



XIPPLAY SCOTLAND



Scottish Play Commission (SPC)

The SPC is being established to examine the state of Play in Scotland and make key recommendations to the Scottish Government to support the development of a National Play Strategy for Scotland.

The SPC will gather a wide range of views and recommendations on the state of Play in Scotland in 2008.

Your contribution to the SPC is vital.

Do you like
playing outside?

“Yes, because its
bigger”

Nicholas aged 6



Formal Launch

Thursday 13th December 2007
Scottish Parliament

Chaired by Sue Palmer, Author of *Toxic Childhood* and launched by Adam Ingram, MSP, Minister for Children and Early Years and Kathleen Marshall, Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People. This event is being sponsored by John Scott, MSP.

Scottish Play Commission, Highland Yak!

Friday 29th February 2008,
The Royal Highland Hotel, Inverness

Online Forum

An online forum is available for you to contribute your news and views via www.playscotland.org

'Kick start' Event

Monday 19th November 2007, Roslin

Key Speakers: Dr Roger Hart of the University of New York; Dr John McKendrick of Glasgow Caledonian University; Sheila Dobie OBE and Andy Dalziell from the Institute of the Neuro-Physiological Psychology (Scotland)

Commission Hearings

Local Commission hearings will be advertised via the Play Scotland website and organised in Schools, Leisure and Community Centres and Town Halls.

Final Consultation Event

This will be held in April 2008 in Glasgow.
Watch the Play Scotland website for details.

Play Scotland works to promote the importance of play for all children and young people, and campaigns to create increased play opportunities in the community.

About Play Scotland

- Formed in 1998 to support the Child's Right to Play and make children's play rights a reality in Scotland
- Membership organisation and registered charity funded by the Scottish Executive

Priorities for Play Scotland

- Political Lobbying for a Play Policy and a Strategic Approach to Play in Scotland
- Developing Strategic Resources to support the Play Sector in Scotland
- Workforce Development of the Playwork Sector
- Research into Play Provision in Scotland (space to play, time to play, funding for play, best play)

Targets for 2007

- To build on cross party political support for Play in the Scottish Government
- To secure and grow our core grant in order to better support the Play Sector in Scotland
- To publish research on Local Authority Play Provision in Scotland and policy recommendations
- To establish a Scottish Play Commission supported by world leading Play Academics and Practitioners
- To implement with SkillsActive and PETC Scotland the Playwork Education Training Strategy
- To promote National Playday 2007 - Our streets too!
- To support and participate in the 17th International Play Association World Conference in Hong Kong

How does playing make you feel?

"Happy, it cheers me up"

Lia aged 9

"Happy, it's fun and good"

Cameron aged 7

"Excited"

Nina aged 6

"Happy, cheerful, you're having fun aren't you?"

You might get tired because you are running about though"

Olivia aged 9

Welcome to Play Scotland's Annual Report 2007, a year which has seen the promise of challenge in 2006 translated into the promise of change for 2008!

Play Scotland's successful bid to extend our core funding from the Scottish Executive in April 2007 has enabled us to increase our staff and develop and deliver more practical support for the play sector.

Following intensive lobbying, we were delighted when every major political party included play in their manifestos for the May 2007 election. The Scottish Nationalist Party's manifesto commitment to a Play Strategy led to Play Scotland and other key partners in the sector meeting with the Minister for Children & Early Years. We were delighted by the Ministers support for the inclusion of play in Scottish Government targets for Local Authorities.

In October Play Scotland achieved two Big Lottery Investing in Ideas grants. The first was to develop the P.inc & Bl.ew training project into a national play training resource - covering play and inclusion, building play environments and eating wisely. The second award grant was to establish the Scottish Play Commission.

In 2007 we published the research document 'Local Authority Play Provision in Scotland' which has helped inform and support Play Scotland's call for play to be a statutory duty. We have worked with many partner organisations throughout the year, and delivered major events for our members and the play sector. Our annual conference 'fit for play, Scotland' in October was jointly hosted with Fields in Trust (formerly NPFA) and was a tremendous success for both organisations.

On behalf of the Board I would like to thank Play Scotland's members and all our partner organisations, for the support they have given to Play Scotland over the last year. My personal thanks go to Marguerite Hunter Blair, Sharon Forrester, and new staff members Susan McIntyre and Elaine Clark, for their dedication to Play Scotland in 2007!

Margaret Westwood, Chair Person

Treasurers Report

Once again I am delighted to present the annual accounts for Play Scotland for the financial year 2006 - 2007. I am pleased to report that the Play Scotland account closed in surplus despite a small in year deficit.

I am particularly happy to report that Play Scotland has successfully increased its three year core grant funding for 2007-2010 from the Scottish Executive. This together with the expansion of the Board will ensure that Play Scotland will go from strength to strength in the coming years.

Alan Aithie, Treasurer

Do you like playing outside?

"I like the fresh air, it makes me healthy"

Jack aged 6

"Yes, actually I love it!"

Millie aged 5

"Yes! I'm very happy!"

Kyle aged 5

"Yes, because it makes me feel happy"

Zoe aged 11

Chief Executive Report

2007 has been an immensely rewarding year for me and Play Scotland. At long last our hard work and that of many others associated with Play Scotland over the years has paid off. Play is an emerging national issue in Scotland at long last! Our increased resources have meant that we have been able to provide our membership and supporters with lots of interesting and up to date useful information and events, covering what has been happening about Play throughout the year. In return their support has been overwhelming and invaluable and together we have been able to make a difference - I am thinking of the Political Manifestos, the Planning Statement (SPP11), the Play Petition (PE913), New Early Years, Childcare and Play Capital fund for 2007/08, Playday and keeping the Government on track for a National Play Strategy!

All you need to know about the year in detail can be found in our newsletters, eZines and website. I hope you enjoy this Review of 2007 in brief and please contact Sharon Forrester at sharonforrester@playscotland.org to become a member or make a [donation](#) to the [charity](#).

2008 is going to be a hugely significant year for the Child's Right to Play in Scotland. Together we must work to ensure that all our children and young people have equal access to diverse and quality play opportunities both indoors and outdoors that meet their individual needs.

Once again a huge [Thanks](#) to the inimitable Sharon Forrester and the Board of Directors for their selfless commitment to Play Scotland and a warm welcome to Susan McIntyre our new Development Coordinator.

A special thank you also to Eleanor Manson at the Scottish Government for her inspiration and support.

Marguerite Hunter Blair, Chief Executive

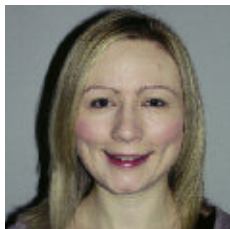
PLAY SCOTLAND STAFF PHOTOS



Marguerite Hunter Blair
Chief Executive



Sharon Forrester
Office & Information
Manager



Susan McIntyre
Development
Coordinator

OTHER STAFF MEMBER

Elaine Clark

PLAY SCOTLAND BOARD



Margaret Westwood
Chair



Kenny Abbott
Vice Chair



Gary Love
Company Secretary



Alan Aithie
Treasurer



Tammy Devlin



Lillian Burnett



John McKendrick



Denise Havard



Philip Ford

OTHER BOARD MEMBERS

Andrea McMillan
Paul Witcombe

POLITICAL LOBBYING

GOVERNMENT MANIFESTO COMMITMENT TO PLAY

"We will strengthen national planning guidelines to give greater protection to green spaces for sport and informal recreational activity, particularly in urban and deprived communities. We will work with local authorities and the voluntary sector to develop an effective play strategy to increase the range of quality play opportunities for children and young people in every part of Scotland" SNP Manifesto, May 2007

In October Play Scotland together with representatives from Barnardo's, FIT and PETC Scotland met with the Minister for Children and Early Years, Adam Ingram MSP to ensure that the key issues in the Play Sector would not be confined within an 0-8 years Early Years Strategy.

We were particularly pleased that at the Early Years Strategy announcement, MSP Robert Brown's amendment to have a separate Play and Communications Strategy was carried.

SCOTTISH PLAY COMMISSION

As part of Play Scotland's strategy to ensure that the Government retains its commitment to Play, we have established the first ever Scottish Play Commission, to examine the state of Play in Scotland and make key recommendations to the Scottish Government to support the development of a National Play Strategy for Scotland.

At the 'kick start' of the Scottish Play Commission, Dr Roger Hart from the University of New York outlined his concerns at the lack of freeplay opportunities for children and young people. "The erosion of freedom in play and parental involvement in directing and guiding play has increased dramatically in recent years because of safety concerns and concerns for children's future and the belief that in order to learn and develop to their fullest they need guidance or programming in all aspects of their lives". The answer is not simply more playgrounds. Dr Hart explained that all over the world children have resisted playgrounds in favour of more interesting settings which offer them greater choice and control. Children continue to prefer playing in the street if they have a choice because they want to be close to home; they don't want to be segregated from the life and multiple interesting activities of the city; and they like the informal involvement of friendly (non-controlling) adults in their lives and on the sidelines. Dr Hart went on to outline what is needed to encourage free play outdoors: safe spaces within which to explore and play; diverse landscapes offering alternative opportunities for activity within children's ranges; more freedom from control and supervision.

In conclusion Dr Roger Hart suggested a hierarchy of Play Provision starting at home with parents and children. He urged delegates to aim high and closed with a final thought that in Sweden where there are two families housed in the same building there is a requirement to provide a play environment.



Dr John McKendrick from Glasgow Caledonian University gave a stimulating overview of poverty and play in Scotland. He outlined the challenges ahead for the Play Commission and stressed the urgency of the task ahead. According to official UK child poverty statistics published earlier this year "150,000 children in Scotland, that is almost one in six, do not have any access to outdoor space or to play freely". The research also clearly highlighted the Social Justice dimension, as children from more impoverished backgrounds have less access and opportunities to play. This is why a National Play Strategy for Scotland is so important.



The Scottish Play Commission was launched in December by Minister for Children and Early Years, Adam Ingram, MSP and Kathleen Marshall, Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People and was Chaired by Sue Palmer, author of Toxic Childhood. This event was kindly sponsored by John Scott MSP at the Scottish Parliament.

Adam Ingram MSP said: *"Having the chance to play and interact with others is great fun for children but it also teaches them vital life skills. Learning about relationships and risk is a key part of children's emotional and physical development and we want to help all of our young people get the best start in life. That's why we're looking at how to best support play and welcome different views on the most effective way forward."*



From left to right: Marguerite Hunter Blair, Play Scotland; Kathleen Marshall, Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People (SCCYP); Sue Palmer, Author; Adam Ingram, MSP; Margaret Westwood, Play Scotland; John Scott, MSP

PE913 TO PLAY OR NOT TO PLAY – PLAYING STRONG IN THE PARLIAMENT

Play Scotland and our membership strongly support PE913 which urges the Government to adopt a Play Strategy that recognises the right of all children in Scotland to a safe, accessible and challenging play environment. The Public Petitions Committee convened by Frank McAveety, MSP also support the petition and have written to the Government seeking an update on how and when the Scottish Government will take forward the development of a Play Strategy.

Written Submissions to PE913 including The Minister of Children and Early Years, MSP response to the Convenor of the Public petitions Committee can be viewed at

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/committees/petitions/petitions submissions/sub-07/subIndexForPE913.htm>

SPP11: Open Space and Physical Activity Planning Policy Statement

The Planning Policy Statement SPP11 was launched on 15 November 2007 and comes into effect on 1st January 2008. The final version of this planning statement included a paragraph on the importance of Play and securing open spaces for free play in community planning. Play Scotland were delighted to secure this concession in this final weakened version of SPP11. We were disappointed to lose the proposed amendment in the Scottish Parliament to revisit minimum space standards for new developments, but seriously heartened by the informed debate.

To view the full report:

SPP 11: Open Space and Physical Activity -

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/11/12152424/0>

SPP 11: Open Space and Physical Activity - Consultation Report

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/11/09143537/0>



“Letting children go out to play is one of the best things that parents can do for their health”

Prof R Mackett, UCL

Do you feel scared playing outside?

“Sometimes if it is in the winter it gets dark”
Olivia aged 9

“No, not really”
Millie aged 5

“No, scared of what?”
Nicholas aged 6

“When a storm comes”
Max aged 3

How does playing make you feel?

“Mummy pig happy!”
Blair aged 2

Resources

Play Scotland is tickled P.inc

The innovative project Play Inclusive, or P.inc for short, has recently moved to Play Scotland. P.inc originated at The Yard adventure playground in Edinburgh. Play Scotland is delighted to have the opportunity to further this work and to develop P.inc as part of a national training programme - P.inc and Blew.

'Blew' stands for buildings, landscapes, eating wisely. Play Scotland is developing resources and training on:

- ☺ Making best use of, and developing, indoor and outdoor environments for play
- ☺ Healthy eating and building confidence to play






The training will be available throughout Scotland, delivered by regional training officers.

Susan McIntyre, who has worked on P.inc from the beginning of the project at The Yard, through to the new phase at Play Scotland, will be developing P.inc and Blew. For further information contact susanmcintyre@playscotland.org

Research

Play Scotland Local Authority Play Provision in Scotland, 2006

Five specific policy recommendations were made on the basis of the survey evidence.

-  There is clearly a wide variation in approaches to play across local authorities in Scotland. A National Play Policy statement underpinned by a Statutory Duty on local authorities (with ring fenced funding for Play) would be a progressive step in assisting local authorities to provide adequate opportunities and resources to support children's play in Scotland
-  Children's play is primarily - although not exclusively - a neighbourhood matter. The survey provided little evidence of a 'local focus' for play. A new requirement should be placed on Community Planning Partnerships to develop and implement a Play Strategy for their area.
-  The survey highlighted that free access to play was not commonplace for after school clubs, leisure centres and community buildings. Although it could be argued that free access is not essential to facilitate participation among children from low income households, there is a need for all local authorities to formulate a play strategy which would set out their approach to facilitating inclusive opportunities for play for all children.
-  The survey highlighted problems in establishing basic counts of playgrounds, playing fields and other spaces for play. Comprehensive national and local records of all spaces for play are required.
-  The survey highlighted an uneven approach to staffing issues across local authorities. There is a need for all local authorities in Scotland to recognise the value of playwork qualifications, playwork staff and to commit sufficient resources to ensure continuous professional development for all staff with a play remit. Furthermore, there is a need for local authorities to have a single point of contact - or play champion - to progress play development in a strategic manner.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

'what are YOU playing at?'

Play Scotland hosted the 4th National Play Forum at the Royal Botanic Gardens in June. The day included presentations on Play Inclusion from Susan McIntyre and Managing Risk in Play Provision from David Yearly, Head of Play Safety, RoSPA. The highlight of the Forum, without doubt, was the fantastic 'Pushing Eddie in the nettles with Connor' training video presented by Mike Greenaway, Director Play Wales.

Worthy of many Oscar Nominations!



Check out the Playwork Principles at:
<http://www.playscotland.org/usefulresources.html>

fit for play, Scotland Conference

Play Scotland and Fields in Trust jointly organised a CPD (Continuous Professional Development) Conference 'fit for play, Scotland' in October. This showed how two organisations from different perspectives could work together to promote opportunities for children in one of the most diverse conferences about play and leisure held in Scotland.



Margaret Westwood, Chair; Lady Provost Sara Hulbert and Provost John Hulbert; Marguerite Hunter Blair



Alison Moore-Gwyn, FIT; Marguerite Hunter Blair, Play Scotland; Adam Ingram, MSP

"Children need wilder places to play where they can take risks".

RoSPA

PLAYDAY - our streets too!



2007 was the twentieth anniversary of Playday. It was one of the biggest and best ever in Scotland and we would like to thank everyone who hosted an event.

Playday is partly about giving children, young people and families a great day out, but also aims to get some serious messages about play and children and young people across. Under the theme of *Our streets too!* there were some important messages to think about:

- ✿ children want and need to play in their local streets - and have the right to be there
- ✿ traffic and fear prevent children playing in their local streets and can place them in danger
- ✿ local streets should be planned, designed or adapted so that children and their families feel confident that they can play
- ✿ streets that are good for play are good for the whole community.

Although Playday is only one day, children and young people can benefit from being able to play in the streets near their homes all year round.

For further information on Playday www.playday.org.uk

Do you like playing outside?

**"yes, because I can run
and play in the streets"**

James, aged 6

**"Yes, because it
gives me freedom"**

Lia, aged 9

Nancy Ovens Awards – Raising the Barrier on Best Play

The Nancy Ovens Trust Awards for Play were created in 2004 to recognise best play practices in Scotland. This years awards took place at Evolution Skatepark, Stevenson, East Ayrshire. Full details of the winners are on our website. *Best Community Award for Play* was awarded to The Limekilns Community Project in Fife and Abriachan Forest Trust in Inverness. *Outstanding Contribution to Play* was awarded to Guth Airson Iarrtasan Bis (GAIN), Ness, Isle of Lewis.



Did you know



That the Scottish Government has developed a UNCRC partnership group to ensure that the Governments obligations under the UNCRC are met by Local Authorities when they exercise delegated powers.

The UK is one of the worst places in the Western world to be a child, according to UNICEF 2007 report. For the first time in 200 years children could die before their parents due to the rising levels of obesity. One of the worst culprits is a lack of places to play and because of this parents are fearful of letting children play outdoors.

Children get more physical benefit from kicking a ball around in a park/playground than from PE lessons. The effort of unstructured play burns more calories than the average 70 mins a week of formal games in school.

One in five children in P7 were estimated to be obese in 2004-05 and the research has estimated the growing problem costs Scotland £171M each year.

1 in 6 children have no access to outdoor space/facilities to play.

Children should be taught through **play** until they are at least six, says a group of influential UK Head teachers.

Only one in four 11 year olds meets the national target of an hour of physical exercise a day.

More than 70% of teachers have said that increased use of games consoles, mobile phones, internet and MP3 players has harmed children's ability to interact with their peers.

51% of children and young people have at some point been told to stop playing in the street of area near their home.

There are 11,210 playworkers in Scotland working in after school clubs, holiday playschemes, parks, adventure playgrounds, playbuses and breakfast clubs. This number covers the private, public and voluntary sectors.

Scotland has been dubbed the 'sick man of Europe'. We have to encourage our children to become healthier so we can make major changes to the nation's health in the long term.

43% of adults thought children should not go out unsupervised until they were 14.

Playwork makes up 20% of active leisure sector employment in Scotland, and is the second largest sub-sector.

The decline in "unstructured, loosely supervised" play is adversely affecting children's mental health.

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Article 31

1. States Parties recognise the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.
2. States Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.

England Only

In December The Secretary of State for Children announced a Play Policy for England and £225 million to be spent over three years upgrading at least 3500 play areas.

“Play Scotland is concerned with the current culture to plan risk averse childhoods for our children which results in them having a benign bubbled wrapped play experience. We need to move from paranoia about protecting our children to promoting resilience where our children can learn and grow from adversity and manage risk not eliminate it. What we are all working for is more child friendly communities which support the balanced development of our children to sustain the future of our Nation.”

Coming in 2008:

Scottish Play Policy Forum
Scottish Playworker Website
Scottish Play Commission Findings
Play Scotland Annual Conference
5th National Play Forum

See website for up to date details www.playscotland.org

Play Scotland,
Midlothian Innovation Centre,
Pentlandfield,
Roslin
EH25 9RE

Tel: 0131 440 9070
Fax: 0131 440 9071
Email: sharonforrester@playscotland.org
www.playscotland.org

Charity Number: SC029167

Printed on 100% Recycled Paper