



Ideas for involving young people in committees

These ideas were put together for Woodcraft Folk Outdoor Centres who want to get more under 18s involved in their centre committees, but they apply to other committees too.

Recruiting young people

- If DF age members seem to move on quickly because of study, work etc - try inviting younger groups such as Venturers.
- A working weekend could be used for recruitment, where young people experience the centre and enjoy contributing to its welfare.
- Inviting the local Venturers for a working weekend would be a great way for them to find out more and explore how they can get involved.
- Recruiting young people in pairs or small groups will help, so no one has to come to a meeting on their own.

Practicalities

- Try to hold committee meetings in a venue and at a time that's accessible to all - ideally not a pub, and not somewhere difficult to get to (eg Heightgate outdoor centre). Make sure meetings aren't during school hours or during local group night (although holding the committee meeting right before / after a group night, near where the group meets, could make it easy for interested young people to come and see what it's like).
- For example Lockerbrook do their meetings on a Sunday in Sheffield. Darsham also meet on a Sunday afternoon, in Cambridge. Cudham do theirs on an evening, with dinner served. Food is usually a popular attraction!
- Check whether young people need help to get to the meeting – both travel costs and chaperoning.
- Make sure under 18s have consent from their parents / carers to attend meetings

Supporting young members to participate

- Offer new members of the committee a buddy who will make sure they have the right information in advance, travel with them to meetings and help them understand and participate during the meeting.



- Involve young members straight away in a particular task or role they're interested in, so they can see there's something there for them, and see the impact of their involvement soon after joining.
- Celebrate young people's involvement – share quotes or stories from young people who've been involved before, and recognise anything younger members of the committee are doing or have done so other young people can be inspired.
- Overall, young people have told us that it's important to make them feel **invited** and **welcome** – they may not have heard about the committee or never been told it's open to them too. Try posting on the Facebook page of local groups, and use photos of fun activities of Heightgate to remind people how important the centre is.

Useful resources for supporting committees to work well together:

- Follow the Trail activities:
http://issuu.com/woodcraftfolk/docs/follow_the_trail_venturer_df_pack
- The A to Z of Good Discussion:
http://issuu.com/woodcraftfolk/docs/a_to_z_of_good_discussion
- Bored meeting training sessions: http://issuu.com/woodcraftfolk/docs/bored_meeting