

# Final Report & Evaluation

VENTURER CAMP 2023

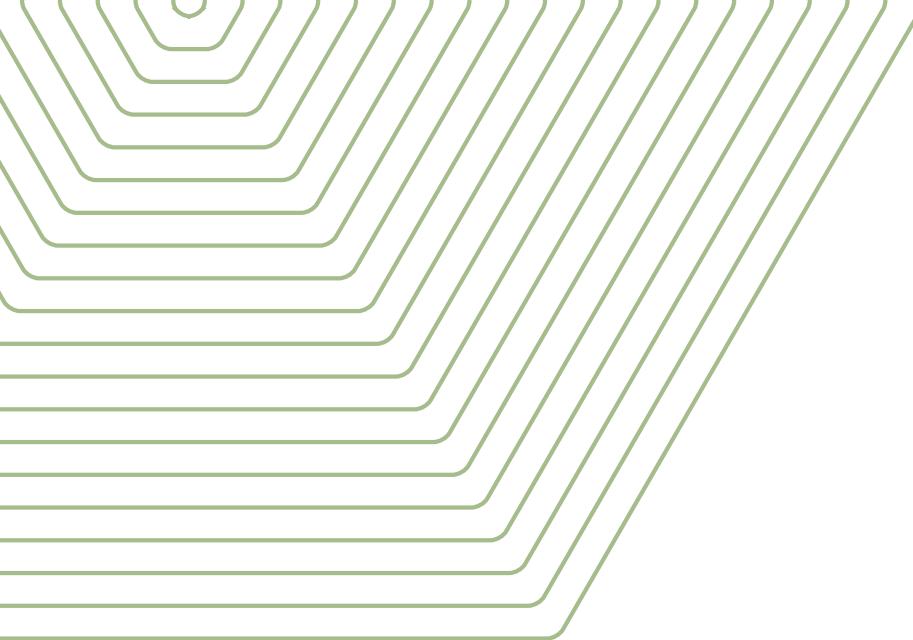
WOODCRAFT FOLK  
FEBRUARY 2024

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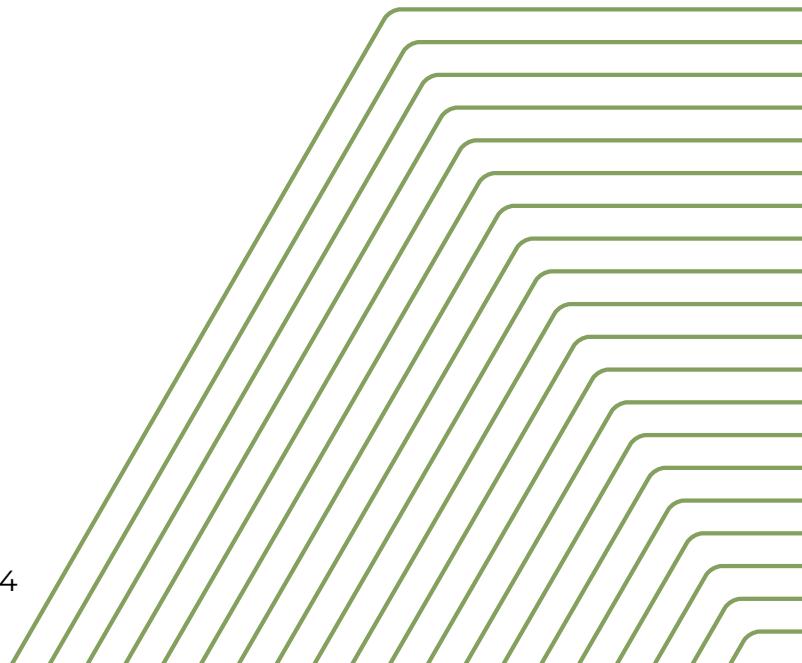
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## **Background & Introduction**



**Part I**

# 1 | Coordinator's Introduction

Welcome to the Venturer Camp 2023 Final Report & Evaluation.

For the most part, this document has been co-authored by the entire Venturer Camp team, with the Coordinator and Woodcraft Folk Events Assistant producing the first draft. This section, however, has solely been written by me - Thomas Boxall, Camp Coordinator.

To coordinate such a big Woodcraft Event was a great privilege. I grew up as a young person in Woodcraft and after seeing the impact the Covid Pandemic has had on the young people of today, I'm honoured to be able to say that I've changed these young people's lives by giving them a space where they can be themselves, have fun, forget the pressures of the outside world and take part in workshops centred around Woodcraft Folk's values.

However, saying that the year which we made Venturer Camp happen in was an easy one - would be a lie. Just saying it was a difficult one would also be a lie. The year from August 2022 to August 2023 was probably one of the most challenging years I've had in my life, due to a number of things - my role in coordinating Venturer Camp being one of them.

Woodcraft Folk is really great at empowering young people to do things, look at me - I was 19 while coordinating this thing. However, it's not good at supporting them to do big scary things like this. To say the year I was coordinating Venturer Camp was tough on my mental health would be an understatement. I'm extremely grateful for those around me who were able to catch me when I fell, both in and out of Woodcraft. They were the reason I was able to coordinate the camp. You know who you are - thank you for that.

Saying this, Woodcraft is good at catching people. From speaking to teams while writing this evaluation - I wasn't the only one to struggle with the work. Many of the teams had more and more work piled onto them, or individual members within teams who initially agreed to take on a small role ended up being instrumental in the success of that team's work. Through all the ever-increasing workloads, teams pulled it off. They more than pulled it off, they did it so well that we didn't notice how well they did it - the ultimate sign of success when it all goes smoothly.

Why Woodcrafter's have to fall before they can be supported is something that we need to consider, as an organisation. We cannot leave this untouched if we want to be a sustainable organisation which supports its members to try new things.

Pulling an event like Venturer Camp 2023 together in 365 days is by no means an easy feat. The countless hours of dedication from Volunteers up and down the country were the reason 450 people were able to be together in a field for 7 days and mostly have a good time. The majority of the work required to pull this event together fell to a relatively small group of active volunteers. Whilst it may seem from the outside that we had a substantial number of volunteers involved in the project, many of these weren't able to commit to a large role leaving a small core team to do most of the work. Throughout this report, you'll hear about different teams' struggles with capacity and workload management. Every core team member should be commended for how well they managed, how well they coped with the ever-increasing workload and how well they rose to the challenge of pulling off a Venturer Camp in a year. Don't ever try and do it in a year again, it's a silly idea.

I'm extremely proud of everyone who had a part to play in the success of Venturer Camp, all those who contributed countless hours making meticulous spreadsheets; those who contacted suppliers and chased to get the cheapest and best meatballs they could; those who cleaned the toilets and showers; and especially those who turned up, tried something new and had fun. We wouldn't have done this without you - thank you for that.

I want to leave you to enjoy the rest of this evaluation with a quote: "we do this because we love Woodcraft".

Blue skies,

Thomas Boxall

Venturer Camp 2023 Coordinator  
<[thomas@woodcraft.org.uk](mailto:thomas@woodcraft.org.uk)>

## 2 | Introduction to the Evaluation

This Final Report & Evaluation of Venturer Camp 2023 has been primarily compiled by Thomas Boxall, Venturer Camp 2023 Coordinator (Volunteer), and Millie Burgh, Woodcraft Folk Events Assistant (Staff).

Every effort has been made to ensure that this report is as accurate and representative of all teams as possible. However, there may be times where this was not possible. All data referenced throughout this evaluation is available on request. Please contact the Camp Coordinator should you have any questions or wish to seek clarification on anything.

### 2.1 Methods Used

Opinions and Thoughts from the wider coordination team were gathered through a series of interviews conducted by the Camp Coordinator and Events Assistant.

Feedback from participants was gathered during the event itself through a Workshop run on a village level. Not all villages submitted notes from their workshop, so participant evaluations may not be representative of all participants on site.

All Volunteers involved in the project were invited to complete a Google Forms questionnaire after camp where they could give feedback. As expected with a survey like this, not all volunteers have responded and those who have responded would fall at either end of the spectrum, either having lots of good things to say or lots of bad things. Conversations had with volunteers throughout the event have been included.

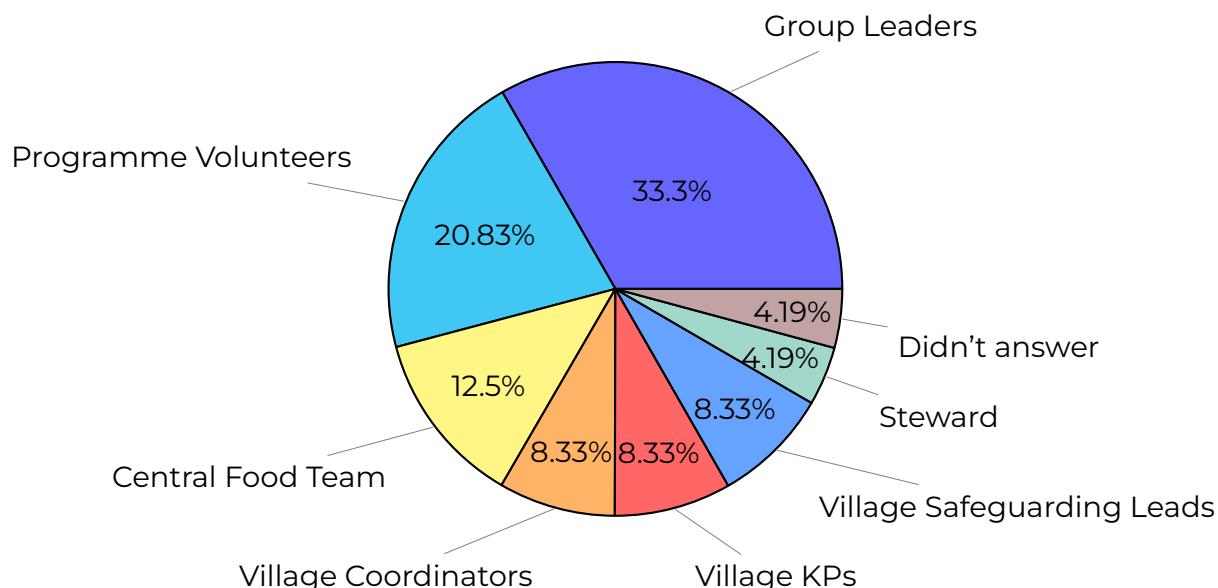


Figure 2.1: Respondents to the Google Form Questionnaire

## 2.2 Why Such A Long Evaluation?

To put it simply, we should be evaluating our projects like this properly. Big camps are such a fundamental part of Woodcraft Folk's operations and with the organisation nearing its 100th birthday, you'd think we've got pretty good at getting lots of Woodcrafters in a field together having a good time. This is only mostly true, however.

This report aims to cover what we did, how we did it, and why we did it. As well as if it worked, how people found it and what we'd do differently in the future.

In all reality, there's going to be very few people who read the entirety of this document from cover to cover. However, people taking on roles at future large camps should be encouraged to read the sections relevant to them.

## 2.3 Photo Credits

Photos have been used throughout this report, the captions include the initials of the photographer, see below for names of those photographers:

**AB** Alex Baird

**IC** Isabel Cleveland

**RS** Ralph Sleigh

**TB** Thomas Boxall

## 2.4 Names and Contact Information

Due to this report being made available to the public on the internet, contact information of most people involved in this project has been redacted. The exceptions to this are Woodcraft Folk members of staff and the Camp Coordinator.

To obtain the contact information of anyone mentioned in the report - please contact Thomas Boxall, Camp Coordinator via [thomas@woodcraft.org.uk](mailto:thomas@woodcraft.org.uk)

# 3 | Introduction To The Project

## 3.1 Idea Conceptualisation

Venturer Camp normally happens every 3 years, as a national camp for Venturers (the 13-15 year olds in Woodcraft Folk). 16 year olds are also normally allowed to come as participants if they haven't experienced a Venturer Camp before.

Typically a volunteer team provides infrastructure for the central area, a central menu, some central programme in the form of workshops in the daytime and some evening entertainment, and put groups in 'villages' where they will eat, sleep and do clan. Group leaders bring their young people and organise their village including infrastructure, clans and activities.

For a long time Venturer Camp happened at Drum Hill Scout Campsite in Derbyshire, but in 2019 for the first time we held it at Biblins, Woodcraft Folk's own site in the Wye Valley.

There were two key things we wanted to do differently from past Venturer Camps this time round. Firstly, due to Common Ground being postponed 2 years because of COVID, this camp was to be 4 years after the Venturer Camp before opposed to the usual 3. For this reason, we expanded the participant age range to 17, to ensure as many young people as possible get to experience a Venturer Camp.

Another focus of this camp was volunteer support. Building on Common Ground, where for the first time there was a volunteer wellbeing role on the camp team, we wanted to ensure all volunteers (both central and village volunteers) were well supported on camp. We didn't manage to do as much as we wanted in this respect as we were only able to recruit one person for the volunteer support team who could support ahead of camp and on site, but the majority of the central team were able to get a day off with planning and support, which definitely hasn't been the norm in the past.

## 3.2 Planning Timeline

The decision was made in summer 2022 to hold a Venturer Camp the following August (we go into more detail why in the 'What Dates' section). Because of this we only had a year to plan the camp when preparation usually starts around 2 years in advance. While most things don't happen until the final year, this extra year is pretty key when it comes to recruiting volunteers, building trust and care among the team and getting started with some key decisions and actions. Much of what could have been improved this camp came down to not having enough volunteers or volunteers not feeling confident/part of a team, which may not have been fully rectified by having an extra year but this almost certainly would have helped.

We have shown a Venturer Camp can be planned in a year, but not without either having a full team from early on or seriously overworking some members of the team. Therefore we would recommend always beginning plans 2 years in advance where possible.

# **Event Decisions**

**Part II**

## 4 | Finding A Suitable Site

For Venturer Camp 2023, the decision of what site to use was perhaps easier than in previous years. The accelerated timeline for the project meant that we would have had great difficulty finding a suitable site for Venturer Camp (thinking about infrastructure requirements on the site, transport links to the site, location in the country, etc).

Ultimately, we used Biblins Youth Campsite, which is owned by Forestry England and leased to Woodcraft Folk. Using a site which is managed by Woodcraft Folk, gives us greater flexibility and a level of quality assurance which would be unknown for other sites which we haven't worked with before.

From the feedback about the previous Venturer Camp's choice of site, also held at Biblins in 2019, you wouldn't have thought that we would use the site again. A large proportion of the campers commented that they were a very long distance from their village to the central area. These complaints were mostly from those camping on pitch 1 where they had to walk to Pitch 6 and 7 for the central programme. Since 2019, Biblins has undergone renovation works to relocate Camp Koodoo (its permanent camp) from Pitch 5 to adjacent to Pitch 1a. This resulted in us being able to centralise our central area onto pitches 4 and 5. We received little-to-no complaints about walking distance from villages to the central area, other than from those volunteers who would be in the central area up until meal times who would have to return to their village, collect food and then get straight back to the central area to finish programme delivery. This issue was quickly rectified, however, by the volunteers getting food delivered from their village to the central area.

For many months, the Coordination team had very little contact with the Biblins Staff Team; however, as camp approached, we had more contact with the team to gain information about the workings of the site, infrastructure on site and get copies of their policies and procedures which we would potentially need to implement while on site.

During the event itself, the Coordinator and Project Staff Team worked closely with the Biblins Staff Team, which enabled clear communication about issues and matters which arose on site such as The Spill, access to the Bunkhouse Basement Storage and Adventurous activities, including a major change of plans to the Canoeing.

Having direct contact with the Biblins Staff Team proved invaluable and made the event considerably easier to organise.

# 5 | Deciding on Dates

## 5.1 2023 v 2024

As part of the project kick off, dates for the event had to be decided. However, before we could decide exactly which dates to host the camp on, we had to decide on a year first. This was a complex debate, with many people weighing in on the decision, ranging from Trustees to venturer group leaders to venturers themselves.

The ultimate decision was made that the camp should be hosted in 2023. We came to this decision based on the preference of Venturer Leaders and Venturers themselves to host the camp in 2023. This data was captured through a survey which ran for a few weeks in September 2022, the results of which can be seen in Table 5.1

	<b>2023</b>	<b>No Preference</b>	<b>2024</b>
Leaders	56%	11%	33%
Venturers	67%	11%	22%

Table 5.1: Results of Year Survey

The survey also provided space where the respondents could share any thoughts, feelings, or suggestions. The responses to this varied were varied, some of the responses are shown below:

- “I think another national camp would not be supported. We need to have district summer camps to get young people back into camping. We struggled like lots of districts getting pioneers to common ground without a summer camp next year we will struggle to get children back into summer camps after the disruption of covid”
- “Some venturers want a ‘proper camp before they are too old.’ Adults want a break in 2024 before 100 camp”
- “It would be good to have a date to be able to add to the calendar and to try and not book family holidays at the same time.”
- “Personally, I think sooner is best as delaying by another year will inevitably mean some venturers won’t get the chance to go. The venturers were mixed in responses, with a small majority favouring 2023 but others saying either or 2024. If it is next summer, please avoid clashing with the international camp in Finland (24-31 July 2023). Also, a question from our venturers is whether DFs who missed their chance to go to VCamp because of covid would be able to attend? Thanks”
- “I have a venturer and a DF happy to help”

At the time of making the decision, we did not have a fully fleshed out team. There were significant gaps of knowledge and experience in the following teams:

- Food
- Site Services & Production
- Programme

- Communications
- Access & Inclusion
- Event Administration (however we expected this role to be done by the Woodcraft Folk Events Assistant, so weren't worried about recruitment)

The lack of some of these teams presented a challenge for project initiation as once we had decided on 2023, they couldn't influence it and as such this deterred people from joining the team.

A volunteer close to the coordinator who supported him a lot said "it's very dangerous when we organise the camp in a very short timeframe with a big dependence on one individual as it puts them in a vulnerable position and goes against our aims and principles. Empowering people to take on roles they've not done before is good but they need support in place. We need to ask questions about how they are supported." It was these questions around support networks which were answered when they were asked; when the coordinator was struggling, not pre-emptively. Pulling off a Venturer Camp in such a short amount of time, with such a limited capacity team, was not an easy thing to do (yes we did have a large number of people on it but many were limited in their capacity to be involved due to other commitments). Woodcraft Folk put too much pressure on the Camp Coordinator who was also juggling many other things, see introduction, which should never happen again.

## 5.2 Which Dates In 2023

The decision of what dates we wanted to host the camp on came down to four things:

1. The dates which Biblins was available
2. Festivals & other attractive-to-young-people summer events
3. School Term Dates (taking into account the early return of Scottish Schools)
4. Finnish International Camp Dates

At first, we chose the dates Monday 7 August to Monday 15 August. These dates were put to the Coordination team who decided that we would rather start and end on a weekend to reduce the amount of annual leave adult volunteers would have to take.

After some deliberation, we decided on Saturday 5 August to Saturday 12 August. These dates didn't clash with any major festivals, were early enough that Scottish Young People would have a few days between camp finishing and their term dates starting, there were a few days between the Finland International Camp finishing and Venturer Camp starting, however the whole of the campsite was not available for all of these dates. There was a group booked onto pitch 1a for the night of Saturday 5 August. The decision was made that we wouldn't need that part of the site for the first night and so could press on with publishing the dates and working out the rest of the timeline.

## 5.3 Group on Pitch 1a

We took a gamble with the group on pitch 1a being a nice group who wouldn't mind 450 people descending onto the site. For the most part, the gamble paid off - the group were lovely and were interested in what we were doing. However, at first they weren't keen on the numbers of people who were camping to the West side of The Spill. We gave them a wide berth after they indicated this and had no further complaints or comments from them.

## 6 | Booking Timelines

Once we had decided on dates for the camp, we could begin to work backwards designing timelines to suit. We settled on the public timeline shown in Table 6.1

Date	Event
27 January 2023	Bookings Open
12 April 2023	Early Bird Booking Deadline
26 May 2023	Final Booking Deadline

Table 6.1: Public Booking Timeline

As we were designing the booking timeline, we made the decision to not close bookings. We believed that if we were to fully close bookings then we would be at risk of people turning up to camp who hadn't booked and would want to book on the door, or worse - they wouldn't tell the camp coordination team they had arrived which would complicate number based operations, such as food distribution or village size. We made a conscious decision to brand the 26 May 2023 deadline as the "Final Booking Deadline" in hope that we would deter people from booking late, and for the most part, we did.

We also had a second timeline, this was created and was published in the Payment Policy for Individuals and Groups, however it wasn't pushed onto people so they may not have known the late bookings were an option. One group reported that they treated the Early Bird Booking Deadline as their internal final deadline and another reported that they would accept bookings right up to the camp starting as long as the young person paid what they owed.

Date	Event
27 January 2023	Bookings Open
12 April 2023	Early Bird Booking Deadline
26 May 2023	Final Booking Deadline
10 June 2023	Booking Content Deadline
	Refund Request Deadline (ad-hoc)
22 July 2023	Late Booking Deadline
12 August 2023	Very Late & On-The-Door Booking Deadline

Table 6.2: Internal Booking Timeline

The refund deadline was added in an ad-hoc manner. This was due to the number of people wanting refunds for individuals coming up to the final booking deadline. The refund deadline was written into the payment policy and a second version was published on 24 May 2023.

Ultimately, not closing bookings proved valuable as a number of additional volunteers

were recruited at DF camp to come and support the MEST-UP provision. These people paid the highest amount to come, the very late booking price, which supported us to hit our booking income target.

# 7 | Who Do We Want To Come, Who Came?

## 7.1 Expanded Age Ranges

Venturer Camps are traditionally held every three years. This cycle was disrupted by holding Common Ground International Camp in 2022, which was displaced from 2020 due to the Covid Pandemic. Not being able to hold a Venturer Camp in 2022, meant that there is one year's worth of Venturers who would have missed out on their Venturer Camp experience. For this reason, we decided to expand the age ranges of Venturer Camp 2023. The decision was made to include 16 and 17 year olds as Venturers. This would mean a small number of people who attended the 2019 camp as a participant would also be able to attend the 2023 camp as a participant.

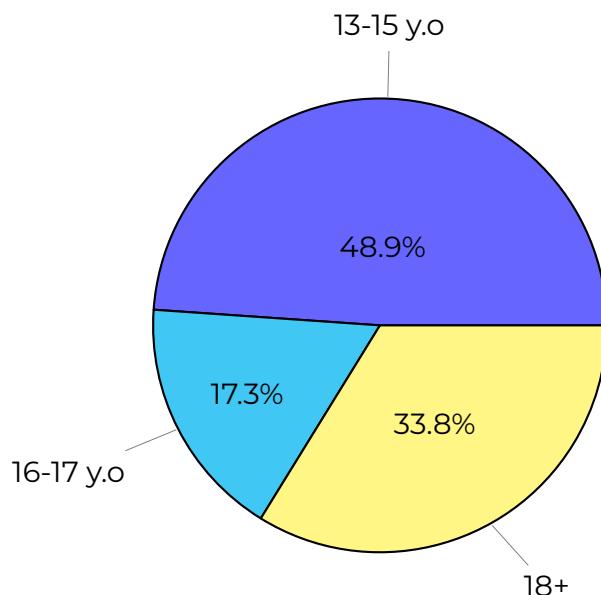


Figure 7.1: Booked attendees by age

By expanding the age ranges, we enabled more young people to participate in Venturer Camp 2023. We also enabled those 16 and 17 year olds who may never have experienced Woodcraft Folk outside their district or Common Ground, which was very structured, to have a looser structured Woodcraft Folk experience. The hope was that this would support them to transition to DFs, enabling them to grow their movement (the pandemic resulted in many DFs falling out of the movement). Figure 7.1 shows how some DFs were able to take on Volunteering roles as under-18 volunteers.

## 7.2 International Delegations

In Autumn 2022 we were also hoping that we would be able to support a number of international delegations to attend. We discussed a number of models through which we could facilitate this with a very small coordination team. The majority favoured being that a group or district would be responsible for all aspects of supporting an international delegation.

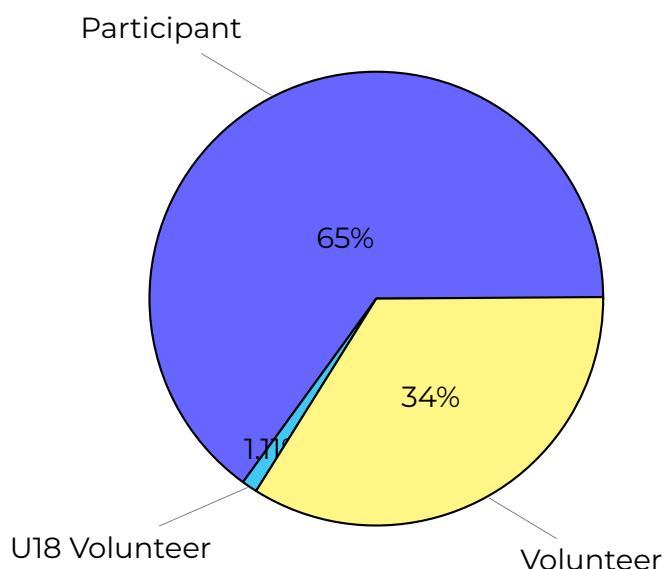


Figure 7.2: Distribution of Attendees

In Spring 2023, the general enquiries inbox was contacted about the possibility of hosting a group from an English Language school situated in Spain. However, due to the Woodcraft knowledge barrier and the implied expectation that we (the central coordination team) would be responsible for supporting this group to attend, the decision was made to decline this request. At this time, the coordination team was stretched very thinly, with many people taking on more than what they'd expected to be doing in the run up to the event.

We were, unfortunately, unable to host any international delegations at Venturer Camp 2023.

### 7.3 Centrally Organised Equipment

During the conceptualisation of Venturer Camp 2023, we decided that to reduce burdens on Villages - we would centrally organise the equipment which was being assigned to Villages. This concept, what worked well and what didn't work about it will be explored in the Site Services & Production Team's section - there are very mixed views about this!



Figure 7.3: Opening Night Performance (AB)

## 8 | Pricing

After developing the booking timeline and deciding about the expanded age ranges, we were able to decide on pricing for the camp.

Woodcraft Folk is committed to working to reduce barriers towards Volunteering. One such barrier, Venturer Camp presented a perfect test ground for - is the financial commitment to come to a camp. This resulted in us having the following pricing structure.

<b>Before</b>	<b>Age Bracket</b>	<b>Whole Camp</b>	<b>1 night</b>
26 May 2023	Under 18	£150	£21.50
	18 and over	£50	£7.50
22 July 2023	Under 18	£225	£32.25
	18 and over	£75	£11.25
12 August 2023	Under 18	£300	£43
	18 and over	£100	£15

Table 8.1: Pricing Structure based on 1-person figures

We made the decision that all those attending the camp who are aged 18 and over would be attending as a volunteer, and as such we would recognise their contribution by charging them a third of the participant cost.

### 8.1 Under-18 Volunteer Priced Places

Due to the enlarged age ranges for Venturer Camp 2023, we also wanted to ensure those who could technically come as participants had the opportunity to volunteer without paying the (higher) participant price.

This desire led to the creation of the Under 18 Volunteer Price Scheme whereby a young person aged 16 or 17 could apply for a volunteer priced place if they were at the camp primarily as a volunteer. The scheme required a few things of the young person before the price reduction could be allocated:

1. have begun the process of obtaining a Enhanced DBS (or membership of the PVG scheme if based in Scotland);
2. be registered as a member of Woodcraft Folk and have paid their membership fee;
3. have submitted references (this will normally have been done as part of becoming a member of Woodcraft Folk); and
4. have spoken to the relevant team leader about the role and a volunteer role description has been produced (this should be included with the application).

This scheme was widely publicised, and despite this - we only had approximately 5 people take part in it. The roles they took on ranged from stewarding to centre coordinator to

cafe & special diets kitchen assistant.

There were a number of young people who had paid the participant price who attended to volunteer. These young people coordinated a centre as a group. They made the decision to pay the participant price as they also engaged in some other programme. For future events, it might be worth having an intermediary pricing point for those young people who are volunteering some of the time and also participating at other times.

# 9 | Extra Stakeholders & Volunteers

## 9.1 Venturer Committee

At the time of project kick-off for this event - there was no functioning Venturer Committee. This was due to the pandemic and the fact that all the current members had 'aged-out'. This led to there being very little involvement in the planning process from Venturer aged people. It was an unfortunate loss to not have young people's voices on the planning committee. We had hoped to overcome this shortfall with a scheme called the *Village People*

In September 2022, a meeting was held between key individuals where it was discussed about using Venturer Camp as a chance to re-form Venturer Committee. Due to a combination of factors, including lack of capacity in progressing with re-forming Venturer Committee, nothing happened with this until camp itself started.

On Camp, an individual planned and held Venturer Committee elections with the support of previous Facilitators. The elections held at the event were a great success and all roles on Venturer Committee were able to be filled. This individual also held other roles of responsibility on camp, and as such they had a very busy time. For future events, it would be recommended that an individual with no other commitments takes on the Venturer Committee Elections Facilitation role.

## 9.2 Village People

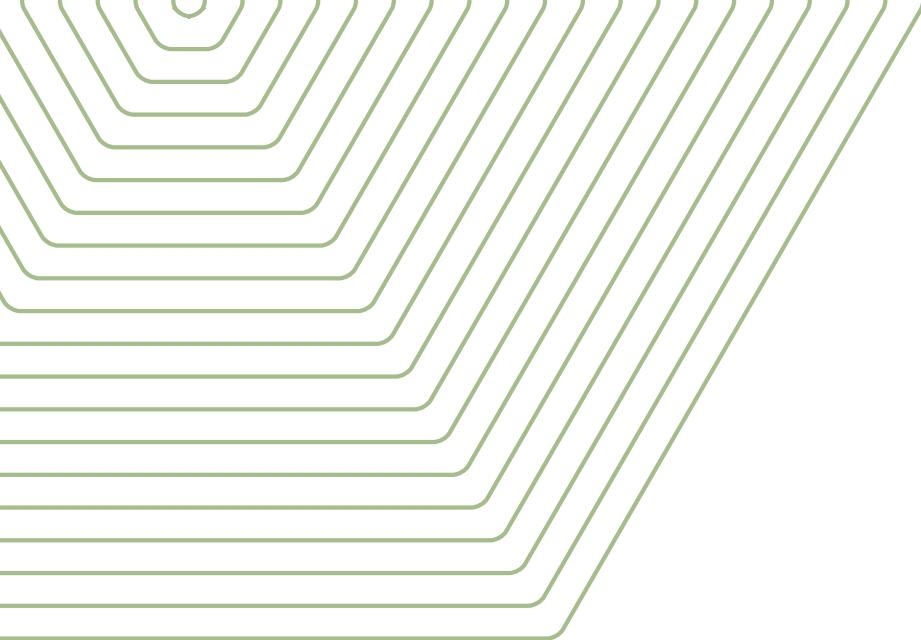
The Village People was a scheme designed to introduce the voice of the participants and the people who knew the participants the best into the planning of Venturer Camp 2023. In Autumn 2022, we invited all Venturer Leaders to apply to join the group. We then selected a representative sample, ensuring all types & sizes of groups were represented.

The scheme unfortunately died out quite quickly due to extremely low response rates to opinion-gathering forms which went out. It would be lovely to see a scheme like this work at a future large Woodcraft Camp.

## 9.3 International Volunteers

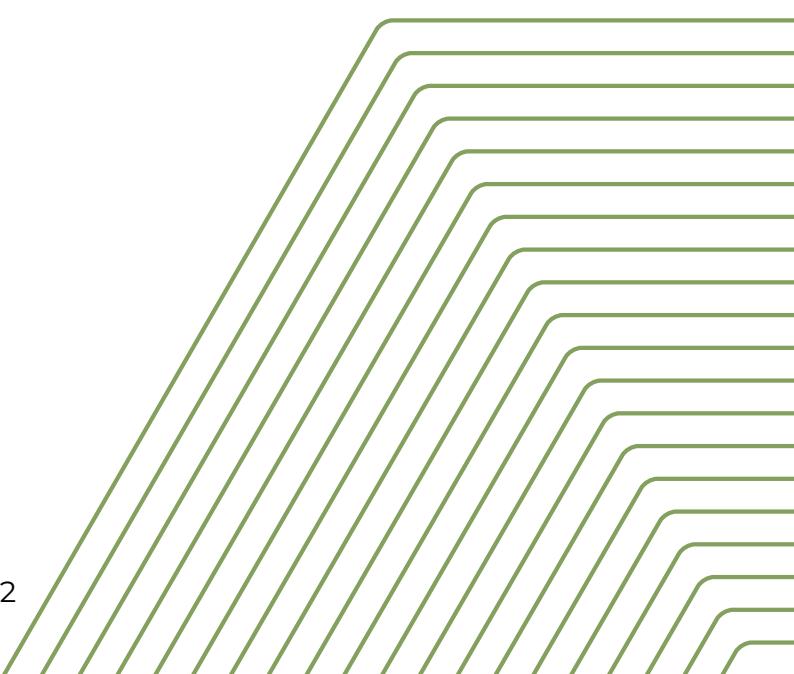
After Brexit, organisations in the UK are no longer eligible to participate in the European Solidarity Corps (ESC) programme run by the European Commission. Common Ground (2022 International Camp) was supported by a 15-strong team of ESC volunteers and as such, it was hoped that Venturer Camp 2023 would also be able to be supported by a number of international volunteers as those at Common Ground proved extremely valuable to the team.

Woodcraft Folk worked with a UK-based charity called Concordia to manage the recruitment of volunteers. A further evaluation of how this worked, what went well and what didn't work can be found in the Concordia chapter.



## **Event Administrations & Communications**

**Part III**



# 10 | Bookings

## 10.1 Booking System

After discussions between the Camp Coordinator and Woodcraft Folk Chief Executive where different booking system options were reviewed, it was agreed to use Ralph Sleigh's custom system which had been first used at Venturer Camp 2019, then Common Ground 2022. Ralph and the Camp Coordinator had initial conversations about what features the booking system would require as Ralph had started re-writing the booking system to use different, more cost effective, technology.

During Autumn 2022, the Food and Special Diets teams were consulted about what data they wished to collect from those booking in. As the focus on special diets was new to Woodcraft Camps, a larger amount of data was captured about each individual booked on. Through using the custom booking system, the implementation of this was exactly as we wished, while using an off-the-shelf system we may not have been able to collect and view this data in the same way.

During January 2023, the booking system was tested with the core team. These tests enabled the workflow of approving bookings, the mechanics of booking and ensuring that the wording used in the system was clear. Also during this period, the Booking Handbook was written.

The decision was made to require "applications to book" before enabling people to book. This decision was made mostly by the fact that Common Ground used this feature. In reflection, it was the right decision to use as it enabled us to ensure people booked in a way that was convenient to us. Rather than individuals booking, we had larger groups booking and we had the say to stop individuals if needed where there was already a group booking for their group. This also enabled us to ensure there were no bookings from people unknown to Woodcraft, but we either received no or very few requests of this nature.

Throughout the use of the booking system, a number of bugs and issues arose with it. Ralph responded quickly to all of these, deploying a fix usually within 12 hours of the issue being reported. Ralph was also able to implement features which improved the usability of the system, for example, messaging manager messages to the Coordination Team Discord server which prevented the need to use the emails the system also sent.

Overall, the use of a booking system which was developed "In house" gave us greater flexibility, greater options and overall a much easier experience than that of an off the shelf system.

The booking system allowed users to be able to be assigned backend access to view some or all of the data entered by users. To ensure volunteers who were being given this access had some basic understanding of GDPR, a Data Protection Declaration was created which all backend users of the booking system were expected to sign before being granted access. This worked and while Woodcraft Folk is not providing basic GDPR training for its volunteers, is something which should be repeated for future events. The transcript of the declaration can be found in the Appendix.

One thing that wasn't so great about Ralph's system is that it couldn't automatically match

up who has / doesn't have membership. Or at least we thought it couldn't. When we discussed this at one point Ralph said there was something he could try to rectify this, which is definitely worth exploring for future events which use this system.

## 10.2 Bookings Administration

After the bookings opened - Thomas and Millie processed most of the administration around bookings. This involved things such as: managing applications to book, reviewing bookings to locate any access needs.

Before bookings opened - there were conversations around how we want people to book. The decision was taken to try to get people to book as groups, with the general principle of one booking per group; with central adult volunteers booking separately. This system worked, mostly. There was one case in particular where a region decided to come together and due to the disconnected nature of the young people attending - they took the decision for all the parents to book their children on. Unfortunately, they decided to start making their booking on the date of the early booking deadline. This led to the booking applications being accepted.

With having the booking deadlines at midnight, this meant that the responsibility of being on standby to approve the booking applications which come in after the members of staff had finished for the day fell to a volunteer, which for this event fell to the Camp Coordinator. For future events, the booking system needs to be able to specify the time of a booking deadline so that it can be set for a more sociable hour!

The booking system generates a unique booking reference for each booking. This then means that when the money is transferred to the Woodcraft Folk Bank Account, we should be able to match up the payment to the booking. This works reasonably well, so far as people used the references and we were able to match up payments. The difficulties experienced with this system came from the structures of the Woodcraft Folk Finance Administration Systems, see below for a more detailed analysis of this.

## 10.3 Early Booking Deadline

A decision was taken that the incentive for booking by the early-bird deadline was to receive a free limited edition t-shirt. This decision, whilst good in theory, creates a large financial overhead - where each t-shirt costs more than the financial discount would have been. Once this fact was discovered, it was agreed that we would expect people to have booked and paid their deposit by the Early Bird Booking Deadline to receive a free t-shirt.

The communications around the requirements for payment before the t-shirts were given out was not the best due to a number of factors. Primarily, it was down to time pressures that all locations promoting the early bird deadline weren't updated to reflect the payment requirement. The requirement to pay was communicated through the Payment Policy and through social media content leading up to the deadline.

Unfortunately, some groups didn't receive the message about the payment requirements. These caused tensions where group leaders had promised their young people free t-shirts and there were no free t-shirts for them as they had not paid by the deadline. These tensions were rectified by selling the group leaders t-shirts 'at cost', rather than at the standard camp rate. Whilst not a perfect solution, it was accepted.

For those who did pay deposits & book in advance of the deadline: a Google Form was used to gather the size requirements, which influenced the numbers of garments in each size we ordered.

It would not be recommended to do a free t-shirt as the reward for Early Bird bookings in the future. This is due to the complex administration requirements, and the difficulties experienced with advertising the offer

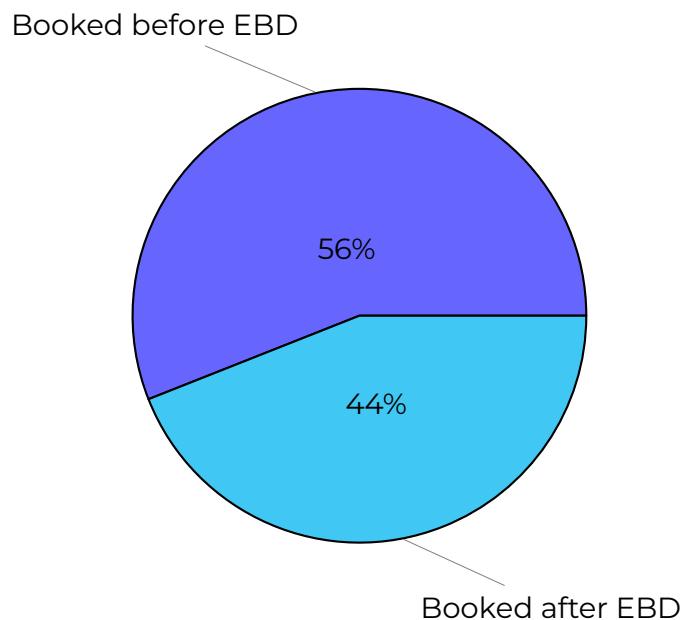


Figure 10.1: Attendees booked before / after Early Bird Deadline (EBD)

# 11 | Finance

The finances for Venturer Camp 2023 were overseen by the Head of Resources at Woodcraft Folk with assistance and knowledge given from the Venturer Camp Treasurer and Coordinator. The decision to manage the finances like this came about from not having anyone in the treasurer post at the start of the project so the Coordinator and HoR began managing the finances themselves, then once a treasurer was appointed this felt like the simplest option.

The management of finances through the Woodcraft Folk systems had a number of benefits and drawbacks. The most notable benefit was that it was all dealt with for us ("us" being the Core Team), with trained professionals managing the day to day running of the finance. The Treasurer was able to support by approving expenses and invoice payments as well as doing the first level of chasing for payments, later levels of chasing were done by the HoR.

One of the significant drawbacks of using the very established Woodcraft Folk finance system is that it is already set up very firmly. The Venturer Camp team's budget lines didn't match the central monitoring system, and this made our lives much more difficult when reviewing payments into and out of the account in order to monitor how much was being spent in each category. This was further exacerbated by the fact that the finance monitoring tools (a series of Google Sheets) were set up such that they required a great level of understanding to be able to read them. This resulted in large amounts of confusion amongst those people who had to read them and understand them.

Another significant drawback of using the Woodcraft Folk finance system was that quite often transactions were "mis-coded" within the system. This resulted in transactions erroneously appearing on the monitoring spreadsheet, or not appearing altogether - leading us to believe we hadn't spent as much as we in fact had.

## 11.1 Budget

The first budget for Venturer Camp 2023 was drawn up by Woodcraft's Chief Executive using figures from Venturer Camp 2019 and Common Ground International Camp 2022 to influence expected expenditure for 2023. Throughout the project, minor alterations were made to the budget, mostly to reflect the change in expected income due to fundraising income being lower than initially expected.

Due to the above mentioned issues with the coding of income and expenditure within the Woodcraft Folk finance systems, and the fact that they do not line up with our budget lines - we do not have a final breakdown of expected vs actual for our budget.

Shown below is the Venturer Camp 2023 budget, compared to the Venturer Camp 2019 actual expenditure.

Category	2019 Actual	2023 Budget
Number of paying campers	?	300

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<b>Category</b>	<b>2019 Actual</b>	<b>2023 Budget</b>
Number of campers	434	400
Price per camper	125/135/150	150
<i>Total Camp Fees</i>	52411	45000
<b>Other Income</b>		
Pre-Camp Food Contribution		750
Christmas Challenge Access Fund	0	5000
Merchandise Sales	?	1800
Restricted Fundraising	?	6000
Unrestricted Fundraising	?	4000
<i>Total Income</i>		62550

Table 11.1: Venturer Camp 2023 Income Budget

<b>Category</b>	<b>2019 Actual</b>	<b>2023 Budget</b>
Site Fees	10500	15000
Food	10811	14000
Pre-Camp food & pitch (50 people max)		1300
Evening Programme	1830	1750
Day Programme	1599	1500
Adventurous Activities	0	4000
Printed Material	140	450
T-Shirts	240	0
Merchandise	0	1500
Website	72	50
Wristbands	400	450
Toilet Hire	600	750
Fridge Hire	?	1750
PA, Stage & Lighting Hire	1000	800
Coach Hire for Shuttle Service	?	2500
Main Marquee Hire	7000	6000
Village Equipment Transport Van Hire	?	2800

continued on next page

<b>Category</b>	<b>2019 Actual</b>	<b>2023 Budget</b>
Volunteer Expenses	2466	2000
Tables & Chairs	1500	1500
Contingency	?	6000
Contribution to Core	5000	0
Venturer Committee	6000	0
<i>Total Expenditure</i>	<b>49158</b>	<b>64100</b>

Table 11.2: Venturer Camp 2023 Expenditure Budget

Broadly speaking, there was enough money in each budget category for the expenditure required. The only places where we felt the strain was within the *PA, Stage and Lighting* hire where the stage hire came out as nearly £2k where we had only budgeted £800.

There were some other expenditures which were higher than originally anticipated, relating to the Solar Array configuration - the difference here was absorbed through a combination of reducing Programme budget and volunteers buying-back the equipment from Woodcraft Folk after the event.

The budget was designed with rental fees for a trailer refrigeration unit in mind. Due to not being able to power a unit like this, the majority of this budget line was re-allocated to the other budget categories, such as Solar equipment. The lack of adequate refrigeration was something which caused the food team many difficulties and is something which should be carefully considered at future events.

## 11.2 Outgoing Payments

### 11.2.1 Ahead of Camp

Woodcraft Folk aim to reduce the admin taken to expensing people as much as possible. To help with this, payments should be and generally were made by invoice to Woodcraft Folk where possible. This can be done with a form that Woodcraft Folk staff have access to, and the coordinator and treasurer should be given access too.

The deadline for the weekly payment run is Tuesday, so forms should be submitted by then in order for the Finance staff to have time to process payment by the end of the week. If we need urgent invoice payments, this is also possible by talking to the finance team.

For things that can only be bought on card, this was done via the Events Assistant, Programmes Manager or CEO where possible, as they all have Woodcraft Folk credit cards and this means Woodcraft Folk are charged directly and there is no need for anyone to be out of pocket.

Discussions were had surrounding the use of prepaid cards for certain teams. It was agreed that these would be sensible to attempt to get however due to complications (i.e. time pressures, exams, not having obvious people to give a card), we were unable to follow through with this. We would recommend this in future so it is easier for essential last minute payments to be made by budget holders (e.g the food and programme teams) in

the final month leading up to camp and on site. Being able to pay by card directly and not have to organise doing so with a staff member would reduce admin for volunteer budget holders as well as staff members.

### **11.2.2 On-Camp**

On camp, sometimes people need to buy things urgently e.g food items that haven't been delivered, equipment for programme that is missing, items to repair tents or other equipment in case of unusual weather conditions etc. Often these will be things we cannot get from suppliers we have accounts with due to availability of the items/how urgently we need them.

This camp we managed to minimise the number of volunteers out of pocket/the admin taken to expense them as we had 3 members of staff on site with Woodcraft Folk credit cards. The food team took the CEO's credit card off site to buy emergency items on a few occasions, and the Events Assistant also ordered some things to be delivered to site the next day on her credit card.

Volunteers also ordered some things on their personal bank cards which were reimbursed. We looked to minimise the spread of this as far as possible, with the Coordinator and other central volunteers ordering the majority, rather than the wider volunteer team being expected to do this.

### **11.3 Expenses**

Through utilising the Woodcraft Folk finance system, we had access to an already well-established expenses procedure which many volunteers were already familiar with from other events.

Core volunteers were able to either put their own expenses through a Google Form, or have the treasurer put them through for them. The treasurer would then have to approve every individual expense request before it went to the Finance Team to be paid. This system worked for the most part as we were clear about what could & couldn't be expensed apart from one incident.

The only incident surrounding expenses was where communications were had with a young person rather than their parent who was driving them to & from the camp. This caused some confusion around what legs of their journey could legitimately be claimed for and what couldn't; when all other members of the team weren't able to claim for their personal journeys to & from the main camp as we simply didn't have the budget to stretch this for everyone.

For clarity in the future, it might be advisable to only allow the treasurer to put in expenses claims, requiring a coordinator to sign off on them. This is a conversation that should be had between the HoR, Camp Coordinator & Treasurer to ensure everyone is on the same page and the systems are set up correctly.

## 11.4 Supplier Accounts

### 11.4.1 Food Accounts

The Head of Resources helped lots with setting up accounts with food suppliers. He did the forms they asked for with proof of finances etc, and set up a Woodcraft Folk email for contacting suppliers/accessing accounts with them so we could use that for all events in future rather than changing the contact details all the time.

We already had an account with Booker; which the Chief Executive is responsible for the upkeep of, including changing our 'home branch' for the duration of events. Additionally, supplier accounts were created with: Evans and Castell Howell.

### 11.4.2 Equipment Suppliers

Woodcraft Folk have an account with Viking. We ordered some stationary, cleaning and generic Site Services supplies through them. They are cheap and good for bulk orders in advance of camp. The delivery gets delivered directly to the site which aids transport logistics massively! The SMT Assistant on the Woodcraft Folk staff team is the only person who can make orders to this company, which adds a little bit of processing time - however we knew about this far enough in advance for it not to cause an issue.

For programme specific resources, and general stationery supplies, we used Manchester Woodcraft Folk's YPO account. The suggestion to use this came from the Head of Memberships & Programmes who is a leader in Manchester. This worked very well and was cheaper than Viking for stationary and other programme supplies. Woodcraft Folk should look into registering as a central unit for this for future events.

## 11.5 Access Fund

At the time of project initiation, and then while discussing ticket prices, it was decided that an access fund should be created. This would aim to support disadvantaged Young People and Adults to attend camp as participants and volunteers respectively.

To apply for the access fund, there was a short form which allowed the applicant to self indicate their responses to the following questions:

- I am eligible for Free School Meals
- I am in receipt of Universal Credit
- I would describe myself as disabled
- I would describe myself as a person of colour

The responses to this form were then analysed, in combination with the applicant's distance from Biblins, to distribute the funds. Discounts were applied to bookings where an individual had received some money from the access fund.

This worked successfully, especially to support some of the larger groups who were travelling via group-hired coaches, engaging more people in Venturer Camp than we would otherwise have expected.

The access fund was publicised through our website, emails to group leaders and social media.

## 11.6 Fundraising

We had planned to raise a considerable amount of our income through fundraising activity as this would further reduce the ticket price therefore enabling more young people to attend the event. Unfortunately, we were unable to find suitable grants which we could apply for, and therefore unable to meet our fundraising target.

We were successfully able to raise some funds through fundraising, mostly from a sponsored event in which three DFs coracled & kayaked down the Wye.



Figure 11.1: Coracle fundraising team back on dry land (TB)

## 11.7 VCoin

Due to the lack of signal at Biblins Campsite and the desire to minimise cash handling from the Woodcraft Folk Finance Team - it was decided to use an on-camp currency. This would solve our problem of wanting people to pay by card and only having one location on site where we could use a card machine.

The currency used, deemed "VCoin" was represented by poker chips which were sourced from a Member of Staff's local Rotary Club. These worked out very well for us as there was a plentiful supply of them in not-too-awkward denominations which we weren't charged for the hire of.

The currency exchange rate was 1:1. Attendees were able to exchange as much GBP to VCoin as they wished, however only values over £5 would be returned to GBP at the end of camp. This was due to the fact that we didn't have capacity to handle high amounts of cash. This decision was frowned upon by many and for future events where there is a requirement to use an on-camp currency - it would be suggested to increase capacity for refunds at the end of the event.

The use of the currency on site caused lots of difficulties. It had originally been planned that the bank would only be open for a few hours a day; it was very quickly learnt how-

ever that Venturers aren't that organised and the bank had to be open at any time money could be spent (i.e. whenever the shop or cafe was open). This caused staffing issues for the bank as it had only been planned for the Treasurer to staff the bank, whereas we had to source more volunteers to staff it while the Treasurer was handling other finance related duties. The Cafe team in particular noted that not having the bank open at the times they were open led to a loss in sales, where an attendee would wish to purchase something but wouldn't be able to due to not having any VCoin and the bank wasn't open.

For future events which require the use of an on-camp currency, it would be suggested to: define the opening hours for the bank further in advance; ensure that any time money can be spent on site; better plan for the end of the camp where more provision should be looked for to exchange the camp currency back to GBP.

## 11.8 Final report & Figures as at 1 November 2023

The original budget assumed Venturer Camp would break even but make no contribution to overhead costs. The Final Forecast recognised attendance and income were lower than originally planned. While attempts were made to reduce expenditure to offset the reduction on income it was recognised it would be challenging to retain a breakeven position and the final forecast assumed a £4k deficit. The final position presents a £2k deficit.

Income was £6k (10%) lower than originally planned due to lower levels of attendance.

Expenditure was £8k (12%) lower than the final forecast and £4k lower than the original budget. All areas of expenditure finished very close to budget with the only material underspends relating to 'Other' (£7k) which included a £4k contingency for the potential reduction in income. 'Total Premises' finished £21k underspent, however, this is offset with the 'Internal Centre Fees' overspend (£19.4k) which relates to the internal transfer of funds to Biblins for the hire of the site.

	2023 Actual	2023 Final Forecast	Vari- ance	Vari- ance (%)	2023 Budget
<b>External Income</b>					
Events	44,109	45000	-891	-2%	45000
Donations	165	5,750	-5,585	-97%	5,750
Restricted Grant	0	6,000	-6,000	-100%	6,000
Unrestricted Grant	0	4,000	-4,000	-100%	4,000
Stock Sales	4,690	1,250	3,440	275%	1,250
Internal Events	1,851	0	1,851	0%	0
<i>Total External Income</i>	50,815	62,000	-11,185	-18%	62,000
<b>Internal Income</b>					
Internal Transfers	5,250	0	5,250	0%	0
<i>Total External Income</i>	5,250	0	5,250	0%	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>56,065</b>	<b>62,000</b>	<b>-5,935</b>	<b>-10%</b>	<b>62,000</b>

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	<b>2023 Actual</b>	<b>2023 Final Forecast</b>	<b>Vari- ance</b>	<b>Vari- ance (%)</b>	<b>2023 Budget</b>
<b>People</b>					
Travel & Subsistence	2,120	2,000	120	6%	2,000
<i>Total People</i>	<i>2,120</i>	<i>2,000</i>	<i>120</i>	<i>6%</i>	<i>2,000</i>
<b>Direct Costs of Sale</b>					
Activities Expenditure	24,033	7,250	16,783	231%	7,250
Catering Expenditure	661	15,300	-14,639	-96%	15,300
Cost of Sales	0	1,500	-1,500	-100%	1,500
<i>Total Direct Costs of Sale</i>	<i>24,695</i>	<i>24,050</i>	<i>645</i>	<i>3%</i>	<i>24,050</i>
<b>Premises</b>					
Gas	855	0	855	0%	0
Other Utilities	145	0	145	0%	0
Rent & Rates	0	15,000	-15,000	-100%	15,000
Cleaning	17	0	17	0%	0
Equipment	6,710	13,936	-7,226	-52%	13,936
<i>Total Premises</i>	<i>7,727</i>	<i>28,936</i>	<i>-21,209</i>	<i>-73%</i>	<i>28,936</i>
<b>Other</b>					
Fundraising and Marketing	3,217	0	3,217	0%	0
Administration	865	0	865	0%	0
Other	0	11,014	-11,014	-100%	7,014
Bad Debt	0	0	0	0%	0
<i>Total Other</i>	<i>4,082</i>	<i>11,014</i>	<i>-6,932</i>	<i>-63%</i>	<i>7,014</i>
<b>Internal</b>					
Internal Centre Fees E	19,442	0	19,442	0%	0
<i>Total Internal</i>	<i>19,442</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>19,442</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Total Expenditure</i>	<i>58,066</i>	<i>66,000</i>	<i>-7,934</i>	<i>-12%</i>	<i>62,000</i>
<b>Annual Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>-2,001</b>	<b>-4,000</b>			<b>0</b>

Table 11.3: Venturer Camp 2023 Final Figures

# 12 | Website & Social Media

## 12.1 Website

For historical Venturer Camps, the domain [venturercamp.org.uk](http://venturercamp.org.uk) has been used. Having a separate domain provides a number of pros and cons, this was the cause of a lengthy discussion in Autumn 2022.

Ultimately, it was decided that the domain would be re-registered and a simple WordPress website would be created using a cheap shared hosting provider. Ralph Sleigh and Thomas Boxall met virtually to register the domain, choosing 123-reg as the domain registrar and Hostinger as the hosting provider. Ralph managed the domain registration and therefore configured the DNS records to ensure that the domain was linked correctly to the Woodcraft Folk Google Workspace.

Having our own website gave us the flexibility to publish whatever content we wanted and allowed us to configure the website exactly how we wanted to. The decision was taken to leave WordPress configuration as simple as possible, exclusively using off the shelf components as this would make our life as simple as possible!

The configuration of the website was for the most part left unchanged during the year which it was active for. Only two major changes were made: adding reCAPTCHA and changing the Home Page.

Adding reCAPTHCA to the contact form plugin we used (WP Forms) was done out of necessity. We were beginning to receive an unmanageable amount of spam to the WordPress comment queue and by adding ReCaptcha, we were able to reduce this to a more manageable amount.

Changing the homepage was done to be able to give out the most accurate information during camp - something which the initial homepage didn't allow for.

For the most part, the operation of the website was managed by Thomas, however a number of others also had access to edit and manage the content on the site. There had been plans to expand the number of editors on the website, to allow teams to publish their own news articles and content - however this never happened due to time limitations.

## 12.2 Social Media

After Venturer Camp 2019, there is an already-established Venturer Camp instagram account which we gained control of during October 2022. At the time, the Camp Coordinator was doing the comms role and as such began posting semi-regular content to the account. At the time, there was no plan used as there was little time to devise a plan.

While gaining access to social media accounts, Thomas also got into the Facebook account. Through this, he learnt that the 2019 camp used a profile, rather than a page which meant we wouldn't have had any statistical oversight from it. Thomas created a page and published a link to it across all social media platforms and we gained followers.

The Facebook and Instagram pages were both linked to the same Meta Business Account, which meant we had oversight and control over them both from one place.

Thomas took the decision to not use Twitter. A tweet was published informing followers of this fact and signposting them to where they could find out more.

Through October, November, December and January, Thomas took a lead on producing content for the social media platforms. Posts were sporadic and it was generally used as calls to action for volunteers rather than beginning to excite people for bookings to open.

As pressures on the coordinator ramped up in different aspects of the camp, Thomas handed over the managing of the social media to the Events Assistant who managed the social media until late spring / early summer where Alex Baird, national Communications Volunteer, took over the managing of the social media alongside Woodcraft Folk's Communications Manager.

The use of social media for an event like this has many different purposes, ranging from telling people bookings are open, raising people's excitement about the event and giving them all the critical information.

There were times that we were unable to create and push content out due to not having capacity. This was unfortunate as the event is catering for those who probably spend the highest amount of time out of any age group on social media.

Without the role of communications being filled on the team - we were in a situation where social media often fell to an afterthought. Whilst not ideal, we managed like this. There were enough people who had access to the social media accounts that something could be pushed out when absolutely necessary. For future events, having a dedicated communications team (for larger events) or person (for smaller events) is imperative. It is not something which should fall to the Coordinator to do. The coordination team should also have the space to share content through the social media when needed, another thing which we were unable to do due to the size of our team.

It should be noted that a number of people felt that we were relying on social media too heavily for a communications method to communicate key information. There will never be a solution which is suited to everyone, given the diverse nature of content consumption in the modern age; however future events should look to find alternate mechanisms of communications.

# 13 | Written Communications

## 13.1 Mass Emails

Throughout the coordination of an event like this, communication with the membership is a vital process. Within Woodcraft Folk - the main way in which this is done is through mass emails pushed out through Constant Contact (mass mailing platform).

No one on the Venturer Camp team had direct access to Constant Contact, this caused a number of problems as we were unable to send the mass emails ourselves. Whilst understandable from a GDPR standpoint, it caused some difficulties. The main difficulty was the inability to send an email on-the-fly. Emails would have to be booked in with the member of staff sending the email at least a week in advance of needing to send them with the content deadline often at least multiple days before the target email send date - to give the staff time to schedule the email to be sent. There were a number of times where these tight deadlines meant that the emails didn't contain all the information in them that was originally intended due to not having enough time to write them.

Towards the end of the project, when time pressures were higher, Gmail's Multi Send Mode was utilised as this meant that emails could be sent to multiple recipients without using BCC (as this often results in emails going directly to people's spam box) while maintaining GDPR compliance. This proved extremely effective as the Coordinator had control over exactly when emails were sent and the content of them therefore reducing the dependence on others to send emails therefore reducing the lead time to send a mass email.

Another issue encountered using Constant Contact was the mailing list inconsistencies. Initially, we were using a "All Venturer Group Leads" list which had been pulled from Groop in the Autumn of 2022 however towards the end of the project, it was more relevant to email just the booking contacts. This data was only accessible within the booking system which therefore meant, a new mailing list would have to be created each time a mass email was to be sent within Constant Contact to ensure that any new booking contacts or additional booking contacts were included. Once the final booking deadline had passed, this was less of an issue however it still presented edge-case challenges where extra individuals would book on and we would then need to ensure they too received the mass emails.

As we didn't have capacity to, we didn't think about tailoring emails to the two different groups of people who booked on: group bookings and individual bookings. There was quite often confusion amongst the individual booking contacts where their entire contact with Woodcraft before had been as a parent of a child attending a weekly group night. This added some additional administrative burden to respond to the individuals when they questioned what the email meant to them. In the future - it may be useful to tailor the mass-emails to the two groups.

## 13.2 Big Month Updates

Towards the later months in the project, we began to push out 'Big Month Updates'. These were one-stop-shop updates which contained all the relevant content either for the up-

coming month or about the month-just-gone. It was unfortunate that these updates were only started towards the end of the project as it was felt that they were useful.

A newsletter-kind of update proved useful to the coordination team as it was a regular chance to push updates to the wider movement. Shorter updates would still need to be pushed during the times between the larger updates as sometimes there were news items too critical to wait.

For future large Woodcraft camps, it would be suggested to review and look to keep going with larger newsletter style emails & blog posts on the website. Through publishing to the website, you also make the content available to those not in direct receipt of the email. It would also be advisable to share the highlights through social media, ensuring you reach as many people as possible.

## 13.3 Information Pack

Another staple within Woodcraft Folk camps are the Info Packs. For Venturer Camp 2023, we produced 3 (v0, v1 and v2).

The info packs were timed to be released at strategic points in the academic calendar, providing group leaders the information they needed at the right time. It was felt that less questions came through around topics covered in the info packs than would be expected, suggesting that leaders found them a useful resource.

Info Packs were co-authored by the entire Venturer Camp team, with the Coordinator and Events Assistant taking a lead. Once the content was complete, the coordinator typeset the packs using L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X. The proof copies of the documents were then shared to the team for further contributions / comments, and once amended - the document would be published to the website.

### 13.3.1 Info Pack v0

Info Pack v0 was published in December 2022 and aimed to provide a single location where the initial information about the event could be found. The document included:

- An introduction from Thomas & introductions to the different teams
- Information around the bookings process
- Information surrounding the cost of camp, suggestions for local group fundraising & the access fund
- How to get involved
- Early information around food at camp, which focused on the differences to previous camps
- Information on the Sustainability of Venturer Camp 2023 & its environmental impact
- The dates for on-site pre-camp

### 13.3.2 Info Pack v1

Info Pack v1 was published in early May 2023. There had been plans to release a few weeks earlier however due to delays in some content, the publication of the pack was delayed.

Info Pack v1 contained much more information about the event, still with some unclear details however. Much of the pack was dedicated to logistics surrounding equipment, communications, programme and food at the event. The table of contents included:

- Pre-Camp details, both virtual and on-site
- Travel to site logistics
- Communications during the event, including emergency contact details
- Equipment
- Food
- Programme
- Introduction to the International Volunteers
- Decarbonisation
- Volunteer Wellbeing
- Safeguarding & Risk Management
- Site Safety

### **13.3.3 Info Pack v2**

Info Pack v2 was published in late June. This was the last major update group leaders got before the Village Handbook was released in July. the table of contents included:

- Repeat of much of the info pack v2 content, with some details further fleshed out
- Site Layout
- Village composition
- Further detail on programme offerings
- Greater details on Safeguarding & Risk Management
- Price list for the Cafe and Merch stand
- Remaining roles to be filled

## **13.4 Village Handbook**

For Venturer Camp 2023, we wanted to go back to the historical ways of doing things - publishing the Village Handbook well in advance of the camp, ensuring those who needed it had the information, before they got to site. This methodology worked, and while there were a few minor amendments made on site - the main village handbook document was published two weeks before the start of camp.

### 13.4.1 Village Handbook Document

The Village Handbook document was co-authored by many different members of the team, with the Coordinator bringing the sections together. The VH document followed the same workflow as the Info Packs, including typesetting.

Much of the handbook was dedicated to on-site logistics and sharing the details which are needed to ensure that everything works smoothly. There was also some information about the site, features of it, and how emergencies are handled as well as the consultation activities we were asking villages to run.

Many people commented on how comprehensive the document was, and were thankful for that fact. The aim of producing a longer document was to ease minds and ensure they had all the information they would need, which we achieved!

### 13.4.2 Village Handbook Folder

Due to the nature of Biblins having very limited cellular connectivity, a decision was made to give each village a ring binder stuffed with information which Village Coordinators & Village Volunteers would find useful. This worked well, however there was a lot of printing and folder stuffing.

Printed lists of members of each village was also provided to Village Coordinators as this ensured that they had the data to hand should it be required. The Camp Office also held a printed copy of the booking data, broken down in the same units as the Village copies, for quick reference.

- Camp Map
- Village Handbook Document
- Safeguarding Documents
  - Safeguarding Responsibilities & Support
  - Woodcraft Folk's safeguarding policy
  - Venturer Camp 2023 Risk Register
  - Missing Young Person Procedures
  - Incident & Disclosure Form
  - First Aid Forms
- Village Members lists
  - Attendance list
  - Consents list
  - Dietary Data
  - Medical List
  - Central Role Holders list
- Programme
  - Daytime & Evening programme itinerary
  - Grab 'n' Go Activity Pack
  - Adventurous Activities Info Sheet

- Consultation Activities
  - Heading to 100 Session Plan
  - Strategic Plan Session Plan
  - Camp Evaluation Activity Session Plan
  - EDI Exploration & Discussion Session Plan

This was obviously a lot of paper to print and then dispose of after the event. The decision to do it this way was taken to ensure that Village Coordinators felt they had all the information they needed, without having to continually ask the same questions at the camp office. This worked, with very few village coordinators asking lots of questions at the camp office. For camps where there is phone signal, it would be suggested that the village handbook 'folder' is provided as a web page with downloadable documents linked, then either a QR code or URL is provided in the main document signposting people to this.

# 14 | Merchandise

Merchandise at Venturer Camp 2023 was coordinated by Tom Brooks. The brief for merchandise was that it needed to represent Venturer Camp 2023, give attendees another Woodcraft T-Shirt which they could add to their collection and not loose money. A key factor here was that the main camp merchandise could not loose money as we had already planned to spend a lot on the Early Bird T-Shirts.

## 14.1 What To Order

The question of what merchandise to order is a question for the ages. Now that Woodcraft Folk uses *Teemill* as its online shop, rather than an in-house operation based out of Folk House - the logistics of selling un-sold merchandise gets more complex. In the end, it was decided to keep merchandise simple, offering:

- Early Bird T-Shirt (for those who had booked & paid in time to get one)
- Normal Camp T-Shirt (in 2 colours)
- Stickers with the Venturer Camp logo on

Additionally, ex-Folk Supply stock from Woodcraft Folk's old Crampton Street location was sold off. This had been in storage at Biblins since the closure of the old offices. Camp100 also provided a stock of t-shirts which the Venturer Camp merchandise stall sold to promote their event.

## 14.2 What Got Sold

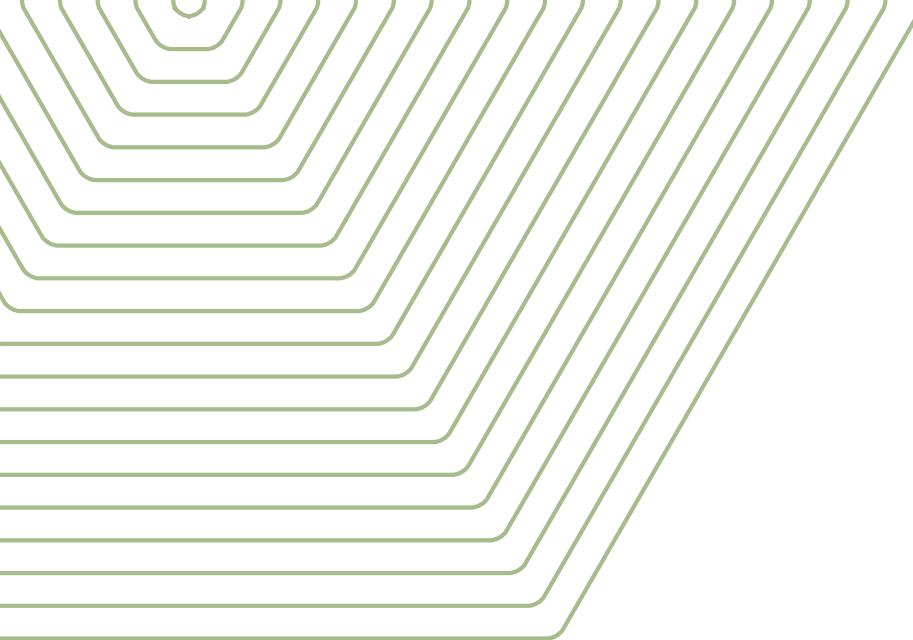
The merchandise was very popular amongst attendees and it was felt that the pricing was reasonable. The t-shirts were priced at £15 with other items being cheaper than this.

All the extra early-bird t-shirts were sold as well as over three quarters of the main camp t-shirts. Other items success varied, unfortunately we didn't gather data on the sales in the shop so we are unable to provide them here.

Any excess stock was transported to Cudham where it will be sold off and profits from which will go towards the centre.



Figure 14.1: Taking down the Events Shelter used as for the Camp Shop (TB)



## **Structure & Operations of Venturer Camp 2023**



**Part IV**

## 15 | Structure & Layout of Site

Converting a youth campsite into a site for a youth camp is actually relatively simple. Biblins is a well equipped site in terms of water and waste disposal. Biblins not being on the mains electricity grid provided some challenges - which will be discussed in the Site Services section of this document, as well as the necessity for the use of bottled gas.

The decisions around how we use the different areas on site were taken over a number of months, involving different people at different times. The first decisions to be made were around how we would divide up the site. With the redevelopment work taking place in early 2023, the decisions around this were almost made for us: using pitches 1 through 3b as villages, pitches 4 and 5 for the central area and site services and pitches 5 through 11 as villages. This structure worked out very well in the end, as pitches 4 and 5 are the right size and location for central amenities for the camp.

The conversion of camping pitches to villages was slightly more challenging however. This was due to not knowing the size of villages until very late and even after having completed the village allocation process - it was difficult to visualise the size of a village. The first draft of site layout was completed by the Camp Coordinator and Chief Executive. This draft was circulated to those booked, which on discovering that the allocated pitches weren't what they seemed - was regarded as an error. The erroneous publication of pitches fell to human error when neither the camp coordinator nor the chief executive knew the sizes of pitches. The solution was found very quickly during On-Site Pre-Camp where a walk of the site was conducted and pitch sizes were re-allocated.

Pitches	Use
1a - 2a	Asgard Village (approx 90 campers)
2a - 3b	Benben village (approx 80 campers)
4 - 5	Central Area
6 - 7a	Camelot Village (approx 90 campers)
7b - 8a	Dinas Affaraon Village (approx 90 campers)
8b - 11	Elysium Village (approx 90 campers)

Table 15.1: Use of pitches

### 15.1 Village Pitch Allocation Feedback

Generally, villages were content with their pitch allocations, other than two exceptions at either end of the site.

Due to ongoing waste water issues at the west-end of Biblins, the grey water septic tank was filling rapidly, causing it to overflow only days after it had been emptied. Before camp started, the Biblins staff team expanded the exclusion zone around the leaking drain cover and village adults were instructed to set up their village such that any food would be prepared as far away from 'the spill' as possible. The overflowing water was regularly being



Figure 15.1: Camp Map

tested by the local health authority, and the tests were coming back that the water was grey water not sewage, thus safe to let people near. Due to the size of Asgard, the village adults took the decision to split their village into two, with a small group of people camping one side of the spill and the rest of their village situated on the other side. During the camp, a young person contacted home and mentioned that they were camping near 'sewage'. This resulted in the exclusion zone around the leaking drain cover to be expanded, splitting Asgard in two, where previously there had been a small walkway and space for tents on the river-side of the spill, as far away from the drain cover as possible. Throughout the event, the Biblins staff team were monitoring the situation and the tank was pumped out twice.

At the other end of the site, Elysium was situated on a series of long and thin pitches. Thus resulting in their entire village being stretched out over a long distance. This meant that some members of the village were a substantial distance away from the village services (kitchen & marquee), which had been situated as close to the Dinas Affaraon boundary as possible due to not having a tap closer than the Eastern toilet block. Due to the mish-mash composition of villages, given the low number of delegates from each group, Elysium turned into a collection of smaller circles of tents which some village residents found disjointing. A number of villages also found themselves in a similar situation with a few smaller circles of tents making up the village.

## 15.2 Central Team Placement

recruiting someone to KP the central village - a decision was made to not have a central village. Difficulties in finding a location to have the central village came from initial plans involving using The Burrow, which was later promised to the Concordia volunteers.

The decision was taken to disperse the central team members through the five villages, into villages where they either had connections, or grouping teams together. This decision caused some apprehension within the team, especially around meals. This was due

to historic events where the central team did not have food saved for them, resulting in them having to scrounge for scraps after volunteering over mealtimes to make the camp happen. These issues were circumvented at Venturer Camp - as extremely specific instructions were given to KPs through the Food team and through the Village Handbook. The Village Handbook also contained a list of those with central roles who had a legitimate need for food to either be held back or served at a strange time, to ensure a consistent message was communicated with the KPs. This system worked well for the most part.

It worked out that Camelot & Benben housed the majority of the central team, this decision was made to reduce the commute of the central team. Villages worked very hard to accommodate these central team members, ensuring that they planned clans around the list of people who couldn't be relied on to be there. This worked very effectively at Venturer Camp 2023, however at larger events where the clan members are younger, less useful, or less-accustomed to Woodcrafts ways of working, then this may not have been as much of a success.

## 15.3 Camp Office, Info Point & Stewards HQ

We took the decision to separate the Stewards HQ and Camp Office. This decision was taken to ensure that the camp admin team had a space where they could do administration without being interrupted by stewards! We decided to use the Cabin as the camp office, as this would ensure good internet connectivity and provide shelter from the elements and then use a marquee for the Stewards HQ.

The Camp Office resided in the “living” room of the cabin, with the option to use the bedrooms or garden for anything (for example, meetings) should they be required. The Biblins staff team worked out of the “Office” section of the cabin which worked well to a certain extent. While we aimed to be respectful of the staff in the office who needed to do their site related work, there were times where we were traipsing in and out of the cabin, through the office to our office talking to people. For incidents like this, it would have been preferred to have another space we could use for meetings. Therefore some meetings were conducted in the garden of the cabin, this gave greater space for larger meetings.

Stewards HQ was situated directly opposite the cabin. For the first day of camp - they also acted as the Sign In point, which worked very well as we were able to direct more complex sign in issues to the cabin while keeping a good flow of people signing in at the stewards HQ.

There was never really a defined “go here first” point, this caused some issues where people would gravitate towards the cabin to ask their questions, most commonly “when will the bank be open”, where the answer could be given by the Stewards HQ / Info Point. For future events, it would be recommended to have a first line support who can escalate to the core camp team in the office where required. These two locations should ideally be close enough together to feel like a large team but independent enough that campers don’t get confused.

# 16 | Structure of the Day

We decided to have village mornings to enable for rest, clan and village activities, with the central area open in the afternoon and evening for centre activities, live music and dancing on alternate days and a cafe providing a chill out space. Each village also had a day where the participants got to do adventurous activities (climbing and canoeing) which were in the morning as well as the afternoon. This structure worked well as it enabled programme volunteers to get some rest and planning time, as well as giving participants and group leaders time in their villages.

Start	End	Content
	14:30	Village mornings (this will include rotating adventurous activities)
14:30	16:00	Central Programme Slot 1
16:00	16:30	Break
16:30	17:30	Central Programme Slot 2
17:30	18:00	Break
18:00	19:30	Dinner
19:30	20:30	News
20:30	22:00	Evening Programme slot 1
22:00	22:30	Sign In
22:30	23:30 (or 01:00 on 11/08/23)	Evening Programme slot 2

Table 16.1: Daily Structure of Venturer Camp 2023

There were some comments that there wasn't enough time between central activities in the afternoon and the news to get dinner sorted and get prepared for the evening. But this is always an issue when we're trying to cram so much into the day and there isn't an obvious solution without removing some program which is not ideal.

## 16.1 Daily Meetings

Village coordinators met with the Camp Coordinator, or Debs on his day off, every morning at 8:00am. Thomas provided a printout of key pieces of info to take back to villages as well as going through the info verbally, to make sure nothing was forgotten. At request of the village coordinators - the weather was also included on this handout. This worked really well, and many coordinators were pleased to have these summary notes. These meetings were generally productive and a really good opportunity to check in with representatives from each village. Having limited numbers of people there (we only had 5 villages whereas an International Camp may have closer to 30) gave a lovely opportunity for the Village Coordinators to get to know each other as well as the Camp Coordinator. This bond helped when there were more difficult conversations to have or more complex

minibus logistics to discuss!

Throughout the day, the Camp Coordinator made themselves available in the cabin at set times should anyone want an audience with them. The timings for these sessions were defined in the village handbook however the timings were more fluid than those advertised. The general policy adhered to was: if the coordinator is in, you can talk to him. This worked well for the most part, except for when the camp coordinator wasn't on shift. This resulted in some difficult boundaries. While the coordinator was elsewhere on-site with the notion that they were always available for questions. The concept of the On Call Duty Coordinator worked well here as those not on shift were able to divert questions to the person on shift.

As part of the food handover from the central team to the village KPs, a short meeting was held. It was compulsory for the Village KP to attend this meeting and to then collect the food, a decision taken to ensure that the right people knew what was going on with the food. A member of the wider food team ran these meetings as the food team didn't feel anyone had the right skills to deliver them. This is something which the Camp Coordinator was made aware of after the event, and something which should have been identified sooner to either upskill one of the Food team members or to identify the individual for them to deliver the meetings - as this was an unnecessary burden placed on them.

## 17 | Structure of the Week

Most days in the week followed a similar structure, alternating between a chill night and a big night. There were overarching mini-themes which the big night's dress up themes related to.

	<b>Afternoon</b>	<b>Evening</b>	<b>Mini Theme</b>
Saturday 5	Arrivals	Opening video and Luna (Venturer drag queen) ABBA party	None (mythology in general)
Sunday 6	Hiroshima Day focus in centres	Chill in villages	European Mythology
Monday 7	Centres	Ceilidh	European Mythology
Tuesday 8	Centres	Chill in villages	Ancient Mythology
Wednesday 9	Wide game	Merry Moot, hosted by Luna	Ancient Mythology
Thursday 10	AGM	Chill in villages, also Activism Talk Show and Venturer Committee election results	World Mythology
Friday 11	Centres	Closing video and Hunny Buzz (band)	World Mythology
Saturday 12	Departures		

Table 17.1: Week's Structure at Venturer Camp 2023

### 17.1 Woodcraft Folk's Annual General Meeting

A decision was taken by the General Council to host Woodcraft Folk's 2023 AGM at Venturer Camp, on Thursday afternoon. During the planning stages of the event, there were concerns that this would add an additional workload to the Venturer Camp team however these concerns were speculative and nothing came of them.

The planning and delivery of the AGM was not managed at all by the Venturer Camp team, other than ensuring that the Main Marquee was available and that there was an internet connection available for the hybrid aspect of the AGM. However, being that the AGM was held at Venturer Camp - a number of the central team members were dragged into supporting the event. This detracted from the efforts which could be put into Venturer Camp itself. The major sacrifice for the success of the AGM was restricting Internet Access further than usual for the duration, ensuring that the connection was stable enough for a

Zoom call.

From the Venturer Camp feedback, some people commented that they disliked having the AGM held at one of Woodcraft's large camps. This is a conversation which the General Council needs to have, not for discussion in this report.

# 18 | Safeguarding and Risk Management

Woodcraft Folk's Chief Executive and member of the Woodcraft Folk Designated Safeguarding Team, Debs McCahon, took the role of on-site Safeguarding lead. She was supported on-site by Catherine Tuffrey and Felix Pepler who both took on shifts on some of the days as well as having mostly off-site and some on-site support from Owen Sedgwick-Jell.

In the lead up to the camp, a Risk Register was written. This was produced primarily by Debs, in collaboration with different teams - ensuring that teams were involved in the creation and management of risks. Overall, this worked very well, especially taking an iterative approach to the production of this document as we were able to ensure that it was as accurate as possible at the start of the event.

On-Site, there was always a nominated individual who was 'on-shift' for Safeguarding. This took the burden of this off of the On-Call Duty Coordinator which worked well. It would be recommended to repeat this at future events. Furthermore, at set times of the day, the on-call safeguarding lead would be available in the Camp Office for a drop-in conversation. With the dynamic nature of Safeguarding, this worked well when combined with always having someone from the safeguarding team on-call. All members of the safeguarding team managed to get at least one day off from Safeguarding throughout the event.

## 18.1 Near Misses & Incidents

As could be expected at an event like Venturer Camp, we had a number of incidents, near misses or disclosures. These were effectively managed at the time by the on-site team with support of the off-site team. We did not have any major incidents at Venturer Camp 2023. Shown below is an outline of the types of incidents and near misses which were reported throughout the event:

- 5 relating to alcohol and intoxicating substances
- 2 relating to young people being AWOL (see the appendices for Missing Young Person Procedures)
- 7 relating to incidents of unacceptable behaviour by participants
- 6 relating to incidents of unacceptable behaviour by volunteers
- 6 relating to first aid / medical issues
- 9 relating to health & safety, data protection or the wild escapades of members of the public

All incidents were managed effectively on camp, with young people being signposted to a range of support services, and local safeguarding leads maintaining a watch on the situation after camp. There was one incident, involving an allegation against a volunteer which had a significant impact on young people and volunteers in a single village - this was addressed with the whole village via a workshop facilitated by two members of staff towards the end of camp. The safeguarding team continued to manage the situation following camp, but it transpired that the allegation was unfounded.

## 18.2 Policies & Procedures

As Venturer Camp is, at a fundamental level, a Woodcraft Folk Project - we utilised Woodcraft Folk's suite of policies and procedures, with a few policies added on top. This was especially useful given that we did not have anyone filling the Admin role therefore work on Policies fell to members of the team who also had other responsibilities.

The Venturer Camp team wrote a number of additional policies including:

- Payment Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Missing Young Person Procedures
- Under 18 Volunteer Price Policy

These were published to our website and linked to from a number of sources throughout the lead up to the event.

# 19 | Camp Census

A Camp Census was carried out on Tuesday 8 August 2023. This census was optional for all attendees on site to complete; it was completed through attendees filling out a form printed which was then later digitised and compiled to produce results shown below. Of the 450ish people we had on site at the time of the Census, we received 334 responses, 51% of those were from young people aged 13-15 years.

- 45.3% described their gender as female
- 39.5% described their gender as male
- 7.2% described their gender as non-binary
- 12.3% described their gender being different from the one assigned at birth
- 15.2% described themselves as having a disability
- 19.6% described themselves as having a health condition which impacted on their lives
- 29.1% described themselves as neuro-diverse
- 16.3% said that they were disadvantaged due to their mental health
- 3.6% of campers had experienced living in care
- 8.4% described themselves as living in a low income household

## 19.1 Summary

- Underrepresentation of people of colour at camp - 87.7% white including British (73.6%), Irish (3.3%), Gypsy/Traveller (1.2%) and other white (9.6%). 2021 Census data suggests 82% of people in England and Wales are white, and 18% belong to a black, Asian, mixed or other ethnic group.
- Greater ethnic and gender diversity amongst our participants when compared to the volunteer team
- Greater reluctance to respond to questions around gender and mental health
- Woodcraft Folk has much higher levels of engagement by neurodiverse individuals, both as participants and volunteers (neurodiversity estimated to be 1 in 7 in the workplace 2016 study)

## 19.2 Participants

This section looks at responses from between 231 and 235 individuals

- 7.2% would describe themselves as non-binary with a further 4.3% wishing to self-define their gender
- 68.4% would describe themselves as white British, 11.5% white other, 3.8% Irish, 1.3% Gypsy or traveller, 1.3% Black or British Black, 5.1% Asian or British Asian, 7.7% mixed or multiple ethnic groups and 0.9% other

- 16.2% would describe themselves as having a health condition which impacts their health
- 13.4% would described themselves as having a disability
- 26.5% would describe themselves as neurodiverse
- 15.5% would describe themselves as experiencing disadvantage due to their mental health
- 9.8% would described themselves as having caring responsibilities
- 4.7% would describe themselves as having lived in care experience

## 19.3 DFs

This section looks at between 26 and 27 responses from individuals aged between 18 and 21.

- 11% would describe themselves as non-binary with a further 7.4% wishing to self define their gender 81.5% would describe themselves as white British, 11.1% mixed or multiple ethnic groups with a further 7.4% as white other 22.2% would describe themselves as having a health condition which impacts their health 19.2% would described themselves as having a disability 40.7% would describe themselves as neurodiverse 23.1% would describe themselves as experiencing disadvantage due to their mental health

## 19.4 Kinsfolk

This section looks at responses from Kinsfolk, aged 21 and above. There were approximately 71 to 72 responses.

- 5.6% would describe themselves as non-binary
- 87.5% would describe themselves as white British, 2.8% Irish, 1.4% Gypsy or traveller, 1.4% as Asian or Asian British, 1.4% other ethnic group, 1.4% mixed British Caribbean with a further 4.2% as white other
- 29.2% would describe themselves as having a health condition which impacts their health
- 19.4% would described themselves as having a disability
- 33.3% would describe themselves as neurodiverse
- 16.7% would describe themselves as experiencing disadvantage due to their mental health

## 19.5 Overall Observations

It is interesting to compare the camp census responses to wider demographic monitoring across the organisation. For example, when reviewing demographic data shared by Venturer Camp volunteers against that submitted in an open call to monitor demographics amongst the volunteer team there are significant differences:

- There is greater gender diversity amongst VCamp volunteers, and a higher representation of male volunteers, when compared to the wider volunteer network: 43.7% male, 46.7% female, 5.6% non-binary compared to 28.4% male, 67.9% female and 2.6% non-binary. 9.9% of Venturer Camp volunteers suggested that their gender was different to that assigned at birth, compared to only 4.3% of the wider volunteering membership
- Venturer Camp volunteers were also more likely to suggest that they had a disability 19.4% compared to 12.7% of the wider volunteering membership
- The ethnicity of the wider volunteering membership is slightly broader than that of the Venturer Camp volunteering team - 6.3% of the whole volunteer membership described their ethnicity as something other than white compared to only 4.2% of Venturer Camp volunteers. Both demonstrate a huge underrepresentation of people of colour within the organisation.
- Venturer Camp volunteers more likely to report a health condition - 29.2% compared to 24.3%
- Venturer Camp volunteers more likely to share that they have a disability - 19.4% compared to 12.7%
- Venturer Camp volunteers significantly more likely to share that they are neurodiverse - 33.3% compared to 17.8% of the wider volunteer team.

The difference shared above requires further investigation, the sample sizes are small and the response rates significantly different - only 9% of volunteers responded to the demographic survey across the whole organisation, but 0.5% equates to one respondent whereas 1.4% equates to one respondent of the census completed at Venturer Camp.

The camp census also included an open question asking for suggestions of how Woodcraft Folk could be more inclusive. The majority of responses related to local group activities and the need for more marketing and promotion. Below are those statements which reference camp experiences, as provided by the young participants:

- The need to make merchandise cheaper, as not all participants can afford to purchase
- Longer quiet hours - start at 10:30pm
- More drop-in workshops
- Cheaper camp cafe food
- More circle activities/team building activities
- Buy new tents
- Autism tent
- Clean showers more often
- More village activities
- Printed list of activities by day
- Mobile phone signal
- No camp currency

- Camp cafe is exclusive - whilst cheap is still making a profit and preventing some Venturers engaging due to financial barriers
- Clans should be made up of people known to the clan group - more comfortable working with friends
- Gender neutral toilets

Much of the comments made by DFs or volunteers focused on the wider organisation and the need to work in partnership with other organisations to increase and widen participation. All comments from the census have been shared with Woodcraft Folk's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Working Group.

There were also several comments on the food, unfortunately not all of the following comments are descriptive enough to inform future plans:

- Better food
- More snacks
- Nicer food
- More food
- More diverse food
- Not enough meat on camp
- Make food better
- Vegan and non-vegan/vegetarian options being of equal value

## 19.6 Some Pretty Graphs

The below graphs use data from all respondents to the camp census. All questions had a Prefer Not To Say (PNTS) option.

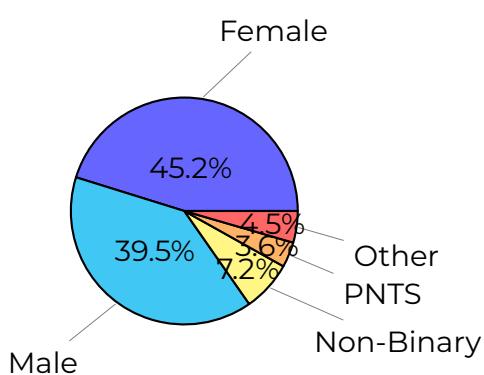


Figure 19.1: What Is Your Identified Gender?

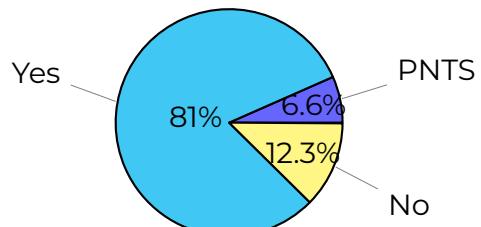


Figure 19.2: Is Your Identified Gender Same as Birth Gender?

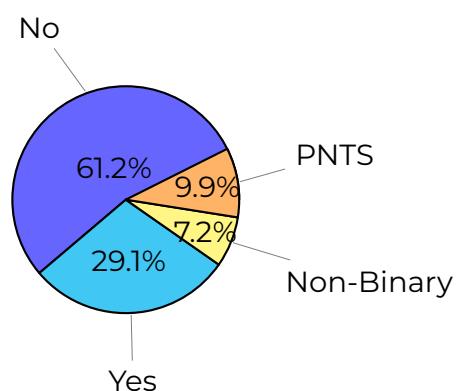


Figure 19.3: Do You Consider Yourself to be Neurodiverse?

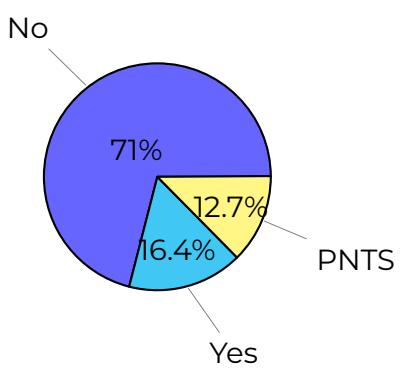


Figure 19.4: Would you describe yourself as disadvantaged due to your mental health?

# **Supporting Events**

**Part V**

# 20 | Online Pre-Camp

After seeing how Common Ground, Woodcraft Folk international camp held in 2022, ran their Pre-Camp sessions - it was decided to emulate this with a heavier emphasis on the online sessions. The online sessions took place from w/c 17 April to w/c 26 June with at least one session each week. Each session focused on a different component of the camp, ranging from a virtual site tour to a session where the attendees could meet the Site Services team.

Some teams found the online pre-camp sessions helpful, however on the whole - it was felt that they were stressful and time consuming. This point is further emphasised when reviewing the audience for each session. Most sessions only were attended by 2 to 4 attendees, with some gaining up to 20 additional views on YouTube after the fact. Some sessions, where recordings were actually taken, were published to the Woodcraft Folk YouTube channel.

No feedback was gathered beyond the core team, so we don't know the impact of Online Pre-Camp on the attendees.

On the whole, it would not be recommended to repeat Online Pre-Camp again in the same way in the future. However, taking learnings from this: it would be suggested that teams are given the opportunity to present an 'update' which is recorded and published in some capacity, giving camp attendees information; with some teams still delivering a live session. The Food and Cafe & Special Diets sessions were the best attended single-team sessions, it would be highly recommended to run similar sessions again. The General Q&A & broader sessions were also well attended, as would be expected - however many participants came along just to hear what was going on rather than ask specific questions, a testament to the team's excellent communications! The best-attended session was the Meet Your Village Evening, see below for further details around this.

## 20.1 How the Sessions Worked

The majority of Online Pre-Camp sessions took a similar form:

- Introductions to people hosting the session
- A short presentation, providing updates on that topic & plugging future sessions
- Space for discussions and / or Q&A

During each session, it was expected that notes were taken. The content of these notes was at the discretion of each session's facilitation team. For future sessions, it would be helpful to provide the facilitation team with a template they can insert their notes into rather than expect them to work out what to take notes on; thus ensuring what notes are returned to the coordinator after the session.

The sessions were promoted through our website. On the website, an events plugin enabled us to have a calendar which displayed upcoming events. An event was created for each Online Pre-Camp session, which gave us a space to link the Zoom Meeting from & share any details about the session. A main Pre-Camp page also displayed information about Pre-Camp, should the movement want more information. Each week, a post was

made to social media which detailed the upcoming sessions in that week - these were usually published in the first half of the week.

After each session, the event on the website would be updated to contain a link to the recording published to YouTube, any slides used, and any other relevant resources.

## 20.2 Sessions

- Welcome To Pre-Camp
- Virtual Site Tour
- Code of Conduct I (Day Scheduling and Leaving Site)
- Meet the Coordinator
- Booking Help
- Code of Conduct II (Respect, Clans & Co-operation)
- Meet the Cafe / Allergy Teams
- Meet the Programme Team
- Meet the Food Team
- Meet the Site Services Team
- Meet Your Village Evening
- Code of Conduct III (Consent and Intoxicating Substances)
- Meet the Volunteer Support Team
- General Q&A

## 20.3 Meet Your Village Evening

The biggest and most exciting session of the Online Pre-Camp series was by far the Meet Your Village Evening. This session was designed to announce the village allocations & ensure village adults made contact with each other, a sort of first Village Meeting.

The session was regarded as a success - with all-bar-two groups booked present at the session, and some villages felt that their conversations had been so productive during the evening that they didn't require further meetings. From a coordination perspective, it was reassuring to know that key village adults had at least agreed on roles. A follow up email was sent a few days after the evening, re-introducing those who had been at the session and introducing those who hadn't made it. This also shared links to the relevant forms which volunteers would need to fill in to say that they were taking on a role in the village or to request access to the Booking System.

### 20.3.1 Running Order

Participants were given an overview of how villages would work and what would happen at camp. We also reinforced the aim of bringing everyone together and that this is our first Venturer Camp since before the pandemic. After a brief introduction and look at the map we showed the participants which groups would be in which villages and where villages would be on the site.

We spent some time talking about feeding central volunteers and explained which volunteers would be allocated where.

We then broke off into breakout rooms for each village, with a facilitator in each

1. Introductions (names, pronouns, group & role in group, all time favourite camp meal)
2. Talk about equipment and who was supplying this
3. A space for the central volunteers to make themselves known
4. Village Roles
  - We said we needed names for: village coordinator, village KP (preferable more than one per village), Safeguarding lead, First Aid lead. Names don't have to be given tonight but note down ideas from people of who we could chase
  - Optional extras (don't need names or need to dwell on this tonight): lost property keeper, KE/G (depends on where you're from), Fire, Programme, birthdays

We shared the form for village roles and said that these needed to be filled in as soon as possible.

Jeni, one of the people who ran this session, said it was Incredibly successful. We only had 2 districts coming to camp not turn up or send apologies We need to have this session scheduled and in people's diaries as early as possible as it's really useful but more so if more people are there

## 21 | On-Site Pre-Camp

On-Site Pre-Camp was held at Biblins on the weekend of Friday 30 June - Sunday 2nd July. Not many members of the Core Team attended the event, in part due to dates and in part due to travel times. No leaders from delegations attended, despite being invited. We believe this to be due to the fact that many people in Woodcraft know Biblins well and wouldn't want to make the trek down there just to be told the same things they could find out online.

The dates were chosen to minimise exam clashes, which given the young nature of the Coordination team was for the best however it left us with very little time to do tasks and pick up actions after the event. This, whilst okay for some team members, left others with many actions to complete and little time to do them well in. The late date choice impacted other people not on the direct coordination team, for example getting the camp map designed.

There had been some discussion in the weeks leading up to pre-camp about if the event should go ahead or not, ultimately it did go ahead however some people felt the go or no-go decision needed to be made sooner as it resulted in confusion for some. It was also noted by attendees of the weekend that there wasn't an obvious booking contact for the weekend in the event that someone needed to cancel / amend their booking - while this did stop someone from cancelling their booking, it should be considered in the future. Furthermore, attendees who were in the central organising team but weren't core team didn't get any advanced information due to the Discord Structure. This is an oversight on the camp coordinators part, and the issues were rectified as soon as possible.

The agenda for the weekend was designed with fluidity and a chance for teams to take the time to do what they needed to do in mind. This resulted in a good balance of time where all the people present on site were taking part in site-wide activities and taking time to do what they needed to do in small groups (there were a series of bonus tasks completed throughout the weekend).

The pivotal moment during Pre-Camp was deciding the layout of the central area. Having this discussion on site enabled a participative & cooperative approach where the majority of the relevant teams were able to contribute. Not having anyone with direct oversight of programme made this process slightly more complicated as it meant the people on site were relying on data in a number of spreadsheets to be up-to-date and from conversations had between team members to be able to decide placement for structures. Ultimately, this worked out fine - however it should be noted that when doing site layout, it's advisable to have members from the programme team present to determine marquee layout.

Another especially useful session was around teams sharing updates. This is something the coordinator had struggled to get teams to do in the leadup to this so having teams all in one place presented the perfect opportunity to share updates. Updates were varied, with some teams being basically ready for camp tomorrow and others still having lots of work - the Pre-Camp weekend displaying this to them and them then being able to get on with it.

The final major session of the weekend was Open Space. This time was utilised by some

teams for them to have a team meeting where they could determine an actionable plan to take forward and complete; other teams did some maintenance at Biblins; and the remaining people took an inventory of the ex-Common Ground equipment and the ex-Crampton St. Office rooms within the Bunkhouse. In feedback from the weekend - some people found the inventorying to be a waste of time, however others thought it was invaluable as we now fully understood the equipment stored at Biblins, should we need to use any in the event of an emergency.

Jack Brown, working week & takedown coordinator, led a session on what is happening during Working Week and Takedown - which was a very valuable use of time. Having this as the last session of the day proved very beneficial as we were able to use knowledge gained and decisions made earlier in the day to feed into this conversation, making it more productive.

Finding a KP for the weekend proved challenging. We were unable to source an external volunteer, which resulted in Noemi and Sabrina (ESC Volunteers based at Biblins) being tasked with KPing for us. They were supported by Lauren Karstadt with menu planning and ordering of food.

Throughout the weekend, the people on site at pre-camp were 'left to it' with the food, after Noemi and Sabrina dropped it off for us on the Friday night. This was not how it had been sold to us, which caused some confusion. However we were able to make do given the number of competent Woodcrafters present! It was also noted during the evaluation that some of the specialist diets' food wasn't quite right - notably the Gluten Free options.

A good suggestion came out of the evaluation whereby for future events like this at Biblins, a member of the team should be encouraged to warden as this would then mean we have relative-unrestricted access to the Warden's Cabin with its electricity and WiFi! We were able to make do sitting on the balcony or on the grassy bank however had the weather been worse - we would've struggled.

It was felt that whilst the weekend on site proved extremely useful, it would be also extremely useful to have the entire team together. It was suggested that two in-person meetings could be held in the year of the event, one of them being in an easy-to-access meeting room in a city and the other being a site visit. From the coordinators perspective, this would be much more valuable as only having half the team present was a very difficult experience given the time pressure placed on us to pull off Venturer Camp in a year.

## 22 | Roadshow

The Roadshow for Venturer Camp 2023 was a series of sessions facilitated by various members of the core team at regional events around the country in late 2022 and early 2023. These sessions aimed to spread the word of what was happening, gather potential participant's thoughts on the programme and answer leaders' questions.

It was decided to run these sessions as they had been done for previous camps, with greater success than ours however. Each of the different sessions went differently to each other, with some being great successes and others being less successful.

After some conversations, it was decided that it would be best to 'piggyback' off of other events in the Woodcraft Folk calendar, rather than run our own events - due to the administrative & financial impacts of running our own events. A session plan was devised by Woodcraft Folk's Chief Executive, which was designed with a number of sub-sessions in mind, so each Roadshow could be tailored to the audience, and time requirements.

The first roadshow was held in Scotland at their Scottish Gathering. This was a successful roadshow, probably due to the cohesive nature of the Scottish Nation in Woodcraft, and how core their Gathering is to their operations. This resulted in a large turnout of both young people and volunteers. The young people also re-wrote lyrics to a song which featured as part of an advert in the Venturer Camp news!

The roadshow then travelled to the Eastern Region for their first ever Eastern Region Venturers Fun day. This was facilitated by leaders based in the Eastern Region who were also on the Core Team. This was a successful event, mostly due to the fact that the target audience were present and the fact that the coordination team were experienced leaders who were able to take a session plan and engage young people & adults in it.

The next stop for the Roadshow was the London Regional Gathering. This being a large event naturally meant that the Venturer Camp roadshow would be a smaller component than it was at either of its previous stops. Again, this was a successful event - gathering thoughts on programme activities from the young people in attendance and answering leaders' questions.

The Roadshow continued its journey south in the country to the South East Regional Gathering. This event was the least successful roadshow where any content was actually delivered. The event wasn't successful, due to the low number of attendees as well as the poor communications around the SE Gathering & Venturer Camp roadshow. The low number of attendees, who were mostly adults, meant that the sessions designed to get participants talking had to be adapted and run as sessions for the leaders, still hoping to gather useful information.

The final stop for the Roadshow was supposed to be the biggest, as it was being planned to run as its own event. The event planning had all gone well, and we had agreed facilitators to run the event. We had planned to use a Youth Hostel Meeting Room in Manchester, as Woodcraft Folk has an agreement whereby they can access these facilities for free. A booking form had been created and circulated to Venturer Leaders through social media and our website. Unfortunately no one had booked. A decision was taken within the Woodcraft Folk Senior Leadership Team to cancel this event. This decision was commu-

nicated to the venue however not to any of the Volunteers working on the project. This resulted in the sessions facilitator finding out the session had been cancelled on arrival at the venue. This communication failure demoralised the team and soured the end of what, until this point, had been a successful roadshow.

The division of Roadshows around the country felt alright for a Venturer Camp sized camp. For a larger camp, it may be more beneficial to target all the functional regions & hold general open access sessions, depending on what you wish to gain from them. Holding a roadshow virtually was also discussed but never happened due to time constraints, this could be a valuable opportunity to take. Piggy-backing off other events worked well, as our plans fit this well. It is suggested to repeat this. Generally the Roadshows were well received, with young people and volunteers alike getting excited about Venturer Camp 2023!

## 23 | Working Week

Working Week for Venturer camp was scheduled to begin on Wednesday 2 August, and run until midday on Saturday 5 August, when we allowed campers onto the site. During On-Site pre-Camp, the Camp Coordinator and Working Week coordinator decided that they would arrive on site on Sunday 30 July.

For the duration of Working Week and Pre Working Week, we were camping & eating with Lewisham & Greenwich, who were having their district summer camp on Pitches 6 & 7. This was hugely beneficial to the Venturer Camp team as we were able to be fed and have shelter, without having to deal with it ourselves. However, from a KP's perspective: the Venturer Camp team was a nightmare to cater for. The KP has recommended not to do it in this way again, and that a separate KP should be sought for Working Week due to conflicting requirements of District Camp and Working Week. Members of the Working Week team were strongly encouraged to get involved with the meal preparation and clean up, to aid the Lewisham & Greenwich team. The KP gave us a requirement of numbers for each meal, then it was up to the Venturer Camp team to find the people to fill this.

Having Lewisham & Greenwich on site for the duration of Working Week also meant that we had access to the Luton Van which they had hired to transport their equipment. This proved extremely valuable as we were able to move equipment around the site with ease. It's helpful to have a few people confident to drive the van on-site as the requirement of this being on one or two people makes it more of a complex operation to move the van with needing to have the right people in the right places.

The pre Working Week days were used to organise and extricate equipment from the Bunkhouse storage rooms. It was decided that these days were needed after reviewing the relatively unorganised mound of equipment during on-site pre-camp. These days were instrumental in the success of Working Week, as there wasn't lots of time wasted on the first official day pulling tent poles out of a tiny room where only a few people could fit at once.



Figure 23.1: Camp100 coordinators survey one of the surviving 5x10m marquees as it's put up (TB)

On Tuesday 1 August, the Concordia team arrived to site. They spent the afternoon getting to know each other and the site with the ESC volunteers; then from morning on Wednesday 2 August - they got stuck in with the Working Week tasks. Altogether, we had 42 people book for some of Working Week, with 27 of these being on site from 2 August. This felt like the right number, however some additional people will always be useful! We managed to get all the required tasks done, however some of the administration was a bit of a squeeze towards the end.

As more people arrived for Working Week, they were keen to camp where they would be for the duration of the camp, rather than pitching on Pitch 6 for two nights then having to move. It was agreed that where no further groups were scheduled to be on the pitches, then Working Week attendees could camp where their village would be, this worked fine for the most part.

Having a dedicated coordinator for Working Week is extremely important. This is someone who works closely with the Coordinator to understand exactly what tasks need to be done and can lead the operational aspect of getting the site configured - leaving the Coordinator to deal with other, more complex problems. We were fortunate, in that there weren't many other problems - leaving the Coordinator to support with the site setup. A vague plan was devised ahead of time, building on discussions had at on-site pre-camp. This was useful and allowed for the Coordinator & Working Week Coordinator to allocate tasks, especially surrounding people setting up their spaces on camp.

Each morning, a daily briefing was held over Breakfast - which enabled tasks for the day to be divided up & people to share where they might need additional support throughout the day, or plan use of resources such as the van. Throughout the day, the Coordinator and Working Week Coordinator kept up to date with different teams - ensuring everyone was able to get on with their tasks. Walkie Talkies were used for communication, which is vital. It's imperative that these arrive to site fully charged and ready to go as waiting around for them to be charged wastes time.



Figure 23.2: Working Week Crew (TB)

Generally speaking, the right people were on site for Working Week. It would have been

useful to have some more representatives from each centre present to ensure they were set up how they wanted it to be, however the Programme coordinator was able to fill in this gap. It proved very helpful to have a number of people who were able to support the large tasks, such as the Solar Array installation where a few key individuals were the masterminds behind it. Having additional people enabled the masterminds to conduct rather than do - preserving their energy for the camp itself!

During the week, large pieces of infrastructure got delivered to site. Much of this had been arranged by one person, with only them knowing the details of it or these details being stashed in a Google Drive folder somewhere. It would be useful for future events, for this information to be collated into the Working Week timetable so that we are able to easily allocate where the Porta-Loos are being placed or work out how big of a space we need to leave for the Main Marquee!

During the week, the Coordination & Event Administration team worked closely with the Biblins site staff, forming relationships which proved extremely valuable for the camp.

Towards the end of the week, there were still a number of large groups on site who were scheduled to leave early on 5 August, the first day of camp. It would be beneficial to ensure that the site is booked for at least one day either side of the event itself as having the groups around made some things more complex, such as access to pitches. Generally speaking, other than one incident, the groups who were present on site during Pre Working Week & Working Week itself were fine with us and didn't mind us being there. The incident was in relation to a group camping at the Eastern end of the site not wanting people driving past their pitch to access the canoe turning circle, which was required to turn the van around.

## 24 | Takedown

Takedown formally started on the afternoon of Saturday 12 August, after the main camp had concluded & attendees left. Due to site restrictions, we had instructed all attendees to be off site by midday as there were a number of other groups scheduled to be camping at Biblins that night. Takedown was scheduled to run until Wednesday 16 August, and the Burrow had been booked as such - however due to a desire to get away as quickly as possible, Takedown formally concluded at around lunchtime on Monday 14 August. Takedown was coordinated by Jack Brown, who is also one of the coordinators of Woodcraft Folk's next big camps. Having a dedicated Takedown Coordinator proved extremely helpful as they were able to take the lead on planning when equipment should be taken down and manage the storage of it, ensuring it was stored in a safe way for the 2025 camp.

On paper, it would seem that we had a good number of people booked to come to Takedown, with 25 coming. This figure included the 12 Concordia volunteers, so in reality - we had about 13 people at Takedown. Some of these people were only able to stay for one day, which left a very small group of people doing takedown. This was extremely difficult, as many of these people had been to Working Week and held key (high stress) roles on camp, which lead to a number of delirious moments throughout Takedown. Ultimately, we made it work - however for larger events where there would be more to do, this would be too great a task for the people left behind. For future camps, it may be worth exploring asking a Venturer or DF group to stay behind and support with Takedown.

To make the takedown crew's lives easier & due to inclement weather, a decision was taken to strike as much of the central area as possible on Friday 11 August. This, whilst leaving the last night to have a strange looking central area, proved extremely valuable as we were able to drop 4 of the 5-by-10 m marquees after the central program finished. Whilst the Camp Coordinator & Takedown Coordinator did end up orchestrating the taking down, extra people were able to be involved in getting the marquees down, sharing the load of the takedown.

The main food depot tent was also able to be taken down earlier in the day on Friday 11 August. This was returned to New Barnet overnight in the Luton Van, a decision which left us without the van on site to use to move the smaller centre marquees after taking them down - however a smart decision nonetheless, as it saved the hire of another van just to collect the marquee after camp. One of the parents of a young person drove the van to New Barnet and back, after being added to the insurance by the hirer. We were able to use a minibus on site to move the marquees, enabling them to be moved to the bunkhouse with ease.

The Luton Van had been scheduled to return Ealing's equipment to Ealing on Saturday morning, then return Lewisham & Greenwich equipment to south London on Sunday where it would stay and not return to site. This left the takedown team with a shortage of van for the majority of Saturday and Sunday - something which had been planned for and we made work, however was another complication. Due to the lack of a van, we had to work in the earlier mornings and later into the evenings to ensure that all the required movements of equipment were managed; this was accompanied by using a car to transport some of the smaller, lightweight equipment. Having a van available isn't the only piece of equipment which is vital for a successful takedown - you also need some basic tools and ladders available for striking marquees, as we had hung lights high in the Ex-

Swindon spiky marquee which we needed to de-rig. We were able to find a ladder on site to use, fortunately.

Villages generally were very good about getting their equipment taken down and off site by the specified time. Some villages chose to strike their large infrastructure the night before, in part due to early departures of some groups and in part due to inclement weather scheduled for Saturday 12 August. Villages were also generally pretty good about not leaving their pitches messy, other than one village who left a large amount of rubbish on the site. This was dealt with by the site staff team, however it should be noted for future that doing a full litter pick of the site may take a lot of people, a lot of time.

Some of the villages also opted to take down their sleeping tents, with the aim of minimising what had to be dried out after a potentially damp morning on 12 August. The Coordinator had given permission for the young people to bivy in the main marquee on the night of 11 August on the understanding that an appropriate ratio of adults would also be in the marquee. At 1am when the central programme finished, a member of Woodcraft Folk SMT overturned this decision which frustrated many campers, souring what had been a positive experience for the most part. For future camps, it would be beneficial to publish guidance and a suggestion around this ahead of camp.

In the evening of Sunday 13 August, the team (including the Concordias) had a meal from a fish & chip shop for dinner then went to the pub for a celebratory drink. It is a tradition within Woodcraft camps to go to a pub for a meal, however we were unable to book a table large enough for all of us. This was a lovely way to conclude the main part of Takedown and gave the team some downtime before the final rush of activity on Monday Morning before the last people left the site.

Throughout the takedown weekend, meals were served out of the Burrow Kitchenette, which could just about cope with the size of our group. Leftover food which hadn't been donated to the Foodbank had been taken to the burrow towards the end of camp, which was turned into a number of simple meals. An oversight had been made in relation to the special diets, where not enough equipment or a sanitary space was available to cook these meals in - which is unacceptable. This was rectified by a small number of individuals cooking & eating from the Warden's Cabin, until we had to close it for cleaning.

For future Takedowns, it's suggested that the Vengabus needs to be played more. This may sound strange to people who didn't come to takedown - however for those who were there, we can all still hear it. On a serious note, having a loud speaker and some good music can really help with takedown and morale.



## The Team



**Part VI**

# 25 | Team Structure

## 25.1 Core vs Wider Team

When the Coordinator began recruiting for Volunteers to fill out the majority of the team, an idea was vaguely mapped out that a smaller group of people would form the 'core team', with support from the 'wider team'. Work to recruit volunteers did fill the majority of the core roles initially, with many volunteers who hadn't been involved in a large camp before being recruited. Very quickly, the concept of a 'core' and 'wider' team was blurred, with it only remaining in the Discord server - roles such as centre coordinators & stewards weren't assigned 'core' access.

From a coordinator's perspective, it would've been beneficial to keep this structure in place - with a more defined support structure, as this would have reduced some of the repeated conversations, which may have saved some time. Generally speaking, the volunteer teams felt this way too. Volunteers agreed that a structure including team leads and supporting volunteers makes sense, considering the division of responsibilities and roles; furthermore it allows for more effective decision making by the core team.

## 25.2 Teams

Broadly speaking, the individuals who were part of the Venturer Camp 2023 team fit into one of the following teams:

- Coordination & Event Administration
- Site Services & Production
- Food
- Finance
- Volunteer Support
- Programme
- Stewarding
- Communications
- Transport Logistics
- Merchandise
- Sustainability, Environment & Decarbonisation

Each team was structured slightly differently, their evaluations in the subsequent chapters will detail this.

There were a number of individuals who worked across a number of teams, for example a number of volunteers were involved in the Solar Power system (under Site Services & Production's jurisdiction), and the Sustainability, Environment & Decarbonisation team. Considerations should be given here as to who they report to, we managed for Venturer

Camp as the team supported each other however in the future plus the volunteers are extremely experienced; however in the future, we need to be more considerate of cross-team working like this.

## 25.3 Team Unity

Due to the accelerated time scale in which Venturer Camp 2023 was organised, the unity & bonding of the team was not as strong as it had been in the past. This was felt throughout the core & wider team. Unfortunately, due to time pressures - we were unable to take the time to get to know each other and build relationships which would help to make the camp even better.

It was generally felt that the lack of in-person meetings contributed to the isolation some members felt. The only in-person meeting offered was On-Site Pre-Camp which had extremely low attendance due to the difficulties of getting to Biblins. For those who did attend Pre-Camp, there was a greater feeling of unity

## 25.4 Volunteer Recruitment

Volunteers were recruited for Venturer Camp 2023 through a number of mechanisms, the primary being word of mouth at Common Ground. Having an international camp where the idea of a Venturer Camp is conceived works really well as lots of awesome Woodcraft Folk members are in a field who can be gently persuaded to take on a role at the next camp.

Further recruitment was done off the successes of Common Ground, using social media and email to reach members, inviting them to join an open meeting which enabled them to ask questions before getting involved. This worked well and filled out many of the remaining spaces on the team.

Unfortunately, not all roles were able to be filled. This included some significant roles such as Communications and Administration. These roles were less critical to fill as for the first time with a Venturer Camp - we had a dedicated member of staff working on it who could fill the gap. However, due to shortcomings in other teams, the member of staff's time was filled very quickly. This led to the Coordinator taking on some Production, some Communications, some Administration and some Finance tasks in addition to the Coordination role itself. Some of these additional tasks were shorter term due to either late recruitment or peaks in work. Having additional team members who could be used to plug these gaps would be extremely useful.

As would be expected with a large Woodcraft camp, recruitment continues right up until the end of camp for volunteers to take on a variety of roles. These late recruited roles ranged from Wide Game volunteers to stewards. The carefully calculated late-leaving of recruitment works, however it should be noted that for roles with age restrictions, for example, stewarding - can result in having to turn some people away. We ran into the fortunate circumstance where too many under-18s applied during camp for a shift. This left us overstaffed with under-18s and not enough over-18s to pad out numbers with the restriction in place that anyone aged under-18 needs to be paired with an over-18 while stewarding.

Venturer Camp 2023 also began to develop a suite of Role Descriptions for key roles. This is something which Woodcraft SLT requested that we do, as managing expectations for

Volunteering roles is critical. For future events, it would be suggested to set the dates for any compulsory attendance meetings in advance, and require people to be available to attend to be able to take on the role.

We ran into an issue with a volunteer taking on a local group role as well as a significant central role. Due to ensuring the young people had sufficient leadership capacity, we were unable to allow the volunteer to take on both roles. This resulted in one of the teams loosing a core volunteer with lots of experience & knowledge of the site. For future events, it would be suggested that the expectation that core team members only take on that role is made clear.

## 25.5 Volunteer Onboarding

Venturer Camp had no real Volunteer Onboarding process. This is something which it would be recommended to explore for future camps.

It was found that through not having a volunteer onboarding process, beyond “join our Discord server”, we ran into issues where team members’ contact details weren’t available and it wasn’t always clear what people were signing up for, either to themselves or to members of other teams. It would have helped greatly to have a short Google Form which new team members are expected to complete that asks for their basic information (email address, telephone contact number, role, etc) as well as any access needs they have and sets out expectations for meeting attendance etc. From this form, relevant data would be passed to relevant people which would hopefully enable people to feel better supported in the team as well as having more ways to contact them.

# 26 | Working Together To Make Venturer Camp Happen

## 26.1 Meetings

### 26.1.1 Online Meetings

Monthly online check-in meetings were for the majority of the year leading up to Venturer Camp itself. These meetings were designed to check the progress of each team, understand where they have gotten to and work out where they are going next; a way of building shared accountability for the project. It was felt that the meetings would've been more engaging if there had been substantial discussions built into them - rather than sharing completed work.

The date and time to hold these meetings varied, a decision taken to ensure that the maximum number of people could be present. Unfortunately, some members of the team didn't engage in many (if any) meetings which lead to them not knowing anyone before they got to camp.

It was generally felt across the volunteer team that the meetings would be better if there were more decision-making and bonding activities planned as part of the agenda. It was suggested to have fewer meetings, with each being longer and more meaningful.

The online meetings were useful from a Coordination perspective as they were a very good time to get updates from teams, ensuring that teams were making required progress. Meeting with team members seemed to be the most productive way to get updates out of people, as when discussing team progress on Discord - teams would rarely respond which is extremely difficult to gauge progress from.

### 26.1.2 In Person Meetings

To save time and money, it was decided that the only in person meeting held for Venturer Camp 2023 would be On-Site Pre-Camp, this would also double as the site visit. Whilst this was a good decision in terms of saving volunteer expenses for in-person meetings, it was a bad decision in terms of team unity & building relationships between team members.

Woodcraft Folk members got very good at using technology to support their engagement through the Covid Pandemic where that was the only option. However, there is very little which compares to having people in a room building relationships, sharing ideas and feeling the excitement from each other about this thing which we are all working towards.

It is generally felt across the volunteer team that at least one more in-person meeting would have been beneficial. It was suggested to use a Youth Hostel Association Meeting Room in a large city or convenient location for the members of the team, as Woodcraft has access to these for free, for a day meeting or to have another residential meeting. For either of these options, careful considerations need to be taken as to who gets travel expenses paid to come - and this needs to be made clear in advance of the meeting.

It was also suggested that the in-person meetings could ‘tak-onto’ another residential meeting taking place. For example, a General Council or Venturer Committee meeting could run in parallel to a camp committee meeting. This would reduce the overall cost per head for venue hire as well as provide space and time for lots of un-scheduled conversations which are often the most productive.

A suggested timeline for the in-person meetings, for Venturer Camp 2023, is shown below:

- Late 2022 / Early 2023 - kick off meeting in a YHA in a city
- Spring 2023 - Team suggested to join a working weekend at the site to get to know the site
- June 2023 - On-Site Pre-Camp on site with team meeting element
- August 2023 - Camp itself

## 26.2 Communications

### 26.2.1 Discord

It was decided early on during the project conceptualisation phase that Discord, a popular instant messaging platform which is similar to Slack or Microsoft Teams, would be used as the primary communication platform for members of the Coordination team. This decision was taken due to the high levels of flexibility with which the platform can be used, and the Coordinator’s familiarity with it. A positive side effect was that teams would be given a space in which they could converse with each other, without having to deal with setting up WhatsApp groups if they chose to use it.

Opinions about using Discord varied. Some volunteers found Discord effective and user-friendly, particularly for keeping discussions organised (through using channels & threads) and for facilitating quick responses. However, there were a number of challenges which need to be addressed before Woodcraft uses Discord again. Some team members found it difficult to use and there was a need for better instructions around how to use it & what the different areas of it were for which was highlighted during the evaluation. It was also sometimes felt that the information was scattered throughout it - making it hard to track down a critical piece of information.

It was generally felt that having a category per team, with a few communal categories worked well. Each category had a number of channels, which teams could edit and manage as they so chose. It was suggested that precisely what channels were made available to teams should be explored further as for some users the number of channels available to them was overwhelming. Again, users felt the need for better education around the use of the platform.

When new people were added to the server, they landed in a channel which required them to send a message containing their name and role on camp. This was used to assign the team members to the right places within the server. The Coordinator managed administration for the server, with another volunteer also having Administrative access should it be required.

A bot (carl-bot) was used to provide some additional functionality, such as auto assigning roles and reaction roles. It was suggested to look into a bot which can also send an email to a mailing list when a message is posted in an announcements channel. This is due

to the fact that people would miss critical announcements as a result of not having their notifications configured correctly.

### **26.2.2 Inter-Team Communications**

In the lead-up to camp itself, some teams needed to contact other teams for a variety of reasons. This proved more challenging to teams than it should have. Through the Discord server, team members were able to identify members of the team to contact - however they weren't always sure who from a team to contact. A suggestion was made to have a who's who document linked from the Discord server identifying who to contact about different things.

It was also suggested that core team members should be given access to other team's general conversation channels, on Discord, to improve communication between teams.

Once team members were able to gain contact with the right person - the inter-team communication experience was positive, as you would hope within Woodcraft volunteers!

### **26.2.3 Other Communication Methods**

Some teams found it easier to communicate using other platforms such as Email & WhatsApp. They used these other platforms as they would be their platform of choice or to avoid using crowded Discord channels.

All staff members were formally communicated with through their Woodcraft Folk email addresses. Many staff members engaged in the Discord server where they were given access to everything so they could communicate with teams there. For future camps, it would be suggested to do this in the same way, as having staff members accessible over an instant messaging platform works well. However, guidance should be given to volunteers on appropriate communications to staff as to not overburden them.

## **26.3 Google Workspace Use**

As Woodcraft Folk utilises the Google Workspace as its cloud based productivity suite and email solution, it made sense for us to also utilise it. As part of the domain registration in Autumn 2022, the domain was re-configured as part of the Woodcraft Folk Google Workspace.

### **26.3.1 Google Drive Folder**

A folder for Venturer Camp 2023 was created within the Events shared drive. All team members were given access to this folder and instructed to store all their files in this folder. They were also instructed not to store secure files or files with sensitive content in this folder.

Feedback regarding the use of the shared folder was mixed, some members of the team found it efficient while others had difficulties in locating files due to folder naming and save-location issues. Members of the team would've been appreciative of a clearer folder structure and a more user-friendly approach.

A sub-folder was created for each team, as well as supporting events. This also applied for teams where there weren't people taking on those roles which may have led to the

confusion.

With the Venturer Camp folder existing within the Events shared drive, this meant that lots of people had access to the Venturer Camp folder just by having access to the Events drive, which had been assigned for a previous event. This is a potential GDPR risk, especially with no volunteers receiving adequate Data Protection training. Due to this, it would not be recommended to follow this file saving approach in the future; with the recommendation being that each individual event gets its own Shared Drive created. After the event has concluded, the files can be moved to the main Events shared drive, for archival purposes.

### **26.3.2 Email Addresses**

As already discussed, we made use of the Woodcraft Folk Google Workspace, which included access to Gmail. We decided to use an individual email address system, rather than sharing passwords. This involved each member of the core volunteer team having their own personal @venturercamp.org.uk email address, with these being assigned delegate access to the shared team inboxes (for example, info@venturercamp.org.uk). As people understood how the system worked, they got the hang of it. However, it took members of the team some time to appreciate how the system works.

With the way Google manages delegate access to inboxes, you are unable to add this as an account on a mobile device without knowing the password, for this reason - it would be recommended to further explore how to do email addresses. Perhaps rather than a single individual holding all the passwords for all the accounts and dealing with all the delegation, it would be useful for a member of each team to know the password but be expected to use delegate access for the most part.

# 27 | On Camp Working

## 27.1 Volunteer Support

Volunteer Support came in the form of the Positive Energy Bubble (PEB). PEB was located in the Camp Koodoo (adjacent to pitch 1a at the far-western end of the site) Marquee. This raised a number of concerns due to its location, being a 5 to 10 minute walk from the central area, and its size (a large marquee). Some volunteers were unable to utilise PEB due to the distance to get there and the requirement to climb steps to enter the marquee.

It was suggested that PEB should be centrally located, with the potential of it being used as a social space for adult volunteers in the evening. Volunteers also requested clearer communications about PEB's purpose and goals, which would enhance its effectiveness.

Volunteer Support would also have benefitted from additional capacity. There was one main leader of Volunteer Support who also had brought young people with them. They were supported by a number of other volunteers who ran small workshops. The lead Volunteer Support volunteer remarked that the trek from their Village (Elysium, pitch 9) to the PEB tent proved the most useful part of their day as they could stop and talk to people.

### 27.1.1 Support From The Coordinator

The overall level of support from the coordinator was varied, with some teams feeling well-supported while others had limited engagement. Teams suggested that a consistent and proactive approach to support is necessary.

The Coordinator & Events Assistant had hoped to split the teams between them, being a point of contact for the teams questions, concerns or ranting. However, due to the amount of additional work the Coordinator & Events Assistant absorbed, they were unable to do this. Unfortunately, there was little capacity to support teams.

## 27.2 Time Off

A major focus for Venturer Camp 2023 was to ensure that all volunteers, whether they be a group leader or the coordinator, got some time off. This goal was built from feedback from Common Ground where volunteers didn't find that they had any downtime, leading to a large amount of burnout and exhaustion at the end of the camp. While we didn't get it right, as we still had a situation where the majority of a single team had to walk away for an afternoon on the same day, we definitely did better.

Many of the central volunteers managed to take some time off, with the majority opting for a day off. This took some planning and in some cases - drafting in of additional resources to plug gaps. However, the collective feedback indicates that having dedicated days off is essential for volunteer's wellbeing. Days off should be planned in advance of camp, not decided ad hoc, to ensure that adequate cover can be planned. It may be beneficial for teams to over-recruit volunteers to ensure that they can all take a day off without over-burdening others in the team.

Many volunteers found that socialising in the evening was a good way to relax. Some volunteers went off-site to the local village, Symonds Yat, before returning to site and looking for somewhere to socialise. When planning the camp, it hadn't been taken into consideration about the lack of spaces where volunteers could socialise. This lead to a number of instances where we had to ask Volunteers to move on and find somewhere else as they were disturbing sleeping Venturers. For future events, where there is not an obvious volunteer socialisation space, one needs to be provided. This may be the main marquee after the evening programme has concluded, or it may be the Volunteer Support space.

## 27.3 Feeding The Central Team

Due to incidents at previous large Woodcraft Folk camps where central team members not camping as part of the Central Village didn't get food saved for them at meal times, we were very keen to improve on this. This was especially the case, given that we were not having a Central Village and having all the central team members camping in standard villages.

As part of the village handbook, KPs were given a list of people who needed food to be held back for them. This list was compiled by the Coordinator, ensuring that only the essential people were on this list as we recognised the large ask on KPs. Broadly speaking, the KPs were happy to oblige with this, understanding the need for it.

For future events - consideration should be given to those with allergies and how this is handled in relation to saving food. We had an unfortunate incident where a village had not saved food for one member of the core team, who had an allergic reaction as a result of cross contamination in the kitchen.

A number of members of the central team found that they needed more snacks provided. There were a few teams who had access to snacks, however there were teams who did not.

## 27.4 Meetings

Due to a shortage of time and capacity on site to organise a meeting, there was not a team meeting. Nearly all teams commented that having something like this would have been really nice and a good way to share experiences and increase team unity. It would have also been a time where teams could check in with each other, to ensure they all had enough capacity to get through camp.

## 27.5 Shopping Trips

Many teams had to take numerous trips off site to purchase additional resources. Some of these trips are unavoidable due to difficulties with deliveries, such as food deliveries, however some would've been avoidable with some slightly better planning. We tried to order as much as possible from online suppliers during camp, however due to Biblins being so isolated, deliveries took a long time to arrive.

Throughout the camp, there were a number of ideas raised which could've saved the number of individual trips off site, however none of these came through. The primary idea which would be great to see replicated in the future, is a single person going off site to do all the shopping.

## 28 | Staff Support

Woodcraft Folk's Events Assistant was able to devote the majority of her 14 weekly hours to Venturer Camp from November 2022 until December 2023. This time was used to book major infrastructure, do some of the event administration, communications and support the Production and Programme teams, among other things. This role is managed by the Programme Manager, who also contributed some time in the last few months leading up to the event and on site.

The CEO of Woodcraft Folk put lots of time into this event from its conception, supporting the Coordinator and the programme team, leading on risk management and safeguarding both in the run up and on site, as well as helping with other things.

On site the Events Assistant, Programme Manager and CEO took on coordinator shifts along with the Coordinator and occasionally other volunteers. The CEO took on the majority of the safeguarding shifts with support from one volunteer and also the Head of Memberships & Programmes (and Woodcraft's Designated Safeguarding Lead) at the very end of camp. With more than one volunteer coordinator and a volunteer safeguarding officer this level of support on site would not be needed.

From early May until the camp, the membership team supported us by doing membership and DBS checks, chasing those without them and supporting these people to sort it. This saved the camp team a lot of time compared to Common Ground when the Camp Assistant (staff administrator job role) did much of this.

The Head of Resources helped us set up accounts with food suppliers, and the finance team helped us pay invoices and expense individuals. Woodcraft's Fundraiser (Individual & Legacy Giving) raised £6000 from the Christmas Challenge and this enabled us to offer an access fund to people who couldn't afford the full camp fee.

This camp had a lot more staff support than Venturer Camps have done in the past, with the creation of the new Events Assistant role and also the accelerated timeline for planning the camp meaning the team needed more support. It's also thought that since the pandemic volunteering attitudes, knowledge and experience have changed quite a lot, making it harder to recruit people. Some level of staff support is essential, with the Events Assistant role aiding continuity of knowledge between events and support from the experts on finance, membership and safeguarding. Hopefully future camps will not need this level of support, with a longer planning timeline and more young people moving into volunteer roles with experience developed from this camp, Common Ground and Camp 100.

## 29 | Concordia

Woodcraft Folk worked with the company Concordia to recruit a team of international volunteers. This was the first time that Woodcraft has worked with Concordia and as such there were a number of teething difficulties.

A representative from Concordia visited the site in March 2023 to conduct a Health & Safety audit. As part of this, the decision was made that the Burrow would act as a base for the Concordia team. This decision was not effectively communicated to the team at the time as until this point, it had been vaguely agreed that the core team would have access to the burrow as a place to sleep with better beds and a small kitchenette which the team could use to reheat food should they require this.

Concordia managed the recruitment of volunteers. While this saved time for the Venturer Camp team, it proved challenging to get this information out of Concordia. Specifically, their dietary requirements and any access needs were not communicated until after the standard booking deadline and one volunteer's information not being shared until days before the first members of the team were on site. In the end, we had nine volunteers, who all arrived in the country and were helpful with some tasks they were assigned.

In the lead up to the event, Woodcraft Folk's Programme Manager made repeated attempts to gain direct contact with the volunteers themselves however Concordia were reluctant to divulge the volunteers phone numbers. Ultimately, however, the Programme Manager was successful in gaining contact with the team. This allowed limited information to be shared with the volunteers. Unfortunately, this information came too late for many of the volunteers who had already packed and were unable to bring suitable clothing or prepare for their time at Venturer Camp. This led to a decreased spirit amongst the team and a general reluctance to do things.

Due to the lack of communication with the volunteer team in advance of the camp, no expectations were able to be set from Woodcrafts side. This led to a very harsh reality on the first night where we had to put the team up in tents rather than the burrow. Whilst the team did have suitable tents and sleeping mats provided from Biblins and the room of strategic requirement, a number of them did not bring suitable clothing for that night. The volunteer team also had the expectation that they would have more time off during the event. This led to lots of disappointment when they couldn't go off site to a Pub as they were needed to support other activities on site.

On-Site the two Centres ESC Volunteers were tasked with supporting the engagement of the Concordia volunteers. The two volunteers had training sessions with the Concordia staff team as well as the WCF Programmes Manager. Unfortunately, on site, the two ESC volunteers were not able to support the Concordia volunteers effectively which further led to low spirits within the international volunteers.

During Working Week, camp itself and takedown, the Concordia volunteers needed to be told exactly what to do and when. As this was their first experience of Woodcraft Folk and the way we camp, and for many of them - their first experience in a camp setting, they were unable to take initiative or move on to another task once what they were doing had been completed. This resulted in some confusion for them and frustration for the Woodcraft volunteers & staff when the Concordia team wouldn't show up or they would

not engage with changed plans, which unfortunately happened numerous times.

Due to an administrative error when reviewing the draft contract from Concordia within Woodcraft Folk, the Concordia volunteers were scheduled to arrive on Tuesday 1 August and depart on Monday 21 August. This error led to us having to put them in tents the first night they were on site. Luckily, we were able to provide this equipment for them, however the tents were not treated particularly well. Many of the doors were left open during the days following their use, when it rained heavily, hence we couldn't take them down. When the tents were finally taken down, they were thrown in a heap rather than being packed back into their bags. These actions resulted in the exhausted Woodcraft volunteer takedown team needing to do extra work to clear up after the Concordia team. The date the Concordia team was booked to depart was later than that originally advertised to the Coordination team of the camp. This resulted in some confusion amongst both the Woodcraft Volunteers and Concordia team. Ultimately, all the members of the Concordia team paid to change their flights / booked new flights to depart on either the 16 or 17 August.

The volunteers showed they had the independence to navigate trips to shops and pubs (neither of which are particularly close to site), but did not apply this to tasks on site and often did these things when they were meant to be on shift either at the time or early the next morning when they often didn't show up because they were still asleep.

We were very clear in all our communications about the camp (including the info packs we sent Concordia) that there would not be much signal or Wifi on site. However Concordia failed to pass this info on, and as a consequence we felt we had to share the wifi with the volunteers so they could keep in touch with friends and family. This meant they were often hanging around the cabin to use the wifi, making it slow for people needing it to make the camp happen/run the site, and bothering other volunteers/staff for the password when we had to change it so the staff on site could do their jobs.

The volunteers were very helpful when it came to putting up lots of 5x10m marquees in working week, and also some of them supported other jobs really well e.g helping the shuttle bus volunteers on arrivals and departures days, some stewarding shifts etc. However overall, it was more work for us to manage them and give them things to do, plus paying for their food and board, than the little work they did on site. This is partly due to lack of planning and understanding on our part, and partly due to Concordia not delivering what they said they would in terms of giving us and the participants the information we needed.

It would not be recommended to work with Concordia again for the reasons outlined above. Should Woodcraft Folk decide to work with them again, written assurances should need to be provided to the Camp Coordinator / Project Manager that the issues outlined above will be addressed and resolved to the satisfaction of Woodcraft Folk

# 30 | Wider Volunteer Team Evaluation

All volunteers at Venturer Camp 2023 were invited to give feedback through a Google Form, which was circulated to them after camp concluded. For some questions, the form asked volunteers to rate their experiences out of 10. This chapter will analyse that data only - as the dataset is unique with its reach.

## 30.1 Preparation and Support

Volunteers generally felt adequately prepared ahead of camp, with an average rating of 7.3. However, three individuals expressed lower levels of preparedness, spanning different roles. Notably, the virtual meet your village evening received positive feedback, indicating its effectiveness in strengthening relations within villages and exciting people for the event. Those who felt less prepared also reported feeling less supported, suggesting a correlation between perceived support and preparedness.

## 30.2 Communication Before Camp

Communication from and with the central team received an average rating of 7.9. However, there were discrepancies, with two respondents expressing dissatisfaction, particularly regarding clarity on early bird rewards and reliance on social media for updates. The delayed initiation of stewarding recruitment might have contributed to lower satisfaction among some respondents.

## 30.3 Role Performance

Overall, respondents felt they met their role's aims well, with an average rating of 8.4. Notably, no respondent rated their performance lower than a 6. However, a suggestion arose that the camp-wide designated safeguarding leads should not both be in the same village.

## 30.4 Support During Role During Camp

Despite the generally positive performance ratings, a few individuals felt unsupported in meeting their role's aims, resulting in an average rating of 8.2. Additional support from the central team and clearer boundaries on role responsibilities were highlighted as areas for improvement.

## 30.5 Communication During Camp

Communication on camp received a slightly lower average rating of 7.4, with concerns raised by both leaders and central volunteers. While some perceived communication issues, others, like a village coordinator, found it effective. This suggests a need for consistent and reliable communication channels to ensure smooth operations.

## 30.6 Personal Enjoyment

The camp garnered a high enjoyment rating of 8.1, indicating a fulfilling experience for most volunteers. However, feedback highlighted areas for improvement, such as clearer information on village safeguarding leads, better support for MEST-UP, and better off-duty spaces for volunteers.

## 30.7 Willingness for Future Roles

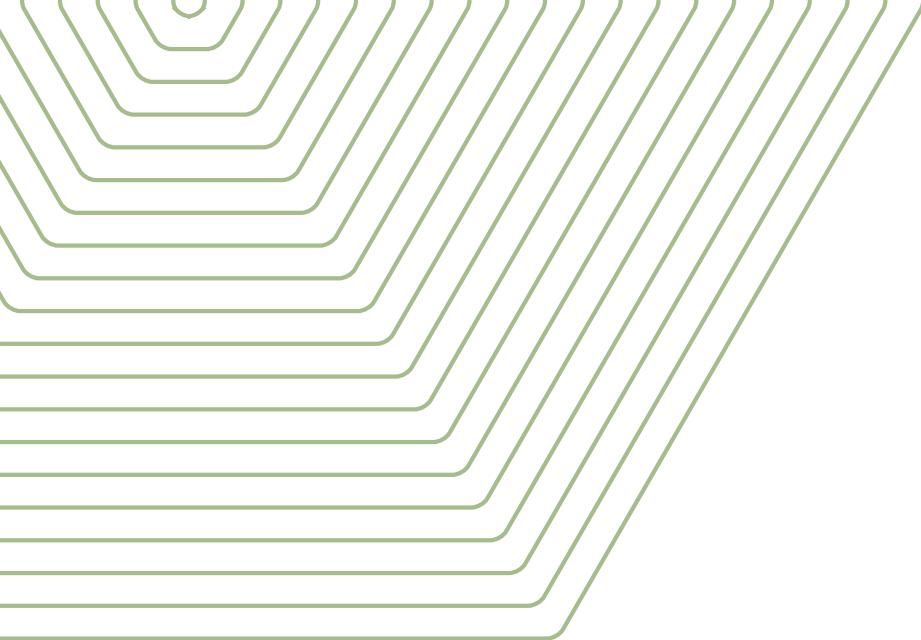
While the majority expressed willingness to undertake their roles in future camps, some respondents, particularly Village KPs and programme volunteers, expressed reservations. Suggestions for improvement included simplified menus, more socializing opportunities for KPs, and increased volunteer numbers across teams.

## 30.8 Suggestions for Improvement

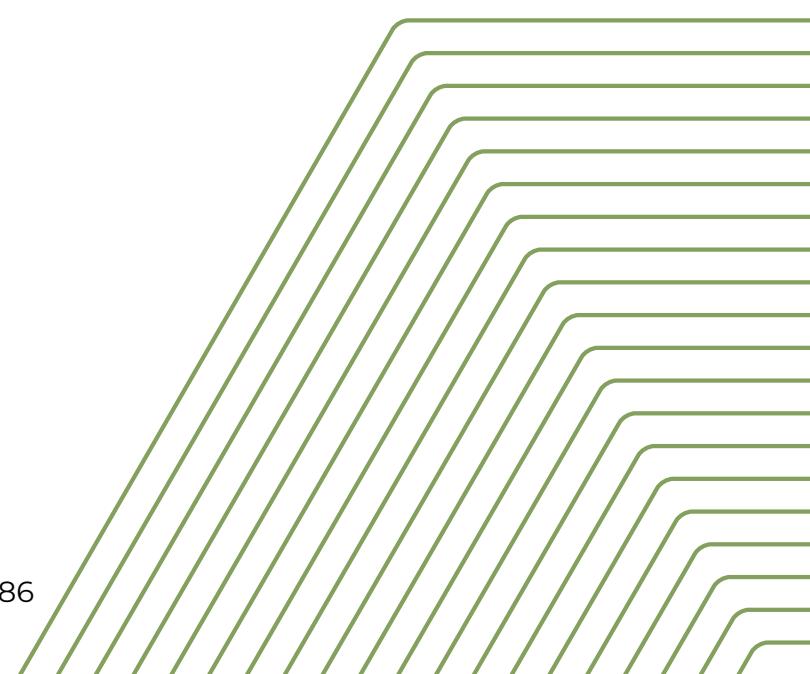
Participants provided valuable insights for enhancing future camps, including streamlining signing-out protocols, having a proper opening ceremony, prioritizing sustainability, and incorporating nightly entertainment activities. Additionally, suggestions for clearer communication and designated evening programme MC's leaders were noted.

## 30.9 Highlights and Memories

Memorable aspects of the camp included the camaraderie and friendships forged, exciting adventure activities, the atmosphere of the merry moot, and appreciation for the food team's efforts. Participation in the central team was also highlighted as a meaningful experience.



## **Team Evaluations**



**Part VII**

# 31 | Production & Site Services

## 31.1 Team Structure

The Site Services and Production team was composed of Bx Muller, Imke Hoffmann, Will Tuffrey, Alex Jones, Keith Turner and Bob Todd with lots of support from Millie Burgh, Woodcraft Folk Events Assistant. Support was also given by a number of individuals at camp, including Huw Hickman.

This sized team worked well for a Venturer Camp sized event. There were a number of volunteers who were unable to commit much before camp, however they took on considerable sized roles at camp.

### 31.1.1 Roles Within The Team

Bx, Imke and Millie led on Site Services & Production in the run up to camp; while Keith and Bob focused on their specialities, stage and electricity respectively. Millie focused on booking infrastructure, including the marquee and porta-loos as well as procurement of some supplies from suppliers in advance of camp.

The role of sorting Village Kit initially lay with Millie, was then passed to Thomas (Camp Co-ordinator) and finally to Bx. This caused some confusion between team members about who was responsible for what, especially as camp got closer and we were working out how to divide up the Village's kit.

On site during the camp, Huw, Will, Alex and Imke worked together on the Site Services. Huw, Will and Alex led on gas while Imke focused on Camp Hygiene - primarily toilets and showers.

During camp, Mike, Rick and Alex (Biblins Staff Team) also provided support with the site's infrastructure. This was extremely helpful as they know much more about the site than any of the Venturer Camp team!

### 31.1.2 Evaluation of Team Structure

The team felt that there was a lot of work, especially before the camp. This is something that the team wasn't prepared for however with support from the Camp Coordinator and Woodcraft Folk Events Assistant, they made work. Will and Alex felt they had to adapt their roles from what they were expecting it to be to what it actually became on site.

The team felt that not having a leader was a disadvantage as there wasn't a single person having oversight of all aspects of Site Services and Production. They recommended that this person should have a comprehensive knowledge of camp operations. The team also felt that there was a need for a clear distinction between "people who know" and "people who do", as this would enable younger people to be upskilled in Site Services & Production roles, without having to agree to coordinate the whole thing!

On site, Bx took on an advisory role rather than boots on the ground with the Site Services team role due to leadership commitments with her local group. This caused a lack of con-

tinuity between the pre-camp planning and the on-site operations.

The team felt that the Central Clan worked very well and that it is something which should be repeated at future events. Central Clan was a daily working party with no particular purpose advertised. This meant it could take on whatever tasks were needed on that particular day, most commonly - cleaning the toilets which were not cleaned by Biblin's cleaner.

## 31.2 Supporting Events

### 31.2.1 Pre-Camp

The team had mixed experiences with their online pre-camp session. Most didn't attend their session which left the person leading it to have a stressful experience. It's suggested that alternative volunteers should be found to facilitate sessions with team leaders there to answer questions and provide information.

A very small number of the team attended the On-Site Pre-Camp, with all team members commenting that it would have been useful for the entire team to attend. Bob found it helpful to meet the team in person and work out the site layout, something which was fundamental to the success of the Camp Radio.

### 31.2.2 Working Week

Bob and Keith both attended working week, no one else from the team was able to make it. It was felt that having some of the Site Services team there would have been beneficial.

### 31.2.3 Takedown

Members of the team stayed during takedown for as long as they were required for. This worked out to be only a single day, due to their excellent preparations during camp for takedown. As already discussed in the Takedown section earlier in this report, it would have been useful to have additional help, especially with the physical side of this role.

## 31.3 On-Camp Operations

### 31.3.1 Daily Structure

On-Camp, the team's day would often involve attending their village's circle, managing the central clan then addressing issues as they arise. For the gas team, they were busy around meal times when KPs ran out of gas.

### 31.3.2 Support

Team members were able to take time off during the day, and all members were able to take a day off due to the team's size. The team felt well-supported by the coordinator and Volunteer Support, despite the fact that the team members weren't all aware of PEB. It was suggested that better communication around the purpose of PEB would benefit future events.

## 31.4 Site Services & Production Specific Insights

The team expressed the need for better preparation & communications. Keith and Bob enjoyed the experience and appreciated the support. For all team members, it was recommended to have a bike as the site is pretty expansive and the role covers the whole of the site!

### 31.4.1 Technical & Stage Services

Keith provided all the technical equipment from his personal stores. We hired a 7x3.5m Steel Deck stage from Stage Lighting Services at 1m high. It was found that the stage was too high for the height of the marquee we had, as the performers couldn't stand up all the way at the far edges. A 0.6m or 0.7m high stage would have sufficed.

Keith found it worked well to train up a couple of Venturers on DJing, sound and lighting control throughout the week. On the last night - they were left to do it and they did an excellent job!

Keith appreciated the height of the stage as he was able to store the majority of bulky equipment under it or within a small store tent he pitched at the rear of the main marquee. Small, valuable equipment (including microphones and laptops) were stored in his car.

### 31.4.2 Signs

A task completed during Working Week was creating all the signs for centres and central points of interest. This task was completed by the Concordia Volunteer team using thin white-coated plywood and marker pens. Millie oversaw this process to ensure the right signs were being produced.

In advance of camp, signs for priority seating and hazard warning signs for gas storage locations were digitally designed then printed and laminated. A priority seat was provided in each centre as well as at strategic points along the path. These were appreciated and well used. The chairs which were used had stiff upper backs.

### 31.4.3 Toilets

Venturer Camp used all the toilets on the site, including the Western and Eastern Toilet Blocks and the Bunkhouse Toilet Block. 6 additional porta-loos were also hired, providing additional toilet capacity in the central area and at the far-eastern end of the site adjacent to Elysium Village. This worked very well, with enough capacity for all campers.

Codes for the toilets were distributed on the first day to villages with the instruction that villages should give their members the codes to their closest toilet block to them. This worked well. The porta-loos were padlocked shut during Working Week as they were dropped off a few days before camp started and we wanted to prevent members of the public using them. This worked, however it would help to have the padlocks on site before the porta-loos arrived as we had to go and buy them. Signs were posted on the porta-loos instructing members of the public not to use them and where they could find a public toilet on site.

The Eastern and Western toilet block was cleaned by the Biblin's cleaner, who was contracted for 6 days a week during the camp as it was peak summer season. This had mixed

reviews. The Site Services Team were pleased that they didn't have to clean the toilets however for the cleaner's safety & ease, the entire block is closed while they are working. This caused issues as Venturers disregarded the signs and used the toilet blocks while the cleaner was working. The cleaner reported these issues to the Coordinator and a message got out to villages the following morning which prevented further issues surrounding this. Knowing about the block closure in the future would allow better communication around this.

One other incident of note within the Toilet Blocks was a Gender Neutral Protest. Due to an administrative oversight, we had not de-gendered any of the main toilet blocks, leaving the only truly Gender Neutral facilities as the Porta-Loos and the Western Toilet Block. Some young people decided to protest against this at the Eastern Toilet block which caused some confusion, however it was dealt with. For future events, it would be recommended to de-gender more toilets as we did not create a truly inclusive and welcoming environment.

Toilet Paper was used at a rate of around 1.3 rolls per person per week. This is higher than what we had expected it to be. The Site Services team managed stock levels well and ensured that a shopping trip was done to a local cash & carry to purchase more when required, before we ran out. Enough toilet paper was left at the end of the event to provide for Takedown and leave some at Biblins.

#### **31.4.4 Showers**

The showers on site were situated within Biblin's East and West toilet blocks. These worked fine, with little-to-no maintenance required from the Site Services team. Participants found that the facilities weren't the best, however they're perfectly good showers which is all you need!

It was found that when run for a long time, they lightly flood the toilet block floors. There's nothing we could have done about this as by design that's what they do. It's worth the Site Services team being on hand to mop out if they get too wet however.

We didn't have any shower related incidents like we have had at previous events, which the Site Services team appreciated.

#### **31.4.5 Central Provision of Consumables**

The Site Services team were responsible for provisioning some catering consumables for each village. This was a limited amount of washing up liquid and other cleaning supplies. There was confusion over whether we should be doing this or not, given we were providing kitchen stuff however consumables are a grey area. Attendees have requested clearer communication around this for future events.

#### **31.4.6 Central Clan**

The Site Services & Production team ran Central Clan each day, which was a working party that could be assigned to any needed task. The team ran it as they would meet the clans from the 5 villages and split them into smaller groups, giving them tasks to get on with. This worked well and motivated villages to keep the toilets near them clean.

It was commented that villages would appreciate knowledge of activities such as this further in advance so that it can be factored into rotas etc.

### 31.4.7 Waste & Recycling

With Biblins being an already established camp-site, the waste & recycling situation is already very well established. Additional collections were organised to take place during Venturer Camp which managed the amount of waste very well. The only time that the bins were badly overflowing was during Takedown, which is expected. A shuffle of bin bags completed by the site team rectified this very quickly.

Biblins has two types of bins: mixed recycling and general waste. This is un-ideal for obvious reasons however it was not feasible for us to do anything about it at this event. For future events, it may have been worth exploring possibilities of local farmers who may have been able to take food waste or paying for a van to take glass to a Local Authority Waste Centre.

In addition to the additional empties during camp, it would be helpful in the future to have an empty on the morning of arrivals day. From the groups camping before Venturer Camp began, some of the bins were already quite full which led to a slight challenge.

The Central Clan tasks also included litter picks. The Site Services team will need a stock of litter pickers & PPE for this, something we were unable to source. Villages also need clear instructions that they need to leave their pitch in an acceptable condition as one village failed to do so, they may also benefit from support in planning their groups exit. The village who left their pitch in a mess had a large proportion of their campers who had to leave very early in the morning, leaving a small team left to pack up everything and get it in the van; which was an impossible task.

### 31.4.8 Central Tent

Getting a Main Marquee for Venturer Camp proved quite difficult. Two bookings were cancelled before we found a local company (County Marquees, based out of Chepstow) who were able to supply us with a SIZE at short notice. Their service was excellent and they were of great value.

The remainder of the Central tents were sourced from stores at Biblins itself. Four centres were situated within 5x10m marquees from Common Ground, with two more used for Stewards HQ / Info Point and for the Site Services tent. The Media Centre used the West Coventry Kitchen Tent, from the Common Ground store room. The Radio Station, Cinema Tent and Safe Space tent were all sourced from the basement of the Bunkhouse.

The main food depot proved a large challenge to source as we needed a substantially sized tent which we could logically transport to and from Biblins. We explored a number of possibilities before settling on using New Barnet's main marquee. This was supported by a small store tent (used for Fridges & Cool boxes) and the 'Sea Change' Marquee from the Bunkhouse Basement Stores.

### 31.4.9 Village Equipment

During the idea conceptualisation stages of the project, it was decided that the central team would organise village equipment themselves, rather than expecting each village to be self-sufficient. The reason for this was to simplify the administration each village would need to do, with regards to working out equipment and to hopefully reduce the amount of equipment needed to travel around the country.

There was lots of back and forth between districts and the central team, and unfortunately due to different people in communications at different times - the goalposts for districts provided kit changed. The initial conversations were had in late 2022, then with no communication until early summer 2023. This caused some districts to think that we no longer needed their kit, and as such volunteers were no longer available to support the transport of it.

In the end, we used the following:

- Oxford provided a village's marquee, 2 kitchen tents and a full kitchen's worth of equipment. A van was hired and used to transport the equipment to and from site and the van stayed on site for the duration of Venturer Camp with the driver & van available should it be required.
- New Barnet provided a kitchen's worth of equipment alongside their marquee which was used for the Food Depot and an events shelter. They also provided a large number of tables & benches which were distributed throughout the site. A 2-van convoy was used to get the equipment to site during Working Week; and the kitchen equipment was returned after camp with the large marquee being returned on the night of Friday 11 August.
- Heightate & Holloway provided a marquee and some tables and benches. This arrived before Venturer Camp for their District camp and the smaller items were stored in the Bunkhouse Kitchen. It was all transported back to Heighgate & Holloway during Takedown.
- Lewisham & Greenwich provided a full village's worth of equipment. They were camping on Pitches 6 & 7 for their district camp the week before camp, which meant their pitch allocation for their village was planned carefully to ensure they didn't have to move everything. Their equipment was transported via their van, arriving for their district camp and leaving on Sunday 13 August, after their van had been used for Ealing's kit the day before.
- Hackney provided a full village's worth of equipment (minus marquee). They were camping on Pitch 6 & 7 the week before Lewisham & Greenwich were. They stored their equipment (minus Marquee, see below) in a store tent on the boundary of Pitches 7 & 8, as they would be on pitch 8 for Venturer Camp. This worked well, however some additional administration was required to ensure this worked!
- Stroud provided their large marquee to Hackney to use for their District Camp and then for a village at Venturer Camp. This was erected on Pitch 7 and left up for the duration of Hackney and Lewisham & Greenwich district camp then for Venturer Camp. This meant that the Lewisham & Greenwich marquee was used in Dinas Affaraon due to its ability to be moved where as the Stroud marquee stayed in Camelot. The marquee was transported via Hackney's van, arriving for Hackney's district camp and leaving on Saturday 12 August.
- Ealing provided a full village's worth of equipment. Adam Senior drove Tom Brook's van to Ealing on Friday 4 August before camp to collect the equipment. At the end of camp, it was returned to Ealing on Saturday 12 August by Tom Brooks in his van.

Despite all these different districts providing equipment, some was still required from Biblins' stores and some was traded between districts for the duration of camp.

Overall, logistics headaches aside - this system worked. The core budget included funds to reimburse districts for van hire for use of their equipment which worked well. There were no major breakages of equipment or damages. Groups coming to Venturer Camp



Figure 31.1: Elysium loading their van at the end of camp (RS)

were grateful that equipment was sourced for them. Despite some of the challenges in solving the equipment logistics, it would be recommended to repeat this process for future Venturer Camps; larger events would need more consideration as to the feasibility of it.

The component of providing equipment which caused a major logistical problem was tables and benches for Villages. When discussing with districts what they could and couldn't provide, and what was within legal weight limits for a Luton van, we had omitted to discuss tables and benches. When we went back to districts in Summer 2023, it turned out that the districts were not able to provide as many tables and benches as we had hoped they could. This ended up with New Barnet providing tables and benches for almost the entire central area and two villages. This part was definitely too much of a headache for the sized team we had and we should have hired the required equipment as tables and benches don't cost excessive amounts to hire.

### **31.4.10 Electricity**

We had to build the support framework for the PV panels, then wire up the 24 volt battery / inverter system. Paul Fleming brought the Leicester solar trailer too, which was integrated into the system, and provided the Power Station tent. All together, we had about 3.7kWp of solar input, and about 15kWh of storage. Power was distributed at 230V 50Hz, with centre-tap earth.

Safety is obviously an important concern. The main hazards are electric shock, burns/fire, and trips. These were minimised by earth leakage (RCCBs) on all feeds, multiple safety earths, appropriate fusing and overcurrent trips, limiting access to the batteries and their connections, and by routing distribution cables away from walkways, in cable protectors or overhead. All mains voltage connectors/devices were well off the ground, or in water proof protection, in case of local flooding.

All the central area tents were provided with lighting, and around 200 metres of fairy lights were installed. These were mostly sourced from the stocks in the Common Ground room of the Bunkhouse.

The cinema was well used. It had a 250W projector, and a very efficient 100W power amp for sound, and showed 2 or 3 films per day.

The Radio Station uses very little power, but is quite time consuming to set up, with it's 3 battery powered micro transmitters needed to persuade the signal around the massive bend in the Biblins valley. It seemed to have a reasonable audience, but we don't have an accurate measure of that.

Bob was kept pretty busy during the camp keeping all this stuff working well, checking power consumption, and making additions / mending things where needed.

# 32 | Programme

## 32.1 Team Structure

The Programme team was comprised of Anya Sier and Nuala O'Rourke as the Programme Coordinators, with a lot of support from Millie Burgh, Woodcraft Folk Events Assistant. Millie did most of the work until May 2023 due to Anya and Nuala having other educational commitments. Nuala found out she was unable to attend camp and disengaged.

Millie took the lead on booking the evening programme performers, recruiting centre coordinators and volunteers as well as planning the adventurous activities with the Bib-lins' Activities Coordinator. She also worked out a structure for the programme and mini-themes. Anya took the lead on coordinating four centres (Activism, Arts, Mythology and MEST-UP) with the remaining (Radio, Media and Cinema) self-coordinating. Anya also worked with another volunteer to coordinate the Wide Game.

### 32.1.1 Evaluation of Team Structure & Support

While the team structure worked, it put a lot of pressure on a very small team to make Programme happen. Ideally, you need at least two people to coordinate the programme as their full time role, with these two continuing onto site to manage programme delivery. You should also have two coordinators for each centre.

The team found that there was a drop in capacity during Anya's exam period, which whilst expected, hadn't been planned for causing issues. They should have worked out what could have been done earlier and drafted in additional support.

There was a lot that needed to be done in the final few months, which Anya managed, with some limited support from Millie who was also juggling other tasks for the camp. This was Anya's first time in a central role like this, and she was unsure who to reach out to. Support increased as camp approached, however earlier guidance would've been appreciated. Anya suggested that having an 'understudy' would be a good idea, as it would allow a Venturer or DF to be trained up and feel more confident doing this role.

## 32.2 Supporting Events

### 32.2.1 Pre-Camp

Only 1 person made it to the Programme Online Pre-Camp session. They found that the Q&A element was the most useful part of it. It was suggested that the session could be targeted more towards Venturers, given that it was programme based and they would be encouraged to engage with it.

No one from the Programme team was able to make it to On-Site Pre-Camp. It was also noted that the aims of the weekend hadn't been made clear and that may have improved attendance.

## 32.2.2 Working Week

Anya was able to make it to working week which she found vital to the success of the role. She was able to divide up supplies, ensure the right tents were put up and sort furniture for centres. She had planned to make a start on getting centres setup, however was unable to get very far due to running out of time. She noted that MEST-UP needs someone to attend Working Week, especially since they have to also set up the Safe Space. If the coordinator can't make it in the future, then another volunteer from the MEST-UP team should be sent.

## 32.3 On-Camp Operations

### 32.3.1 Daily Structure

Anya had a very busy time on camp, exasperated by the fact that she was working on her own in the role of Programme Coordinator. Her mornings involved preparing and circulating the day's programme. This calmed down towards the end of the camp, enabling her to have some time off. Afternoons involved overseeing the workshops to ensure they were full and making good progress, as well as ensuring that the Centre Coordinators were able to get a break and dinner. The evenings were filled with supervising the progress of evening activities, however this was a challenge as Anya also had leadership commitments within her own group.

### 32.3.2 Support

Anya managed to get time off here and there throughout the week and take a full day off. The programme team felt well supported by the Volunteer Support Team. The programme team also gained support from the coordinator, although this was lacking until the Programme Coordinator was close to breaking point. The Centre Coordinators provided a good and supportive team, however it felt like there was more support for the core team than the members of the wider team. Despite this, the Centre Coordinators did feel supported - with the programme coordinator taking the brunt of the stress. The centre coordinators suggested to make PEB more accessible and known to a wider audience.

## 32.4 Programming Specific Insights

### 32.4.1 Programme Issues On Camp

As would be expected, there were a number of issues with the Programme. The primary issue being related to permissions for Sex Education Workshops within the MEST-UP centre. We required every participant to have consent to be able to take part in SRE (Sex & Relationships Education) beyond the initial consent workshop which was a compulsory part of the camp programme. A number of campers didn't have this consent, and as such they could not be permitted to take part in MEST-UP workshops around Sex & Relationships. For future events, the Safeguarding team needs to support in advance of the event with working out what content we can deliver and where the boundaries should be. MEST-UP need to be involved in the conversation, to ensure that the boundaries are realistic for them to be able to deliver to.

Challenges were also experienced with external facilitators' activities' due to the lack of promotion and engagement. A number of facilitators were brought onto site to run sessions which had very low engagement. For future events - it's recommended to advertise

these sessions more through the news & providing printed programmes. It would also be worth running consultation with Venturers to understand what types of workshops they want to see from external organisations.

The concept of Mini-Themes, where a few days would have a sub-theme relating to Mythology, also didn't work very well. This could be due to centres not implementing this into their programme, perhaps due to not being told far enough in advance, but it could have also been due to lack of advertising of the Mini-Themes. It would have helped to have a Programme Guide which explained this in more detail than what we released.

### **32.4.2 Miscellaneous Insights**

There were additional challenges with using Biblins as a site for Venturer Camp, including the site not being truly accessible and the lack of signal across the site. This was especially a challenge while attempting to coordinate with External Organisations or Bands.

It helps for the programme team to have bikes available, so they can get between the different bits of the site easier & quicker. It also felt useful to have the centre coordinators and programme coordinator in the same village, as this allowed for easy communication.

For future events, the Programme Coordinator suggests not to get too stressed about issues arising throughout the camp, promoting externally facilitated sessions and to make announcements after the news about that evening's programme & the big sessions on the subsequent days.

The Cinema Tent required a Umbrella License from the Motion Pictures Licencing Company Limited. This is valid for one year for the organisation, and costs approximately £150. This license is required to be able to display films and other media live.

### **32.4.3 Daytime Programme**

The centres which operated in the daytime were as follows:

- Activism - Coordinated by Cherry Tucker
- Mythology - Coordinated by Tom Egan-Payne, Dermot O'Rourke and Colm Andrews
- Arts - Coordinated by Carmen Mallinson-Pocock
- MEST-UP - Coordinated by Isla Douglas with the DF MEST-UP Team
- Media - Coordinated by Gus Canham
- Radio - Coordinated by Tyler Eckersall
- Cinema - Coordinated by Ash Taylor

The layout generally worked well. The programme coordinator said it was weird having the footpath at the back of the central area as it made it a bit difficult to get people in without a clear 'through path' and lots of public on the footpath.

Within the central area it was lovely but very close to the footpath. It's perhaps not the best to have radio and cinema next to each other due to noise. Something that isn't clear on the map is that MEST-UP had a workshop/drop in tent and a separate tent as a safe space.



Figure 32.1: Final battle at the end of the Wide Game (TB)

### 32.4.3.1 Equipment

It worked well doing a bulk order for stationary from YPO and asking centre coordinators what they needed to add to this. It also worked well to allocate each centre the size / kind of tent, the number of tables and chairs and the amount of power that we thought they needed and tell them rather than ask them what they wanted as often it's a lot of work negotiating this with what equipment / power we have available. There didn't seem to be any complaints about this. Centres got their own budget for anything else they needed e.g decoration, specific resources not available on YPO or expensing guest workshop facilitators but many didn't use much of this if any. Some centres requested floor coverings, in the form of tarps as they would be sitting on the floor. We were able to scavenge some for this, however it would be beneficial to source these further in advance in the future.

### 32.4.3.2 Adventurous Activities

Ahead of camp, the Events Assistant organised canoeing and climbing with Alex, the Activities Coordinator at Biblins. The idea was that every participant should get the chance to do at least one of these should they wish to. We booked for two morning sessions and one afternoon session of both canoeing and climbing, on the Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday of camp. This should have enabled 144 venturers to canoe, and 144 venturers to climb, which we predicted would be enough. The plan was that each village would get a day to offer their venturers these sessions and we would hand out a sign up sheet at the village coordinator meeting the morning before so they could plan who would do what. In the end the two smallest villages shared a day because bookings went up and we created a fifth village. We didn't want to run these sessions on the first full day as everyone needed to be at the consent workshop and we wanted to give everyone a chance to explore and get to know the centres and site. And we didn't want to run them on the Wednesday because we wanted everyone to be involved in the wide game. The bulk of the cost for this comes from hiring the canoes, and that makes it difficult to have more than 12 young people canoe at once. But Biblins are hoping to purchase some soon and this would make it a lot cheaper and therefore a lot easier to run as an activity.

The canoeing plan had to be changed at the start of camp because there was uncharacteristically high rainfall and as a consequence the river was flowing too fast to do static sessions. We worked with Mike to come up with the best way to still give as many venturers the chance to canoe as possible. The solution was to offer sessions where participants canoed down the river. This meant we could only offer one canoeing session in the morning rather than two, and we had to ask groups to help pick up / drop off young people where they would end or start the sessions in minibuses and cars they had on site. It was a struggle offering everyone an adventurous activity session with this revised plan, but in

the end due to the river slowing down and Mike offering his time we were able to offer an extra session on the Friday, so very few young people missed out.

In the future it may be worth planning for the worst in terms of weather and then we can offer more sessions if possible, to avoid the stress of last minute changes on both the central team and group leaders.

The Programme Coordinator wasn't really involved in any of the discussions around these activities, which made her feel a bit isolated. She was asked questions about them but didn't know what was going on.



Figure 32.2: Canoeing group preparing to launch (RS)

### 32.4.4 Evening Programme

The timescale of planning and budget for this camp made it difficult to get any big name performers in unfortunately. The Events Assistant used a spreadsheet provided by the Evening Programme Coordinator from Common Ground to ascertain some local performers worth contacting (luckily they lived in Bristol so most of the performers were based in the West Country). The Events Assistant also asked for input from Venturers on the socials. We knew we definitely wanted a Merry Moot one night which wouldn't require booking anyone. We also wanted a ceilidh one night so we looked into ceilidh bands from past events, but unfortunately these were all too busy or expensive so we went with someone the Head of Centres knew in Wales.

It was decided we should have an evening programme every other night as it is usually the case to have some chill nights, and we wanted a variety of music the two nights remaining. The Events Assistant contacted many performers but the majority never responded and a few were unavailable. Below are all the performers we booked / seriously considered, the ones that we had in the end in green.

In the spring we were worried about finances, so we decided to not book any more performers that cost money. We did a callout for budding DJs and a couple responded but no one really had time to sort this on camp so they weren't able to play until the last night. It would be worth calling on these two in future now they know the ropes though. As they are under age 18 as of releasing this report - please contact Venturer Camp 2023 Coordinator, Thomas Boxall, for their names and contact information.



Figure 32.3: Performer at the Merry Moot (RS)

<b>Band / Per-former</b>	<b>Date / Time</b>	<b>Style</b>	<b>Fee (if booked)</b>	<b>Other Info</b>
Spitfire Tides	Sat 5, 8:30 - 10?	Indie Rock - a lot like the arctic monkeys	Quoted 200	We decided against them and they were no longer available once SBB cancelled
Sunshine Blues Band	Sat 5, 9 - 10	Blues	Quoted 200	Band split up and cancelled on us. Only discovered this emailing for tech reqs 6 weeks before camp!
Bunny Eye Ceilidh	Mon 7, 8:30 - 11:30	Celtic folk (with ceilidh caller)	550	Not recommended. Dances at the start weren't great and the caller was rude to Scottish venturers

*continued on next page*

<b>Band / Per-former</b>	<b>Date / Time</b>	<b>Style</b>	<b>Fee (if booked)</b>	<b>Other Info</b>
Luna	Weds 9, all night to host Merry Moot with a couple of her own numbers	Venturer drag queen, pop music esp Abba!	Free!	Recommended. Excellent performer and free! also hosted an Abba party on the first night when we were unable to replace cancelled band
Hunny Buzz	Fri 11, 8:30 - 10	Indie Rock	350	Recommended. Very popular with venturers and gave us a discount
Jonny Helm and Carmen M-P	Fri 11, 10:30-11	Fire per-formers	Free!	Recommended. Excellent performers, free and good to have something different esp for opening or closing! We organised on site, but if you do a callout in advance more people could bring equipment (lots of fire performers in WCF)
<b>Total</b>				900
<i>Left In Budget</i>				850

Table 32.1: Evening Programme Options at Venturer Camp 2023

## 32.4.5 Timeline

### 32.4.5.1 Autumn

- Theme chosen.
- Key decisions made about the programme over the week (e.g when are centres open? When is the wide game? When is the evening programme?)
- Programme coordinators recruited.
- Centre themes decided.
- Begin recruiting centre coordinators.

### 32.4.5.2 Winter

- Performances / workshops booked with anyone we want to prioritise / are really keen to get.
- Daily / weekly itinerary planned with timings.

### 32.4.5.3 Spring

- Centre coordinators all recruited. Recruit centre helpers.

- Booked in everyone else we want for the evening programme, fill in gaps by calling out to Members on social media to DJ / perform.
- Working with Comms people to get programme info on social media, in info packs etc

#### **32.4.5.4 May**

- Pre-Camp prep.
- Wide game planning with another volunteer.
- Consult centres on where they want to be before locations are decided and camp map is created.

#### **32.4.5.5 June / July**

- Chasing centre coordinators and making sure they had everything they needed.
- Trying to get them to make the timetable for the programme. Further wide game planning.
- Ordering materials (should have asked centres what they needed way earlier, mostly for peace of mind).
- Planning tech requirements with performers and Keith.
- A lot of chasing people in the last stages.

# 33 | Food

## 33.1 Team Structure

The Food team was composed of Morgan Britton-Voss, Wilf Lamont and Sadie Lamont. Additionally they had support from Eiriol Evans, Ro L-Jones and Jess Nicholls on site. The Food team was also heavily supported by Joe and Chris Bowler, who took on roles in the Cafe & Special Diets Team.

Before camp, Morgan, Wilf and Sadie planned the menu and made decisions around meals; Morgan took the lead on contacting Suppliers. Eiriol also supported a lot with the spreadsheet work.

On-Camp, Morgan continued leading on communicating with Suppliers and managing additional orders with Chris; Eiriol managed the physical food distribution, supporting shopping and managed the stores; and Sadie and Wilf led on communications with KPs.

The team was supported by Joe and Chris, who took on a number of tasks to support the Central KP team, including lots of the small details. They had planned to mentor the younger KP team but due to time constraints and the amount of work they had to do - this wasn't possible.



Figure 33.1: Some of the Central Food Team (I/C)

### 33.1.1 Evaluation of Team Structure

There were a number of challenges the Food team faced. On reflection, they felt that Eiriol should have been involved from earlier, as their initial role had been planned to be purely on-camp but ended up being more organisational. They also felt that the team would

have benefitted from having clearer defined roles. They also felt the communication with the Village KPs could have been smoother, as it took a few days to get into the swing of it. It was also commented that one year is not enough time to organise a Venturer Camp in, and that the Food team benefits from a longer lead in time.

Joe and Chris noted that their involvement in the Core Food team was more than they had initially intended it to be during their Cafe & Special Diets Evaluation Interview. They had initially thought that they would be mentoring the Food team, however they ended up being instrumental in the success of the food team. Joe and Chris spent lots of their free time plugging gaps where the Food Team hadn't completed actions or needed support. This included facilitating a number of meetings and pushing decisions out of the food team. This was, for many members, their first experience in a large Woodcraft Folk project like this - which highlights the need for better mentoring with young volunteers. The food team felt that the understanding of the mentoring and guidance was understood differently to them and Chris and Joe and thought that there would be more frequent communications than there were. This, in part, led to the food team falling behind on some elements. It also seemed as if the team was intended to be one unit then became almost two sub-units then one unit again on the event. Suggestion of defined roles for all volunteers and task groups, that may be subject to change as the project evolves, made clear in an accessible file and available for all to see to be clear on what is expected of everyone and to provide clarity of responsibilities, authorities, and duties.

### **33.1.2 Areas for Improvement**

For future camps, it's recommended to have more people trained on how to read the Food Spreadsheets, as it worked out that all the people who could read them also had other pressures on their time at Venturer Camp. The food team also felt the need for better-defined deadlines and to have more support with driving on site. The type of driving support they need to have available is also important to consider; where a top-up shop could fit into a car for a Venturer Camp sized event but would require a van for anything larger.

The team also felt that changing their team structure to include a Leadership role would be beneficial. They found that not having a defined leader led to some of their difficulties they experienced with workload management and time balancing, both in the run-up to camp and on site. They also felt that having an 'internal food communications' person would help. This person would be responsible for talking to KPs, and is in effect a buffer between the central KPs and the village KPs.

The team felt that the co-working and relationships between the Central Food Team and the specialised Cafe & Special Diets team drifted over the course from January 2023 to April 2023. There was some ambiguity as to where the boundary between the two teams' roles were. For future events, a better understanding and clearer definitions of team remits would be recommended, as well as ensuring that where there is overlap - documentation is clear as to decisions made and any contributing factors to these decisions.

## **33.2 Supporting Events**

### **33.2.1 Pre-Camp**

The online Pre-Camp Food session had low attendance, however this wasn't an issue as all they needed to present was the menu and make people aware of the Special Diets team.

Team members found it a useful opportunity to catch each other up to where they were.

A good proportion of the food team made it to On-Site Pre-Camp. One team member described it as “the best pre-camp I’ve ever been to”. The Food team used the open space time to have a team meeting, where they made leaps and bounds of progress. Lots of time was also spent discussing cooling of food to ensure we meet food hygiene standards. It was said, after the event, that the food team should have had suitable commercial standard refrigeration and not rely on a domestic fridge and cool boxes.

### **33.2.2 Working Week**

The majority of the food team attended Working Week. This was very useful for them as they were able to get stuck in with some of the other Working Week tasks for a day or so, enabling them to get to know the wider team. Then, once their main marquee arrived - they were able to support erecting that then begin setting up their space. They were also able to work out niggles in their plan, which meant we were able to rectify problems. This included giving them an additional marquee for food distribution.

The team was also able to travel to suppliers to meet them in person. This proved very useful when communicating with them

## **33.3 On-Camp Operations**

### **33.3.1 Daily Structure**

The food team had a very defined daily structure, which would begin with them opening up the Distribution Centre in the morning, keeping an eye out for people turning up in panic about shortages of Breakfast supplies. On some mornings, they would arrive to see a delivery from the bakers had arrived. This would arrive at around 07:30, which meant it was often the Coordinator coming onto shift who would receive this. The food team would then pick the chilled foods for the morning distribution, then give out the food at the morning meeting. They then took a short break for lunch before picking the dry food for the following day's distribution.

This was interspersed with receiving deliveries in the morning and early afternoon. The food team worked with suppliers to negotiate the best times for deliveries, which worked well as they were able to manage the incoming food better.

Quite often, a team of people would be sent off site to procure more food. This would take place after lunch, and take a number of people off-site for multiple hours.

### **33.3.2 Time Off**

The Food team were able to take some time off during the event. Each member got at least one day off, with some taking additional time off due to medical issues. On one day, multiple members of the team took time off which meant a substitute needed to be drafted in. Sourcing this substitute was fortunately easy as they were able to call on someone who had been part of the food team at Common Ground, so understood the systems and processes.

### 33.3.3 Support

The Food team had a difficult experience trying to gain support from anyone. They found that the support from the Coordinator and Volunteer Support team was lacking; with the Coordinator too busy and stressed and the volunteer support space was inaccessible to many members of the team, due to distance and rock dust on the ground. They tried to visit the PEB tent in the evening, but were told they needed to leave due to noise concerns in the adjacent village. This was especially unfortunate to the team on the last night where due to the Main Marquee sleeping issues, Venturers were sleeping in the Koodoo bell tents - therefore volunteers were moved on from the Koodoo Marquee. Whilst this is understandable from the perspective of wanting young people to be able to sleep, it emphasises the need for future events to find a location for Volunteer Support which is available all the time to everyone, and away from campers if possible.

## 33.4 Food Team Specific Insights

### 33.4.1 Challenges On Site

Due to the nature of internet ordering, and the lack of internet & signal at Biblins - there were great difficulties with ordering food on the internet. This resulted in members of the team making trips into the local village to use a Pub's WiFi near enough every day to be able to order top-up foods.

Plans had been made to operate a Refills system whereby goods which the Villages would get through at a different rate would be made available to KPs to collect. These goods included milk, break, biscuits, cereals, sauces, etc. The food team had planned to log out the amount taken to gather some real-world data on this. However, due to time and capacity constraints, this was unable to happen.

Due to issues with suppliers not fulfilling the orders and unexpected needs arising, there was the need for daily off-site procurement trips. This was in part from attempting to use a domestic delivery service, Morrison's Home Delivery, for a commercial use where they don't have the capacity. The food team also experienced challenges in ordering & predicting demand for certain products as usage varied by village and time of week.

The food team also experienced challenges when working out what food to serve. They received no guidance on specific food operations, for example how much meat to serve and the camp's stance on nuts. They expected this to be provided to them, despite the challenges it may have caused them. They went largely by Common Ground and DF proportions.

With regards to deliveries, the Food team had difficulties starting the camp on a Saturday. Have to start with three and a half days of fresh food and majority of ambient leading to the food arrivals being overwhelming, leading to less fresh milk due to capacity and no opportunity to do an emergency run on Sunday. Commercial suppliers usually only deliver on Mon-Fri.

### 33.4.2 Tips for Future Central KPs

When building KP teams in the future, it's important to ensure that there is significant prior KP experience. It also helps to have some people with logistics experience as quite a lot of the central KP role at a large camp is logistics.

It's recommended to anticipate forgotten tasks and work around this, building contingency plans. Planning in advance also should extend to the team members personal circumstances, especially relating to School Work and Exams - which will generally take over young people's lives, leaving less capacity for Woodcraft activities.

The food team also suffered from lack of capacity in the month leading up to camp, leaving a very small number of people the work of a very large group of people. It's recommended to ensure that the entire team is available in the month leading up to camp, as there's often things which will come up and need to be dealt with.

The team also recommends planning the menu early, and keeping it as simple as possible. Through having a menu available early, the Special Diets team are then able to work through booking data to ensure all diets are being catered for (to some extent as some allergens vary depending on which product is used e.g. falafel). Keeping recipes simple includes not having mange tout and green beans on the same menu, due to some people's difficulties in identifying vegetables.

It had been planned for the Food team to work with the Cafe & Special Diets team to produce specialist training & resources for Village KPs. It can be safely assumed that a village KP will not be as experienced as a central KP and as such communicating with them is a challenge. Through creating specialist training & resources, the central KP team would be able to pass knowledge to the village KPs, upskilling volunteers who may be inspired to take on a central role at subsequent camps.

A major area for improvement for the Food team is requiring better Volunteer Support provision. By nature, the Food team is an extremely stressful environment due to its high emotional involvement in the camp's morale and success. The importance of supporting these volunteers who are not only physically doing a lot, but also carrying a massive mental burden should not be underestimated. A potential solution to this would be to have a dedicated member of the team who is responsible for the rest of the team's wellbeing, ensuring that they are fed, watered and have somewhere to sit down as this did not happen for the food team this time.

The food team not only needs to be able to purchase food, but also be able to purchase associated supplies. This includes things such as box cutters, weighing scales, bags, tape, markers, etc. For future events, a second budget line should be allocated to the food team for such consumables, rather than them having to compromise on food to be able to afford basic supplies. They should also be given the opportunity to order supplies through camp-wide stationary orders.

### 33.4.3 Menu

<b>Day</b>	<b>Breakfast</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	<b>Dinner</b>	<b>Pudding</b>
Satur- day 5			Pesto Pasta	Coconut & Cherry Tray- bake
Sunday 6	Eggy Bread	Leek and potato soup	Korma curry and rice	Fruit and cus- tard

*continued on next page*

<b>Day</b>	<b>Breakfast</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	<b>Dinner</b>	<b>Pudding</b>
Monday 7	Porridge	Sandwiches	Pasta with tomato sauce and meatballs	Banofee Pie
Tuesday 8	Fried Breakfast	Falafel and wraps	Chilli and potato	Chealsea Buns
Wednesday 9	Bircher Muesli	Bagels	Lentil dahl; Cauliflower curry; and green bean curry with rice	Apples & toasted oats
Thursday 10	Garlic fried bread	Lentil soup	Sausages and mash	Strudel
Friday 11	Porridge	Hot dogs	Stir-fry with noodles	Fruit & Custard
Saturday 12	Leftovers	Leftovers		

Table 33.1: Menu at Venturer Camp 2023

Feedback on the menu found that attendees were neutral towards its taste, with a slight lean towards they liked it. It was found that the quantities of food were slightly lacking, however the reasoning behind this is unclear.

### 33.4.4 Menu Alteration Due To Gas Supply Issues

Due to potential issues with Gas supply, a number of last minute changes had to be made to the menu. This caused a great deal of stress within the food team as it was too late in the process to be able to make any significant changes, however the changes made did contribute to the overall success of the camp.

### 33.4.5 Food's route From Van To Mouth

1. Van arrives
2. As food is taken off the van, food team sorts it into piles in the Main Food Distribution Tent
3. The food is then 'picked', where its taken from the Main tent in to the Giving out tent in village sized piles
4. Village KP comes to the meeting and after they've listened to the meeting, they can collect food. The KP has to come to this meeting, no one else unless agreed prior with food team.
5. KP cooks food and serves in Village

### 33.4.6 Food Safety

Food safety is always a challenge at large Woodcraft Folk events due to the living-in-a-field nature of them. This being said, with the amount of people at Venturer Camp, we should

have done better than we did.

To actively keep food cold, a single 300-ish litre Pantry Fridge was used. A number of cold boxes and broken fridges were used, filled with ice to passively cool food. This is unacceptable and should not be repeated in the future. The fridge, being a domestic fridge, isn't designed to have its entire contents changed every day and have the door opened for such long periods of time. It was decided to purchase this fridge and run the camp in this way to prevent the need for hiring a diesel generator and fridge trailer, for Carbon Emission and Cost reasons. For future events, we should acknowledge the carbon footprint of such an appliance and still hire it to ensure we are being food safe. We were fortunate enough to be able to situate all the cool storage in a smaller store tent adjacent to the Main Food Depot, in the shade. This combined with the cool weather experienced throughout the camp may have been the reason that we didn't have any major food safety issues throughout the camp. It's also important to note that there were not enough thermometers provided to the Food Team, alongside other equipment which they need.

Outside of the cold stores, generally food safety was okay. With the short-termed nature of the Food Distribution Centre's marquee, combined with the floor coverings and elevated storage used within it - no pest incidents were reported. There were, however, a few mice were spotted once the marquee had been taken down, which suggests that it takes mice about a week and a half to work out where food is stored. Mice were spotted getting into food within the Cafe Kitchen however. This was expected due to the Cafe Kitchen being the Old Camp Koodoo's standing kitchen. A car roof-box was used to prevent Venturers and Mice getting into stocks overnight.

Within villages, we have no sure data on this however it was felt that Food Safety was at an acceptable level. This excludes chilling food however as there was no provision for ice packs. Chilled foods were given out on the day it was due to be consumed, which reduced the time any food was out of the fridge. Meals with frozen ingredients were staggered so the frozen item could be used to help keep cool the cool items (e.g. frozen cauliflower to cool milk). There was a large number of wasps in villages. Village KPs were very good at controlling this, through minimising the amount of open sticky, sweet substances.

The Food team were able to make use of leftover online Food Safety & Hygiene Courses purchased for Common Ground. They experienced difficulties in ensuring that all village KPs had completed relevant training. For future events, they suggest to require information of village KPs further in advance than we did as well as proof of certification.

### **33.4.7 Food Team's Timeline**

#### **33.4.7.1 Autumn 2022**

- Establish Team
- Team meeting includes role division
- Discussions around menu

#### **33.4.7.2 Winter 2022**

- Menu set around December, pending minor change
- Recipes trialled at DF's Winter Wonderland and Spring Awakening
- Action log created, however not used consistently

### **33.4.7.3 February / March / April 2023**

- Search for Suppliers
- In person meeting
- Enhanced Team Communications & Cross Team Communications with Cafe & Special Diets Team
- Further recipe tests conducted at DF's Spring Awakening

### **33.4.7.4 May / June 2023**

- Suppliers contacted
- Supplier accounts created by Woodcraft Folk's HoR
- In-Person Pre-Camp attended, team meeting held in Open Space time

### **33.4.7.5 July 2023**

- In-Person team meeting, detailed planning conducted
- KP Handbook produced
- Spreadsheet of orders finalised, recommended to do this earlier and involve more people in it as it's a pain for an individual to do
- Orders placed
- Puddings planned (not done previously due to concerns over budget)
- Finalisation of products from suppliers & re-distribution where necessary
- Gas supply issues led to menu changes

### **33.4.8 Suppliers**

Suppliers were found through a combination of internet research and speaking to people familiar with the local supplier landscape for the Ross-on-Wye area. The suppliers used are as follows:

- Evans of Monmouth Ltd - Incredible service, hard to return something that they have bought in specially but that is expected for a local supplier.
- Castell Howell - Mediocre, food team would rather have used a different supplier. Crisps were good
- Bookers - Good for 10 items (the basics like: beans, rice and biscuits), bad for rest.
- Neil Powell (butchers) - Communication informal, good value and quality. All meat was gluten free (sausages on request, the rest was naturally GF)
- Wigmores Of Monmouth (bakers) - Very good, returning the trays was a hassle due to KPs keeping the trays for a few days. They delivered very early.

# 34 | Café and Special Diet

## 34.1 Team Structure

Ahead of camp, the Café and Special Diets team was composed of Joe Bowler and Chris Bowler. They had originally planned to be an offshoot of the food team - working towards the common goal of feeding people, however due to the elevated support needs of the Food Team, they were unable to solely exist out of the café. This led to the Special Diets division operating from the Main Food Distribution Marquee.

On camp, Joe took a lead on the café, while Chris focused on the Special Diets. They had support from Caitlyn McArthur, who volunteered initially as part of the Special Diets team and ended up working more in the Café.

Within the Café, Beth was the fantastic Maître D, Alex and Ash were amazing chefs de partie, Caitlyn did a wonderful job as Front of House, and Laurence was the perfect Venturer guinea pig / mascot!

Several people dropped out in the lead up to camp and unfortunately none of the remaining onsite volunteers had capacity to do any pre-event organising. This put a lot of pressure on Joe and some areas suffered, including ordering food before camp and organising the café takeovers.

A big contributing factor to short staffing was the lack of 16-17 yr old volunteers, without them we needed the whole core café team to open up the café. This drastically reduced the amount of time we could be open and meant that volunteers did not get time off.

The team worked amazingly well and we had such a good time working together in the kitchen. Joe noted "I'm really proud of everyone who worked in the café and space we created!"

### 34.1.1 Evaluation of Team Structure

Joe and Chris took on too much and were definitely overworked, it's only through the support of their friends and volunteers that they made it look good. The café had reduced opening times and menu choices because of the volunteer issues. However the café was very busy from the Monday onwards all the way through.

The special diets team was structured poorly. It's a work in progress concept and we're certainly discovering what not to do and slowly discovering what to do. Village KPs are much more likely to accept the support in the form of ingredients and recipes. They do not want someone else cooking the food outside the village. People with special diets are not keen for food to be prepared without seeing it be cooked and see the packaging. People are very much on edge about allergies and the consequences of messing up. Chris only cooked 2 meals outside the KPs doing it themselves (1 meal each for 2 people).

Special Diets structure needs to involve the village KPs at a much earlier stage. Chris spoke to the leaders more than the young people that needed help (leaders of these young people were often on the village KP team) and ordered food to supplement for special diet needs.

### 34.1.2 Support Ahead of Camp

The team did not feel well-supported in the lead-up to camp. They should have reached out to coordination / volunteer support to help the KPs, as they could not do their job without the KPs sorting some things first (the menu, for example). But it didn't feel there was capacity in the wider team to help with either this or special diets. A longer lead-in to the event would definitely have helped here as it would have allowed for certain things to be set far out in advance, thus enabling subsequent activities to be less time-compressed.

### 34.1.3 Team Redesign

For the Café team, a massive difference would be made from the number of people in the team increasing. Not only would this reduce the burden on individuals during the camp, it would also enable more people to be involved in the picking of the merchandise - thus allowing a richer variety of food and drinks, which people are more likely to want. As it stood, the menu was often decided while looking at stock in Bookers Wholesale. The Café team would also have benefited from using the bakers (which the food team were using for desserts) for baked supplies.

For the Special Diets team, a dedicated person is needed who can go around the site and talk to different people, talking them through the menu (this person needs to have an intimate knowledge of the menu). This would be supported by an individual / team who can cook as and when needed. At a Venturer Camp sized event - it would work to do this with two people, as their only role on Camp; obviously this figure would need to be scaled up as the camp grows. Part of the core role of a future Special Diets team would be to educate Village KPs on how to handle allergies before camp. It would also be nice for the Special Diets team to facilitate a caucus between Village KPs and Parents of Allergy Kids.

## 34.2 Supporting Events

### 34.2.1 Pre-Camp

The Café & Special Diets Online Pre-Camp event had very low attendance, with the only person turning up not knowing about allergies. Joe and Chris enjoyed the session as it gave them a good chance to get their words in order about allergies and catering for them.

Joe and Chris both attended the On-Site Pre-Camp weekend which they found useful. They enjoyed seeing the spaces physically and being able to visualise the Café space! It did highlight things which hadn't yet been considered - however this was useful. The most useless part of the weekend for them was going on the Car Park walk.

### 34.2.2 Working Week

Joe and Chris both came to Working Week, where for a good proportion of the time they helped with the manual labour, such as putting tents up. They also used the time to set up their spaces, including moving an oven, clearing out the Café and furnishing it as they wished. There was also some time spent travelling to the local pub to use their internet to do Special Diets Internet Activities, however this could have been done in advance if there was capacity to do so.

### 34.2.3 Takedown

Joe and Chris both came to some of Takedown. They helped to clear down their spaces, which due to understaffing was “a complete mess”. This is something which should be managed better on camps, or even as part of the last day. Everyone was exhausted, suggested to recruit people for takedown only.

## 34.3 On-Camp Operations

### 34.3.1 Daily Structure

The Café & Special Diets Team was one of the, if not the, most overworked teams on site. To quote their evaluation interview, their days consisted of “get up, work, work, work, work, work, sleep”.

Joe spent all of his time either in the Café, or when it wasn’t open - offsite buying for the café or making food for the café.

Chris would wake up early to meet the bakers, then run the KP meeting (something which he stood in for due being the best personality to run them, in the future if there’s not someone in the KP team who feels confident enough to run a whole group meeting - run them as a series of 1:1s). He would spend the rest of his day dashing around site dealing with Special Diet meals, working in the café and delivering food to different bits of the site by bike.

### 34.3.2 Time Off

Both Joe and Chris were able to get some time off in the evenings. Joe didn’t get a complete day off, however had an afternoon off and Chris managed an entire day off.

### 34.3.3 Support

Support from the coordinator and cabin team was good, but Volunteer Support engagement was limited. They should have visited teams to check in rather than expecting teams to go to them. PEB was deemed not accessible, too big so not cosy, and should have had light evening programme for chilling after a long day.

## 34.4 Café & Special Diets Team Specific Insights

### 34.4.1 Challenges Experienced

Due to limited time for pre-event organising, plans which had been laid for running café takeovers and ordering food, were unable to happen. The café takeovers were unable to happen properly due to not having enough time to plan them.

The lack of 16 & 17 year old volunteers, due to the expanded age ranges of the camp, impacted the core team’s ability to open the café. This reduced opening hours and therefore reduced income from the café.

### 34.4.2 Improvements for Next Time

With a longer lead time for the next camp, the menu and ingredients will be finalised earlier. This will then enable the Special Diets team to begin planning with Village KPs



Figure 34.1: Café in full swing (AB)

around what meals they will need support with.

The Café needs more volunteers to enable it to open for longer hours. As well as the team needing support with sorting things that aren't specifically Café or Special Diets, however directly impact their operations. This includes things such as sourcing an oven, dealing with the gas, and sorting food refrigeration.

### 34.4.3 Miscellaneous Insights

Joe and Chris brought their own bikes to the event. This enabled them to travel around the site quicker. This is something which all core team should be encouraged to do, if possible. It was especially useful for the Café team where they were cooking in the Koodoo kitchen, near pitch 1, and serving from the Café on Pitch 5.

Lots of ideas have been thought about for the next incarnation of the Allergy Kitchen. These mostly include resources such as: special diets cookbooks and blank templates for meals. This would make the Special Diets Kitchen more efficient.

The Café team struggled with the use of VCoin. They have suggested not to repeat it in the future. VCoin is explored in greater detail elsewhere in this report.

### 34.4.4 Future Focus

Future events should come with an emphasis on upskilling village KPs, this will enable them to require less hand holding around a centrally devised menu as well as building the next generation of Central KPs. Working with suppliers to develop relationships with them should be a top priority, as well as working with the central Woodcraft Folk staff team to support this. The team commented that working with the Head of Resources was extremely helpful, and having this support sooner would have been helpful. It's also

important to engage the Wider Team in the planning process, not just in the last few weeks.

It is also important to focus on creating comfortable workspaces, as well as comfortable spaces on camp. This was a particular challenge at Biblins where many of the semi-permanent marquees, including the Café Marquee, are site on a gravel hard standing.

### **34.4.5 Popular Café Items**

The café didn't record sales. Generally speaking: cans of drinks, biscuits and cheese toasties were popular. These were all served in a way such that they could be taken out of the café, to other parts of the central area - perhaps contributing to their popularity. The Café team believes that if they had disposable cups, people would have bought drinks from the big bottles, at a lower cost to us therefore lower price to them, as they liked being able to take drinks away.

The café aimed to sell products which weren't available in Villages for snacks or as part of the main menu - this works well as people are enticed to the café to find treats.

### **34.4.6 How Special Diets Worked**

Using the booking data we designated attendees into categories of how much support they might need with diets on a 1-4 system.

1. People with needs that are easy to cater to, e.g. don't like mushrooms, melon allergy, not too spicy. These people will just have a note sent to the village KP so they are aware. These people shouldn't need any outside of village intervention
2. People with diets that will require alternative ingredients, e.g. Milk intolerance. These people will have alternatives such as plant milks and vegan cheeses provided by the central KP team
3. People who have special needs or combination allergies, e.g. Diabetic, celiac, vegan+quorn allergy. These people need their own action plans like separate storage and food prep tables or may need some special alternative foods bought by the SDT. We're aiming for all this food to be prepared in the village.
4. People with severe allergies, multiple combination allergies, or a special diet. They may require multiple meals to be altered or an entirely different diet planned for them on camp. There were 10 people in this category. substitutions to the core menu, custom meal plans, or pre-packaged meals

### **34.4.7 Specific Diets We Worked With**

#### **34.4.7.1 Combination Allergies**

Combination allergies are a major challenge for finding substitution ingredients. For example, A vegan with a soya allergy cannot eat meat free sausages and yet the alternative cannot be eaten by the vegan with a pulses allergy.

#### **34.4.7.2 Elimination Diets**

An elimination diet is a dietary approach that involves temporarily removing certain foods or food groups from your eating routine to identify potential food intolerances or sensitivities. It is often used as a diagnostic tool to determine which specific foods may be causing adverse reactions or symptoms in an individual.

### **34.4.7.3 Diabetic Diets**

Diabetic support is something that we've just started looking into. We can provide glucose boosting snacks and drinks, and make nutrition information available for insulin calculations.

### **34.4.7.4 Gastro Health Conditions**

Gastrointestinal (GI) health conditions encompass a wide range of disorders that affect the digestive system, including the oesophagus, stomach, intestines, liver, gallbladder, and pancreas. These conditions can have varying impacts on diet and nutritional needs. These can include GERD, IBD, IBS, Celiac Disease, and Liver Disease

### **34.4.7.5 ARFID and Autism**

Avoidant/Restrictive Food Intake Disorder can be described as a clinically significant form of "fussy eating" or selective eating. While many young people and adults may display some level of picky eating behaviour, ARFID goes beyond typical picky eating and involves severe and persistent limitations in food intake that significantly impact a person's physical health and daily functioning. Many campers with ASD have eating difficulties that can manifest as selective eating or ARFID-like behaviours.

# 35 | Stewarding

## 35.1 Team Structure

Before camp, the Head Stewarding team comprised of Paul Nolan-Paley and Adam Patterson. During Working Week, Ralph Sleigh also joined the team to ensure adequate experience with senior Stewarding was available on the team. Paul and Adam focused their pre-camp work on drafting a rota and supported with policy drafting, where this impacted Stewarding.

Woodcraft Folk's Chief Executive had been in contact with a number of Young People from Birkenhead, with the potential of them taking on Head Stewarding Shifts as they have lots of experience with roles like this. Due to this, we weren't focusing on recruiting others for this role. Communication with this group of people was extremely difficult as they were slow to respond through the Chief Executive to the Coordinator. Ultimately, their lack of timely responses and how unclear they were of if they would even be attending the event led us to recruit Paul, Adam and Ralph. These young people did arrive at the event, however due to unclear arrival dates, they didn't actually start Stewarding until well-into the event.

Some of the major Stewarding Events, especially arrivals day, had been planned by the Coordinator with support from previous Coordinators as Head Stewards weren't available for discussions.

On-camp, Paul, Adam and Ralph took it in turns on shift following a rota. The three mentioned above did eventually turn up and provided some respite support with this towards the end of camp. During the day, there would be one Head Steward on shift and sometimes there would be two. Having multiple head stewards on shift was especially useful in the evenings when we were running central programme.

The Head Stewarding team was supported by a team of Stewards who took on shifts throughout the event. These were recruited through a mixture of before-camp social media advertisement and on-camp having people turning up to Stewards HQ and wanting to sign up. Some of the Concordia volunteers' hours were assigned to Stewarding.

### 35.1.1 Evaluation Of Team Structure

This team structure worked as well as it could have given the difficulties in sourcing a Head Stewarding Team. The Head Stewards rota worked in a way such that there was no handover period, they have recommended that there needs to be a handover in the future, ensuring that things don't get dropped.

The team also noted that you can get by with 3 or 4 Stewards during the daytime, however in the evening you need 7 or 8. This was an issue at Venturer Camp as the Concordia Volunteers were rota'd in, however didn't show up. Then when someone went to look for them, they'd either be asleep or at the pub. When they did turn up, however, they needed direct supervision. It had been decided that a Concordia Volunteer needs to be paired with a Woodcraft Folk Volunteer aged over 18. This was also the case for those aged under 18, in that they needed to be paired with someone aged over 18. These decisions were made for Safeguarding reasons. We did get to a point during camp where lots of

16 and 17 year olds had volunteered to Steward and not enough over 18s, which caused a recruitment drive for people aged over 18 to steward. This was a complete pain for the Head Stewards as they found that people would turn up in pairs to steward; this led to some pairs of 16-17 year olds being stationed in the central area, near the Steward's HQ / Main Marquee, so they were able to steward however there were lots of adults supervising them.

### **35.1.2 Support Ahead of Camp**

The team felt well supported by the Coordinator and Volunteer Support.

## **35.2 Supporting Events**

### **35.2.1 Pre-Camp**

The Stewarding Team didn't have an online pre-camp session.

No one from the Head Stewarding Team was able to make it to in-person Pre-Camp. This meant, for some of the team, that their first time seeing the site was during Working Week. This also meant that the Head Stewarding team missed conversations around arrival planning, which was held on site as part of the site walks.

### **35.2.2 Working Week**

Some of the Head Stewarding Team attended Working Week. They used this time to have discussions around the rota and their operational plans. They also had a number of conversations with Owen Hayter, Common Ground 2022 Head Steward, who was attending Lewisham & Greenwich's District Camp.

It's important for a Head Steward to be at Working Week for a day or two in order for them to have time to reacquaint themselves with the space and the entry & exit points as well as the boundaries and any hazards on site. Something which didn't happen that it would have been good to do during Working Week was to do a Full Boundaries Walk with the Coordinator, Head Stewards and Site Manager present. This would have enabled the Stewards to be more prepared for different locations of the site, and ensure everyone was clear about where the boundaries were.

On the Final Night of Working Week (Friday 4 August), an Arrivals Briefing was held, which was aimed for anyone and everyone involved in the Arrivals Operation, the following afternoon. This was due to be delivered by the Camp Coordinator but due to the amount of work remaining, Jack Brown delivered this. For future events, it would be great if this can be handled by the Head Stewarding Team.

### **35.2.3 Takedown**

After the majority of campers have gone home, the Stewards role at large Woodcraft Events conclude. This means there is no obligation for Stewards to stay behind for Take-down.

## 35.3 On-Camp Operations

### 35.3.1 Daily Structure

The daily structure for each head steward was slightly different, it was also different on each day depending on when they had shifts, time off, etc. Generally, their routine would involve paperwork and rounding up stewards. They didn't fuss too much if Stewards didn't arrive for morning shifts, as these were calmer. Focus was mostly on preparing for the evening and ensuring that Stewards would turn up for them.

### 35.3.2 Time Off

All Head Stewards managed a day off, however these days weren't always restful as individuals had other responsibilities at camp. For example - one of Ralph's days off from Stewarding was the day of the AGM, where he has a role on the Standing Orders Committee which is heavily involved in the AGM; he also managed a day off for his Birthday, which he was able to completely get off site for. Others were given a day off after especially long days, meaning they didn't get to enjoy the event rather they were just recovering; some stewards preferred this as they needed less time to recover so were in fact able to enjoy the event.

### 35.3.3 Support

The team felt well supported by the Coordinator and Volunteer Support. The team also commented that PEB wasn't accessible due to the distance from the central area and the villages which the Stewards were camping in.

## 35.4 Stewarding Specific Insights

### 35.4.1 Adult Social Space

The PEB centre (Camp Koodoo's Marquee, located adjacent to Pitch 1), became a hangout zone for DFs in the evening as there hadn't been one designated. The stewards were happy with this and they added it to the rota, however for the future - it's important to also give adults a social space in the evening.

### 35.4.2 Food

The Stewarding team found that mischief wasn't caused over meal times, as everyone on site was eating at the same time. Due to this, they were able to take a break and eat at reasonable times every meal time. Sometimes they had their food brought to them in their Stewards HQ, and other times they trekked back to their village to collect it.

The Steward HQ was stocked with snacks, which were replenished throughout camp. However, they struggled to get them replenished at times.

### 35.4.3 Successes

There were no huge issues! The team reported that in the event of a missing person search being initiated, the individual was always found within 5 minutes, commonly in their village.

The Stewarding team also dynamically responded extremely quickly when the Coordination team decided that we would have a Fire Show on the final night with only a few hours notice. They were able to cordon off a safety boundary and had the right capacity to support keeping campers behind this.

### **35.4.4 Miscellaneous Insights**

It was found that those who had signed up for an Under 18 Volunteer Priced Place with Stewarding as their role didn't do as much work as those with other roles. They could have probably been worked a bit harder, however due to their age - scheduling them presented more of a challenge.

There were scheduling conflicts with those who also took on MEST-UP duties. For the future, this could be managed better by developing the rota further in advance.

It's also useful to have more printed stuff in advance. This is documents such as the rota template, sign out sheets, etc.

### **35.4.5 Tips For The Future**

This role is not about pleasing everyone. This role is about keeping people on site safe, and mostly happy. The role should not be taken on by people who don't handle stress well.

Stewarding Training and First Aid Training for Stewards should be run at Pre-Camp and / or Working Week. It was decided that due to the large investment into training at Common Ground International Camp 2022, we wouldn't invest beyond the legal essentials, which meant we couldn't afford either First Aid or Stewarding training.

When Volunteering Programmes, such as Concordia, are designed - their schedules should align to the Stewarding Timetable. Not the other way around. We didn't have a Stewarding Timetable at the time of sorting the timetable for the Concordia's which influenced the way we did this.

There needs to be a hard limit on how long an individual can steward for in a single day and across the event. This is to ensure that individuals are in a fit state to steward where they are not causing danger to themselves or the campers. Head Stewards also need to feel empowered to dismiss a Steward mid-shift should the need arise, and how to escalate this process to the Coordinator if needed.

It's also recommended to identify individuals who will be Stewarding in advance of camp. When a new Steward joins the team, they need to be given a briefing. A rule also needs to be included in the Code of Conduct that a leader needs to stay awake until their Venturers go to bed.

# 36 | Transport Logistics (Coaches)

## 36.1 Team Structure

Before camp, the Transport Logistics team was composed of Jeni Dixon and David Neibig. David took a lead on the technical aspects of coach scheduling while Jeni led on customer services and communications to the wider movement. This was an informal structure, which was defined through exchanging emails. David had previously held this role for events on his own so handed off some responsibilities to Jeni.

On arrivals & Departures day - two Concordia Volunteers supported with the on-site operations. They were briefed by Jeni and they were responsible for communications to Jeni, meeting & greeting coaches and managing the crossing of the bridge.

### 36.1.1 Evaluation of Team Structure

The structure worked well, with a clear division of responsibilities between David and Jeni. They had previously worked together in Woodcraft, which aided this easy-collaboration. They didn't have any capacity issues, as the right combination of people brought balance. They experienced challenges on arrivals and departures day, in part due to many things outside of their control and poor communication between the different involved parties. They found that their position in the 'Core Team' was slightly unnecessary, however they do need to be kept in the loop about certain things including the first and last day plans.

### 36.1.2 Support Ahead of Camp

The team felt supported by the Coordinator ahead of camp. The team had considered their boundaries of what they could commit and as such managed their workload well. They were left to figure out how they were getting to the station themselves, this fortunately worked out fine however in the future, its suggested that a standby car is sourced.

## 36.2 Supporting Events

### 36.2.1 Pre-Camp

The Transport Logistics Team did not have an online pre-camp session, nor did either of them attend On-Site Pre-Camp.

### 36.2.2 Working Week

The team came to the final few days of Working Week. They made this decision to ensure that they would have internet connectivity to enable them to do any last minute administrative tasks. Having a few days on site enabled them to do any last minute planning on site and to brief helpers.

## 36.3 On-Camp Operations

### 36.3.1 Arrivals Day

- Got a lift to station, arrived half an hour before first train so could meet the station staff and manager. This gave time for really good cooperation between us and station staff for things like opening barriers etc
- Hung around at the station to meet groups when came off the trains. Explained what was happening about waiting or getting straight on a coach. Explained about return journey
- Worked well there were 2 people there - One could do group wrangling and one could do driver wrangling. One could go to the shop and one could do people wrangling
- Would have been nice to have a packed lunch sent with them in the morning
- Came back to site on the last coach, thanked drivers etc

### 36.3.2 Intervening Days

During camp, the Transport Logistics Coordinators had conversations with groups and individuals about their return journey. They then refined their coach schedules and ensured that everything was printed and the right people had access to it.

They found it was about a day and a half's work spread across the entire camp. For future events - it's recommended to have drop-ins at set times rather than getting coach-users to leave messages at the cabin or tracking either Jeni or David down.

They also spent a sizeable portion of time negotiating Scotland's transport Logistics (see below).

### 36.3.3 Departures Day

- Had a strict plan as most villages were leaving early
- Village coords need to know when people from their villages are leaving (rough idea even!)
- Got up really really early to see over the scotland coach
- Took camping chair and sat on the other side of the bridge
- Met venturers at bridge and let things happen (which they did!)
- Filled coach number 1 and left David to it
- Much harder than arrivals as didn't go to bed until half three (This was due to an issue with a change of plan about where venturers were allowed to sleep, nothing to do with this role)

### 36.3.4 Support & Time Off

The role was not a full time role while camp was taking place. This meant the volunteers were able to do other activities, and were able to use their time as they felt best. They had one evening 'fully off'.

## 36.4 Transport Logistics Specific Insights

### 36.4.1 Biblins' Coach Access

Biblins' Coach Access is through a Forestry Track on the Welsh side of the River. The entrance to this track is protected by a padlocked gate. The track is not wide enough for a coach to pass another, meaning only one could be on the track at any given time. The turning circle on the Welsh side of the River Wye is only big enough for two coaches.

We solved these issues by instructing a "coach leader" to telephone Jeni when they arrived at the top of the track, who either instructed them to wait for a coach to come up or allowed them to proceed down the track. Someone on the campsite would then message Jeni to inform her that the track was clear, once the coach was visible in the turning circle. Jeni would also be informed when a coach departed the turning circle and began to drive up the track. This system worked within the Woodcraft Volunteers however working with different Coach Companies caused some difficulties with managing expectations for driving down the track.

### 36.4.2 Scotland's Transport Logistics

The Scottish groups had contracted their own coach to transport all their members, leaders and equipment to and from Biblins. They had lots of issues with their driver not liking driving his coach down the Coach Access Track on arrival day, including him refusing to do it again on departure day. This resulted in a lot of conversations and planning to resolve.

We resolved the issues with getting Scotland & their Equipment to the top of the Coach Track, and to a suitable meeting point for their coach by using one of the Venturer Camp coaches to shuttle them. This worked fine and the Scottish members were dropped in "the layby". This is by no means a perfect solution and we were fortunate to have such an accommodating coach company.

This situation also highlights the importance of having a small team working to solve problems, as at one stage there were potentially five people working on finding a solution which may have lead to incorrect information being shared internally or externally to Coach Companies.

### 36.4.3 Timeline

- Oct - Events Assistant booked coach company for a minimum number we would definitely need, with a view to being able to increase if necessary
- Dec - asked to put question in booking form
- Feb / march - david started to contact the station
- Apr onwards - started to have an idea of data and working out worst case scenario
- May onwards - started proactively emailing people to ask them if they knew anything then funneling it down
- 2 or 3 weeks off from camp - numbers, trains booked and schedule with company made
- Week before - almost chilled!
- On camp - rechecking data then working out data

- Post-camp - Thanking the coach company, proactively. Dealt with general thank you emails. Could have been some additional admin bits but we didn't need them (around coach stuff e.g vomiting kids)

### 36.4.4 Miscellaneous Insights

The team had a question added to the booking system about whether people would need a coach space or not, this made it much easier for them to plan and assign people coaches.

They found having information on who's in what village at the station helpful. This enabled them to group groups together while they were waiting for their coach.

They found that the Venturer Camp Coaches email address became a secondary General Enquiries inbox after Working Week had started. They think this is because campers only ever got direct communications from those two email addresses. It would be worth improving communications about who to contact about what for future events, to ensure the questions can be answered by the right people!

The Transport Logistics Team should have some basic safeguarding information, including about ratios and ensuring young people have adequate leaders. The Woodcraft Folk Safeguarding team is able to advise on this.

### 36.4.5 Tips for the Future

You need a combination of people who are good at logistics and understand the group model within Woodcraft Folk and have Safeguarding knowledge. This has now been proven to be an extremely effective combination!

It would be nice to have a structured way to give away unwanted train tickets. This may be more of a thing localised to areas such as London however it would save money for groups. For international camps, this role could be expanded to include to support booking UK Train Tickets for International delegations and potentially commissioning a train.

When planning coaches, you need to factor in driver breaks. Each coach company will do this slightly differently, so speak to the company first!

Be proactive with communications! Contact each district and ask how many will need the coach and when their trains are/when they're planning on booking them. This works much better than waiting for people to come to you.

The Coach Company we used, Jones Coaches, are phenomenal! They are very interested in working with Woodcraft Folk in the future, including at non-Biblins' locations.

# 37 | Volunteer Support

## 37.1 Team Structure

Initially, the workload within this team had been divided between Sapna Argwal, focusing on pre-camp support and Mollie Saunders focusing on on-site support. In the end, Mollie was unable to make it to Venturer Camp; Sapna was fortunately able to run the Volunteer Support centre on site. Sapna was supported by a number of other volunteers, including Jeni Dixon and Margaret Fleming.

### 37.1.1 Support

Sapna felt underprepared in the lead-up to the event, this was due to the lack of communication and support from the Coordinator, and lack of knowledge of how Venturer Camps work having never attended one before. She felt unsure about how often to contact the volunteers teams, as to not burden them as she was supposed to be supporting them!

### 37.1.2 Team Redesign

The Volunteer Support team suggests that the current model of having a small team of volunteers supporting the entire organisation's volunteers isn't fit for purpose. They suggest that regions should be responsible for their own volunteers. Through this idea, an individual or small group of volunteers from each region would support all volunteers in that region. The Scottish Nation operate like this currently, they know what's going on in each of the districts and are able to support each other without breaching privacy. Future events should take note of this idea in particular, as it may be time to resurrect the regions!

## 37.2 Supporting Events

### 37.2.1 Pre-Camp

The Volunteer Support Online Pre-Camp session was poorly attended. It's probably not worth doing a whole session dedicated to this in the future, rather tack it onto another session where attendance might be higher.

The Volunteer Support team wasn't able to make it to On-Site Pre-Camp due to the distance from their home to Biblins. They think that it would be useful for the team to be represented at Pre-Camps as it's a good opportunity to get to know the team and to have conversations which can influence future support. It's also a useful time to get to know the site.

The Volunteer support team noted that they wished they had got to know people better, so when they were in crisis or struggling, it would have been easier to have conversations with them.

## 37.2.2 Working Week

The Volunteer Support Team didn't attend Working Week due to travel arrangements. They were able to set up their space, PEB, on the first day of camp. For future events, it would be nice to make the PEB space more comfortable by having soft furnishing or sofas, etc. This would make a good Working Week task for someone with a van.

# 37.3 On-Camp Operations

## 37.3.1 Daily Structure

The team's daily routine involved moving between Elysium, where they were camping, to the Volunteer Support marquee (located adjacent to Asgard). On the walk along the entire length of the site, they would stop and talk to volunteers in all the villages they passed and the central area as well as stopping at the Camp Office to chat to the people on the balcony.

## 37.3.2 Time Off

Sapna held a number of roles at Venturer Camp and managed to take a day off from each role, where she took on a different role for the day.

## 37.3.3 Support

The Volunteer Support team felt supported by the Coordinator.

# 37.4 Volunteer Support Specific Insights

## 37.4.1 Positive Energy Bubble Tent

The Positive Energy Bubble (PEB), was the home of Volunteer Support. It was situated in the Camp Koodoo main marquee. As well as offering support to Volunteers it was also planned to use the space to host a number of workshops aimed at volunteers around EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion). These were cancelled during the camp as it was decided that the PEB tent wasn't the right place to host these workshops.

The use of the Camp Koodoo Marquee was the wrong choice for Volunteer Support as the marquee is sited on a hard standing which requires the use of steps to get up to it.

During the evenings, it was found that DFs used the PEB tent as a social space. This was approved by the Volunteer Support team as it was felt that they should have somewhere to go and socialise without feeling like they're on duty. They did need to be cleaned up after, however. This returns to the point made earlier of needing social spaces for volunteers as well as participants at large Woodcraft Camps.

## 37.4.2 Timeline

In the lead-up to Camp, the Volunteer Support team checked in with each of the teams every three weeks, as camp approached. Before this - teams were checked in with every 4-to-6 weeks. This seemed to work well. Most teams ignored the check-in messages or said that they were fine. Occasionally, the Volunteer Support team was able to offer support. After camp, the Volunteer Support team was reached out to by the MEST-UP team

who had a challenging experience at camp. Post-Camp support would be worth exploring for future events.

The team noted that they needed better communication channels with adult volunteers. They found that the provided methods, Discord and Emails, weren't sufficient. This could be rectified through giving the Volunteer Support team access to other volunteers phone numbers, or enforcing a meeting structure between the Volunteer Support team and other volunteers, where a verbal check-in is had.

### **37.4.3 Tips for the Future**

The team emphasises the need to think about stress points and how to alleviate them. This is something all teams experience throughout the planning process - so having a small group of volunteers at the stress points to offer practical and emotional support. It's encouraged to plan and get to know team members in advance of them hitting breaking point.

Future camps should strive to create a culture of people asking for help and receiving said help.

### **37.4.4 General Areas for Improvements across the Camp**

Across the camp, it's felt that a quick win could be to look at straightforward, low-impact environmental practices at the village level. For example, hay boxes and solar showers. It was felt that the access fund for travel and attendance, and to have a reduced rate for volunteers was beneficial and should be repeated.

On the chill nights, it's suggested to play music in the central marquee, even when there's no organised activity or performances. This would need careful planning & branding to ensure that it didn't turn into a rave every night however.

# 38 | Sustainability and Decarbonisation

## 38.1 Team Structure

The Sustainability and Decarbonisation team had a loose structure. Margaret and Paul Fleming took the lead, supported by Ann MacGarry and Bob Todd.

It was felt that young people were not sufficiently involved in the process. Ideally young people would drive Sustainability and Decarbonisation, with support from adults only. The Decarbonisation Working Group is focusing on this for future camps.

The team felt like they needed more engagement from other teams to ensure that sustainable choices were being made throughout the camp.

### 38.1.1 Team Redesign

The team felt the best future Sustainability and Decarbonisation team would be led by knowledgeable young people, who are identified well in advance of camp and trained. They felt that a University Student could use decarbonisation at a large Woodcraft Folk event as the topic for a dissertation.

The team doesn't need to necessarily attend every planning meeting, however they do need to advise on things. There needs to be some planning and consultation with the Sustainability and Decarbonisation team as well as other teams here to understand the best ways to work together for future events.

## 38.2 Supporting Events

### 38.2.1 Pre-Camp

The team came to On-Site Pre-Camp and found that a useful experience as it enabled them to meet other teams in person and discuss plans. They felt, however, that the transport to the site could have been arranged better - rather than everyone fending for themselves, arranging a taxi or minibus would have been more efficient.

### 38.2.2 Working Week

The team were kept very busy during Working Week as most members of the team overlapped with the Electricity team. This involved getting the power station, solar cinema and radio station sorted.

## 38.3 On-Camp Operations

### 38.3.1 Daily Structure

The team's days consisted of checking on the power station, trying to get media coverage for the news of a decarbonisation idea and trying to get young people involved in

decarbonisation.

### **38.3.2 Time Off**

The team managed a few half-days off when family visited.

### **38.3.3 Support**

The team felt well supported by the Coordinator and Volunteer Support. However they noted that as a team they've been working together for quite some time, which means they know each other quite well. This enables them to support each other efficiently.

## **38.4 Decarbonisation Specific Insights**

### **38.4.1 Evaluation & Future Camp Recommendations**

The programme team used bleach in the tie-die activity which is bad for the environment. They should be using water-based paints to avoid gasses.

Generally, the food was disappointing, in that it could have been more sustainable. There was a lot of processed food and not much processed stuff, not only in the central menu as this was found in the cafe too. It is suggested that we need to minimise travel off site to the shops every day and we should look for bigger fridges and freezers. However, this would require more power and battery capacity.

It's recommended to apply for grants to do specific decarbonisation projects, with a proposal for creating a solar-powered shower trailer, using panels, especially for Biblins during Summer Season on the table. Historic large Woodcraft Camps would do projects like this that encouraged more young people to get involved in Decarbonisation - something we should strive to return to.

Bikes and bike trailers are really useful for moving things around site! Grant bids should be put in for these to minimise the car use on site for transporting stuff.

# 39 | Finance

## 39.1 Team Structure

The volunteer finance team consisted of DJ Hanson. DJ wasn't recruited until a few months into the project, and there was never a designated handover point - meaning there was always some confusion over who was responsible for what aspects of finance. The Woodcraft Folk Head of Resources and Finance Assistant did all of the pre-camp money handling with DJ approving expenses and money tracking.

On Camp - it felt like just the treasurer working on finance. This involved running the camp bureau de change, managing tills (cashing up etc), paying cash into the bank and supporting spending money on site. This was a lot of work for one person; an easy off-load of work would have been to train other people on bureau de change operations.

### 39.1.1 Support

Overall, DJ felt well supported by the Coordinator and Volunteer Support in the run up to the event, however some delays were felt with getting access to all the right systems, most notably the finance email address.

### 39.1.2 Team Redesign Thoughts

It's suggested to redesign the team, making roles more clearly defined. There also needs to be a stronger link between the people managing and spending the money.

## 39.2 Supporting Events

### 39.2.1 Pre-Camp

The Finance team attended On-site Pre-Camp which they found useful as it was a chance for them to test the payment card machines on the WiFi. It was also useful for the team to get to know the site and the other members of the team.

## 39.3 On-Camp Operations

### 39.3.1 Daily Structure

The finance team had quite a varied daily structure, with shop management, running the camp bureau de change, dealing with money and paperwork taking the majority of their time. They were able to use some time in the afternoons to support other things.

A sizable amount of their time was spent travelling to and from various internet-enabled locations such as the Pub or Cafe, so they could complete internet-based forms.

### 39.3.2 Time Off

As mentioned above, the finance team were generally able to take some time off in the afternoons to support other things on site, including their Venturer Group. They also had

to walk somewhere most days to get access to the internet.

### 39.3.3 Support

The team felt well supported by the Coordinator and Volunteer Support team. They felt that they didn't need much support and emphasised the non-intimidating role of the treasurer.

## 39.4 Finance Specific Insights

See the Finance chapter for a detailed breakdown of everything money related.

### 39.4.1 Timeline

Once the treasurer was brought into the project, there was quite a lot of faffing to get access to things sorted. This was partially due to the access requirements of the treasurer - needing access to Woodcraft Folk finance systems as well as Venturer Camp systems. They did some budget stuff, some collecting and chasing of payments as well as checking in with other teams about spending before camp. The treasurer was also involved in the idea, conception and implementation of the V-Coin currency.

### 39.4.2 Areas for Improvement

The systems and processes that are put in place currently to manage finances are extremely dependent on having good internet access. This is an obvious issue for a site like Biblins where there is a poor connection coming in which is required by so many people. For future events, either better internet connectivity is required or designing processes which don't require internet connection.

The budget lines not matching the Central Woodcraft Folk Finance Monitoring caused no end of issues - this needs to be looked into for future camps, with one fitting into the other.

There were lots of journeys off-site, it would be more time efficient if these were consolidated into fewer journeys per day.

# 40 | Coordinator

The role of coordinator at a large Woodcraft Folk camp is a unique one, with it being a pivotal role in its own right as well as potentially needing to ‘mop up’ and ‘fill in gaps’ for other roles on the Core Team.

## 40.1 Team Structure & Evaluation Of It

The role of Coordinator was taken on solely by Thomas Boxall.

At the start of the project, it was aimed to recruit a second person to take on the Coordinator role alongside Thomas, thus sharing the workload and ensuring that there would be more support available to teams. This did not happen and therefore Thomas was the only coordinator.

Plans had been made where Thomas would line manage the team leaders for individual teams, who would in turn support their teams. However, due to the rushed nature of the project - this structure was never able to be put into place. It was a continual struggle for the coordinator as to what they could get involved in to support teams without overburdening themselves. In the end, the coordinator directly supported the majority of the core team, which was much more intensive in relation to communication and slowed progress somewhat as the coordinator had to contact many people who would often take some time to respond before anything could happen.

### 40.1.1 Staff Support

A number of different staff members were involved in supporting the functioning of Venturer Camp at different times. The Coordinator was expecting that, from autumn 2022, Woodcraft Folk’s Events Assistant would have Venturer Camp as their sole focus. However, this was not specifically discussed or agreed as part of the project kick-off. This led to some underlying confusion regarding the Events Assistant’s role supporting camp. Workflow and the allocation of tasks were complicated by the Coordinator not having line management responsibility for the Events Assistant. While it is not usual in Woodcraft Folk for line management of staff to be undertaken by volunteers, a more detailed agreement at the outset about project structure and management would have reduced the potential for confusion.

Having the Events Assistant available was a massive relief; they were able to be assigned some tasks which took burdens off of the teams and the coordinator. However, the distribution of their working hours, and the impact of flexible working meant that urgent tasks which could otherwise have been picked up by the Events Assistant ended up being completed by the Coordinator - especially when there were interdependencies with other tasks.

Staff Support also came from Woodcraft Folk’s Chief Executive and Programme Manager. Both of these members of staff had very clear roles and responsibilities which they took on.

## 40.1.2 Support In The Lead Up To Camp

The Coordinator did not feel well supported during the project - neither by his team of volunteers, nor by the organisation more widely, and felt that he was putting in more work than the majority of other volunteers working on the project (rather than sharing in a truly cooperative effort). This has had a significant and detrimental impact on other areas of The Coordinator's life, which shouldn't be underestimated. Through the evaluation interviews, it transpired that other individuals were in similar situations - this further emphasises the need for more face-to-face interaction within the core team alongside better-managed deadlines and key milestones being established in advance of camp.

The lack of support was potentially made worse by the knowledge that at the end of a day, a staff member could 'log off' and stop working whereas there is an underlying expectation for Volunteers to continue working with little-to-no encouragement for time off. The Coordinator's main working hours were in the evening - thus feeling like they were 'Always On'. The coordinator found that coordination began to take over their life, for example while in a lecture - they would be responding to emails or discord messages, or while waiting for their dinner to cook - they would be catching up on edits to documents.

The Coordinator noted that the experience of working to Coordinate teams felt at times like they were "screaming into the void" with little return from teams. At times, it felt as though the Coordinator was the only one doing significant work to progress the camp forward whereas other teams were taking their time to do tasks. This should be rectified for future events through setting a clear timeline in advance of the project - and ensuring this is kept to and that the deliverables noted on it are actually delivered on time or a good excuse is at the very least.

There were large periods of time when The Coordinator felt he was putting lots of messages out to volunteers, generally and individually, and getting nothing back. While individually, volunteers might have had a handle on the things that they were expected to do, there was little understanding or acknowledgement of the impact on others of things being pulled together late or at the last minute, and the lack of feedback from people in key positions raised levels of stress and concern for The Coordinator in particular. We need, as an organisation, to find approaches to sharing goals and holding each other collectively and supportively to account, rather than what feels like a top-down management of volunteers in a project of this nature.

The Coordinator's mental health suffered as a result of their role in Venturer Camp 2023, as did their first year final grades of their degree. They had numerous breakdowns with little support from Woodcraft Members, most of their support came from people outside Woodcraft.

## 40.2 Supporting Events

### 40.2.1 Virtual Pre-Camp

This was a lot of stress and hassle to organise from the Coordinator's perspective. Chasing the team to run their sessions when they were already behind in what they were doing was difficult and led to lots of additional stress on the Coordinator's part.

The sessions the coordinator ran went fine, with relatively low attendance. The coordinator passed off quite a few of the sessions which were due to be ran by themself to other members of the team due to capacity limitations.

## 40.2.2 On-Site Pre-Camp

The on-site pre-camp weekend felt like the most useful meeting that the project team had - although lack of commitment to the date from the team as a whole meant that all the right people were not there. Actually being on site was hugely helpful, and the coordinator regrets not doing this earlier - they reflected that there is a significant difference between being familiar with a site from having visited / camped there previously, and seeing it through the eyes of an organiser of a camp on a significant scale.

The pre-camp weekend would have benefited hugely from having at least one person from every team present - and from team leaders ensuring that this person was briefed to speak on behalf of the team as a whole. It would also have been beneficial had one or both of the ESC volunteers on placement at Biblins attended the pre-camp weekend to share knowledge about the site and provide additional detail to support the team's understanding.

## 40.2.3 Working Week

The early part of the week, where The Coordinator & Working Week Coordinator were on site alone moving equipment and slowly beginning setup was quite relaxed and enjoyable. Having this time for site acclimatisation for an unfamiliar site proved extremely valuable as the Coordinator was able to spend the time getting to know the site before the masses descended.

Much of Working Week for the Coordinator was spent 'putting out fires' and dealing with issues that arose throughout the week. This wasn't unexpected however the frequency and complexity of issues further emphasised the need for better planning ahead of Working Week. An example of this was where the locks on the Bunkhouse storage were changed by the Biblins Staff Team to prevent unauthorised access and on one of the days in Working Week, no members of the staff team were working from site. The issue of gaining access to these stores fell to the Coordinator who spent the morning phoning different people trying to work out who knew the padlock code. It ultimately transpired that one of the ESC volunteers knew it and they were able to unlock it, though this had not been communicated to the camp volunteers.

The Coordinator felt that by Wednesday (when the majority of people arrived for Working Week), 'all hell had broken loose'. This feeling came from key volunteers arriving sporadically and there being a mismatch between stress experienced by people who had been on site for a few days and those arriving and realising that tasks they thought had been done, in fact hadn't while they were feeling the way into their role and getting acclimated to the site.

The Coordinator found it extremely helpful to have a separate Working Week Coordinator. This position was held by Jack Brown - who was able to deal with much of the operational decisions and planning for Working Week, leaving the Coordinator to plan further into the camp.

## 40.2.4 Takedown

By the time that campers had departed the site, the small number of volunteers left on site were exhausted and burnt out. It was hoped that Concordia volunteers, who had less reason to be exhausted, would add valuable capacity at this point, but they didn't and it was generally easier to do things ourselves than try and wrangle Concordia to do it, which

contributed to further ill-feeling among Woodcraft Folk volunteers.

Takedown provides an opportunity for volunteers to celebrate and debrief informally, but by this point some volunteers were (physically and emotionally) unable to contribute meaningfully, but still wanted to be part of it. More of a contract or briefing to give people clarity about what is expected of them would help, and the takedown phase would also benefit from dedicated volunteers to provide 'fresh blood', though this is hard to achieve in practice. Managing these volunteers fell to the Coordinator - a task which they did not feel prepared to complete or able to tackle maintaining positive social interactions.

Takedown for Venturer Camp 2023 was a blur of exhaustion and the VengaBus for many attendees. This was extremely unfortunate given the success of the camp - that for some volunteers it ended this way. Having fresh volunteers available who are able to support the exhausted central team is critical for a successful takedown.

## 40.3 On-Camp

The Coordinator found that Village Coordinator meetings in the morning were a positive part of the routine - it was good to see people face to face and hear what's going on for them. The Village Coordinators were a lovely group of people who were positive and constructive at the meetings. Sometimes it felt like other members of the team who attended these meetings, led a bit too heavily - where they would decide something without deferring to the Coordinator.

The core team didn't meet up at camp - it didn't feel there was time. The idea of an 'on shift' co-ordinator was a good one, but there was insufficient handover when this changed from one person to another - possibly due to the timing of this shift-change, but it's possible that there isn't a 'good' time. In conclusion it didn't really achieve what it set out to (and The Coordinator still felt 'on duty' even when he wasn't wearing an orange jacket) - though with a pair of co-ordinators doing more of a double-act as equal partners, and a stronger 'core team' this might be more successful.

The Coordinator found that they mostly experienced camp from the inside of the Camp Office, and lacked the time and space to walk around the site and soak up the atmosphere. This may have contributed to a tendency to see the problems and issues that were arising, rather than appreciating that the majority of camp was running well and most everybody (or at least all the young people) was having a good time and a positive experience.

The Coordinator did manage to get some time off, however this was mostly spent sleeping or off site. Being off site felt like the only way to get away from the demands of the role for the Coordinator.

## 40.4 Coordinator Specific Insights

Taking on a Coordinator role at a large Woodcraft Folk Camp is both a blessing and a curse. It's a great opportunity to meet new people and try new things but it's a huge responsibility which comes with an unpredictable and unwieldy amount of work. Often Woodcraft takes the mentality that once a Coordinator is found, the event can go ahead - with details to be ironed out later. This is potentially the wrong approach to take and future Coordinator's shouldn't allow planning to commence, until they have a team sourced and inducted.

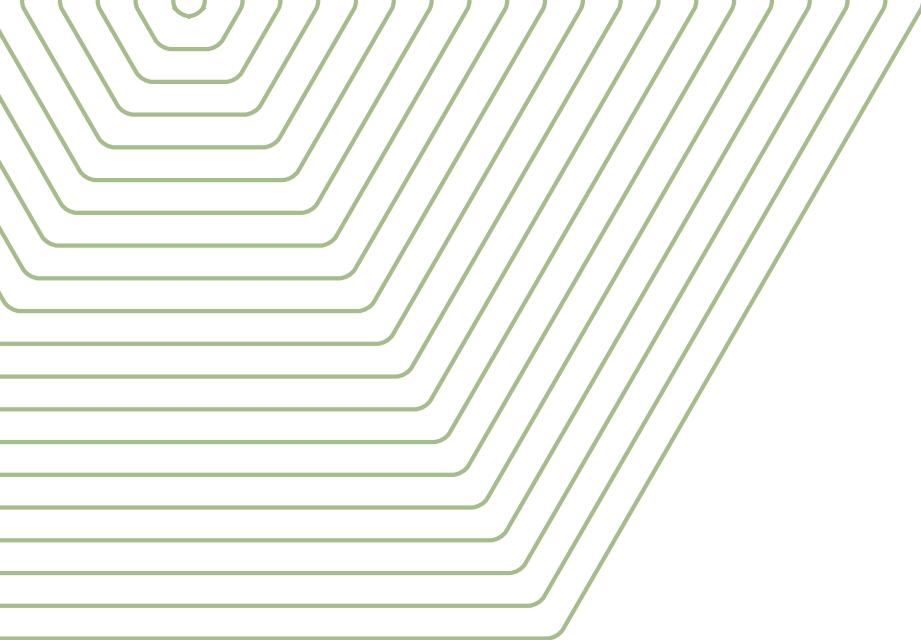
Much of the time at the start of the project was spent dealing with what dates to host the event in. We settled on 2023 in the end due to Venturer's decisions, not decisions based on the capacity or willingness of volunteers. This fundamental decision underpins quite literally everything - from how quickly planning progresses to the wellbeing of the team. It's the wellbeing of volunteers that should be at the heart of everything we plan like this. The Coordinator notes that no one has walked from the organisation as a direct result of Venturer Camp 2023, and the stress it puts on individuals; however we can't rely on the good will of volunteers to stay in an organisation which works them to the breaking point frequently.

#### **40.4.1 What The Role Entails**

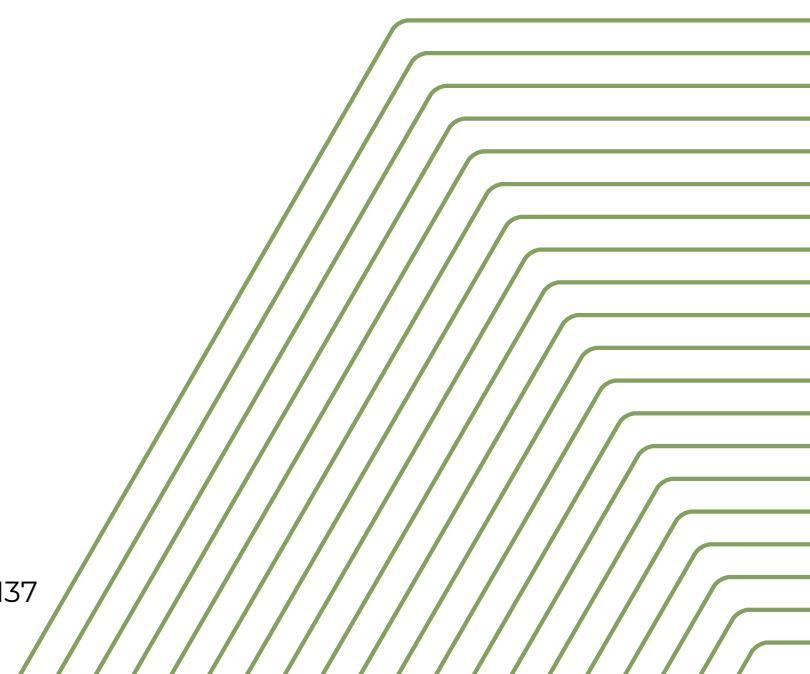
This is a really difficult question to answer. The role of coordinator at a large Woodcraft Folk camp is hugely varied and will change minute-to-minute.

For Venturer Camp 2023, due to not recruiting anywhere near enough Volunteers the Coordinator ended up dealing with lots of the Event Administration, Communications, some equipment wrangling, early finance activities and monitoring finance alongside all the standard Coordinator tasks. This was a huge task which the Coordinator often would spend between 15 and 20 hours a week working on relatively constantly from the word 'go' in September 2022 to June 2023 where it ramped up considerably.

After camp - the role continues. The Coordinator holds responsibility to ensure that the evaluation is completed as well as the finances are left in an orderly condition, with all outstanding invoices & expenses paid and all income has been gathered; and that any loose ends have been tied up. This took a considerable amount of time for Venturer Camp due to the Coordinator's limited capacity after camp.



# **Appendices**



**Part VIII**

# A | Payment Policy

## **VENTURER CAMP 2023**

### Payment Policy v2

For groups & individual participants

24th May 2023



Payment Policy v2

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## Section 1

# Payment Policy for Groups

### 1.1 Standard Camp Fees

The standard camp fees are outlined in the table below.

Age Bracket	Whole camp price per person	1 night per person
Under 18	£150	£21.50
18 and over	£50	£7.50

Table 1.1: Standard camp price breakdown for all ages

### 1.2 Early Bird Offer

If your booking & deposit is received before 12th April 2023, participants will be eligible for a free, limited edition Venturer Camp 2023 t-shirt. Any participants added after 12th April 2023 will not be eligible.

There is no financial discount for booking before 12th April 2023.

### 1.3 Payment

All payments should be made **using your unique booking reference number** to:

**Bank** Unity Trust plc

**Account Name** Woodcraft Folk

**Account Number** 20392756

**Sort Code** 60-83-01

**Bank Address** 4 Brinley Place, Birmingham, B1 2JB

**Swift Code (BIC)** NWBKGB2L

**IBAN Number** GB93NWBK60023571418024

#### 1.3.1 Deposits

Your group booking is secure after you have paid 50% of your delegation costs. The deposit is non-refundable but will be taken out of your group's remaining balance.

### 1.3.2 Paying the remaining balance

You need to have paid the remaining balance for your group by 26th May 2023 but please make payments as soon as your group can afford to. The funds raised will go towards making the camp sound, look, taste and smell even better.

We will not be allowing any groups access to camp if their fees have not been paid in full upfront. This is in fairness to all the other delegations who have paid by the deadline.

### 1.4 Late Bookings

We may not be in a position to take bookings after 26th May 2023 and reserve the right to increase the camp fee after this date as shown in the table below. From 26th May, the fees have to be paid on booking, upfront in one instalment.

We reserve the right to not accept entire new delegations after 26th May 2023.

<b>Age Bracket</b>	<b>Whole camp price per 1 night per person</b>	
Under 18	£225	£32.25
18 and over	£75	£11.25

Table 1.2: Late booking price breakdown for all ages

By 10th June 2023, the food order will have been placed. We cannot guarantee that dietary needs can be met after this time.

You will also need to ensure that DBS/ PVG checks are in place for all participants aged 18 or over. We will not be allowing access to camp for anyone without a valid DBS/ PVG.

### 1.5 Very Late Booking & On the door

After the 22nd July 2023, we may not be in a position to take bookings and reserve the right to further increase the camp fee after this date as shown in the table below. From 22nd July 2023, the fees have to be paid on booking, upfront in one instalment.

<b>Age Bracket</b>	<b>Whole camp price per 1 night per person</b>	
Under 18	£300	£43
18 and over	£100	£15

Table 1.3: Very late booking price breakdown for all ages

### 1.6 Cooling-off period

There is a cooling-off period of 14 days from the time when you first pay the deposit to change your mind. In this time period, you are eligible for a full refund and your group does not have to give a reason for the cancellation.

## 1.7 Refunds

The camp fees generally go towards upfront costs. For this reason, we regret to say we are unable to offer refunds to groups who withdraw prior to attending.

In the unlikely event that you book onto camp and your group is then unable to take part, please first try to find replacement participants and group leaders. This is to avoid disappointing any young people who have already been expecting to attend. Then contact [info@venturercamp.org.uk](mailto:info@venturercamp.org.uk) where our team will make every effort to support you in finding a satisfactory solution. There is guidance available for fundraising, and for accessing camping equipment. You are important to us and we want to enable as many groups as possible to attend.

If an individual who has booked as part of a group withdraws from attending the event, the group should first attempt to find a replacement for them. If this is not possible, refunds will be offered for applications made before 10th June 2023. To request a refund, please contact [info@venturercamp.org.uk](mailto:info@venturercamp.org.uk).

If during camp you are unsatisfied with the experience, please contact camp management on site, at the earliest opportunity. We want everyone to enjoy their experience and will actively work with you to resolve the issue. We regret to say that at the time of the camp, the expense has already been incurred and we are unable to offer refunds. Please use the camp procedures or Woodcraft Folk complaints policy for raising issues.

## Section 2

# Payment Policy for Individual participants

Participation at camp is encouraged as part of a group. This is for your social, safety and financial benefit. Participants are likely to have a much richer experience attending with a group. However, participants aged 18 or above can choose to book independently if there is no alternative.

Members attending the camp who are aged 18 and above should be taking on a significant role, whether this be on a local village, or central level. The Venturer Camp 2023 team reserves the right to reject a booking application where there is not a significant commitment on camp demonstrated.

### 2.1 Standard Camp Fees

The table below shows the camp fees for participants aged 18 or over. Any participant attending Venturer Camp 2023 will need to be a fully-paid-up member of Woodcraft Folk. Participants aged 18 and above will need to hold a valid DBS/ PVG check.

Age Bracket	Whole camp price per person	1 night per person
18 and over	£50	£7.50

Table 2.1: Standard camp price breakdown for over 18s

#### 2.1.1 Early Bird Offer

If your booking & deposit is received before 12th April 2023, you will be eligible for a free, limited edition Venturer Camp 2023 t-shirt.

There is no financial discount for booking before 12th April 2023.

### 2.2 Payment

If you have difficulties paying, please contact [info@venturercamp.org.uk](mailto:info@venturercamp.org.uk) and we will make every effort to allow you to pay by standing order. All payments should be made **using your unique booking reference number** to:

**Bank** Unity Trust plc

**Account Name** Woodcraft Folk

**Account Number** 20392756

**Sort Code** 60-83-01

**Bank Address** 4 Brinley Place, Birmingham, B1 2JB

**Swift Code (BIC)** NWBKGB2L

**IBAN Number** GB93NWBK60023571418024

### 2.2.1 Deposits

Your booking is secure after you have paid 50% of your camp fee.

The deposit is non-refundable but will be taken out of your remaining balance.

### 2.2.2 Paying the remaining balance

You need to have paid the remaining balance by 26th May 2023.

We will not be allowing any people access to camp if their fees have not been paid in full upfront. This is in fairness to all the other delegations who have paid by the deadline.

## 2.3 Late Bookings

We may not be in a position to take bookings after 26th May 2023 and reserve the right to increase the camp fee after this date as shown in the table below. From 26th May, the fees have to be paid on booking, upfront in one instalment.

<b>Age Bracket</b>	<b>Whole camp price per 1 night per person</b>
18 and over	£75

Table 2.2: Late booking price breakdown for over 18s

By 10th June 2023, the food order will have been placed. We cannot guarantee that dietary needs can be met after this time.

## 2.4 Very Late Booking

After the 22nd July 2023, we may not be in a position to take bookings and reserve the right to further increase the camp fee after this date as shown in the table below. From 22nd July 2023, the fees have to be paid on booking, upfront in one instalment.

<b>Age Bracket</b>	<b>Whole camp price per 1 night per person</b>
18 and over	£100

Table 2.3: Very late booking price breakdown for over 18s

## 2.5 Cooling Off Period

There is a cooling-off period of 14 days from the time when you first pay the deposit to change your mind. In this time period, you are eligible for a full refund and you do not have to give us a reason for your cancellation.

## 2.6 Refunds

The camp fees generally go towards the camp infrastructure, food and other upfront costs. For this reason, we regret to say we are unable to guarantee to offer refunds to anyone who withdraws. However we understand that losing a sum of money could put you in hardship. Therefore please speak to us at the earliest opportunity if you have payment difficulties. We want to help you with fundraising advice and with practicalities. Please contact us on [info@venturercamp.org.uk](mailto:info@venturercamp.org.uk). You will not be pressured into attending the camp if you don't want to.

If during camp you have any problems, please contact camp management on site, at the earliest opportunity. We want everyone to enjoy their experience and will actively work with you to resolve the issue. We regret to say that at the time of the camp, the expense has already been incurred and we are unable to offer refunds. Please use the camp procedures or Woodcraft Folk complaints policy for raising issues.



Venturer Camp 2023, a project by [Woodcraft Folk](#), will bring together 13-17 year olds from across the UK to camp together and live by the Woodcraft Folk values for a week in the summer of 2023. Check out our website ([venturercamp.org.uk](http://venturercamp.org.uk)) and our social media pages for more information.

Woodcraft Folk is a registered charity in England & Wales (1148195) and in Scotland (SC039791), and a limited company, registered in England & Wales (8133727). Registered office: Holyoake House, Hanover Street, Manchester M60 0AS

## B | Code of Conduct

### **VENTURER CAMP 2023**

#### Code of Conduct

The expected conduct of everyone on site

4th July 2023



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Code of Conduct

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## Section 0

# Introduction

### 0.1. Definitions

- 0.1.1. "Participant" - anyone under the age of 18 who is not attending as a volunteer and as such has paid the participant price.
- 0.1.2. "Volunteer" - anyone aged 16, 17 or 18+ who is attending Venturer Camp as a volunteer and as such has paid the volunteer price.
- 0.2. This Code of Conduct applies to all participants, volunteers and Woodcraft Folk members of staff attending, or who will be present on site at Venturer Camp 2023.
- 0.3. See below for a list of relevant Woodcraft Folk Policies. These should be read in conjunction with this document. These policies are to be adhered to by everyone on site.
  - 0.3.1. [Safeguarding Policy](#)
  - 0.3.2. [Health, Safety & Wellbeing Policy](#)
  - 0.3.3. [Volunteering Policy](#)
  - 0.3.4. [Code of Behaviour](#)
  - 0.3.5. [Drug, Alcohol, Tobacco & Intoxicating Substances Policy](#)
  - 0.3.6. [Relationships & Sex Education Policy](#)

## Section 1

### Consent

- 1.1. In Woodcraft Folk and at Venturer Camp, everyone has the right to feel welcome, feel comfortable and to feel safe.
- 1.2. Everyone on site is expected to be friendly and to respect each other's boundaries.
- 1.3. It is necessary to be aware that not everyone has the same boundaries as you, and to be sensitive and respectful to other people.
- 1.4. Before sharing any intimate acts with another person (for example: hugs; sexual acts; or holding hands), you must have explicit consent.
- 1.5. Consent means positive affirmation.
- 1.6. Consent is necessary for *each and every* act.
  - 1.6.1. "No" means no.
  - 1.6.2. Only "yes" means yes.
  - 1.6.3. The affirmation must be explicit and non-coercive.
  - 1.6.4. "Maybe", "not yet", "I'm not sure" do not count as giving consent.
  - 1.6.5. You must accept "no" either verbally or through body language as an answer without questioning the person's reasons.
- 1.7. Threatening and/or coaxing people into saying "yes" does not count as getting consent.
- 1.8. A person can change their mind and withdraw consent at any time, this must be respected.
- 1.9. If someone is intoxicated, they cannot consent.
  - 1.9.1. If you are under the influence of intoxicating substances, you must still get consent.
  - 1.9.2. You will be held equally responsible for your actions whether you are sober or otherwise.
- 1.10. Contraceptive products will be available for anyone of any age along with advice around safe sex practices.
- 1.11. We encourage attendees to look out for each other.
  - 1.11.1. Don't be afraid to check in with someone and clarify if they are alright.
  - 1.11.2. If you are concerned about someone then contact: your group leader; any adult you trust; a steward; village coordinator or member of the coordinating team.

Code of ConductSECTION 1. CONSENT

- 1.12. If you are concerned or upset by someone's behaviour, including breaking consent or disregarding personal boundaries, the Venturer Camp Safeguarding Team will take your concerns seriously and address them promptly.
- 1.13. Any behaviour that breaks consent will be dealt with according to the Woodcraft Folk Safeguarding Policy, Woodcraft Folk Complaints Policy and Woodcraft Folk Grievances Policy.

## Section 2

# Respect

- 2.1. Respect for each other
  - 2.1.1. Woodcraft Folk aims to create a safe and inclusive space for all.
  - 2.1.2. Discrimination of anyone will not be tolerated.
  - 2.1.3. Everyone is to be viewed as equal and differences between us are to be respected.
- 2.2. Respect other people's privacy & personal property
  - 2.2.1. Do not share photos/ videos of participants without their explicit permission.
  - 2.2.2. We will have camp photographers who will be documenting the camp officially.
  - 2.2.3. If you are unhappy with being photographed, please speak to the on-shift coordinator at the earliest opportunity.
  - 2.2.4. Do not enter other people's personal space (ie their sleeping tent) without their consent.
- 2.3. Respect the site
  - 2.3.1. Leave the site as you find it, if not in a better condition.
  - 2.3.2. Use the designated red waste and recycling bins for your village's waste
  - 2.3.3. Do not damage the facilities on site, this includes, but is not limited to:
    - 2.3.3.1. permanent buildings
    - 2.3.3.2. temporary structures
    - 2.3.3.3. equipment borrowed from districts
  - 2.3.4. If you notice any broken or damaged equipment report it to your Group leader or site services
  - 2.3.5. Any equipment taken to the site for camp will need to be removed from the site at the end of camp regardless of if it is broken or not.
- 2.4. Respect for others
  - 2.4.1. Everyone on site should show respect and consideration for other participants, volunteers (including stewards) and Woodcraft Folk staff
  - 2.4.2. Everyone on site should show respect to organised visitors on site
  - 2.4.3. Everyone on site should show respect to members of the public who are using the footpath which crosses through the site. This means do not heckle them, cause distress to them or attempt to block their path.
- 2.5. Respect for other Village's space

Code of ConductSECTION 2. RESPECT

- 2.5.1. When travelling through the site, do not cross through other village's space. Use the footpath which runs along the length of the site
- 2.5.2. When entering & exiting villages (either your own or another person's), do so at their "gate" or through a large clearing in tents. Do not force your way through small gaps between tents where guy ropes are positioned.

## Section 3

# Day Scheduling

- 3.1. The Venturer Camp coordination team encourages everyone to check in with their villages regularly and emphasise the importance of getting enough sleep to fully enjoy the camp.
- 3.2. Villages should set appropriate bedtimes for all participants.
  - 3.2.1. They may divide participants into multiple age groups, however this is discouraged.
- 3.3. A 'Morning Circle' will be held each morning in each village.
  - 3.3.1. The time of this is at the discretion of the Village Coordinators, this should be decided before camp.
  - 3.3.2. Everyone camping in the village will attend the morning circle. This is an important mechanism for checking in with both participants and volunteers.
  - 3.3.3. Morning Circle should not be held until after the Village Coordinators Meeting.
  - 3.3.4. If you are unable to attend the morning circle then you should inform your village coordinator at the earliest possible opportunity.
- 3.4. Central programme is organised on alternate evenings.
  - 3.4.1. On Saturday 5, Monday 7 and Wednesday 9 August, the central evening programme will finish at 23:30.
    - 3.4.1.1. At this point most programme including all amplified music will end.
    - 3.4.1.2. Volunteers will be able to stay in the central area until 01:00 if they choose to, the main marquee will be open for low-key gatherings until then.
  - 3.4.2. On Friday 11 August, the central evening programme will finish at 01:00.
    - 3.4.2.1. At this point, all programme including all amplified music will end.
    - 3.4.2.2. The main marquee will close once all central programme has finished, volunteers should return to their villages at this time.
  - 3.4.3. On the nights not listed above, there may be some low-key central programme organised
  - 3.4.4. On any night there is central program organised, the central area will close to everyone at 01:00.
- 3.5. Sign in is between 22:00 and 22:30 on all nights.
  - 3.5.1. On central programme nights, the programme will stop for half an hour.

Code of ConductSECTION 3. DAY SCHEDULING

- 3.5.2. On village programme nights, villages do not have to stop programme however this is suggested to allow for an efficient sign-in.
- 3.5.3. During sign-in, participants should return to their villages where their leader or a designated volunteer should sign them in. The volunteer responsible for sign in should be made known to the participants in advance of sign in.
- 3.6. No amplified music should be played in villages after 22:00.
  - 3.6.1. Campfires, chatting and singing in villages should happen with respect for the needs of others in your own and neighbouring villages.
- 3.7. Quiet hours on site are from 23:30 to 08:00.
  - 3.7.1. During these hours, no noise, including amplified music, is permitted anywhere on site.
  - 3.7.2. Anyone travelling around the site at this time should do so quietly and avoid moving close to villages.
  - 3.7.3. No 'morning cry' before 08:00

## Section 4

# Cooperation & Clan Expectations

- 4.1. Villages are expected to cooperate with the central coordination team.
  - 4.1.1. This includes but is not limited to
    - 4.1.1.1. Food Team
    - 4.1.1.2. Programme Team
    - 4.1.1.3. Site Services Team
    - 4.1.1.4. Coordination and Event Administration Team
  - 4.1.2. The central coordination team will make themselves available to villages should questions or issues arise.
- 4.2. All participants of the camp and all volunteers, unless it would conflict with their village or camp-wide role, should be assigned a clan.
  - 4.2.1. Their attendance to clan should be monitored and where needed clan attendance should be enforced.
  - 4.2.2. Clans are expected to help and take part around their village
  - 4.2.3. Clans are expected to help and take part with central teams, where rota'd.
- 4.3. Participants are encouraged to participate in both village and central activities to make the most of Venturer Camp.

## Section 5

# Leaving Site

- 5.1. Participants are encouraged to remain on site where possible to fully take part in the camp.
- 5.2. Participants are only allowed to leave the site if they have been given explicit permission by their group leader.
  - 5.2.1. They must be accompanied by at least two other people (this can be participants or volunteers).
  - 5.2.2. They should return to the site by no later than 18:00.
  - 5.2.3. If participants haven't returned by this time and haven't signed back in then the stewards will be informed and the missing person procedures will be followed.
- 5.3. Volunteers are permitted to leave site at any time it is deemed necessary.
- 5.4. Anyone leaving site must sign out at the camp office before leaving site.
  - 5.4.1. This includes groups going off-site for a structured activity.
  - 5.4.2. Participants must be signed out by their leader.
  - 5.4.3. They must leave a contact telephone number; their purpose for leaving site; and an estimated return time.
  - 5.4.4. While off site, everyone is representing Woodcraft Folk and as such should act accordingly.
  - 5.4.5. As soon as you return to site, you must sign back in at the camp office.
- 5.5. Anyone leaving site should not abandon responsibility (included but not limited to: clan, being on-shift, leading activities) without good reason. This reason should be communicated to the person overseeing that activity when seeking permission to leave site
- 5.6. There must be enough leaders on site at all times, volunteers need to consider this before leaving site. During a typical group night session, Woodcraft Folk's minimum ratio for supervision of venturers is 1 adult for every 10 young people with a minimum of 2 total leaders. We recommend that each group has at least 3 leaders, since camp is effectively non-stop for 7 days. However please consider the needs of your group and plan accordingly.

## Section 6

# Intoxicating Substances (Drugs & Alcohol)

- 6.1. Venturer Camp 2023 takes place within the UK under UK law. Anyone on site is expected to comply with UK legislation.
- 6.2. Safety is the most important thing, look after yourself and each other.
  - 6.2.1. If you are concerned about someone then contact: your group leader; any adult you trust; a steward; village coordinator or member of the coordinating team.
  - 6.2.2. If anyone is found drunk or intoxicated due to drug or alcohol consumption then the primary concern will be for their health. They should be escorted back to the village and handed over to a leader who should take care of the individual. Where this is not possible, the Head Steward should be informed and they will provide support until the person is in a fit state to return to their bed or take further medical action as required.
- 6.3. Intoxication is not an excuse for bad behaviour
  - 6.3.1. Adults should be aware of the fact that they may be sent home from the event if they behave in a drunk and disorderly manner.
- 6.4. Alcohol can only be consumed by those aged 18 or over.
  - 6.4.1. Under-18s found with alcohol will have it confiscated.
  - 6.4.2. No alcohol is to be consumed in the central area.
  - 6.4.3. Alcohol under 15% ABV may be consumed by adults in villages, if the village decides to permit it.
  - 6.4.4. If adult volunteers choose to consume alcohol, villages must ensure that there are sufficient leaders sober, to respond in an emergency. One of these should ideally be able to drive and have a vehicle on site.
  - 6.4.5. Alcohol should be stored securely in a locked vehicle.
  - 6.4.6. If a person aged 18 or over is found to be supplying under 18s with alcohol, they should be immediately reported to the on shift coordinator.
  - 6.4.7. Alcohol may be consumed, if the village deems appropriate, from the end of the news. However, villages should consider that adults must model a good relationship with alcohol and being at Venturer Camp is not an excuse to drink excessively.
- 6.5. Smoking and vaping is only allowed in the designated smoking areas.

Code of ConductSECTION 6. INTOXICATING SUBSTANCES (DRUGS & ALCOHOL)

- 6.5.1. The ends of used cigarettes should be extinguished then disposed of properly in the correct bin. This will be made clear in the smoking areas.
- 6.5.2. E-Cigarettes should be disposed of using the correct bin.
- 6.5.3. Adults must not supply those aged under 18 with cigarettes or e-cigarettes.
- 6.6. Substances which are illegal outside of Venturer Camp will remain illegal at Venturer Camp. Psychoactive substances are also not permitted at Venturer Camp.
  - 6.6.1. If anyone is found to be in possession of, using, or supplying illegal or psychoactive substances, this should be escalated to the On-Shift Coordinator and On-Shift Safeguarding Lead.

## Section 7

# Breaches of these Guidelines

- 7.1. If you have any problems on camp or feel that any of these guidelines have been breached by participants or volunteers, you should speak to your leader/ village coordinator/ member of the Coordination Team/ a trusted volunteer on site.
- 7.2. Anyone you speak to should escalate concerns to the Safeguarding & Grievances Panel/ On-Shift Coordinator and on-shift Safeguarding Lead as deemed appropriate.
- 7.3. Breaching these guidelines may result in consequences. These may be, but not limited to:
  - 7.3.1. Verbal Warning
  - 7.3.2. Talking to leaders
  - 7.3.3. Talking to parents off-site
  - 7.3.4. Removal from the site
  - 7.3.5. Contacting the police
- 7.4. Decisions taken by the on-shift coordinator in conjunction with the Safeguarding & Grievances Panel are final.
  - 7.4.1. Individuals have the right to appeal using the standard Woodcraft Folk procedures, after camp is complete.
- 7.5. The coordination team will keep a log of every incident referred to them, along with the action taken.



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## C | U18 Volunteer Pricing Policy

### **VENTURER CAMP 2023**

#### Under 18 Volunteer Pricing Policy

A guide to being aged 16 or 17 and volunteering at Venturer Camp

4th March 2023



## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Participants & Volunteers

Venturer Camp 2023 has expanded age ranges to include anyone aged 13-17 inclusive as a participant, this is due to the Covid Pandemic. By default, anyone attending the camp who is aged under 18 will be classified as a participant and charged the participant fee; and those who are aged 18 and above will be attending the camp as a volunteer and they will be charged the volunteer fee.

There is an option for young people aged 16 or 17 to become a volunteer and be charged the volunteer fee. This document will outline the process to do this and requirements of this.

Regardless of if a person aged under 18 is attending Venturer Camp as a participant or volunteer, they are still a child according to law and therefore Woodcraft Folk's safeguarding policy & procedures. The Venturer Camp coordination team recognise this and that there will be a difference in the expectations of a 16 or 17 year old volunteer and a volunteer aged over 18.

### 1.2 Volunteer Pricing

Volunteers are being charged a reduced rate as part of Woodcraft Folk's commitment to reduce barriers to volunteering. The Venturer Camp coordination team recognises that camp programme is targeted at 13-17 years, and as such there is no dedicated programme for over 18s. The Venturer Camp coordination team have decided to charge volunteers a reduced fee to recognise their contribution, without which the camp would be unable to happen.

The Venturer Camp coordination team recognises that anyone coming to the camp may experience financial barriers, as such an access fund will be launched in April 2023.

### 1.3 Participant Voluntary Contribution

Participants of the camp will still be expected to undertake standard camping tasks, as is expected at Woodcraft Folk Events as part of the cooperative nature of the organisation.

## 2 Who Is Eligible?

### 2.1 Different Voluntary Commitments

The Venturer Camp coordination team recognises that there are different voluntary roles, each with different commitments before, during and after camp. The coordination team does not wish to display favouritism for one team of volunteers over another as all volunteers are equally as important in making the camp a success.

### 2.2 Role Requirements

Anyone aged under 16 or 17 is eligible for a reduced price place at camp, if they are taking on a *significant* voluntary role. A voluntary role is classed as significant when:

- the role is the persons primary focus on site; and

- the role will require the majority of the persons time on site for at least 5 full days of camp (or 70 % of their time on site if they are not on site for the whole event);

### **3 Applying For A Reduced Price Place**

#### **3.1 Prerequisites For Application**

Before an application can be placed, there are a number of prerequisites. These will be checked on submission of an application and the application will be rejected if any of these criteria are not satisfied.

The young person must:

1. have begun the process of obtaining a Enhanced DBS (or membership of the PVG scheme if based in Scotland);
2. be registered as a member of Woodcraft Folk and have paid their membership fee;
3. have submitted references (this will normally have been done as part of becoming a member of Woodcraft Folk); and
4. have spoken to the relevant team leader about the role and a volunteer role description has been produced (this should be included with the application).

#### **3.2 The Application**

Assigning an under 18 year old a volunteer priced place is at the discretion of the Camp Coordinator & relevant team leader. Applications should be sent to [info@venturercamp.org.uk](mailto:info@venturercamp.org.uk) at the time of applying to book or booking, should it be part of a larger booking.

#### **3.3 Outcome Of The Application**

The decision will be communicated via email to the booking contact & applicant, and the price reduction will be manually entered on the booking system. The booking contact will be able to login to the booking system to view the updated invoice.

## **4 On-Site Practicalities**

#### **4.1 Safeguarding**

For Safeguarding purposes, the young person will still require a designated leader. The volunteering young person will still count as a young person in the ratio of adults to young people.

#### **4.2 Wristbands**

Young people taking on voluntary roles will be given a different wristband to those over-18 and participants. This is to recognise the difference between them and an over-18 volunteer.

Under 18 Volunteer Pricing Policy4 ON-SITE PRACTICALITIES**4.3 Volunteering Hours**

Volunteers aged 16 or 17 may also have some restrictions on when they can volunteer on site (for example, volunteers aged under 18 will not be allowed to be on overnight stewarding shifts or be alone on stewarding shifts).



Venturer Camp 2023, a project by [Woodcraft Folk](#), will bring together 13-17 year olds from across the UK to camp together and live by the Woodcraft Folk values for a week in the summer of 2023. Check out our website ([venturercamp.org.uk](http://venturercamp.org.uk)) and our social media pages for more information.

Woodcraft Folk is a registered charity in England & Wales (1148195) and in Scotland (SC039791), and a limited company, registered in England & Wales (8133727). Registered office: Holyoake House, Hanover Street, Manchester M60 0AS

# D | Missing YP Procedures

## Missing Young Person Procedures

### Venturer Camp 2023



In this document, a “child” or “young person”, is anyone aged under 18, which includes a limited number of volunteers.

#### Background

Woodcraft Folk takes the safety of young people very seriously and will take every precaution necessary to ensure that individuals in their care do not leave an activity unaccompanied. The chances of finding a missing individual safe are greatest if the individual's absence is soon discovered.

This document outlines the steps to be followed in the event of a young person (under the age of 18) going missing or leaving a Woodcraft Folk activity.

#### Scope & Purpose

These procedures apply to Woodcraft Folk's Venturer Camp 2023, and will be followed by all staff and volunteers at the event.

#### Prevention

Volunteers and staff will take reasonable steps to prevent young people from going missing or leaving the event:

- Undertaking risk assessment of the site and activities
- Maintaining a register of young people present
- Providing an engaging and age-appropriate programme
- Ensuring adequate supervision, and where appropriate providing a named individual responsible for overseeing the engagement of groups of young people
- Arranging check-ins, sign-ins or headcounts regularly as appropriate
- Setting clear expectations for young people about their level of autonomy and supervision from adult volunteers, which will vary based on their age and other factors
- Defining clear boundaries for individual camping villages and the site as a whole
- Briefing young people on staying safe during the event, e.g. signing in/out arrangements, where to go and who to approach for help should they need it

missing-young-person-procedures-v1  
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## Responding to a Missing Child

Immediately on discovering a child is missing, or has not returned from being off-site by the specified time:

- Review the group register to confirm who is missing and how many individuals are missing
- Ring the individual's mobile if they have one
- Alert stewards and/or Camp Office to mobilise support for a search of the site and immediate surrounding area
- Create and share a description of the missing individual (name, age, appearance, clothing)
- Reassure other group members

If an immediate search is unsuccessful, the Duty Safeguarding Officer will work with the volunteers responsible for the missing child(ren) to:

- Contact parent/carer to inform them of the situation
- Engage with the Police
- Mobilise additional support to searchCollate contact details for all individuals searching

When the individual is found it is important to recognise that during the time an individual is missing, however briefly, all involved can suffer fear, guilt and distress. It is not always easy to control all these emotions when the child is found. Staff and volunteers should ensure they remember that the individual also might have been afraid and distressed and might now be in need of comfort - remain calm, reassure the individual and avoid apportioning blame.

The Duty Safeguarding Officer will also ensure:

- The individual is offered medical and/or pastoral support as required
- Parents/carers, Police and and other search parties are updated with news of the individual's safety
- Villages remind all young people of boundaries and the importance of adhering to them
- An incident report is completed and filed
- Relevant practice is reviewed and updated to reduce future risk, both for the remainder of Venturer Camp 2023 and at future large scale events

# E | Data Protection Declaration

## Data Protection Declaration - Access to the Booking System

\* Indicates required question

### 1. Email Address \*

This should be the email address which you wish to have access granted to the manager areas of the booking system.

If you have a Woodcraft/ Venturer Camp Google Workspace account, you **must** use this.

### 2. Declaration \*

By ticking the box below and submitting this form, I

- will only use the data collected for its original intended purpose, to support the safe engagement of young people and volunteers in Venturer Camp 2023;
- will not share personal or sensitive data;
- will not use the data for any other reason than to fulfill my camp organising role;
- will not access, or attempt to access, data which I have not been given consent to access by the Camp Coordinator or Data Controller;
- will not download and save reports from the booking system without prior consent from the Data Controller (data@woodcraft.org.uk);
- will not download and save reports on a personal device. If you need to download data to manipulate it to extract figures, for example, you must upload this to the appropriate area of the Venturer Camp 2023 Shared Folder and delete it from your personal device before manipulating it;
- will ensure good account security practices are followed for my login (this **must** include Multi-Factor Authentication and a strong password).

*Tick all that apply.*

I have read and understood the above

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Google Forms

## F | Other Relevant Documents

There are many more relevant documents which it would have been nice to include in the Appendix of this Report, but as the report & current appendices are already far longer than planned - here's a list of documents organisers of future camps may find it useful to refer to.

Many of these documents have been typeset using L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X and therefore can be found in the `venturer-camp-2023-docs` repository on GitHub

- Info Pack v0 (available on Google Drive & GitHub)
- Info Pack v1 (available on Google Drive & GitHub)
- Info Pack v2 (available on Google Drive & GitHub)
- Booking Handbook (available on Google Drive & GitHub)
- Village Handbook (available on Google Drive & GitHub)
- Volunteer Role Descriptions (available on Google Drive)
- Food Handbook (available on Google Drive)
- Risk Register (available on Google Drive)
- Evaluation Sheets from Village Evaluations (available on Google Drive)

Any questions relating to documents which can't be found can be directed to the Venturer Camp 2023 Coordinator via [thomas@woodcraft.org.uk](mailto:thomas@woodcraft.org.uk)



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