

Woodcraft Folk 'Hands In' 2017



For more information contact:

Debs McCahon

Deborah.mccahon@woodcraft.org.uk

What is 'Hands In'?

'Hands In' was created in 2011 by the TREE steering group (a group of Pioneers and Venturers) to help our youngest members feel connected and part of a UK movement. The idea was simple, that all groups should try to do similar activities and contribute to a national resource once a year.

From then on, every Spring term all groups are encouraged to participate in 'Hands In' activities helping Woodcraft Folk groups to try something new, develop partnerships or influence programme. In the past 'Hands In' activities have included:

- [quilt making](#)
- [geocaching](#)
- [poetry writing](#)
- Celebrating Woodcraft Folk's 90th anniversary (see images on front page)

'Hands In' 2017

This year groups are being asked to explore Woodcraft Folk's identity and suggest themes for our next strategic plan as we head towards our centenary in 2025.

The next 9 years will be busy, as we:

- Continue to build on the success of the New Group Project
- Seek sustainable sources of funding
- Plan to host an international camp in 2020
- Review and update our leader handbooks
- Support existing groups to be sustainable
- Reach out to new communities, such as our new refugee project in Glasgow
- Take action on the issues important to children and young people

This resource is full of ideas for how children and young people can be supported to influence Woodcraft Folk's ongoing development. Activity suggestions include:

- I like Woodcraft Folk...
- Woodcraft Folk is...
- What is Woodcraft Folk? – How do children and young people describe their experience of Woodcraft Folk?
- Key features of Woodcraft Folk – What makes a group a Woodcraft Folk group?
- Woodcraft Folk crumble – What are the key ingredients which make a Woodcraft Folk group?
- Strategic plan consultation – What ambitions do young people have for our organisation as we head towards 100?

As a group you may wish to build on your discussions and go one step further and review our aims and principles: Are they old fashioned/relevant? Are they accessible?

Please send your responses and photos to Debs McCahon at Folk Office or email Deborah.mccahon@woodcraft.org.uk

In return groups will be sent badges for all children and leaders who participate.

I like Woodcraft Folk...

Reason to play:

- Active method for gathering feedback on what members like
- Good warm-up activity to some of the more discussion based activities described below

Resources: Just a pen and piece of paper to record the responses.

What to do:

This is a variation of the 'sun shines on'. If members of your group are familiar with the 'sun shines on' you might want to play this version for a few rounds before swapping to the Woodcraft Folk version.

1. Sitting or standing in a circle (if sitting on chairs it is clear to see where the gaps in the circle are, but members need to be careful not to fall over chairs)
2. Nominate an individual to be in the centre of the circle as a caller
3. The caller should say 'I like Woodcraft Folk because....' Completing the sentence, examples might include 'I like Woodcraft because I like camping', 'I like Woodcraft Folk because I get to play games with my friends', 'I like Woodcraft Folk because I get to do new things'
4. Everyone who agrees with the caller needs to change places. The caller needs to find a space in the circle. The last person to find a space in the circle becomes the caller
5. Leader to record responses, and how popular they were.

Finish my sentence/Woodcraft Folk is...

Reason to play:

- A method for gathering feedback on what members like
- Useful to gaining suggestions for what members would like to do in the future
- Can be done in a circle anywhere

Resources:

- The beginnings of sentences on pieces of paper
- Pen & paper to record responses

What to do:

1. Explain to the group that you are asking for their feedback and suggestions about Woodcraft Folk and future activities
2. Sitting in a circle, ask members to take it in turn to pick up a piece of paper. Each piece of paper should have the start of a sentence on it.
3. Members should complete the sentence on the piece of paper they have selected
4. When the member has completed their sentence they can return the piece of paper to the pile, enabling someone else to choose that sentence starter again if they wish
5. All responses to be recorded

Extension activity:

- Using a dot voting ask group members to prioritise the response e.g. the one they think is the most important, the one they most wish to do

Example sentence starters include:

- Woodcraft Folk is...
- I come to Woodcraft Folk because...
- The best bit about Woodcraft Folk is...
- As a group I wish we could...
- Woodcraft Folk has helped me...
- I think the most important thing about Woodcraft Folk is...
- Woodcraft Folk has made me think about...
- Woodcraft Folk should...
- Only at Woodcraft Folk...

Calendar/What is Woodcraft Folk?

Reasons to do this activity:

- Feedback from our members on the things they enjoy
- Contribute to a national calendar for 2018
- You can do this as a group or individually

Resources needed:

- Paper
- Pens
- Scissors
- Glue
- Material to make a collage (if desired)

What to do:

1. Explain to group members that Folk Supply (the Woodcraft Folk shop) would like to produce a calendar for 2018
2. Explain that we would like the calendar to be made up of drawings, photos and collages from members
3. Ask individuals/small groups to decide on something they have enjoyed doing with their Woodcraft Folk group (you might wish to give each group a different season/term)
4. Support individuals/groups to produce a drawing, collage
5. Scan/photograph/post images to Folk Office or Deborah.mccahon@woodcraft.org.uk
6. All images will be uploaded on to the online gallery

Agree/Disagree/What is Woodcraft Folk?

Reasons to do this activity:

- To gather feedback from children and young people – responses from adults have already been collected during a General Council meeting and the northern regional gathering
- Quick, simple and does not require any resources

Resources needed: Pen and piece of paper to record responses

What to do:

1. Place a piece of paper with 'agree' and a 'disagree' written on them at different ends of your hall – if you prefer you can use sad or smiley faces.
2. Draw two columns on large paper/flipchart paper – Title the columns 'Agree' and 'Disagree'
3. Explain to group members that you would like them to individually respond to a series of statements, placing themselves along the Agree/Disagree line depending on how strongly they feel about each statement.
4. Read each statement out in turn, asking individuals to move along the line
5. If there is disagreement ask individuals to explain why they have chosen to place themselves in a particular spot.
6. Record where people stand.
7. After participants have responded to the statements place them in one of the columns on the flipchart
8. Flag up any contradictions if and when they exist

Example Statements

- Woodcraft Folk is a children's charity first and foremost
- Volunteers do not need to agree with all of the aims and principles, they just need to be safe and reliable
- Woodcraft Folk is just Scouts for atheists
- Some of Woodcraft Folk aims and principles are outdated and can be dropped
- Woodcraft Folk needs to be careful and not be seen to be socialist or too party political
- Woodcraft Folk is a family organisation
- Woodcraft Folk's traditions and customs are really important
- All Woodcraft Folk groups should camp every year
- Woodcraft Folk is a political organisation
- Woodcraft Folk members should actively be encouraged to campaign on issues important to children and young people
- All Woodcraft Folk groups should undertake some international work
- Running about in the trees is good quality programme
- Woodcraft Folk is inclusive

- Gluing and sticking are not Woodcrafty
- Our number one goal should be to achieve Education for Social Change – giving children and young people the confidence and skills necessary to work towards a fairer and more equal world

Key features of Woodcraft Folk

Reasons to do this activity:

- Hear the views of children and young people about what they think is important about Woodcraft Folk
- Identify what is unique about Woodcraft Folk
- Highlight the shared experiences, the things which unite members

Resources needed:

- Pen and paper to record responses
- The essential feature statements written or printed on to bits of paper and cut out to enable the group to sort them into priority order

What to do:

Ask you group if they agree that the following are essential features of a Woodcraft Folk group:

- Encouraging members to wear Woodcraft clothing, e.g. Folk shirts, hoodies
- Singing/saying the Envoi or singing Link Your Hands on group nights
- Sitting/standing in a circle to have discussions or make decisions
- Doing activities that are connected to Woodcraft's Aims & Principles
- Offering the chance to do outdoor activities and go camping
- Having leaders/helpers who are volunteers, not paid staff
- Trying to be inclusive of young people regardless of gender, ethnicity or any additional needs
- Helping young people have a say in planning what the group does
- Doing activities that help other groups or the wider community (fundraising, campaigning, volunteering etc.)
- Being part of big Woodcraft activities like Folk Assembly or International Camp

Ask the group to prioritise the list of statements they agree with – most to least important. They can do this in a number of ways:

1. Using the diamond ranking system described below
2. Simply placing them in order 1 – 10

Divide the group into pairs or threes and ask them if they would add other features e.g. recycling, camp fires, campaigns

Woodcraft Crumble

Reasons for doing this activity:

- To encourage the children to think about what makes their Woodcraft Group unique
- To encourage the children to think creatively and have fun

Material needed: paper and pens, example recipes and a snack to eat would be helpful

What to do:

1. Open a discussion about recipes. Perhaps, in anticipation of this workshop, your group might have cooked something on a previous group night. Ask the children if they have ever cooked anything. What ingredients were needed? What if one of the ingredients had been left out (a cake with no sugar, bread with no yeast etc.)? Was there any equipment they needed – bowls, oven etc. You could have this discussion whilst eating something and begin by discussing what ingredients are included, and what it might taste like without one of them.
2. Explain that you are going to write a Woodcraft Group recipe, including all the essential ingredients to make a good group. Record suggestions from the children about what ingredients and equipment and equipment you might need. Suggestions might include: children, fun, games, camping, leaders, community room etc.
3. Break them up into smaller groups and get each group to write a recipe. It would help to give the groups example recipes.

Example Ingredients:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------|
| • 20 children – medium sized | • Fun |
| • 5 leaders – size not important | • Friendship |
| • 3 fun games | • Co-operation |
| • 1 craft activity | • Education |
| • songs | • Camping |

Method:

To make the filling: mix the twenty children and five adults in a big room. Sprinkle on the fun games. Add in one craft activity, a generous dollop of fun and a large pinch of songs.

To make the topping: rub friendship and co-operation together with just a dash of education (be careful because too much might make it too heavy...)

Once it is all well mixed up, place the filling in a carefully prepared campsite. Cover generously with the topping. Bake in warm sun for at least one weekend.

Extension activities:

- You could use the recipes as the basis for posters.
- Discuss with the children what would happen to their recipe if one of the ingredients was removed. Would it still be a Woodcraft Folk Crumble? Why not?

Wish-list/Strategic Plan 2018 – 2025

Reasons for doing this activity:

- to gather input for the new strategic plan from as wide an audience as possible within Woodcraft Folk
- to allow members to feel that they are contributing to Woodcraft Folk's development
- to have fun

Target group: this session plan is intended to be used by Elfins, Pioneers, Venturers, DFs, adults – or all age groups together. For Elfins and Pioneers you might want to choose quick and active ways of working, but the basic questions on which we want feedback are the same

Materials needed:

- answer sheet and pen to record the participants input
- diamond ranking sheet or sticky dots for voting
- Aims Principles & Programme on handout (optional)
- flipchart/markers
- paper and pencils for all participants

Notes

The activities given below are suggestions only. The key thing is that you harvest the responses of your group to questions 1 and 2. How you gather the information is up to you – there are many creative people in the Folk who can come up with great ways of getting children, young people and adults to explore, discuss and decide.

Remember this is a chance for a practical demonstration to your members of how participation & empowerment can work, so the process the group goes through is important, as well as the outcome.

The responsibility of the group leader includes feeding back the information in as clear a way as possible. We aim to have responses from at least half the groups in the country – that's over 200 groups, each with 3 priorities. The clearer those 3 priorities are, the better the strategic plan will be.

You will also produce 3 priorities (and maybe further options) for your local development. Hang on to these – they could be very useful in helping your group and district set priorities and make choices over the next few years.

The basic questions we want feedback on are:

1. How would you like your group to be in 2025? What things would you like to be involved in?
2. What would you like Woodcraft Folk to do between now and 2025? - What should it continue to do? What can it do better?

1 Introduction – Putting the activity in context

Session leader explains briefly what we are doing, why we are doing it and how the group's views will be fed into the process, along with views harvested from other groups.

Points to include:

- Woodcraft Folk has had four previous strategies - “Dancing to a Stronger Beat”, “The Beat Goes On”, “The Big Plan” and “The Bigger and Better Plan”. The latter expires in 2018. Since 2008 Woodcraft Folk has tried to engage more people in writing these plans, so that all members can influence change and have ownership of our direction.
- This time the process involves this session plan, being sent to every group and district in the country, as well as taking place at regional gatherings, DF Althing etc. It results in three priorities for development from each group. These should be sent to Debs McCahon at Folk House by March 1st 2017.
- The results will then be grouped together according to common themes that emerge. The grouped information will go back out to the movement by the end of April, for consideration and further discussion. At Folk Assembly in June 2017 we will all decide which of the priorities to focus on over the next few years after which each group, district and region will be able to make its own action plan in line with priorities we have all agreed.
- Every group in the country is being asked to make their input. This is an exercise in democracy for Woodcraft Folk – we have only ever done this once before and feel that the strategic plan achieved more as a result.
- Remind or ask the group what they have done at Woodcraft Folk over the last year or so. This will help them focus their thoughts and could be represented through video, photos, posters, discussion, songs etc.
- Remind them of any events they have been involved with outside their own group, e.g. regional gatherings, fun days, camps, Folk Assembly, Venturer Camp, community festivals etc.
- A new strategy does not mean a new Woodcraft Folk – we still have our Aims & Principles, our constitution, songs, games etc. The strategy will guide our development as we head towards our centenary year in 2025.

Optional activity on Aims & Principles (taken from Introduction to Woodcraft Folk training course) *This is a good way to put the activity into context and remind the group what we stand for.*

Give out copies of Woodcraft Folk Aims & Principles (You can either use the full text or the photo-story of the aims and principles). Read all of number 1, the bold headings of 2 – 8, explain “Religion” (number 6) means “all faiths and none” read all of number 9. Put participants in small groups and discuss which two principles on the list means most to them and why.

Small groups report back to the whole group and discuss results plus how we can put these Aims & Principles into practice.

2 Share ideas

The aim of this section is for the group to come up with as many ideas as possible in answer to questions 1 & 2. Remember when brainstorming not to reject any ideas at this stage (the *next* stage is prioritisation) and to encourage participants to join ideas together. The options below are a variety of ways to maximise creativity and let ideas flow. You may think of more.

Questions:

1. How would you like your group to be in 2025? What things would you like to be involved in?
2. What would you like Woodcraft Folk to do between now and 2025? - What should it continue to do? What can it do better?

Options for gathering ideas via a brainstorm:

Quick & Easy

- After warming up the group, simply ask them the two questions and get them to write answers individually, then in small groups, which feed them back to everyone.
- Unfinished sentences to finish anonymously "I'd like our group to be more..." or "I wish we could....." or "The trouble with our group is...."

Creative drawing/making

- Draw pictures or make a collage of your ideal group night
- Make a 3-D model of Woodcraft Folk now and in five years using junk, playdo or clay.

Creative acting/performing (and see appendix below)

- Write a new song "Future of the Folk"
- Prepare a TV documentary or a newspaper article or a website story about Woodcraft Folk five years from now.

Games:

- Consequences - sit in a circle and write down, on prepared sheets, what or how to change; pass to left and respond to first idea; fold and pass to left again etc. Feedback
- In pairs, devise a way to persuade another pair to come to Woodcraft Folk, then get into 4s and try them out. This will give children/young people an idea of what they value about Woodcraft Folk
- Devise a new Woodcraft Folk game for 2018

3 'Polishing' stage *(Allow five to ten minutes for this stage)*

Before you do the prioritisation, you may need to make sure the ideas are expressed clearly, and will be understood by somebody not at your session. One word usually won't tell anyone else what you mean e.g. 'chocolate' is not enough. 'Sufficient chocolate' is better; 'Fairtrade Co-op chocolate available once a term' is more like what we're looking for.

The polishing stage presents a good opportunity to ask the participants to help with combining some of the ideas. This can really help with prioritising

4 Prioritise & Feedback *(about 25% of the time)*

This part is about taking the ideas harvested in the session so far and choosing between them). Two possibilities for doing this are:

a) Diamond Ranking

Write the brainstormed items clearly on post-its. Working with the whole group, place the post-its on a diamond ranking sheet - nine boxes in rows of 1-2-3-2-1 (see example); the highest priorities are

placed in the top three boxes, the middle ones further down, and so on. Participants are likely to be having lively discussions on the ideas and their implications. You'll need to do this twice - once for national ideas and once for local ideas.

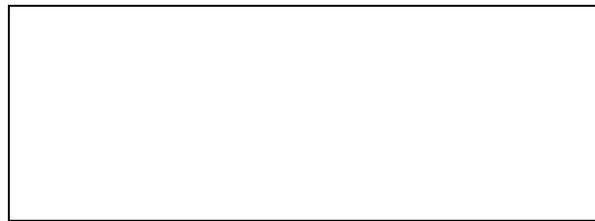
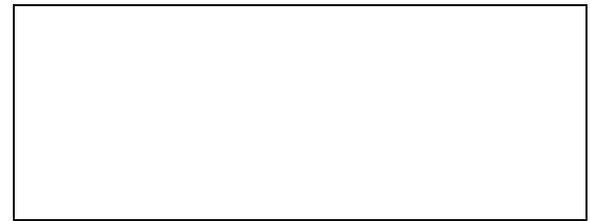
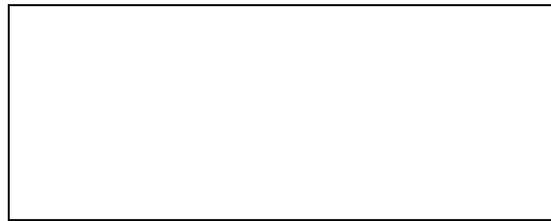
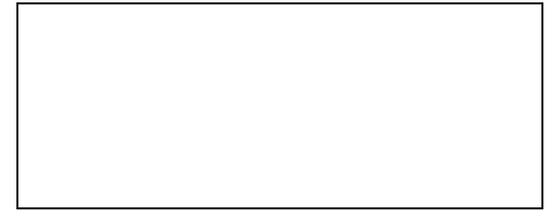
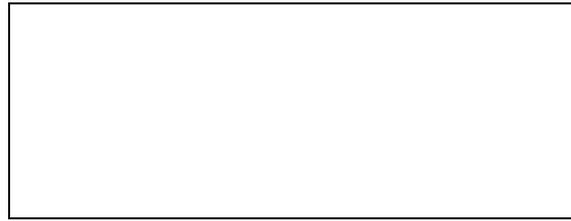
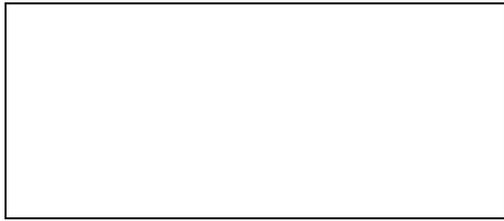
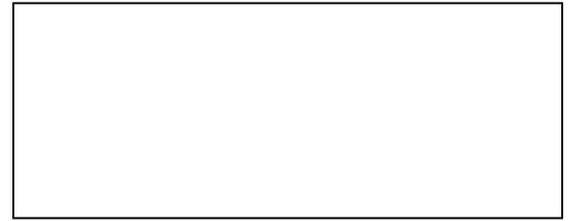
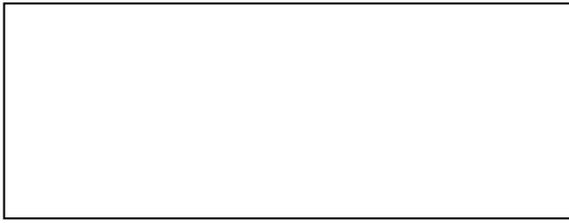
b) Voting with sticky dots

Ensure that each option is written clearly where all can see and with space next to them to stick the dots. Give each participant the same number of sticky dots – e.g. 3 or 4 or 5. They can then choose which option or options are most important for them, and stick their dots next to them (all on one option, or split between them). This voting approach is quicker and cruder than Diamond Ranking.

5 What to do with the results

When you've decided the 3 priorities, write them onto the answer sheet (attached). If you do it now, as the final part of the session, it is a better representation of the groups' thoughts, there is more ownership.....and it's one less thing to do afterwards.

Close the session, and undertake to keep the group informed as the strategy develop.



Strategic Plan 2018 -2025 Feedback

Name of district/group:

Contact person:

Email address (if we need further information):

	<i>Priority 1</i>	<i>Priority 2</i>	<i>Priority 3</i>
How would you like your group to be in 2025? What things would you like to be involved in?			
What would you like Woodcraft Folk to do between now and 2025? - What should it continue to do? What can it do better?			