

Education and Culture Committee

Outdoor Learning

Submission from Museums Galleries Scotland

4 December 2013

Dear Sir or Madam

Education and Culture Committee: Evidence session on outdoor learning, 10 December 2013

Please find below evidence from Museums Galleries Scotland, on behalf of the museums and galleries sector in Scotland.

Background:

Museums Galleries Scotland is the National Development Body for the museum sector in Scotland. Our role is to work collaboratively to invest in and develop a sustainable museum and galleries sector for Scotland, in line with the aims of *Going Further: The National Strategy for Scotland's Museums and Galleries*.

Guided by the **vision** of the National Strategy for Scotland's Museums and Galleries:

"Scotland's museums and galleries will be ambitious, dynamic and sustainable enterprises: connecting people, places and collections; inspiring, delighting and creating public value".

We work with a sector of over 400 museums and galleries, developing, supporting and enabling them to meet their objectives in a number of ways, though offering strategic investment and skills development opportunities, maintaining and developing standards, providing information and signposting to sources of advice, building networks and partnerships and sharing best practice.

Museum and gallery learning:

The museums and galleries sector supports delivery of the Curriculum for Excellence by working in collaboration with Education Scotland and with individual schools and other learning organisations to develop object-based learning programmes.

Museums bring heritage learning experiences into the classroom through 'loan boxes' and delivery of object-based learning sessions by museum staff in local schools, customised to meet the learners' needs. Glow is just one tool that can be used to make museum learning resources available to museums.



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Museums Galleries Scotland is a company limited by guarantee registered in Scotland (No. 74264)

Museums Galleries Scotland is a charity registered in Scotland (No. SCO15593)

The value of learning inspired by objects and paintings is explored in Education Scotland's Exploring object based learning: Hands On Guide:

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/resources/e/exploringobjectbasedlearning/puttingideasintopractice.aspx>

Outdoor learning provided by museums and galleries:

Many museums and galleries provide outdoor spaces for learning in addition to their internal learning spaces. Outdoor learning can provide a refreshing change to the classroom environment, and spaces managed by museums often have learning programmes with a variety of themes, and with links made to the Curriculum for Excellence, ready to be customised for use by any school.

Many museums employ professional museum and education staff with considerable experience of working with schools to support engagement with their collections.

Invariably museums have websites, as a first point of call for schools to explore the availability of museum outdoor learning resources. In addition MGS has an online museum search function to help schools to find museums in their local area to work with: <http://www.museumsgalleriesScotland.org.uk/scotlands-museums/>

Outdoor learning spaces available through museums vary hugely and could include access to a park, sculpture garden or other outdoor areas surrounding the museum. I have listed below a few examples of outdoor learning spaces provided by museums and galleries:

1. Highland Folk Museum

The Highland Folk Museum has extensive grounds and outbuildings with a year-long programme of associated indoor and outdoor activities.

<http://www.highlandfolk.com/education.php>

2. Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, Glasgow

Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum is situated within a public park and the museum has partnered with a number of organisations to deliver learning sessions which explore internal and external learning resources available to the museum and art gallery:

<http://www.rspb.org.uk/livingclassrooms/kelvingrove.aspx>

3. Lauriston Castle, City of Edinburgh Museums

Lauriston Castle has extensive grounds, and the outbuildings and outdoor space are used to deliver a varied and year-long learning programme to complement indoor learning:

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10151891124254682.1073741908.269712989681&type=3>

What could help support access to outdoor learning with museums and learning in museums by schools:

Museums Galleries Scotland is working with Education Scotland to support access to heritage based learning.

Further signposting from Education Scotland resources to museum resources, and case studies of best practice would support teachers to consider the value of museum learning.

Teacher training and CPD for teachers on museum learning opportunities would help teachers to understand the value of collaborative learning work with museums and galleries.

Contact information:

We hope that the information above is helpful. For further information, or if you have any questions relating to museum outdoor learning, please do not hesitate to contact Helena Gillis, Collections and Engagement Manager, Museums Galleries Scotland.