



**Woodcraft folk**  
[www.woodcraft.org.uk](http://www.woodcraft.org.uk)



*Education for social change*

Annual Review  
2005-06



## From the Chair

Undoubtedly 2005 was a busy and testing year for the Woodcraft Folk both in terms of our finances and ensuring that this year's Global Village project achieves the success it deserves.



Global Village is firmly committed to playing its part towards achieving the United Nation's Millennium Goals. These are to reduce worldwide poverty, disease and child mortality; to improve primary education and gender equality, and to work towards environmental sustainability and a global partnership for development.

Our organisation was one of the first to affiliate to Make Poverty History and throughout the UK groups and individuals have been working hard to assist and publicise this vital campaign.

We have also held our largest-ever Venturer Camp (for young people aged 13-15) attracting 800 participants, including international delegations from 13 countries.

We are very fortunate to have a General Council which is undertaking our programme with such enthusiasm. Many of them are aged under 25, a fine example of young people's empowerment.

In response to the loss of our Department for Education and Skills grant, a major problem for us in 2005, groups, districts and individual supporters heeded the call to make donations to the national organisation. Their support has ensured that the Woodcraft Folk has been able to continue its educational work for social change and for a fairer world.

We are also grateful for the one-year secondment from the DES of civil servant Chinelo Chizea to help us identify and pursue new funding streams.

There are always people to thank for their contributions to the Woodcraft Folk but, most of all, thanks must go to our volunteer group leaders who are the life blood of the movement.



**Richard Lace**

## Make Poverty History

Woodcraft Folk Scotland made a considerable contribution to the MPH rally in Edinburgh in July, at the time of the G8 conference, by providing a variety of activities as well as a friendly space for families.

At the Folk marquee, people of all ages wrote messages to the G8 leaders and pinned them to 25ft letters spelling MAKE POVERTY HISTORY. Handmade banners and specially designed badges reinforced the rally's message that world poverty could be ended by a concerted effort from the rich countries of the west.



Members from all over the UK joined walkers from hugely differing backgrounds to create an overwhelmingly positive atmosphere on the great march, which made a white band around the city. Flares sent up every three seconds - each one marking a child's death - were a poignant reminder of why they were there.

Crowds poured in to the Woodcraft Folk ceilidh as the lively dancing echoed the optimism of the day. 100 singers joined together in songs specially written for the occasion and finally eight DFs (16-20 year-olds) and the Woodcraft Ceilidh Band took the stage to lead a world record attempt for the largest g8some (sic) reel.

## Cooperative support was vital

The Woodcraft Folk acknowledges the continued financial support received from the Cooperative Group and other cooperative societies. This has been even more important this financial year due to the loss of the grant from the Department for Education and Skills.

Folk members have been keen to discuss the establishment of a young person's cooperative network, the first meetings of which are planned for 2006. In addition, the Woodcraft Folk DFs have appointed a liaison officer in order to promote membership of co-operative societies.



## Record-breaking Venturers

The 800-strong Venturer Camp 2005, held in Derbyshire, broke all previous records. Its main theme was Peace and the final day marked the 60th anniversary of the Hiroshima bombing with an anti war demonstration and a minute's silence at midnight.



The majority of the campers were from the UK, but there were also delegations from Lithuania, Belgium, Russia, Italy, Austria, Peru, Mexico, Chile, Palestine, India, Nepal, South Africa and Senegal.

130 workshops were held in themed centres, including crafts and performing arts as well as serious discussion topics such as refugee and asylum issues. In the Sustainability tent, young people built a low energy sauna, made sustainable cosmetics and ran 'green' quizzes.

DFs ran the MEST-UP (Mediation Education Support Team Umbrella Project) providing peer education and confidential counselling, gaining the respect of the movement as well as encouraging Venturers to continue within the Folk.

For relaxation, the young people enjoyed dancing, karaoke, pub quizzes, a battle of the bands, and a 'fire fair' with fire breathers, jugglers and fireworks.

## DFs are unstoppable

In the summer DFs played a full part in many events. Venturer camp was co-ordinated by a DF, and more than 100 of them worked there, running centres and villages, co-ordinating food and providing site services.

About 100 gathered for their own DF Camp at a site on the Anglesey coast and 70 attended their annual business meeting, where important decisions were made on improving the effectiveness of their work. There were also workshops and a speaker from the Palestinian Solidarity Campaign.

The annual Winter Wonderland and Spring Awakening events were also well attended with their mixed programmes of workshops, music and fun.

Throughout the year, work continued on campaigns for sustainable transport and Latin American co-operatives as well as projects for Global Village.

Democratic quarterly forums are open to all DFs and attendance is increasing. The website is

[www.spanthatworld.com](http://www.spanthatworld.com).

## Ending with a bang

For the first time in several years, London Region held a summer camp this year bringing together 250 members from nine London districts, joined by a large delegation from Germany.

Held at the Woodcraft Folk camp site at Lurgashall in Sussex, the opening ceremony celebrated the movement's 80th anniversary. The highlight came on the last day when Taru Brazil, a group of Brazilian artists, provided workshops in costume making, drumming and Salsa dancing. Later everyone joined in the Brazilian carnival procession and the evening ended with dancing and fireworks.



As well as plenty of fun activities, campers explored sustainability issues, such as pedal power, solar panels, the reuse of computer printer motors and even an experimental compost toilet.



## Gwerin y Coed/ The Woodcraft Folk in Wales Environment, environment, environment...

Environmental issues dominated the programme for Gwerin y Coed in 2005, including a successful summer camp Reduce, Re-use, Recycle on an experimental sustainable farm near Newport, Pembrokeshire.

Adult leaders, Venturers and DFs from across Wales attended the National Venturer Camp, where their multi-national village had a particular focus on renewable energy, using wind & solar power to generate all its electricity.

Welsh DFs were part of the first youth exchange between Libya and Britain for 35 years, involving 14 young people from each country. They visited each others' lands to explore environmental issues and found it a very positive, life-changing experience. Outcomes included a 16 minute television programme and trilingual website.

Another highlight was Gwerin's own Annual Gathering & AGM where adults were joined by 40-plus Pioneers, Venturers and DFs.

Gwerin y Coed receives funding from the Welsh Assembly's National Voluntary Youth Organisations scheme, the Carnegie Trust, CAE (Snowdonia National Park Fund) and the Co-operative Group. Joint working has continued with the Welsh Youth Forum on Sustainable Development (WYFSD) and Urdd Gobaith Cymru. (the Welsh language youth movement).

## Adolygiad Blynyddol 2006

Canolbwyntiodd rhaglen Gwerin y Coed yn 2005 ar faterion amgylcheddol, gan gynnwys gwersyll haf llwyddiannus ar fferm gynladwy ger Trefdraeth, Sir Benfro ar y thema 'Lleihau, Ailddefnyddio, Ailgylchu'.

Mynychodd Arweinwyr Anturwyr a phobl ifanc dan 16 oed ar hyd a lled Cymru, Wersyll Cenedlaethol yr Anturwyr. Ffocws pennaf y pentref aml-genedl hon oedd egni adnewyddol, gan ddefnyddio pŵer haul a gwynt i gynhyrchu trydan.

Roedd aelodau o Gwerin y Coed yn rhan o'r cyfnewid cyntaf rhwng Libia a Phrydain ers 35 mlynedd. Bu i 14 o bobl ifanc o'r ddwy wlad gymryd rhan yn y gyfnewid.

Ymwelont â gwledydd ei gilydd i drafod materion amgylcheddol. Teimlwyd ei fod yn brofiad positif ac yn

un bythgofiadwy, un a newidiodd eu bywydau.

Cynhyrchwyd rhaglen deledu 16 munud a safle we tairieithog i gyfleu materion diwylliannol ac amgylcheddol yng Nghymru a Libia o'u safbwyntiau, a oedd yn aml yn cyferbynnu, ond eto'n gweddu'n llwyr i'w gilydd.

Uchelbwynt arall oedd Cyfarfod Cyffredinol Blynyddol Gwerin y Coed a gynhaliwyd ym mis Hydref. Daeth arweinwyr o hyd a lled Cymru i'r cyfarfod, yn ogystal â mwy na 40 o Arloeswyr, Anturwyr a phobl ifanc dros 16 oed.

Mae Gwerin y Coed yn parhau i gael ei hariannu gan gynllun Mudiadau Ieuenctid Gwirfoddol Cenedlaethol, Cynllun CAE Parc Cenedlaethol Eryri, yr Ymddiriedolaeth Carnegie a'r Grwp Cyd-weithredol.

Maent yn gweithio yn agos gyda Fforwm Ieuenctid Cymru ar Ddatblygu Cynladwy, yn ogystal ag Urdd Gobaith Cymru. Mae grwpiau newydd wedi cael eu hagar yng Nghymru, gan gynnwys grŵp drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg.

## Scottish Folk make themselves heard

During 2005 Woodcraft Folk Scotland was involved in several major events, notably the Make Poverty History rally in Edinburgh.

About 100 people attended a Family Event in Glasgow which included a pea fair, storytelling, African drumming, co-operative games, arts & crafts and a ceilidh. Part of an initiative to develop the Woodcraft Folk presence in Glasgow, it was funded by Scottish Co-op and The Robertson Trust.

Other events included 'Big in Falkirk'; a successful Scottish forum weekend in Pitlochry, and a strong presence at the WF Annual Gathering in Loughborough.

Edinburgh district was awarded £26,000 from the Scottish Executive Sustainable Action Fund to develop a renewable energy trailer and accompanying sustainable development education resources.

Further financial support came from the Scottish Executive Education Department, Scottish Co-op, and various trusts and individuals, as well as funds raised by members volunteering for the Workers Beer Company at Scottish concerts.

Woodcraft Folk Scotland also helped to set up the first group in Northern Ireland.



## INTERNATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Many exchanges and joint projects take place every year between the Woodcraft Folk and young people's organisations overseas. These are just a few.

### Snow way to travel

Wading through waist high snow in temperatures of minus 37C in northern Finland was a memorable experience for 16 Venturers and DFs from Middlesex. They were visiting a Finnish group who had been hosted in Britain the year before, and concentrated on exploring the way of life of the Sami people.



They stayed in log cabins in the middle of a forest, venturing out to visit a reindeer farm, a Sami village and a national park. Other highlights included an exhilarating speed-ride in a reindeer-drawn sledge, learning to ski, riding a snow-mobile and a traditional Finnish sauna.

### Limbo at the disco

Less dramatic temperatures welcomed 85 Folk members of all ages to a multi-national DUI Jubilee camp in Hals, North Jutland. They enjoyed an excellent programme with mini Olympics – all in the spirit of cooperation and fun – day trips, crafts and games. The under-14s disco and limbo competition was a superb evening, while the camp fire included fire breathing and bread making.

DFs again made their presence felt by running workshops on mediation and relaxation as well as children's games. They established lasting links with peer groups and exchanged ideas.

### Reaching new heights

The Woodcraft Folk symbol and message Span the World with Friendship was planted alongside other greetings 5,200 metres above sea level when two Woodcraft Folk leaders from Eastbourne visited Everest Base Camp in the Himalayas. While in the area, they happened to meet two Nepalese delegates from Kathmandu, who told them of the success of Venturer Camp and the Global Village seminar in Sheffield.

### A stronger IFM-SEI

Having faced a difficult financial period in 2004, the International Falcon Movement-Socialist Education International, a global umbrella of children's organisations, has re-grouped and grown from strength to strength in 2005. It regained its EU administrative grant, moved into new offices and entered a new phase in its political and educational work.

'A Children's Europe', a political paper advocating a Children's Commissioner, Ombudsman and an international exchange programme for children, successfully raised IFM's profile within the European institutions and prompted much interest from other youth organisations.

As an important indication of its global involvement, IFM held an international committee meeting in Santiago de Chile, the first outside Europe for many years.

### Games people play

Funded by Connect Youth International, young people gathered at the Woodcraft Folk Environmental Activities Centre at Cudham, Kent, for two residential weekends to try out games they

had collected from their European counterparts. Gathered via direct contact, e-mail and fax, the games have since been printed and will be available in a later edition of Games, Games, Games.

Participants also learned more about their European partners and customs, and gained a wider knowledge about the use of games and the value of co-operative play.



## Great progress in training

The London Training Project had a busy and fulfilling year in 2005, with more and more groups stepping forward for residential weekends and evening sessions to gain or brush up on the skills needed to work with children and young people.



A national register of trainers has now been set up and two dedicated training courses written. The first is a stand-alone two-hour introduction to working with the Folk and is available from the website or via Folk House. The second is a 12-hour course covering relevant topics like health and safety, group work, child protection and the value of play. It is hoped this course will be endorsed by Skills Active in 2006 as part of a nationally recognised training programme available to all.

## Tribute to staff

As always, this report must pay tribute to the commitment shown by the Woodcraft Folk's staff. Employment with a small voluntary organisation like ours does not bring the financial rewards of other jobs, and we are indebted to all of them for their sheer hard work willingly undertaken.

I would like to thank the other members of Staff Committee for their work, and the members of national, regional, project and outdoor centre management committees who have agreed to take on line management responsibilities for centre-based staff.

**Stewart Hunter, Chair of Staff Committee**

## Reliving our history

Brighthelmstone District's history project, funded by the Heritage Lottery's 'Young Roots' programme ended during 2005. Educational activities included interviewing older Folk members about their memories of the pre-war years, researching food available in 1930's Britain and Folk costume at the time.

Venturers took part in two bushcraft weekends and learned to make tents which were then used to recreate a 1930's camp.

A website <http://historycamp.woodcraftfolk.net> was completed in 2005. Colour postcards and 400 copies of a DVD about the project will be issued free to libraries and secondary schools in the Brighton and Hove area.

## Money Matters

Serving as trustees of the organisation, members of General Council continue to be mindful of their financial responsibilities, ensuring financial stability whilst supporting developments which further the aims of the movement. A considerable amount of time and attention is given by these volunteer trustees, particularly during the past financial year when the regular demands have been placed on much slimmer resources.

The Woodcraft Folk continues to be indebted to all of the volunteer treasurers who also undertake financial duties on a local or regional basis. As mentioned elsewhere, we thank those individual members, groups and districts who donated money to ensure that Head Office was able to continue functioning through this difficult financial period. The General Council recognises that in order to avoid similar situations in the future, additional funding needs to be secured. A fundraising working group has been established to undertake this task.



## LOOKING AHEAD

Global Village is a major educational project taking place from 29 July to 9 August near Maidstone in Kent, which the Woodcraft Folk is running on behalf of IFM-SEI.



Focusing attention on the plight of the world's poorest people, through the lens of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Global Village was launched in Sheffield last summer, attended by 150 delegates from around the world.



The project aims to raise awareness of the MDGs amongst young people and to empower them to play an active part in achieving them – whether it is through projects in their local communities or by lobbying politicians at world summits.

The website [www.globalvillage2006.org](http://www.globalvillage2006.org) has been launched containing masses of information, activities for youth groups and schools, and many different ways for young people to share their ideas and opinions on the things they really care about. The site is already experiencing high volumes of traffic and we hope that by summer 2006 it will have built into a worldwide community of young people.

Woodcraft Folk groups all over the UK are using the on-line programme ideas in their meetings as they plan for their involvement in what will be the biggest-ever IFM event to be held in the UK.

Around 5000 participants are expected at Global Village – many travelling from distant parts of the world – and all committed to changing the world for the better.

For further information about Global Village, contact [info@globalvillage2006.org](mailto:info@globalvillage2006.org) or telephone 0845 458 3527.

## New challenges for Liss

Liss Woodcraft Folk in Hampshire earned Ofsted commendation for its 2005 training programme involving a total of 52 adults and young people in a variety of courses, including first aid, playwork, health and safety, child protection and tackling challenging behaviour.

An enrichment programme for Venturers and DFs took them to London, Gosport and Portsmouth, and several members are actively involved in earning Youth Achievement Awards, undertaking sponsored walks, local conservation work, painting and running a Fair Trade café.

The Days of Hope playscheme provided 20 different activities during August ranging from hands-on experience with farm animals, back to basics camping, and a day trip to the Isle of Wight. A PlayNow scheme has been introduced, following a grant from the Local Network fund, which aims to engage with the harder to reach young people.

## PlayOut is never still

Last year saw a number of changes for the established PlayOut Programmes in Birkenhead and South London as they evolve in response to need. Both received further support for another two years from BBC Children in Need appeals, as well as local funding and the Children's Fund.

Through PlayOut, 3000 young people have been able to enjoy co-operative activities and alternative play, including games, crafts, scrap recycling and other social learning activities.

The Playout teams have established a reputation for fun and their dedication to the Woodcraft Folk ethos. This is reflected in the number of young people joining in the work programme and volunteering for Woodcraft activities throughout the year.

Educating children about the world outside their immediate environment and helping them to use their imagination is still high on Playout's agenda. More young people with special needs are becoming involved and adults too are helped to enjoy their children through play.



## The Woodcraft Folk

### The Progressive Educational Movement for Children and Young People

Groups exist throughout Great Britain, mostly in larger towns and cities, and are run by volunteers, often parents. The programme at their weekly meetings includes games, music, craftwork, discussions, projects, etc.

They also have regular outdoor activities, particularly camping and hiking, and international exchanges are popular with the older age groups.

Groups are for both boys and girls, divided by age as follows:

'Woodchips' – under six year olds.

'Elfins' – 6-9 year olds

'Pioneers' – 10-12 year olds

'Venturers' – 13-15 year olds

Young Adults, aged 16-20, are known as 'DFs' (district fellows)

For further information contact head office.

**Chair:** Richard Lace

**Vice Chairs:** Linda Osborn  
Simon Phillips  
Stewart Hunter

**General Secretary:** Andy Piercy

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### The Woodcraft Folk in Scotland

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### Woodcraft Folk Outdoor Centres

#### Cudham Environmental Activities Centre

Valley View, New Barn Lane, Westerham  
Hill, Kent TN16 2HT  
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cudham@woodcraft.org.uk  
Centre managers: Ann Johnson, Peter  
Brookes

#### Darsham County Centre

Darsham.  
Enquiries to: Annette Day,  
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darsham@woodcraft.org.uk

### Hamsterley Forest Centre

Hamsterley, Co Durham.  
Enquiries to: David Tully,  
Hamsterley Forest Outdoor Centre,  
Redford, Hamsterley, Bishop Auckland,  
Co.Durham DL13 3NL  
hamsterley@woodcraft.org.uk  
Centre manager: David Tully

### Height Gate Farm

Eastwood, Todmorden.  
Tel: 0845 456 9522  
heightgate@woodcraft.org.uk  
Height Gate Farm is managed by  
Hebden Bridge district

### Lockerbrook Outdoor Activities & Environmental Education Centre

Snake Rd, Bamford, Hope Valley,  
Sheffield S33 0BJ  
Tel: 01433 651412  
lockerbrook@woodcraft.org.uk  
Centre managers: Simon Hampton

### Lurgashall Park Farm Camp Site

Lurgashall.  
Enquiries to Tom Searle,  
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lurgashall@woodcraft.org.uk

## Be a friend of the **Woodcraft** folk

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I would like to increase my gift at no extra cost to myself. I pay tax. I want this donation to the Woodcraft Folk to be treated as gift aid.

I would like more information about working as a Woodcraft Folk leader with children and young people.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

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