

# Wodens Hearth Viking Group

## Members Handbook



## Index

General Guidelines	3 - 4
Living History	5
Combat	6 - 8
Battle Commands	10 - 11
Group Structure	12 - 13
Training	14 - 15
Members Kit	16 - 17

# Wodens Hearth – Jormungandr Rekr

## General Guidelines

A member is defined as paying the membership fee each year after initial registration for the purposes of battle combat or purely living history. Only adults over the age of 16 can have full membership, however they will require parental consent until the age of 18. Any children under the age of 16 that are related to a full member can be classed as a child member and are not required to pay a membership fee. A lifetime member is a person that is still by choice part of the group but usually but not exclusively lives to far for regular training or shows. If this situation changes they can become a full member again.

Membership fees go to the payment of group insurance, admin fees and to the general running of the group.

Shields are the property of the group, however members can take them home once they are painted for that appropriate member.

All members must own or borrow appropriate clothing for shows

All members should respect and treat each other with civility at all times.

Any actions that are deemed malicious against another member or the public will result in a combat ban immediately and will be dealt with at the most appropriate Thing

Actions when in Kit will be subject to the rule of the Jarl in keeping with the Living History we are portraying as a Viking group.

Safety is an overall consideration and all activities between members and the public, and must not endanger the public.

Kit must be worn at all times within the period the public are pre-

sent and members should arrive at all musters on time and in full kit.

No offensive language or gesture are allowed during show times and are discouraged during camps.

No member should use a weapon they are not trained in and no member under 16 can carry weapons unless authorised to do so.

Anyone under the age of 16 must have a Parental Consent Form and be assigned a guardian or have a parent present at all times.

Any disciplinary action will be taken under the direction of the Thing, however the ruling decision will lie with the Jarl and the committee members.

A Thing will be held once a year or when a disciplinary is required.

Before all public combat shows there is to be a muster and all weapons must be checked for burrs and damage

No sharp weapons are to be taken into any combat situation either during training or at public shows.

All forms related to the group that have personal information must not be shared and are to be kept locked away unless they need to be updated. Any promotion forms should only have the persons Viking name as should any pictures on social media .

There is a page for documents on the website so that any documents such as insurance need to be checked this can be accessed [here](#).

It is everyones duty to look out for each other and to report any issues of bullying or harassment to the relevant safeguarding person or the Jarl. So this can be dealt with as soon as possible and in a professional way.

Note: the structure was quite orderly within this community and male or female could progress in any direction as there was near enough equality between them, however there was a general tendency that you would progress to whatever task you are most skilled within. We have tried to portray what the society was like in 870AD not the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and this must be taken into account.

## Kit for all Members

### Female Kit – Under Kirtle

- Kirtle
- Apron
- Wimpole or Headband
- Knifr - Sharp Knife
- Seax - Ambótt and above

### Male Kit – Under Tunic

- Over Tunic
- Trousers
- Leg wraps
- Brown Leather Gloves -natural or tanned appropriately
- Seax
- Knifr—Sharp Knife
- Belt Pouch
- Shoes – Karls and above
- Helmet – Rekkkr and above

Children's kit – As per adult kit without the knives and authentic shoes

All kit will be checked before shows and if deemed unsuitable in any way you will be asked to replace it or not to attend the show.

## Living History

All combatants must wear padded gloves at training and brown leather gloves when at shows, this is part of the kit they must have.

All members of the public will be treated with respect and civility at all times during shows and training.

All tent interiors that are open during a show will be on display to the public.

All non-authentic items should be removed from view during a show before opening times.

All members can be expected to help with clearing the site or setting up.

No fires can be lit without the organisers/owners permission and set up accordingly to their requirements. Only dead wood and lumpwood charcoal can be used for a fire. No fire can be allowed to be left unattended at any time and should be roped off when the public are on site.

All pets and working animals are the owner's responsibility at all times. They must be kept on a lead or suitably confined so as not to cause a nuisance, and any mess associated with them are the owner's responsibility.

Areas for the chopping and storing of wood should be roped off, and kept at a safe distance from the public and if possible wood should not be chopped whilst public are present.

Any rules set up by the organiser supersede the group's rules and must be obeyed at all times.

Traders can set up using authentic trades and goods with the permission of the group's Committee.

## Combat

All blows to target areas must be controlled to avoid injury; malicious blows will be subject to disciplinary action.

All blows should simulate real combat where possible and be drawn across to allow knowledge of the blow.

Thrusts are to the torso area only and with the flat of the blade.

All blows must be reacted to accordingly see armour rules.

When wounded drop the weapon or shield safely.

All people on the battlefield are viable targets unless they are not wearing gloves or previously stated.

If you are wounded as part of the scenario you can return to the battle but must act appropriately for your wound.

All combat must stay within the roped areas, if too close to the public back away to a safer area.

Be conscious of your surroundings, be battle aware, do not step on people if they are dead or drop weapons if it will hit someone.

When finishing off, act appropriately but remember the following points

- No weapon should be drawn across the bare skin.

- Throats should only be cut using a seax

- Swords and axes are used to hack but only to be used after safety training

- Spears can be used as a thrusting kill only under appropriate conditions.

To gain warrior or apprentice status you must have a full set of clothing and weapons or craft tools appropriate to your status.

Weapons should not be carried in public unless being used specifically as part of a display or being transported to and from a dis-

These rules only apply when the shot hits the armour only. Even though some shots have no long-term effect all hits must be reacted to properly. The only two times these rules do not apply is when the combatant is on their knees or lower and if the Jarl says so.

### Gloves

When taking part in any form of combat all combatants must wear gloves. They must conform to authenticity rules. Before taking their Basic Combat test all new members must own their own gloves. To use two weapons the combatant must wear two armoured gloves.

### Helmets

All combatants must wear a helmet at the request of the Jarl.

### Shields

The shields must have leather all around the edges and will be sewn rather than tacked on, the boss must be free of burrs and the grip and strap (if fitted) must be secure. All combatants should put their names on the back of the shield in runes, not the grip, or have their own design on the front.

### Hit Zones

**No Go Area** - Head, Neck, Groin/Inner Thigh.

**Avoid Area** - Lower Arms (elbows to hands inclusively), Lower Legs (knees to feet inclusively).

**Wound Area** - Upper Outside Legs and Upper Arms.

**Kill Area** - Torso and Backside.

**All hits must be pulled when making contact with body. Any blow landing on the head or requiring medical treatment MUST be reported to a relevant person where all the details will be recorded.**

## Training

Combatants start unranked as a Thrall and will train with Seax for a period of 3-6 months, progressing to Axe and Spear each of 3 months minimum and then with a period of combat at shows. After a minimum of 15 months and 8 shows 2 of which must be large shows they can be promoted to a Warrior, when they can train with a sword and long axe or longbow before achieving the status of an experienced warrior/Eski.

### Combat Tests

As a group we do many types of tests and this is a list of what you should know. All tests must be done in kit according to the rules. Excluding basic combat.

### Basic Combat

Before any member can fight in front of the public they must have passed a basic combat test, showing different safety and acting skills. On average this test takes 4 training sessions and is part of the initial Seax test. Before taking the test they must own a pair of gloves to a standard required by the group.

### Basic Safety Test

This test must be taken before any guest member can take part in combat. At shows and events this must be done in kit they will be wearing and the weapons they intend to use.

## Armour

### Body Armour

Requires two proper hits consecutively if wearing link mail or leather armour to affect a kill using a Seax, or an Axe and followed through to complete the kill.

Require one decent hit with a sword, spear or Dane-axe in kill area but must be followed through to complete kill.

play. Weapons should be kept secure and covered when being transported.

No weapon should be used against a member of the public or members not trained to receive attacks or are not expecting an attack.

Do not use weapons in an area where the public's property could be damaged.

No alcohol can be consumed before or during an event.

Headshots must be recorded and reported to the Jarl and could result in disciplinary action if three or more occur in a season.

All weapons must be deburred before each show and training session and will be checked by the training officer.

Combatants can only use weapons they are trained in for display and combat.

For training purposes there should be two people supervising, one doing the training and one to watch.

## Combat Rules

### Hit Areas

Main body front and back are kill areas, upper arms and upper legs are wound areas. The head, neck and groin areas are completely out of bounds. Lower legs, lower arms are non-hit areas.

For no armour any hit to the body is a kill but person must be finished off and all shots must look good, effectively 2 good shots.

With mail or good leather armour two good shots are required and then person is to be finished off, effectively 3 good shots.

The seax will not pierce armour and will require multiple shots to have any effect, so go for a wound shot first.

The hand axe creates a crush shot but needs to be a good couple of shots to have an effect on armour.

Sword and spear are good against armour but require two good shots to kill.

Dane axe is immediate kill if it is a good shot.

Always react to shots even on non-hit areas though if the second shot does not occur within approx. a 10sec interval for armour you can continue fighting. If non-armoured retire from fight and look as though you are grievously wounded.

Wound shots mean drop a weapon or shield or if a leg shot do not move around, go down on one leg, but can still defend and kill if safe to do so.

**Karls/Freeman** (unranked) - in training to be warriors.

### **Retainers cont**

**Rekr/Warriors** (lowest rank) - trained in the necessary weapons, the Warriors protect the Hearth, and perform guard duties and maintaining public order. Designated by a serpent brooch.

**Eski/Experienced Warrior** – are able to carry out duties pertaining to leading a group of warriors in combat and are able to help in the training of Thralls and Bondir.

**Húskarls** (middle rank) - highly trained warriors, competent in all combat and battlefield techniques. The Huscarls are also trained in the use of the sword, long axe and longbow. Designated rank by Cloak pin of Jormungandr the world serpent.

**Hersir** (highest rank) - the thanes are combat trained to the same standards as the Huscarls, but are also educated in the political and economical ways of the Vikings, often leaders of their own Hearth.

**Jarl** A lord with land and a leader of troops, with knowledge of political and economic systems.

### **Levy Warriors/Mercenary**

The Levy provide support to the Hearth in times of great need, acting as a shield wall, or performing other specific duties. The Levy will be expected to have the kit to represent their rank

### **Other Terms**

**Riddari** Horseman

**Kaupmadr** Trader

**Svinfylking** Boar Warrior



## Group Structure

A group based in England around the time periods 750 –950 AD specifically 870AD based in Medamthstede (Peterborough) We are a trading/settlement party ready for any attacks by other Viking groups or the native Anglo Saxon's. Our main aim is to provide an authentic view of Viking life within this era, including combat with different weapons and styles.

### Structure

The structure of Wodens Hearth is that of an encampment, where the members of the group have their own roles and duties. Some of the main groups within the Hearth are shown below:

### Kindred

This group is made up of non-combatants and under 18's. It is mainly female as crafts person who was male would often progress as a warrior, or become a trader/Kaupmadr, likewise females were as standard trained in some weapons and could also progress to become a warrior. Within this group you will find several smaller divisions:

**Thrall/Bóndi** (unranked) - carrying out the menial tasks essential to everyday life.

**Ambótt**(lowest rank) - learning a craft/trade. Designated by wearing an Iron Othala symbol (Troll Rune).

**Iðn-maðr/Iðn-Kona** (middle rank) - for example, blacksmiths, woodworkers, weaving and the like.

**Húsfreyja** (highest rank) - usually a member of the Hearth family unit, the elders supervise the lower ranking members. Denoted by a cloak pin in the shape of Jormungandr the world serpent.

### Retainers

Again, this group can be further divided:

**Thrall/slave**, probationary – rank when first joining for a period of 3-6 mnths.

## Battle Commands

### Movement Basic

Loka	<i>Close Order</i>
Skjald	<i>Shields (short for shield wall)</i>
Lauss	<i>Loose Order</i>
Merk Tima	<i>Mark time (optional)</i>
Stefna	<i>Advance one step at a time</i>
Framr	<i>Forward</i>
Stöðva	<i>Halt</i>
lkring	<i>About (short for about turn)</i>
Ofna staða	<i>Stand down</i>

### Movement Advance

En <u>Röð</u>	<i>One Rank</i>
Tveir Röðr	<i>Two Ranks</i>
Snu	<i>Turn</i>
Hrökk	<i>Withdraw</i>
Sókn/scækja	<i>Attack/advance</i>
Renn Undan	<i>Retreat</i>
Snu Vinstra	<i>Left Turn</i>
Snu Noegra	<i>Right Turn</i>
Svin	<i>Boar snout</i>

### **Other Commands**

Loka röð	<i>Close Order</i>
Lauss röð	<i>Loose Order</i>
Opīnn röð	<i>Open Order</i>
lkring um Snu	<i>About Turn</i>
Fyrst	<i>First</i>
Spjör	<i>Spears</i>
Eptir	<i>Behind</i>
Framr	<i>Forward</i>
Fœða	<i>Rear</i>
Fram	<i>Front</i>
Sveipa	<i>Encircle</i>

### **Arrow Wall – ör skjald**

Tveir Röðr	<i>Two Ranks</i>
Ör Skjald	<i>Arrow Wall</i>
Hrökk	<i>Withdraw</i>
En Röð	<i>One Rank</i>
Dæll Staða	<i>Stand Easy</i>

### **Arrow Commands**

Knock	<i>Drepa</i>
To Draw	<i>Heimta</i>
Loose	<i>Lauss</i>

### **Beginning Command**

Warriors of Jormungandr One Rank

*Rekk En Röð Jormungandr/Rekk Jormungandr*