



Pathfinders Camp – Woodlarks Guidance for New Helpers



Welcome

Please read this booklet carefully before coming to camp. It is designed to help you understand how the camp works, what will be required of you, and how to ensure that you and the people you are working with have a good time. If reading this raises any questions for you or if you feel at all unsure about anything - please ask!

Pathfinders Camp is a friendly and inclusive holiday based at Woodlarks Campsite in Farnham, Surrey, where a group of around 110 people gather together each August aged 16 to 80+. Great importance is placed on everyone feeling comfortable and able to contribute.

Woodlarks Campsite has been described as a place where 'everyone can do everything, as long as there is enough active help'. Pathfinders Camp aims to make this happen but can only be as successful as the participants help to make it. While the organisers try to ensure that there is a full and varied programme, which they hope will provide something to suit everyone, only by joining in wholeheartedly will you and a disabled camper gain as much as is possible from the Pathfinders experience.

The information and guidance in this booklet is intended to help you to feel confident about the forthcoming week. It is designed to give you a feel for the way the camp is organised. Please try not to be nervous about attending Pathfinders Camp, there will be other new helpers; equally, there will be lots of people who have been helping at camps like Pathfinders for many, many years. They will be happy to help and guide you as you settle in. If you are at all unsure about anything, please ask. Remember that we were all 'first timers' once, no matter how confident we may seem to you.

What happens when I arrive at camp?

As a helper you are asked to arrive at the campsite no earlier than 3pm. If you are very early there are lots of good places to grab lunch nearby rather than queue on the drive!

On arrival please introduce yourself to the Camp Leader, Sam. She will be sitting at the "Information Table" with Nicky, the Treasurer. They will provide you with some introductory details of the helper/camper you will be buddied with, give you a book with some information about the week, and tie in any loose ends to do with forms or camp fees. You will also get a name tag and patrol colour so you can easily find your new friends in your team.

We ask that campers arrive no earlier than 4.30pm, so that, as a helper, you can familiarise yourself with the campsite and begin to prepare for your campers' arrival. It also ensures that, wherever possible, you have a conversation with the camper and her parents / carers. It is through this meeting that you will be able to begin to identify exactly what care she needs and how she likes this to be provided.

Remember, whilst some of our campers may find it difficult to communicate, they are the best people to tell you about how they like to be looked after. Be sensitive about this as it can be patronising to talk to someone else about a disabled person if she is able to provide the answers for herself.

Once you have registered and know which team or "Patrol" you are in for the week, you may be asked to help with setting up tents and getting everything ready for the week ahead. As soon as Patrol tents have been identified you and your patrol will need to gather enough kit to set up your home for the week and you need to ensure your home for the week keeps everyone warm and dry. Some campers may need to sleep in one of the dormitories. There are beds that can be set up in tents and some of the larger tents even have bunks! You may need to get mattresses from the dormitory and there are groundsheets and blankets available. Once you know where your camper will be sleeping you should help to get them and their luggage 'moved in', so that they can begin to feel settled.

What does helping at camp mean?

Your role during camp is twofold. It consists of providing any personal care your camper might need and enabling them to join in as much of the camp programme as possible.

Providing Personal Care

As we said earlier, Pathfinders Camp has been set up to provide holidays for women over 18. Whilst most of our helpers are women, we also recruit a number of male helpers. Personal care is provided almost exclusively by female helpers, but everyone can be a part of the team that ensures that nobody is left 'sitting on the sidelines'.

Each disabled person has different personal care needs. The camper you will be assisting may need help with some or all of the following: getting in and out of bed; washing; dressing; going to the toilet; fetching and eating meals. Each camper will do things in the way that suits them best and you will need to work together on how to achieve this.

You will be working closely with a camper and may have to do some very personal things for them. Therefore establishing what they need assistance with, and how they like to be helped is really important. Always ask the camper how they would like something done. Ask if they can do it themselves, and encourage them to do so where practical.

Your camper may be slow at doing some things and when watching them, you may think that they must be longing for help. However, as a helper you must appreciate that often campers would rather do things for themselves slowly than let you do it, just because it is something they can do for themselves. Never rush in to help 'just to save time', as you may offend someone who is trying to be as independent as possible.

As the week goes on, you will come to know how much time may be needed for tasks, try to schedule your own personal care accordingly.

Enabling Participation

Involvement is the key to a happy and successful camp. It is all too easy to help someone get to an activity or involved with a particular task and then leave them to it. However, encouraging your camper to join in with activities and working on tasks together will usually be much more enjoyable for you both.



Many of the programmed activities will be totally new to some of this year's campers. Joining in activities together or sitting to watch before having a go might encourage a hesitant camper to try something new and push their limits. This applies to all activities including the chores. For some folk, helping to cook breakfast can be the highlight of their week at camp! The rota of chores we have are essential to the running of camp and we expect everyone to participate in these, the chores range from washing-up, laying tables, cooking, to cleaning the loos and washing facilities.



What happens at camp?

Every day at camp is different, full of different activities, duties, and challenges! Most days run to a basic timetable, which you will have a copy of with each day's activities. You might also find that on certain days there are special activities or it might be your patrol's turn to take an outing!

7:30	Cook patrol report for duty Main camp get up
8:30	Breakfast is served on the main field (or inside if it is raining). Everyone eats together, with Cook patrol serving the food, Orderly patrol laying the tables, and Wash Up patrol cleaning up. A short while after breakfast, Camp patrol will break the flag which is followed by "Time Out In The Trees" – a non-denominational, multi-faith chance to gather together in the camp's wooded chapel area and share a moment of quiet, music, and reflection as the day begins. . There is then time to tidy the tents ready for tent inspection.
11:00	Elevenes & Tuck Shop Patrol leaders' meeting The rest of the morning is available for time to complete patrol duties, try out some activities from the Activity Box, or spend time with your friends old and new
12:30	Lunch is available to collect from the kitchen area. You may have chosen to order a Hike Lunch to cook in the woods, or you might share in the buffet lunch that is prepared by the Cook patrol and kitchen team. This is often a time where the Patrol Leaders share news from Patrol Leaders' Meeting.
1:00	Lunch then a rest hour A chance for patrol meetings... Chill out time... Chatting together and making friends...
3:00	Afternoon activities begin. These will be different depending on the day, but might include crafts, games, swimming, aerial runway, trampoline, wheelchair swing, exploring the woodland or dancing on the netball court. Swimming is always split into two sessions so that everyone can swim and still be in time to report for their duties.
4:00	Afternoon Tea is served at the kitchen. The second swimming session begins. There is a time for patrol duties such as Tent Inspection before the tents are bedded down for the evening
5:30	Patrol duties
6:30	Supper is served on the main field with everyone eating together. There is a time for notices and announcements, using explaining the evening activity...
8:00	The evening activity begins. This might be a campfire, a wide game, karaoke, a film, a quiz or game, or the week's disco and is then followed by bed-time drinks.
10:00	camp begins to get quiet and everyone gradually makes their way to bed...

Teams or Patrols

You and your camper will be members of a team and at Pathfinders Camp, we call these teams 'Patrols'. People come to camp from all over the country (and occasionally from overseas!) and your Patrol will include a wide range of individuals. The camp has many regulars who come back year after year; however, there are always new people too. So, while some people know each other very well, others are initially faced with a camp full of strangers. For this reason we try to create Patrols with a mix of new and returning campers and helpers. Some activities are organised on a Patrol basis which will give you the chance to get to know others in your Patrol.



During the day

You may find attending Pathfinders very demanding both physically and emotionally. Remember you're not at camp to 'wait' on your camper but to 'enable' them to participate in everything! Most of our helpers say that they get a great sense of achievement from enabling a camper to take a full part in activities which they might not have the chance to do at home. Try to remember to pace yourself carefully and take advantage of any quiet periods or rest breaks.

Whatever you do, make sure that your camper is OK first; perhaps they might need or want to have a rest during the day. If so, make them comfortable, either on their bed or in the shade. It is important to remember that some of the campers do not spend much time out of doors and therefore their skin can be very sensitive. Please check on the camper's comfort regularly. The sun moves round, so a shady spot can become a suntrap in a surprisingly short time.

At the end of the day

Some campers can take a long time to get ready for bed, so, if they want to stay up late, it may be better to encourage or help them get ready for bed early, they can then sit around with everyone else enjoying evening activities or talking for as long as they wish. It is then a simple matter of getting them into bed when they are ready. If your camper is ready for bed but wanting to stay up later, make sure that they are warm enough. There will be plenty of spare blankets available.

Remember that there will always be some people who go to bed early. The Woodlarks campsite is an astonishingly good sound trap; even the slightest noise is amplified at night, and can be heard throughout the site. Some people will be in bed from 10.00pm onwards, so please be thoughtful of others and as quiet as you can, especially near the tents and the dormitories. If you prefer to stay up later to chat and unwind, just remember to keep the volume down, so that you don't disturb others.

Tips and advice

Reducing risks

Working in an unfamiliar setting and with people you don't know inevitably involves an element of risk. Pathfinders Camp takes risk management very seriously and carries out risk assessments in areas where you are working. We offer the following initial advice:

- ☀ Ensure you receive, understand and follow the guidance given to you.
- ☀ If you are not sure, ask for advice.

Manual handling techniques

Many of the campers at Pathfinders Camp have very limited mobility and as a result may use manual or electric wheelchairs. They may be unable to support themselves independently to transfer from the chair to the toilet, bed or swimming pool. It is therefore likely that you will be called upon to help with these transfers.

Manual handling is a delicate art, and could be dangerous, to you and the person you are helping, if not done correctly. You will be given an introduction to manual handling techniques, and it is important that you pay close attention and practice what you have been shown.

The camp does have special hoists to assist in lifting people and these should be used wherever possible. You must undertake training before using the hoists and never use them on your own. If you are at all uncertain about managing a transfer, please seek assistance. Your camper, experienced helpers within your Patrol or the Camp Nurse may all be able to help with advice.

Providing personal care

As part of the role of caring for someone with significant disabilities you will at times be required to provide extremely personal care, such as washing someone or assisting them in using the toilet. It is important that undertaking such care is provided sensitively, so as not to cause embarrassment to either yourself or your camper. You should always remember that the person who requires your assistance is relying on your discretion. Therefore, you should try to put any embarrassment you might feel out of your mind and approach the matter professionally. Think how you would like to be treated if the situation was reversed. If at all possible there should be a second person with you when providing personal care.

Helping with washing

To take account of differing needs Woodlarks has a range of washing facilities, including baths and level access showers into which you can wheel someone on a commode chair. However, there is not always space to transfer someone from a wheelchair onto a commode chair in a shower/bath cubicle, and so it is necessary to undertake the transfer in one of the nearby changing areas and then to wheel the commode

chair through to the shower. It is extremely important that a person's right to privacy and dignity is not compromised when this happens. Ensure that if it is necessary to undress someone before entering the cubicle that they are appropriately covered with a dressing gown or towels before wheeling them through public spaces, en-route to the shower.

Also bear in mind that when using a commode chair the camper's bottom can be seen through the underside of the chair, and therefore it is necessary to ensure that towels are suitably draped to screen the view.

It is really important that the person being cared for is comfortable with the level of support given when washing. Talk to your camper and ask them if they can manage to wash themselves or are there areas with which they need help. If they are able to manage, give them a flannel and leave them to it. If they can't, let them decide if they're comfortable with you doing it for them. They may prefer to have someone else, with whom they have previously built up a stronger bond of trust, to undertake that role. Remember, many of the helpers will have a lot of experience to share.

Woodlarks is primarily a campsite, and therefore the buildings are not huge. Individual cubicles are provided for washing, but they are not really large enough for dressing. Consequently most people will wash and then return to their tent or to the changing area to dress. It is important to ensure that your camper is well covered not only to maintain dignity but also to ensure that they do not feel cold 'in transit' between the washrooms and their tent.

Assistance with the toilet

There will be different levels of assistance needed with going to the toilet and it is important to ask the camper how they wish to be helped. Some campers will be able to manage and clean themselves, others will need help.

Understandably, some people find undertaking this form of care embarrassing or difficult. If you are at all unsure, remember to seek help and advice when taking a camper to the toilet, particularly for the first time.

It is important to treat the matter sensitively. Remember that you may not have helped another adult in this way before, whereas your camper may have needed this kind of help several times a day for every day of her life. Remember to ensure that your camper is appropriately covered if you need to move them around on a commode (i.e. from changing space to toilet cubicle), and when in the cubicle. Don't stand in the cubicle waiting for your camper to finish but either wait outside or go and get a cup of tea and come back later to see if they have finished, you should ensure that your camper is happy to be left alone, feels safe, and you have agreed a time you will return to them. You should also take care when entering or leaving the toilet cubicle that your camper is appropriately covered.

When you are providing this very personal care, if at all possible there should be a second person with you. You should always let someone in your Patrol know where you are. Always be advised by your camper.

Hygiene

When caring for someone in a personal way it is important to observe all the usual rules of good hygiene. Latex gloves are available in various sizes and should be worn for both your own and your camper's safety and comfort.

Etiquette

Don't let fear or uncertainty keep you from getting to know people with disabilities. Fear of the unknown and lack of knowledge about how to act can lead to uneasiness when meeting a person who has a disability.

Remember: a person with a disability is a person with feelings. Treat them as you would want to be treated. You can't always see someone's disability. If a person acts unusually or seems different, just be yourself. Let common sense and friendliness break down any initial awkwardness you may feel.

- ✿ Avoid asking personal questions about someone's disability. If you must ask, be sensitive and show respect. Do not probe if the person prefers not to discuss it.
- ✿ Be considerate with regard to the extra time it might take for a person with a disability to do or say something.
- ✿ Be polite and patient when offering assistance, and wait until your offer is accepted. Listen carefully to specific instructions and ask if you are not sure what is required.

Wheelchair handling

There are plenty of experienced campers and helpers who can help and advice with any questions you have about wheelchair handling.

Don't presume someone needs to be propelled in their chair, ask them if they would like assistance and where they want to go.

Some of the campers you may be helping use manual wheelchairs, anyone helping an individual in a wheelchair should always be alert to the danger of tipping the occupant out. This can occur with little warning, but can easily be avoided with care and observation.

Camp is on a steep hill so you must always ensure that the brakes are on when you are stationary. Try not to directly point a wheelchair down the hill whilst stationary, but angle them sideways, this should reduce any incidents caused by brake failure.

Firstly, ensure that the camper is wearing a seatbelt if they have one. Secondly, always warn the person in the wheelchair you are about to tip the chair, as this sudden action can be very disconcerting.

Pushing on uneven surfaces

The main danger lies in the chair tipping forwards jettisoning the occupant to the ground. This can be caused by the smaller front wheels striking uneven paving, larger stones, or merely becoming bogged down in deep chippings or soft earth (of which there is plenty at Woodlarks!) A careful watch should be kept for such obstacles at all times.

The risk of getting stuck, or tipping the chair forward can be greatly minimised if the attendant keeps a firm grip on the push handles and maintains a reasonable amount of downward pressure, thus taking the weight off the front wheels. If the chair does get jammed on a stone, or in a cracked pavement, use the tipping levers (there is one on either side of the chair, inside the rear wheels and just below the axle line) to raise the wheels over the obstacle and then proceed.

Mounting kerbs

Where possible, try to use a dropped kerb, this is far more comfortable for everyone involved. However, if there is not a dropped kerb available, you should approach the kerb ensuring the chair is squared up with the edge of the kerbstone but not touching it. Place one foot on the tipping lever then, taking a firm hold on the handgrips, carefully tip the chair back until it is balanced on its rear wheels. (The user can assist the attendant in this by leaning back slightly and pushing forward on the hand-rims.)



Propel the chair forward until the front wheels are on the pavement, then PUSH – don't lift - the chair up the kerb. Once again, the occupant may assist, if they are strong enough, by pushing on the hand-rims. NEVER lift the rear wheels clear off the ground otherwise the front wheels will probably twist side-ways and if the pavement is sloping, the chair could skate downhill.

Descending kerbs

You may have seen wheelchair attendants reversing wheelchairs and taking them backwards down the kerb. Whilst this may give



the occupant some sense of security it is not to be recommended, especially in busier highways, as with this method the attendant's back is towards the traffic. The extra turnaround required once the kerb has been negotiated is both time-consuming and hazardous. The correct method, though seemingly risky, especially to the person in the chair, is really much safer and after practice, quicker and more efficient.

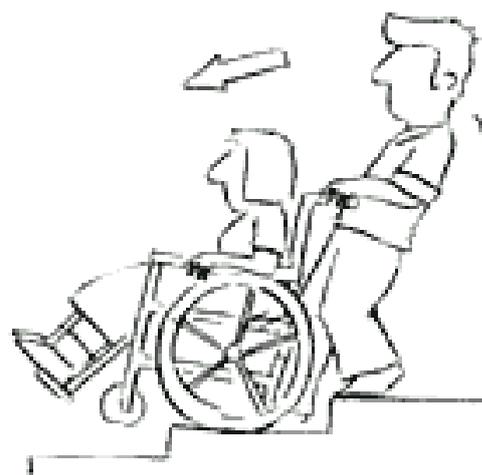
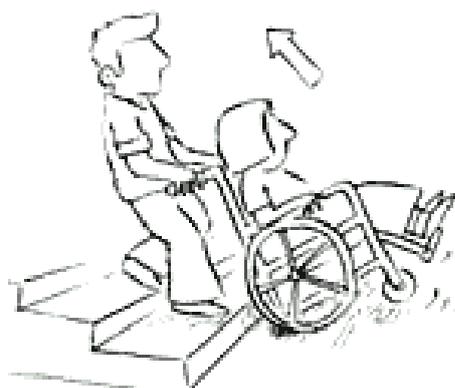
Having squared the chair up to the pavement, the attendant places one foot on the tipping lever and raises the front wheels as previously described. When the chair reaches the balancing point it is easy to hold it on the rear wheels until an adequate lull in the traffic makes crossing the road possible. Move the chair to kerb edge and lower gently down the kerb (user may help to control the descent with hand-rims), then allow castors to return to ground and proceed across the road. It is recommended that practice be made on kerbs no higher than 2½" to start with. Once experience has been gained, two or more steps, provided they are not excessively deep, may be negotiated in this manner, although it is important that the attendant is strong in proportion to the weight of the occupant of the chair.

Getting up and down steps

Flights of steps may be overcome even with one attendant provided that they are strong and sure-footed. Obviously the heavier the occupant, the more difficult the task, and anyone having the slightest doubt as to their ability to manoeuvre the chair and occupant up such an obstacle should request help from an additional attendant to steady the chair from the front.

The chair is drawn backwards, balanced on the two rear wheels. The attendant places one foot on the first step and the other on the step immediately above, then throwing their weight back, takes the weight of the chair and draws it up and so-on, always holding the chair in good balance.

Remember that the chair should never be lifted by either the armrests or footrests as these are normally detachable, and may come away in the attendant's hands, leaving the chair and passenger to fall away! Always make sure you have a firm grip on the frame of the chair.



Electric Wheelchairs

Those campers who use electric wheelchairs may also bring a manual "spare" with them to use when their electric is on charge, or they may bring a spare battery.

You should encourage independence in those who use electric chairs, however as the campsite is on a hill and can be slippery and uneven you may sometimes need to provide assistance with either steering or aiding out of a rut.

- ✿ Charging should only happen at the assigned charging stations (at the end of the “old” wash block, and on the Bradbury Croft veranda).
- ✿ Electric wheelchairs must not be charged indoors.
- ✿ You must ensure that you are using your campers charger (and not someone else’s).
- ✿ If you have to move a chair or charging block over to fit in the chair you are charging, ensure this doesn’t stop the chair you have moved from charging.

There are plenty of experienced campers and helpers who can help and advice with any questions you have.

Protecting vulnerable people

It is Pathfinders' aim to provide a safe and supportive environment for all participants regardless of age, intellect or ability by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional harm.

In meeting this aim, we ensure that wherever possible all volunteers are screened for their suitability to work with vulnerable people. All members of Pathfinders Camp are expected to abide by the following code of behaviour in order to protect other people and to protect themselves from unnecessary allegations of improper behaviour.

Do plan all activities, especially 'personal' care, to involve more than one other person being present where possible or at least within sight or hearing of others

Do respect a person's right to privacy and dignity

Do ensure that where vulnerable people share accommodation with helpers, at least two helpers are also accommodated

Do ensure everyone has access to their Patrol Leader/Patrol Second or Camp Leader if they wish to talk about any concerns they may have

Do encourage everyone to feel comfortable and be caring enough to point out attitudes and behaviours they do not like

Do remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned

Do recognise that caution is required even in sensitive moments of counselling, such as when dealing with a distressed person

Do treat everyone with respect

Do provide an example you would wish others to follow

Do NOT permit abusive activities (e.g. ridiculing, bullying, or denying care)

Do NOT have any inappropriate non-consensual contact with others

Do NOT jump to conclusions without checking facts

Do NOT allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour such as tantrums or crushes

Do NOT let suspicion, disclosure or allegation of improper behaviour, go unrecorded or unreported

Do NOT rely on just your good name to protect you

Do NOT believe "it could never happen to me"

If you suspect a person is being abused:

1. Tell the Camp Leader immediately and do not talk about this with anyone else.
2. Write down the facts as you know them and give a copy to the Camp Leader.
3. Ensure that the individuals concerned have access to an independent adult advocate.
4. Ensure that no further situation arises which could cause any additional concern.

If someone tells you about abuse by someone else:

1. Allow the person to speak without interruption, accepting what is said.
2. Alleviate feelings of guilt and/or isolation, whilst passing no judgement.
3. Advise that you will try to offer support, but that you must pass on the information.
4. Follow steps 1-4 from the guidance listed above.

If you receive an allegation of abuse:

1. Tell the Camp Leader immediately.
2. Record the facts as you know them and give a copy to the Camp Leader.
3. Try to ensure that no-one is placed in a position, which could cause further compromise.

You must refer; you must NOT investigate.

All questions regarding this policy should be presented in writing to:

Sam Dunn
11 Matson Avenue
Matson
Gloucester
GL4 6LE

Further Information

Thank you for taking the time to read this booklet. We hope it has answered most of your questions

Please don't hesitate to contact us with any queries.

We are looking forward to meeting you.

Camp Leaders

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