



Let's connect!



NEWSLETTER

January 2026 No.4



IOL North West Conference 2026

Fri 6th February at Brathay Trust, Ambleside, Cumbria.

The really popular annual Conference
Fee includes lunch & refreshments

- IOL members £92
- Non-members £130
- Students £30
- **Exhibiting space** £200 - an optional extra you can book with a delegate place.

Great choice of Workshops

(download full details [here](#) (PDF))

- Outdoor Experience - Being-in-time
- Increasing accessibility in your organisation - if you do just one thing to - do this...
- Making a mallet
- Rights, Risks and Relationships: A Rights-Based Approach to Outdoor Learning
- Nordic walking for the fells
- Nature and the Nervous System
- Young people's experiences of teacher-student relationships and the impact on engagement with learning, through outdoor learning



- Understanding Schools: Barriers, Pressures & Outdoor Practitioner Solutions
- The Outdoor Learning Toolkit: 30/30/30 — Maths, Literacy & Nature Problem-Solving
- Leadership and facilitation of outdoor learning: establishing high quality relationships with new groups in time constrained environments
- Building Better Teams: A Practitioner Development Workshop
- Walking Back to Wellbeing: How Nature-Based Walking Supports Mental Health & Reduces Burnout in Working Parent
- Indoor outdoor learning in primary school
- Systemic Coaching and Constellations



IOL Bushcraft Spring Conference 2026

Fri 27th Feb to Sun 1st Mar at Danemead Scout Camp, Broxbourne, Herts.

Full Conference bookings include 2 nights camping and all meals.



Full Conference bookings incl. 2 nights camping and all meals

- IOL Members **Early Bird £142** then £156
- FSA Members **Early Bird £157** then £173
- Non Members **Early Bird £215** then £237
- Full Conference optional **upgrade to 2 nights indoor accom £24**



Single Days (including meals)

- IOL Members Saturday **Early Bird £84** then £92
- IOL Members Sunday **Early Bird £58** then £64
- Non Members Saturday **Early Bird £120** then £132
- Non Members Sunday **Early Bird £95** then £105

Workshop hosts and topics

- Outdoor First Aid
- Besom Brooms
- Woodland Toys
- Pendant Carving
- Pyrite Fire & Tinder Fungi
- Fish Leather Tanning & Pouch Making
- Willow Weaving - swallow
- Willow Weaving - bird feeder
- How to market your outdoor provision
- Feathered Game Preparation and Cooking
- Tracking and Tracking Sticks
- Fairy Baskets
- Building Resilience in Nature
- Green and Blue Spaces for Mental Health

LOOK! SAVE THE DATE!

IOL Freelancer and Sole Trader Forum Event 25th March 2026. 9.30am to 12.30 pm

An online CPD event where Outdoor Learning Freelancers and Soletraders can access business support, gain career development information, share quality OL practice, problem solve on issues specific to their work, and consider their own self care.

Aimed at members who work on a self employed freelance basis or are sole traders

Just £5 to register for IOL Members. £95 non members.

Bookings will open soon.

Association for Outdoor Therapy First Event of 2026



Association for Outdoor Therapy

3rd of Feb 2026 from 7.00-8.30pm.

Free for AOT Members. We invite all members to gather in an Open Space. There will be no pre-arranged agenda and we will work with what emerges and what the group brings on the night. More details and please register [HERE](#).

A CPD day for Outdoor Learning Professionals and Practitioners

Only 2 places left!

Thursday 19th Feb, 2026 at High Ashurst, Dorking, Surrey.
An inspiring and exciting day of CPD for outdoor learning professionals aimed at all levels and experience of practitioner.

Practical and theoretical workshops to develop your skills, knowledge and understanding.

The event is being hosted and subsidised by IOL, AHOEC & Surrey Outdoor Learning and Development (SOLD).

[Download the brochure](#)

WORKSHOPS (please choose after you book):
We have a choice of over 20 varied workshop options including the following (fuller details overleaf):

- Bushcraft
- Orienteering
- Inclusion
- Environment
- Handie sport
- Roped activity
- Archery
- Nature Connection
- Business Development
- Working with SEND
- Managing/developing staff
- Safety compliance
- Sector Updates

BOOK NOW

£ Delegate fee £55.
Camper van/camping 18th Feb is free

IOL Bushcraft Awards

For details see:

- [Bushcraft Awards web page](#)
- [BCC web page](#)

Are you ready for your BCC assessment?

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

IOL AGM 2026 online. 19 May at 7pm. Register [here....](#)

Project Zero's Thinking Routines Toolbox

This toolbox highlights thinking routines developed across a number of research projects at PZ.

A thinking routine is a set of questions or a brief sequence of steps used to scaffold and support student thinking.

PZ researchers designed thinking routines to deepen students' thinking and to help make that thinking "visible." Thinking routines help to reveal students' thinking to the teacher and also help students themselves to notice and name particular "thinking moves," making those moves more available and useful to them in other contexts.

[Read more...](#)

- CORE THINKING ROUTINES
- INTRODUCING & EXPLORING IDEAS
- DIGGING DEEPER INTO IDEAS
- SYNTHESIZING & ORGANIZING IDEAS
- INVESTIGATING OBJECTS AND SYSTEMS
- PERSPECTIVE-TAKING
- CONSIDERING CONTROVERSIES, DILEMMAS, AND PERSPECTIVES
- GENERATING POSSIBILITIES AND ANALOGIES
- EXPLORING ART, IMAGES, AND OBJECTS
- GLOBAL THINKING

Participate in the Climate Literacy Survey 2026



Climate education is a vital driver of climate action, and is linked to the Paris Agreement, the COP process and future PISA education benchmarks. It is hoped to build on existing evidence of the state of climate literacy amongst school leavers in the UK and Crown Dependencies.

In England, participating in the Climate Literacy Survey could form part of your school's Climate Action Plan. [Read more...](#)



'We shouldn't take outdoor access for granted'

January marks the centenary of landmark legislation that created a right to walk and ride on about half a million acres of land in England and Wales.

"What those people fought for and those little wins, they're actually really big wins for me," says mountaineering and climbing instructor Alex Jones. "But I think what people don't realise is that that can be taken away from us." [Read more...](#)



Manchester will host a World Climbing Series event, the first in Great Britain since 2022

The event, which will include Lead, Speed and Para Climbing Lead, has been secured through collaboration between World Climbing, the BMC, Manchester City Council, and UK Sport. Marco Sclaris, President of World Climbing, said: "Great Britain has a rich history in organising world class events and we are thrilled to be back with our World Climbing Series in 2027, in a city synonymous with sport. [Read more...](#)



Celebrate World Wetlands Day

Enjoy a free visit to participating WWT wetland sites. Wetlands are nature's superheroes - flood-busting, carbon-sinking, mood-lifting habitats that are alive with energy. On 2 February, the world comes together to celebrate them - and we'd love more people to be part of it. [Read more...](#)

A date for your diary
Thursday 11th Jun
2026 9:30am - 4:30pm
[Book here](#)



Disclosure and Barring Service changes

Self-employed workers and personal employees can now apply for Enhanced DBS checks. From 21 January 2026, self-employed people and personal employees can apply for Enhanced and Enhanced with Barred List(s) DBS checks through an Umbrella Body. Legislative changes coming into force on 21 January 2026 will allow self-employed individuals and personal employees to apply for Enhanced and Enhanced with Barred List(s) DBS checks for the first time. [Read more...](#)

Following Alex Honnold's incredible free solo of Taipei 101

Let's take a brief look at the historical development of climbing buildings, tracing its evolution from rooftop traditions to modern skyscrapers. [Read full article on 'Gripped' magazine...](#)

Duty of Care in Austere Environments: the standard that stops predictable failures

Most incidents in remote environments don't start as "emergencies". Austere environments punish that because support is limited. Not just medically — in comms, resupply, evacuation, and decision time. So here's the real question: If something goes wrong, could you honestly say you did everything reasonable to prevent it — and you had a realistic plan to respond? That's duty of care. Not paperwork. Not vibes. A standard. [Read more](#) in the [Merchantraveller newsletter](#) on LinkedIn

Research into outdoor learning CPD for school leaders and staff

Sheffield Hallam University are undertaking the research. They are keen to get views and thoughts from as many school staff in secondary schools across the UK as possible. Whether your school has lots of outdoor space or very little, and whether you're new to outdoor learning or an expert, your perspective matters! [Take the survey](#)

The must-attend training conference for EVCs and school leaders.

National EDUCATIONAL VISITS Conference

Powered by



HEADLINE SPONSOR

Collective Knowledge Project - promoting safety

Final call for sign-ups

i The Collective Knowledge Project has grown out of an Adventure Activities Industry Advisory Committee (AAIAC) working group. It was initially set up in 2023 to look at new ways of sharing safety lessons and knowledge across the sector. Through partnering with the University of the Highlands and Islands North, West and Hebrides (UHI North, West and Hebrides) and the IOL, we have been able to access funding through Interface to help move the project forwards.

The project has had the following three phases;

Phase 1 – a retrospective study to test the process of a sector wide incident-reporting system.

Phase 2 – to develop a participation and incident-reporting tool, that could be used across the sector. This has led us to...

Phase 3 – run a Participation and Incident Snapshot Survey in 2026. The intention of the project is to connect relevant knowledge and information to individuals and providers in the sector to reduce incidents, improve quality of provision, and support individual / provider development by encouraging a greater understanding of safety and risk management.

The project has three overall objectives;

Collection – awareness of current trends and themes across the sector

Curation – information and knowledge stored in a useful and accessible format

Communication – encourage and develop ways of sharing knowledge and information widely and effectively.

[Read more...](#)

Overall the aim is to ensure that safety knowledge and lessons from previous incidents are not forgotten and are retained to help support the workforce and organisations of tomorrow.

Do you want to promote safety?



Do we have an accurate view of incidents in the outdoors?

Are you keen on sharing lessons and experiences?



Help us with this by getting your organisation to participate in a **RESEARCH PROJECT** that is aiming to answer these questions and more!



In a UK-wide joint project, we are running a 12-month 'Participation and Incident Snapshot Survey' in 2026.



We are looking for participation from a wide range of organisations involved in the delivery of outdoor adventurous activities



You would be asked to submit your organisations relevant participation and incident data over six separate two-week blocks throughout 2026 (i.e. total of 12 weeks).

Consent to Participate Deadline – 19th December 2025

First two-week block to report – 26th January to 8th February 2026



Our aim is for this to enable us to have a greater understanding of;

- Participation Levels
- Overnight stays
- Incidents and the relationships between features

Primary researcher, Peter White: PETER.WHITE@uhi.ac.uk

SIGN UP



For more information please visit: [Snapshot Survey 2026](#)

Ready to agree to Participate?

Scan the QR code to access the online Consent Form

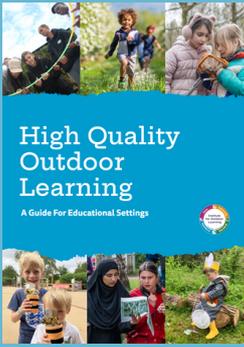


UPDATE

We aimed for 100 organisational participants for the survey.

60 We currently have 60 organisational participants.

96 In total we have 96 different sites or centres participating, across various organisations.



High Quality Outdoor Learning - a new Guide for Educational Settings

A guide for educational settings was launched at the IOL International Conference in November. We are preparing printed hard copies which you will be able to order online. How many copies will you need?
[Contact us](#) to register your interest. Price tbc.

Free to download from the IOL website
 Use this QR



THE IOL FREE WEBINAR PROGRAMME

FREE WEBINARS

13 have been hosted so far and there are 3 more to come!



Feedback from a recent webinar participant....



"As a relatively new member of IOL I'd not done one of their webinars yet, so this was a fantastic introduction to what they offer members."

Book now! The next two are:

● Getting risk assessment right

The principles of effective risk assessment. She'll discuss how to identify hazards and control measures and suggest tools and tips to help you embed good practice with your team. Tuesday 3rd February at 3.30pm
 FREE for IOL Members. £37 non IOL

[Info & BOOKINGS!](#)

● Mental Health First Aid - Recognising and supporting mental health distress on activities

Principles of effective risk assessment. How to identify hazards and control measures and suggest tools and tips to help you embed good practice with your team.

Thursday 19th February at 10am

FREE for IOL Members. £37 non IOL

[Info & BOOKINGS!](#)

FREE webinars for IOL Members

Knowledgeable hosts from across the outdoor learning sector

BOOK NOW ➔

Winter/Spring Webinar Programme 2025/26
 FREE for Members
 Non IOL Members £35*
 (*£37 after January 1st 2026)

SEE THE FULL PROGRAMME + BOOK HERE
<https://www.outdoor-learning.org/news-events/ems-event-calendar.html>

Engaging and informing outdoor professionals



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Who to contact at IOL

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