



Common Ground COMMS PACK



Overview

The Common Ground Comms Kit offers communications support and guidance for Woodcraft Folk groups wanting to promote their attendance at international camp Common Ground to their local communities and media outlets in order to increase brand awareness and attract new young members and volunteers to their group.

The Comms Pack includes an accompanying press release template featuring two sections to localise for your group, social media customisable templates, tips for securing local press, social media promotion advice and communications guidance to consider whilst at camp.

After Common Ground, further communications guidance and assets will be shared to help groups produce camp summary comms.

Why it is important to promote attending Common Ground

Common Ground is a very special event which truly showcases what Woodcraft Folk is all about on so many levels, from the international and co-operative focus to the forming of new friendships and partnerships, to the programme of engaging activities. The camp therefore offers the perfect opportunity to attract new members/volunteer interest, making them wish they were a part of the movement and feel inspired to act and reach out regarding ways to be involved.

Promoting the event locally also increases public awareness of the national movement which can result in increased visitor numbers to Woodcraft Folk centres, recruitment of potential donors for campaigns, further event attendees, volunteer sign ups, donations of equipment and much more!

As well as a chance to attract new members and supporters, the camp provides a fantastic opportunity to secure the interest of local businesses, community groups, sponsors and funders.





Press releases

A press release template has been provided to share with your local press outlets. There are two sections to tailor with information regarding your local group. We advise that you keep the rest of the template the same.

Here are some suggestions of what you could include in the first customisable section:

- The location of your group and how long the group has been running
- How many are attending Common Ground from the group and what attendees are looking forward to about the camp
- How often the group meets and where and when
- What ages the group runs sessions for
- What activities there are to do at group meet ups
- What makes your Woodcraft Folk group special

We recommended writing no more than a paragraph for this section.

The section groups can tailor at the end of the PR offers a chance to encourage volunteers and membership. Let people know in this section where they can find out more about your group and how they can get involved. Include details here such as a call out for members and volunteers and a contact name and number or email address. You could also include a web address if you have a website and note that people can keep up-to-date with group activities via your social media channels (if you have accounts on there) and include your social media handles.

The press release includes two quotes but you can remove these and add a quote from someone from your group to make the press release more localised or you can add a quote in addition to the others. When adding a quote to the press release, you need to include the person's full name and relationship to your group (leader, volunteer, member) and make sure that they have a final sign off on the wording before it goes to press. We advise to have quotes no more than a few sentences long. If you want to add a quote in addition to the ones in the press release, make sure it adds a new angle and isn't repeating what has already been said by others quoted.



Press releases need to be written in the third person (except for quotes) so make sure to write in this format when filling in the customisable gaps in the press release regarding your group.

Securing local press

Media outlets such as radio, TV and print receive many requests throughout a given day so you have to sell a story with intrigue and excitement concisely to them to break through the noise and secure their interest. As press outlets are so busy, the most organised you can send your press information to them the better.

See below for some useful tips regarding how to sell your Common Ground story to the press:

Finding press outlets

- To secure press coverage you will need to contact local press outlets such as newspapers, online news websites, social media news pages/groups, radio stations and TV news stations.
- To find local press outlets, search online via Google and social media, ask friends and family, check your local TV guide or head to your local newsagents/corner shop to seek printed publication opportunities such as local newspapers or magazines.

Contacting press outlets

- When you have found a media outlet, they usually advertise how to submit a story and who you need to contact. If you are not sure, give them a ring or direct message them on social media (which is usually a good route for a quick reply) and you can even prompt them that you are sending over a story. It is suggested to ask them to keep a lookout for your press release and let you know when it is received to start to build a relationship with the media and seem keen/organised.
- Print outlets such as newspapers and magazines require a press release for print. Radio and television will want a summary of the key points of your story but it is always advised to send over a copy of the press release anyway to these outlets to provide detailed information if they want to read further. You could also share the camp programme too which will be uploaded here



<https://www.commonground.camp/programme/> soon and the camp web address



- If you plan on sending the press release to news outlets via email/online form, we advise to attach the press release along with supporting images and then write an enthusiastic accompanying cover email that builds excitement of the camp by summarising its key points and note the inclusion of a press release and photos and offer to be interviewed.
- If you decide to ring to arrange press coverage, it is best to follow up the call with an email summarising the key event details as a reminder and to share contact details.

What to include

- When summarising the camp in a cover email or on the phone for any press outlet, start by asking if they would like to cover a special international event your local Woodcraft Folk group is taking part in and also make sure to include points on what makes the camp special and stand out





from similar camps/events run by other organisations. You could note here the international focus, the fact it is organised by young people for young people - press outlets want a hook/angle. It is also worth noting topical issues relevant to the camp (the bigger picture) for example the pandemic and how it has caused an increase in children's mental health support and why events like Common Ground are important for wellbeing and in improving confidence or in light of the Ukraine war, in building friendships and encouraging peace and cooperation. But as an organisation, we need to not make political comments.

- Also, don't forget to note in communications with press outlets what your role is, what group you are from and who the camp is run by. The press release includes a bit of background information on Woodcraft Folk but it is always advised to include a sentence in a cover email on the organisation too and its relation to your group with a nod to the IFM–SEI. Most importantly, keep your cover email local and note in your key points that your group is looking to recruit (if they are or think of another call to action for the press) and that camps such as Common Ground are just one of many ways for people to get involved with your group. Make sure to include that groups are an active part of the local community - feel free to give examples here. Press outlets want stories that they feel will appeal and connect with their local audience.
- When sending an email make sure to include an attention grabbing subject header
- Sending engaging, clear and high quality imagery (that isn't blurry) of your group activities along with your press release is crucial (make sure you have consent from people in the photos before you share them or consent from parents of children). Ideally, you want camp themed photos too to align with the press release story.





- If your images are too big to attach to your cover email you can place them in a compressed zip file or use sites such as WeTransfer (it has a free to use option) and explain to the press how photos can be accessed.
- Make sure to credit any photographs that require them by placing the photographer name in the image file name along with a clear description e.g 'Group night - credit Brian Cox' and note to the media outlet that some images require credit and explain where these details can be found
- Offering to be available to be interviewed adds a better package deal to the press. Make sure if you are offering this that you explain that you are happy to be interviewed for any press opportunities and provide details on how the press can contact you (or give contact details for someone else if not you) and detail your availability. It is really important not to promise interviews and then fail to deliver as time is precious and media outlets want to form reliable relationships that are trustworthy for stories. Therefore, ensure commitment from an interviewee before contacting the press.

Follow up

- Once you have sent your story keep in touch with the press contact and check in to see if they need any further information to keep conversations going and to remind them of your story
- After Common Ground make sure to follow up with local media outlets with a summary press release of the camp (we are providing templates for this) - you can let the press know you will do this in advance so they can see the story has longevity. Make sure to send a follow up press release even if you didn't hear back from your initial enquiry or if the press said they didn't have time to run your camp story originally or you didn't have time to send it - it is good to keep in contact and a summary of an event is still worthy of a publication. Also, we advise you to continue to share stories with the local press after Common Ground to build a lasting relationship and help increase awareness of your group and the national movement.

Tips for social media promotion

If your group has a social media account, it is the perfect place to promote your attendance at Common Ground to entice new members / volunteers. If you don't have an account, now is a great opportunity to set one up! Instagram/Tik Tok are the social media platforms where younger audiences are bigger in number and therefore



worth the most investment to attract young members. Facebook, Instagram and Twitter are useful in reaching parents and volunteers with Twitter partially helpful at communicating with businesses.

We have included some tips below on how to gain the best reach and engagement levels on social media platforms such as when promoting groups events for example attending Common Ground camp

- Posting consistently on social media is really important as it favours platform algorithms which means your content will be seen by more people. There is a balance though, too many posts can put people off if you are clogging their feed. Posting often also makes your account seem active and worth a follow by intrigued new viewers. If you are not an active account it is easy to get lost and forgotten about by those who do follow you. A post every couple of days is suitable but it really depends on the platform. Twitter can be used to post a few times a day whereas Instagram and Facebook are more relaxed and can favour posts going out every couple/few days. It is advised to make use of Instagram/Facebook stories in between posts. You can upload content there as often as possible and even share other relevant content via this feature which eases the pressure of having to create new content. Common Ground is the perfect event that lends itself to lots of content. There are a diverse range of posts you could share leading up to the camp such as 'Items to take to camp', 'programme details' and 'camping tips'. Facebook and Instagram have scheduling features and you can use Tweetdeck for Twitter which means you don't have to actively be on social media everyday to post you can schedule all your posts in advance to save on time.
- Capitalise on trends and talking points in the media and on social media platforms to boost reach and think of ways to make group stories, updates and activities relevant to current trends. One easy way to tap into trends is to utilise popular hashtags and don't be afraid to get creative with content such as trying the newest Tik Tok dance craze challenge! There has to be a clear connection though between a trend and your content, it needs to make sense, feel organic and not forced and align with your group's and the national movement's core messaging.
- Creating content linked to occasion days is also a proactive way to increase reach such as the 'International Day of Friendship' - a quick Google search





provides upcoming occasion /anniversary dates and think of ways you can creatively tap into these whilst referencing Common Ground.

- To get the most out of social media platforms, think about posting when your audience is most active to ensure your content is being seen. If you have a Facebook/Instagram page you can tap into the business suite and the platform will tell you in the planner section when your audience is the most active and therefore suggest the most opportune time to post. You can also test posting on different days/times on platforms and see what posts get the most traction.
- Social media users love interaction so make sure to share engaging posts, this could include quizzes, polls, challenges, questions and if you are on Instagram, make use of Stories which features lots of interactive elements. If your content is interactive it is more likely to get shared. Common Ground lends itself to lots of fun and engaging content.
- It is really important to post a mix of content types to keep your feed fresh and engaging. Make content interesting, fun and relevant to add value. Share photos, videos, stories and graphics. Canva (<https://www.canva.com/> - includes free to use options) is a really useful, user-friendly design platform to utilise to ensure a continuous stream of diverse, professional looking content. Make sure to keep a consistent visual feel to content too so it looks visually pleasing and helps form a strong brand image. Whilst a mix of content is good, video is king at the moment and is favoured by algorithms so where you can, make sure to create and share videos.
- We suggest sharing high quality and emotive images and videos on your social media channels, stay clear of blurry and pixelated content. You can download generic photos from sites such as Pixabay and Unsplash but people pictures from these sites can appear staged and not very natural so they should only be used as a last resort.
- Don't forget to tag local news pages or family groups/pages in your posts too to help advertise your group.



Example social media posts



We advise you to post updates on your group's preparations in the lead up to camp to not only get those attending excited but also to attract new members for the next camp! In the few days leading up to camp we advise posting an update using elements from the Press Release to announce that you'll be heading off to camp soon and to remind people what a fantastic event it is and what it is about.

Using platform Canva, we have provided some social media templates that your group can customise for a post advertising your attendance at camp which can be accessed via the links below. Make sure to copy the design first before editing it otherwise you will edit the template which others need to use. You can copy the design by selecting 'file' then 'make a copy'. You can add your own photos to the document using the side panel 'upload' section and then you can drag these over to the document and then hover over the areas you want images to be placed.

[Facebook & Instagram post](#)

[Twitter post](#)

Communications guidance whilst at camp

- Look out for different coloured wristbands for participants with or without media consent
- Some children have no media consent for their own safety. They may not be aware of this themselves
- Only take images of your own group, otherwise check that no young people can be recognised in images
- You can still take active, fun images of hands doing crafts, dancing feet etc
- Speak to your young people about how they can respect others' privacy
- Don't forget to tag the national Woodcraft Folk social media channels in your posts so we can share them! You can find us on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook.