

# Learning Outside the Classroom!

*What you need to know!*

**ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION FORUM**

## **Conference Report**

**23 September 2008**

***Share Centre, Lisnaskea***

### ***Outcomes:***

- *Provide EEF members with the opportunity to keep up to date with essential requirements needed to run a successful environmental education programme, including the new 'quality' badge for providers, updating of POCVA legislation and policy and practice requirements for educational visits.*
- *Review good practice examples from the sector and local schools, sharing ideas on what works and the problems encountered.*
- *Preparing the sector and schools for the challenges that lie ahead!*



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Share Centre, Venue of the EEF Autumn Conference 2008

# Welcome and Introduction

The Environmental Education Forum's Autumn Conference was held on Tuesday 23 September 2008 at the Share Holiday Village, Lisnaskea, Co Fermanagh.

Liz Wallace (WELB / Magilligan Field Centre) chaired the day and explained that the purpose of the conference was threefold:

- *Provide EEF members with the opportunity to keep up to date with essential requirements needed to run a successful environmental education programme, including the new 'quality' badge for providers, updating of POCVA legislation and policy and practice requirements for educational visits.*
- *Review good practice examples from the sector and local schools, sharing ideas on what works and the problems encountered.*
- *Preparing the sector and schools for the challenges that lie ahead!*

Liz then welcomed the conference's keynote speaker Tony Thomas, Chief Executive of the Field Studies Council who had kindly agreed to give the assembled delegates an overview of the new quality provider's badge being introduced.

## Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Providers Quality Assurance Badge

**Tony Thomas**  
**Field Studies Council**

Tony opened his presentation by giving a brief rundown of the new LOtC quality badge scheme for providers. This is currently being piloted in England and will be launched there from January 2009.

The Quality Badge is designed to help schools identify organisations and venues offering high quality teaching and learning experiences and which manage risk effectively. The Quality Badge brings together a number of existing schemes that cover safety on educational visits. It offers a quality standard for sectors that previously have not had a quality assurance scheme at all (e.g. museums and galleries, field study centres).



Adventurous  
education



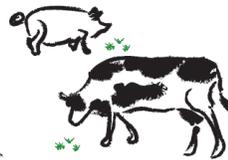
Natural  
environment



Built  
environment



School  
grounds



Farming and  
countryside



Sacred space



Heritage



Creativity and the  
arts

The Badge will cover a variety of different Learning outside the Classroom sectors, not just Environmental Education.

The indicators on the following slides are supported by examples of evidence that assessors may request as part of an assessment visit.

The examples were agreed at a workshop with Awarding Bodies and are only intended to be suggestions and indications of what assessors may seek as evidence, rather than an exhaustive list. Providers do therefore not need to be able to demonstrate how they meet every example. Assessors should seek to use their own judgement and sector specific knowledge to gather appropriate evidence.

Most examples take the form of evidence to be obtained and reviewed or sought through discussions with the provider. The assessor will need to satisfy themselves that they have enough evidence to show that the provider meets each indicator. Where providers have completed self assessments, the assessor should validate the evidence during the on site visit and may need to request further information in some areas to achieve comfort over the evidence offered.

The indicators will be supported by sector specific exemplars being developed by Awarding Bodies and CfBT.

## **Pre Visit**

### **The provider:**

#### **1. Has a process in place to assist users to plan the learning experience effectively.**

**Important note: Planning must involve communication in some form between users and providers, this may involve offering a pre-visit, a telephone conversation, a clearly laid out brochure including contact details for users to ask questions of the provider or a website with opportunities to communicate with the provider. The assessor should use their own judgement to determine appropriate communication methods. Whichever method is used, the following information needs to be gathered, advised on etc.**

A) Offers guidance/information on **or** agrees roles and responsibilities of the user and the provider i.e. who does what;

B) Captures **or** agrees learning objectives;

C) Offers a menu **or** plans (where necessary) a tailored programme of work, with a purpose for each activity, linked to learning objectives;

D) Takes into account, any equality, diversity and inclusion issues and needs;

E) Offers guidance/information on **or** agrees a process with the user, for assessing learner progress during the overall experience;

F) Offers guidance/information on (could include resources/activities) **or** discusses with the user preparation and follow up to the visit; and

G) Offers guidance/ information on **or** agrees with the user how the experience will be evaluated.

#### **2. Provides accurate information about its offer. Therefore:**

A) Ensures that any promotional / written materials provide an accurate description of amenities, facilities and services provided and contact details; and

B) Has charging policies that state honestly the charges of the experience.

## **During the Visit**

#### **3. Provides activities, experiences and resources which meet learner needs. Therefore:**

A) Offers a variety of activities delivered through a range of teaching and learning styles;

*B) Equipment and materials are suitable for tasks/activities, the age and ability of the learners, are current and in good working order;*

*C) Makes good use of their location;*

*D) Provides activities, experiences and resources which meet learner needs. Therefore: The amenities, facilities and services are as described in promotional / written materials;*

*E) Where there are on site educational or instructional staff, staff are competent; and*

*F) Where there are on site educational or instructional staff, there is a process in place for monitoring and evaluating the quality of their teaching / instruction.*

## **Post Visit**

### **The provider:**

#### **4. Reviews the experience and acts upon feedback. Therefore:**

A) Evaluates their own services;

B) Gathers feedback from users (teachers and learners), including that what was agreed at the planning stage was delivered, whether learning objectives have been met and value for money has been achieved; and

*C) Has a process in place to change practices as a result of review, evaluation and feedback.*

## **Organisational**

### **The provider:**

#### **5. Meets the needs of users. Therefore:**

A) Communicates effectively with users;

B) Evidence of written policies that are dated, 'live', reviewed on a regular basis and are communicated to staff

C) Shows an understanding of sustainability issues and the impact of activities and shares this understanding with users; and

D) Has a process in place to monitor the overall quality of provision across it site or sites (if multiple sites) and make changes where necessary.

### **The provider:**

#### **6. Has safety management processes in place to manage risk effectively. Therefore:**

A) Has safety management procedures in place, (which are shared with users) so that risks are identified and appropriately managed;

B) Complies with all external regulation relating to them e.g. Health and Safety at Work Act;

C) Has appropriate/agreed public liability insurance cover; and

D) Has relevant safeguarding procedures in place e.g. maintains Child Protection Standards and provides child secure venues.

The full and complete presentation is available to view from the EEF website at: [www.eefni.org.uk/conferenceproceedings](http://www.eefni.org.uk/conferenceproceedings)



## Update on Access NI Checks

**Lee-Anne Thomas**  
**Volunteer Development Agency**

Lee-Anne Thomas from the Volunteer Development Agency (VDA) gave the assembled members a presentation on the updates that have occurred to the POCVA checks legislation.

### What is Access NI

AccessNI was established by a joint programme between the Northern Ireland Office, the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, the Department of Education and the Police Service of Northern Ireland. AccessNI enables organisations in Northern Ireland to make more informed recruitment decisions by providing criminal history information about anyone seeking paid or unpaid work in certain defined areas, such as working with children or vulnerable adults. AccessNI is part of central government and operates under the provisions of Part V of the Police Act 1997.

### Level of Check

**Basic** - anyone can apply for basic disclosures – employers will need individuals' consent to do so.

**Standard** - Exempted Question (ROA) someone with any level of contact with children or vulnerable adults.

**Enhanced** - will be working with children (regulated post) or vulnerable adults (care position) within their normal duties as under POCVA.

### What Level of Check?

Consider the **degree of proximity** to children/ vulnerable adults:

**Standard** - Exempted Question (RO) and primarily positions **with access to** children/vulnerable adults.

**Enhanced** - regularly involved in caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge of children/ vulnerable adults.

### Fees

£150 one-off registration fee.

Includes Lead Signatory enhanced check.

£10 for each further Counter Signatory.

Enhanced disclosure £30.

Standard disclosure £28.

Basic disclosure £26.

AccessNI provides **FREE** checks for qualifying **volunteers**.

### **Volunteer**

*"anyone who gives their time in a position in a non-profit organisation, free of charge doing something for the good of the community or a voluntary group (for which they may get travelling and other out of pocket expenses) and which is not for their own benefit or for the benefit of a close relative."*

### **2 exclusions**

### **Exclusions**

The person is volunteering directly for a Statutory organisation.

The person is volunteering for a "not for profit" organisation in a position which delivers statutory services under contract or in a specific project for which that organisation has received funding from the Government which includes provision covering the costs of disclosures for volunteers.

### **Information Sources Checked**

Basic/Standard/Enhanced

- Criminal Record Viewer (NI criminal record).
- Police National Computer (GB criminal record).

Standard/Enhanced

- Disqualification from Working with Children (NI) List.
- Disqualification from Working with Vulnerable Adults (NI) List.
- Other Disqualification Lists (DE, UK)

Enhanced

- Additional non-conviction (soft) information which Police consider relevant to the disclosure.

### **Assessing disclosure information**

Disclosure info gained from Police and forwarded to Lead/Counter signatory.

Copy of Certificate also goes to Applicant.

If applicant listed - offence to employ/involve as volunteer for regulated/care position.

If not listed - your discretion

### **Recruitment decisions**

Exercise careful judgment

Had the applicant declared it?

Relevance to post?

Pattern of offending?  
Recent offences?  
Check out exactly what conviction means and circumstances/context of offence.  
Be consistent in decision making.

## **Forthcoming legislation**

**Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007.**

**Due to commence 12 October 2009.**

**Membership scheme for individuals with significant access to children or vulnerable adults.**

**Minimise risk of harm by preventing entry / removing individuals when harm / risk of harm is demonstrated.**

[www.dhsspsni.gov.uk](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk)

[www.volunteering-ni.org](http://www.volunteering-ni.org)

AccessNI

[www.accessni.gov.uk](http://www.accessni.gov.uk)

DHSSPS

[www.dhsspsni.gov.uk](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk)

NIACRO

[www.niacro.co.uk](http://www.niacro.co.uk)

Our Duty to Care

[www.volunteering-ni.org](http://www.volunteering-ni.org)

# **Education Visits, Policy, Practice and Procedure: An Update**

**Trevor Quinn**

**SEELB, Ardnabannon O.E.C**

Trevor Quinn from the Ardnabannon O.E.C gave a presentation on the background behind and development of the Education visits document that underpins much of the outdoor work that occurs in Northern Ireland through the boards.

## **Background**

**Health and Safety of pupils in Educational Visits (HASPEV)  
(Good Practice Guide)**

**Incidents/events involving Educational Visits**

**Existing Policies and Procedures**

## **Working Groups**

The working group was made up of a variety of different stakeholders, including the five **ELB's (Health and Safety, CASS, Legal, Child Protection, Youth, Special and Welfare)** plus **CCMS, DE/ETI, GBA, NICIE and Schools (Primary, Post Primary, Voluntary, Controlled, Maintained, Integrated and Special).**

## **Context**

- **Young people derive considerable benefit from taking part in educational visits**
- **Those involved in planning and managing such visits are already demonstrating a high level of care, competence and safety awareness**
- **Number of high profile serious incidents**
- **Importance of good planning and attention to safety**

## **Introduction**

It is the earnest wish of the working group that this document is used to support and give direction to the planning and organisation of visits so that they may continue to play an integral part in the development and education of many of our young people.'

## **Definition**

'all academic, sporting, cultural, creative and personal development activities, which take place away from the young persons' school or youth setting, and make a significant contribution to learning and development of those participating'

## **Categories of Visits**

1. Visits which take place on a regular basis
2. One-off day/evening excursions
3. Residential visits of one or more nights within the UK or Ireland
4. Residential visits outside UK or Ireland
5. Hazardous activities – residential and non-residential

## **Provided Guidance and Advice on:**

Supervisory Ratios  
Briefings – young people, parents, staff  
Risk Assessment/Management  
Emergency/contingency arrangements  
Transport  
Insurance  
Use of external providers

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

Employing authority  
Governing bodies  
Principal/Youth Leader in charge  
Educational Visits Coordinator  
Group Leader\*  
Accompanying Staff\*  
Central Contact

\*Those who are actually participating in the visit in a supervisory capacity.

## **Where are we now?**

The document was:

- Completed in 2004,
- Implemented in Sept. 2005 (*some organisations*)
- Reviewed in June 2006 - Which resulted in a number of the suggested changes being accepted & incorporated.

## **The Changes (2007 Version)**

Ratios at Primary age key stage 1 & 2  
Supervision re: mixed gender groups at Primary level  
Risk assessment model has been removed  
Youth Service Provision in Republic of Ireland

New guidance has been added:

Arrangements for dropping off pupils following a Visit  
Transport section has been updated  
Data protection statements added where necessary  
EVO form has been totally revised with the EV2 form removed

### **What Next?**

2007 version will be updated - terminology only E.G. Child protection  
Subject to the approval of the ELBs' SEOs Schools/groups will be informed to implement 2007 version.

## **Outdoor Learning: A best practice Example**

**Liz Wallace**  
**Magilligan Field Centre**

### **Supporting Learning**

- Ensure that every learner fulfils his or her full potential at each stage of their development.
- Empower Young People to achieve their potential and to make informed and responsible decisions throughout their lives.

### **The Journey**

Systems  
Mastery – Artistry  
Models  
Shared Vision  
Team Learning

### **Outcomes**

- **Literacy**
- **Numeracy**
- **ICT**
- **Coursework**
- **Appreciation**
- **Freedom of Choice**
- **Connection**
- **Stewardship**
- **Sense of Place**
- **Joy**
- **Lifelong Learning**
- **Take Action**

### **The Rocks don't Move but Water will shape them!**

- **Consistent messages**
- **Monitor and Evaluate**
- **Reflect**
- **Affirm everyone's contribution**
- **Communication**
- **Contribution to something much bigger than ourselves**

## **Futures Education**

- **Connection**
- **Globalisation**
- **Sustainability**
- **Holistic**
- **Information Age**
- **Economics**

## **Magilligan Field Centre**

**[www.welb-cass.org](http://www.welb-cass.org)**

## **Learning outside the Classroom: A Teacher and Young Person's Perspective**

**Peter Richardson  
Enniskillen Collegiate College**

Peter Richardson gave the conference a presentation on the work of the Enniskillen Collegiate College's work with LOTC. The main emphasis that the young people looked for was fun! – they liked to enjoy their work out of the classroom and so programmes had to be motivating and engaging.

### **The Collegiate Experience**

| <b>YEAR</b>      | <b>TOPIC</b>                                       | <b>LOCATION</b>                               |
|------------------|--|---|
| <b>8</b>         | <b>Location, Location</b>                          | <b>Enniskillen</b>                            |
| <b>9</b>         | <b>Limestone Landscapes</b>                        | <b>Cuilcagh Mt. Pk. and Marble Arch Caves</b> |
| <b>10</b>        | <b>Tourism Decision making Exercise</b>            | <b>Castle Archdale Country Park</b>           |
| <b>11</b>        | <b>Urban regeneration</b>                          | <b>Laganside</b>                              |
| <b>12</b>        | <b>GCSE Project</b>                                | <b>Enniskillen, Irvinestown, Lisnaskea</b>    |
| <b>13 and 14</b> | <b>AS – River Study<br/>A2 – Coastal Processes</b> | <b>Magilligan Field Centre</b>                |

## Key Issues for Schools

Safety issues e.g. Risk Assessments  
Time – flexible programmes  
Differentiation – written resources  
Curriculum/specification requirements  
Equipment – provide new skills/experiences  
Greater use of ICT inc. GIS

## Learn from Experience

Most primary and secondary schools surveyed did not recognise the value of fieldwork and "did not fulfil the requirement to provide it".

Schools were concerned about health and safety, time, expertise and budgets, inspectors found.

*Ofsted Report on Geography in English schools January 2008*

## The Curriculum Context – KS3 Revised Curriculum at KS3 (2007, pilot 2006)

The N.I Curriculum should provide relevant learning opportunities to help each pupil develop as:

**Objective 1**  
**An Individual**

**Objective 2**  
**A contributor to**  
**society**

**Objective 3**  
**A contributor to the economy and environment**

## Geography Strand:

**Investigate how physical processes operate to create distinct and diverse environments**  
**e.g. Marble Arch caves [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk)**

The screenshot shows the CCEA website interface. At the top, there's a navigation menu with 'File', 'Edit', 'View', 'Favorites', 'Tools', and 'Help'. Below that is a toolbar with icons for Back, Forward, Stop, Refresh, Home, Search, Favorites, History, Print, and Edit. The address bar contains 'http://www.ccea.org.uk/'. The main content area features a banner 'meet the needs of all learners' and a 'Qualifications Quickfind' search box. To the right, there's a 'Results' section for 'May/June 2008 Results Information (FAQ, Grade Boundaries & Uniform Marks)'. Below that is a 'Latest News' section with three news items: 'GCSE Specs online', 'GCSE Results', and 'GCE Results Summer 2008'. At the bottom, there are navigation tabs for 'Teachers', 'Students', 'Parents', 'Employers', and 'Exams Officers'.

## The Curriculum Context - GCSE

### New GCSE Geography Specifications (2009)

#### Role of Controlled Assessment – 4 set tasks (Geography):

**A study of how river characteristics change downstream**

**A study of local weather conditions and a comparison with national weather patterns**

**A study of changing functions in the CBD**

**A study of the level of awareness of fair trade and related issues**

**ASSESSMENT VALUE: 25%**

### New GCE Geography Specification (2008)

AS 1 – Section A concerns skills related to fieldwork. This section requires students to:

Identify geographical questions and issues, select appropriate sources and methods, and establish effective approaches to inquiry in their geographical studies;

Show awareness of fieldwork safety both in preparation and in the field.

A2 -1 – Section B

Students should have an opportunity to investigate global issues and debates:

AIR POLLUTION

NUCLEAR ENERGY

ISSUES IN TOURISM

AGRICULTURAL CHANGE

*.....Students should be given the opportunity to conduct fieldwork using PRIMARY DATA collection techniques.*

## The Way Ahead...

1. Provide explicit curriculum links in your fieldwork projects
2. Incorporate the language of learning within your fieldwork provision e.g at KS3.

Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities

Problem solving/hypothesis testing

Assessment for Learning

3. Use compatible technologies
4. Make fieldwork activities relevant
5. COMMUNICATE and CO-ORDINATE!



# Welcoming Webster: A New Education Programme

**David Knott**  
**Belfast Harbour Commission**

Davis Knott gave the conference a presentation of a new education programme that the Port of Belfast are looking to develop.

## The Port of Belfast

- Dates back to 1613
- Trust Port - Constituted by the Belfast Harbour Act 1847 and subsequent various Harbour Acts and Orders 1847-2002
- Purpose to operate, maintain and improve the Port of Belfast on behalf of its stakeholders



## Economic Contribution

Port of Belfast supports:

- 187,000 jobs – 26.8% of NI workforce
- 30.7% of the region's total economic value (£7.4bn)
- 17,000 jobs, 2.4% of NI total, located within the Harbour Estate
- £11.2m or 8.1% of total Belfast City Council's rates revenue

## Market Share

- Port handled 17m tonnes of cargo in 2007
- 60% of Northern Ireland's Seaborne trade and 20% of the entire island's.
- Total value of traffic passing through the Port of Belfast in 2007 = £20bn.

# The sustainability challenge for ports

To balance the basic needs of society, the economy and our environment – without our ports we have no future!

To ensure that a strategic view of our coastal resources and requirements is taken

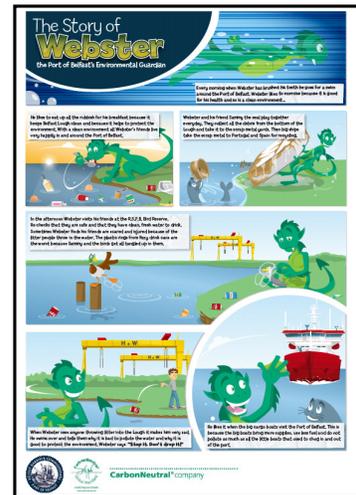
To protect and develop port infrastructure and capacity

To develop the maritime economy

## The Port and the Environment

- Ongoing compliance with current and future environmental requirements
- More Recently:
  - Biodiversity targets
  - Carbon Footprint
  - Climate Change Action Plan
- Sustainable Port Development
- Partnership approach

## Where Did Webster come from?



# BBC Breathing Places Schools Update

## Janet Wilson

The final presentation of the conference saw Janet Wilson give an update on the BBC Breathing Places campaign and the delegates were given a variety of information to help them get schools signed up to take part in the project.

**Do One Thing 3 – Feeding Wildlife** launched September 2008 – contains lots of ideas and curriculum activities for your class.

Teachers - have you signed up to BBC Breathing Places Schools yet? Hundreds of schools across Northern Ireland have already registered and are delighted with the resources they have received, enabling them to involve their pupils in exciting hands-on learning that makes a difference to the environment.

Registration is easy to do and it's entirely free – so why not register your school today on [www.bbc.co.uk/breathingplacesschools](http://www.bbc.co.uk/breathingplacesschools)

As soon as you register, the BBC will send you a colourful folder to keep all your Breathing Places resources. Teachers notes from previous DOTs can be downloaded to give you a comprehensive resource pack and you can take part in the activities in whatever way suits your school or class. Share your experience with other schools - send in your pictures and Breathing Places experiences and get your school up on the BBC website.

For further information, contact:

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BBC Learning Projects Manager  
BBC NI  
Broadcasting House  
Ormeau Avenue  
Belfast  
BT2 8HQ    Tel 028 90338207    Email [margery.quinn@bbc.co.uk](mailto:margery.quinn@bbc.co.uk)

Or

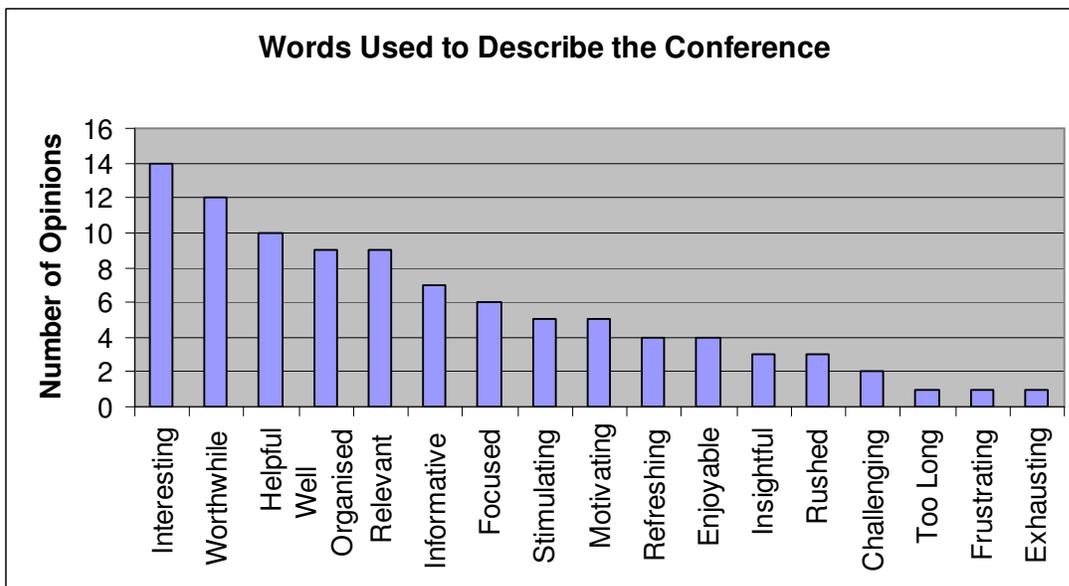
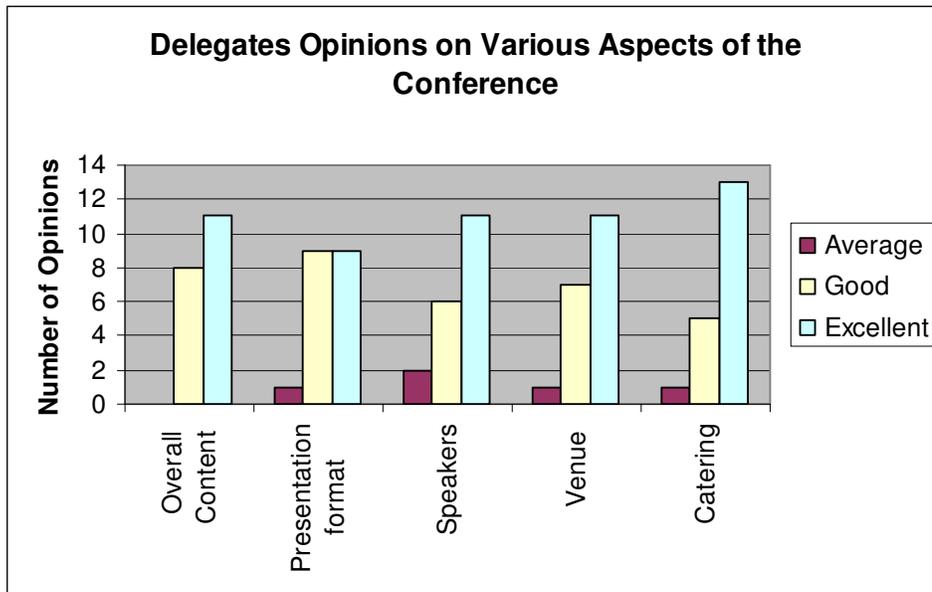
Janet Wilson  
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Website [www.bbc.co.uk/breathingplacesschools](http://www.bbc.co.uk/breathingplacesschools)



# Feedback

Feedback from conference attendees was very positive. Many appreciated the opportunity to get together and network with a range of other people both from the different sectors. The speakers involved were praised for their effective and informative presentations and it was felt by many that the conference will greatly aid them in the course of their everyday work. The catering and venue were generally also mentioned as being of very good quality.



## Conference Delegates

| Title    | First Name | Surname    | Organisation  | E-mail                                   |
|----------|------------|------------|---|--|
| ✓        | Laura      | Coey       | Action Renewables                                   | laura.coey@actionrenewables.co.uk        |
| ✓        | Adrian     | McLaughlin | Action Renewables                                   | adrian.mclaughlin@actionrenewables.co.uk |
| ✓        | Alyn       | Jones      | Alliance Youth Works/Kilbroney Centre               | alynjones@allianceyouthworks.org.uk      |
| ✓        | Liz        | Farnam     | Alliance Youth Works/Kilbroney Centre               |  |
| ✓        | Trevor     | Quinn      | Ardnabannon Outdoor Education Centre                | trevor.quinn@seelb.org.uk                |
| ✓        | Graeme     | McKimm     | ARENA/BITC  | graeme.mckimm@bitcni.org.uk              |
| ✓        | Shirley    | Lewis      | Baglady Productions                                 | shirley.lewis@bagladyproductions.org     |
| ✓        | John       | Gallagher  | Belfast City Council                                | gallagherj@belfastcity.gov.uk            |
| ✓        | David      | Knott      | Belfast Harbour Commissioners                       | d.knott@belfast-harbour.co.uk            |
| ✓        | Laurence   | Speight    | Bryson Charitable Group                             | laurencespeight@hotmail.com              |
| ✓        | Adam       | McClure    | Carnfunnock Country Park                            | mccclurea@larne.gov.uk                   |
| ✓        | Nigel      | Crothers   | Conservation through Fishing                        |  |
| ✓        | Mervyn     | Hill       | Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside | secretariat-hillst@doeni.gov.uk          |
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| ✓        | Peter      | Richardson | Enniskillen Collegiate                              | prichardson134@c2kn.net                  |
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| ✓        | Richard    | Hyde       | Forest Service                                      | richard.hyde@dardni.gov.uk               |
| ✓        | Susann     | Stilec     | Groundwork Northern Ireland                         | susannstilec@groundworkni.co.uk          |
| ✓        | Jo         | Boylan     | Lagan Valley Regional Park                          | jo@laganvalley.co.uk                     |
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| ✓        | Glenn      | West       | Lough Neagh Discovery Centre                        | glenn.west@craigavon.gov.uk              |
| ✓        | Gillian    | Simpson    | Loughs Agency                                       | gillian.simpson@loughs-agency.org        |
| ✓        | Chris      | Reid       | Marble Arch Caves European Geopark                  | chris.reid@fermanagh.gov.uk              |
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