

# Scouting in the United Kingdom



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## What is Scouting?

Scouting is a worldwide, values based, educational Movement.

## How Scouting began

The World Scout Movement began in the United Kingdom in 1907 with an experimental camp on Brownsea Island, Dorset. During the week-long camp, Robert Baden-Powell and a small party of boys put into practice his ideas for training young people in responsible citizenship. In August the following year, the first official Scout Camp was held at Humshaugh, near Hexham, Northumberland.

Today, there are well over 28 million Members in over 216 countries and territories and the Movement is still growing. Two-thirds of the world's Scouts live in developing countries.

## A co-educational Movement

Scouting in the UK is firmly committed to co-education so boys and girls can meet the aims of Scouting through one programme.

## The Aim and Method of Scouting

The Aim of Scouting is to promote the development of young people in achieving their full physical, intellectual, social and spiritual potential, as individuals, as responsible citizens and as members of their local, national and international communities.

The Method of achieving the Aim is through the provision of exciting and adventurous activities

with progressive training based on The Scout Promise and Law guided by adult leadership.

## The Programme

The Programme is a seamless progression of training, activities and awards for young people aged 6 to 25. The Programme is delivered in five age groups, called Sections.

Beaver Scouts	(6-8 years)
Cub Scouts	(8-10½ years)
Scouts	(10½-14 years)
Explorer Scouts	(14-18 years)
Scout Network	(18-25 years)

The Programme aims to help young people to grow in a number of personal development areas to ensure the young people themselves really are 'learning by doing.'

## United Kingdom Membership

In the UK, the total Membership is 450,562.

(Source: Census of Membership 2004.)

This comprises:

Role/ Status	No. of Members
Youth Membership	360,863
Leaders	61,137
Managers	11,759
Administrators	16,803
<b>Total Membership</b>	<b>450,562</b>

## The Scout Information Centre

Gilwell Park Chingford London E4 7QW Tel + 44 (0)20 8433 7100 Fax + 44 (0)20 8433 7103 email info.centre@scout.org.uk www.scouts.org.uk

## Organisation

Scouting in the UK is administered by The Scout Association at Gilwell Park, Chingford, London E4 7QW.

The Association employs 198 full-time & part-time staff to support the work of its adult volunteers. In the UK the Movement is decentralised in 7,848 Scout Groups, each of which comprises one or more Beaver Scout Colonies, Cub Scout Packs and Scout Troops. The Groups are supported locally by 895 Scout Districts which, in turn, receive support and guidance from 115 Scout County organisations.

## Promise and Law

The Scouts, with the Guides, are unique amongst youth Movements in having a Promise and a Law which Members willingly accept as a guide to the standards of conduct required of them.



In October 1982, The Scout Association introduced 'Beavers' for 6 to 8-year-old boys in response to a growing demand within the Movement. In April 1986, they became a recognised training Section and took the title of Beaver Scouts. From 1991, girls were also able to join Beaver Scouts.

In the UK, Beaver Scouts wear a simple uniform consisting of a turquoise sweatshirt and Group Scarf.

Beaver Scouts take part in a balanced programme and work towards Challenges and Activity Badges. There are opportunities to learn about themselves: explore their feelings and develop good habits of health and personal safety. They get to know people: finding out about those in their family, the family of Scouting, the local community and the wider world. Beaver Scouts discover science,

nature and technology, exploring the natural and man-made world. Beaver Scouts care; growing in their love of their God and responding to the needs of others, the local community and beyond.



Beaver Scout clipart is available at [www.scoutbase.org.uk](http://www.scoutbase.org.uk)

Their bright, colourful identity reflects their aim of 'fun and friends' and a positive experience at this stage often encourages young people to continue their journey through Scouting.



Cub Scouts are young people aged between 8 and 10½ years old. Easily distinguished by their dark green sweatshirt and Group Scarf, they form the largest Section of Scouting in the UK.

Baden-Powell's originally intended Scouting should be for boys aged 11 to 18. But seeing the fun and adventure older brothers and friends were having as Scouts, younger boys began asking to join too. The physical development and interests of boys differ considerably over and under the age of 11, and Baden-Powell saw training must be designed on quite separate although complementary lines. In 1914 'Junior Scouts' were announced and in 1916, they became 'Wolf Cubs'.

In 1966, as part of a modernisation plan, a number of sweeping changes were introduced and the Section became known as Cub Scouts. New proficiency and training schemes were introduced and the Cub Scout Law and Promise revised.

Following an update in the early 1990s, the Cub Scout Section has changed again with the introduction of the new 6-25 programme. Girls have been joining in the fun and challenge of Cub Scouting since 1991.



One of the new cartoon mascots for Cub Scouts

With a fresh new image, cartoon mascots and an exciting and balanced programme of activities, the Cub Scout Section is as strong as ever. There are currently some 137,612 Cub Scouts in the UK.

## [SCOUTS]

Scouting is for boys and girls aged between 10½ and 14 years, who want to make friends and develop their widening interests in ways that are both educational and fun. It is ideal for young people who want a break from the usual after school routine of homework, games and TV.

With the emphasis on adventurous activities, action and involvement, Scouting means more than just camping. Hiking, rock climbing, gliding, sailing, pioneering, canoeing, parascending, abseiling, First Aid, motor mechanics, electronics, amateur radio and photography are just some of the things they do.

Their uniform of activity trousers, with teal green polo or long sleeved shirt, reflects their adventurous lifestyle.

Each Scout Troop consists of small groups (usually called Patrols) of six to eight young people, one of whom is the Patrol Leader. The PLs share responsibility with the adult Leader for maintaining standards and training within the Troop. All Scouts are encouraged to take part in the decision-making process and regular Forums provide the chance for them to help in planning Troop activities.

Outdoor activities feature prominently in the Scout Troop. The highlight for most is the annual summer camp or expedition, and much of the rest of the year is devoted to preparing for this. Even in winter there may be Patrol hikes or weekend

camp. Map reading, camp cooking, First Aid and other skills can be practised at any time of the year.



Explorer Scouts are young people usually aged between 14 and 18. They make up the fourth Section of the Scouting family.

In the Movement's early days, Lord Baden-Powell saw the need to provide a programme for young men who wanted to continue after their time in the Scout Section. Senior Scouts, developed to meet this need, continued to evolve over the years.

In 1967, Venture Scouting was formed from the existing Senior Scout and Rover Scout Sections, becoming the first Section to welcome girls into the membership in 1976.

During the late 1990s, it was decided that, in order to meet the changing needs of young people over the age of 14, two new Sections should be created. Venture Scouting was discontinued and Explorer Scouts for 14 to 18-year-olds and the Scout Network for 18 to 25-year-olds, introduced.

There are many types of Explorer Scout Units: some are linked to the local Scout Group, others may be based around local activity or other centres.

They are encouraged to work with other Explorer Scouts in the District, not just the Unit. This widens the chance to take part in many more activities, not just those their own Unit organises.

All Explorer Scouts wear a uniform consisting of beige shirt and blue activity trousers, and have a wide choice of optional items.

## NETWORK

All members of The Scout Association between 18 and 25 years are members of the Scout Network. As a member of Scout Network you could be:

- a Leader with another Section
- a Sectional Assistant or Skills Instructor
- a Member of the Scout Fellowship
- a Member in another capacity

Local Networks can be based at County, District or Group level; some may be focused around a specific activity or location such as a Gang Show, Activity Centre, climbing or canoeing club.

Scout Network programmes reflect the huge variation in Members' interests. Some local Networks will have activities concentrating on one area of the programme, whilst others will have a wider range. One of the key elements is the opportunity to spend nights away, either under canvas or in other accommodation.

Like all those in Scouting aged 18 and above, members of the Scout Network wear a uniform consisting of a 'stone' shirt and smart blue trousers or skirt for formal occasions.

### **Adult Leaders**

Successful Scouting depends on the quality, commitment and enthusiasm of its adult leadership - volunteers who freely give their time to help the development of young people. All Leaders are required to undertake training to equip themselves for their roles and the Movement's training programme has become recognised by professional trainers as one of the best of its kind.



One of The Scout Association's strengths has always been its ability to attract a strong element of adult support for Leaders.

Men and women over the age of 18 are welcome to join Scout Fellowship, regardless of whether they have had previous connections with Scouting. By joining, they have an opportunity to contribute to Scouting's work in whatever way they can.

### **Safe from harm**

It is the policy of The Scout Association to safeguard the welfare of all young people by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional harm. Our 'Young People First' policy includes a code of good practice for adults in Scouting.

The Scout Association has an effective, well-tried and tested system for vetting adults coming into the Movement to protect young people from harm.

### **Scouting for all**

In 1997, The Scout Association published its Equal Opportunities Policy covering both adults and young people.

### **Further information**

To find out more about Scouting in the UK, visit [www.scouts.org.uk](http://www.scouts.org.uk) or call our Scout Information Centre on 0845 3001818.