

# Preliminary Agenda for Annual Gathering 2011

## THE WOODCRAFT FOLK ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2011

To be held during

**Annual Gathering 2011**

29<sup>th</sup> April - 1<sup>st</sup> May 2011

Walesby Forest Scout Centre, Nottinghamshire

### Preliminary Agenda

1. Welcome and Opening Address
2. Minutes of Annual Conference 2010 and Matters Arising
3. Election of Scrutineers and Tellers
4. Consideration of the Annual Report
5. Consideration of Accounts and Financial Matters
6. Report of Standing Orders Committee
7. Introduction of Candidates for Election
8. Consideration of Motions and Amendments
9. Declaration of Election Results
10. Other Business
11. Close of Conference

#### Notes from Standing Orders Committee:

- **Motions which alter the Constitution** require two thirds of the votes held at the Conference in order to be carried
- **General Motions** (those which do not alter the Constitution) require a simple majority of votes cast in order to be carried
- **Supporting Statements** have been provided by movers of some motions for information, and to aid understanding and debate. For the sake of clarity they have been printed with the respective motions in this agenda, but do not form part of the motion to be amended or voted upon.

## **Motion 1: Developing Volunteers**

This Annual Conference notes:

- The importance of having two members at each Woodcraft Folk event to ensure that the core principles of the Woodcraft Folk are at the heart of our programme
- That Annual Gathering 2010 raised the stakes of growing and supporting groups, by having it as a core strand of our big plan
- That General Council had growth and support as the second biggest priority (after finance) for the movement at their meeting in September 2010
- That many groups are now run by a collection of members and volunteers, and without this cooperation these groups would struggle to operate
- That people volunteer with the Woodcraft Folk for a variety of reasons
- That the issue of CRB checks and the Independent Safeguarding Authority has yet to be grasped by the movement in relation to volunteers.

This Annual Conference instructs General Council

- To provide support to groups and districts by ensuring that we can call on as many people as possible to support the work they are doing
- To help leaders by implementing the volunteer policy agreed by General Council at their meeting in November 2010
- To provide a structure that will enable groups and districts to have CRB checks (and other similar checks as required) for volunteers.

Moved and Seconded by: Boveney District

### ***Note from Standing Orders Committee:***

*The following motion seeks to alter the processes for CRB checks. Constitutional clause E(3) states that "Members aged 18 or over are required to have completed the CRB procedure". Thus the effect of this motion must therefore be limited to allowing non-member volunteers to undergo the CRB procedure.*

## **Motion 2: Separate CRB checks from membership process**

This Annual Conference resolves to separate the CRB check and membership process and offer free CRB checks to all Woodcraft Folk's volunteers.

Proposed and Seconded by: Stroud Valley District

### **Motion 3: Reduce adult and DF membership fees**

This Annual Conference agrees to replace adult and DF membership fees with a minimum donation to the Woodcraft Folk of £1.

Proposed and Seconded by: Brighton Hill Fort District

#### ***Supporting Information:***

*At present, The Woodcraft Folk has a problem with a large number of volunteers working with children and young people without a CRB disclosure. We recognise that asking volunteers to pay membership fees, in order to sacrifice their time and effort to volunteer with the organisation is not acceptable. This is the process that one must take in order to obtain a CRB check. We recognise that safeguarding our children and young people is more important than the income that the central organisation generates from membership. The income that The Woodcraft Folk generates from membership is a relatively small amount. Furthermore, by January 2012, there will be an online donations and membership system, including the possibility to set up direct debits, thus encouraging members to make regular donations to the organisation. The membership will greatly increase through this revised membership system and The Woodcraft Folk communications and press will reach a greater number of people than present. The revised adult and DF membership system will further allow Folk Office to monitor more accurately how many members The Woodcraft Folk has.*

### **Motion 4: Enable 5 year membership for DFs**

This Annual Conference recognises that large numbers of memberships lapse between the ages of 16 and 20, a time of change in many peoples lives. Therefore this Annual Conference resolves to allow 16 to 20 year olds to buy 5 year memberships which will not only keep them in the Woodcraft Folk but decrease administrative costs and improve cash flow.

Proposed and Seconded by: DF committee

### **Motion 5: Group Registration fees**

This Annual Conference resolves to change the group membership system from January 2012. The base group registration fee will be lowered from £125 to £50 for Woodchip, Elfin, Pioneer and Venturer groups, with an additional £5 fee per child or young person in the group. The base fee will include one free delegate place for every registered group at each Annual Conference. Each child registered will receive a membership badge and a Woodcraft diary annually.

Proposed and Seconded by: Brighton Hill Fort District and Kingswood Elfins

#### ***Supporting Information:***

*The revised system will be more economically beneficial for smaller groups; groups with less than 15 members will pay a smaller amount annually than the current system and larger groups will contribute more to the movement. Annual Gathering will be more accessible and inclusive, as each group will have a free delegate position, making The Woodcraft Folk more representative and democratic. The membership badge and diary for each child member will heighten the children's ownership of the organisation and will create more of a link between the national and the local. The revised group membership system will further allow Folk Office to monitor more accurately how many members The Woodcraft Folk has.*

### **Motion 6: Replace membership cards with badges**

This Annual Conference resolves to get rid of the current Woodcraft membership cards in exchange for a yearly membership badge for adult and DF members.

Proposed and Seconded by: Brighton Hill Fort District

#### ***Supporting Information:***

*The current membership cards are dated, have little sentimental value and do not reflect our organisation. In this proposal, each member will receive a badge that is unique to the year of membership, with the given year printed on the badge. Members can then collect the badges for each of the years that one has been a member. Membership numbers will be printed on a letter that arrives with the membership badge.*

### **Motion 7: Venturer and District Fellow representation**

This Annual Conference believes that we are a democratic youth organisation and that as such young people should be encouraged and supported to participate as much as possible.

This Annual Conference strongly urges that delegates for Venturer and DF groups should be of the age range that they are representing.

*Proposed and Seconded by: DF committee*

### **Motion 8: Include all Annual Gathering activity on the formal agenda**

This Annual Conference resolves to include the informal discussion items of the Annual Gathering agenda (Workshops and Open Space Discussions) within the formal agenda of Annual Conference. In addition to this, a 'matters arising from informal agenda' item will be added to the Annual Conference agenda with a capacity for motions to be presented to delegates on which to vote.

This Annual Conference recognises that the constitution will be amended to adopt the changes to a branch structure charity and instructs those amending the constitution to include this aspect within their proposals.

#### ***Supporting information:***

*Motions allow Woodcraft members to suggest solutions to a problem that they have seen within Woodcraft. This system is great if one believes in the perfect solution when writing the motion. Changing the system to the above suggestion allows members to present problems to Annual Conference in order for solutions to be found from the body of Annual Gathering. In the current system, these new-found solutions must wait a year to be voted upon, and only if someone feels confident to write the motion.*

*Motions exclude the capacity for problems to be brought before Annual Gathering if the member who wishes to bring a problem forward, cannot find the solution.*

*This motion allows members to add items to the informal agenda; to ask for something to be discussed in a wider group and if a solution is found to the problem, then a motion can be voted on in the traditional fashion. It is a much more inclusive way of affecting change.*

## **Motion 9: Making a Branch Structure a legal reality**

This Annual Conference notes:

- Annual Conference 2010 instructed that the necessary constitutional amendments to ensure the Branch structure of Woodcraft Folk is made legally sustainable be brought to this Conference in 2011
- subsequent legal advice to General Council is that this aim is best achieved by incorporation into a Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee
- the process of drawing up the necessary legal documents to incorporate is a complex one, and has not yet been completed.
- That the structural reforms have already been delayed by a year and further delay will mean that the project will have taken almost 6 years from end to finish.

This Annual Conference believes that General Council should make moves to complete the process before Annual Conference 2012 so we are able to fulfil the wishes of Annual Conference 2010.

This Annual Conference therefore instructs General Council to call a special day conference in an accessible location in the autumn to bring the suitable new Constitutional documents.

Proposed and Seconded by: General Council

### ***Supporting Information:***

*The process of limiting ourselves by guarantee will enable us to set up a new organisation so that all branches are recognised as part of a branch structure. The process involves issuing a new model district constitution and then transferring the assets of the old charity over to the new.*

*This would best be done by calling a special-conference to ratify the new constitution and wind-up the old one. We believe that having a special day conference to deal with this issue will allow those who wish to get involved in the process the ability to do so.*

*We are keen to make a move on this and whilst there is no rush, we aim to fulfill the aim of incorporating before the end of 2011. General Council believes it would not be right to present a document that was not fully democratic and therefore asks for more time to complete the process. While we know that we do not require Annual Conference's consent for an extra-ordinary meeting in the autumn we also we would like your continuing support for this process and ultimately for you decide if we need a special meeting.*

### **Amendment (1) to Motion 9**

Delete fourth bullet point and replace final two paragraphs with:

*This Annual Conference therefore instructs General Council to bring suitable new Constitution documents for approval to Annual Conference in 2012.*

Proposed and Seconded by: General Council

**Note from Standing Orders Committee:**

The following motion was laid upon the table by the 2010 Annual Conference, where it appeared on the agenda as "Motion 27: International Secretary".

**Motion 10: Create new staff post of International Secretary**

This Annual Conference instructs General Council to actively seek new funds or to divert central funds as necessary to employ a paid officer, to be known as the International Secretary, who will work alongside the General Secretary, the IFM Secretary and International Committee, with the aim of furthering the Woodcraft Folk's aim of Spanning the World with Friendship.

Proposed and Seconded by: Brighton Central and Hove District

**Supporting Information:**

*We believe that a paid officer is needed to support groups and districts engaged in international work and to encourage more groups and districts to launch such international work. International work includes, for example, the hosting of delegations or the taking of delegations to other countries.*

*One key area in which a paid officer could work would be helping groups find and secure funding. This would, amongst other things, make the task of organising a delegation less daunting.*

**Motion 11: Campaign on visa regulations**

This Annual Conference instructs General Council to facilitate the organisation of a campaign, by any interested Members, Groups and Districts of the Woodcraft Folk, to change the regulations which allow the UK Border Agency to refuse visas to members of delegations who wish to attend events, such as International Camps, run by Woodcraft Folk and other similar charitable organisations.

Proposed and Seconded by: Brighton Central and Hove District

**Supporting Information:**

*This problem with visas is not just limited to Britain but is a much wider issue across Europe which, if allowed to continue, will mean that we will have great difficulty in getting any Solidarity delegations along to our camps, and in particular to Co-camp this year. Surely this cannot be ignored any longer, particularly by an organisation with the motto "Span the World with Friendship."*

**Motion 12: Reverse position on Israeli produce**

This Annual Conference affirms the links between the Woodcraft Folk and our kinsfolk in the International Falcon Movement. Last year's emergency motion banning Israeli produce is incompatible with the spirit of international cooperation and should be reversed.

Moved and Seconded by: Bromley District

**Supporting Information:**

*Both Israeli and Palestinian groups are affiliated to the International Falcon Movement. The only hope for the Middle East is dialogue and cooperation.*

### **Motion 13: Support for Woodcraft climate campers**

This Annual Conference acknowledges the great achievements of the Woodcraft Folk in supporting young people in their decision to protest and raise their voices. This Annual Conference resolves to continue all aspects of this supporting role and to attend Climate Camp this summer, performing a similar role for young people deciding to act against climate change.

Proposed and Seconded by: DF committee

### **Motion 14: Free Education for All**

This Annual Conference notes the way in which children and young people have come together to speak out against the outrageous rises in tuition fees for university students, the scrapping of the Education Maintenance Allowance, the covert marketisation of our schools, and the cuts in services to the population.

This Annual Conference reaffirms its commitment to free education for all, and also commits itself to supporting the most needy through schemes such as Education Maintenance Allowance.

This Annual Conference sends a message of support to all those fighting to defend education and services for all, congratulates the Woodcraft Folk for standing alongside young people who choose to protest against these measures, and calls upon the General Council to continue to provide the excellent support to our members who wish to have their voices heard, including as appropriate and possible: transport, food, safe accommodation and anything else deemed helpful.

Proposed and seconded by: Boveney District, DF committee and Aberystwyth Dfs

### **Motion 15: Consultation on support for campaigning**

This Annual Conference notes:

- The magnificent protests by students and other young people about changes in education funding
- The highly successful involvement of Woodcraft Folk at both local and national levels in support of these young people
- That this has revealed that Woodcraft Folk is, effectively, the **only progressive young people's movement** in the UK
- That this both offers opportunities and creates responsibilities for our movement

This Annual Conference instructs General Council to engage **as a matter of urgency** in a wide-ranging consultation throughout the movement as to how best to take this opportunity forward, to circulate ideas and to produce proposals for concrete actions.

Proposed and Seconded by: Hackney District

### **Motion 16: Require meat to be on menu at national camps**

This Annual Conference believes that the Woodcraft Folk is an organisation with many ways of working and with members with different needs. We support the principle that we are all different but all equal. This is especially important in terms of catering for our members at camps- kosher, vegetarian, vegan, meat etc. At recent national, centrally organised events the Woodcraft Folk has not catered for all, by creating vegetarian only menus. For most people vegetarianism is a personal choice, not a specific dietary requirement relating to health. This Annual Conference calls upon organisers of central events (where food menus are managed above village level) to ensure meat is on the menu at least every other day.

Proposed and Seconded by: Spelthorne district

### **Note from Standing Orders Committee:**

*The following motion seeks to alter the constitution. By section SO.7 (ii) of the Woodcraft Folk Standing Orders the next opportunity to amend the constitution is at the Annual Conference in 2013. This motion is therefore ruled 'Out of Order'.*

### **Motion 17: Remove requirement to send Convening Notice by post – RULED OF OUT ORDER**

This Annual Conference resolves to amend : Constitution U (Notices) (1)

- (1) Any notice required to be served on any member of the Woodcraft Folk shall be in writing and shall be served by the General Secretary or the General Council on any member either personally or by sending it through the post in a prepaid letter addressed to such member at his or her last known address in the United Kingdom, and any letter so sent shall be deemed to have been received within 10 days of posting.

To read:

- (1) Any notice required to be served on any member of the Woodcraft Folk shall be in writing and shall be served by the General Secretary or the General Council. Notices may be served:
  - i. personally; or
  - ii. by post in a prepaid letter to a UK address supplied by the member; or
  - iii. by electronic form to an e-mail address supplied by the member;

Notice shall be deemed to be received immediately when noticed is served personally or by electronic form or within 10 days of posting.

Proposed and seconded by General Council

### **Supporting Information:**

*The General Council is aware that the constitution is usually only amended every 3 years. However these requirements are costing us over £3,000 p.a. As many members know, our finances have not been strong and to meet our planned targets we must budget accordingly. To prevent an unnecessary expenditure of £6,000 over the next two years we are asking for the conference to agree a suspension of the Standing Orders and amend the constitution.*

*It will also allow us to communicate in a way in which members (through other motions passed in recent years) have requested us to do.*

**Note from Standing Orders Committee:**

*The effect of the following motion would be to alter the constitution, particularly the following clause:*

- *Constitution - E (3) - Members aged 18 or over are required to have completed the CRB procedure and to sign the annual child protection declaration.*

*By section SO.7 (ii) of the Woodcraft Folk Standing Orders the next opportunity to amend the constitution is at the Annual Conference in 2013. Additionally by section V(1) of the Woodcraft Folk Constitution a motion must set out the terms of any alteration to the constitution. This motion is therefore ruled 'Out of Order'*

**Motion 18: Full and Supporter Membership – RULED OUT OF ORDER**

This Annual Conference resolves that there shall no longer be the option of full or supporter membership of the Woodcraft Folk. Any member of the Woodcraft Folk will be a full member, with an additional option of whether the given member requires a CRB assessment or not. The membership form will explain that a CRB assessment is required if the individual works with children on more than one occasion per month or stays overnight with children.

Proposed and Seconded by Brighton Hill Fort District

**Supporting Information:**

*As it stands, there is a distinction between members who do and do not work with children on The Woodcraft Folk's membership form. The current membership form implies that if one does not work with children then one is not a full member of the organisation, thus creating a hierarchy between those people who are paying money to our movement. Furthermore, it should be noted that members can volunteer with The Woodcraft Folk without working with children, thus not requiring a CRB.*

**Note from Standing Orders Committee:**

*The following motion seeks to alter the constitution. By section SO.7 (ii) of the Woodcraft Folk Standing Orders the next opportunity to amend the constitution is at the Annual Conference in 2013. This motion is therefore ruled 'Out of Order'.*

**Motion 19: Link age of delegates to age-group represented – RULED OUT OF ORDER**

This Annual Conference believes that we are a democratic youth organisation and that as such young people should be encouraged and supported to participate as much as possible.

This Annual Conference agrees that delegates for Venturer and DF groups must be of the age range that they are representing and resolves to amend the Constitution as follows:

- Add new clause Q(2) (v): 'The delegate of a group for 13-15 year olds must be 13-15 years old and a group member as defined by Clause F(1). The delegate of a District Fellows group must be a District Fellow as defined by Clause F(2) (i).'

*Proposed and Seconded by: DF committee*