

# Volunteering Code of Good Practice

## LISS WOODCRAFT FOLK 2<sup>ND</sup> DRAFT

### Introduction

The code sets out a series of undertakings on good practice in volunteering and is intended for use by Woodcraft Folk Groups who rely on volunteers for their very existence.

The aim is to provide best practice to a diverse volunteer workforce and offer them the necessary support through effective management.

The Volunteering Code of Good Practice is to be viewed in conjunction with other Woodcraft Folk policies and will add more detail. Readers should familiarise themselves with the following documents:

- Equal Opportunities
- Protecting Children in the Woodcraft Folk
- Aims, Principles and Programme

### 1. Volunteering

1.1 Volunteering is the commitment of a person's time; it is given or offered at their own initiative for, in this instance, the benefit of children and young people and the wider Woodcraft Folk movement and can take many forms. It is undertaken freely, without concern for financial gain. Volunteering should not be as the result of coercion or compulsion.

1.2 There is an agreed recognition that volunteering makes a major contribution to all aspects of the Woodcraft Folk for example – the running of groups, in the education of children and young people, the promotion of peace, co-operation and friendship and care of the environment. They bring a diversity of skills, experiences and qualities to the Woodcraft Folk.

1.3 Actions and decisions taken within the Woodcraft Folk movement can affect the activity of volunteers and this code highlights the need for a consistent and appropriate approach from all groups be they Woodchips, Elfins, Pioneers, Venturers, District Fellows, Payout and Play Schemes or International Events.

1.4 The Woodcraft Folk are committed to maintaining best practice in the promotion, development and celebration of volunteering. Volunteering should be open to all providing, there is an acceptance of the Folk's aims and

principles, irrespective of background, culture, ability, disability and sexual orientation etc.

1.5 It is acknowledged that barriers to volunteering can be overcome through the acquisition of skills, experience, confidence and contact with others. The Woodcraft Folk recognises that in volunteering there is a reciprocal relationship whereby the volunteer is valued and also benefits by attaining a sense of achievement.

1.6 Volunteering should be a satisfying, pleasurable experience where the person is welcomed, wanted and valued.

## **2. Responsibility of the National Woodcraft Folk**

2.1 The Woodcraft Folk recognise the extensive benefit brought to its organisation by the involvement of volunteers and undertakes to have effective working practices for their management and development.

2.2 It is the responsibility of the deputy general secretary (currently Chris Pyke) to ensure that all registered groups within the Woodcraft Folk movement are familiar with this document and also to ensure that this policy is reviewed on an annual basis.

2.3 The Woodcraft Folk acknowledge the special volunteers who become trustees of the organisation and accepts its responsibilities to provide them with such training as permits them to carry out their duties.

2.4 It is recognised that the recruitment of volunteers is usually through the individual groups and most probably will be parents of child members. However recruitment can come about through direct contact and the activities of Volunteer Centres. All methods of recruitment should be encouraged. The Woodcraft Folk make no distinction between these volunteers and all are bound by legal requirement and the organisational policies.

## **3. Responsibilities of Groups**

In supporting this code Woodcraft Folk groups undertake to:

3.1 Ensure that their organisation has a good profile. One attractive to volunteers. i.e. a vibrant and interesting web site.

3.2 Take all offers of volunteering seriously and assist a potential volunteer by identifying an appropriate person for them to refer to. This person should have an enthusiasm and passion for the Woodcraft Folk and the

work to be contributed by the volunteer and receive training to fulfil this role.

- 3.3 Ensure that volunteers and potential volunteers feel welcome and wanted. Identify what role or opportunity will suit them best.
- 3.4 Provide all volunteers with appropriate training/induction to enable them to carry out such tasks required of them and make provision within the budget for this.
- 3.5 Always have something for the volunteers to do. They have chosen to give this time and may not appreciate you wasting it. Have something in reserve – a back up work plan.
- 3.6 Encourage and enable accreditation of skills acquired through volunteering with recognition being given to both formal and informal learning.
- 3.7 Recognise that volunteers may have exceptional skills and talents, listen to their ideas, involve them in decisions and value their opinion on development and working practices. By allowing spontaneity, energy, warmth and reward you are more likely to retain the volunteer.
- 3.8 Provide support to volunteers who wish to progress onto further opportunities and support their own initiated training.
- 3.9 Ensure that the volunteer achieves a sense of fulfilment and a realisation that they and their work are valued. Remember to say “Thank you.” Acknowledge the role they play in your annual report.
- 3.10 Remove barriers for disabled volunteers. Do not assume they should be the recipients and not the providers of the work. Remain focussed on what the volunteer can achieve and not on your own perception of what they cannot do.
- 3.11 Never degrade the volunteer by placing social barriers around them. They are entitled to the same respect and friendship as paid staff. They are not there to carry out tasks that you or group members do not care to do themselves.
- 3.12 Resolve any problems faced by the volunteer in connection with their role even if they are of the volunteers own making.
- 3.13 Provide a sensible and manageable workload for the volunteer. There should be a balance between the opportunity to volunteer and the drain on their time and emotions.

- 3.14 Wherever possible reimburse the volunteers out of pockets expenses. For example travel or childcare. The Woodcraft Folk does not permit flat rate expenses to be paid. Remember the need for receipts for accounting purposes.
- 3.15 Ensure they have an identified membership secretary/child protection officer and adequate procedures in place to carry out Criminal Record Bureau checks and other references as required by the organisation and for legal reasons.
- 3.16 Ideally give volunteers protection under the Insurance and other policies of The Woodcraft Folk

#### **4. Volunteers' Rights**

- 4.1 The volunteer has a right to have a full explanation of the tasks and responsibilities open to and expected of them.
- 4.2 An identified person to whom to refer for explanation and guidance.
- 4.3 To confidentiality on matters/information shared with the organisation.
- 4.4 To protection under the Health and Safety and insurance policy of the Woodcraft Folk.
- 4.5 To become a member of the Woodcraft Folk.
- 4.6 To be offered training/induction consistent with their role and future personal development.
- 4.7 Not to be exploited; be it through over expectation, over work, unfair demands or being asked to go against their principles or beliefs.
- 4.8 To be able to play an equal part in the sharing of idea's, decision making and have their idea's given respect and consideration.
- 4.9 Not to be out of pocket through completing tasks requested of them. This should not be confused with expenses incurred by them in order for them to further their personal development.

**Note** - All expenses should be relevant to the role of the volunteer. If you make payments or provide training to a volunteer outside the scope of their work an employment tribuneral may well classify this as a wage and give the volunteer employment status and employment rights.

#### **5. Responsibility of the Volunteer**

- 5.1 All volunteers must accept that they play a major role within the Woodcraft Folk and have responsibilities to its members, the organisation and other volunteers. These are:
- 5.2 To work within the aims and principles of the Woodcraft Folk and its policies. To understand the need to work within the laws of the country. To allow for personal identification and vetting through the Criminal Records Bureau.
- 5.3 To work to deliver the five outcomes for children identified in the governments green paper 'Every Child Matters': Be Healthy, Stay Safe, Enjoy and Achieve, Make a Positive Contribution and Achieve Economic Stability.
- 5.4 To undertake any reasonable request for training as necessary for their voluntary work paying special regard to child protection and health and safety.
- 5.5 To carry out their duties to the best of their abilities and honour any commitment they have made. Also to understand the organisations right to expect quality of service.
- 5.6 To treat information gained through their volunteering role with confidentiality and in accordance with legal requirements and the organisations policies.
- 5.7 To share their ideas for best practice and development with the organisation.
- 5.8 To recognise they represent the organisation and present themselves accordingly.

For further information on voluntary practice please contact

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