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.

**Our Mission**

To increase awareness of the importance of play and the contribution play makes to the development and wellbeing of children and young people in Scotland. To ensure that all children and young people in Scotland have equal opportunities to participate in diverse and quality play experiences that meet their individual need.

Play Scotland's work is underpinned by Article 31 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the UNCRC General Comment No17 (article 31) which articulates the "the need to create time and space for children to engage in spontaneous play, recreation and creativity, and to promote societal attitudes that support and encourage such activity."

**Priorities for Play Scotland**

- To work with policy makers to embed play as a priority and to press for a statutory duty for play.
- To develop strategic resources to support parents and families, play providers, community planning and policy makers.
- To support workforce development of the playwork sector, the children’s services workforce and other professionals whose strategic decision making impacts on play.
- To promote research into play in Scotland (space to play, time to play, funding for play), and help build robust evidence in order for improvements to be delivered.

**Play Scotland aims to**

- Influence policy towards achieving a statutory commitment to play.
- Develop new and innovative resources and opportunities for play in Scotland.
- Create and support a regional infrastructure to grow and support the play sector throughout Scotland.
- Lead in the professional development of play and the play workforce in Scotland.
- Initiate and participate in play related research, and disseminate research on the benefits of play and the contribution of play to improving children’s outcomes.

---

**Play Scotland Chair’s Review 2015**

Once again a very busy year for Play Scotland, with notable gains and key stages of the Play Strategy delivered.

Particularly pleasing is the effectiveness of our partnership with the Scottish Government in this regard. While it is still our role to be the burr under the blanket keeping pressure on to secure the right to play on behalf of the nation’s children, we have also demonstrated how aims can also be achieved by strong alliances.

This is illustrated by working with the Scottish Government to:

- Jointly recruit and manage a Play Strategy Coordinator Post to support the delivery of the Play Strategy Action Plan: Deborah Hay’s twelve month secondment started in June 2015. We also support the Business Group and wider Play Strategy Group.
- Develop and deliver a digital project designed to encourage ‘more play, every day, in different ways’.

We are also delighted to have completed the Play Map resource that has been developed to support Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) build play into their strategic plans. Written by Dr Susan Elsley, it is intended to help CPPs deliver on their objectives to support the wellbeing of children, young people and their families across communities.

Play Scotland continues to work closely with a wide range of partners and this year have supported the development of the NHS Scotland Place Standard Tool, which complements the Play Map resource.

We remain committed to our Four Nations collaborations in progressing improved play opportunities, and have worked closely with our partners in SkillsActive, APPG Westminster Fit and Healthy Childhood, UK Play Safety Forum, and UK Children’s Play Policy Forum.

Once again I would like to thank all the staff for their achievements this year and my thanks also to the very active board members.

Harry Harbottle, Chair

**Chief Executive’s Report**

Play Scotland has been working to make the child’s right to play a reality in Scotland since 1998. Reflecting back in 2015 on the seventeen year journey so far, we can see that significant progress has been made in achieving our goal. The Play Strategy Conference at the end of the year highlighted this with the many tools, resources, recommendations and policy links for play being showcased. Equally important is Minister for Children and Young People Aileen Campbell’s passion for play, and the diverse nature of our ever increasing partners in play. As Fraser Falconer, Chair of the Play Strategy Group, observed at the close of the conference, a key challenge for us now is to stop talking among ourselves and get the message and the means out to the more unusual suspects!

From our sellout workshop-based Conference in Falkirk in March, to our busy roadshow events throughout the year, we have excelled ourselves in taking the message and the means across Scotland. Working with colleagues in Inspiring Scotland, the Care Inspectorate, local play projects and Local Authorities, we have been impressed at the good practice which is ongoing and heartened by the demand and interest in the resources and toolkits available. This interest is also reflected in our social media following and the high demand for our practical resources for parents.

A huge thank you as always to the hard working and well-travelled staff team, our supportive and insightful Board of Directors, and the massive membership and followers. Play in Scotland is flourishing because of you!
Play for Life Conference
In March we held a sold out workshop based conference, which gave delegates the opportunity to choose ‘hands on’ workshops such as Risky Play; Fire Play and Balloon Modelling and learn Drama based Play, Sensory Play and Adventure Play. Despite the lovely Scottish weather a great day was had by all!
Managing Risk in Children’s Play and Learning

Play Scotland organised 4 seminars with over 200 people attending in March 2015, in partnership with the Care Inspectorate and with Tim Gill as Keynote speaker. These events took place in Inverness, Aberdeen, Glasgow and Edinburgh.

This was part of our campaign to embed risk benefit assessment, rather than risk assessment in children’s play settings, therefore empowering practitioners to provide more challenging and interesting activities.

Children and young people enjoy and benefit from challenging, adventurous play opportunities where they can test themselves and extend their abilities. Risk management in play contexts is different from workplace or factory contexts in one crucial respect - in play provision, a degree of risk is often beneficial, if not essential. Giving children the chance to encounter hazards and take risks provides other benefits, such as the chance to learn how to assess and manage these and similar risks for themselves. Hence accidents and injuries are not necessarily a sign of problems, because of the value of such experiences in children’s learning. Unlike conventional risk assessment, risk benefit assessment takes account of benefits by bringing together consideration of risks and benefits when deciding on appropriate responses.

Judgements about the balance between risks and benefits can be complicated. They involve many factors, and are often partly subjective. For example, children may be unpredictable in their play, and have widely varying interests and competences; different providers may have different aims, goals and values, which may be expressed in widely varying approaches; and the context of a site, and the level and style of supervision, are important local factors. Guidance such as play equipment standards help to set reference points, but do not provide an absolute answer, nor do they take into account local circumstances.

As a result of these events, and because of feedback from practitioners who felt that there was still some difference between what was being said at these events and what inspecting officers were saying ‘on the ground’. The Care Inspectorate, supported by Play Scotland wrote a high level statement to publicise their view on challenging and risky play.

Care Inspectorate statement on risk in play

The Care Inspectorate supports care service providers taking a positive approach to risk in order to achieve the best outcomes for children. This means moving away from a traditional deficit model that takes a risk-averse approach, which can unnecessarily restrict children’s experiences attending registered services, to a more holistic risk-benefit model. For example, we encourage services to use risk assessment to support children to enjoy potentially hazardous activities such as woodwork using real tools, exploring nature and playing in the mud and rain. We do not expect written risk assessments to be carried out for daily play activities.

Driving Change for children and young people through play

Play Scotland organised a further series of events in partnership with Inspiring Scotland and the Scottish Government, mainly to promote the Care Inspectorate’s statement on Play in Risk and the Play Ranger Toolkit. Four of these events took place in November and December 2015, in Stirling, Dundee, Inverness and Oban, with a further two events planned for February 2016 in Melrose and Dumfries.

Street Play

Play Scotland administers Scotland’s Play Council, and at the September meeting of the Play Council, Anna Bambridge from Battlefield Community Project spoke about the need for a change in legislation or guidance to Local Authorities to allow children to play on the streets outside their homes.

Street play closures have been very popular in many communities and often, when children come out of their homes to play, adults come out as well, leading to increased community cohesion and neighbour awareness.

“Together we all need to find a way to make this a free and easy process. It is a simple effective way of giving children quality time outdoors playing physically with young and old in their own community. The benefits are enormous and well documented” (Anna Bambridge, community activist)

This led to the first ask on the Manifesto for Play 2016

Scotland’s Play Council is calling on all politicians to make street play a priority by

- Providing guidance on street play to Local Authorities to ensure that children are able to play and feel welcome in their communities
- Seeking interpretation of the Road Traffic Regulations Act to allow street closures for play; removal of ‘No Ball Games’ signs; giving children and young people a role in Community Planning

Since then, the campaign has grown momentum and there are meetings planned involving the Minister and relevant officials to explore and discuss solutions to this issue.
Introducing the Play Map

A Resource for Community Planning Partnerships

Valuing play, every day

Written by Dr Susan Elsley

The Play Map has been developed to support Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) build play into their strategic plans. It will help CPPs deliver on their objectives to support the wellbeing of children, young people and their families across communities:

- **Supporting play at home** - so that all children and young people have plentiful play opportunities appropriate to their age, stage, needs and preferences
- **Supporting play in nurseries and schools (and other early learning and childcare settings)** - so that children and young people have high quality play opportunities every day, particularly outdoors
- **Supporting play in communities** - so that children and young people have sufficient time and space for playing and are welcomed in their communities
- **Ensuring positive support for play** - through commitment to play across all sectors and services and within communities.

In 2013, the UN issued a General Comment on Article 31 of the Convention, clarifying that this means that governments have obligations to ‘promote, protect and fulfil’ children’s right to play by means of appropriate legislation, planning and budgets.

The Play Map describes and gives examples of 3 actions that CPPs can undertake to support their commitment to play:

**ACTION 1:**
Uphold principles underpinning a commitment to play

**ACTION 2:**
Undertake mapping of play provision and opportunities in communities

**ACTION 3:**
Embed play in CPP activities

For more information contact Play Scotland
Info@playscotland.org 0131 440 0456

Company Number: 017885 Scottish Charity Number: SC029167
Manifesto for Play 2016

Play is a fundamental right for children and is an essential part of every child's development. But hardly a week goes by without a study suggesting that children and young people in Scotland don't play out nearly enough. A recent survey for The Wildlife Trusts revealed that over a quarter of children aged 8-15 had never played outside by themselves - and over a third hadn't done this in the past six months.

Freedom, independence and opportunity to play is restricted for many children and young people despite growing evidence of the long-term health benefits of playing, including boosting physical activity levels which helps to tackle child obesity, and supporting children to become more resilient. Play initiatives can benefit families and the wider community by encouraging neighbourliness and improved community spirit.

Scotland’s Play Council is calling for all political parties to further support and invest in children’s play because of the proven benefits to children, families and communities and pledge to make Scotland the best place to play.

Scotland’s Play Council is calling on all politicians to make street play a priority by
• Providing guidance on street play to Local Authorities to ensure that children are able to play and feel welcome in their communities (eg interpretation of the Road Traffic Regulations Act to allow street closures for play; removal of No Ball Games signs; giving children and young people a role in Community Planning)

Scotland’s Play Council is calling on all politicians to protect informal play and recreational spaces by
• Ensuring play spaces are protected in the same way as playing fields by establishing a statutory open spaces playing fields by establishing a statutory open spaces consultation that ensures play sufficiency assessments are carried out before redesignating established play spaces

Scotland’s Play Council is calling on all politicians to support the Play Strategy for Scotland by
• Promoting positive messages about the benefits of play to parents, carers and cross-sector professionals whose work has an impact on children and young people's play opportunities (eg planning; environment; transport)
• Providing a dedicated play fund aimed at reducing inequalities to support local play services and extend good practice.

Playful Places: Making Scotland the Best Place to Play

How can we prioritise play to create stronger communities?

Scotland’s first National Play Strategy conference was held on 18 November 2015 in Edinburgh’s Murrayfield conference centre. It was free to attend and full to capacity! Minister for Children and Young People Aileen Campbell welcomed all the delegates and challenged us all to take the play strategy tools and resources to a broader audience and help build a far reaching network of Play Champions.

The conference explored
• How play contributes to achieving local and national outcomes & priorities
• The opportunities presented by play as a new Key Change area for the Early Years Collaborative
• Tools developed specifically for Community Planning partners to build play more effectively into their strategic plans
• Latest research findings around play and good practice from across Scotland and beyond

National Play Strategy Top Ten

• Remove all No Ball Games signs by Play Day 2017
• Open up school playgrounds
• Extend and enforce 20 mph zones
• Support community efforts to extend all Street Play
• Pilot the Play Map resources (GIRFP) and Place Standard & share learning
• Create an area-wide Play Strategy with focus on equality and inclusion
• Support a network of Play Champions at local and regional level
• Improve play training and practice in early learning, childcare and schools
• Promote the use of the principles of Universal Design in making spaces for play
• Protect and prioritise wild and natural play spaces
The 29th National Playday was held on 6th August across the UK. The Playday 2015 campaign theme was Play more...

The Playday Play more... campaign was calling on everyone to help make sure that children and young people across the UK have the time, freedom and space to play more. As well as promoting children’s right to play, the campaign highlighted that playing more is crucial for children’s health, well-being and happiness.

Every year support for Playday and Play on the Longest Day, which is held in June, continues to grow across Scotland, as children and young people and communities enjoying play out to celebrate the importance of play.

Information & Communication Services

Membership

Membership to Play Scotland is now FREE!! To obtain a form please email info@playscotland.org or download from website at 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

For fast and up to date information on Play follow us on
Twitter: www.twitter.com/playscotland
Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/pages/Play-Scotland/223667477759513

Bored kids?

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

Messy Play Booklets

We have four messy play booklets which are available free as a pdf, a new booklet will be published in 2016.

You can also follow on us on Pinterest www.pinterest.com/playscotland/

If there is a Board you would like to see please let us know.

For further details contact Sharon McCluskie on Tel: 0131 440 0456
Email: sharonmccluskie@playscotland.org
**Play Scotland Board**

Harry Harbottle – Chair  
John Cleary – Treasurer  
Ross Dunn – Company Secretary  
Dr Simon Knight, Dr John McKendrick, Paul Gallacher,  
Ali McDonald, Dr Fiona Munro

**Play Scotland Staff**

Marguerite Hunter Blair, Chief Executive  
Email: marguerite@playscotland.org  
Cherie Morgan, Play Development Officer  
Email: cheriemorgan@playscotland.org  
Deborah Hay, Play Strategy Co-ordinator  
(secondment June 2015 – 2016)  
Email: deborahhay@playscotland.org  
Sharon McCluskie, Information & Communication Officer  
Email: sharonmccluskie@playscotland.org

---

**PLAY SCOTLAND**  
**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**  
For the year ended 31st March 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>INCOMING RESOURCES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted Funds</td>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrestricted Funds</td>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incoming resources from generated funds</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>220,876</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary income</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incoming resources from charitable activities</td>
<td>8,105</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership fees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference fees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total income resources</td>
<td>8,105</td>
<td>220,876</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RESOURCES EXPENDED</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted Funds</td>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charitable activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support costs of charitable activities</td>
<td>17,507</td>
<td>220,876</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance costs</td>
<td>3,019</td>
<td>3,019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total resources expended</td>
<td>20,526</td>
<td>220,876</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NET INCOMING/(OUTGOING) RESOURCES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outgoing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reconciliation of funds</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Funds brought forward</td>
<td>23,662</td>
<td>23,662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Funds carried forward</td>
<td>11,341</td>
<td>11,341</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The financial statements were approved by the Board on 19th November 2015 and signed on their behalf by  
Mr. John Cleary, BA, CA., Treasurer  
Registered Company Number: SC197785  
Registered Charity Number: SC029167

---

Children learn through play!

[www.playscotland.org](http://www.playscotland.org)
About Play Scotland

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.