



IOL Accessible Outdoor Learning Conference 2026

Early Bird rates until 30th September 2026 for IOL Members.

'Inclusion as Standard: Turning inclusive practice into everyday practice'



Friday 27th to Sunday 29th November 2026
at Calvert Kielder, Northumberland

This event is kindly being sponsored by [Adventure Climb Rescue](#)

Keynote Speakers: Neil Russell and Christine Fox

"Rethinking the Ride: Building an Inclusive Future for Mountain Bike Leadership"

True inclusion means embedding accessibility, representation and belonging into the way qualifications, training and opportunities are designed and delivered. By listening to, working meaningfully with, and empowering relatable role models, those with the lived experience, to shape the journey—qualification and adventure providers can create more welcoming, relevant and sustainable systems.

The key message is simple: inclusion works best when it is built into the standard, not added on afterwards.





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Evening Speaker: Darren Swift

Darren Swift was injured by an IRA bomb in May 1991 while serving with the Army's Dog Unit in Belfast.

He went through 18 months of recovery at Woolwich Hospital and Headley Court before being offered the chance to stay in the Army. Not keen on "plinky plonky desk work" he opted to be discharged in 1992.

"It was the best decision I've ever made," he says. He went on a number of expeditions over the next few years, including canoe trips to the Arctic and a solo "trike ride" around Iceland. After becoming one of the first ex military amputee skydivers with Alistair Hodgson they won a gold medal at the 2003 British Championships.

Swiftly then became an amputee snowboarding pioneer. He also works as a public speaker in the education and corporate sectors using his incredible story to inspire and motivate others and is a BASI Snowboard Instructor/Coach. He and Dale Rennard (former Calvert Trust) have founded and now Co Direct DAKScom a Not for Profit CIC that facilitates and develops Snowboarding opportunities for Double Above Knee Amputees.





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Delegate rates	IOL Member Early Bird fee until 30/9/26	Non member fee & Members from 1/10/26
Full Conf accommodation (Friday - Sunday)	£242.00	£265.10
Full Conf accommodation (Saturday - Sunday)	£209.00	£228.80
Sole occupancy bedroom additional charge (subject to availability)	£30	£30
Full Conf NO Accommodation (including lunch and evening meal)	£170.50	£187.00
Saturday or Sunday only (including lunch)	£121.00	£132.00
Exhibitor stand	£360 (inclusive of accommodation and access to the conference)	

About Calvert Kielder

Located on the edge of Kielder Water and Forest Park,



Calvert Kielder is one of the UK's leading specialist outdoor learning centres for disabled people. With accessible accommodation, facilities and activities, the centre has been pioneering inclusive outdoor adventures for over 40 years, enabling people of all abilities to experience challenge, achievement and the life changing benefits of the outdoors. Delegates will have the opportunity to explore the centre and experience how inclusive practice has been embedded into every aspect of its provision.



Note: Calvert Kielder have a no camping/camper van policy. However, there is Forestry Commission overnight parking (for camper vans) nearby. Expect fees around £10 per night.



AOL CONFERENCE NOVEMBER 2026 - PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)


TIME	SESSION	LEAD PERSON
FRIDAY		
16:00	Registration open <i>(Please complete a medical form)</i>	Amanda Wild
18:30	Dinner	Calvert Kielder Team
19:30	Evening activity	Calvert Kielder Team
21:00	Relax, social and bar	Calvert Kielder Team
SATURDAY		
07:00	Morning run, wheel or bike ride (Optional)	Open to all
08:00	Breakfast (for residents)	Calvert Kielder Team
08:30	Registration open <i>(Please complete a medical form)</i>	Amanda Wild
09:00	Welcome, introduction and house keeping	Nick Liley & Pete Coulson
09:15	Keynote: Rethinking the Ride: Building an Inclusive Future for Mountain Bike Leadership	Neil Russell & Christine Fox
10:15	AOL members lightning updates	Nick Liley
10:45	Coffee / Tea	Calvert Kielder Team
11:00	Tour of Calvert Kielder	Calvert Kielder Team
12:30	Lunch	Calvert Kielder Team
13:30	Inclusive activities: High Ropes, King Swing, Crate Stack	Calvert Kielder Team
14:45	Coffee / Tea	Calvert Kielder Team
15:00	Inclusive Expeditions	Suresh Paul
16:15	Beyond the Visible: Lived Experience of Accessibility in Outdoor Learning	Carol Murdoch
17:00	Use of the pool, climbing wall or Free time	Calvert Kielder Team
18:30	Dinner	Calvert Kielder Team
19:30	Evening speaker	Darren Swift
21:00	Relax, social and bar	Calvert Kielder Team
SUNDAY		
07:00	Morning run, wheel or bike ride (Optional)	Open to all
08:00	Breakfast	Calvert Kielder Team
09:00	ZipCoaster activity	Calvert Kielder Team
10:15	Visit to Calvert Kielder boat house and review of water-based activities	Calvert Kielder Team
11:30	Coffee / Tea	Calvert Kielder Team
11:45	AOL Committee and IOL update followed by the AGM	Nick Liley
12:30	FINISH – Grab a packed lunch	Calvert Kielder Team