



## **Woodcraft Folk Group Activities: Briefing for Group Leaders, April 2021**

### **Overview**

This briefing summarises the current position with regard to the expected gradual lifting of restrictions in place to control the transmission of Covid-19, and the implications of these for the planning of future Woodcraft Folk group and residential activities.

In **England** the government has announced a stepped approach to the easing of restrictions. While potential dates have been widely communicated in respect of each of these steps, it is vital to remember that these are the *earliest* dates at which the steps will be implemented, and progression to the next step will always be dependent on certain data-driven thresholds being reached. There is currently no suggestion that there will be a return to regional tiers of regulation.

In **Scotland** the government has also set out steps to reduce the lockdown restrictions, with progressive easing based on **protection levels**. All areas of the country moved to level 3 with effect from 26 April. Outline timetables have been announced for progression to levels 2 and 1, but again these are subject to review based on national and local infection rates.

In **Wales**, the **stay local** restrictions were lifted from 27 March, and organised outdoor activities for children and young people are now permitted. Timescales for further lifting of restrictions have not been announced at the time of writing.

Woodcraft Folk's approach, like that of all youth work organisations, continues to be shaped by the guidance issued by the National Youth Agency, YouthLink Scotland and the Council for Wales of Voluntary Youth Services.

For the remainder of the academic year, Woodcraft Folk expects to continue to provide a 'blended offer' of programme activities to our young members, including:

- Remote programme activities, supported by #DreamBigAtHome
- Online programme activities, locally and nationally
- Where permitted, and subject to maximum numbers, socially distanced outdoor activities
- Where permitted, and subject to maximum numbers, socially distanced indoor activities
- If permitted, carefully planned and managed camping or residential opportunities (no earlier than summer 2021)

No arrangements should be made for international exchange visits as part of Woodcraft Folk activity without the express permission of the [Chief Executive](#).

## **#DreamBigAtHome**

Online provision via [dreambigathome.uk](http://dreambigathome.uk) will continue, with a mix of weekly challenges and live programme sessions. The activity pages contain a wide range of activities that are searchable by theme and by suitability for online, outdoor or socially-distanced delivery.

## **Supporting Young Members**

As always, if you are concerned about any of the young people in the group(s) you work with, please contact Woodcraft Folk's safeguarding team by emailing [safeguarding@woodcraft.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@woodcraft.org.uk) so we can discuss how we can best meet their support needs.

## **Resuming Face-to-Face Provision**

As restrictions ease, group leaders need to consider not just what is permitted by the regulations, but balance carefully the benefits of resuming activities against the increased risks of transmission they will give rise to. This may be affected by particular circumstances, e.g. the vulnerability of young people or volunteers, leading different groups to come to different conclusions about the appropriate time to resume face-to-face provision. Volunteers should not feel pressured to undertake any activity that they are not comfortable delivering.

So that Woodcraft Folk can provide appropriate support to groups and ensure that adequate insurance cover is in place, group leaders/co-ordinators *must* complete the Reopening Checklist before resuming any face-to-face provision. This will involve confirming that your group has registered for 2021, and sharing your risk assessment for the sessions that you intend to deliver.

If you require further support or advice please contact [membership@woodcraft.org.uk](mailto:membership@woodcraft.org.uk).

## New Guidance for Scotland

Guidance from YouthLink Scotland permits face-to-face provision at all levels:

- At Level 4, provision should be **outdoors only**, including a maximum of 15 participants
- At Level 3, provision should be **outdoors only**, including a maximum of 30 participants
- At Level 2 and below, provision may be **indoors or outdoors**, including a maximum of 30 participants

It is important to note that both young people *and* adult volunteers count towards the maximum numbers for delivery outlined above.

All areas of Scotland moved to Level 3 with effect from Monday 26 April, meaning that outdoor activities can now include up to 30 people.

For the time being it is expected that youth work organisations limit travel as part of their provision, so outings or trips should be restricted to visiting local parks, nature reserves etc.

## Requirements for Face-to-Face Delivery

Before resuming face-to-face sessions with your group you should ensure that you are familiar with the latest version of YouthLink Scotland's [Guiding Framework](#), and that you are adhering to the government's [FACTS guidance](#).

Delivery in an outdoor setting can include a maximum of 15 participants; group leaders and other volunteers are *included* in this maximum.

Group leaders need to ensure that they can meet the **Expectations Before Delivery** outlined in the Guiding Framework, which include:

- Confirming delivery plans are compatible with current government public health guidance, scientific and medical advice
- An up-to-date risk assessment for your activity
- Appropriate infection control, cleaning and hygiene procedures
- Face coverings worn when required by law (indoors for those aged 12 or above)
- Physical distancing is observed (except for those aged under 12)
- Procedures to adhere to 'Test and Protect' are in place
- Measures to protect those at higher risk from Covid-19
- Clear communication with all participants, volunteers, parents/carers

In addition, before returning to face-to-face delivery, you must ensure that:

- The group is fully registered with Woodcraft Folk for 2021, with your group co-ordinator and safeguarding lead for the group identified
- You have permission from the owner/operator of your venue to start meeting again (local authority in the case of public parks etc.)
- Your group will not exceed the maximum size permitted
- A written risk assessment has been completed for the planned activities, detailing the procedures in place for controlling all relevant risks, including transmission of Covid-19. This should be emailed to [safeguarding@woodcraft.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@woodcraft.org.uk) and shared with all volunteers *before* face-to-face activities commence

Failure to comply with the above expectations will mean that your activities are not covered by Woodcraft Folk's insurance.

YouthLink Scotland guidance indicates that some residential activity may resume as early as mid-May (subject to confirmation by the government and public health authorities). However, this will be subject to strict restrictions which will mean overnight trips are impractical for most groups until restrictions ease further. Groups wishing to camp are advised to consider participating in the Scottish Camp planned for July and/or the age group camps at Biblins in August. If you are planning other camping or residential activity this summer, please contact me to discuss your plans.

No arrangements should be made for international exchange visits as part of Woodcraft Folk activity without the express permission of the [Chief Executive](#).

**Owen Sedgwick-Jell**

Head of Membership & Programmes

[owen@woodcraft.org.uk](mailto:owen@woodcraft.org.uk)

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