

Woodcraft Folk

Aims, Principles and Programme – (APP '07)

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The Woodcraft Folk

AIMS, PRINCIPLES AND PROGRAMME - (APP)

A&P. EDUCATIONAL AIMS AND PRINCIPLES

A&P.1 The Woodcraft Folk is an educational movement for children and young people, designed to develop self confidence and activity in society, with the aim of building a world based on equality, friendship, peace and co-operation.

A&P.2 Education for Social Change

We seek to develop in our members a critical awareness of the world. We will work to develop the knowledge, attitudes, values and skills necessary for them to act to secure their equal participation in the democratic process that will enable them to bring about the changes that they feel are necessary to create a more equal and caring world.

As an educational movement, we believe that equal opportunities should extend to all aspects of activity and participation in the Woodcraft Folk. We will combat oppression or discrimination in our movement, whether on grounds of age, class, gender, race, sexual orientation, for reasons of disability, contact with mental health services, or a previous criminal conviction that does not create risk to children or young people. We will educate our members so that they may take these issues into the wider community.

A&P.3 A Co-operative and Sharing Attitude to Life

We believe that to further our aims it is vital to approach our educational work through the principles of co-operation. To achieve this we will provide a programme which ensures that our members practice co-operation through all the activities in which they participate.

A&P.4 International Understanding

Our motto is 'Span the world with friendship'. We will therefore encourage and develop international understanding and friendship through our educational work and by our exchanges between children and young people of different lands. We will promote a greater understanding of the world amongst our members so that they are aware of the inequalities which exist in it.

A&P.5 The Rights of the Child

In our work with children and young people, we respect and defend their individual rights, and encourage them to participate responsibly and democratically, in all aspects of Woodcraft Folk activity.

A&P.6 Religion

The Woodcraft Folk welcomes all children, young people and adults, who wish to become members of the movement, and it asserts the right of all its members to practice the faith of their choice providing it does not contravene the aims and principles of the movement.

A&P.7 One World

The Woodcraft folk will encourage an understanding of the need to work towards a world where we provide for the needs of everyone on the planet now and in the future without destroying the physical environment. We aim to educate our members about issues of environmental and social sustainability and how this relates to their own lifestyles and other people's actions.

A&P.8 A world at Peace

Because of our international outlook and concern that all shall enjoy the right to freedom from the immorality of war and want, the Woodcraft Folk is dedicated to the cause of peace.

Accordingly we associate with the movement for world disarmament and for the transfer of those resources directed to the destruction of life into channels which will be used for the fulfilment of humanity's needs.

A&P.9 Affirmation

The task of the Woodcraft Folk is the cultivation of a world outlook. Because the Woodcraft Folk is concerned with educational activities, it is accordingly precluded from being involved in activities and policy making of political parties. The Woodcraft Folk expects its members to abide by its Constitution and to participate actively in a movement that is dedicated to all people for all time.

PROG. PROGRAMME

PROG.1 The following programme is designed to give practical application to the above-stated general aims.

PROG.2 The Woodcraft Folk ...

will establish throughout the United Kingdom co-educational Groups of children and young people under the leadership of responsible adults, who have received some Woodcraft Folk training, for the purpose of guiding members to take their part in the fulfilment of its programme, recognising that the movement will determine its policy and programme by the democratic involvement of its members at all levels. Its Annual Conference shall have the final responsibility for directing policy and programme;

- PROG.3
- (i) will establish meeting places for its Groups for the regular practice of cultural, recreational and educational activities;
 - (ii) will provide sites for the establishment of weekend and long-term camp communities;
 - (iii) will establish national training centres for outdoor pursuits and residential training schools;
 - (iv) will arrange events, courses and activities to deliver the Woodcraft Folk's educational aims and principles to children and young people from outside the membership;
 - (v) will arrange courses designed for the training of its leaders at local, regional and national level;
 - (vi) will use available information and communication technology to deliver its educational and training programme.

- PROG.4
- (i) believes that all Woodcraft Folk activities should be carried out in a manner which reflects its commitment to equal opportunities;
 - (ii) will promote a positive programme of anti-discrimination work, and develop strong links with other organisations and community groups, particularly those which face specific oppression;
 - (iii) will ensure that the language and images used in its own publications and publicity materials are in accordance with its educational aims and objectives;

PROG.5 believes that the District Associations should act as a springboard for the natural development of the movement. Therefore it will promote strong District organisation wherever two or more Groups exist within a given locality, to ensure the holding of regular meetings of leaders for the co-ordination of Group activities, the programming of Leader-Training courses, and the involvement of local Youth and Community Service affairs. Further, it will encourage Districts to apply national policy decisions to the local circumstances;

PROG.6 will make special efforts to strengthen and broaden its District support under the direction of General Council and its Development Committees. In doing so it will encourage recognition of and support for co-operatively run groups and the role of volunteers from outside the membership;

PROG.7 acknowledges that the development and expansion of the movement is dependent on a trained and committed leadership. Therefore the Woodcraft Folk is concerned with the ultimate aim of securing a fully qualified leadership in all its Groups and on General Council. In furtherance of this aim it will promote a programme of education for its leaders based on a common syllabus and organised through Leader-Training courses of short and long-term duration;

PROG.8 will promote a programme of educational activity of its Groups through an age related educational structure in order to nurture and develop the aims and principles of the movement.

PROG.9 will promote its own publications, handbooks, manuals and other materials for the training of its members, both young people and adults;

PROG.10 will publish and disseminate explanatory leaflets, posters and audio-visual materials in the interests of informing the general public of its aims and activities;

- PROG.11 will encourage association with other organisations which share its aims and principles whereby mutual benefits may be enjoyed by all members;
- PROG.12 will support the aims of the Co-operative Movement and maintain close links with Societies which promote co-operative education. Similarly it will seek to strengthen relations with the Co-operative College Board of Management;
- PROG.13 will encourage members of 6 months standing to be members of their local Co-operative Society, save where conditions of membership or the regulations of the Society prevent this;
- PROG.14 will encourage members, as part of their development into responsible citizenship, to join an appropriate Trade Union where circumstances permit;
- PROG.15 will promote international and reciprocal exchanges between the movement and organisations abroad with whom it has aims in common. These exchanges to include participation in international, national and local camps and, wherever practical, a short stay in the homes of members of the host organisation. International friendship exchanges shall also be encouraged by pen-friendships, the mutual exchange of literature, documentation and cultural materials, and by participation in appropriate seminars and conferences of an educational character. The purpose of such exchanges shall be the furtherance of tolerance and understanding between young people in the pursuit of world harmony and peace. It is the declared aim of the Woodcraft Folk to extend and develop these exchanges whenever and wherever possible.

DEF. DEFINITIONS: MEMBERS

- DEF.1 Any person whose application for membership has been accepted, or who is aged 15 years or under and regularly attends a WCF group, will be regarded as a member of the organisation.
- DEF.2 (i) Young Member is defined as a member aged 15 years or under.
(ii) District Fellow is defined as a member aged 16-20 years inclusive
- DEF.3 People who wish to be involved with the Woodcraft Folk but who do not wish to work directly with members aged under 18 may join the organization as supporters.
- DEF.4 Members shall abide by the decisions of the Annual Conference and General Council.
- DEF.5 Except where explicit approval is given by the General Council, the payment of any member for services rendered is deemed contrary to the spirit of the Woodcraft Folk.
- DEF.6 Members are required annually to signify their acceptance of the Constitution; and Aims, Principles and Programme of the Woodcraft Folk.

DEF. DEFINITIONS: GROUPS

- DEF.7 Membership categories, age groups and group membership structures shall be determined from time to time by the Annual Conference. Variations in the age group structure to suit local circumstances are permissible subject to the prior approval of General Council.
- DEF.8 District Fellows:
- (i) A District Fellowship Group is defined as
(a) comprising a minimum of 5 District Fellows; and
(b) being insured by having at least 2 members over the age of 18 years.
(ii) A District Fellowship Group is not required to pay a Central Registration Fee.
- DEF.9 District Fellows are recognised as needing their own identity, programme of activities and Constitution, which has been endorsed by General Council.
- DEF.10 Every year an Annual Conference, known as “Althing”, will be held for District Fellows.

ORG. LOCAL AND REGIONAL ORGANISATION

- ORG.1 The running of a Group shall be in the charge of members who will be responsible to General Council, through the District Association where one exists.
- ORG.2 (i) District Associations: All Groups existing together in a convenient local organisational area shall join together in District Associations. Each District Association shall be responsible for co-ordinating and supervising all the activities of the Groups in its area and for initiating joint activities and leadership training. It shall keep a census of all members in its area. The boundaries of District Associations shall be agreed between Districts concerned, subject to the approval of General Council. Accordingly, no Group may secede from or transfer to another District Association without permission of General Council.
- (ii) The District Association shall be responsible for maintaining the Constitution (C'04) and the Aims, Principles and Programme (APP) of the Woodcraft Folk in the District. The District Association is responsible for ensuring the reasonable and constitutional conduct of its members whilst they are engaged in any Woodcraft Folk activity.
If the District Association feels it is necessary to terminate the membership of any member in that Association, it should suspend the member from the movement and inform the General Secretary, in writing.
Whilst under suspension, no member may join in any activity organised by the Woodcraft Folk. The General Council will investigate the matter and take whatever action it deems necessary. It will inform the member and the District Association of its decision, in writing.
Any member who has had their membership terminated has the right of appeal to the next Annual Conference and should submit their appeal in writing to Standing Orders Committee, no later than six weeks prior to the Conference.
- (iii) Every District Association shall hold regular meetings to discuss its activities, receive reports and plan future development. There shall be no less than six meetings a year.
- (iv) Every District Association shall hold an Annual General Meeting at which a report of the years' activities and a financial statement shall be received. This Annual General Meeting will elect officeholders for the District Association.
- ORG.3 There will be six Regional Councils in England, a Welsh Council and a Scottish Council. The English Regions will be Northern, Midlands, South-West, London, Eastern and South-Eastern.
- ORG.4 The English Regional Councils and the Welsh and Scottish Councils shall take on a coordinating role in strengthening and developing the movement in their geographical areas and shall organise an annual Regional/Welsh/Scottish Gathering for members within their area, to be held each Autumn.
- ORG.5 That each Regional Council and Scottish/Welsh Council shall appoint a Treasurer, the Treasurer to be a member of the Council. English Regional/Scottish/Welsh accounts will be submitted annually for consolidation with the overall Woodcraft Folk accounts.
- ORG.6 That English Regional/Welsh/Scottish Councils encourage, where appropriate, the continuation or development of Area Councils within their Regions or Nations. Area Councils shall seek to facilitate close association with bodies of the Co-operative movement in their area.
- ORG.7 Each English Regional Council and the Welsh Council and Scottish Council shall use the model constitution appended to this document, or such other constitution as may be endorsed by National Council.

FIN. FINANCE

- FIN.1 The subscriptions for young members shall be on a fixed basis; the amount to be determined by each District Association (or lone Group) subject to approval by General Council.
- FIN.2 (i) Central Registration Fees and membership fees shall be paid to the Treasurer through the Treasurer of the District Association where one exists. In the case of hardship an appeal may be made to the General Council, through the District Association, where one exists.
- (ii) Subscriptions to the movement for members shall be payable annually. The amount shall be a standard fee, or minimum for students, those on state benefits and for those aged 17 years and under who are not eligible for state benefits. These fees can only be changed by resolution at the preceding Annual Conference.
- FIN.3 Newly established Groups shall not be required to pay the full Central Registration Fee for six months. Each new Group must then pay 1/12th of the Central Registration Fee for each complete month remaining in the calendar year. At the end of that calendar year the full Central Registration Fee will be due for the following year.
- FIN.4 All monies paid by Groups to District Associations shall be mutually agreed. In the event of disagreement the matter shall be referred to General Council for decision.
- FIN.5 The financial year shall commence 1st January and end 31st December each year.
- (i) at the end of each financial year all Group Treasurers shall lodge with the appropriate District Treasurer a detailed annual Statement of Account, signed by an independent examiner.
- (ii) at the end of each financial year all District Treasurers shall lodge with the Central Treasurer a detailed annual Statement of Account, signed by an independent examiner, and including the Statements of Account for each Group which makes up the District.
- (iii) the Central Treasurer shall be given access to inspect all books and monies of any sections of the movement.
- FIN.6 (i) The funds and assets of any District Association or Lone Group which closes down becomes the property of the movement and shall not be disposed of without the consent of the General Council.
- (ii) The funds and assets of any Group which closes within an existing District Association automatically becomes the property of that District Association.
- FIN.7 Any Group likely to be disenfranchised because of financial difficulty shall apply through the District Association, where one exists, to the General Council for special dispensation.

COS. COSTUME

- COS.1 As a unifying symbol of their support for the aims and principles of the Woodcraft Folk, members shall be encouraged to wear either an open necked green shirt, green T-shirt or green sweatshirt all with a Folk Symbol.
- COS.2 Under no circumstances may any member attend party political events wearing Woodcraft Folk costume.

INT. INTERNATIONAL

- INT.1 Any District Association, Group or individual member wishing to participate in a visit to a foreign country in the name of the Woodcraft Folk must first seek the approval of the General Council.
- INT.2 Such visits shall be subject to the current guidelines of the General Council governing visits abroad.