



Let's connect!



NEWSLETTER

March 2026 No.2



SPRING is here



IOL Ambassador, Nick Beighton

In May 2014, Nick undertook a world-first attempt to travel from Land's End to John O'Groats in a straight line in aid of BLESMA, the limbless veterans. Beeline Britain covered 1400Km in 28 days by sea kayak, hand cycle and 'by foot', in the process raising £30,000 for the charity.

Having rekindled his motivation for competitive sport, Nick started training with the Great Britain Sprint Canoeing Squad with a view to competing at the Rio 2016 Paralympics, eventually winning Paralympic Bronze in the K1 200m event. After Rio, Nick continued to train full-time with the Canoe squad but failed to qualify for the games in Tokyo 2021.

In 2022, in search of a new challenge, Nick undertook a talent transfer to British Cycling as an H5 hand-cyclist, representing Great Britain at the 2023 World Championships in Glasgow. Needing to find a balance within his busy family life and the commitment to a full-time role as an athlete, Nick left the squad in 2024.

Not content with leaving competitive sport behind quite yet, Nick returned to his first love of climbing. He became British champion in the AL1 class of Para climbing and was selected to represent Great Britain yet again. In his fourth sport, he competed internationally at the Innsbruck Para Climbing World Cup in 2025.

Alongside his sport, Nick is a qualified Bushcraft instructor and works for an alternative education provider, mentoring young people struggling with full-time education or within the care system.

CALL TO ACTION: Outdoor Learning APPG drop-in session March 24th

Meet our Ambassador, Nick Beighton

Nick will be sharing his personal journey, 'Trauma to a New Normal', with MPs at the **Outdoor Learning APPG drop-in session on March 24th**. A journey that begins in Shropshire, takes in Afghanistan, the Paralympics and a new career to mentoring young people struggling with full-time education or within the care system into the world of Bushcraft.

Nick Beighton, 44, spent his childhood in Shropshire as the youngest of four children. Growing up, he was a passionate sportsman, taking part in several events from playing rugby to athletics, cross country, rock climbing and mountaineering.

He joined the British Army as an Officer in 2006 after commissioning from the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. Before this, he gained a 2:1 Hons degree in Natural Environmental Science from the University of Sheffield.

His first tour was at 28 Engineer Regiment in Hameln, Germany, as a close support Troop Commander, before deploying to Afghanistan in August 2009 as part of 11 Light Brigade. On the 5th of October 2009, he was on a routine night patrol to the Company patrol base. About 40m from the entrance, he was severely injured in a Pressure Plate IED blast and subsequently lost both legs above the knee and broke his pelvis. He spent the following 2 years recovering, undergoing rehab and learning to walk on prosthetic legs, based at the Défense Medical Rehabilitation Centre, Headley Court.

Having taken up rowing to aid his recovery, in 2012 Nick was selected to represent Great Britain in the Trunk and Arms Mix Double Scull at the London Paralympic Games, where, with his rowing partner Sam Scowan, he finished in 4th place; only 0.21 seconds outside of a medal.



Invite your MP to the 'drop in' - Outdoor Learning APPG

The APPG for Outdoor Learning are meeting, and we are mobilising every MP possible to attend on the 24th March to understand why the provision of outdoor learning experiences, especially for children and young people, is more important than ever.

- [Download our invite template](#) to post/email to your MP.
- [Find out](#) who your Constituency MP is.
- Connect with your local MP via the [Outdoor Learning Digital Map](#).

[Read more...](#)

IOL AGM 2026 online 19 May 7pm

Join us as we look forward to the next year for IOL.

Register free [here....](#)



Make the most of your IOL Membership:

Free info webinars

30 minute free webinars to find out more about your membership. This webinar gives you an introduction to the charity that champions outdoor learning and supports those that work within this sector. The webinar will help show you how to access, manage and make the most of membership benefits.



Click on any of these dates to book.

- [23rd March 2026 12.30pm - 1pm](#)
- [9th April 2026 4pm - 4.30pm](#)
- [27th April 2026 1pm - 1.30pm](#)
- [5th May 2026 4pm - 4.30pm](#)

[Find out more....](#)

NEW SOLE TRADER:

A new IOL category of Organisational membership

The IOL has introduced an additional organisational membership category for Sole Traders.

You get to access the benefits of organisational membership (including course listing and course accreditation, but not job adverts) AND the benefits of Individual membership (including personal accreditation; APIOL, LPIOL).

This new category is very useful if you want to deliver IOL Bushcraft training, as you need to be an IOL organisational member to become an approved provider and an approved trainer.

What does it cost? £213 per year or only £18.50 per month by Direct Debit. [Read more....](#)



A 2-day workshop led by Leading Practitioners of the IOL.

This is for those with a senior and strategic role in their organisation, or who are seeking to develop their career to take on higher levels of

responsibility. We're pleased to announce that the 2026 Strategic Leadership workshop event will take place on **Friday 25th to Saturday 26th September at FSC, Preston Montford, Shrewsbury.**

It will be £270 per person. There will be details soon when we open bookings. Watch this space!



Early Spring Flowers Quiz

Test your knowledge of flowers adorning the woodland floor or learn which species will help bring splashes of blue, yellow, pink and white to your garden.

[Take the Woodland Trust quiz](#) to discover some common flowers that bloom in early spring.



Government risks breaking the law over plans to weaken nature protections

The Wildlife Trusts are seeking legal advice because they believe that the Government is at risk of breaking EU trade commitments if it goes ahead with the Review's recommendations to weaken nature laws. [Read more...](#)

COMING SOON IOL Freelancer & Sole Trader

ONLINE FORUM WEBINARS

A series of webinars this Autumn. Watch this space for more details...

They will be held on evenings in the Autumn 2026. Each session will be recorded and these will be made available to anyone who books on. The following subjects may be covered:

- Self-Care
- What High Quality Outdoor Learning looks like in daily practice
- Managing Challenging Behaviour
- The Employer Perspective
- You as a business'- setting up, getting known, managing bookings and planning ahead
- Tax & Finance
- What no signal? Communication Solutions
- DofE Expedition Resources
- Insurance
- Safeguarding - Duty of Care - your responsibilities
- Incident Management
- Awards updates
- Accessible OL

We are finalising the details so **bookings open soon.**

Outdoor learning, forest school and continuous provision: What's the difference?

(A piece in Quality Education Insights)

As outdoor learning approaches surface in policy discussions, we explore the differences and similarities between various outdoor learning methods for young children. During a January parliamentary debate on play and continuous provision within the KS1 curriculum, outdoor play and playgrounds were frequently referenced alongside continuous provision by MPs.

[Read more...](#)

IOL Bushcraft Competency Certificate Assessments

Are you ready for your BCC assessment?

This is designed to assist and support teachers, instructors and leaders to follow accepted practice and develop a high level of safety and competency in a range of bushcraft skills.

It is relevant to for those working in all areas of outdoor learning - education, personal or professional development, therapy, expeditions, etc.

- 23 April, Jack Raven Camp, Kent. Details and [Book here](#)
- 30 Sept, Jack Raven Camp, Kent. Details and [Book here](#)

See the [Bushcraft Awards web page](#)

See the [BCC web page](#)



Make a splash

with an advert in Horizons magazine

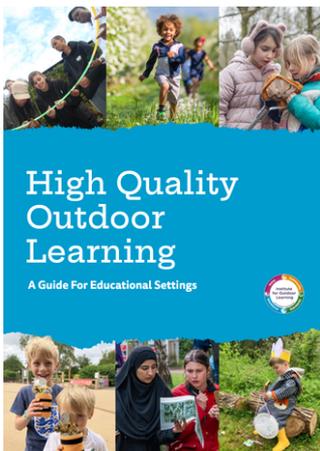
From just £250 for 1 year

- Big discounts for IOL Members
- Reach a targeted readership of outdoor professionals and practitioners
- The magazine is considered by outdoor professionals to be a vital part of their continuing professional development

www.outdoor-learning.org/voice/horizons-magazine.html

DEFRA's Access to Green and Blue Space in England

DEFRA's Access to Green and Blue Space in England' 15-minute commitment' document just published (4 March) as part of the 2025 [Environmental Improvement Plan \(EIP\) 2025](#). Lots more information also available here [Access to Nature Statistics](#) – GOV.UK. [Read more...](#)



High Quality Outdoor Learning - a new Guide for Educational Settings

Printed copies are available for pre-order now!

If you want to know what High Quality Outdoor Learning looks like in your school (or other educational setting) this is the document for you!

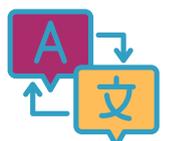
From £1.40 per copy. Discounts for quantity.

[ORDER HERE](#)

Free to download from the IOL website. Use this QR >>>



HQOL is now available as a Chinese translation. You can find it [here](#).



NICAS Ascend, climbing award scheme

The scheme is designed for disabled and neurodivergent climbers, going well developed in partnership with disability and inclusion specialists [Access Sport](#).

Scouts 'what to do in an emergency' Purple Card

Free download available [here...](#)

Scotland facing escalating threat from wildfires - report

A new strategy to deal with the problem has been launched ahead of the busiest three months for wildfires.

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) has invested in new equipment and there will be an expansion of a scheme where volunteers and equipment from local communities are used to help tackle fires.

Agriculture Minister Jim Fairlie welcomed the new strategy but said that "each of us has a part to play in preventing wildfires". [Read more..](#)



Large tortoiseshell butterfly confirmed no longer extinct in UK

Early spring sightings show this colourful insect is a resident species for first time in decades, says conservation charity. [Read more...](#)



Wales Outdoor Learning Week: 16-22 March 2026



Clear your diary and save the dates for [#WythnosDysguAwrAgored / #WalesOutdoorLearningWeek](#) and celebrate it at some of Wales' greatest playing and learning spaces – heritage sites!

Wales Outdoor Learning Week is for people of all ages to develop lifelong positive learning, health, and well-being behaviours. So come on, let's all get involved!

It doesn't need to be complicated or costly to engage your senses or learn something new. Ditch the screens and take yourself, your family, or your class, out and about. Slow down and focus in on what's around you.

Wales Outdoor Learning Week is a great opportunity to showcase and celebrate how we can all benefit from learning in, learning about and learning for our natural environment [Read more...](#)

The IOL JobSite



The premier website for outdoor learning job vacancies

- SUPPORTING the outdoor learning sector
- SIGNPOSTING for job seekers
- Helping to FILL WORKFORCE vacancies with FREE ADVERTS for organisational IOL Members, and affordable rates for non-members
- Job adverts on the IOL JobSite are SEARCHABLE by category, region, contract type and salary



JOIN US www.outdoor-learning.org/workforce/job-listing.html

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM CONFERENCE 24 APRIL 2026



Rooted in Nature, Growing Through Learning

In its 9th year, SOLD'S hugely popular, 'Learning Beyond the Classroom' Conference is back and we want to you join us!

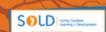


Why attend?

- ✓ Outdoor Learning Industry leading speakers
- ✓ Choose from a huge variety of outdoor learning workshops
- ✓ Network with fellow outdoor educators
- ✓ Free resources and materials to use in school
- ✓ A day in the outdoors!

What are you waiting for?

CLICK HERE TO BOOK YOUR PLACE NOW!



High Ashurst, Mickleham, Dorking, Surrey
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