

November 2009

Dear HSP Network member,

In July 2009, the Heritage Sector Partnership (HSP) was given a small grant by the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom. The HSP is using these funds to help under-resourced heritage organisations to develop their learning services and to provide support and guidance to the whole sector on Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) and the Quality Badge; in order to do this, we have developed a number of different resources and tools – most of which are now available for you to make the most of:

Develop your learning service with a telephone advice session – You should all have received information about the 50 free telephone advice and guidance sessions. These sessions were created to provide heritage organisations, particularly those with limited time and/or expertise, with an opportunity for discussing the learning services they offer with an experienced heritage education practitioner (adviser). The adviser will be able to give friendly and informal advice relating to a particular problem or idea and suggest ways in which the services might be developed. We hope that in some cases this will enable organisations to feel more confident about meeting the Quality Indicators and applying for the Quality Badge. The telephone sessions are nearly, but not quite booked up! So if you are interested in participating, then do please contact the GEM office on 01634 853 424 or office@gem.org.uk and we can see if we have a session time to suit you.

Stuck with the SEF? Not sure how your practice measures up? Read on.. – A second major element of the HSP support package is a selection of written resources hosted on the GEM website – http://www.gem.org.uk/lotc/lotc_resources/lotc_res_menu.html. These resources have been developed in consultation with the sector and written by experienced heritage education practitioners. As with the telephone sessions, they have been designed to be of particular use to those heritage organisations without education expertise or with limited resources or capacity to attend training. The resources include: tools to help you with your Quality Badge application; materials to support you in developing learning services at your organisation and lists of useful LOtC publications and websites. We very much hope that you find these resources useful and early in the 2010, we will be contacting you by email once again to ask you to evaluate your use of these resources and whether or not they have met your needs.

Other LOtC news.....

Call to support the Learning Outside the Classroom Early Day Motion (EDM) – The Council for Learning Outside the Classroom is asking everyone committed to LOtC to write to their local MP to ask them to sign EDM number 4. An EDM is a written motion in the House of Commons which all MPs are free to sign. EDMs that are signed by a small number of MPs achieve very little. EDMs that are signed by a hundred or more MPs have a far more significant effect.

Therefore the help of everyone in the LOtC community who cares about the future of learning outside the classroom is urgently needed. The EDM states:

That this House notes the conclusion of an Ofsted report that learning outside the classroom contributes significantly to raising standards; recognises that learning through experience is a powerful educational tool; applauds the work put into the Manifesto for Learning Outside the Classroom; regrets that despite this work, its aspiration to provide all young people with a wide range of quality experiences outside the classroom, including one or more residential visits, is not yet embedded in all schools; and calls on the Government to find a way of making this a reality for all young people, including those who need financial support.

You can write to your MP at the House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA or by email link at http://www.parliament.uk/mpslordsandoffices/mps_and_lords/alms.cfm#A. If you don't know them personally, you will need to explain that you are one of their constituents. You might want to explain briefly why it's important that they sign the EDM but you've no need to spell out the content of the EDM – just ask them to sign EDM number 4.

LOtC Awards for Innovation & Excellence – These awards, now in their second year, recognise the commitment of educational establishments providing exciting and challenging learning experiences beyond the classroom. The regional winners and an overall national winner will be announced at the LOtC Conference on 3 December 2009. Keep an eye on the website for the results: <http://www.lotc.org.uk/News-and-events/LOtC-Awards-for-Innovation-and-Excellence-2009>

New primary curriculum announced – It has been announced by ministers, as part of the Children, Schools and Families Bill, that the outcomes of the primary curriculum consultation have been accepted and the new primary national curriculum should be established in law. This announcement follows other recent developments including the acceptance of the revised subject level descriptions and the decision to make PSHE education statutory. You can access the latest news about the primary curriculum at <http://www.thinkingprimary.co.uk/>

GEM/GEM Cymru Quality Badge training event – This event aims to improve your awareness and understanding of the LOtC Quality Badge scheme and also improve your chances of making a successful application. The event will take place at St Fagans National History Museum, Cardiff on Monday 7 December, 2009. For more information and to book, visit <http://www.gem.org.uk/>

Kind regards,

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