



# **Pathfinders Camp – Woodlarks Guidance for New Campers**



## 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 with have a good time. If reading this raises any questions for you or if you feel at all unsure about anything - please let someone know!

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. 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 your helper 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

campers; equally, there will be lots of people who have been coming to 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 let someone know. Remember that we were all 'first timers' once, no matter how confident we may seem.

## **What happens when I arrive at camp?**

As a camper you are asked to arrive at the campsite no earlier than 4:30pm. On arrival please make yourself known to the Camp Leader. When you have found your helper take a few minutes to get together with her and your parents/carers/ guardians. It is through this meeting that you will be able to begin to explain exactly what help you need and how you like this to be provided.

Remember, whilst your helper may feel nervous and find it difficult to understand you, you are the best person to tell them about how you like to be looked after. Encourage your parent/carer/guardian to share any hints & tips and pass on any essential knowledge and experience.

The Camp Leader will also tell you which group or "Patrol" you are in. If you are able 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 each Patrol will need to gather enough kit to set up your team's home for the week. If you need to sleep in one of the dormitories let the Camp Leader know. There are beds that can be set up in tents and some of the larger tents even have bunks! You may need to ask your helper to get mattresses from the dormitory and there are groundsheets and blankets available. Once you know where you will be sleeping your helper should help you to get your luggage 'moved in', so that you can begin to feel settled.

## **What does being at camp mean?**

Your role during camp is twofold. It consists of having fun by joining in as much of the camp programme as possible whilst encouraging your helper to gain confidence and new skills. Working together is key.



## Receiving 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 small 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 side-lines'.

As a camper, you will be paired with a helper to assist you during the week. This is not about having someone to run around after you, but to enable your personal care so you can participate as fully as possible in camp life.

You are the expert and are in charge of your care and you need to inform your helper what you need. Please be aware that there may be some things you can complete independently when at home which may be more of a struggle when on camp due to the different environment and facilities.

Each disabled person has different personal care needs. Please ensure your helper is aware of your needs including getting in and out of bed, washing, dressing, going to the toilet and during mealtimes. Help them to feel confident about these things before they are expected to carry them out i.e. at bedtime in the dark!

Never feel embarrassed. The best thing you can do for your helper is to give them as much information as possible and be truthful about how you feel.

## Working Together

Involvement is the key to a happy and successful camp. It is all too easy for your helper to get you to an activity or involved with a particular task and then leave you to it. However, encouraging your helper to join in with activities and working on tasks together will usually be much more enjoyable. Also the bonds you make during social times make personal care more comfortable.

Many of the programmed activities will be totally new to some of us. Joining in activities together or sitting to watch before having a go might encourage you to try something new and push your 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! Just let your helper know if you'd like to try something new and how much assistance you will need.

## 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!

<b>7:30</b>	Cook patrol report for duty Main camp get up
<b>8:30</b>	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.
<b>11:00</b>	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
<b>12:30</b>	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.
<b>1:00</b>	Lunch then a rest hour A chance for patrol meetings... Chill out time... Chatting together and making friends...
<b>3:00</b>	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.
<b>4:00</b>	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
<b>5:30</b>	Patrol duties
<b>6:30</b>	Supper is served on the main field with everyone eating together. There is a time for notices and announcements, including explaining the evening activity...
<b>8:00</b>	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.
<b>10:00</b>	Camp begins to get quiet and everyone gradually makes their way to bed...

## Teams or Patrols

You and your helper 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. The idea of camp is to encourage independence. This may include having the courage to ask for help. 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. If you do not want to participate in an activity just let your helper know.

Whatever you do, make sure you take care of yourself; perhaps you might need or want to have a rest during the day. If so, ask your helper to make you comfortable, either on your bed or in the shade. It is important to remember that you may usually not spend much time out of doors and therefore your skin may be very sensitive. The sun moves round, so a shady spot can become a suntrap in a surprisingly short time. Make your helper aware if you are becoming too hot.



Your helper may be slower than what you are used to and may need to be reminded about that things they are required to do. Please be patient as they are learning new skills. During camp your needs may change. Just be honest with your helper whether you

need more or less help. Working together and communicating with each other is key.

## At the end of the day

It can take a long time to get ready for bed, especially in unfamiliar surroundings and when you feel tired, so, if you want to stay up late, it may be better to get ready for bed early. You can then sit around with everyone else enjoying evening activities or talking for as long as you wish. It is then a simple matter of getting into bed when you are ready.

If you are ready for bed but wanting to stay up later, make sure that you 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 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. 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 from the Camp Leaders, helpers, other campers, and anyone else around.

### Manual handling techniques

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

Manual handling is a delicate art, and could be dangerous, to you and the person helping you, if not done correctly. Your helper will be given an introduction to manual handling

techniques, and it is important that they pay close attention and explain to you what they have been shown.

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

### **More about personal care**

We appreciate that some of you will at times require extremely intimate personal care, such as washing or assistance in using the toilet. Your helper should appreciate that it is important that undertaking such care is provided sensitively, so as not to cause embarrassment to either of you. They should always remember that you are relying on their discretion. Try not to be embarrassed; your helper will probably be embarrassed too to start with. But as you both progress through the week, this will lessen. Think how you would like to be treated if the situation was reversed. Try to use humour if applicable. It is advised that there should be a second person with you for Health and Safety reasons when you are transferring from place to place. Due to the nature of the camp this ideal situation may not always be possible. If you have concerns about this please tell your helper.

### **Washing and changing**

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 or be wheeled 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. Ask your helper to ensure that if it is necessary to undress you before entering the cubicle that you are appropriately covered with a dressing gown or towels before wheeling you through public spaces, en route to the shower. If you feel uncomfortable with this, be honest with your helper.

If you feel that any part of you that shouldn't be is on show, and it is necessary to ensure that towels are suitably draped to screen the view, tell your helper. If you feel more space or dignity is needed, than is available in the 'Old Wash Block' as it will be referred to during the week, then ASK to use Bradbury Croft.... It is newer and more accessible and spacious!

It is really important that you are comfortable with the level of support given when washing, as with all Personal Care. Talk to your helper and tell them if there are areas with which you need help. Ensure you communicate with your helper, when you need help, and when you would rather they left you to it! If you can't do something, decide if you're comfortable with them doing it for you. If you don't feel comfortable, speak to a Leader.

## **Assistance with the toilet**

There will be different levels of assistance needed with going to the toilet and it is important to tell your helper how you 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 advice when going to the toilet, particularly for the first time, and particularly with a helper you don't yet know very well.

It is important to treat the matter sensitively. Remember that they may not have helped another adult in this way before, whereas you as a camper may have needed this kind of help several times a day for every day of your life. Remember to ensure that you are appropriately covered if you need to move around on a commode (i.e. from changing space to toilet cubicle), and when in the cubicle. Ask if you want your helper to stand in the cubicle waiting for you to finish or wait outside or go and get a cup of tea and come back later to see if you have finished. You should also ask your helper to take care when entering or leaving the toilet cubicle that you are appropriately covered.

If you go to the toilet, with or WITHOUT a helper, PLEASE tell at least SOMEONE where you are. You should always let someone in your Patrol know where you and your helper are.

## **Hygiene**

When caring for you in a personal way it is important to ensure your helper maintains good hygiene. Advise your helper that gloves and aprons are provided if they wish to wear them when doing your Personal Care.

## Etiquette

Just be yourself. Let common sense and friendliness break down any initial awkwardness you may feel. But be aware that you might be the FIRST person with a disability, that your helper has EVER met!

- ☀ If your helper asks you questions that you find strange, still try to answer them honestly. Their perception and awareness of disability may well be different to yours. You may make each other laugh!
- ☀ Appreciate that your helper may be slower while they are still learning about how to help you and about your needs for support.
- ☀ Be polite and considerate in requesting assistance, and wait until your request is accepted. Be aware you may need to be specific in your instructions and/or repeat things, so try to curtail your frustrations.

## Wheelchair handling

Anyone pushing a wheelchair should always be alert to the danger of tipping you out! But advice and tips on how to avoid this will be covered in the training and the equivalent booklet that THEY are given. Camp is very uneven with areas covered in either loose chippings or grass. If at any point, you feel unsafe, or like you could fall out of your wheelchair, ask for help immediately.

## Mounting kerbs

Assist your helper in this, if you can by leaning back slightly and pushing forward on the hand-rims. This is, as a lot of you will know more comfortable and safer for you in the long run.

## Electric Wheelchairs

If you use an electric wheelchair, you may also want to bring a manual “spare” with you to use when your electric is on charge, or you may want to bring a spare battery.

Whilst your electric chair can give you a great deal of independence, as the campsite is on a hill and can be slippery and uneven you may sometimes need to request 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 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 everyone is 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 if consented, or at least within sight or hearing of others.

**Do** respect a person's right to privacy and dignity.

**Do** ensure that you have sufficient help at all times, within your accommodation.

**Do** ensure everyone has access to their Patrol Leader 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. Get someone you trust to help you, whilst maintaining confidentiality.
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, if you can, and give a copy to the Camp Leader. If you are unable to record facts you will have to recount them as best you can.
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

Most importantly, do not worry. EVERYONE at Camp is there to support each other, and you should NEVER be left in an unsafe or scary situation at any time.

## 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 last minute queries.

We are looking forward to meeting you.

### Camp Leader

Sam Dunn  
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### Camp Secretary

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### Pathfinders Camp

[www.pathfinderscamp.com](http://www.pathfinderscamp.com)  
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### Woodlarks Campsite

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