

Suffolk Forest School Association

Event: November Networking and Sharing event

Date: Saturday 21st November 2020

Time: 10.00-11.00

Attendees:

Committee: Charlotte, Mell, Steph, Elizabeth, Joanna and Emma.

Members: Sara, Shona, Sarah, Rebecca, Christina, Janine and Julia.

- Welcome; Charlotte
- Zoom etiquette: Mell

Introductions and sharing ideas:

- Charlotte: Shared a seasonal suggestion for campfire cooking. Apple segments dipped in a sugar and cinnamon mix and cooked on a stick over the fire. Yum!
- Steph: Shared a green woodworking tip. She wished to make wooden reindeer but the trees on her site are still young, so she tried it with much smaller pieces of wood and used a palm drill for the drilling. Looked very effective especially with the large, twiggy antlers!
- Emma: Shared a seasonal game. "I am the Wind and I blow the leaves which are...."
Gather children in a circle. One person in the centre. This person calls out "I am the Wind and I blow the leaves which are...."
The children are the leaves. Therefore, you can say the leaves, which are wearing green wellies, wearing a scarf, covered in mud and so on...
Any leaf / child that fits the description runs around the circle and back to their place. No winning or losing, just lots of laughing and keeping warm. Many opportunities to look at and think about leaves, too.
- Sara: Is going to make her own mulled wine over the fire pit in the garden. An idea, which can be extended to sessions, perhaps with spiced apple juice or spiced hot chocolate / milk / chai...
- Shona: Shared a storybook containing short and long tales for all seasons. 'The Natural Story Teller – Wildlife Tales for Telling', by G. Keeble.
- Sarah: Shared an autumnal activity. Insert a feather into an apple, conker or acorn. Climb up to your highest point. Sarah uses a hill. Drop your creation and watch it spin!
- Joanna: Leaf storm with a tale... gather children around a lovely leaf pile.
'One day a leaf fell from the tree. It began to get windy. Then it started to rain. Then there was a HUGE storm!' Everyone gathers arms full of leaves and throws them up in to the air to create a leaf storm!
- Mell: Mell recommended a book called Apple Pigs. It is an old book, which led her group on to making Apple Pigs and other creatures! Using apples, sticks, cordage,

other natural materials and whole lots of imagination and creativity you can make any creature you wish!

- Christina: brought a lovely example of a walnut boat. She suggests using a walnut for the base; place some clay inside to give it some weight. Insert a twig to the clay and add a leaf to the stick and you have a sail!
- Elizabeth: shared a new knot. Similar to a timber hitch!
- Janine: Suggested linking activities to nests. She showed some nests she had used and linked to learning about habitats incorporating den building and bug hotel building!
- Rebecca: Shared a book called 'I am the Seed that Grew the Tree: A Nature Poem for Every Day of the Year' National Trust.

Updates from the Committee

Save the Date!

On Sunday 7th February, we will be holding the AGM in Lavenham. We are keeping everything crossed that this will be 'in-person' rather than online. We plan to link this in to a 'Games, Story and Song CPD' as requested by the FSA Suffolk community. The day will run as follows:

Morning: AGM and Skill Share

Afternoon: 3-hour CPD session

We really do value your input and support with these as they raise funds to cover our basic costs of insurance and so on. In addition, it enables us to offer support and a space for the community to gather with other wild folk.

More details to follow. Watch this space!

Small group discussions

We split into small groups to consider the following:

What do we feel is working well at this time?

Some have appreciated being forced by the current climate, to take a breather.

Some have a sense of hope for the future.

Some have managed to continue working with some groups but not others because of what is considered by the Government as 'essential'.

Some have enjoyed watching their site return to a less trodden state.

Some have found that demand for their groups has increased.

And many felt that their work was valued

What challenges or issues are we facing at this time?

Some feel that the guidance for the Forest School community has been vague and reading government guidance has been a chore.

Some do not feel supported by school staff.

Upcoming CPD available

We concluded the meeting by looking future, full of hope and sharing any planned CPD that is coming up:

Charlotte's Forest School. 9th February 2021. **Training for Forest School Helpers.** Email Charlotte on head@charlottesforestschool.co.uk for more information and booking.

Charlotte's Forest School. 6th March. **Skills Day for New Forest School Leaders.** Email Charlotte on head@charlottesforestschool.co.uk for more information and booking.

Huathe. Date TBC. **Starting a group to share nature excitement with nature nerds!**

Mell. Saturday 19th November. **Celebrating the Celtic Wheel 'Winter Solstice'**. 11.00-14.00. See Kinda Forest School Facebook Page for tickets and information

Green Light Trust. 6th February. **16 Hour Outdoor First Aid.** See GLT Facebook page or website for booking

Green Light Trust. 26th February. **Ropes and Knots at Forest School CPD.** See GLT Facebook page or website for booking

Green Light Trust. 12th March. **Green Wood Working at Forest School.** See GLT Facebook page or website for booking

Green Light Trust. 25th-27th March. **Jon Cree - Working with Challenging Behaviour in the Outdoors.** See GLT Facebook page or website for booking

Green Light Trust. 29th March. **Earthwalks with Jon Cree and Mell Harrison.** See GLT Facebook page or website for booking

Green Light Trust. 3rd April. **Easter Willow Weaving Workshop with the Coddiwomplers.** See GLT Facebook page or website for booking

The Hive. **Outdoor First Aid. Date TBC.** Possibly January.

Suffolk Wildlife Trust. Bradfield Woods. **Woodworking course.** Date TBC. Possibly April.

In other news

Jo from Suffolk Wildlife Trust informed us that The Tree Council are running a scheme called 'Orchards for Schools. Please signpost any schools that may be interested in this super scheme.