

**EAST LoTHIAN
FOREST SCHOOL
AUTUMN GATHERING
2010**



Interest in Forest School has been increasing in East Lothian since the pilot project in Saltoun Primary in 2007. A Forest Education Initiative Local Cluster Group was initiated, with one role being the development of Forest School in East Lothian. This group received funding from Equally Well “Support from the Start” – an initiative set up to tackle health inequalities. This has been utilised to provide a variety of Forest School training opportunities for nearly 60 council employees, school and nursery staff, volunteers and independents, as well as purchasing essential outdoor kit:

- Places on Edinburgh based Level 3 courses
- Two East Lothian based Level 3 courses
- East Lothian based Level 2 course
- Nature Nurture course - Nursery and Early Years staff
- Individual school and shared kit resource

In essence – East Lothian now has not only fully accredited Forest School Leaders (and many mid training), but qualified support staff and volunteers, working with all age groups - with a supply of the all important wellies and waterproofs!

This has enabled 28 Forest Schools to take place so far in East Lothian (up to August 2010) – with many more longer term projects imminent. To celebrate this achievement, East Lothian Countryside Ranger Service and Equally Well hosted the first East Lothian Forest School Leader Gathering on the 10th September 2010 at Yellowcraig, near Dirleton.

The event provided an excellent opportunity to bring those just out of training together to network and support each other – while also providing a wide variety of ideas and practical activities to enhance the learning opportunities provided by Forest School.

There now follows some information about the event – including photographs and comments. Plans are afoot for the next gathering.....watch this space!

If you would like to get involved in the development of Forest School in East Lothian or would like more information, please contact Steven Wray at swray@eastlothain.gov.uk or Leigh Shearer at lshearer@eastlothian.gov.uk



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Displays

- East Lothian Countryside Ranger Service and your Forest School
- Forest School in East Lothian – the story so far
- East Lothian Forest School practitioners - by cluster
- East Lothian Outdoor Learning Service (Formerly Outdoor Education Service)
- Forest School kit
- John Muir Award
- East Lothian Access Officer
- East Lothian Biodiversity Officer
- Edinburgh and Lothians FEI Cluster group
- Sandersons Wynd – Forest School in action
- Equally Well



Workshops

- **Natural Art** (Karin Chipulina)
Making elder beads / jewellery / natural dyes / green man clay faces / Japanese Hapa Zome printing
- **Nature Connections** (Kate Hedges. Blue Skies)
Exploring Jon Young Core Routines. Expanding our senses / animal forms and imitations / Journaling
- **Tracks and trails** (Ranger Service)
Scouts tracking trail / unnatural trail / real mammal and bird footprints, food remains, poo etc
- **Tree id** (Ranger Service)
Identification techniques / Folklore / traditional uses / measuring / tree safety (disease signs etc) / plant uses
- **Practical Skills** (Aline Hill)
Using ropes. Swings / ladders / tightrope
- **Open Fire Cooking** (Ranger Service)
Fire management and safety / menu ideas / Cooking pitta pizzas, cinnamon apples, banana boats
- **Traditional Firelighting Skills** (Lorraine Johnston. Mobex)
Types of natural tinder / fire structure / flint and steel / fire strike / bow drill use



“Just the practical supportive help I needed – encouragement and comradeship”

“Loved the clay faces in particular – a lovely calming activity and a great way to explore emotions”

“Enjoyed the soup / sharing experiences and meeting others of like mind – not feeling the only one in the woods”



“Inspirational. More of the same please.”

“Fab! Makes me want to use ideas straight away”

“Lots of good advice. Never thought poo could be so exciting!”

“Excellent afternoon. Very useful workshops and in making contacts”

“Fun games for different ages that I can use – encouraged us to participate out of comfort zone”



“Need policy makers and management to value Forest School so staff can be freed up to complete programmes - we are all keen”

“Great to meet other forest school people in area to arrange new plans”



“More of the same please. Can we sleep over?”

“A real inspiration! Lots of ideas and aspirations”

“Would have liked more time. Thoroughly enjoyable. Thank you”

“Good useful straightforward ideas I will put into practice☺”

“Great to meet others, enjoyed learning other skills to use with youngsters”

“Best CPD I’ve even done”

“Concerned just latest idea and will not be sustained”

“More bushcraft / practical skills training please”

“Must do more gatherings like this”

“Could you do more part time training rather than block weeks?”

“More opportunities for Level 2 training”

