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Scout Ambassador, page 42



Summer Term 2018



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It is important to note the differing structures of UK Scouting in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. However, for ease of reading, this magazine refers to all variations of 'County'-level groupings simply as County.

At Scouting magazine, we make every effort to ensure that our content is accurate, complete and up to date at the time of going to press. Occasionally, inaccuracies may occur.

You can read Scouting magazine and Make.Do.Share. magazine online at scouts.org.uk/magazine. Follow us on scouts.org.uk/facebook. You'll also find us on Twitter @UKScouting and on Instagram @Scouts



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Welcome back to Scouting!

I've always said that Scouts are shining lights in their communities. The incredible difference you make to the lives of those around you is one of the things that makes me so proud to be Chief Scout. And, of course, it all goes back to our Promise to help others.

This issue you'll meet Scouts who have gone on to become teachers, nurses, and even the CEO of a charity. It goes to show that the values you develop in Scouting really do stay with you throughout your life. But serving others is a two-way street. Not only do you learn skills along the way, but it also makes you feel great and leads to better wellbeing. I'm reminded of our founder Robert Baden-Powell's last message: 'The real way to get happiness is by giving out happiness to other people.' Read the inspirational stories about Scouts in Grimsby and Bristol and you'll see why this still rings true today.

Talking of wellbeing, what better way to refresh the mind and body than

a long walk? From trekking across moors to hiking under a full moon, our special feature reminds us of the transformative power of putting one foot in front of the other.

Finally, I'm so pleased to introduce polar explorer Dwayne Fields, our newest Scout Ambassador. The story of his journey from Jamaica to the North Pole, via Palmer's Green Scouts, is one of the most amazing you'll ever read. I know that you'll make him feel incredibly welcome.

And whether you're heading into the wild this summer, learning new skills or supporting your community, remember to take pride in everything you do.

Bear Grylls, Chief Scout

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The journey so far

Over the past year, we have been focusing on the future of Scouting. Following consultation at the end of last year, our new strategy – Preparing Better Futures in Scotland – will launch this spring. Before then, we'd like to take a look back over our current Strategy, which launched in 2013 with a vision that:

Scouting in 2018 will:

- Make a positive impact on our communities
- Prepare young people to be active citizens
- Embrace and contribute to social change

Scouting in 2018 will be:

- Shaped by young people in partnership with adults
- Enjoyed by more young people and more adult volunteers
- As diverse as the communities in which we live

We are really proud of everything we have achieved together since then. Here are just a few of the highlights:

Scouting has made a positive impact in communities across Scotland, with groups taking part in over 500 community impact projects between 2015-17. Over half the groups in Scotland are registered to take part in A Million Hands.

We have a Youth Involvement Strategy and Youth Advisory structure at District, Regional, and National levels. Our young people developed our Youth Approved Award, which celebrates meaningful youth involvement in Scouting.

Since 2013, our membership has grown by almost 13%, and we now have 50,081 members. Thirty new sections have opened in areas of deprivation. We have employed Local Development Officers to bring Scouting to the young

people that can benefit the most. We now have a team of Development Advisers to help us reach even more communities.

In November, we supported the TIE Campaign's aim to address all forms of homophobic bullying through inclusive education.

Of course, there have also been some challenges along the way, and we recognise that there is much more work to do. This is reflected in our new Strategy, with a continued focus on growth, community impact, inclusion, and youth involvement. You can read more about everything we have achieved across the UK on page 24.

Graham Haddock, Moray Macdonald and Katie Docherty
Chief Commissioner of Scotland,
Chair of the Scottish Board and Chief Executive of Scouts Scotland

Coming Soon: New Young Leader resources

New log books will soon be available for Explorer Scout Young Leaders to record their progress, as well as a new 'Preparing to Lead' booklet for adult volunteers keen to train and support Young Leaders in their section. During the consultation on the draft 2018-2023 strategic plan, increasing the number of young people in leadership roles was identified as a priority. To boost our volunteer numbers, we need to encourage leadership early. To access the resources, keep an eye on members. scouts.org.uk/supportresources/2628/young-leader-resource.



Updates to POR

Following consultation with volunteers, some changes have been made to Scouting's Policy, Organisation and Rules. In the Appointments Process chapter, Regional Commissioners, Regional Training Managers and Regional Administrators have been added to the Appointments Table. Notable updates have also been made to the Commissioner's Commendation Award and to the Beaver Scout uniform diagram, where a new leadership stripe has been included. For more information, visit scouts.org.uk/por.



Prepare for GDPR

With new data legislation coming into effect in May 2018, it's time to get organised and review how you manage personal data as part of your role within Scouting

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is new legislation designed to give greater data protection and rights to individuals. It's really important that everyone who handles data, whether at a Group, District or County/Area/Region level, understands the implications of the new legislation. Regardless of your role, start thinking about the personal data you hold, such as contact details, medical information or any individual's personal information. Think about where and how you store

this data, how you use it, and how you delete it. In May, we'll be updating the data protection rules in POR. If you're a member of a local Executive Committee, then as a Trustee you have a shared responsibility with your other Trustees to act upon GDPR. We will also be providing a toolkit to support your compliance. In the meantime, the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) has put together a wide range of tools and resources to help you prepare. Visit ico.org.uk to access these.

Scout brand review: improving our perception

We know we still need to be clearer with the public on who we are and what we do. Further to the update in the last edition of Scouting magazine and identification of perception as a priority in the recent consultation on our strategic plan, we are now progressing with a review of the Scout brand.

Seventeen years on from the launch of our current logo, proposals for a new brand position, logo and visual identity are in development and are currently being tested. The aim is to increase

our reach, relevance and enhance our reputation. We want to develop a brand that makes the benefits of Scouting clearer, leads to more effective recruitment and work better online.

Subject to testing and approval, the new Scout brand, brand centre and templates will be launched in mid-May 2018. Further updates will be provided in ScoutingPlus. At this stage, we would caution against making any major investments in branded materials until the launch.



Youth Approved Silver Award launched

Since the launch of our Youth Approved Awards during YouShape 2017, over 150 Foundation and Bronze Awards have been gained across Scotland and we were really excited to launch the next stage of the Award during YouShape 2018. The Silver Award takes meaningful youth involvement to the next level, with even more ways to engage young people in shaping their Scouting. The

Silver Award is available to all Groups, Districts and Regions who have completed the Foundation and Bronze Awards. It will progress the work already begun to benchmark achievements, identify any areas for improvement and celebrate the great work that is already happening. For more information about the Youth Approved Awards, visit scouts.scot/youthapproved.



ScoutFest 2018 and Scottish AGM

Something big is coming this year! ScoutFest – our festival for adults will take place at Scout Adventures Fordell Firs on 15-16 September 2018.

ScoutFest is going to be something very special for our adult members. We're planning a whole weekend of skills development opportunities, training, programme ideas, social events, camping, and loads more!

We will also be hosting our AGM at ScoutFest – our first AGM where all adult members in Scotland will have the opportunity to vote on any constitutional decisions and Board elections.

Following a vote by the Scottish Council, all 11,500 of our members will now have the opportunity to take part in consultations, decision-making, and elections. This means that our governance is now more accessible, transparent and democratic.

For more information about ScoutFest or our governance, head to scouts.scot.



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Choose your own adventure

Involving young people in camp or expedition planning not only helps you naturally build youth involvement into your programme, but will also help them develop valuable skills

Edinburgh-based Meadows Explorers had the perfect idea to encourage their Explorer Scouts to think about international adventure. Assistant Explorer Scout Leader Vikki created a board game to make Explorer Belt planning interactive and fun. We asked her to tell us more about it:

'The Explorer Belt encourages young people to explore and engage with countries and cultures different to their own. It's so much more than just an expedition; it is a tremendous challenge, both physically and mentally. Young people have to take responsibility for themselves, work together as a team and navigate through communities they have never encountered before.

'When communicating the requirements of the Explorer Belt to young people, the exploration and fun can sometimes get lost, so I was keen to find an interactive way to help our Explorers not only understand the required elements, but also get a sense of the adventure and problem solving involved, in a quick and fun way.

'The game's playing style is a mash-up of more familiar family games. The aim is to get to the end of the board's 10 squares to finish your hike. Depending on which square you land on, you will either answer a training question or play a chance card; the outcome of which decides if you move forward, backward or wait a turn.

'The game focuses on two elements: training and chance. It introduces the idea that as Scouts we aim to be prepared for all the potential outcomes that may come our way, positive or negative. The better trained the Scout, the better they can handle challenges they may face along their expedition, or even avoid the circumstance in advance. As an introductory activity, it isn't comprehensive, but it gets the ball rolling and starts conversations.

'The game has certainly made the Explorers think more about the encounters and situations they might find themselves in during an Explorer Belt expedition. They asked questions and discussed other elements of the Belt, such as what kit they would

take, who would work well together in a team or what country would they like to visit. In one instance, after the game had been won, the Explorers read through the remaining cards and continued quizzing each other. I think that means they enjoyed it!

'The important thing to remember is that each Explorer Belt will be unique; the aim is not purely to hike or cycle or kayak for 10 days abroad. The participants need to stop, smell the flowers, talk to locals, try the food, dance the dances, generally immerse themselves as much as possible and make memories!

'This can be daunting for even the most experienced of adult volunteers, and for some participants this may be their biggest adventure yet. As leaders we need to support our young people to have the skills and confidence to do this. They are called Explorers after all...'

If you want to check out Vikki's Explorer Belt game, head to the 'News and Events' section of scouts.scot.



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Ask Team UK

The UK Chief Commissioner and his team answer your questions about the District Commissioner role, international trips and more!

Illustrations: Patrick George

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I have completed the census for this year and see lots more data has been requested around our young people. Why is this and how will it be used? Understanding the disabilities and additional needs of our youth members helps us to constantly improve access to Scouting and we ask that the nature of the disability or additional need is identified. Monitoring these categories informs the support, training and guidance needed and helps us identify key external bodies we need to work with to better support the full participation of all young people. Having an accurate record also assists with our strategic plan beyond 2018.

Tim Kidd
UK Chief Commissioner

I'm planning a Group camp and some District Explorers are coming to help. How can I ensure an adventurous programme when the only permits we all have are Nights Away?

Everyone can have an adventure at camp without the need for permits. You don't always need one to deliver a high-quality outdoor and adventure programme. Encourage the Explorer Scouts to lead some adventurous activities for the younger members like blindfolded trails through the woods, a wide game at night for the Cubs ending with toasted marshmallows, and a campfire, or a night hike for the Scouts.

Hiking at Terrain Zero is also very achievable and you can build in some



games and activities as preparation. You could set various stages and lengths for different age groups and have age-appropriate bases and activities along the route. Why not build in some practical skills development with young people working in mixed section teams? These could include pioneering with a purpose or looking after and using knives and axes. Make sure the activities are age appropriate and you have done risk assessments.

Use the weekend to develop new skills among your leader team. You could invite other leaders from the District or neighbouring Groups to join you and pass on their skills and experience.

Above all, have fun and the young people will reflect on their weekend of adventure for weeks afterwards. Good luck. Do write and tell us how it went.

Graeme Hamilton
Acting UK Commissioner for Programme



The District Commissioner role in my District is vacant. It looks like a role that I might be suited to but it seems like it's a big role that has lots to do. Are there any ways that it can be made easier?

District Commissioners (DCs) lead and manage the District team. Traditionally, it's been a role filled by one person, but this doesn't have to be the case. There are many different options to get the right person or team managing the District and ensuring all the DC's responsibilities are carried out.

One option is to have a 'Team District Commissioner', where a team of people (no more than three) are appointed to carry out the DC role. The County Commissioner appoints the team and the roles are equal in status and weight. The County Commissioner also defines each team member's duties from the outset so that each has a clear outline of what aspects of the role they are responsible for.

Another option is to appoint one or more Deputy District Commissioners to assist the DC. A Deputy DC's duties are defined by the DC at the time of appointment; they may have a specialist role, such as focusing on supporting adults, recruitment or training. The County Commissioner



appoints the Deputy District Commissioners following the DC's recommendation. Kester Sharpe and Mark Tarry Deputy UK Chief Commissioners

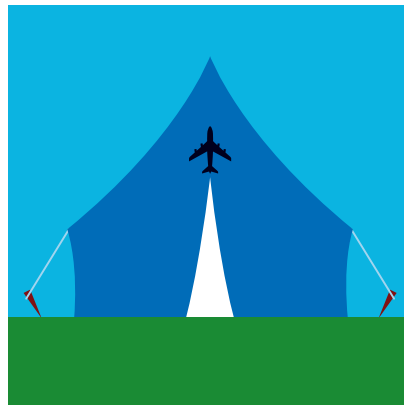
I'd like to organise an international trip for my section but I've never done this before. Where do I begin?

Last year, amazing volunteers like you gave nearly 9,000 young people the opportunity to have an international adventure. This is amazing, but we know there are young people who want to travel with Scouts and are missing out.

To get started with planning a trip, I recommend getting in touch with your Assistant County Commissioner (International). They will know all the ingredients needed for a fun, safe, life-changing trip abroad and are in a position to support you in planning a great adventure.

There are loads of national Scout Jamborees hosted by other countries every year. These are great for a first-timer as there is a price, programme and location to suit most adventurers. If you're keen to put your own programme together, look at some international Scout centres. There are plenty across Europe that are suitable for all ages.

More information on visits abroad can be found at scouts.org.uk/international and remember, whether it's a Cub getaway or an Explorer expedition, you can contact the International Team at international@scouts.org.uk or the International Active Scout Support Unit at enquiries@issu.org.uk. Jack Maxton International Commissioner



Can I count some recent extra learning outside of Scouting towards my Wood Badge, or will I still need to complete a training module?

At Scouts, the key principle for adult learning is that learning is optional but validation is essential.

Any prior learning, experience and existing knowledge is recognised and can be counted towards completing the Wood Badge. It's not necessary for you to attend training if you can clearly show that you're able to meet module objectives by demonstrating your skills in your Scouting role.

The same applies to relevant learning outside Scouting while you are a volunteer. Validation can be done in a number of different ways; ideally, it should be unobtrusive and take place while you carry out your role naturally.

You should get in touch with your Training Adviser and discuss what is the best way to validate the learning you have completed.

Amir Cheema
UK Commissioner for Adult Support

Ask a question

If you have a query for Team UK, head to scouts.org.uk/connect and complete the online form.

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School of thought

By working in partnership with a local primary school, 1st Dings in Bristol thought they had simply found themselves a home. Little did they know that in doing so they'd be making strides towards community cohesion and offering a whole host of new opportunities to local parents

Words: Aimee-Lee Abraham | Pictures: Francesca Jones

It's Thursday evening in Bristol and hail is hammering against the windowpanes of Hannah More Primary School. The streets are frosty and glum and half of the Scout Group has been struck down with a strain of flu, but for those who remain, it doesn't matter. Tonight, Scouting's newest recruits will be choosing the kinds of activities they'd like to try, ripping pages from magazines, designing their own adventures in the knowledge they can happen here. Next, they'll fashion hot-air balloons from bin bags, and collapse in a giggling heap. Meanwhile, parent volunteers will stay long after the session has finished, sharing Scout Programme ideas, or simply catching up.

There is never a dull moment here at 1st Dings – a pilot Group trialled to fill a huge gap in local opportunities for young people – but it took time to get to this stage. It was clear Scouting had potential here, offering refuge and release to those at a loose end in the hours between school and bedtime. It was also clear there was a genuine need for outdoor adventure, with overcrowding and a shortage of green space impacting the wellbeing of local families.

But, as the Group's current leader Georgie Hudd explains, articulating why Scouting might be able to help develop skills to enable young people to succeed was not always easy. How do you reach out to parents who have never come across Scouting before, let alone convince them of its benefits? How do you overcome multiple language barriers? And, in an area where tensions can arise between different cultural groups, how do you serve each community equally well, and make sure disputes never spill over into Scouting?

'We were keen to work with Somali parents in Bristol, for example,' Georgie explains. 'Not only was there an initial problem with translation, many Somali parents were unfamiliar with the concept of volunteering as a whole. We had to wait for the right opportunity to reach that community, and we had to innovate.'

After 18 months of searching, Georgie and team found Hannah More, a local primary school known for its inclusive approach. Having heard about another pilot Group at a nearby Muslim school, Headteacher Sue Ramsay was excited at the prospect of broadening pupils' horizons through Scouting. Easing the financial strain on the Group, she offered up their school hall free of charge and set about spreading the news by plastering the local area with posters and roping in community development expert Ruth Cochrane to act as a mediator between the Movement and the parents. Though everyone fully expected pupils to enjoy the sessions, they did not anticipate the positive effect the Group would have in bringing parents closer together. 'Our children are naturally very cohesive. They mix very well,' Sue explains, 'but we're aware parents may stay within their own groups if we don't do something to help. Scouting presents a chance for that to happen.'

If it proves sustainable, this Group could be a real success story. So far, partnering with a close-knit school like Hannah More seems to be helping with adult recruitment, by allowing Georgie to reach out to a whole new generation of leaders and helpers, who may never have come across Scouting otherwise.





When we visit, Bintu, a young helper whose siblings attend the Group, is calmly instructing the younger members. Rolling up her sleeves, kneading through clay, she quietly encourages them to persist whenever their attentions wander. In the future, she wants to train as a paediatrician so she can help other young people. For now, she's just trying to make it through her GCSEs while gaining work experience along the way. This desire to chase new skills is fuelling her interest in Scouting. Here, she gains useful hands-on experience with young people.

At one end of the table, Bintu's youngest sibling, Ibra, is fashioning a snow monster out of clay. At the other, Beaver Dominic is proudly displaying the imaginary breakfast he's created with his dad, Phil. Assembled on top of the bin-bag tablecloth is a toaster, complete with a moveable lever, and two hollowed-out compartments for the bread. If it were real, Dominic is certain his creation would be top of the range, costing 'at least £60'. He's

also made a bowl of inedible cornflakes and a pretend plate of toast with jam. The pair tuck into their imaginary meal and in-between bites Phil tells me that this quality contact time with his son is what drew him to Scouting. Initially he had 'no idea what to expect', but as he saw Dominic's confidence develop, he began training to become a Beaver Leader.

Since then, Phil has been here week in, week out and, like most of the other parents, has found himself unexpectedly hooked on the sheer possibility of it all. 'Dominic is quite a timid character. In the beginning he was reluctant to join in if any older kids were around. But in the last few weeks I've noticed a real change. Initially, I was quite happy sitting on the sidelines just to make sure he wasn't anxious being left by himself. But over time I've become hooked and now I really want to see the Group succeed. The numbers fluctuate, of course, but I'm optimistic we'll get there in the end. I'd love to grow the

Above: Hannah More Primary School in Bristol doubles as a home for 1st Dings Scout Group

Facing page: Through its engagement of the younger generation, the new Scout Group is helping to bring community cohesion to The Dings



‘Parents are experts at knowing what each of their communities needs’

Georgie Hudd, Scout Leader



‘It’s shown that Scouting exists beyond our own meeting place,
that our Group is part of something much bigger.’

Georgie Hudd, Scout Leader





Above: Scout Leader Georgie Hudd helps the group to make collages

Facing page: The parents of 1st Dings Scouts are just as hooked on Scouting as the young people!

section so that Dominic can experience more with children his own age... At the moment it's quite mixed and we often have to combine sections to make it work,' he says.

Laura, whose daughter Courtney is one of the Group's only Scouts, has similar motivations. She works long hours and struggles to connect during their frantic midweek evenings. 'On weeknights it's a case of rushing home to make dinner for us both, frantically eating it, then going to bed and realising we haven't had chance to have a proper conversation. During this hour at Scouts, we talk things through and try new things together... As long as she's happy, I'm happy. That's why I'm here.'

For other members of the Group, being here has also led to unexpected new skills, developing a confidence that has not been felt for years. For Mags and her son Jack, for example, Scouting has provided a newfound sense of purpose no one could have anticipated.

'When Mags came to the Group she had no qualifications. She has very little confidence in

herself in terms of providing references and doing admin tasks, because she hasn't done those things before,' explains Georgie. 'But every week I'm receiving emails full of ideas she's initiated herself, which most leaders will agree is unheard of. She's up for the training. She's up for helping at residential trips. In the longer term, we're hoping to build up her skill set so she can feed that knowledge back into her community.'

Though it's too early to leave the Group unaided, the prognosis is positive. Despite the growing pains and the teething problems, the hall grows fuller by the week. And though there have been occasional clashes between parents who want to handle the Scout Programme differently, parents who may not otherwise cross paths can often be seen sharing stories and passing Tupperware boxes full of snacks between the gym benches. It's a small gesture, but one that bodes well for community cohesion in a neighbourhood where social isolation and division is a real risk. Best still, as volunteers grow more confident and sure, word is spreading at rapid speed.





‘Rather than trying to translate everything ourselves, we’re working with parents to get the message out, and it seems to be working,’ says Georgie. ‘After all, parents are experts at knowing what each of their communities needs. Those who were tentative are starting to get involved, and going on an away day has helped to put everything into context. It’s shown that Scouting exists beyond our own meeting place, that our Group is part of something much bigger.’

At the end of the Group session, Basmala puts her sculpture to one side and dives into her mother’s outstretched arms, certificate in hand. This week, she was given an award for improving her English, and her mum thinks coming to Scouts may have played a role in boosting her confidence to speak outside the classroom. She laughs as she describes their new Thursday morning routine, which has become notably smoother since 1st Dings opened its

doors. ‘She’s always packing her bag for Scouts the night before,’ she laughs.

Witnessing the Group in action, it’s hard not to feel hopeful about the direction in which the Movement is headed. By embracing the challenges and working to create a diverse base of volunteers, the Group is showing adults who may not recognise themselves in Scouting that they have a place here; that they too have skills to share and friendships to build upon. ‘These Groups are not easy to set up, but they’re so needed,’ says Georgie, smiling. ‘It’s our job to show young people and adults from all walks of life that we absolutely do see them as important – that everyone is rooting for them.’

As we exit the building, Basmala is twirling in the distance, and Dominic is reluctant to put on his coat. It seems they may have already found a home here. 🍀

Above: Parents have become eager volunteers, using the sessions to spend quality time in the presence of their children; The Dings, a community built from within; Youth Shaped programme planning at its finest



Did you know;

As well as the National Memorial to Scouting, a special tree in our grounds remembers Jack Cornwell after whom the 'The Cornwell Scout Badge' is named.

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Having successfully developed its learning programme over the last few years, the Arboretum, which is free to enter, welcomes around 15,000 young people each year on organised group visits. The learning activities at the Arboretum promote a sense of national pride in our history whilst helping young people develop an empathy and understanding of other cultures and beliefs. Featuring a mixture of inside and outdoor activities, the programme is varied and includes bookable activities such as World War I and World War II Explorer Days, Acts of Remembrance, Guided Tours, Evening Torch-Lit Tours and Medal Explorer Days, a variety of free self-led activities are also available.

In 2018, your Group will also be able to participate in interactive activities to mark the Centenary of the formation of the Royal Air Force and the Centenary of the end of the First World War.

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All we've achieved

In the lead-up to the launch of our 2018-23 strategic plan, we look back at our achievements as a movement over the past four years: read on to find out how we've done

Words: Helen Pearce | Illustration: Ralph Spegal

With the launch of our new strategic plan fast approaching, we thought it would be worthwhile to reflect on our successes and challenges over the past four years. In 2014, we committed to grow, be more inclusive, make a bigger impact in our communities and become more youth shaped by 2018. And thanks to your dedication, we've done just that. Below, some of our lead volunteers talk about all we've achieved against our Scouting for All objectives as of the 2017 census, and what we need to focus on now.

Growth

Mark Tarry, Deputy UK Chief Commissioner

'Scouting succeeds when we offer opportunities to as many young people as possible. Key to the growth of the Movement is the recruitment of enough adult volunteers to open new sections, and to provide a great programme supported by amazing section leaders.

'In 2014, we recorded 104,427 adult volunteers in Scouting. The 2018 census data is currently being processed and will be available in the 2017/2018 annual report in September but, as of 2017, we have 154,000 adults in Scouting. This is our highest-ever number of adult volunteers. Encouragingly, the number of front-line section leaders and section assistants had increased by 6.5%. 2017 was also our 12th consecutive year of growth.

'In 2014, we recorded 432,000 young people in Scouting and in 2017, this number had increased to 457,000. Realistically, we are unlikely to hit our target of 500,000 young people by 2018/2019 but what we've seen is steady incremental growth and this is unusual for youth organisations today. We need to keep that up – more than ever, we need great leaders to deliver great programmes.

'Following Cubs100, we saw an increase in Cub numbers of 1.3% and Young Leaders are on the up, with an increase of 6%. Encouraging Explorer Scouts to take on leadership roles

when they turn 18 is one of our greatest sources of adult volunteers. Increasing the number of Young Leaders will not only increase our Explorer numbers, it will also improve programme delivery immediately and lead to long-term adult volunteer numbers.

'In order to continue to grow beyond 2018, we need to support Groups that are missing sections and make sure that sections are operating at capacity. We have 7,238 Groups in total but we are missing some 1,000 sections. If those existed at an average size, we would have 18,000 more members.'

Inclusivity

Amir Cheema, UK Commissioner for Adult Support

'Scouting continues to become more reflective of the diversity of UK society. In 2014, 22% of our membership was female and today, 27% is female, reaching 100,000 girls for the first time. We have also increased representation from minority and ethnic groups. Scouting in the Muslim community is growing and, in early 2017, we recorded over 3,500 members in local Groups supported by the Muslim Scout Fellowship across the UK.

'Since 2014, we have started Scouting in nearly 650 areas of deprivation. These initiatives enable even more adults and young people to enjoy the adventure of Scouting and create spaces for young people of different backgrounds to mix and build friendships. We also celebrate our LGBT members with presence at Pride events across the country every year.

'In January 2017, we set up the Inclusivity Advisory Group to advise, challenge and inform the future strategic approach to inclusivity. The Group is made up of adult volunteers as well as experts from external organisations, and ensures that underrepresented voices are included in this process. In 2015/2016, we partnered with the disability charity Scope to support disabled young people to fully participate in



457,000

young people in
Scouting

In
648

more areas of
deprivation

154,000

adult volunteers
in Scouting

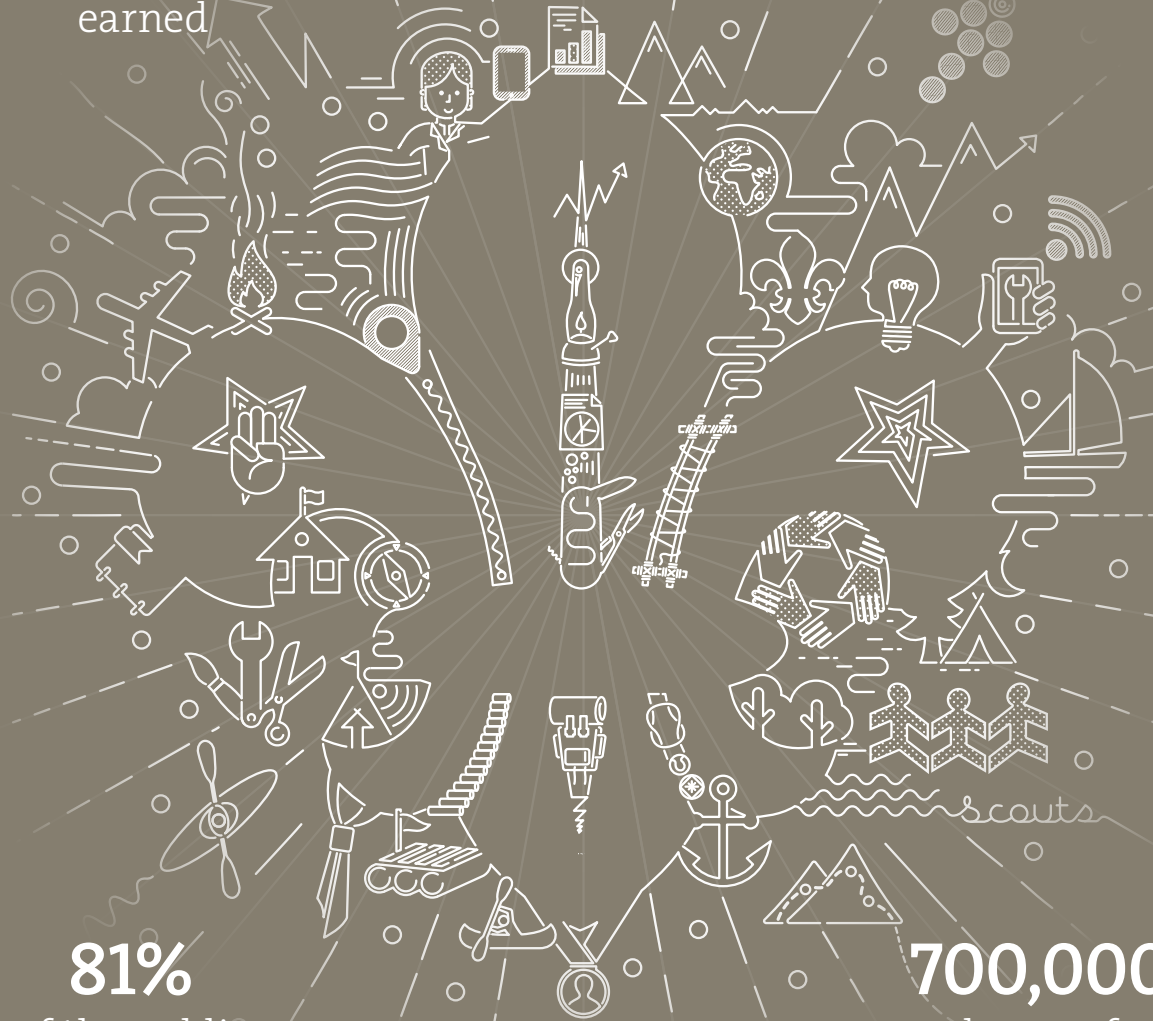
Over

56,000

YouShape badges
earned

27%

of our membership
is female



81%

of the public
believe Scouting is
open to people of
all backgrounds

173

District and County Youth
Commissioners appointed

700,000

hours of
community impact
action taken

Our achievements by 2017 census

'It's everyone's responsibility to ensure Scouting really is "for all" beyond 2018'

Amir Cheema, UK Commissioner for Adult Support

Scouting. The work resulted in 29 new sections opening and over 360 new young people welcomed into Scouting, as well as the development of guidance and resources.

'Public perception of our diversity is steadily improving too. In 2016, 71% thought Scouting was open to people of all backgrounds; in 2017, it increased to 81%. To support us with public perception, we've recruited a great team of Scout Ambassadors including astronaut Tim Peake, Countryfile presenter Anita Rani, polar explorer Dwayne Fields, Paralympic swimmer Ellie Simmonds, survival expert Megan Hine, adventurer Steve Backshall and Olympic rower Helen Glover. They're helping us recruit more members from a range of backgrounds.

'We need to continue to think about how we can actively and positively drive diversity. It's everyone's responsibility to ensure that Scouting really is "for all" beyond 2018.'

Youth Shaped

Frankie Smith, Deputy UK Youth Commissioner

'Scouting works better when young people shape their experiences. That's something we have always known and we've made great progress in ensuring that more young people are shaping Scouting across the Movement.

'A major step forward has been the appointment of 173 District and County Youth Commissioners who are driving this change locally. Just as significant is the uptake of the revamped Sixer and Patrol Leader resources – it's in our Sixes and Patrols where our future leaders get their grounding and one of the things that makes Scouting so unique.

'There is now a wider Youth Commissioner Team, with four new assistant UK Youth Commissioners appointed in 2017 whose remits reflect the four areas of the Youth Shaped Scouting strategy: Programme, Leadership, Management and Governance. At a national level, it's also great to report that 25% of UK Trustees are now young people.

'Our yearly YouShape events have been held across the UK, attended by young people and they're generating brilliant

ideas about how to improve Scouting. Over 56,000 YouShape badges have been earned since 2014.'

Community Impact

Graeme Hamilton, Acting UK Commissioner for Programme

'Since the launch of A Million Hands, our social impact campaign, in 2015, over 4,600 Scout Groups have registered. That means 247,000 young people have had the opportunity to take part in high-quality social action on four big issues of our time. When we conducted our annual survey of adult members we found that the number of Scout Groups delivering community impact had risen from 25% in 2015 to over 56% this year.

'The campaign is delivering for two reasons: firstly, it's embedded in the Scout Programme, with opportunities for young people to do it as part of their termly programme rather than something extra. And secondly, it's supported by strong partnerships. A number of great partners came on board in 2014 to provide expertise and support. This great teamwork was recognised when the campaign won 'Cross-Sector Partnership of the Year' at the Charity Times Awards 2016.

'As a measure of the campaign's success, over 1,400 projects have been logged and 90,000 Community Impact badges have been earned, recognising over 700,000 hours of action. There are now 16,000 Scouts trained as Dementia Friends. We've shared this news with the world too. Over 1,000 pieces of media about A Million Hands were generated, reaching over 90 million people.'

After extensive consultation with both adults and young people in the Movement, we will be launching the new strategic plan for 2018-2023 in spring 2018. We will continue to focus on Inclusivity, Community Impact, Youth Shaped Scouting and Growth through three pillars of work: People, Perception and Programme. ❁

For more information on the 2018-2023 strategic plan, including research and blogs from senior volunteers, visit scouts.org.uk/beyond2018.



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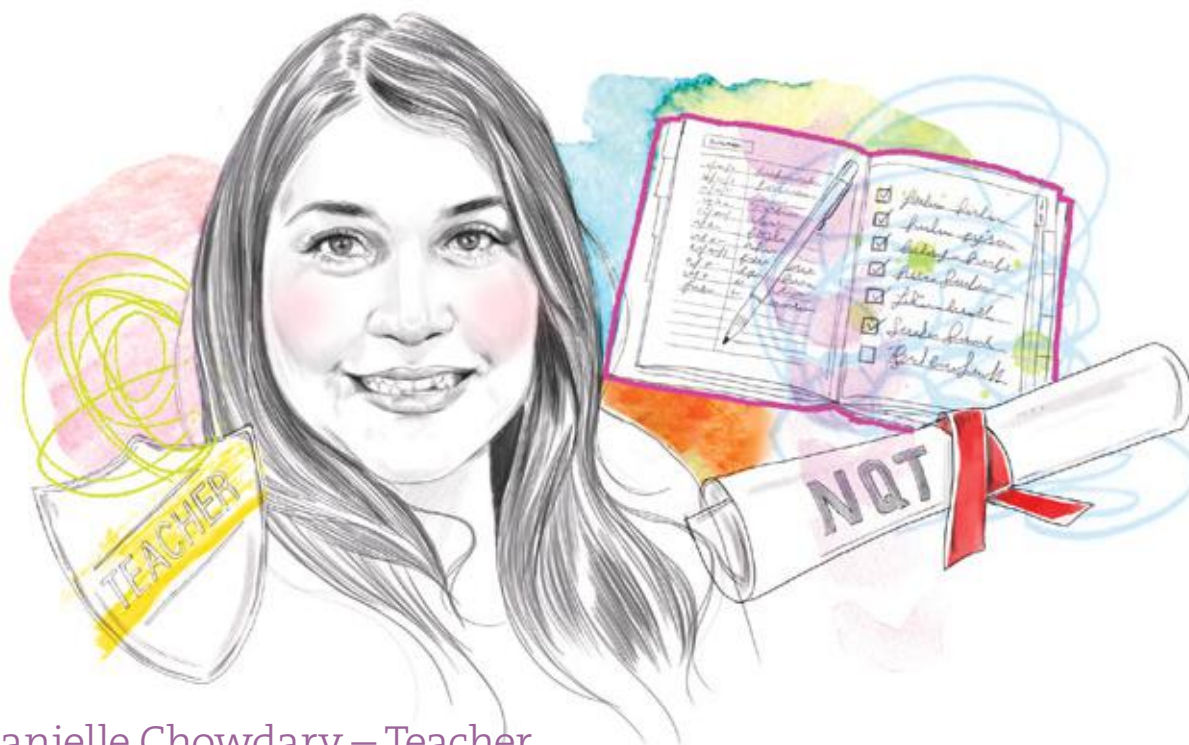
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Scouting their way to success

In a movement built on supporting others, it's no wonder so many Scouts go on to do such meaningful work. We speak to some inspirational members about Scouting's influence on their community-orientated careers

Interviews: Jacqueline Landey | Illustrations: Tracy Turnbull



Danielle Chowdary – Teacher

Before moving on to Explorer Scouting at the age of 15, Danielle was a Young Leader at her brother's Beaver Colony. Today, she transfers her Scouting skills into her teaching.

What made you want to become a teacher?

I enjoy working with children, wanted to be a teacher and have always thought making a difference in some way is important. Teaching is a job I can do that in.

What have been some of the most rewarding moments of your career?

Passing my NQT year, having my first classroom and class, positive feedback from parents and children, and when children who find learning challenging suddenly pick something up and are excited by it. The end of the school year is the most rewarding. There is a sense of achievement in knowing I helped these children through their learning journey. I look forward to finding out how they carry that on.

Which Scouting skills have been useful in your life and career?

Confidence, organisational and teamwork skills. Scouting helped me to take part and made me realise it's OK to not be an expert right away.

What is the greatest bit of wisdom you learnt from a Scout Leader?

To be myself, make sure I do what I want to do, and that I can make a difference to other people by doing the smallest of things.



Kate Wells – Social, Emotional and Mental Health teacher

Kate attended her first, rather muddy, Scout camp at just three months old. Her dad was a Scout Leader/Group Scout Leader, and her mum an Akela. Following in her mum's footsteps, Kate is an Akela today, alongside her work as a Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) teacher.

Which Scouting skills have been useful in your life and career?

Beyond the admirable skills of fire lighting and tent erecting, I've learnt leadership, problem solving and teamwork skills, and gained a great sense of logic. Most valuably though, I've learnt perseverance. This has been particularly useful in my career. As an SEMH teacher I have to problem-solve and think on my feet – being able to do this with a calm head is entirely due to my life in Scouting.

Was there something about the way those skills were shared in Scouting that left a lasting impression?

Repetition helps skills stick, but the hands-on 'give it a go' approach Scouting offers is a great tool for teaching. We learn the most through our mistakes; Scouting offers a platform to try something out. As a leader, I let my Cubs make mistakes. If it doesn't work out, I give them a bit more information or refine a skill, then let them try again, then get the joy of celebrating with them when they get it – that's my favourite moment: the Cub that can't, then suddenly can.

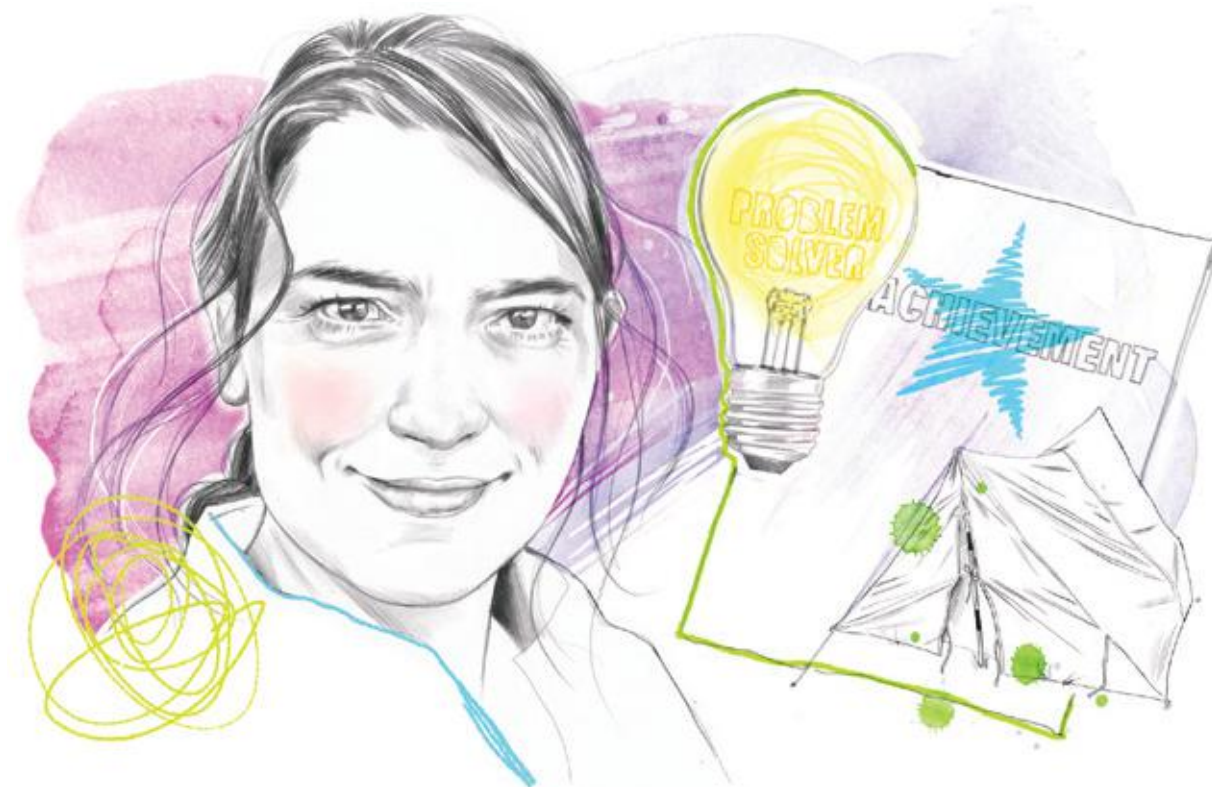
Did Scouting inspire you to contribute positively to society?

Definitely. I get a real buzz (as any teacher does) from seeing a child achieve something they couldn't

before. Scouting and teaching are the same in that respect; we get to pass skills, knowledge and values on to others. In Scouting we are able to play a positive role in someone's childhood, shaping who they become and that was something I really wanted to be able to do full time.

What have been some of the most rewarding moments of your career?

When children join our school they often come with a tricky educational background and usually assume they'll get the same approach when they join us. I absolutely love watching them realise that we like them and want them to be at our school, that this is a safe space where it is OK to make mistakes. Those mistakes won't change our opinion of them, which isn't an experience they're familiar with.



‘At university, I realised the difference Scouting had made – I was more independent than most..’

Simrit Kudhail



Simrit Kudhail – Medical student and photographer

Simrit Kudhail joined Scouts when he was six years old. Today, he’s qualifying as a medical doctor and works as a photographer to boot.

Why did you want to be a doctor?

Partly wanting to help people and loving science, but more than anything, I wanted to challenge myself. Scouting was all about challenging myself and I guess that mentality never left me.

What have been some of the most rewarding moments of your career?

Getting into med school was rewarding, but strangely some of my most rewarding memories have been

when I’ve made patients laugh even though they were in pain.

Which Scouting skills have been useful in your life and career?

My interest in medicine started with my first-aid training, and my photography developed through my Scouts Speak Up training and work with the UK Media team.

Was there something about the way those skills were shared in Scouting that left a lasting impression?

Scouting taught me skills I could use in all aspects of life. Many school skills can’t be applied in the same way.

At university, I realised the difference Scouting had made – I was more independent than most, be it planning meals or having the confidence to chat to new people.

What does success mean to you?

I don’t like to define success as an end goal. I see it more as the small victories that make up a journey. That might be sitting down and doing two hours of studying without getting distracted. Those small successes will (hopefully) get me to graduation, which will get me to my first day as a doctor, which will get me to whichever medical specialism I choose.



‘That’s why we do it; so we’ll be enriched, rewarded and hopefully make a difference’

David Barker



David Barker – Charity CEO

Driven by a passion to do something meaningful, David Barker has worked in the voluntary sector for years. Today, he’s the Chief Executive of Crohn’s and Colitis UK and District Explorer Scout Commissioner. Having joined as a Cub, he’s been a Scout almost all his life.

Did Scouting inspire you to contribute positively to society?

No doubt. Scouting gives you a sense of community. When I was a Cub doing a community project, clearing out the duck pond in the village or litter picking, that influences you.

Which Scouting skills have been useful in your life and career?

Leadership skills have been the key one. Many of the skills I use most I learnt through Scouting, from teamwork skills to knowing how to bring out the best in people.

What advice do you have for volunteers who feel overwhelmed by the challenges of balancing work and volunteering?

Prioritise. Focus on the things that matter the most. Don’t try to eat the whole elephant all at once – decide

where you’re going to start first. Then get a really good team behind you. By surrounding yourself with brilliant people, you’ll become brilliant yourself.

What is the greatest bit of wisdom you learnt from a Scout leader?

Talk to young people as they are. Just be yourself – laugh, enjoy it, have fun. That’s why we do it; so we’ll be enriched, rewarded and hopefully make a difference. If we harness that, we can continue to be a powerful force for good in the world.



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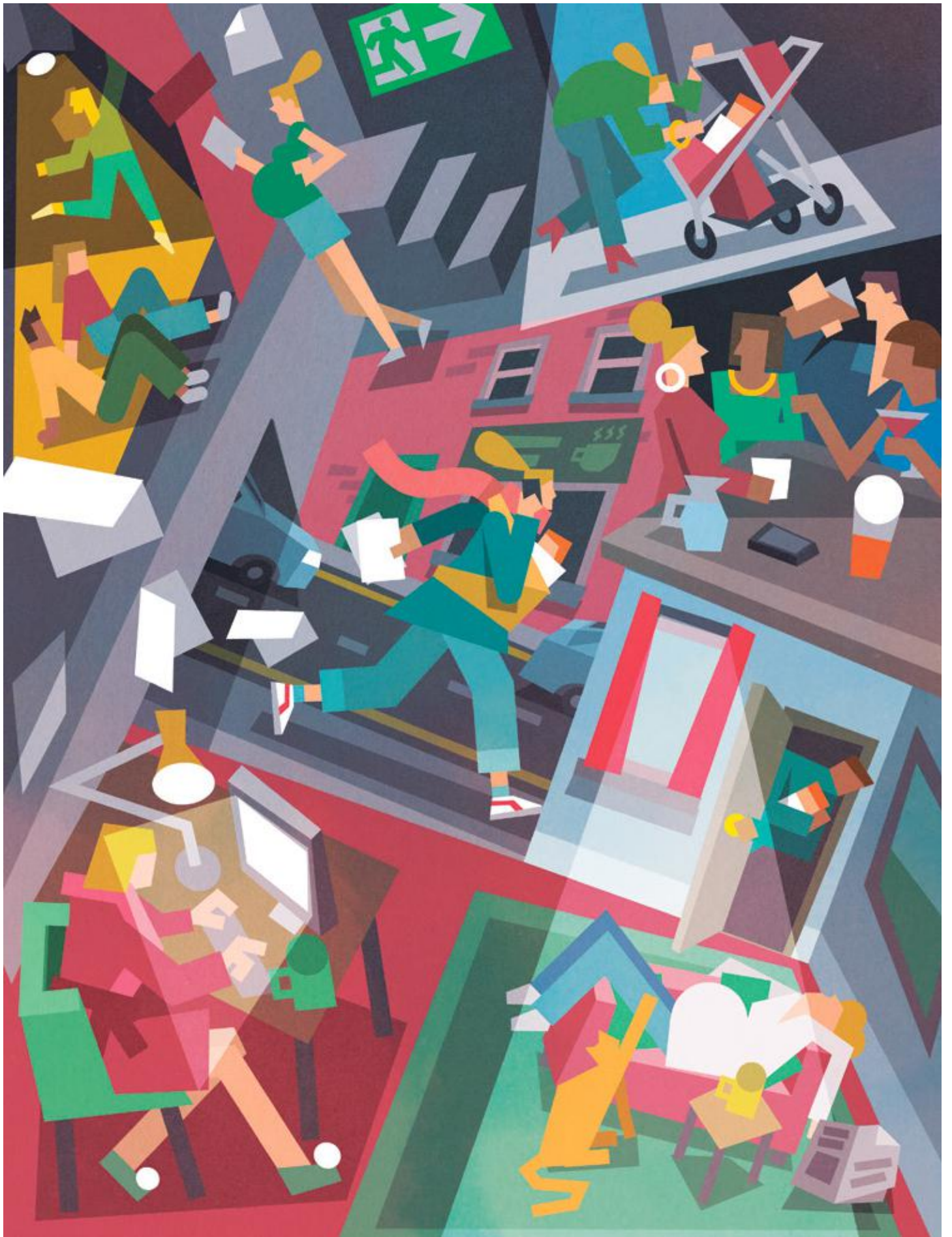
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A new member of the gang

Hermione Drew, producer of St Albans Scout and Guide Gang Show, talks about volunteering when pregnant and as a first-time parent

Words: Hermione Drew | Illustration: Ben Pearce

My volunteer role in Scouting is quite an active one, both physically and in terms of time commitment. Twice a week and on most weekends from September to February, I am teaching dance and songs, and running around a theatre or rehearsal space after 120 young people. When I found out I was expecting my first child, I was thrilled, but it also made me pause and consider how it would impact my volunteering. To me, Gang Show was already 'my baby' and so it was never a question of giving up my role, but just how I could make the two work together.

Telling the rest of the volunteer team was one of the first things I did. Their support and understanding has been so important. Working as a team to plan how we would manage things if I was less able to do my role as my pregnancy progressed was very reassuring for me. It was also helpful for the team to be clear on how elements of the show would progress if I needed to be absent unexpectedly.

Luckily, I had a fairly easy pregnancy and so even the week before my due date, I ran a weekend residential for the volunteer team at Gilwell Park – just with my hospital bag packed in the car and my husband nearby in case we had to disappear suddenly!

Then my daughter was born! I found people often expected that I'd stop or do less, but my volunteer role is such an important part of who I am that it's not something I can give up. I was back at meetings a few weeks after my baby was born and being up most of the night meant I was on email responding to things at 4am just a few days after she was born (oh the joys of newborns!).

For me, this was a way of not losing my previous identity the moment my baby arrived. Having a supportive husband was

crucial. He does everything he can to help me keep my Scouting commitments. We have worked together to divide up our parenting duties so we can keep up our other passions in life and where possible involve our family in them too.

But it wasn't all easy. While my husband could cover most things when I needed to be out, breastfeeding was not one of them and sometimes trying to feed using a bottle proved challenging. So he started bringing our daughter up to rehearsals for feeds at certain times, or I'd pop home.

The other area of strain was keeping up when I was never getting more than two hours' sleep at a time! The sheer exhaustion can at times make you feel like you can't do it anymore! I found I was especially tired in the evenings when I would normally have done lots of emailing and admin for my role. So when I was on maternity leave, I learnt to get better at using the time during the day when my daughter was napping. It's surprising how much you can do in 30 minutes if you really put your mind to it! That way, in the evenings when I was exhausted, I could let myself crash out.

Sadly, the after-rehearsal pub drinks with the adult team each week, which had been a longstanding tradition, had to change. As a team, we chatted and looked at a compromise. We didn't want to lose that important team-bonding time, nor did we want those volunteers without children to feel their experience had changed. We agreed we would all make an effort once a month to go to the pub after rehearsals.

Many of the team have had children and juggled that with their volunteering, and their support and experiences helped me feel encouraged that I could do both too. For me, one of the wonderful things about volunteering in Scouting is the emphasis on and inclusion of family. 🌸



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Gift aid

One small suggestion from a Scout has spawned a burgeoning community project where homemade gift bags bring much-needed joy to victims of domestic abuse

Words: Laura Steiner | Pictures: Jo Denison

The table is full of intricate and quirky charms: little silver stars, different coloured hearts, red Monopoly houses and yellow buttons. There are also threads of every colour, and golden bracelets. At one end of the table, a pair of hands is using pliers to open a thick silver chain. On the other side, a pair of eyes squint while fingers carefully thread a string through a golden heart. Someone else is covering a bangle

with fine wool using a technique called 'knit and knot'. It's a cold Tuesday night and the Scouts of 1st Healing Scout Group in Grimsby are busy making jewellery. These accessories will go inside the gift bags they're preparing for the Grimsby Women's Refuge. The refuge falls within the North East Lincolnshire branch of Women's Aid and acts as a safe house for women and children who are fleeing



'It feels really good because you know you're helping people who are in very difficult situations'

Emily, Scout, 1st Healing Scout Group



domestic abuse; a place where they can live free from violence.

Scout Section Leader Louise Drakes is the adult driving force behind the gift bag project. Whether she's out collecting old pieces of jewellery to up-cycle or saving any piece of material she can lay her hands on (extra fabric? 'Perfect for a small headband!'), Louise is constantly thinking about new items to put in the gift bags and more ways of inspiring her Scouts to use their creativity to help others.

'As leaders, we bring our own skills and our own craft into the Group,' says Louise while she 'knits and knots' a bracelet and prepares the room for a

guest speaker. While Louise is always on the lookout for projects that will have an impact on the local community, the idea of working with the refuge came from her son, Will. Will is a member of the 1st Healing Scout Group and has been part of the Movement since he was a Cub. His idea to make gift bags for the refuge came after finding out that a mother of a fellow Scout was working there.

When Will first pitched the idea, Louise was quickly convinced and what started out as a small Christmas project, with 10 gift bags in December 2016, has quickly grown into a fully fledged community impact project. For Mother's Day 2017, the Group delivered 20 gift bags to the

Above: The Scouts of 1st Healing work tirelessly to knit scarves, create jewellery and fill gift bags for the residents of the Grimsby Women's Refuge



refuge and for Christmas 2017, a total of 30 gift bags were lovingly made and delivered. 'It's a very important action,' says Louise. 'Women at the refuge do receive donations over Christmas but these are very personal gifts that we make for them.'

A quick look inside their meeting place and there's no doubt that everyone is committed to making the very best gift bags they can. Henry, who's in charge of the music tonight (making a speaker out of a pink plastic cup), is busy adding extra charms to a bracelet. Afeef has already finished three necklaces tonight and two parents have stayed this evening to help knit scarves. But beyond the creativity, and at the core of this

project, is the issue of domestic abuse in the community. Janice Woods from Women's Aid is here to talk to the Scouts about the impact of domestic abuse. 'It's very important for us to have the speaker here tonight because that's what's going to help the Scouts really understand why we're doing what we're doing,' says Louise.

Domestic abuse is not an easy subject to address with young people, so Janice framed the conversation around the subject of bullying.

'At some point or another in your life, you've all experienced bullying. Is that a good or a bad thing? Is it something we do?' Janice asks the group. The Scouts are all quick to respond with a

Above: As well as spreading goodwill, 1st Healing Scouts also learn about the seriousness of domestic abuse with the help of Women's Aid representative, Janice Woods



resounding 'no' and then go on to give different explanations as to why bullying is so harmful.

'It can make people very sad,' says Henry. 'People who get bullied can get mental health issues,' adds Lilly.

'It's like hammering a nail into a fence and then taking the nail out when someone says sorry,' says Ben. 'You take the nail out but the hole is still there and then you have to live with that hole.'

It is instances and observations like this that make Tracy Kelly, the former Grimsby Cub Leader and an occasional helper for the Scout section, feel incredibly optimistic about the impact of this project on both the community and the young people involved.

'I think the young people feel very proud,' says Tracy. 'It's always great to feel that you're involved because that's really what Scouting is all about, it's about getting involved in the community and about teaching young people skills.'

To make sure the project includes the community on a larger scale, Louise has invited the town to participate by donating different materials. She's approached people through the Healing Community Facebook group and the results have been astounding: all sorts of craft supplies and broken or old jewellery have been donated. 'Word has gotten out and the people of Healing are very appreciative,' says Tracy. 'When I chat to people around town, they know about the work the Group does, the information definitely gets around.'

As for the Scouts themselves, creativity and craft making is exciting and, according to Louise, it tends to have a very positive impact on the Scouts' mental wellbeing, helping them feel confident and more relaxed. But the biggest accomplishment comes from being able to help. 'It feels really good because you know you're helping people who are in very difficult situations,' says Emily, who's been part of Scouts since she was a Cub.

That help comes in the form of gift bags containing items such as shampoo, soap, socks, handcrafted jewellery and knitted scarfs. But the real service is the commitment and the genuine care from the 1st Healing Scout Group every time they 'knit and knot' a new bracelet with their community in mind. 🍀

From a woman at the refuge:

'Young people like you are an inspiration'

'My children and I have been in refuge for almost six months, and will remain in refuge until a safe place to live is found for us. When we first arrived we had very little. We were in the position of having to rebuild our lives and forget about the things we had to leave behind. To be given a gift bag of any kind was superb – even the toiletries were appreciated greatly. Some women have absolutely nothing when they come here; only the clothes they stand in.

'The benefit of addressing the topic of domestic abuse with young people is awareness. Some young people may not realise what abuse is. It doesn't have to be physical; it can be emotional as well. Also some young people may be being abused without even knowing it, because it's all they have ever known. It's important to be able to point them in the right direction if they need help and show them who they can turn to.

'If you know someone who is suffering from, or witnessing, domestic abuse then listen to them and give them reassurance that they are not to blame. Try to encourage them to contact the appropriate agencies that can offer professional support.

'I'd like to say to 1st Healing Scout Group: thank you so much for the wonderful gift bags and donations that you give to Women's Aid and for all the hard work that you do. Young people like you are an inspiration to others and bring so many smiles to the faces of families that would otherwise struggle and go without.'



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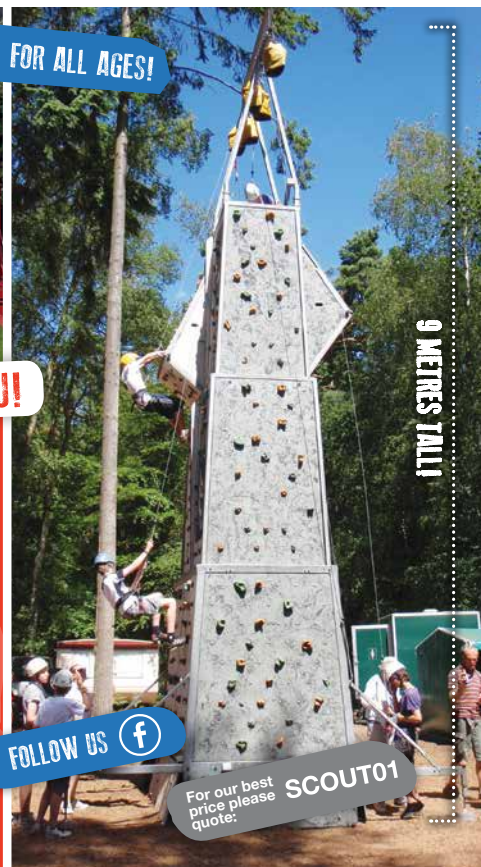
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Inspired by the great outdoors

Our newest Scout Ambassador, polar explorer Dwayne Fields, has led a remarkable life – after moving to London from Jamaica at the age of six, he escaped gang violence to become the first black Briton to walk to the North Pole. Here, he shares his story

Words: Helen Pearce | Pictures: Mohamed Abdulle

Dwayne's love of the outdoors stems from the first six years of his life, when he lived with his much-loved great-grandmother in the idyllic, lush Jamaican countryside. 'We lived in a really rural part of the island. There were trees, woodland and open fields all around us,' remembers Dwayne. 'At three years old, I had the freedom to go out and walk through the woods and climb trees and mess around in puddles of water. For me, it was the perfect, perfect beginning'.

In 1988, six-year-old Dwayne was uprooted and sent to live with his mother in London, a part of the world that could not have been more different from the one he had known since birth. 'I remember the day I flew to the UK,' says Dwayne. 'I got off the plane and I remember seeing my mum in a bright purple tracksuit with these big '80s earrings. This was Heathrow Airport. I'd never been anywhere like it. There were crowds everywhere. It was loud. It was massive. I was petrified.'

Dwayne struggled to settle into London: 'I would wake up at all hours of the night because I missed home, I missed my great-grandmother and I missed the sunshine.

'In Jamaica, I had all the space and freedom a young child could want. The very first thing I did when we arrived at my mother's house was run to the back window. I looked out

and there was nothing; just a concrete space which was about three metres by six metres. I thought "Where's all the grass, where are the trees, where's the greenery?" This was definitely not home.

'At school, I didn't fit in. I spoke differently, and at lunchtime I didn't understand what any of the foods were, or what the right foods were to order. I really just wanted to fit in. I remembered reading somewhere that female woodlice keep their babies on their stomach, and for me, that was the most fascinating thing in the world. So, one day I picked up this handful of woodlice and I ran over to some kids at school and I said "Look, some woodlice!" and everyone just ran away. I felt so alone.'

A welcome change

Dwayne was first introduced to Scouting by chance. He went along to Palmer's Green Scouts with a friend one day before being dropped off at home and was encouraged to join in. 'It was an environment where it was normal to include everyone,' he explains. 'It felt really good to be welcomed into something. I felt for the first time since moving to the UK that I'd found something that was for me. Whether we were making a bridge out of wood and rope or finding ways to navigate some kind of obstacle course, these were skills that I was fully versed in and was able to take part in. I felt like I fitted in.'



'Young people today are missing the ability to be at one with nature and follow their instincts... Scouting can offer all these skills.'

Dwayne Fields

Despite his sense of belonging at Scouts, in his teens and in early adulthood, Dwayne continued to struggle with his identity and his place in the world. However, through Scouting, he'd realised that he was good with his hands. At 23, he spent many solitary months building a moped from scratch. One day, shortly after the moped was complete, some boys in his neighbourhood stole it.

'I was determined that that moped was going to come back with me that very night,' explains Dwayne. 'I had literally put blood, sweat and tears into it. I found out where it was and went down there. The boys were taking it apart!'

After an altercation, one of the boys pulled a gun on Dwayne and fired. 'I remember he cocked the gun, I heard a bang and I thought, "Yep, I've definitely been shot!"'

Where next?

Luckily for Dwayne, the gun misfired. And this experience completely changed the course of his life. He admits that after the incident he was tempted to retaliate, but he decided to take a different path. 'I realised that if I did do anything, it would be me perpetuating that same behaviour,' he reflects.

For some time, Dwayne stayed away from his friends. He spent a lot of time thinking about what he wanted to do with his life. 'It was a really difficult time,' he says. 'I had to think back to a time when I recognised myself and that was the five-year-old boy in the woods in Jamaica. I wanted to do something in the outdoors that would inspire and empower others.'

Dwayne explains that when he made this decision, he was thinking about inner-city young people. 'The same type of young person who pulled a gun on me, the same kind of people that I grew up with. Those were the people I wanted to influence in a positive way.'

Dwayne's journey to becoming a polar explorer began with completing the Three Peaks for charity with a friend. 'I was in a lot of pain,' remembers Dwayne. 'I was really suffering

with cramps all over, but I remember thinking that I was outdoors and doing exactly what I wanted to do. And that felt good!'

A few months later, having returned from rowing across the Atlantic, Ben Fogle and James Cracknell announced that they were going to walk to the South Pole and were looking for a third person to join the team. 'It's like they were shouting my name!' says Dwayne.

'I sent in an application, but I was too late. They asked if I would consider going to the North Pole instead. And I thought well, I'm Jamaican, I'm pretty sure a pole's a pole!'

And so, in 2010, Dwayne became the first black Briton to walk to the North Pole. 'It was gruelling. And I don't think I realised how boring it would be!' he laughs. 'When we finally arrived, I looked down and thought, "Gosh, that patch of snow is exactly the same as the one 400 miles back!" But you know what? It was my goal and I achieved it.'

Dwayne now has plans to walk across Antarctica, the Sinai, the Amazon and the Gobi Desert. 'I just want to see and experience the world. I want to bring that experience back to people who wouldn't otherwise get the chance to see it,' he explains.

Dwayne is thrilled to be part of Scouting once again and he feels strongly that Scouting has an important role to play in today's society. He says, 'I think that young people today need more experiences that bring them together. These experiences help them develop interpersonal, teamwork and planning skills. Young people today are missing the ability to be at one with nature and follow their instincts. That's a skill in itself; being able to listen to and safely follow your instincts. Scouting can offer young people all these skills.'

Dwayne is joining Chief Scout Bear Grylls along with the other Scout Ambassadors, Ellie Simmonds, Tim Peake, Helen Glover, Anita Rani, Steve Backshall, Megan Hine, Chris Evans, Ed Stafford and Julia Bradbury, to help promote Scouting nationally. 🌿



Clockwise from top: Our new Scout Ambassador, Dwayne Fields; a young nature-loving Dwayne in his new London setting, a stark contrast to his Jamaican origins; kite-bugging with a member of the Hampshire Scouts Expeditions (HSX) Antarctica.

In praise of the long walk

We walk, we wander, we explore. It's in our Scout DNA. But why do we do it? Why do humans do it? We celebrate the benefits and power of walking, alone and as a movement

Words: Jacqueline Landey | Illustrations: Lucy Waldman

We walk for countless reasons. To stretch our legs, to get from A to B, to exercise our bodies, to relax our minds. We do it to take in the scenery, to walk the dog, to break in new shoes.

At times we do it to clear our heads, at others to generate ideas. We do it to look good, to feel good, to save money, to save the planet, to avoid looking for parking. We do it to walk off a meal, or to work up an appetite. Sometimes we walk to work; sometimes we walk to avoid work.

We walk to challenge ourselves, or to march for what we believe in, and as Scouts, we go in search of adventure.

But it's easy to take the privilege of functioning feet for granted, the freedom and power of inbuilt vehicles steering us through the world. We forget that we were once toddlers teetering to stand, struggling to put one foot in front of the other, to take our first steps.

Just as those first steps were met with applause, here we celebrate walking once again – as a means to greater physical, mental and spiritual wellness, and sometimes, a way to a better world.

Walking your way to wellness

Some call it the perfect exercise. It's enjoyable, free, environmentally friendly, and accessible to people across the fitness spectrum, from energetic Beavers to laid-back leaders. Young and old alike, walking helps us maintain a healthy weight, increase good cholesterol, reduce blood pressure, and build healthy muscle and bones.

But getting young people reaping the benefits of walking is more than just a good idea; the dangers of inactivity are severe. Recent NHS statistics show that over half of UK adults, over one in five children in Reception, and one in three children in Year 6 are overweight or obese.

According to the UK's Chief Medical Officer, young people should be active for at least an hour every day, for both physical and mental health. While an active lifestyle decreases the risk of developing numerous diseases, walking simultaneously improves mood, memory and sleep quality. It also reduces stress, anxiety, fatigue, and helps those who are depressed to recover, while reducing the risk of developing depression by 30%.

And as Scouts know from experience, walking in green







When enough feet come together, a walk becomes a march, and a march becomes a movement.

spaces is said to help even more. Mental health charity Mind conducted a study that found self-esteem levels of 90% of its participants had increased after a walk in a green environment. Walking is also thought to improve creativity. A recent Stanford study found that a person's creative output increases by an average of 60% when walking.

It's socially beneficial too. Mind Chief Executive Paul Farmer praises exercise as 'an opportunity to strengthen social networks, talk through problems with others or simply laugh and enjoy a break.'

But all this is not to say that those without walking ability can't reap similar benefits. You can support young people of various abilities with alternatives such as wheelchair basketball or adaptive rowing, or by helping wheelchair-users explore the outdoors in the way Disabled Ramblers do. Disabled Ramblers assists mobility-challenged people to get out into the countryside with the help of able-bodied support members, making the joy of gliding through the fresh air a pleasure available to all. As one rambler put it: 'I never say, "Let's go for a walk". It's always, "Let's go for an adventure".'

Walking the way of a pilgrim

Beyond offering physical and mental health benefits, walking provides opportunities for deep reflection. For centuries, people around the world have embarked on long, often arduous journeys in the name of spiritual growth. These pilgrimages usually entail some form of separation from an individual's everyday life to journey to a sacred place, sometimes at a sacred time.

Although individuals' motivations vary (across and within faiths, and outside of religion too), one way to see a pilgrimage is as an external expression of an inner journey towards spiritual discovery.

From the Muslim hajj to Mecca, to a Hindu pilgrimage to Varanasi, to a Christian crusade to Lourdes, embarking on a journey to connect – with the world, with your god or with yourself – is a longing that travels across borders. This small sampling of pilgrimages from around the world is testament to that.

Mount Kailash Pilgrimage, Tibet

Ascending Mount Kailash is forbidden; some believe this Tibetan mountain must be circled 108 times to erase the sins of a lifetime. Mount Kailash is sacred to many Hindus and Buddhists. The 32-mile trek takes approximately three days and reaching the summit is said to lead to nirvana – the final goal of Buddhism, a transcendent state free from suffering, desire and sense of self, in which a person is released from the effects of karma and the cycle of death and rebirth.

The Inca Trail to Machu Picchu, Peru

Snaking through subtropical jungle, cloud forest and ancient ruins, this popular trail leads to the lost city of the Incas. According to experts, the Incas were an advanced South American civilisation that built the trail five centuries ago to prepare pilgrims for their arrival into 'the castle in the clouds'.

The Incas worshipped multiple gods and deities linked to the natural world. Many of today's secular pilgrims walk the trail as an ode to nature too. With Amazon jungle skirting the trail and the snow-capped Andes draping the sky, the trail is a 26-mile feast of staggering scenery. After four days of trekking, pilgrims reach the sacred city just as the sun rises.

The trails to Kumano Kodo, Japan

There are a number of trails that lead to Kumano Kodo. Located in Japan's Kii Peninsula, some routes offer views of the Pacific; others weave through bamboo forests or mountains laced with streams. Overlooking seemingly endless valleys, often shrouded in mist, it's not hard to see why the Shinto shrine is associated with nature worship.

As old as Japan itself, Shinto is an aspect of Japanese life connecting people to the ancient past. Often practised alongside Buddhism, Shinto believes in the essential goodness of people and honours kami, sacred spirits linked to the natural world.

Nowadays the pilgrimage attracts not only Shinto and Buddhist practitioners but also hikers, history and nature lovers from around the world.





El Camino de Santiago, Spain

In medieval times El Camino (also known as the Way of St James) was a predominantly Christian pilgrimage. Today, people from all walks of life embark on the trail, taking various routes to the Spanish city of Santiago de Compostela, where the remains of the apostle St James are said to lie.

The most popular of these routes is the French Way. Lined with religious, cultural and artistic monuments, the trail offers opportunities for spiritual and creative reflection over a six-week period, more or less.

Although some still walk the trail for religious reasons, many embark on the pilgrimage as a personal response to an experience that calls for a period of reflection – illness, a change of direction, or perhaps the death of a loved one.

Walking for a worthy cause

Many commit to long walks in the name of causes that go beyond the personal – raising money for charity, creating awareness around an issue, or bringing people together. In Scouts alone, these walks happen every day.

Notably, Adam Dawson walked 1,492 miles from Lizard Point to Dunnet Head, the southernmost to the northernmost points of the UK, to raise money for the UK Scouts Hardship Fund – a fund enabling Scouts and Guides in difficult financial circumstances to attend World Scout Jamborees. Adam's sons had been active Scouts and so he wanted to do something for the Association that had had 'such a major and positive impact' on them.

It was also because of Scouting that 19th Swindon Scout Group walked from Land's End to John O'Groats – or rather, its equivalent distance. The Group spent 21 hours walking, lapping a church hall 28,000 times, to raise funds for Cancer Research UK. Each member walked an average of 1,000 laps, to collectively tally up the 780 miles that fall between the two points.

And when their former District Commissioner Paul Leeper passed away, Scouts from Romford District organised a sponsored hike that raised over £18,000 to donate to Saint Francis Hospice, where he was treated. With 550 members taking part, Group Scout Leader Julie Leeper said: 'This was Scouting as he loved to see it – everyone coming together to support a great cause, challenging themselves and having a great time.'

Walking as a movement, marching for a better world

When enough feet come together, a walk becomes a march, and a march becomes a movement. Throughout history people have come together to protest against injustice and to walk for what they believe in.

Great marches have toppled dictators, pressured the powerful into ending wars, and led to societies becoming a little bit fairer than they might have been.

Scouts have been part of these movements. We've protested against discrimination, marched for rights and walked for peace. Just last year, an image of a Girl Scout coolly confronting a far-right protestor at a rally in the Czech Republic went viral, becoming a symbol of peaceful defiance in the face of hate.

And just as we've come out to march against hate, we've taken to the streets to stand up for love. Each year at Pride, Scouts around the UK gather to celebrate the fact that love unites us.

Pride is a celebration of individuality within a supportive movement. Emily, an Explorer Leader, thinks of Pride as a way 'to show that as a movement, we are accepting of all.' Davina, a District SASU Member, said, 'as a transgender person, attending Pride helped me to better myself and have more confidence in doing more for people in Scouting.'

Globally, Scouts recognise the power of walking as a movement, from the Scouts in Ghana who organised a Walk for Peace in the lead-up to elections, to the Scouts in Belize who walked the length of their country to promote a culture of peace.

And in May 2018, Scouts around the world will take part in Jamboree on the Trail (JOTT). Scouts everywhere are invited to take part. Be it a walk in the park or a hike up a mountain, what counts is walking towards a better future through Scouting.

So, pull on your walking boots, rally up some young people and let's carry on walking together. And when you're out of breath, let these words from Baden-Powell remind you why we do it: 'No one can pass through life any more than he can pass through a bit of country, without leaving tracks behind, and those tracks may often be helpful to those coming after him, in finding their way.' 🌿





Above: Young people in Cambodia enjoy just one of the many books donated by Bookbridge
 Left: Kaira Konko gets its very own hand-hygiene demonstration from the Hampshire Explorers

Beyond our borders

If you're planning a community impact project, there's no reason to limit your plans to your own turf. Instead, let these three international projects inspire you and your section to achieve true greatness in places that need it the most

Words: Helen Pearce | Pictures: Alan Hands, Letitia Northcott and Marvin Takel

Scouting has always encouraged young people's natural curiosity and it's this curiosity that leads to the acquisition of knowledge and a thirst for adventure. This curiosity also opens their eyes to the world around them. Looking around, it's plain to see there are problems in our world today, but rather than turning our backs on challenging issues, as Scouts we focus on finding solutions and making the world a better place.

By including community impact in our programme, we develop kinder, more tolerant individuals who are better skilled to make a positive contribution to society. Many Scouts have taken their commitment to community impact beyond the borders of the UK. These three inspiring projects involve UK Scouts working with Scouts from other countries to make an impact on our global community while learning about other cultures and global issues.





Project 1: Kaira Konko, Soma, The Gambia

In 1989, a Hampshire Scouts Expedition (HSX) spent six weeks building classrooms in the Gambia. Through this trip great friendships were formed and two years later, HSX sponsored four Gambian Scouts to participate in Hampshire Venture One, an international camp.

When the time came for the Gambian Scouts to head home, Marion Christmas, who at the time was the Assistant Group Scout Leader at 2nd Bentley Scout Group in Hampshire, asked them what, out of all the things they'd seen while in the UK, they would most like to have back home in The Gambia. 'A Scout Centre like Ferny Crofts (the Hampshire Scout centre in the New Forest)', they replied.

So, Marion and the 2nd Bentley Scout Group decided to make it happen. They fundraised money in Hampshire to build a Scout centre in Soma in The Gambia. The land was purchased and the Gambian Scouts built Kaira Konko Scout Centre, which officially opened in 1998. In 2002, Marion wanted to formalise the support in the UK so set up a

fellowship (which is now a Scout Active Support Unit) to look at long-term objectives for the centre and provide support from the UK. Since the formation of Kaira Konko Scout Active Support Unit, the centre has gone from strength to strength.

The Kaira Konko Scout Group, which today has over one hundred Scouts, meets every Friday evening at the centre. The aim is to offer every Scout a better education, a sense of community and a brighter future. For instance, during those times when the electricity goes off in the village, Kaira Konko gives Scouts the opportunity to do their homework at the centre, where there are lights powered by solar panels installed on the lodge roof.

The centre is also used as a base for Scout Explorer and Network expeditions and as accommodation for visitors to Soma, including teachers and NGOs working on projects in the local area. Any profit that is made from guests is reinvested in Kaira Konko to improve facilities and Scouting equipment and spent on community projects.



Facing page and left: Explorers work alongside Gambian Scouts on vital community projects. Of course, no matter how pressing the project at hand is, there's always time for a quick kick-around...



'Our initial goal was to make the centre self-supporting and we succeeded by 2007. We now look at community projects and improving the quality of Scouting by providing programme support to the Gambian Scouts,' says Jackie Heath, who joined the initial fellowship in 2002, and as an Explorer Leader has since taken eight groups of Hampshire Explorers on expeditions to Kaira Konko.

During the expeditions, UK Scouts undertake community projects in and around Soma, working alongside Gambian Scouts and using funds raised by supporters in the UK. The aim of these expeditions is to give these Explorers the opportunity to experience the challenges of living in a developing country first-hand while developing skills such as independence, leadership skills and the ability to work in a team. 'The UK Scouts work directly with the Gambian Scouts. It's a real partnership and a wonderful opportunity for Scouts from both countries to get to know each other properly,' says Jackie.

Lamin Kinteh, who was one of the original four Scouts to

visit the UK in 1992, and who is now the centre manager, manages the community projects and is the main point of contact for expeditions. He was awarded an honorary MBE in 2012 for devoting 20 years to the Kaira Konko project, building up the Scout Movement in Soma and supporting educational projects in the area. 'He knows what projects work well and understands the community's needs. We are very passionate about the fact that our projects are driven by need in the community. We don't produce any white elephants,' says Jackie.

So far, projects completed by expeditions have included setting up libraries in schools (and cleaning and sorting donated books in order to fill them), buying paint and painting the Soma mosque, building toilets at the back of the mosque, repairing homes that have been damaged in the rainy season, teaching in schools and setting up community gardens.

For more information about Kaira Konko Scout Centre, visit kairakonko.com.





Above: Scouts in the UK sort through the thousands of donated books while their Cambodian counterparts wait to help unpack the boxes

Project 2: Bookbridge

Almost 10 years ago, a group of German Scouts visited a Mongolian Scout camp on an international trip and noted that the local children had a real thirst to learn English but had very few books and limited resources. Back in Germany, the Scouts started to collect books and within a few years, had succeeded in raising enough money and collecting enough books to open the first learning centre in rural Mongolia.

The centre in Mongolia had a dramatic impact on the local community, with access to books

expanding to include English language lessons and teacher training, with the centre becoming a financially self-sufficient heart of the community.

The German Scouts set up Bookbridge as a registered charity that aims to improve children's access to education in developing countries by establishing learning centres, training teachers and providing children's books for use in the centres. As a result of this work, young people and local Scouts have the opportunity to learn English, build self-confidence, and develop practical skills through these learning centres.

‘The important thing is that we’re teaching our young people about global issues and other cultures’

George Devine, International Scout Support Unit Manager

Officially a charity, Bookbridge continued to open learning centres across the Asia Pacific region in partnership with local Scouts. They also partnered with UK Scouts who started a drive to collect English books for the centres. Over the last five years, UK Scouts have collected, sorted and packed over 100,000 children’s books in aid of Bookbridge.

By learning about the issue and working with Bookbridge, UK Scouts can achieve their Community Impact Staged Activity Badge and Global Issues Badge, while making a difference to fellow Scouts and other young people in Mongolia, Cambodia and Sri Lanka.

Bookbridge learning centres are the hub of the local community. ‘The centres are run by local entrepreneurs as financially self-sustained social enterprises. These are local people empowered to make local decisions based on local need,’ explains Alan Hands, who is a Bookbridge Book Champion. His role involves building international bridges to enable Scouts in the UK to donate books to learning centres in the developing world.

This year a group of Explorer Scouts followed the books that they had sourced, collected, categorised and dispatched to their final destination in Mongolia. On the trip, the Explorer Scouts spoke to over 6,000 Scouts at the workshops they ran in the ‘Better World’ zone of the Asia Pacific Jamboree. They also spoke to senior Scouting volunteers from across the Asia Pacific region, spoke on local media outlets, helped deliver training to the Bookbridge centre managers at their annual gathering, and visited the newest Bookbridge centre, which opened in 2017 on the fringe of the Gobi Desert.

Since returning to the UK, they have become pro-active advocates for Bookbridge, attending Gilwell Reunion, assisting in the Programme Zone, and visiting Scout Groups where they speak to other young people about how they can get involved. There are now 23 centres across Mongolia, Cambodia and Sri Lanka open and thriving.

For more information about Bookbridge, email ukscouts@bookbridge.org.

Project 3: Scouts Against Malaria

In early 2015, delegates at the 8th Hampshire International workshop were asked to list the top 10 problems that were affecting the planet. Disease was at the top of the list; AIDS, the Zika virus and the hidden killer, malaria, were mentioned most often.

The delegates realised that as Scouts they were in a unique position to help communities in malaria-affected areas. They could utilise links with local Scout Groups usually attached to schools that could help with the distribution of nets and education; why it’s important to use the nets and how to use the nets correctly and safely.

Until 2014, Marvin Takel was Assistant Scout Leader at 8th Camberley Scouts in Surrey. Over several years of expeditions to Uganda, he developed extensive knowledge and insight into the country and so, in 2015, he discussed a possible initiative with representatives of the Ugandan Scout Association. The initiative was welcomed by the Ugandan Scouts and they committed to support it logistically.

And so, Scouts Against Malaria was launched. Scouts Against Malaria’s mission is to provide programme ideas and resources to teach young people about malaria and its effects. They are then encouraged to raise funds in order to supply African Scouts with mosquito nets that they can distribute to vulnerable families in Sub-Saharan Africa. An estimated 43% of people at risk of malaria in Sub-Saharan Africa don’t have access to malaria nets or insecticides. By learning about malaria and what can be done to limit its impact, young people can make a difference and save lives while broadening their minds and learning about the world.

‘When I was first approached about this project, I raised some questions about whether it was the right thing for us as an organisation to become what was to all intents and purposes, an aid agency. That’s not what we do, we do education,’ admits George Devine, Manager, International Scout Support Unit.

‘However,’ he continues, ‘I liked the principle of getting UK





Scouts involved and becoming more aware of the affects of malaria and what it was doing in other parts of the world. I feel strongly that we need to remember that our role is education and personal development. The important thing is that we're teaching our young people about global issues, as well as teaching them about other cultures, and if the spin-off of that is that we're helping people who are in need, that's brilliant, but it's not the main objective.'

Once Scouts in the UK understand the issue, they complete badge criteria to earn a Scouts Against Malaria Challenge Badge. The Scouts then fundraise £5 per badge, and after sending the money to Scouts Against Malaria they receive their badges. The corresponding number of mosquito nets is then supplied to the Scouts in Africa. Once Scouts Against Malaria have been

informed of where the nets have been distributed, the information is uploaded to the website so that interested fundraisers can see exactly where in the world their efforts have helped those in need.

Local African Scouts allocate the mosquito nets to individual homes in their communities. The Scouts meet the family and teach them the importance of using the net and how to set it up correctly. They then keep in contact with the families to ensure that the nets are maintained and used correctly. For taking part in this initiative, the African Scouts also earn the Scouts Against Malaria Challenge Badge. 🍀

For more information about Scouts Against Malaria, and how you and your Scouts can get involved, visit scoutsagainstmalaria.org.uk.

Above: Mosquito nets are distributed to families in Bugembe, Uganda, while UK Cubs learn how mosquitos pass malaria on to humans and attempt erecting their very own mosquito nets



Buy a brick and help provide opportunities for more young people

The Promise Path is a brick trail that runs through the spiritual home of Scouting, Gilwell Park – it's an uplifting new feature of the park built by supporters like you.

Having a brick engraved and laid into the Promise Path is the perfect opportunity to give a gift to someone close to you. Perhaps you'd like to buy a brick as a way of:

- Thanking a fellow volunteer for years of service
- Celebrating the achievement of a young person
- Commemorating a special event
- Letting your Group make its mark at Gilwell Park

The path is already full of positive, inspiring messages from Scouts and supporters of Scouting from all over the world.

You and those close to you can be a part of the Path too – simply by giving the gift of a Promise Path brick.

You can donate to the Promise Path by simply filling in the form opposite.

You can also visit scouts.org.uk/promisepath or contact the team at **020 8433 7100** to get additional details and make a donation.

ENGRAVE A PERSONAL MESSAGE ON ONE OF OUR BRICKS



Single brick

210x105mm
2 lines of black text
16 characters per line



Square brick

210x210mm
3 lines of black text
16 characters per line



Super brick granite

400x200mm
3 lines of golden text
22 characters per line



Square granite

300x300mm
4 lines of golden text
22 characters per line



Super square granite

400x400mm
Golden fleur-de-lis
5 lines of golden text
26 characters per line



Yes, I would like to support...



You can make a dedication and donation now by calling 020 8433 7100 or visiting scouts.org.uk/promisepath

Alternatively, please complete and return this form to:

Freeport RTLB-YJYT-BCHL Promise Path, The Scout Association, Gilwell Park, London E4 7QW

Title: Forename: Surname:

Address:

 Postcode:

Telephone no: Email:

Your inscription:

Please tick your chosen brick and write the name or message you would like engraved below. Please note that letters, numbers, punctuation and spaces will all contribute to the total allowed characters per line. We will confirm your order with a certificate and you will have 10 days to make any changes to your inscription.

- Single brick** 2 lines/16 characters per line — £50
- Square brick** 3 lines/16 characters per line — £100
- Super brick granite** 3 lines/22 characters per line — £250
- Square granite** 4 lines/22 characters per line — £500
- Super square granite** 5 lines/26 characters per line — £1,000

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LINE 1																										
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LINE 4																										
LINE 5																										

This is a gift for (if applicable):

Cheque (made payable to The Scout Association) Credit/Debit Card (please fill in below)

1: Type of card: Mastercard: Visa: Maestro: Visa Delta/Electron:

2: Name(s) on card:

3: Card no:

4: Card valid from: / 5: Expiry date: / 6: Issue no. (Maestro):

Thank you for supporting Scouting. The Scout Association takes your privacy very seriously and will only use your personal information to administer your account and provide the products and services you have requested from us.

If you consent, from time to time we will contact you with fundraising information and offers, appeals, exclusive charity products, competitions, lotteries and gaming.

Please tick to say how you would like The Scout Association Fundraising Team to contact you:

Post Email Telephone Text message

We will not share or sell your details with any third parties or affiliated organisations.



The Scout Association retains complete control over the location and date of installation of all stones in the Promise Path. The stones are and will remain property of The Scout Association. The Scout Association agrees to maintain the stones for a minimum of 5 years. Stones used may differ in colour from those illustrated. Stones may become worn, weathered or damaged by natural cause without any liability to The Scout Association. In exceptional circumstances The Scout Association reserves the right to relocate stones. The Scout Association reserves the right to refuse any application at its discretion. The Promise Path is intended to be positive and inspiring, and any negative phrasing is likely to be refused. After you receive the certificate confirming your inscription, you will have 10 days to notify us of any possible changes. On receipt of your order form, your request will be granted subject to (a) approval of the inscription (b) availability of stones and (c) remaining space in the Promise Path.

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Feed everyone on camp – regardless of their dietary requirements – with our three delicious recipes

79 Activities

From paracord survival bracelets to growing an edible garden, try our 10 activities with your section and help them to earn badges and awards



Making an impact at a local level begins with understanding your community's needs

intelligence; increasing their empathy with and understanding of people different to themselves.

And it doesn't have to be complicated, it simply has to have a positive impact on the community you are trying to help. Below are five steps you should follow when carrying out a community impact project locally with your Scouts.

1. Understand what your community needs

The most important thing to think about when embarking on a community impact project is what the community actually needs. Often, we have preconceived ideas about what is needed without fully understanding what the issues are.

Be open-minded and talk to people locally, such as those who work in the public sector and decision makers in your community. Consider inviting a local councillor or other representative

to your sectional meeting so that you and your young people can better understand the community's need.

Doing a community mapping activity with your young people can also be a really nice way to start thinking about what and who is local to you. It can be easily adapted for different age groups.

For Beaver Scouts, start by looking at their immediate community – ask them what they know about where they live. For Explorers and Scout Network, broaden this out to think about the international community and more complex issues.

Doing community mapping activities can also help when working towards badges such as the World Challenge Awards and the Local Knowledge Activity Badges. The A Million Hands resources (amillionhands.org.uk/resource) contain guidance on carrying out a community mapping activity.

Once your young people have assessed the need, they can dig deeper into the issue and start to think about how they can make a difference to their community. This will help them understand what they are trying to achieve before getting started.

2. Plan your action

It's important that young people take the lead when planning a community impact project. Consider who will do what, and delegate different parts of the planning to ensure that the work is spread out fairly. This is great practice for Explorer Scouts and Scout Network members, who will also be developing these skills through planning towards requirements for their top awards.

For younger sections, the planning will be more of a challenge. Although they won't necessarily be able to do things without some help, they can start to develop these important skills with the support of leaders and parents.





Working with people from within your community will ensure your project has an even greater impact

Consider having a different Lodge or Six take the lead on different parts of the planning with an adult supporting them. The adult is then responsible for that part of the plan. You could also have Lodge Leaders or Sixers take the lead by shadowing leaders.

When planning their action, your Scouts will need to consider the following things:

- How will it make a difference?
- What are the timescales?/How long will it take?
- Is the project going to cost anything? If yes, then how much?
- Who needs to be involved? Are there any key, influential people in the community or VIPs who could help support your cause?
- Are there any rules or regulations you need to be aware of?
- Is the impact sustainable?
- How will you check if the project has been successful?

Look at other projects for inspiration. Although you will want to tailor what you do to the specific need in your community, other projects can give you ideas. And remember, to make a real impact, it's important to work closely with people in the community.

3. Take action

Go out there and make a genuine difference! This is what Scouting is all about; helping others, making friends and having adventures. Remember to record anything you learn along the way, including things you would do differently next time, and log your actions at amillionhands.org.uk to help inspire others and share best practice.

4. Reflect, learn and do more

After the project, it's a good idea to reflect on how it went and to think about what you could do in the future to continue to have a positive impact on your community. Are you going to continue working on the same issue?

How can you challenge yourself and your young people to do even more next time? What new skills for life have you and your young people learnt?

5. Tell the world and celebrate

It's really important that we shout about what we do. Not only will it attract more people to our movement, it will help spread positivity and inspire others to make a difference in their communities too. Get in touch with your local Media Development Manager to help you tell the world about your amazing work.

And don't forget to be proud and celebrate. You have worked hard and made a difference! Reinforcing this with your young people will motivate them to want to do more to help people in their community. 🌟

Don't forget to get involved in your issue's Big Moment this spring. Visit amillionhands.org.uk/bigmoment.



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Spontaneous stars

Improvisational theatre – or ‘improv’ as it’s more often called – is an unplanned, unscripted, hilarious way to get Scouts thinking on their feet and help build their confidence

Words: Laura Steiner

Picture a makeshift stage, a group of six people and two chairs. There is no script, no costumes and no props. One person comes to the front of the stage and asks the audience for a word. Using that word, the performers create characters and a story. A whole universe comes to life. Someone might pretend to be on the moon. Two

people might act like they’re on an awkward date. The performers make mistakes, jokes and ultimately, some seriously fun theatre.

But improv isn’t only about making one another chuckle; it’s also a fantastic way for young people to develop confidence and creative skills.

The golden rules of improv

- Improv’s golden rule is ‘yes and...’
Saying ‘yes and...’ shows the performer’s willingness to go along with an idea presented by their scene partner and add to it.
- It’s about co-operation and trust.
A scene is ultimately built as a collaborative effort. The actors

co-operate and trust one another to follow through the scene and create something together.

- It's about listening carefully and paying attention. When an actor is in a scene, they listen to all the details that their scene partner is giving them so they can react appropriately and build on the story. The actor never goes on stage knowing what they're going to say; rather they go on stage with open ears and focus their whole attention on the person in front of them.

The benefits

The benefits of learning this art form range from boosting confidence and resilience, to improving listening and observation skills, to learning how to work together as a team. Improv is a great way for young people to develop these skills in a fun and active way.

Badges

With these improv games, you can inspire Beavers to work towards their Creative Activity Badge, Cubs towards their Entertainer Activity Badge, Scouts towards their Entertainer Activity Badge and Explorer Scouts towards their Performing Arts Activity Badge. They can journey from just having a go to organising their own performance as they move through the sections. These badges provide a platform for creative and outgoing young people to shine, while encouraging those who are shy or more reserved to come out of their shells and develop confidence.

Activities to try

Try out these simple improv games. Remember, the aim of improv isn't necessarily to create comedy – rather, it's about exploring the principles outlined above. The comedy and the jokes will emerge by themselves!

Soundscape

For all sections

This is a great warm-up game to build teamwork and co-operation skills.

The aim of this game is to build a group soundscape using your voice and the sounds you can make with your body.

- Ask your young people to stand in a circle and to take a deep breath. It's best if everyone keeps their eyes closed.
- Anyone can start the soundscape with a simple beat or sound.
- In their own time, the young people can join in.
- Let the song end quite organically. You will all have a sense of when the song has reached its conclusion.

Remember, there are no right or wrong moves and the rhythm can change as many times as you like, speeding up, slowing down and going in different directions!

Make shapes

For all sections

This is a good game to get everyone moving and paying attention to what people around them are doing. The aim of this game is to get the whole group to build a shape together.

- Explain to the group that the goal is to build a specific object with their bodies while you count down from 10. Be sure to establish some ground rules to avoid injuries and ensure everyone feels comfortable.
- Decide on an object (a pirate ship is always a favourite, but it can be anything – a toaster, an aeroplane, a falling leaf – let your imagination run wild!) and start counting down.
- When you reach one, say 'freeze!'

and everyone must stay in the position they're in while you inspect the object they've made.

- In the first couple of rounds, allow the young people to talk. Then you can make it more challenging by telling them to be completely silent while they build the object.

Remember: embrace mistakes! So, a weird-looking pirate ship might just become the funniest thing to happen.

Trio

For Scouts, Explorers and Network

This game is brilliant for getting everyone to react quickly and trust their instincts. The aim is to build small improvised scenes between groups of three people.

- Choose a group and get all three of them up on their feet.
- The first player makes a statement out loud and mimics the object (eg 'I am a sofa!')
- The second player jumps in and adds something to that scene and mimics the object (eg 'I am a TV!')
- The third player jumps in and adds something that ties the whole scene together (eg 'And I am a woman sitting on the sofa watching TV!')

Remember, the scenes don't always have to be logical. The point is to react as instinctively as possible using the information presented. Embracing mistakes is all part of the fun. As actress and comedian Tina Fey wrote, 'In improv, there are no mistakes, only beautiful, happy accidents. And many of the world's greatest discoveries have been made by accident.' Anything that might be seen as a 'mistake' in an improv scene is simply an opportunity to laugh together. 🌸

All kinds of minds

Temple Grandin is a renowned scientist whose inventions have revolutionised the way we treat farm animals. By openly talking about her experiences as a person on the spectrum, she's also changing the way we see autism. Here, she gives advice on how to help all young people soar

Interview: Aimee-Lee Abraham | Illustration: Bijou Karman

If you think a young person has autism, the worst thing you can do is nothing. I didn't speak until I was nearly four. Doctors assumed I had brain damage, but my mother pushed for answers. She took me to see a wonderful speech therapist, and we practised one word at a time. That early intervention was vital. Before I got help, I could only communicate by screaming.

When somebody speaks to me, their words are instantly translated into pictures. I translate words into full-colour movies, complete with sound, which run like a VCR tape in my head. Language-based thinkers find this difficult to understand, but when I design things, visual thinking is a tremendous advantage. I have video memories of every item I've ever worked with – steel gates, fences, latches, concrete walls, and so on. To create new designs, I just retrieve bits and pieces from my memory and combine them into a new whole.

Not everyone on the spectrum thinks like me. Some young people learn best if they focus on patterns. Others learn in words. Learning styles and sensitivities are very variable and different kinds of thinkers respond well to different kinds of activities. Ask your young people how they like to do things and tailor your approach to suit them.

The spectrum has broadened and shifted. It's great that more young people are getting diagnosed properly, but labels can be limiting. We mustn't let them shape our beliefs about what we can and cannot do. It's important to evaluate on a case-by-case basis. In my case, autism is an important part of who I am, but the scientist in me always comes first.

The world owes a great deal to people with autism and we need all kinds of minds. If the autism gene was eliminated from the gene pool early on, we might be less advanced as a species today. In fact, we might still be standing around in

caves, chatting and socialising and not getting anything done. It's likely that the first human to invent the stone spear wouldn't have been the extrovert leading the group, or the gossipers huddled around the campfire. We were probably driven forward by the awkward, studious person sitting at the back of the cave, chipping away at the rocks until they figured out how to turn them into tools.

Innovation and (high-functioning) autism often go hand in hand. I've been to Google. I've been to Microsoft. I'd estimate about half of the people working there are on the spectrum. Young people on the spectrum may have different or challenging traits, but they have the potential to do amazing things if they're well supported. Albert Einstein was non-verbal until he was four. Mozart had trouble with social interaction. Steve Jobs was disruptive in the classroom as a child, but soared as soon as he joined extracurricular computer clubs. If any of these people were born today, I have no doubt they'd be diagnosed with a form of autism.

We need to teach basic skills for life. Things like knowing how to pay for groceries, how to greet someone, how to speak up when something feels unfair. Negotiation is a basic social skill, but it's something I would never have picked up if I hadn't been taught. I practised and practised until I got it right.

We shouldn't throw young people in the deep end, but we shouldn't be afraid to stretch them, either. Planning things in advance is a great way to reduce the amount of anxiety people on the spectrum might feel. Most people with autism find comfort in routine, but it's important for them to feel prepared if and when plans change. If any major changes are likely to happen, such as the introduction of a new Scouting volunteer, or a change to a camp itinerary, then it's right to make sure you give that person as much notice as possible, so there's less of a shock. Equally, there may be situations you





‘Scouting is great because it encourages young people to step outside their comfort zones’

Temple Grandin

can't predict, so it's good for them to understand that, too.

It's important to give young people a choice. I was terrified to visit my aunt's ranch when I was 15. My mother gave me two choices. Either I could go for two weeks, or I could go for six. I said yes to the two weeks and ended up staying for the whole summer. It was the best thing that ever happened to me, because it introduced me to my life's passion – working with animals. Today, the majority of livestock plants in the USA are using the technology I invented. I may never have started if my mother hadn't given me that choice.

When I first started working on cattle ranches, I was usually the only woman in the room. Some people doubted me, but I didn't know it. I wasn't so great at picking up on subtleties. In a way, not noticing helped me to do my job well. Things have thankfully changed a great deal since. It's just terrific to see more girls in Scouting.

If video games had been around when I was a kid, I would have been a total addict. Scouting is great because it encourages young people to step outside of their bedrooms and outside of their comfort zones.

For a long while, my friends were my horses. Then, I found other kids who shared my interests. Finding a shared interest is vital for kids on the spectrum and participating in group badges and team-based tasks is just great for them. What I find unique about Scouting is the variety of badges you have, to suit different kinds of thinkers. These badges unite kids who share interests, however unique those interests might be, and they teach them how to co-operate outside the home.

If a young person struggles to complete tasks, break everything down into a pilot's checklist. Although there are many kinds of thinkers and many forms of autism, one of the more common issues is trouble remembering the sequence of things. You can make tasks more manageable if you break them down into lots of individual steps.

Empathy and patience are very important. People often assume that the people with autism are the ones who lack empathy. It's true that autism can make it more difficult to

understand emotions and feelings, and it's true that some people with autism lack emotional empathy. But many people in society show a real lack of understanding towards young people with sensory issues. If a child starts screaming in a restaurant, for example, people assume that that child is poorly behaved. In reality, that child may be extremely sensitive to crowds and lights and smells. That might be just why they're screaming and crying. Few people consider that, because it's just too far away from their own experience.

Knowing what to expect can reduce anxiety. Recently I heard about a pig farm that was hiring a lot of young kids on the spectrum, and teaching them how to cope with the workplace in a really exciting way. Rather than interviewing candidates, they invited them to an open day at a hotel. When they arrived, the kids immediately assembled into groups with their future workmates, and put on the uniforms they would be wearing at work, so they had plenty of time to get used to the different materials (some people with autism can be highly sensitive to itchy clothes, for example).

Then, they practised all of the tasks they would be carrying out on the job, in a less intimidating environment. So, instead of injecting real pigs with their health vaccines, they injected oranges with water. And instead of putting ear tags on real pigs, they put tags on cardboard pig heads designed to look and feel just like the real thing. By the time they arrived at the farm itself, they were familiar with the process. This hugely reduced their anxiety and helped them to do their jobs extremely well, despite their supposed disadvantages. Leaders won't be interviewing their Scouts, but they may be introducing them to new things. To increase confidence and reduce nerves, sometimes all it takes is a little tweak. ✿

For more information to support and better understand the needs of a young person on the autism spectrum in your section, use the Parent/Carer Conversation Framework to discuss with a young person's parent/carer. You can find this at scouts.org.uk/conversationframework.

You can also download visual stories about what to expect from Scouting during key moments like the Grand Howl from scouts.org.uk/autism and at scouts.org.uk/visualresources.

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Getting personal

The Personal Challenge Award encourages young people to reach their full potential. For leaders who find supporting this particular badge a little tricky, here are some volunteer tips from across the Movement

Words: Jacqueline Landey

The Personal Challenge Award is a way for Scouts to tackle something that's holding them back or stifling their growth. Whether it's avoiding practising for a music exam, learning how to swim, or speaking in public, we all have hurdles to overcome. The things we fear prevent us from reaching our full potential, which is the very opposite of Scouting's purpose.

With the Personal Challenge Award you can support young people to overcome a challenge they're struggling with. As the award requires the young person to overcome two challenges – one they have set and another a leader sets for them – the badge is a perfect opportunity to learn more about the young people in your section as individuals. By chatting to them about what they'd like to improve, you'll be in a better position to empathise with their struggles, and share in the joy of achievement as they overcome them.

How do young people earn the award?

Young people must complete two personal challenges, agreed upon with their leader. The challenges should be things they find difficult but that they can overcome with commitment.

The challenges can relate to any part of the young person's life – home,

sports, school or Scouts – but they must be challenges that are personal to them, so that young people can take full ownership.

Overcoming challenges can change lives

The Personal Challenge Award is positively challenging and growing young people across the Movement. One mum, Jenny Davis, said her 10-year-old Cub 'does the remembrance parade every year but doesn't stay. This year, his challenge was to stay throughout the wreath laying and speeches.' She explains that because 'he has ADHD, this is extremely challenging for him.'

Carol Blyth says her son was nine when he joined swimming club and his challenge was to swim in a competition and dive off the blocks: 'It took him nearly six months to achieve but he was delighted when he did it!'

Anna L K Whitt says her son had to keep his bedroom tidy for three months for his leader challenge, while he chose to cycle the length of the South Downs Way for his own. 'He found the first part a lot harder than the second,' she says.

Volunteer Anne Addison said their Cub Pack took part in the Save the Children (STC) National Den Day. She explains

that 'they spent the evening building their dens and then the challenge was to sleep out in them.' According to Anne they loved it, and they raised quite a bit for STC as well.

To help you support your young people to achieve their award, here's some useful guidance from other volunteers – from useful methods to inspiring examples.

Tips and ideas

- Timing counts. Encourage young people to tackle the award once they're settled into the section and you've got to know them a bit better, to give you both a chance to identify what to work on.
- Use positive phrasing. Instead of asking what they're good at or not good at, you could ask what they can improve on or what they'd like to get better at. After all, the challenge is not only about developing new skills but also furthering skills they already have.
- Encourage them 'to think of something that will really change their lives and set them a time scale to plan and achieve,' as volunteer Matt Austin suggests. This year, his section was challenged to support its charity Candlelighters, working with mental health charity Mind.
- Although the Personal Challenge Award is about young people



choosing a challenge for themselves, younger sections might benefit from some parental input. Rachel Betteridge says they ask parents about 'things that may benefit at home or things they would like their children to develop.' This input should come out of a discussion between the parents/carers and their children. Dialogue with the young person is key.

- Link their challenge to their Promise and make a good-deed jar each, as Beaver Leader Sara Price suggests. They could 'take their jar home and try to do something kind, helpful or do their best every day and each time put a pasta shape or something similar and see how it fills up over the next few weeks.'
- Rachel Cook was inspired by SMART plans in supporting her Cubs to come up with their challenges, getting them to think of something both achievable and realistic.

One Beaver Leader shares an example method:

1. In one section meeting, set up activity bases that are linked to different badges, one of these focusing on the Personal Challenge.
2. In groups of up to six, ask the young people to rotate around these bases. The Personal Challenge base should feature pictures of example challenges to inspire young people to come up with a challenge of their own.
3. Discuss the importance of challenges with the young people, eg how they feel when they overcome a challenge.
4. Encourage them to draw their challenges.
5. Discuss how to make those challenges achievable and meaningful. For instance, she said that one Beaver wanted to be a superhero, so they discussed the qualities of a superhero, eg being kind – and so, they agreed on a challenge based on that.
6. Chart everyone's challenges on a spreadsheet to keep track.

Challenge ideas from volunteers

- Build a dustbin oven as part of their Scouts Team Leader Challenge Award. [Avril Williams Moir](#)
- Refurbish a bike. Help at Beavers. Do homework when it's set, rather than when it is due. Devise and monitor a cat-feeding rota. [Anna Collins](#)
- Give up Xbox for a month to play outside more, try a rollercoaster for the first time, reach a goal at rookie lifeguards, try a sleepover. [Ellie Hajdasz](#)
- Play trumpet every day for two months up to exams. [Lisa Lawson](#)
- Sleep in a hammock for a night. [Rachel Parkes](#)
- Complete seven acts of random kindness within seven weeks. [Michael Lashbrooke](#) 🍀

Find out more

Take a look at scouts.org.uk/personalchallengeaward where you'll find an example programme for the Personal Challenge Award from 2nd Southampton Scout Troop.



Walk this way

If you're feeling inspired by our walks feature on page 46, getting young people into the fresh air is the natural next step. Here are some tips and resources to get you going

Words: Jacqueline Landey

When it comes to walking in Scouting, don't be put off by the prospect of permits; walks in Terrain Zero territory don't require a permit. Full definitions of Terrain Zero, Terrain One and Terrain Two are in Chapter 9 of The Scout Association's Policy Organisation and Rules (POR), available online at scouts.org.uk/por.

That means you can get your young people reaping the benefits in next to no time – while supporting them to work towards badges. A good walk can contribute to the Scout/Explorer Hill Walker Activity Badge, Hikes Away Staged Activity Badge, My/Our Adventure Challenge Award, or for those doing a walking expedition, the

Scout Expedition Challenge Award. This is not to say a walk requires no preparation at all. A prepared walker is a happy walker. To support you and your young people trekking through the great outdoors, we've gathered some links to useful resources and guidance.

Permits

Something to consider is whether or not you need a permit. Generally, as long as the terrain isn't too steep or challenging and help is within easy reach, you shouldn't require a permit. For more challenging terrain, however, a permit will be needed. There are various levels of hillwalking permits, determined by factors such as weather

conditions, the height of the route and the distance from assistance.

If you're new to organising walking activities, it's best to begin with Terrain Zero expeditions, as there are plenty of routes accessible to all sections and abilities and you won't require a permit. Despite not needing a permit, activity leaders should have the skills and knowledge to complete the necessary risk assessments and activity plans. Take a look at the Terrain Zero Activities factsheet at scouts.org.uk/terrainzeroactivities for more support.

More practised leaders, who are after more of a challenge for their young people, can choose a route that falls into Terrain One or Terrain Two.

Walking with young people in these terrains will require a permit. If you're unsure of how to classify the terrain, get advice from your Assistant District/County Commissioner (Activities) (or equivalent) or a hillwalking adviser.

First-aid requirements

For Terrain Zero and Terrain One routes, you'll simply need a standard first response certificate. However, Terrain Two routes require a full first-aid qualification.

What to do before setting off

- Plan your route. An example route plan is available at scouts.org.uk/expeditionchallenge.
- Be sure to leave a copy with a responsible local member who is not participating in the walk.
- Ensure the activity is suitable for the age and ability of all participants.
- Complete a risk assessment using the guidance online at scouts.org.uk/riskassessment.

- Ensure appropriate supervision and support will be available for the duration of the walk.
- Make sure Scouting's adult-to-young-person ratios are adhered to as specified in Chapter 3 of POR.
- Brief your section: make sure they know what to wear, what to bring and where they're going.
- Make sure you have an InTouch process in place – scouts.org.uk/intouch.
- Have a safety plan in case of emergency.

What to bring: the bare essentials

Your equipment requirements will naturally depend on the length and climate of your particular walk. You could use the Scout Expedition Challenge Award kit list as a guide. But even the simplest walk with your young people will require these essentials:

- good walking shoes/boots or sturdy trainers

- a map and a compass/GPS
- water
- snacks
- sunblock and sun hat
- a first-aid kit
- rain gear

Find accessible routes

Ensure all young people, regardless of their ability, have access to the joys of the outdoors by choosing accessible routes. For those with limited walking ability and wheelchair users, take a look at how to hire equipment such as all-terrain wheelchairs and find out where to go for accessible paths with this guidance from National Parks: scouts.org.uk/nationalparksaccess.

Support young people on their way to gaining top awards

Taking part and planning for a good walk, hike or expedition can contribute to several top awards, such as the Chief Scout's Bronze/Silver/Gold/Platinum/Diamond Award, the Queen Scout's Award and DofE.

For the Scout section, Scouts can complete an expedition for their Expedition Challenge Award. Information and resources are available at scouts.org.uk/expeditionchallenge. Resources include an expedition planner, a menu planner, a kit list and guidance on how to pack a rucksack.

Further support

For factsheets, risk assessments, rules, forms and further guidance on hillwalking in Scouting, visit scouts.org.uk/a-z.

Or contact your Assistant District/County Commissioner (Activities) (or equivalent) or your local hillwalking adviser. 🌿



A feast for all*

Cooking for young people with dietary requirements can be daunting, but it needn't be so. Here are three campfire favourites, adapted to suit each and every Scout

Words: Aimee-Lee Abraham | Polymer clay miniatures: Maive Ferrando | Pictures: Adam Gasson



To start:

Campfire corn with chilli lime butter

Comforting, crowd-pleasing and easy to prepare, corn on the cob is the perfect campsite snack. If you swap your usual butter topping for a dairy-free spread, it's also naturally free of common allergens.

You will need (serves 15):

- 15 fresh corn on the cob
- 600g dairy-free butter

- salt and pepper
- water
- a squeeze of lime (optional)
- chilli flakes, to taste

Method

1. Prepare the corn by cutting the tops and bottoms off, and removing the outer leaves.
2. Spread some dairy-free butter on

the corn, and season generously with salt and pepper.

3. Place the corn on a double layer of tinfoil and sprinkle it with water.
4. Tightly wrap the foil into a sealed parcel shape.
5. Place directly on the campfire for 15-20 minutes, turning occasionally.
6. Once cooked, add a squeeze of lime and a sprinkle of chilli. Ta dah!

*All recipes are gluten-free, dairy-free, egg-free, soy-free, celery-free, nut-free, vegan, halal and kosher.

The main event: Chocolate chilli

It may seem like a strange combination, but a few squares of dark chocolate can transform a bland bean chilli. This spicy sweet potato version is perfect for warming up after an icy cold hike.

You will need (serves 15):

- 9tbsp oil
- 4 large onions, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 4 red peppers, chopped
- 4tsp chilli flakes
- 2tsp cumin
- 2tsp cinnamon
- 4 cans chopped tomatoes
- 4 cans kidney beans, drained
- 4 sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into cubes
- 2tsp salt
- 8 squares of dark chocolate* (most dark chocolate is vegan and nut-free, but always check the label)

To sprinkle on top (optional):

- Chopped coriander
- Chopped spring onion
- Grated cheese* (dairy-free vegan cheese is available in all major supermarkets)
- Sliced avocado

You could serve this with:

- Boiled rice
- Jacket potatoes
- Boiled potatoes
- Tortilla chips (check to ensure allergen-free; some brands contain dairy and gluten)
- An allergen-free bread wrap (corn bread wraps are available in the free-from section of all major supermarkets, and are usually allergen-free)

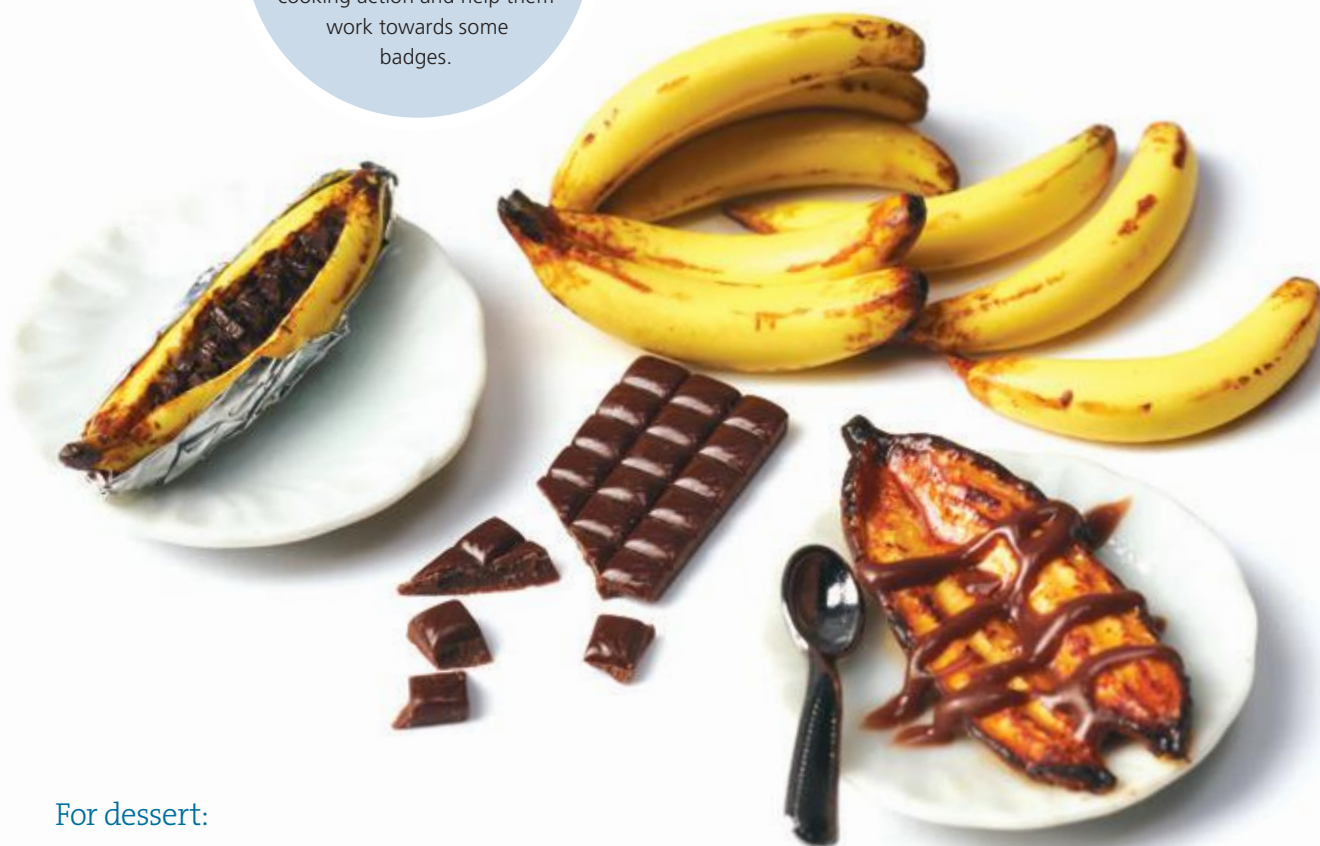
Method:

1. Heat the oil over a medium heat.
2. Add the onion, garlic and red pepper. Fry until soft.
3. Add the chilli flakes, cumin and cinnamon. Stir until combined.
4. Add the chopped tomatoes, kidney beans, and the cubes of sweet potato. Season with salt.
5. Bring to the boil before stirring in the squares of dark chocolate.
6. Reduce the heat and cover the pot. Simmer for 25 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add some extra water if needed.
7. Allow to cool a little before dishing up. Serve your chocolate chilli with your chosen side dish and sprinkle your favourite toppings over the top to keep hunger at bay.



TOP TIP:

Whether you're making this free-from feast or the coconut porridge recipe on page 79, get your section in on the expedition cooking action and help them work towards some badges.



For dessert:

Bonfire banana boats

This classic camp recipe is zero-fuss, zero-mess and totally delicious. To make it suitable for all, just swap your usual milk chocolate filling for a dairy-free version.

You will need (serves 15):

- 15 bananas
- 30 squares of dairy-free dark chocolate (plus extra for the chocaholics!)

Method:

1. Slice the bananas lengthways – leaving their skins intact.
2. Cut a few horizontal slits into the bananas, without slicing all the way through.
3. Fill the gaps with some squares of dairy-free dark chocolate. We recommend two-to-three squares of chocolate per head.
4. Wrap the banana in foil and place it into hot embers for 10-or-so minutes.
5. Await the results, carefully checking the foil regularly to avoid burning.
6. Eat when the skins have blackened and the chocolate has melted.

A note on allergens

Please double check the recipes and ingredients listed here for any allergens and always consult with your young people and their parents/guardians before cooking with your Group or section, in case there are any allergies you are unaware of. You should be especially careful when dealing with any severe allergies within the Group. In extreme cases, cross contamination can be just as harmful as consumption itself. Additional advice is available at scouts.org.uk/allergies.

This activity contributes to the following badges:



Cub Our Outdoors Challenge Award



Scout Outdoor Challenge Award



Scout Expedition Challenge Award

The activity could also help towards:



Beaver Cook Activity Badge



Cub Chef Activity Badge



Scout Chef Activity Badge

Thought about peer leadership?

Divide your section into Lodges, Sixes or Patrols and let the Patrol Leaders take charge.

Beavers | Cubs | Scouts

Try expedition cooking

Even after the hearty free-from evening meal on page 76, tummies will be rumbling by sunrise, so get your section cooking up a storm with this coconut porridge

Time 60 minutes

Equipment

- campfire, camping stove, eg Trangia
- large pan or billy pot
- bowls and spoons

Ingredients (serves 4, so multiply quantities as necessary)

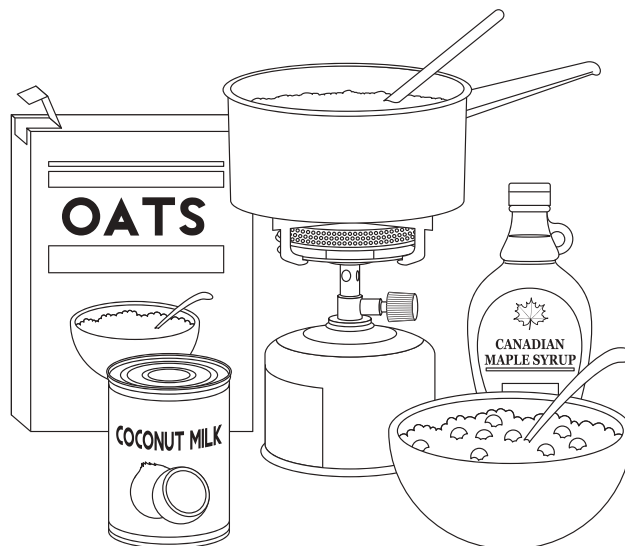
- 160g gluten-free rolled oats
- 440ml water
- 400ml coconut milk
- 1tsp vanilla essence
- 2tbsp maple syrup
- pinch of salt
- berries, desiccated coconut or chopped nuts to serve

Instructions

1 Set up your cooking station with one clean area for prep and easy access to your camping stove. For guidance on how to use a gas camping stove safely, head to the 'Camping and Practical Skills' section of scouts.org.uk/safety.

2 Help your section ensure their cooking space is kept clean at all times and that hands are washed before handling food. For guidance on camp food safety, head to the 'Camping and Practical Skills' section of scouts.org.uk/safety.

3 Prior to the camp, help your section divide up duties



among themselves, with a team in charge of prepping, another in charge of cooking and another in charge of clear-up. The prep team should calculate the quantities needed before weighing out all the ingredients and packing them up. When on camp, they then supply the cooking team with the ingredients they need at the right time. The cooking team should put the oats, water, coconut milk and vanilla essence into the pan. The porridge should then cook on a medium heat until all the liquid has been absorbed. For smaller quantities, this should take around 5-7 minutes but may take longer for larger amounts.

4 Meanwhile, the prep team can work on the toppings,

washing fruit or chopping nuts. Once all the liquid has been absorbed and the oats are cooked, the cooking team can serve the porridge and allow people to choose their toppings. A squeeze of maple syrup with blueberries and sprinkle of desiccated coconut will set them up for the day!

5 After everyone has finished, the clear-up team can collect, wash and dry all the cooking equipment and store them away safely.

Take it further

Why not try cooking this on a campfire at your camp or sleepover? Before arranging such an event – head to scouts.org.uk/nightsaway for more information.

This activity contributes to the following badges:



Beaver Creative Activity Badge



Cub Our Skills Challenge Award



Scout Craft Activity Badge

The activity could also help towards:



Explorer Fundraising Activity Badge

Beavers | Cubs | Scouts | Explorers | Network

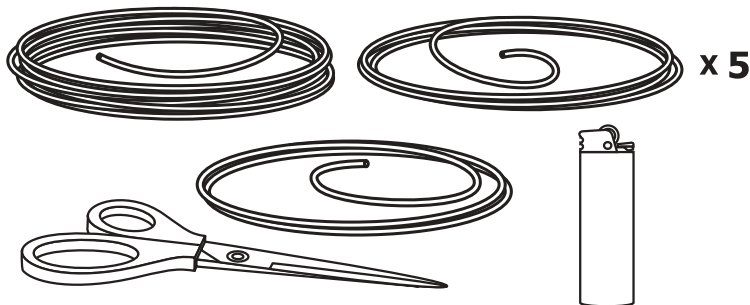
Make friendship bracelets

World Friendship Day, 30 July Create these paracord bracelets with your section and encourage them to give one to someone special in honour of World Friendship Day

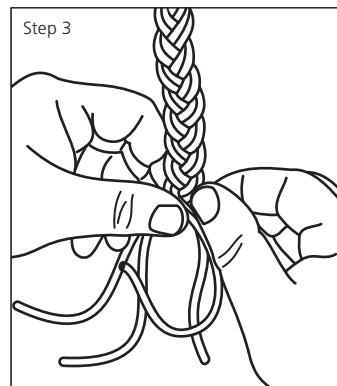
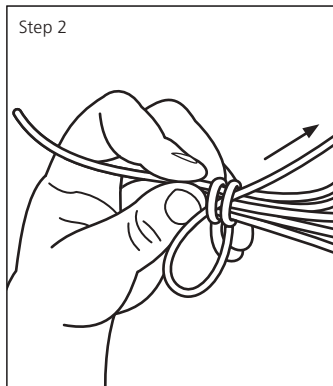
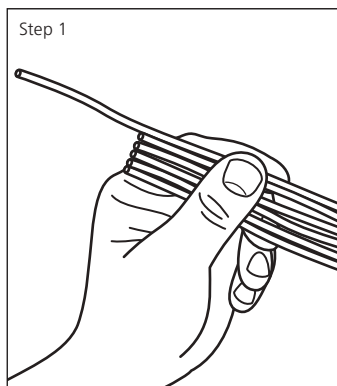
Time 30 minutes

Equipment (per bracelet)

- 70cm paracord 550 x 1
- 40cm paracord 550 x 5
- scissors
- lighter or matches
- 30cm gutted paracord



Instructions



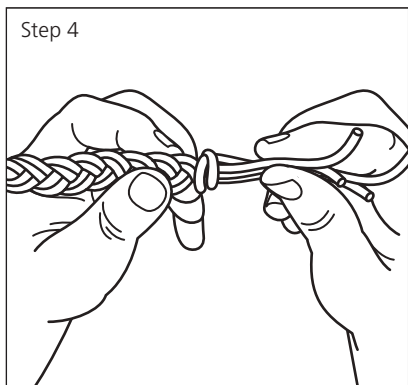
1 When selecting their paracord for these friendship bracelets, your section ideally wants a range of three colours from which to choose. The longer length and one of the 40cm lengths should be the same colour, while the other four 40cm lengths should be in two different shades. Your young people should start by gathering the five 40cm lengths so the ends line up.

2 Tie the ends together using the long cord to create a stopper knot by looping it around the gathered cords twice before pulling the excess through the loops. Leave 15cm excess of the long cord on the other side of the knot and don't pull it too tightly. Arrange the five shorter cords so that the cords of the same colour are adjacent to each other before pulling the stopper knot tightly.

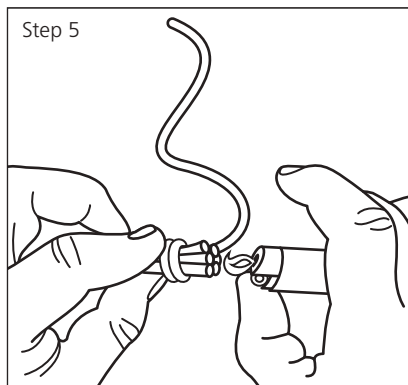
3 Next, your young people should take the three colour pairings of cords and plait them over each other until the bracelet is the desired length. To plait, separate out the three pairs of cord. Bring the left pair over the central pair before bringing the right pair over the new central pair. Keep taking it in turns to plait the left and right over the constantly changing central pair of cords.

Explorer Scout Young Leaders

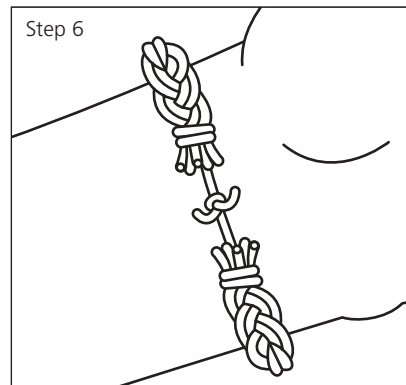
Your Young Leaders could lead this activity to work towards their mission 2 of the Young Leaders' Scheme.



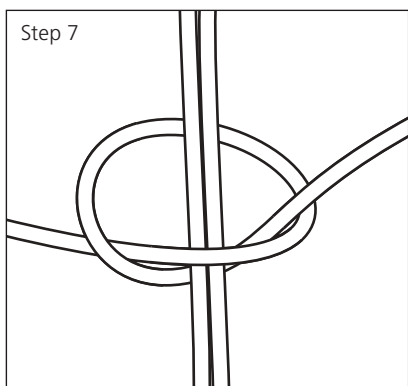
4 They should now hold the end of the plait between their thumb and forefinger while they bring the end of the longer cord out and loop it around the bottom twice and pulling the excess through the loops to create another stopper knot and pulling it as tightly as they can.



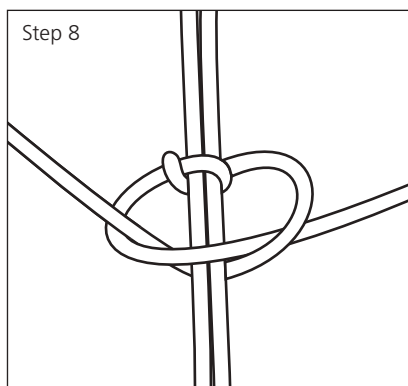
5 Using a sharp pair of scissors, they can now carefully snip the ends of the five shorter cords, making sure they don't cut the long cord. Under your supervision, they should singe these ends using a match or lighter to prevent fraying. They should now have the plaited paracord survival bracelet with a length of excess cord protruding from each end.



6 At this point, your young people can simply knot the ends of the excess cord and tie the bracelet around their wrists. Alternatively, they can add an adjustable sliding knot to their bracelets using a 30cm piece of gutted paracord (paracord that has had its central strands removed, available to buy online).



7 Taking the two knotted excess lengths of the bracelet, your young people should lay one over the other and loosely gather the gutted paracord around their middle. They can then begin as if they were tying a standard overhand knot, crossing the left and right-hand strands over each other, but instead of poking the new right-hand length up through the loop, they should take it behind the gathered lengths and draw it back through the loop towards them.



8 Take the left-hand piece and bring it across the gathered lengths but under the right-hand piece. The right-hand piece then comes across to the left but going underneath the gathered lengths. Bring this piece up through the loop created on the left-hand side and pull both ends to tighten the knot. Repeat this, starting with the right-hand piece and continue a couple more times until you have a substantial knot. Snip and singe the ends of the sliding knot and voila!



Take it further

Encourage your section to make as many of these bracelets as possible and sell them to raise funds for charity. While they're making them, discuss the ways in which you can make new friends through Scouting. You could even invite an Explorer Scout or Scout Network member who visited a World Scout Jamboree or other international camp to speak to your young people about meeting new people from faraway places.

This activity contributes to the following badges:



Beaver Creative Activity Badge



Cub Our Skills Challenge Award

The activity could also help towards:



Beaver Book Reader Activity Badge



Cub Book Reader Activity Badge

Beavers | Cubs

Stitch a sock snake

National Lost Sock Day, 9 May Break out your sewing kit and put odd socks to good use

Time 90 minutes +

Equipment

- clean odd socks
- sharp scissors
- sewing needles
- cotton thread
- fabric glue (optional)
- red ribbon
- stuffing such as newspaper, unwanted bubble wrapping or wadding
- buttons x 2

Instructions

1 A couple of weeks before the meeting, ask your young people to collect as many odd socks as possible – it doesn't matter what colour they are or whether they have holes in the toes. At the meeting, put all the socks into a pile and, as a group, select as many socks as you can that are roughly the same width. Put the rejects to one side – you may be able to use them to make a second narrower or wider snake sock.

2 Ask the young people to cut the socks into four-inch sections, removing the toe and the heel. Longer socks will provide a second stretch of fabric between the heel and the elasticated cuff at the top. Recycle the offcuts or repurpose them into sweatbands or scrunchies.

3 Using a running stitch or a backstitch (find detailed instructions online), help your section stitch the ends of two sock pieces together around the openings, making sure they don't accidentally sew them shut. If using patterned socks, turn them inside out to sew them together. If your section struggles with sewing, use fabric glue instead.

4 Give individual young people small sections of sock snake to work on, then help them attach the sections together to form one length of snake. Decide which sock your group would like to act as the head, as the end of this will need sewing up. You can even add a forked tongue made of ribbon.

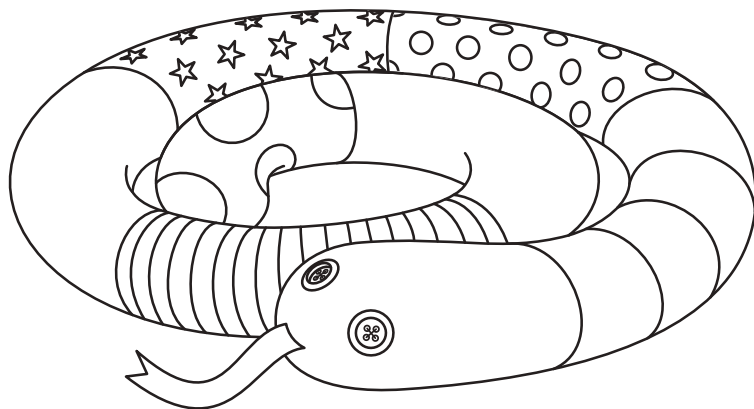
5 Once all the longer sections are sewn together and you have your full-length snake, work together to turn the snake

back so that any patterns are on the outside and the stitching is hidden within. Add buttons to the head to act as eyes.

6 Ask a young person to sew the end into a point. Now it's time for everyone to admire their handiwork and give the sock snake a name. Why not call it Kaa and use it as a chance to explore the history of Cubs and its connection to Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Book*?

Take it further

You could suggest to your section that they read *The Jungle Book* to find out who Kaa is. Encourage them to keep adding to their sock snake over the term to see how long it can grow! Can they get it as long as Medusa, the longest-ever snake living in captivity, according to Guinness World Records, who measures a whopping 7.67 metres?



Thought about peer leadership?

Encourage peer leaders to take responsibility for their Lodge or Six in this short and simple activity.

This activity contributes to the following badges:



Beaver My World Challenge Award



Cub International Activity Badge



Cub My Faith Activity Badge



Cub World Faiths Activity Badge



Cub Our World Challenge Award



Scout World Faiths Activity Badge



Scout World Challenge Award



Queen's Scout Award, Chief Scout's Diamond Award, Chief Scout's Platinum Award (ICV list)

Beavers | Cubs | Scouts | Explorers | Network

Celebrate Eid al-Fitr

Eid al-Fitr, 14-15 June Organise a celebration to mark the end of Ramadan to help young people explore the differences and similarities in faiths and beliefs

Time 90 minutes

(plus planning and prep over the course of several months)

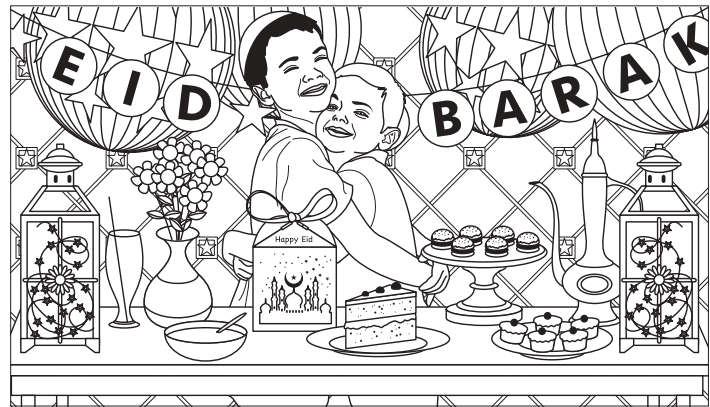
Equipment

- a tablet or laptop
- a venue
- decorations
- traditional foods

Instructions

1 Begin by gathering your section and talking about Eid al-Fitr, which is a day of celebration that marks the end of Ramadan (a month-long fast) within the Islamic faith and a time for feasting, prayer and rejoicing. Are there young Muslims in your section? How do they celebrate this holiday and what would they like to see at this event? Discuss that Scouting is a worldwide movement made up of members of all faiths and beliefs, and it's important that we celebrate this diversity.

2 Discuss with your section how they would like to celebrate Eid, for example, by organising a community event. What might they need to consider? Who would come? What refreshments would you offer? Giving to charity is a pillar of Islam so it could be a great opportunity to raise funds for a good cause too.



3 As a group, identify what roles you might need to make this event a success, such as someone in charge of advertising the event (eg, fliers, posters, social media shout-outs, website updates, local radio mentions) and someone in charge of refreshments, music, decorations or budget. Divide these roles up between the young people and appoint team leaders for each aspect.

4 Confirm the details of your event, such as date and location, and let your advertising team start promoting the celebrations. Your refreshments team can begin researching what types of food and drink are popular during Eid. There's lots of information to be found online, or why not approach someone from the local Islamic

community for advice and extend an invitation to the event while you're there? Appeal to everyone within the section to contribute a dish.

5 On the day of the event, everyone should be dressed in their best clothes. Make sure that everyone in your section knows what their duties are. Everyone attending the event should be welcomed with the greeting 'Eid Mubarak' (which means 'blessed celebration' or simply 'happy Eid') and invited to eat, chat and celebrate.

Take it further

Why not contact your local mosque and arrange a time for you and your section to visit? Is there scope for you and your local Islamic community to work together on a local project? Could you collaborate on this event?

This activity contributes to the following badges:



Navigator Staged Activity Badge



Beaver Health and Fitness Activity Badge

The activity could also help towards:



Cub Disability Awareness Activity Badge



Beaver Disability Awareness Activity Badge



Cub Teamwork Challenge Award

Beavers | Cubs | Scouts

Play a DIY relay race

Planning a hike? Warm your section up to the challenge with this fun obstacle course to practise your navigation skills

Time 30 minutes (plus prep time)

Equipment

- paper and pens
- course obstacles such as cones, bean bags, chairs, hoops, buckets, etc
- map of the space
- masking tape, chalk or similar (optional)

Instructions

1 Begin by deciding where you're going to hold your obstacle course relay race; you need a large, uncluttered space, so a park, sports pitch, or inside your meeting place would do.

2 Now, design your obstacle course. The beauty of this activity is that you can make it as challenging as you like, depending on the age and ability of your section. The

course needs to be big enough for two players to navigate at the same time, with two distinct sides. You can include cones for young people to zig-zag around, tunnels to crawl through, hoops to hop in and out of... You could even include challenges along the way, such as needing to score a hat-trick of goals with a ball going into a bucket.

3 Once you have a clear idea of what your obstacle course is going to feature, you need to create a map for the young people to follow. You could even apply a grid system to your course and provide the young people with a number of grid references they need to follow to get through to the other side.

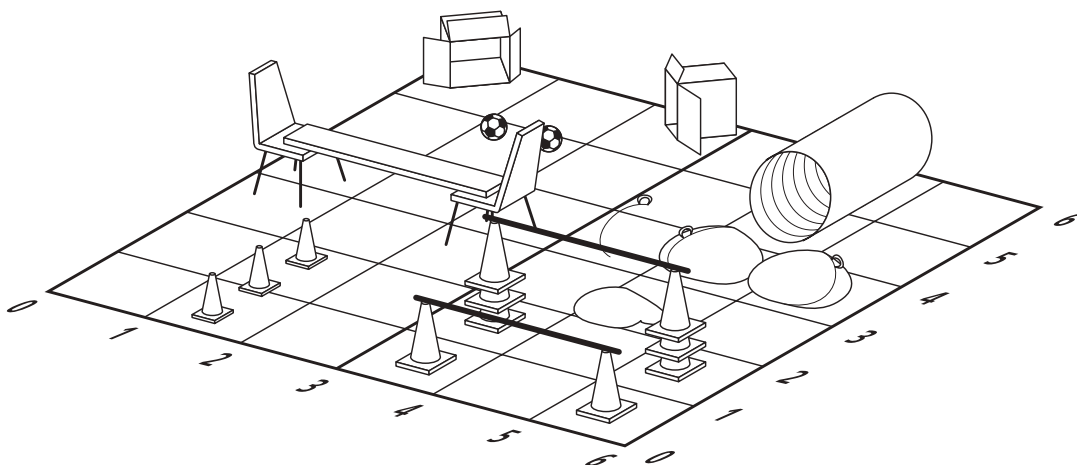
4 Set up the obstacle course and divide your section into two teams. Explain the obstacle

course and that they're going to be taking part in a relay race and that they need to work as a team to plot a route through the course. Each person can only take their turn when the previous player runs back to the beginning and taps their hand.

5 Now they're ready to play! The winning team is the first to get all its players through the course and back to the beginning again.

Take it further

Encourage your young people to navigate the course using a buddy system, where one young person is blindfolded and the other guides them through the course using words alone. It's a great trust-building exercise and can also spark reflective conversations about disabilities, inclusivity and accessibility.



Explorer Scout Young Leaders

Young Leaders could run this activity to develop their leadership skills while sharing their navigation skills with others.

This activity contributes to the following badges:



Beaver Creative Activity Badge



Beaver My World Challenge Award



Scout International Activity Badge

The activity could also help towards:



Cub International Activity Badge



Cub Disability Awareness Activity Badge



Cub Our World Challenge Award

Beavers | Cubs | Scouts

Learn to say 'thank you'

Volunteers' Week, 1-7 June Explore some of the many ways of giving thanks

Time 60 minutes

Equipment

- large sheets of paper
- colouring pens and pencils
- craft materials such as glitter, glue, paint, brushes, etc
- list of ways to say 'thank you' in other languages (find online)
- coats or jumpers
- A4 paper

Instructions

1 Gather your section and explain to them that you're going to explore some of the different ways of saying 'thank you' around the world. Give them some examples of the customs surrounding gratitude, eg the Japanese practice of bowing to give thanks, or the Chinese custom of giving a gift to show appreciation. Ask your young people if they know of any other ways of conveying gratitude.

2 Now explore how to say thank you in different languages – for instance, do the young people know the French or Spanish words for 'thank you'? How might someone show gratitude using sign language? And when did the young people last say thank you to someone? Why is it important to let people know they're appreciated?



3 Next, you have two choices: you can either make a gratitude mural or play the 'thank-you game'. For the mural, get out all of your craft materials and ask your section to create a giant piece of artwork around giving thanks. Who are they most grateful to? Is there anyone in the community they might like to thank? What might they include on their mural and where would they display it?

To play the 'thank you game', turn your meeting place or local outdoor space into a map of the world, using cones or bundled-up jumpers to vaguely represent some of the main countries. Make paper signs to indicate which country is which, then gather the young people

into the centre of the room before shouting out 'merci' at which point the young people should run to France. Next, you can shout 'grazie', after which they should run to Italy. Run through a list of 10-15 of them if you can and throw in a few lesser-known ones to really challenge them.

Take it further

Your young people could explore a country in which they are interested in more depth for their International Activity Badge. Or why not organise an international evening where everyone can explore a different country, including their customs, cuisine and crafts? Older sections could even take the lead in organising this event.

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This activity contributes to the following badges:



Beaver Gardener Activity Badge



Cub Gardener Activity Badge



Cub Naturalist Activity Badge

The activity could also help towards:



Scout Naturalist Activity Badge

Thought about peer leadership?

Complete this activity as a Lodge, Six or Troop and each take on a particular vegetable to grow.

Beavers | Cubs | Scouts

Grow an edible garden

National Insect Week, 18-24 June Use small-scale planting projects to show your section what impact plants have on the world around them

Time 30-45 minutes (plus aftercare)

Equipment

- old clothes
- large, deep plant pots or upcycled planters (find ideas below or online)
- soil
- fruit and vegetable seeds such as carrots, squash, onions, strawberries, raspberries, etc
- labels

Instructions

1 Discuss your planting options with your section. Ideally you want to choose plants that are not only edible, but that also require insect pollination to survive (such as the examples listed above), as this will encourage bees and other insects to your edible garden.

2 Discuss what growing conditions these plants will need (eg direct sunlight or a sheltered spot) and where around your meeting place you can arrange your planters. You can find lots of advice online about growing conditions for specific plants.

3 Head outside to begin planting! Encourage your young people to wear protective



clothing or to dress in old clothes that can get dirty. Fill your planters with soil, first making sure they have drainage holes in the bottom. If you don't have access to deep pots, see what alternatives your section can think up, for instance, are there unwanted tyres that can be stacked, decorated and filled, or old pallets that can be fashioned into planters?

4 Once filled with soil, your section can follow the instructions on the back of the seed packet and sow the seeds accordingly before watering generously with rainwater after planting. You may want to position a container outside to collect rainwater for drier patches of weather. Everyone should label their plants so there's no confusion.

5 It's now up to your young people to care for and monitor these plants. They can either create a rota, where each young person takes their turn to be responsible for the whole crop, or they can each take care of their own plant. After the vegetables have started sprouting, the young people can monitor the plants' progress, as well as the types of insects that gravitate towards them. Is there anything living on their plant and if yes, what impact is it having on the plant?

6 Once the plants have reached full maturity, it's time for the harvest. As a section, you can pool all of your vegetables and cook up something together, or each take them home and share them with the family. It's also a great opportunity to discuss sustainability and organic farming practices. How easy were they to grow? What impact might pesticides have on the wildlife that lived on or around these plants?

Take it further

Find out what steps you would need to take in order to adopt a local piece of land and work with your young people to plan a larger-scale planting project?



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This activity contributes to the following badges:



Emergency Aid
Staged Activity
Badge



Cub Our Outdoor
Challenge Award



Scout Outdoor
Challenge Award



Scout Expedition
Challenge Award

Beavers | Cubs | Scouts | Explorers

Go on an incident hike

Worried your section doesn't know what to do in an emergency?

This hike will get them back on track



Time 60-90 minutes

Equipment

- weather-appropriate hiking gear
- backpacks containing essentials such as water, food, sunscreen, etc
- maps
- compasses (optional)
- GPS (optional)
- mobile phones
- first-aid kits

Instructions

1 First, plan your hike: this could take place in a city, town or village, along a waterway or a popular footpath, or in a nearby green space. Choose a route that is suitable for the age and ability of your section. Make sure there are plenty of rest stops along the way as this is where you will stage your incidents. If you plan a route that is in Terrain Zero, you won't need additional

permits. Head to scouts.org.uk/terrainzeroactivities for the Terrain Zero Activities Factsheet or to scouts.org.uk/a-z for more information about hillwalking, hikes and terrain definitions.

2 Ensure you have sufficient adult support for the hike. It's a good idea to see if parents/carers can join this activity, particularly for the Beaver and Cub sections.

3 Embark on your hike, encouraging the young people to navigate their own way, and at the first rest stop divide the group into small teams and give each one a first-aid kit. Explain that one person in each team has stumbled and twisted their ankle. The remaining team members must respond in a calm, safe and responsible manner. What should they do first? The adult volunteers can

observe each team and prompt them if they get stuck.

4 After the first incident, continue along your route until the next rest stop. This time, they might find themselves lost without a map or a compass – how should they proceed?

5 Continue through your hike, regularly stopping to act out these emergency scenarios, using it as an opportunity to advise them on the best courses of action. Other scenarios might include a young person becoming dehydrated and fainting, an accident where the emergency services would be needed, or a closed road or pathway that would require re-routing the hike.

Take it further

For younger sections, try re-enacting these scenarios in the Scout meeting place or at a nearby outdoor space. What would they do in this situation and what other things might they need to consider, eg weather, terrain, etc? Older sections can tackle this challenge while they're on camp. What additional precautions might they need to take if they were doing their Queen's Scout Award or Duke of Edinburgh's Award?

Explorer Scout Young Leaders

Young Leaders could plan and run one of the incident activities as part of mission 2 of the Young Leaders' Scheme.



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This activity contributes to the following badges:



Beaver
Disability
Awareness
Activity Badge



Cub Disability
Awareness
Activity Badge



Community
Impact Staged
Activity Badge

Beavers | Cubs

Try lip-reading

Deaf Awareness Week, 15-21 May Invite your young people to step into the shoes of the hearing impaired with this simple activity

Time 30 minutes

Equipment

- lists of questions (two different sets)
- ear plugs and ear defenders – one set of each per pair

Instructions

1 You are going to give each member of your section a taste of what it might be like to be hearing impaired in an attempt to spark discussion and encourage understanding. Firstly, divide your section into pairs and give one person in each pair a set of ear plugs and ear defenders. It's important to have both so as to cancel out as much noise as possible.

2 Ask one person from each pair to wear the earplugs and ear defenders. Give the other team member the first set of questions and ask them to start a conversation with their partner. Allow this to continue for 10 minutes or so before asking the pair to switch. This time, give the speaker a second set of questions so there can be no cheating.

3 After another 10 minutes has passed, stop the activity and bring everyone back together. What did they learn

from the experience? As the person asking questions, how difficult was it to make themselves understood? What approach did they find worked best and what didn't work at all? And how did it feel being unable to hear? What was it like when people shouted, over-enunciated or gesticulated? Was there anything that helped them to better understand what was being said?

4 Now explain to them that around 11 million people in the UK are hearing impaired and that hearing loss affects people of all ages and backgrounds. What can be done to make life easier for the hearing impaired and how will your young people

behave next time they encounter someone with hearing loss? You can download or print off the deaf-friendly Scouting resource at scouts.org.uk/deaffriendlyscouting for guidance.

Take it further

Does anyone in your section know a deaf person? Could they come along to one of your meetings to meet and talk to your section? Those of you who have chosen disability as your A Million Hands issue can also use this as a supporting activity in the build-up to the A Million Hands Big Moment in March and April.





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Activity Badge



Cub Photographer
Activity Badge



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Community
Impact Staged
Activity Badge



Scout Creative
Challenge Award



Explorer
Creative Arts
Activity Badge

Cubs | Scouts | Explorers | Network

Take a picture

World Photo Day, 19 August Give your young people a good reason to take selfies – invite them to start a self-portrait project

Time 60-90 minutes
(over a number of weeks)

Equipment

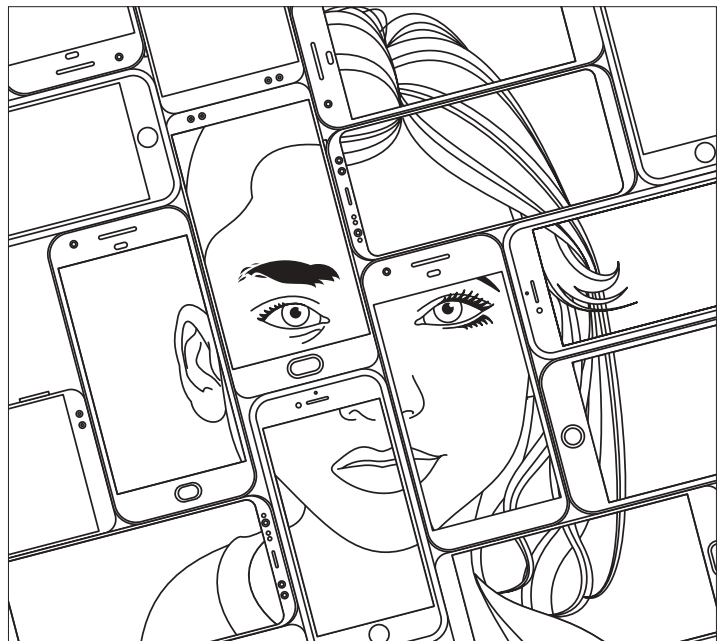
- tablet or laptop
- smartphone or digital camera

Instructions

1 Firstly, talk to your young people about selfies. What are they, why do people take them and how do they make people feel about themselves? Are they positive and empowering or can they have a negative impact? How can we make sure that selfies aren't affecting our mental health? For support and guidance around emotional wellbeing, head to scouts.org.uk/emotionalwellbeing and remember to follow the Yellow Card at all times. For guidance around photography and sharing images, head to scouts.org.uk/recordingatevents.

2 Next, show them some examples of self-portraits throughout the ages – the original selfies! Examples could include Van Gogh's Self Portrait, Salvador Dali's Soft Self-Portrait with Grilled Bacon, or any one of Frieda Kahlo's 55 self-portraits.

3 Challenge your young people to take interesting



and original self-portraits of themselves using a smartphone or camera. None of the images should be digitally retouched or have filters applied, but the young people can play around with lighting, backdrops, angles, motion and props to create something truly unique. Their self-portrait can include other people if they wish and could even tie into Scout Scarf Day on 1 August.

4 Encourage everyone to share their selfies with the rest of the section. What did they learn during this project and how do they feel about the outcome? How would they feel about creating an exhibition of

their portraits to showcase the project to parents and carers?

Take it further

Older sections could post images of their exhibition or the selfies themselves to their Group's social media site (with the permission of all the participants – for further information about online safety, head to scouts.org.uk/digitalskills). If you've chosen mental health and wellbeing as your A Million Hands issue, there's still time to use this activity as a part of your project. There are resources to support you, created by our charity partner Mind, available online at amillionhands.org.uk.



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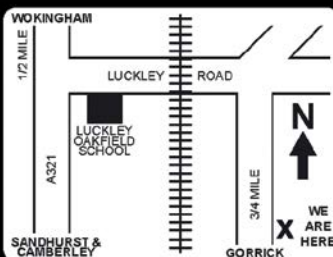


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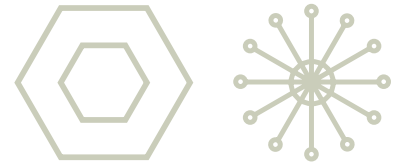
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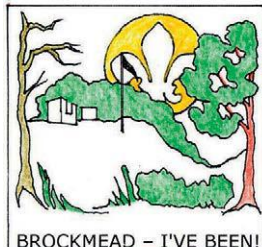
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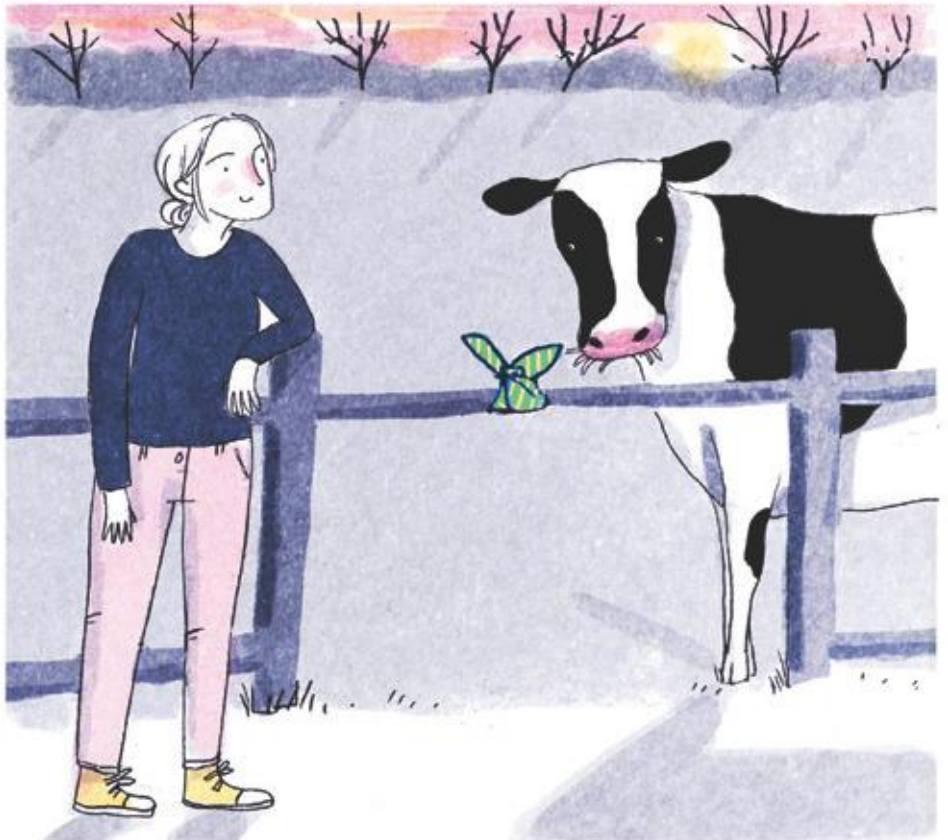
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