

## **Council for Learning Outside the Classroom Update**

*Beth Gardner, Chief Executive of the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom, updates us on the latest news from the Council*

Looking back on the past 12 months since the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom was incorporated as a limited company and awarded its status as a registered Charity, we should celebrate all that has been achieved. With our first annual conference delivered just over a week ago, it is inspiring to see the ground swell of support for LOtC gathering momentum and the passionate belief from our supporters in the value of LOtC as an aid to learning and the difference it can make to young lives. Key achievements include the 450 organisations which have been awarded the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge since its launch in February, the 190 members who have joined in support of our cause and the outstanding coverage gained in over 583 pieces in national, regional, broadcast and online media between January and September, raising the profile of Learning Outside the Classroom significantly. We recognise the challenges ahead but are empowered by the support of our partners and members. For more information on joining the council for learning outside the classroom download the membership application pack here:

<http://www.lotc.org.uk/Council-for-LOtC/Membership>

### **Write to your MP in support of learning outside the classroom today**

An Early Day Motion has been tabled for this parliamentary session in support of LOtC and we urgently need the help of everyone in the LOtC community who cares about the future of learning outside the classroom to urge your local MP to sign the motion.

The motion states: "That this House notes the conclusion of an Ofsted report that learning outside the classroom contributes significantly to raising standards; recognises that learning through experience is a powerful educational tool; applauds the work put into the Manifesto for Learning Outside the Classroom; regrets that despite this work, its aspiration to provide all young people with a wide range of quality experiences outside the classroom, including one or more residential visits, is not yet embedded in all schools; and calls on the Government to find a way of making this a reality for all young people, including those who need financial support."

Please write to your MP and urge them to sign EDM number 4. Please spread the word amongst colleagues and your professional networks, asking them to do the same. You can write to your MP at the House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA or by email link at [http://www.parliament.uk/mps/ordsandoffices/mps\\_and\\_lords/alms.cfm#A](http://www.parliament.uk/mps/ordsandoffices/mps_and_lords/alms.cfm#A). If you don't know

them personally, you will need to explain that you are one of their constituents. You might want to explain briefly why it's important that they sign the EDM but you've no need to spell out the content of the EDM – just ask them to sign EDM number 4. We need more than 100 MPs to sign the motion in order to ensure it has an impact after the general election so please act without delay.

### **Learning Outside the Classroom 2010 and Beyond**

Our first National Conference, held on 3<sup>rd</sup> December at the Leeds Royal Armouries, was fully booked within 2 weeks of being publicised and lived up to expectations as a lively and engaging occasion. Highlights included the keynote speech of education correspondent Hilary Wilce on the life-changing potential of LOtC experiences, Judith Hackitt, chair of the Health and Safety Executive's talk on why Health and Safety should not stand in the way of getting children out and about and the conference debate exploring whether barriers to LOtC are holding schools back. For more on the National Conference [click here](#).

### **The Learning Outside the Classroom Awards for Excellence and Innovation, sponsored by TUI Student Division**

The announcement of the regional and national winners of the 2009 LOtC awards at the National Conference resulted in a flurry of coverage on T.V, Radio and in the press, demonstrating media interest in the value of learning outside the classroom. Now in their second year, the awards are proving a fantastic way of showcasing good practice and celebrating the achievements of schools offering exceptional LOtC provision. Read about the national winner, Sandhill View School in Sunderland later in the e-newsletter, or for the full list of regional winners and how to register an interest in the 2010 Awards [click here](#).

### **Primary curriculum**

Further to the consultation held over the summer, the new Primary Curriculum has now been launched. All of the main documents are available to download at:

<http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=QCDA/09/4355>

Whilst we are disappointed that the new curriculum fails to make explicit the terminology "Learning Outside the Classroom", nevertheless the new curriculum encourages better cross-curricular links, and promotes learning outside the classroom within the 6 new Areas of Learning.

## **More support from the Heritage Sector Partnership**

The Council has funded the LOtC Heritage Sector Partnership (HSP) to develop some resources to help heritage organisations to:

- Improve their understanding of the Quality Badge Self Evaluation Form (SEF) and the Quality Indicators
- Review their learning services within the Quality Badge framework
- Develop their learning services
- Feel more confident about applying for the LOtC Quality Badge

The resources have been designed primarily for those organisations with limited education expertise and/or without the time or capacity to attend training. They include useful tools such as:

- A glossary of terms for the Quality Indicators
- Fictional case studies describing good quality education practice in a variety of heritage organisations....and connecting that practice to the Quality Indicators
- Simple, practical guidance notes on how to develop your education service in key areas
- Real example documents such as booking forms, education policies etc. from a variety of heritage organisations.

The resources are available at [www.gem.org.uk](http://www.gem.org.uk)

If you have any queries about these resources, the work of the HSP, GEM or the Quality Badge, please contact the LOtC HSP Coordinator – [fenellahunt@gem.org.uk](mailto:fenellahunt@gem.org.uk)

We would greatly appreciate your feedback on how useful you find these resources and whether or not they have met your needs. Please take the time to complete and return the short evaluation form that accompanies the resources on the GEM website.

## **HASLOC**

HASLOC (Health and Safety for Learners Outside the Classroom) is a new DCSF document which aims to provide government guidance for all those involved in running LOtC experiences in schools and other youth establishments. It will replace Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits: a good practice guide 1998 (known as HASPEV) and the 3-part supplement published in 2002. HASLOC will have a wider audience across all Children's Services (not just schools). It sets out the enabling nature of sensible risk management and how to reduce 'red tape'. It flags up the lessons learned from serious incidents. HASLOC also sets out how and why staff can expect to be treated fairly if a participant is injured

despite their care. In general HASLOC works at a high level and leaves most of the detail to the operational parts of the Learning Outside the Classroom Council's website which will carry downloadable material.

The document is now out for consultation, and is available at:

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/index.cfm?action=consultationDetails&external=no&consultationId=1599>

The closing date is Monday 8<sup>th</sup> February, and everyone is urged to take time to send in their comments in order to shape this important piece of guidance.

### **New Board of Trustees for the Council**

Finally, as if the last 8 weeks haven't been busy enough, the Council held its first AGM on 3<sup>rd</sup> November. John Stevenson, the outgoing chair of the Council, paid tribute to the interim Board members for their hard work and dedication over the past year; and to the LOtC Advisory Group, for its support and encouragement in acting as a critical friend to the Board. John also thanked the DCSF for their commitment to moving LOtC agenda forward.

John's speech concluded with the following message to the incoming Board: "Come back frequently to what the Council is all about which is, "Every child should experience the world beyond the classroom as an essential part of learning and personal development, whatever their age, ability and circumstances". Make sure that it is there in practice. Being a Board member is about representation of the children rather than sectors. Move forward as a powerful force for LOtC. Key achievements so far have been the setup of the Council itself, the Quality Badge scheme, and 'how to' guidance. However, the Council is still an infant and the Council's staff will need the support of members throughout its formative years."

The new Board of Trustees was voted in, and comprises:

Paul Airey

Mick Brooks

Merrick Denton-Thompson

Steven Horsley

Brian Ogden

Kim Parry

Anthony Thomas (Interim Chair)

Sue Wilkinson

Biographies of the new Board members will soon be available on the LOtC website. We all very much welcome the new Board members, and look forward to working closely with them to take forward the mantle of Learning Outside the Classroom.