



Annual Review 2013

A photograph of two young boys in a forest. They are inside a shelter made of many vertical and horizontal sticks. The boy in the foreground is kneeling and looking up at the sky. The boy in the background is standing and looking to the side. They are both wearing dark jackets.

**Play for Life**

## Launch of the Play Strategy and the Action Plan

“We want Scotland to be the best place to grow up. A nation which values play as a life-enhancing daily experience for all our children and young people; in their homes; nurseries, schools and communities”

Aileen Campbell MSP, Minister for Children and Young People, Play Strategy Vision



“Play, as we know, is an essential part of a healthy, happy childhood, taking place within the home from birth, through formal and informal learning, and in community settings through the use of public spaces and services”

Aileen Campbell MSP, Minister for Children & Young People, Play Strategy Action Plan

## Play Scotland welcomes Scotland's First National Play Strategy

“Play is vital from the early stages of brain development and bonding with parents and carers, and promotes independence and autonomy for the teenage years”

Aileen Campbell MSP, Minister for Children and Young People

After many years of campaigning Play Scotland were delighted when the Scottish Government launched Scotland's first National Play Strategy in June 2013. This was followed by the Play Strategy Action Plan which was debated in the Scottish Parliament on 31 October 2013.

“Children's play is crucial to Scotland's wellbeing: socially; economically and environmentally. Scotland's first national Play Strategy will contribute directly to all of the Scottish Government National outcomes and specifically to ensure children in Scotland have the best start in life and are ready to succeed, and that Scotland's young people are successful learners, and confident individuals”.

Both these documents can be downloaded from the Play Scotland website [www.playscotland.org/publications](http://www.playscotland.org/publications)

“Play Scotland welcomes this ambitious first plan for Play in Scotland. It represents a truly collaborative approach across sectors and a wide range of policy areas, all of which can have a significant impact on children and young people's play opportunities.

Children have a right to play and the Play Strategy and Action Plan will ensure that this right can be delivered throughout Scotland. Playing contributes to children's quality of life, their wellbeing and their physical, social and brain development.

We are delighted that the Scottish Government will continue to lead on the implementation of the Play Strategy Action Plan, and we hope that it will attract resources from a wide range of funders who work to improve the health and wellbeing of our children and young people”

Marguerite Hunter Blair, Chief Executive

As I read this year's annual report I can remind myself of earlier thoughts that if we were ever going to make the type of transformational change in this small nation of ours that would really help us achieve our aims and contribute to the Government's ambition of making Scotland the "best place to grow up", we would have to make significant gains of the nature of those that we have made in 2013.

When I say, "we", I am minded, too, that such gains can really only be made through working with others. As Tom Peters said "There is no limit to what you can achieve if you don't mind who gets the credit". As can be seen by the breadth of our partnership network, joining with others to achieve goals gives our cause considerable strength.



The Government's Play Strategy is a welcome milestone making play everybody's business and the accompanying Action Plan provides the structure, within which Play Scotland will play a considerable part, to make even more gains over the next three years if the vision is backed by the commitment to make it a reality.

The SQA accreditation of our Strategic Planning for Play qualification consolidated our position as a training provider and marks another important step for the organisation, demonstrating the importance of working with professions outwith the play sector. If play is to be "valued, enhanced and supported" then all sectors have to be convinced and involved in the development of communities which realise children's rights to play.

One consistent barrier to our objective of supporting the play sector to deliver positive opportunities for free play has been the culture of risk aversion. The second edition Managing Risk in Play Provision which was published this year reinforced our efforts to tackle this cultural problem. Our programme of training based on this and the HSE's "proportionate approach" position will hopefully give those working with the Nation's children the confidence in their own competence to make judgements based on balancing benefits and risks in their everyday lives.

As the Chief Executive says elsewhere in this report, this has been a year of great achievement but none of this would have been possible without the hard earned support from the Third Sector Early Intervention Fund for which we are grateful and the tireless efforts of the Chief Executive herself along with the well organised support of Sharon McCluskie in the office and the bringing on board the considerable skills and experience of Debbie Willett and Cherie Morgan. What a team! Thanks, too, to the continued commitment of an active board working inside and out of meetings to support the staff and enhance the organisation's reputation.

**Harry Harbottle**, Chair, Play Scotland

The Professional Development Award: Strategic Planning for Play, is a new Level 8 CPD qualification available from Play Scotland.

This qualification has been designed for organisations, community groups and individuals interested in analysing the play sufficiency of their services.

This qualification is aimed at the wider policy makers, architects, and health and management workers in a local authority or other organisations i.e. third sector.

The qualification is underpinned by the Getting It Right for Play toolkit and the Play Logic Model outlined in the Go Play Outcome and Evaluation Framework.

### The key outcomes of Strategic Planning for Play are:

- Play and Play Spaces
- Play, policy and community
- Evaluating and analysing the impact of play on children and young people
- Evaluating Play Sufficiency



Paul Gallacher of the Scottish Qualifications Authority is very excited about the positive impact of the new Award on children's lives in Scotland: "We are delighted in SQA to have helped develop this Strategic Planning for Play Award. We look forward to the first learners being certificated and making a difference to the lives of Scotland's children through a better understanding and knowledge of play."

### Play Policy and Strategy Training

Scotland's first National Play Strategy and Action Plan have been welcomed by the Scottish Parliament.

Play Scotland have been involved in the development of the Scottish Play Strategy and Action Plan. We have also been key players in the introduction of other play related policy in Scotland. As a result, our staff team has a wealth of experience in the play sector from both a strategic aspect and also a practice approach.

Play Scotland are offering full and half day training sessions on Play Policy and Strategy. Find out how:

- The Play Strategy impacts on YOU, the CHILDREN you work with, your ORGANISATION, and the REGULATORS
- How the Play Strategy can DRIVE national Policies and help DELIVER your Outcomes
- What you can DO to make the child's RIGHT to PLAY a reality in Scotland- develop your own Play Strategy!

### Managing Risk in Play Provision Training

Play Scotland are offering full and half day training sessions on Managing Risk in Play Provision which will focus on:

- Why managed RISK is important for children in their play
- How robust POLICIES and RISK BENEFIT ASSESSMENTS support the provider
- Why PROVIDERS need to advocate for children to have challenge in their play
- The development of a PLAY POLICY to share the vision with parents

"Fantastic, I am intrinsically motivated to go off and do something in my nursery"

Nursery Manager, North Lanarkshire

"Thank you very much for providing such a stimulating and informative seminar... Your light hearted and well illustrated deliveries made it a very enjoyable and informative day"

Perth and Kinross Council.

On 1st February, the UN Committee on the Rights of the child adopted a new General Comment – GC17 (2013) on Article 31 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child - the right of the child to rest, leisure, play, recreational activities, cultural life and the arts. This was launched by the International Play Association (IPA) on 30th September in Geneva.

The General Comment defines all elements of Article 31 and explains their importance in the growth and development of children and their impact on children's overall wellbeing.

Play is defined as: Children's play as behaviour, activity, or processes initiated, controlled and structured by children themselves and it takes place whenever and wherever opportunities arise. Caregivers may contribute to the creation of environments in which it takes place, but play itself is non-compulsory, driven by intrinsic motivation and is undertaken for its own sake, rather than as a means to an end. It involves the exercise of autonomy, physical, mental or emotional activity, and has the potential to take infinite forms, either in groups or alone. These forms will change and adapt throughout the course of childhood. The key characteristics of play are fun, uncertainty, challenge, flexibility and non-productivity. Together, these factors contribute to the enjoyment it produces and the consequent incentive to continue to play. While play is often considered non-essential, the Committee reaffirms that it is a fundamental and vital dimension of the pleasure of childhood, as well as an essential component of physical, social, cognitive, emotional and spiritual development



Article 31 is important to children and young people

We must have space and time for play, recreation and relaxing

Playing helps us stay safe, healthy and happy

Governments MUST find ways to get rid of the things that get in the way of time for play

We must have opportunities to explore and understand our own culture

We should be involved in cultural and artistic activities and be able to go to places like museums, festivals, theatres, concerts and libraries

Government must make sure that none of us are left out

If Governments take all of this seriously, our lives will be happier and healthier

**Vision:** We want Scotland to be the best place to grow up. A nation which values play as a life-enhancing daily experience for all our children and young people; in their homes; nurseries, schools and communities.

This vision seeks to improve the play experiences for all children and young people, including those with disabilities or those from disadvantaged backgrounds. It aims to ensure all children and young people can access play opportunities in a range of settings which offer variety, adventure and challenge. They must be able to play freely and safely while learning to manage risks and make choices about where, how and when they play according to their age, stage, ability and preference.

**Principles: In the home, at nursery and school, and in every community;**

1. We should value all children and young people;
2. We should enable all children and young people to realise their right to play;
3. All children and young people should have space and time to play.

**Play in the Home**

**Ambition:** Our homes and family environments are places where all children and young people enjoy plentiful play opportunities, appropriate to their age, stage, needs and preferences.



## Scotland's National Play Strategy Play at Nursery and School

**Ambition:** All children and young people enjoy high quality play opportunities, particularly outdoor free play in stimulating spaces with access to nature, on a daily basis in early learning and childcare, nursery and school.



## Scotland's National Play Strategy Play in the Community

**Ambition:** All children and young people have sufficient time and space (physical and social) for playing within their community and play is valued, encouraged and supported in communities.



**Ambition:** Scotland provides a positive environment for play through: a professional workforce, strong and visionary leadership, a well resourced third sector and infrastructure, a supportive and informed media.



## Getting it Right for Play

Play Scotland developed the Getting it Right for Play Toolkit and supporting documents to help local authorities respond to Scottish Government policy and guidance on play, and deliver increased play and physical activity for children in Scotland (Early Years Framework 2008/2010). The purpose of the documents are to inform local authorities of the strong evidence base showing the benefits of play to children and communities, and the wide range of policy and guidance already in place from the Scottish Government, which is not widely known nor acted upon across all departments in local authorities. The Toolkit was produced to help local authorities provide **sufficient play opportunities** in terms of **quantity** and **quality**, and allow them to assess easily if:

- Local people including children have been meaningfully involved in developing local play opportunities
- Local attitudes to children are improving
- Benefits as well as risks are being considered in the design and maintenance of play areas
- Relevant agencies and departments are working together to promote local play opportunities
- Children are satisfied with the play opportunities provided

### Improving Outcomes and Children's Quality of Life though Play by improving play opportunities

The Toolkit allows local authorities to assess how satisfied children are with the quality and range of **play opportunities within walking distance** in their areas. It brings together departments across the local authority to look at play in a holistic way and supports the mapping of provision. If all local authorities use the Toolkit two immediate benefits will follow:

- The authority could adopt a more strategic approach to improving its provision and it can measure improvements from the baseline created
- Benchmarking across local authorities would be possible

### Two further benefits from employing this standardised approach are;

- The implementation of Article 12 Meaningful Participation and Article 31 The Child's Right to Play could be robustly assessed across Scotland for UNCRC monitoring and reporting purposes
- It could provide a national dataset to enable NHS Health Scotland to measure the play indicators in Mental Health Indicators for Children and Young People (2011)

“Investing in children's play is one of the most important things we can do to improve children's health and wellbeing in Scotland. I think this Toolkit is a great way for Local Authorities and Communities to come together to encourage more play opportunities in local areas. Children playing outside contributes to the resilience of communities in Scotland”

Sir Harry Burns, Chief Medical Officer Scotland

## Managing Risk in Play Provision: Implementation guide (second edition)

Play Scotland and the UK Play Safety Forum were delighted to launch the second edition of the Managing Risk in Play Provision: Implementation Guide in October 2013. The guide is fully endorsed by the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) and the Government at Westminster. This guidance creates a new landscape in which providers can confidently offer children the challenge and range of activities that best support children's development.

Managing Risk in Play Provision is an invaluable tool for play providers who wish to put children's need for adventure and hands-on experience of the world at the forefront of all they do. The risk-benefit assessment approach described is practical and proportionate and will enable providers to drive forward innovative and inspiring places for play throughout Scotland.

"Striking the right balance between protecting children from the most serious risks and allowing them to reap the benefits of play is not about eliminating risk. Nor is it about complicated methods of calculating risks or benefits. In essence, play is a safe and beneficial activity. Sensible adult judgements are all that is generally required to derive the best benefits to children whilst ensuring that they are not exposed to unnecessary risk."

(Children's Play and Leisure: Promoting a balanced approach.  
Joint HSE/Play Safety Forum High Level Statement)

Play Scotland have been involved in the development of the first and second edition of the Managing Risk in Play Provision guidance. We have also been key players in the introduction of other play related policy in Scotland. As a result, our staff team has a wealth of experience in the play sector from both a strategic aspect and also a practice approach. Check our website for details of all training available in 2014.

In February we held the Play is a Risky Business Seminar with Grounds for Learning, hosted by the Scottish Government in Edinburgh. This Play and Risk Debate event introduced the new High Level Statement on Play and Risk to Health & Safety Officers and Play Providers.

This statement makes clear that Play is important for children's well-being and development and when planning and providing play opportunities, the goal is not to eliminate risk, but to weigh up the risks and benefits.

Those providing play opportunities should focus on controlling the real risks, while securing or increasing the benefits.

"The Health and Safety Executive recently issued a high level statement about our society's obsession with health and safety and the myths surrounding existing advice and I was pleased to endorse this statement as a step towards a better understanding and balanced common-sense approach towards children's play and leisure in Scotland."

Minister for Children and Young People, Aileen Campbell MSP





"I find the Play Scotland web site invaluable for my studies and am interested in learning more on play through your membership"

Child and Youth Student at the University Highlands and Islands

## Membership

### Membership to Play Scotland is now FREE!!

To obtain a form please email [sharonmcccluskie@playscotland.org](mailto:sharonmcccluskie@playscotland.org) or you can download from the website at [www.playscotland.org/who-we-are/membership](http://www.playscotland.org/who-we-are/membership)

Play Scotland offer the following range of services through its information service: Website, research and policy documents, Briefing papers, Information sheets, CPD events, Media articles, newsletters and information emails.

**Website:** [www.playscotland.org](http://www.playscotland.org)

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## Bored kids?

Play Scotland have a ParentsZone and Kids Zone on our web page which has lots of cheap ideas for messy play and creative play.

**Messy Play Booklets** - We have three messy play booklets which are available on pdf.

"Your play booklets and information have been really useful in the work our organisation has been participating in with service users" **Womans Aid**

"Useful resource for our parents groups" **Librarian**

"Play Scotland information on our stand goes like hot cakes!" **CALA**

You can also follow us on Pinterest,  
If there is a Board you would like to see please let us know.



[www.pinterest.com/playscotland/](http://www.pinterest.com/playscotland/)

### Splat Painting

What you need:

- 2/3 colours of paint in plastic containers
- Plastic fly swats or spatulas
- Cut up sponges (these are the flies!)
- Large pieces of paper

**What to do:**

Dip fly (sponge) in paint and throw down onto the paper and swat it!

### Yo-Yo Splat painting

What you need:

- Balloons filled with water
- Elastic bands
- Paint
- Large pieces of paper

**What to do:**

Tie elastic bands to balloons filled with water, dip the bottom of the balloon in paint and boing onto paper! These can also be used as a water yo-yo without the paint and when it bursts even more messy fun.

### Frozen pavement chalk

What you need:

- Ice cube tray
- Water
- Corn starch
- Food colouring

**What to do:**

In a jug put in 50/50 water and cornstarch and add lots of food colouring. Mix and pour into ice cube trays (why not try different shaped trays) and put in freezer. Once frozen take out cubes and use to draw on pavement, once dry the colours will become more vibrant.

Note: Great for Sensory Play

## Chief Executive Comments

2013 started well for Play Scotland, with good progress being made on Scotland First National Play Strategy and innovative work with our UK partners in the high profile Project WildThing. In February we held the Play is a Risky Business Seminar, hosted by the Scottish Government at St Andrews House, Edinburgh with Grounds for Learning. This Play and Risk Debate event introduced the new High Level Statement on Play and Risk to Health & Safety Officers and Play Providers.

Against this backdrop the voluntary sector was very uncertain about its funding future. In Play Scotland this did not prevent us from planning to flourish and grow in the positive play climate. Our optimism was rewarded when we successfully bid into the Third Sector Early Intervention Fund to expand our organisation capacity and services. We now have 4 full time staff, a vibrant board and strong band of volunteers.

We have built very productive partnerships with new organisations including cycling and sport, nature and wildlife, and planning and architecture. These creative connections have supported the Child's Right to Play in a wide range of settings and has helped attract new funding into the Play sector.

Play on the Longest Day was marked by the launch of the Play Strategy Vision document and the Scottish Parliament debated the Play Strategy Action Plan on Halloween. It was immensely pleasing that the Play Strategy received the unanimous endorsement of all our Politicians. **What a great achievement for Play Scotland.**

Once again, Playday was a tremendous success across Scotland with the best media support ever, and more local authorities taking up the challenge. Let's hope all 32 local authorities support Playday in 2014.

Play Scotland support to the Play Sector has been strengthened this year through our expanding training and communication services. The organisation is now approved as a Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) Training Centre, and we have very strong social media following which complements our new **free membership** policy.

Thank you to all our members and followers for supporting the work of Play Scotland. Once again we had a fantastic response to our national conference with great praise for our speakers and their presentations. Our website continues to develop for parents, providers and students. Next year will see a new training section added; all feedback welcome.

Tremendous thanks as always to the staff, board, membership and supporters of Play Scotland. Together we have made the Child's Right to Play a reality in Scotland in 2013!

**Marguerite Hunter Blair**, Chief Executive

## Play Scotland Board

Harry Harbottle  
Andrea McMillan  
John Cleary  
Ross Dunn

Susan Elsley, Simon Knight, John McKendrick, Sue Palmer, Paul Gallacher, Debbie Willett (to April 2013)

**Chair (appointed 2012)**  
**Vice Chair**  
**Treasurer**  
**Company Secretary**



## Play Scotland Staff

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Cherie Morgan  
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**Chief Executive**

**Office & Information Manager**

**Learning & Development Officer**

(joined May 2013)

**Play Development Officer**

(joined June 2013)



**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES  
For the year ended 31st March 2013**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2013 Total Funds £	2012 Total Funds £
<b>INCOMING RESOURCES</b>				
<b>Incoming resources from generated funds</b>				
Voluntary income	125,500	-	125,500	162,684
<b>Incoming resources from charitable activities</b>				
Membership fees	3,237	-	3,237	4,176
Conference fees	5,411	-	5,411	6,450
Other income	315	-	315	12,032
Total income resources	134,463	-	134,463	185,342
<b>RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>				
<b>Charitable activities</b>				
Support costs of charitable activities	122,437	-	122,437	198,019
Governance costs	2,623	-	2,623	2,774
<b>Total resources expended</b>	125,060	-	125,060	200,793
<b>NET INCOMING/(OUTGOING) RESOURCES</b>	9,403	-	9,403	(15,451)
<b>RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS</b>				
<b>Total Funds brought forward</b>	5,885	-	5,885	21,336
<b>Total Funds carried forward</b>	15,288	-	15,288	5,885

- Influencing Policy towards achieving a Statutory commitment to Play
- A Regional Infrastructure to grow and support the Play Sector throughout Scotland
- Support develop and resource opportunities for Play in Scotland
- Lead contributor in the Professional Development of Play and the Play Workforce in Scotland
- Initiate and increase research and academic based information on the benefits of Play, including Free Play, Risk management, Challenges, Play-Friendly Community Spaces

**Play Scotland Objectives**

- Promote Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child - the Child's right to Play
- Seek commitment from the Scottish Government to make Play a Statutory requirement so that Local Authorities provide high quality, affordable and accessible, formal and informal play sites and challenges, supported by a Universal Play Fund
- Work with Scottish Government to ensure that Play is prioritised within Local Authority Planning
- Work with Strategic Partners to deliver good quality Play opportunities in diverse settings for all children and young people in Scotland
- Promote local Play Associations and build clusters, networks and forums to sustain "free play opportunities"
- Promote equity, inclusion and diversity in Play provision
- Provide continuous professional development opportunities for Playworkers
- Work with relevant Sector Skills Councils to ensure Employers needs are met in the Play Sector
- Promote research which demonstrates the benefits of Play
- Commission research into Play Provision in Scotland

The financial statements were approved by the Board on 19th December 2013 and signed on their behalf by Mr. John Cleary, BA, CA., Treasurer

Registered Company Number: SC197785  
Registered Charity Number: SC029167

These Principles establish the professional and ethical framework for playwork and as such must be regarded as a whole. They describe what is unique about play and playwork, and provide the playwork perspective for working with children and young people. They are based on the recognition that children and young people's capacity for positive development will be enhanced if given access to the broadest range of environments and play opportunities.

1. All children and young people need to play. The impulse to play is innate. Play is a biological, psychological and social necessity, and is fundamental to the healthy development and well being of individuals and communities.
2. Play is a process that is freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated. That is, children and young people determine and control the content and intent of their play, by following their own instincts, ideas and interests, in their own way for their own reasons.
3. The prime focus and essence of playwork is to support and facilitate the play process and this should inform the development of play policy, strategy, training and education.
4. For playworkers, the play process takes precedence and playworkers act as advocates for play when engaging with adult led agendas.
5. The role of the playworker is to support all children and young people in the creation of a space in which they can play.
6. The playworker's response to children and young people playing is based on a sound up to date knowledge of the play process, and reflective practice.
7. Playworkers recognise their own impact on the play space and also the impact of children and young people's play on the playworker.
8. Playworkers choose an intervention style that enables children and young people to extend their play. All playworker intervention must balance risk with the developmental benefit and well being of children.

(Playwork Principles Scrutiny Group, Cardiff 2005, Endorsed SkillsActive – May 2005)



## Be A PLAYFUL PaREnT

Jump iN PuDdles Laugh at their jokes

BE FUN Climb Trees EXPLORE

RUN in the PaRK Say YES to PLAY

MaKE a DeN and CaMP overnight Be CrEaTive

Get MESSY PLAY in the MuD LAuGH

PLAy in tHe Rain liSTen Blow BuBBLES

Play MUSIC loud and DANCE Make TIME to PLAY

Smile Make MeMoRies PLAY Clap hands

Have PicNics InSiDE SING silly SoNGs TiCKLe

YoU cAn't gEt Back thEiR chIldhood

– make every MomEnT cOUnt

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