

# Information for people bringing children to walk with Barcombe Bonfire Society

## Before you come along:

- If you are joining us for the first time – please contact one of the committee to have a chat so that we can make your first procession as safe and fun as possible (details on the web page).
- Make sure to buy membership! Only Barcombe Bonfire Society (BBS) members can walk in the procession. Proof of membership is your badge, and this **MUST** be worn when you are walking with BBS. If you are not a member of Barcombe Bonfire Society you are a member of the public, and our insurance does not cover members of the public walking in the procession. We will actively check membership and expel people from the parade who do not have a current membership.
- It would be brilliant if the whole family could dress up, but we appreciate often it is the children that are most keen! We do have a rule that **everyone** that takes part in the processions must be in costume. Children must have their responsible adult in the procession with them, and must also be in costume. There is more information in other documents about the BBS costume themes (called first and second pioneer) if you would like to dress in those. The only obligation in the BBS children's parade is that everyone walking in the procession is in a costume and is a member wearing a badge.
  - Please bear in mind that fire is very much part of the procession, so please ensure that all costumes are sprayed with flame retardant spray, and effort has been expended to use materials that are not flammable.
- Please talk to your children about what you are doing and explain what will be happening. Talk to them about:
  - what bonfire is in Sussex,
  - that people in the procession will be carrying firelit torches and that they must be careful of these,
  - that they need to be careful,
  - the need to listen to your instructions on the night, and
  - other BBS members giving information on the night; the children will need to listen to them as well.

## Children walking in the bonfire processions:

- It is down to the responsible adult to decide at what age it is appropriate for the child to carry a torch. Barcombe Bonfire Society will not recommend a minimum age as every child and family is different. Bear in mind the torches will feel heavier to a child over time. There is no obligation for children walking in the procession to carry a torch, it is more than fine for them to walk without one, or to carry a torch with fairy lights on.
- We ask all members and other societies to make sure all those walking in or near the procession have sturdy shoes on.

- At no point do we advocate or encourage the use of drop downs or bangers in the procession but, just in case, you may want to provide ear defenders for your child. Also the noise from the bands can be loud. We do recommend protective eye glasses as ash from torches can be a hazard on windy nights. As far as possible, please try to hide these within the costume. Safety is paramount though.
- We form up in ranks of three, utilising the whole width of the road. Each row should be at least 6 feet apart. Marshalls will be giving instructions on where to stand.
- Ideally, members should line up with adults on the outside and child in the middle or, one row of children in between 2 rows of adults. Everyone walking in the procession must be in costume.
- If you are the responsible adult you must be in costume and walking in the procession too.
- In November it is likely to be a cold night, so you (parent) are likely to end up carrying your children's coats, bags and everything else you bought out with you. You will need to arrange for a friend or someone not supervising children to carry these items that will ensure your hands are free to carry torches and supervise your child (ren).
- As we are dealing with fire please be aware that if other adults see your child/ charge taking risks they will speak up. Safety is paramount.
- Under no circumstances should anyone run up and down the procession while people have lit torches. Stay close to your child/ charge at all times.

### **Carrying torches:**

- Carry torches at shoulder height, with outside walkers holding torches on the pavement side.
- There is no need to have a spare torch for the BBS children's parade as the torch will last the length of the procession.
- Children should start off only carrying one torch – no spares and no bag. As they become older and more experienced use your judgement as to whether the child should carry a spare torch in their other hand. Remember that if your child walks over flames the spare can catch light.
- You should light your torch from the Torch Marshal, failing that from the row in front of you.
- If the torch is running low, or your child does not want to carry it any more, please find a safe place on the side of the road (not on the pavement) to place your lit torch. Then just carry on walking.
- If your child is upset put torches down and walk without torches, or (after putting down torches) step out of the procession and join in again later.
- Bear in mind the torches feel heavier over time.

- There is no obligation for children walking in the procession to carry a torch. It is fine for them to walk without one, or to have one with fairy lights on.

### **Barcombe Children's Procession:**

- This is the first procession of our night
- The Barcombe Rookies banner (Rookies is the junior section of the Society) will be at the front of the procession
- The band will follow behind the children
- When we get to the Royal Oak, BBS Torch Marshalls (dressed in red and black stripes) will be on hand to take your torches. Do not attempt to keep the torch.

At this point, we would like to take the opportunity of thanking you for your interest and support of Barcombe Bonfire Society! It may seem like there are lots of rules and that we are being pedantic about costume, but we are putting on a spectacle for those watching and we want it to be as fun and safe as possible, for everyone. We believe that these rules will help everyone to have a fantastic night.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us on the Facebook page, or by contacting any of the committee members direct.

Without you bonfire in Barcombe would not have a  
future . . .

We look forward to walking with you!