members aims such as Play Rangers working on National Trust sites to help facilitate play. Play rangers typically provide mobile play provision that includes opportunities for risk and challenge such as dam-building, fire making, outdoor cooking, tool use. Ranger and Elemental Play(University of Gloucester - Playwork Partnerships).
- Link Natural England to Dept CSF to get empirical evidence between Environment and Wellbeing (what type of space etc) as discussed in wellbeing workshop.
- Feed back to us about what CRN is doing.
- Talk to more academics involved in Countryside Recreation Management also lots of stuff on children's geographies.
- CRN could act as a catalyst to create a greater sense of freedom for children :
 1. Providing a common base of access for England, Scotland, Wales, NI and Ireland
 2. Creating media interest in the benefits of the outdoors and outdoor play for children
 3. Stimulating children's champions for freedom
 4. Bringing natural experience to the people, not sending them to it.