

ANNUAL REPORT 2016 / 2017



**Forest School SNPT
“Getting children very muddy since 2001”**

FUNDERS



ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2016-2017

Forest School SNPT continues to deliver a diverse range of projects and training, playing an important role in connecting children and their families to nature in Swansea, Neath and Port Talbot.

We feel part of a bigger national movement where research is coming out daily supporting the many benefits that making space for nature has on people's lives, from learning and play to relaxation and well-being.

The big news this year happened right at the end of March 2017 when we were fortunate to get a windfall from the Play Sustainability Fund through the Play Team of the City and County of Swansea. This money enabled us to launch a partnership with Llys Nini animal centre who own a large area of woodland and wetland in Penllergaer. We have built a small fenced site with storage shed, compost toilet, covered shelter and permanent mud kitchen and we are really excited about the possibilities for the future as it's the first area that we've been able to do this. We've already expanded our Seedlings sessions there, had a number of school days with Clwyd primary and hosted some training sessions. There are a number of volunteer development days coming up next year which we hope will make it even more inviting and exciting.

Our four year-long project with Blaenymaes Primary School came to an end this summer due to the end of funding. Children from the reception classes enjoyed a range of exciting forest school activities at Penllergare Valley Woods and brought their families along to see what they had been doing.

I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to all for the superb work undertaken throughout the year by our staff and volunteers. Grateful thanks go to our funders for awarding us essential grants and to our partners who support us throughout our work.

I would like to thank the Forest School SNPT staff, trustees and advisers for their work and valued support and finally, say a big thank you to all the children and young people, their teachers and support staff and their families for participating.

Jessie Kidd

Chair



“They’re really relaxed, psychologically it’s a safe space”

STAFF

The current core team comprises Chris Dow (Director), Holli Messam (Project Support), Karen Jones & Pixie Taylor (Training and Projects).

The pool of session leaders and assistants include Angie Rekers-Power, Emma North, Peni Ediker, Kate Davies, Tonya Evans, Steph Dixon, Pam Mayford and Sasha North, Sian Elaine, Izzy Dixon, Tim Phillips & Ruth Evans (accounts).

VOLUNTEERS

We have a large network of volunteers who get involved with all of our projects and are an essential part of being able to deliver high quality Forest School experiences. This year 17 people volunteered 170 days towards projects – that’s 40 more days than last year.

PROJECTS

Our long term project with Blaenymaes Primary School concluded this year at Cadle Mill in Penllergare Valley Woods. Clwyd Primary joined us on this site last year and is continuing next year here and at our new site in Llys Nini.

Our Forest School parent and toddler group continues to go from strength to strength with morning and afternoon sessions on a Tuesday and Wednesday in Bishop’s Wood and new sessions Thursday morning and Friday afternoon at Llys Nini.

Our Calan DVS partnership continued with a second project in Waun Galed woods, Margam working with children who have been in situations of domestic abuse.

A small grant from Santander allowed us to set up a 16 week project with the Swansea Youth Offending Service working with young people under Intensive Supervision which we were able to extend due to cost savings in the budget.

We continue to run play schemes, supported by a Swansea Children and Young People grant during the school holidays, which have been very well attended. We used sites in Kilvey Hill in partnership with the Kilvey Woodland Volunteers, West Cross, UWTSD Townhill campus, Penllergare Valley Woods, Lower Swansea Valley, Bishop's Wood and Parkmill.

We continue to run family forest school days in holiday time with Swansea Parklives project which is a great way for younger children and their parents to do Forest School together.

September 2016 to end of August 2017

We delivered project sessions on **175** days creating **3012** participant days (longer projects will have the same participants visiting regularly).

The following table shows the breakdown of ages of participants having a Forest School experience in the last 12 months.

Project	Days/ session	Age group	Number of participant days (In brackets estimated number of beneficiaries)
Blaenymaes Primary	31	Reception	930 (60)
Seedlings	42	Pre-school	504 (40)
Calan DVS	20	Primary	120 (24)
Clwyd Primary	15	Nursery – Year 2	450 (180)
Parklives	10	All	150 (250)
Play schemes	11	8-12	150 (100)
Sketty Primary	5	Primary	135 (27)
Craig Gwladus	5	Pre-school	70 (18)
YOS	20	Teens	120 (6)
Ysgol Brynymor	2	Year1 & Year 2	79 (52)
Pentrehafod STF	4	Year 9	24 (6)
Think Family	1	Adults	30
Eggtooth	1	Year 9	14
Brownies	1	Primary	11
Rhydaman Primary	1	Primary	66
Alderman Davies Church In Wales School	1	Year 6	56
Children's Party	1	Pre-school	11
St Thomas Flying Start	1	All	48
Ty Hapus Nursery	1	Pre-school	20
Chernobyl Kids	1	Age 9 – 10	9
Arts Council	1	Adults	15
TOTAL	175		3012 (1043)

We have continued to use our sites at Penllergare Valley Woods, Bishop's Wood, Parkmill, Townhill UWTSD campus, Margam and West Cross.

Q: “What have you gained from the training?”

A: “I love how creative learning outdoors can be”

TRAINING


Training numbers have been steady and this continues to provide a much needed element of income to the organisation. We delivered **44** days of training with **245** trainees creating **492** participant days of training.

Training	Days/session	Training numbers	Number of participant days
Gwaenfarren INSET	1	19	19
Ynystawe School INSET	2	20	20
Crwys Primary INSET	1	25	25
Level 1 Outdoor Learning	2.5	5	12.5
BAVO Level 1	2.5	8	20
OLP Level 2 (spring and autumn)	6	5	30
Level 2 Forest School Assistant (spring and autumn)	8	5	40
OPP Agored Level 2	3	9	27
Level 3 Forest School Leader (spring and autumn)	7	15	105
Level 3 Coastal Top Up	2	3	6
First Aid (spring and autumn)	4	19	76
Bridgend Flying Start	1	45	45
Family Information Service	1	11	11
Graduate Teaching Programme	1	19	19
Gower College	1	22	22
UWTSD Teachers Society Carmarthen	1	15	15
TOTAL	44	245	492

“Patience, resilience, sticking at something – all good transferable skills that we need in life”



MARKETING

-  Our presence on social networks continues to increase with 1437 Facebook followers and 1197 followers on Twitter. These are important ways for us to let people know what we are up to and to spread the word about how important things like Forest School and Outdoor Learning are for children. We are now developing a presence on Instagram too with some of our best photos.



SUPPORTERS AND PARTNERS

Funding

This year has brought funds from Gower Sustainable Development Fund, Swansea Children and Young Peoples Fund, Swansea Play Sustainability Fund, Communities 2.0, Natural Resources Wales, The Ironmongers Company, The Oakdale Trust, Gwalia Housing Trust, Santander, Big Lottery Awards for All Wales.

Income

Other income has come from fees from running our popular Agored Cymru training and running bespoke training for groups.

Office Space

C&C Swansea Nature Conservation Team support our office space, storage space and give permission to use the woods at Bishop's Wood Countryside Centre, Caswell.

Woodlands / Outdoors Used

Llys Nini RSPCA Animal Centre, Natural Resources Wales (formerly the Forestry Commission), City and County of Swansea, Penllergare Trust, Neath Port Talbot CBC at Gnoll Park and Margam Park.

Training

Cambium Ltd - Agored Training Accreditation

Outdoor Learning Wales Training Network – member on steering group



🍁 THANKS TO

- 🍁 All the staff who have put so much time and effort into the projects and have provided an excellent quality of service.
- 🍁 The Trustees and members of the Management Committee for their continuing support. Deborah Hill, Sandra Morgan, Tori Wright, Jess Kidd and incoming Trustees Tim Orell and Richard Jones.
- 🍁 A special mention goes to Carolyn Davies and Helen Wright who have left the Management Committee this year but to whom we would like to express our sincere gratitude for all the help they have shown us over many years.
- 🍁 All our wonderful volunteers. Sasha North, Steph Dixon, Sian Elaine, Anais Denner-Roure, Izzy Dixon, Tim Philips, Lee Thomas, Jude Burroughs, Naomi O'Brien, Lucy Thornycroft, Victoria Young, Kate Pratt, Chloe Naylor, Norma Greene, Kate Bilsborough, Julie Hockin, Kate Barret-Plows.
- 🍁 All the children, young people and teachers and project workers who have participated, enjoyed the service we offer and asked for more!

Chris Dow – Director



“By this point they’d usually be bothering me to go, but they’re really chilled, must be just being here, we’re seeing the therapeutic value of the woods” (support worker for Youth Service project)