

Rock down to electric avenue

Introduction

Plug yourselves into the local community to see where the power goes, as we look at how electricity is used in the area.

Outcomes

- Help your community - Be able to take an active role in the community, give to others, and make the world a better place.

You will need

- Map(s) of the local area
- Pens or pencils
- Clipboards
- Paper
- Walking gear

Badge Links

- Scout World Challenge Award (Req. 1)
- Scout Local Knowledge

Before you begin

- The person leading the activity should use the map to plan out a route for the group to walk around the local area. The group will be looking for places that use lots of electricity and places that don't use so much. Think about taking the group past large buildings like schools or hospitals and some public residential areas. Try to avoid busy roads or crowded areas. The route should begin and end at the meeting place.

Run the activity

1. Everyone should split into small groups of three or four. Each group should come up with three important things that need electricity in the local community. They should write these down. After five minutes, each group should read out their electricity uses to everyone else. See if anyone hears anything that makes them change their mind.
2. The person leading the activity should gather the groups around the map of the local area. See if anyone can see anything that makes them change their mind. Remind the groups that large buildings like shopping centres, hospitals, schools and libraries use lots of electricity, while small shops and homes usually use less.

Large groups will need more than one map so that everyone can see.

3. The person leading the activity should explain to the groups that electricity comes from the power grid and can travel a long way to reach them. Ask them what might happen if there is a problem at the power grid or on the journey between the grid and the community. Each group should think about which places should get electricity if there isn't enough to go around and write them down.
4. Everyone should get ready to go for a walk around the local area. In the same groups, everyone should take a clipboard, a pen or pencil and a sheet of paper. Before setting out, each group should write 'Street' at the top-left of their sheet of paper, 'Building' at the top-centre of their sheet of paper and 'Number of lights' at the top-right of their sheet of paper.
5. Set out on the planned route. The groups should stay together with the person leading the activity. At every new street, the person leading the activity should announce what it's called, if they can. Everyone should write this under 'Street' on their paper.
6. On every street, the person leading the activity should point out large buildings and small buildings. Everyone should write down what the building is under 'Building' on their paper (e.g. 'hospital').
7. Then, each group should work together to count how many lights they can see switched on inside or on the outside of the building. Allow a maximum of five minutes for the groups to count the lights and move on when everyone is done. Everyone should write down the number of lights they counted under 'Number of lights' on their sheet of paper.

Groups shouldn't need to enter any of the buildings or premises to do this.

8. When everyone is back at the meeting place, the groups should share their findings. See which buildings and which streets had the most lights and which had the least. Find out if anyone in the group felt that a street or building used too much electricity, or whether they felt the lights they could see were too important to be switched off.

Reflection

The group has thought about electricity use in the local community. Was anyone surprised to find how much or how little electricity was used in the area?

Thinking about how electricity is used is helpful to prepare for any issues with the supply. In the event of a shortage at the power grid, which areas in the community do the group think would be first on the list to get electricity, and which the last? How should we prioritise who gets energy first and who needs it the most?

Change the level of challenge

Ambitious electricity inspectors may wish to look for other electricity uses when walking around the community. Think about listening out for generators humming and other machines that might use electricity from the power grid.

Help those struggling to count each light by estimating the total number of lights for very large buildings.

Make it accessible

- Shorten the route and make it easier for anybody mobility-impaired
- Help those counting lights who have sensory differences or get distracted easily
- All Scout activities should be [inclusive and accessible](#).

Safety

- All activities must be safely managed. Do a [risk assessment](#) and take appropriate steps to reduce risk. Always get approval for the activity and have suitable [supervision](#) and an [InTouch](#) process.
- You must have permission to use the location. Always check the weather forecast, and inform parents and carers of any change in venue.
- Follow the guidance for [activities in Terrain Zero](#), or the guidance from the [adventure page](#).

Take it further

The group should speak to their family members to see if anyone they know is eligible for the Priority Service Register, which is a list of areas that the power grid use to decide what areas must stay powered up.

Youth shaped

Allow young people to choose which local buildings and streets need power the most, based on the evidence they are given.