

Woodcraft Folk DFs

Winter Thing 2023

Minutes



25th of November 2023, Online

Present: Tyler, Wilf, Amelia, Ray, Tabby, Maya L, Maya H-B, Callie, Joe W, Joe H, Eleanor, Parker, Noah
Kinsfolk Observer: Delilah

0 Introductions	2
1 Review of the Previous Thing's Minutes	2
2 Quarterly Reports	2
2.2 Reports from Non-Committee Role-Holders	4
3 Quarterly Financial Report	5
4 Policy Proposals	5
4.1 Cancellation Policy Update	5
4.2 Shadow role emails merged with main emails	6
5 Musings	6
5.1 DF Involvement in Woodcraft Centres	6
5.2 Committee vs Non-Committee, the Future	7
6 Discussion of Upcoming Events	8
6.1 Winter Wonderland 2023	8
6.2 Events in 2024	9
7 Updates and Notices	9
7.1 Update from the GC Reps	9
7.2 Update from the Safeguarding Rep	10

0 Introductions

Tyler took the chair and welcomed everyone to Winter Thing. The meeting began by going around the circle allowing everyone to introduce themselves. Everyone was asked to say their name, pronouns and give their opinion on icebreaker questions. Tyler asked people to use the hand raising function to form a queue to speak. Some people could not stay for the whole meeting. Where people have left and joined the meeting, this has not been recorded in the minutes.

1 Review of the Previous Thing's Minutes

Tyler presented the minutes from the previous Thing. Progress towards goals set at that meeting was noted.

2 Quarterly Reports

Note: In advance of the meeting, anyone holding a Committee or Non-Committee role was contacted and asked to prepare a report which answered 7 questions. The full text of this quarter's reports can be found in the [2023-11 Winter Thing Papers](#)

2.1.1 MEST-UP Coordinator (Amelia and Tabby)

The report was presented by Tabby. Tyler reported that staff member Lauren Karstadt has offered to support MEST UP by linking them with external organisations to help maintain/improve the standard of MEST UP Training.

2.1.2 Safeguarding Rep (Sadie Lamont)

The report was presented by Tyler on Sadie's behalf.

2.1.3 Fundraising (Noah and Parker)

The report was presented by Tyler on Noah and Parker's behalf. Tyler added an explanation of the Workers' Beer income stream.

2.1.4 Shadow Treasurer (Maya Liley)

The report was presented by Maya L.

2.1.5 Shadow Events (Callista Smithson Swain)

The report was presented by Tyler on behalf of Callie.

2.1.6 Outreach Representative (Maya Hall-Balfourth)

The report was presented by Maya L.
Tyler answered questions on the aims of the role.

2.1.7 Even Laymember (Isla Douglas)

The report was presented by Tyler on behalf of Isla.

2.1.8 Training Rep (Carmen Mallinson-Pocock)

The report was presented by Tyler on behalf of Carmen.
Wilf mentioned that Lauren K should also be put in contact with Carmen when she takes the next steps to assist with DF training.

Action #1: Tyler to make sure MEST-UP, Training, Safeguarding and Lauren K are eventually linked up re: external training

2.1.9 Chair of Committee (Tyler Eckersall)

The report was presented by Tyler.

2.1.10 Communications Rep (Tyler Eckersall)

The report was presented by Tyler.

2.1.11 Shadow MEST-UP (Joseph Hammond)

The report was presented.
Wilf noted there is a theme among the shadow role reports that they would like to contribute more, but are not sure what to do. He suggested we talk about better integration between the Shadows and their corresponding main roles during the later policy proposal.

2.1.12 Activism Rep (Paul and Emily)

The report was presented by Tyler on behalf of Paul and Emily.
Tyler called for contributions and suggestions and ideas to the activism@spanthat.world email.

Action #2: Tyler to develop comms for engagement/contribution to activism

2.2.13 Secretary of the Movement (Wilfred Lamont)

The report was presented by Wilf.

2.2 Reports from Non-Committee Role-Holders

2.2.1 International Opportunities Rep (Mickey Lowe)

The report was presented by Tyler on behalf of Mickey

2.2.2 Zine Editor (Sven Reeves)

The report was presented by Tyler on behalf of Sven.

Action #3: Tyler to speak to Sven about concept/strategy for the zine

Action #4: Tyler to develop comms about submission to the zine

2.2.3 Venturer Liaison (Carmen Mallinson-Pocock)

The report was presented by Tyler on behalf of Carmen.

2.2.4 Accessibility and First Aid Fairy (Esme Thompson)

The report was presented by Tyler on behalf of Esme.

2.2.5 Welsh Liaison (Lara Sayers)

The report was presented by Tyler on behalf of Lara.

2.2.6 Scottish Liaison (Aisling Stuart)

The report was presented by Tyler on the behalf of Aisling.

Both regional liaison reports mentioned a wish to speak to the other.

Action #5: Wilf to email the Welsh and Scottish Liaisons to encourage dialogue in light of their comments in quarterly reports.

3 Quarterly Financial Report

Note: The full text of the financial report can be found [here](#)

The Tyler presented the quarterly financial report on behalf of the treasurers

Action #6: Treasurers to contact central treasurers to speak about revising the minimum reserve for the DF finances.

4 Policy Proposals

Note: The full text of the policy proposals can be found [in the papers](#)

4.1 Cancellation Policy Update

Tyler proposed a change to the cancellation policy to scale cancellation fees to the cost of the entire event, rather than using a flat rate as currently.

Eleanor asked whether there was provision to waive cancellation fees in exceptional circumstances, to which Tyler said that this is already a provision of the current policy and will be kept.

Maya said that in her experience of chasing up fees, some people were not aware of cancellation fee responsibilities

Wilf said a slide on cancellations and a link to the policy is already in the info pack, so it is annoying that some people are still unaware that they have a responsibility to pay cancellation fees.

Action #7: Nuala to edit the final page of the booking form to add a cancellation disclaimer and link to the cancellation policy.

Ray suggested adding a mention of cancellation fees to the end of the booking form and advised future-proofing the policy for the case of late opening of booking relative to the deadline for fee-free cancellation.

Amendment: The 50% fee period starts one week before the event or 2 weeks after bookings open, whichever is later.

Amendment accepted

Action #8: Wilf/Tyler to update policy according to Tyler's proposal with Ray's amendment

4.2 Shadow role emails merged with main emails

Tyler proposed giving shadow role-holders access to the main role-holders' emails and associated Google Drive and then getting rid of separate email accounts for shadow roles in order to streamline workflow and training of the shadows.

Shadow treasurer Maya supported the proposed change will cut out the middleman for getting in the loop with main.

The Thing was reminded people of best practice for marking emails as unread if no direct action has been taken and a specific email etiquette workshop at Old/New for managing shared inboxes was proposed. The Thing agreed that we should wait until the handover at Old/New to complete this transition if it takes place.

Delilah made a technical point that two-factor authentication was more difficult when multiple people used the same google account.

As an alternative, it was suggested that all emails to the main accounts were simply redirected to the shadow addresses, but the importance of common access to a drive account to allow synchronised workflow was also brought up in opposition.

Action #9: Tyler to set up a meeting of Shadow Roles and Shadowed Roles to discuss digital integration of the roles.

5 Musings

Note: The full text of the musings can be found [in the papers](#)

5.1 DF Involvement in Woodcraft Centres

Wilf read out an opening statement by Esme introducing the context of the musing. The Thing heard that Woodcraft Centres and particularly Biblins are very interested in DF engagement in working weekends at the sites and that Esme has been speaking to staff and committee from Biblins who have been discussing the possibility of a working weekend specifically for DFs.

The Thing went into breakout rooms to discuss the musing.

Afterwards, representatives reported on the discussions in their room.

The Thing agreed that difficult access to Woodcraft sites without a car was a major issue and a barrier for participation on a short weekend event. The sites are also more expensive than most sites DFs use. The Thing recognised that both sides would really like for events like the one proposed to happen, but that it

probably wouldn't be popular enough to be practical, because of the barriers to DFs. Committee would still like to make use of Woodcraft sites, perhaps for Things and Althing.

Action #10: Nuala to organise Spring Thing at Darsham

5.2 Committee vs Non-Committee, the Future

Wilf opened discussion on the constitutional difference between committee and non-committee roles and questioned whether this corresponded to the reality of the differences between the types of responsibilities that different roles take on. He made a distinction between 'institutional roles', which are about maintenance and administration of DFs as an organisation, and 'practical roles', which are about coordinating the membership to realise our objectives. He noted that practical topics hardly ever get time in meetings because institutional matters are always prioritised.

He proposed using the distinction to divide all the roles into 'Committee' for institutional roles and a new body that would have practice and practical roles as its focus.

Nuala asked for a bullet point summary of what the breakout groups ought to discuss, which was given by Wilf:

- Is this way of thinking about roles within DFs valid?
- Is the tentative division of roles into the two categories found [in the papers](#) reasonable?
- How would a new organisational structure to promote Practice work best?

The Thing went into breakout rooms to discuss the musing and DFs reported back the points discussed afterwards.

The Thing agreed that the main problem holding the two groups back - and especially the practical side - is a lack of communication and clear targets.

Practical roles are focused on ideas, but have not been given the agency to put these into practice. The institutional side prioritises events to the point where that is almost all of DF activity. In the past, DF events and DF activism were two equal sides to the movement.

Ray suggested that the deterioration of our practical side has been because role-holders have not been given drive and have received patchy handover with some roles lying vacant for a year.

Two groups with their focus on different areas could improve things, but it was noted that this could lead to the formation of cliques. A constitutional barrier between the two might end up being problematic, especially in the realm of travel expenses and other constitutional privileges applying to some but not all roles.

Tyler gave some information on the model of GC, where subcommittees and working groups are selected from the members with relevant knowledge to work towards a set goal. He explained his strategy for internal comms on Committee this year which aimed to subdivide into smaller committee group chats to reduce unnecessary contact with different areas of committee. Thing was reminded that the structures for the day-to-day running of Committee change from year to year. The changes we might make on this issue might have a broader and more permanent scope.

Delilah asked about the Campaigns role on previous committees, which might be a model for how to give direction to the practical side of DFs. When Delilah was a young DF, the campaigns role was defunct and eventually dissolved, but previously had been a position that coordinated activism and event programme centred around a yearly campaign theme voted on at Althing.

Action #11: Wilf to set up a working group to have more discussions on this topic and bring further musings, proposals or motions to Things in 2024.

6 Discussion of Upcoming Events

6.1 Winter Wonderland 2023

Dates: 27/12/2023 to 30/12/2023

Location: Barton Camp, Weston-super-Mare

Wilf opened the discussion. Winter Wonderland is set to be the biggest camp since before the Pandemic, with just over 100 bookings. The demographic spread is very healthy with over half under 18.

The coordination team has been established and has met to discuss actions.

Tyler reported on the success of the comms strategy for the event: A single feed post on Instagram, with different slides reposted on the story every few days.

Ray, the KP for the event, has been collaborating with Joe (Treasurer) to try to create a budget that reflects spending over the last few events and takes into account a sub-budget for allergies and restricted diets.

Action #12: Nuala to organise another meeting of the WW coord team

6.2 Events in 2024

Dates: n/a

Location: n/a

Nuala opened the discussion. The events team hopes that DF Camp will be large, perhaps even with a need for more than one village.

The programme will hopefully be planned far in advance, perhaps with live music and external workshops. More complicated programme elements will be trialled on a smaller scale at Winter Wonderland and Spring Awakening.

Volunteers have been found for some roles at Spring Awakening. The coordination of that event will begin after Winter Wonderland. It would be good to promote volunteering for upcoming coordination teams to newer DFs.

Action #13: Events and coord team at promote this opportunity at Winter Wonderland

7 Updates and Notices

7.1 Update from the GC Reps

Tyler gave the update as the only representative in attendance. Tyler spent a long time speaking to different people in central Woodcraft, with topics including:

- The minimum reserve
- Next steps for the DF Movement
- Centres committees

DFs now have more of a voice on General Council because of the high proportion of young people in its members. DFs occupy a strange middle ground because they are both beneficiaries and volunteers in Woodcraft, so advocating from our unique perspective is important.

GC's spring meeting should fall one weekend after the provisional date for Spring Thing (17th-18th Feb 2024).

7.2 Update from the Safeguarding Rep

The Safeguarding Rep, Sadie, was unable to attend, so Wilf presented a pre-written speech on the expectations for members of committee on events due to their increased responsibility.

Tyler thanked Sadie for the report.