

# **Elections to General Council, Standing Orders Committee and Folk Supply Committee**

We have elections to three bodies this Annual Gathering

## **General Council**

General Council is the Trustee board of Woodcraft Folk and is made up of ten lay members, four 18-24 members, four DF reps, one rep each from Wales and Scotland, the Treasurer and a rep from the Co-op movement.

We have elections for five lay members to serve for two years, two 16-24 members to serve for two years and one 16-24 members to serve for one year.

Details of the nominations to date are included in this document.

Nominations for both lay and 18-24 members have been re-opened. If you would like to stand, please download a nomination form from <http://woodcraft.org.uk/woodcraft-annual-general-meeting> and bring the completed form with you to Gathering.

## **Standing Orders Committee (SOC)**

Standing Orders Committee ensure the smooth running of Woodcraft Folk's internal democracy and is made up of six members.

This year we have elections for three members to serve for two years.

Details of the nomination received in advance of Gathering are included in this document. Nominations have been re-opened. If you would like to stand, please download a nomination form from <http://woodcraft.org.uk/woodcraft-annual-general-meeting> and bring the completed form with you.

## **Folk Supply Committee**

Folk Supply Committee has two spaces for members elected at Annual Gathering.

No nominations were received by the deadline. Nominations have been re-opened. If you would like to stand, please download a nomination form from <http://woodcraft.org.uk/woodcraft-annual-general-meeting> and bring the completed form with you.

**Nominations formally close at 10:10am on Saturday 23 September, but it is incredibly helpful if you can submit your nomination in advance by emailing [nominations@woodcraft.org.uk](mailto:nominations@woodcraft.org.uk)**

All elections in Woodcraft Folk use the Single Transferable Vote system, known as STV.

## How does STV work?

- 1** The ballot paper lists the names of the candidates. Voters vote by putting a '1' next to the name of their favoured candidate, a '2' next to the name of their next favoured candidate and so on. They stop allocating preferences when they cannot decide between the candidates – they do not need to vote for them all.
- 2** At the count, the number of votes which candidates need in order to be elected (the 'quota') is calculated by dividing the total number of valid ballot papers by the number of people to be elected plus one. For example, with 100 valid ballot papers and 3 places to be filled, the quota would be 25.
- 3** The ballot papers are sorted into piles according to the first preferences – the '1's. If any candidate has more first preference votes than the quota, they are immediately elected.
- 4** The next stage is to transfer any surplus votes for these elected candidates, i.e. the difference between their vote and the quota needed to be elected. To avoid the problem of deciding which of the votes are surplus, all ballot papers are transferred but at a reduced value so that the total adds up to the number of surplus votes.
- 5** After all the surpluses have been transferred, we look to see whether all the places to be elected have been filled. If they have not, then the candidate with the fewest votes is excluded and their votes are transferred to the voters' second preferences.
- 6** This process of transferring surpluses and excluding candidates continues until enough candidates have reached the quota to fill all the places to be elected. Although the counting process is more complex than with 'First Past the Post', it can be done by, or with the help of, a computer and it is a small price to pay for improving the voting power of every single elector.

## **Summary of Candidates**

### **General Council (16-24)**

Two places up for election, one place up for by-election, two candidates:

- Holly Carter-Rich
- Pip Sayers

### **General Council (lay)**

Five places up for election, four candidates:

- Sapna Agarwal
- Tom Gower
- Ralph Sleigh
- Stuart Walker

### **Standing Orders Committee**

Three places up for election, one candidate:

- Jeni Dixon

### **Folk Supply Committee**

No nominations

Nominations to be re-opened in all categories.

## Pip Sayers

candidate for **General Council (16-24)**

**District:** Bradford

**Age:** 21



### **Experience & Reasons for Standing:**

I have been on GC since October 2015, and have thoroughly enjoyed being involved. I am seeking re-election because I feel there hasn't been a time when Woodcraft Folk's work has been more relevant in the world. I'd like to remain actively involved in helping Woodcraft fight for young people's rights and opportunities, promote the values of co-operation and friendship, and help continue a growing community of districts and groups throughout the UK.

I joined Woodcraft Folk as an Elfin when I was 6, and have been continuously involved in Bradford District as a Pioneer, Venturer and DF. As a DF, I became involved in Woodcraft on a national level, and through DF events and other national events gained a full appreciation of Woodcraft as a nationwide movement. In DF committee, I have worked most recently as their Treasurer which gave me an understanding of Woodcraft's finances. During my time on GC I have represented Woodcraft as a delegate at IFM congress, acted as point of contact for Height Gate committee and GC, and worked as a point of communication between DFs and wider woodcraft.

I am seeking re-election as I feel I have plenty more to give GC on top of my work over the last two years. I am excited to see Woodcraft continue to develop in the modern age, both in its online presence and in the use of different media to reach a wider audience. Woodcraft must continue to make a voice for itself, both through making its opinions heard on national issues, and through vocally standing in solidarity with our friends in the UK and around the globe, and this is all work I am keen to be part of. There has never been a more relevant time for Woodcraft Folk's values and principles to be shouted from the rooftops, and I'd like to continue to work on GC to ensure this.

I've always felt passionate about being involved with the Folk; it's been a huge part of my childhood and teenage years. I'd love the opportunity to continue to work with GC and shape this movement that's been such a formative part of my life.

# **Holly Carter-Rich**

candidate for **General Council (16-24)**

**District:** DF, not currently attached to a District

**Age:** 20

## **Experience & Reasons for Standing:**

I have been a member of Woodcraft Folk since the age of 6, so this is my 15<sup>th</sup> year as member. I will be leaving DFs next April so will be involved as a Kinsfolk and Leader. Having been one of the DF committee nominated reps to General Council for the last two years, and I would really like to continue my time as a young adult representative on General Council.

I believe it is so important that the youth voice is represented within all levels of Woodcraft Folk due to the fact we are a social movement focused on youth empowerment. I have been involved with DFs on a national level for the last two years as the safeguarding admin. While at points it has been difficult, it has also been incredibly inspiring and has really made me want to experience woodcraft on another level.

This is why I have enjoyed my time on General Council so much, as it has encouraged me to think of Woodcraft in a different way. However, I think I have only come to understand how Woodcraft is run and therefore I think if I was re-nominated I would be able to truly advise and help with decisions that are made on general council.

# Sapna Agarwal

candidate for **General Council**  
**(lay member)**

**District:** Glasgow Kelvingrove

**Age:** 37

## **Experience & Reasons for Standing:**

In terms of skills my main experience is in community organising in a voluntary capacity. I have co-initiated and currently co-run and facilitate a number of self-organising groups, mostly for families. This encompasses admin, advertising, facilitating non-hierarchical discussion and activities, responding to changing needs within the groups through listening to the memberships, liaising with outside organisations that the groups wish to work with as well as a little book-keeping.



I have some experience of consent-based decision-making and sociocracy and am interested in proposing some of these working methods to the General Council if it was felt to be of benefit.

Within Woodcraft Folk, I have been the District Co-ordinator for Glasgow Kelvingrove since helping to set it up three years ago and have been heavily involved in organising events both across all Glasgow districts and all Scottish districts.

My motivation for wanting to join General Council is, in part, that I often hear that Woodcraft Folk is "all white, middle class". I first heard it said at the New Leaders' Training Weekend I attended four years ago and then again at regular intervals. I know that's not how anyone in the organisation wants things to be. This unhelpful description can render people of colour, like myself, my children and many other young woodies, invisible and irrelevant. I would like to help increase diversity on General Council in the hope that a greater breadth of representation could begin to change this narrative and thus maybe lead to increased diversity of membership.

I recognise that times are hard as funding has been cut time and again in the recent past and the challenges we are facing as community minded people striving for equality are vastly increased in the current political climate but I feel a great affinity with the aims and principles of the organisation and would like to do what I can to help further them.

## Tom Gower

candidate for **General Council**  
**(lay member)**

**District:** Ealing & Hammersmith

**Age:** 36

### **Experience & Reasons for Standing:**

I have been a member of Woodcraft Folk since I was four years old and have been running groups and camps since I was 16. I have worked with Elfin, Pioneers and Venturers, served as a District Equipment Officer, been a member of the Park Farm Committee, served on London Region Committee and General Council. I work for my local council and have spent most of my career in HR related areas, most recently as a trainer, but previously in personnel.

I have served on General Council for 6 years and have enjoyed feeling like I'm contributing to something I love. I have served for the last 5 years as Vice Chair with responsibility for Staffing matters. During my time on General Council I have led on all staffing related matters, including restructures, grievances, and rewriting/updating all of our HR policies. I have led on drafting important documents, such as a Risk Register and List of Delegated Authority, and served on the Finance and General Purposes Committee. I have also recently led on redrafting Woodcraft Folk's badgework resources, which are currently being consulted on with the movement.

I have spent my entire life in Woodcraft Folk, having been a Woodchip, Elfin, Pioneer, Venturer and as a leader, and have thoroughly enjoyed every minute. I am very grateful to Woodcraft Folk for the experiences and opportunities it has given me and I want to make sure that future children will have the same chance to have fun while thinking about big ideas and developing as a person that I did. I passionately believe in the good that Woodcraft can bring to society, that by encouraging kids to think about big ideas and giving them the values that Woodcraft Folk believe in we can help them to build a brighter future for us all. I would love to be re-elected to General Council and serve for another 2 years, partly because I really want to finish the work I have begun, and partly because I feel I bring a lot of experience and a useful opinion (even if not always right) to most discussions.



## Stuart Walker

candidate for **General Council**  
**(lay member)**

**District:** Newham Watersmeet

**Age:** 51 very old

### **Experience & Reasons for Standing:**

Let's change the world, and let's have fun as we do it.

The last few years has been such an exciting time for us in Woodcraft. People all around us have been waking up, realising, there are better ways of living together. Woodcraft can provide proven models of collaborative living. Real radical alternatives.

Let's make Woodcraft bigger, bringing more children and young people in. There are recruitment opportunities everywhere we look, opportunities to reach out into communities previously untouched. The New Groups projects have shown what is possible. We can continue building on this, breaking down barriers and constructing a mass children's movement.

Let's make Woodcraft better. International Camp 2020, gives us the focus for really showing the world what we do so well. We'll deliver an exceptional event, a massive spectacle and an outstanding social education programme. We'll use this as an opportunity to modernise our systems and ensure our army of volunteers can deliver a professional quality youth provision.

Let's make Woodcraft bolder. Woodcraft was dreamt by Leslie Paul as the children's antidote to failing industrialised capitalist society. For nearly a century we have championed progressive social education and campaigned for children's rights. We have become shy to shout out what we know, that through co-operation we can build a real humane future, beyond hate and discrimination, in a sustainable world. As we ready for our 100 year birthday, let's tell the country what we believe and invite them to join with us, and span the world with friendship.

Let's deliver on our ideals.

Stuart Walker, July 2017



## Ralph Sleigh

candidate for **General Council**  
**(lay member)**

**District:** Ealing & Hammersmith

**Age:** 32

### **Experience & Reasons for Standing:**

Hi Everyone

I have been on General Council 6 years now and am happy to carry on if you wish. It's not been easy but I think we are more financially sustainable and have made good progress governance wise during this time, despite operating in an increasingly challenging environment. On General Council I am currently working ways we can have remote participation at our AGM, as well as some boring governance bits and many other smaller things. My grand visions for Woodcraft mostly involve us doing small things better, but hey someone has to do it.

I have been a Woodcraft member most of my life, and when not doing this I run a Pioneer group in Ealing and keep an eye on Woodcraft Social Media/IT stuff. During the day I further the neoliberal cause as a wizard of the information era (IT Consultant), but let's not go there.

Heres hoping whoever you elect we can make woodcraft better ☺

Blue Skies

-Ralph (yes, it's a toga, the things we do for the cause..)



## Jeni Dixon

candidate for **Standing Orders Committee**

**District:** Lewisham & Greenwich

**Age:** 38

### **Experience & Reasons for Standing:**

I have been involved in woodcraft Folk since 7, I grew up with Woodcraft Folk and its values including of empowering young people.

I remember my first AGM as a District Fellow, and how confusing everything was, with all the rules and unfamiliar terms such as reference to the 'chair standing up', 'taking debates in tandem' and the difference between addendums and amendments. Despite this I felt incredibly powerful. In a society that disregards the opinions of young people it was wonderful to be able to speak (and be listened to) about my opinions and what I wanted for the future of the Folk. To me this is key to Woodcraft, putting young people at the heart of our democracy.

Over the years the things that used to confuse me are things I've come to be passionate about and I have grown into a self-confessed 'governance geek', however I'm all too aware that these terms and rules can easily alienate people from our important democracy.

I work for Amnesty International UK as the Community Organising Manager, responsible for supporting, enabling and empowering our activists and partners across the UK. In this role I need to understand and apply our constitution, for our AGM, our resolutions or our terms of references. I am mocked (lovingly) in meetings for my ability to quote articles of our constitution and for knowing the governance timetable. I know this stuff, and apply it, because I am proud to work for a democratic movement. I am equally proud to be a member of Woodcraft which emphasises ownership of young people over the future of their movement.

My knowledge and experience of Woodcraft's democratic processes and principles have been key to helping my understanding of Amnesty's standing orders and constitution and I'm keen to give something back by taking on a role that allows me to enact governance as a member, not staff.

I'm passionate about finding ways to enable our young people to fully understand and access our democracy and believe there are easily achievable ways for our Standing Orders to be explained and implemented in a manner that is both accessible and empowering to all members. We are movement built on the principles of empowering young people and we must ensure our rules of democracy are able to do just that.

