

# Places

Creating amazing scout groups and explorer scout units that people want to be part of



**Scouts**  
South London



# Setting the scene

Society is changing. In often fragmented communities, the pressures and expectations on young people are increasing. The future is uncertain. Your group or unit has never been so important in helping young people prepare for the future, developing the skills they need to succeed in a changing world. Each week your members enjoy fun, friendship and outdoor adventure. They develop a sense of optimism and strong values as well as the leadership and team working skills that are more valuable today than ever.

Our movement achieves remarkable things. We have continued to grow for 13 consecutive years. Our previous plan, scouting for all, inspired new groups and sections to start across South London since 2013. We now help over 4700 young people aged 6-18 get the best possible start in life. Our social action campaign, A Million Hands, has enabled our members to make a positive contribution in their local communities.

Now we want to go further. Skills for life is a strategy that supports and empowers you. It's a strategy to help you bring your local community together and contribute towards a better society. But most of all, it's a strategy for your young people. They deserve the best skills, the best support, and the best possible future.



# Extending our reach and our impact

It's easy to forget just how powerful scouting can be. From international expeditions to creativity, community and environmental projects, as a county we offer opportunities that improve the life outcomes of over 4700+ young people every year. In every community across Wandsworth, Lambeth, Southwark, Lewisham and the Royal Borough of Greenwich scouting is transforming lives, providing life changing adventure and providing the opportunity for young people aged 6 to 25 to develop skills for life. And that is why our strategy to 2023 is call 'Skills for Life', we want to make scouting available to even more young people and make scouting across South London the best it can be!

## How did we decide this?

This development plan wasn't just decided by a bunch of commissioners sat in a room throwing darts at a list of problems they thought they had!

We invited all our adults to our 2018 County Ideas Exchange where we celebrated our achievements and asked for people's views on our 2023 strategy. Everyone had the chance to have their say, we asked what they felt the issues were around each topic and discussed how we are going to action them.

Then, using the outputs from the day, this plan was drawn up by the county leadership team - which is made up of the county commissioner, our deputy county commissioners for people, programme and perception, our six district commissioners (Wandsworth have two!), the county chair and our development officer.



## Our vision for scouting across South London

By 2023 we will have seen year on year growth and will be preparing more young people with skills for life.

Our scout groups and explorer scout units will be supported by a growing team of amazing leaders who together deliver an inspiring high-quality programme to suitably sized sections.

## Our county strategic objective

As a county we aim to grow, become more inclusive and youth shaped, while making a positive impact in our communities.

By 2023 scouting across South London will be . . .

### Growing

We know scouting changes lives, which is why we want every young person across South London to have the opportunity to get involved. Nationally scouting continues to grow year on year and we want to be part of that success!

### Inclusive

Because every young person deserves the opportunity to take part in scouting, we are working to remove barriers to participation. In line with this we want to work towards our adult and youth membership reflecting (even more), the makeup of our local communities and make scouting available to everyone.

### Youth shaped

We believe that every young person should be able to be part of shaping their scouting experience. We empower our adult volunteers to make this a reality at every level: locally, district, county and nationally, scouting is for young people and is the reason we exist.

### Making a positive impact in our communities

Scouting makes a difference not just to the individuals that are members but also wider society. Each year across the UK, thousands of scout groups take part in Scout Community Week, making a lasting difference in their local communities. We want to be part of this and help increase the social impact of scouting.

## Our county programme pillars

Our development plan is structured around four areas of work. These being the three national pillars and an organisational pillar which has been identified by the county. These areas focus on:

**People**

**Programme**

**Perception**

**Places**

## Our aims

Our aims within this plan is to ensure:

- we are relevant
- we are understood
- we are growing (young people and adults)
- we work smarter
- we function easier
- we are always striving to be better

## Our county goals

By delivering our plan we are aiming to achieve the following outcomes:

In 2023 we will have...			
Growth			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• at least 6,000 young people aged 6-18 attending section meetings each week</li> <li>• at least 2,600 adults in leadership and organisational support roles (including network members)</li> <li>• at least 1 young leader in every colony, pack and troop</li> <li>• larger scout groups, with at least 15 members in each section, that provide the full family of scouting (beavers, cubs &amp; scouts)</li> <li>• started scouting in at least 5 new communities</li> </ul>			
Inclusion			
The demographic of our youth members and our adult volunteers better reflects the communities in which we operate.			
Youth shaped		Community impact	
<h1>70%</h1>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• of our young people shaped their scouting</li> <li>• of our young people achieve top awards</li> </ul>	<h1>70%</h1>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• of our young people undertake social action</li> </ul>

And we will have helped:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• bring communities closer together (<a href="#">social integration</a>)</li> <li>• more young people to get on in life (<a href="#">social mobility</a>)</li> <li>• more young people to feel better about themselves (<a href="#">wellbeing</a>)</li> <li>• more young people and adults to play a full part in their communities, making a positive contribution to society (<a href="#">civic participation</a>)</li> </ul>	

This plan can only be delivered if we work together. We've put together a list of actions you can take, starting now, to help us achieve our goals across the four strategic objectives. Over the next five years, new actions will emerge, and these will be communicated when they become relevant for you.

Collectively, we will make our movement bigger, stronger and more impactful



## Your actions

Thank you for the time you put into delivering scouting. Because of you, more young people take part in an inspiring programme that gives them skills to thrive and develop.

Our skills for life plan contains many exciting initiatives, under our pillars of perception, places, people and programme. Your priority is to keep doing great work towards our four key strategic objectives of growth, inclusivity, youth shaped and community impact.

Under each of the pillars we have listed the initiatives that the county team in partnership with our districts will be carrying out up until the end of 2023. At the end of each of each pillar we have pulled together a series of actions that your group or unit can take, to work towards achieving our shared goals. These actions are specific and either already have supporting resources in place or will be developed over the coming months.

We want to make our districts and county bigger, stronger and even more impactful in our local communities. We can only do this if we work together to deliver our plan.



# Places

**Our aim: To provide amazing scout groups and explorer scout units with appropriately sized (but aiming for maximum sized), sections run by larger teams of adults.**

**All our scout groups have a proactive executive committee in place. Executive members understand their role and know where to go for support. Our explorer scout units are governed efficiently within the district.**

This means:

Where numbers are consistently low, we will subjectively review our provision of scouting to enable us to support the growth of our membership (both young people and adults), and the provision of vibrant, modern, successful scout groups, explorer scout units and scout networks within our local communities, that people want to be part of.

As part of this process we will reform our governance and provide support for our trustees.

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We all know that great programmes that are well delivered attract and retain more young people. If we recruit young members and adults and our programme doesn't meet their expectations, they will leave. If an exciting and balanced programme is created people will come, but it will take much longer to build numbers than if growth driven by quality is also supported by recruitment.

To deliver our goal of more young people and adult volunteers joining and enjoying scouting we need to develop a coordinated approach that looks at both our programme quality and approach to recruitment.

Recruitment should not be something we do when youth numbers fall or leaders are needed: the best reason to recruit should be because numbers are naturally rising - this is a signal that the right approach is in place.

We also know that to help us grow we need to ensure that all our scout groups are complete, with no missing sections and are also partnered to a local explorer scout unit, to retain young people as they grow.

Independent research suggests that the earlier a young person accesses non-formal education, the more positive the impact on their prospects. We also believe that the earlier a young person starts their scouting experience the longer they will stay a member. We also know that young people (14 to 18 years), that become young leaders are more likely to stay on to become a leader.

To help us grow we need to continue to:

- take a coordinated approach to link quality programmes and recruitment
- open missing sections in groups and districts
- open new sections where there are large waiting lists or no provision
- have discussions with groups where their sections have less than 5 young people
- support and grow sections that have fewer than 5 but less than 12 young people

and:

Where numbers are consistently low, we will subjectively review and have positive conversations about our provision of scouting to enable us to sustain and support the growth of our membership (both young people

and adults), and the provision of vibrant, modern, successful scout groups and explorer scout units within our local communities that people want to be part of.

**Where we will be in 2023:**

- We will have at least 6,000 youth members:
- They will be supported by at least 2,600 adult members
- All beaver, cub and scout sections across the county will have at least 1 explorer scout young leader working as part of their leadership team
- All our scout group and explorer scout units meet our building blocks of scouting benchmark

## Sustainable Scout Groups & Explorer Scout Units

### The building blocks of scouting

To ensure that quality scouting is delivered successfully within a scout group or explorer scout unit we believe that the following ‘building blocks of scouting’ should be in place:

- the benefits scouting provides are understood by the members of the group and the members of the local community
- there is an effective group scout leader or explorer scout leader in post
- The group provides the full family of scouting (beavers, cubs & scouts)
- the sections / unit have the leaders and adult supporters they need to carry out the section’s meetings
- the group’s leadership teams (in each section) / unit’s leadership team, are motivated and committed to scouting
- the group / unit has a suitable meeting place
- there is community interest
- some financial resources are available
- games, activity and camping equipment are available
- good governance happens: the group has some form of pro-active executive committee in place or the unit is pro-actively supported by the district executive committee
- adult training has been completed or is underway by the group’s / unit’s leadership team
- some leaders (preferably at least one in each section), have nights away permits
- regular programme planning takes place in each section / the unit
- the group holds at least two events each year for all members of the group to take part in / the unit take part in local partnered groups events and the district explorer programme.

**Once these building blocks are in place, we can grow scouting even more.**

### Your group’s actions

**Have a plan**

It’s a good idea to review the different areas of your scout group from time to time, as this helps you to ensure that everything is working well and going to plan. A group health check is a chance to celebrate your group’s successes and the great things that happen every week at your section meetings and highlights any areas that could do with some improvement. By doing this everyone in your group gets the opportunity to work together and identify the areas you need to improve or need support with.

Action	Support
Hold a group leadership team meeting to discuss the areas detailed in the building blocks of scouting (see above), and plan how you are going to ensure you can deliver them.	Book a group health check workshop with our development officer to review the different areas of your group and form a plan of action. Email Matt at <a href="mailto:matt.butterfield@southlononscouts.org.uk">matt.butterfield@southlononscouts.org.uk</a>



## Growth (youth members)

We believe scouting changes lives, which is why we want every young person and adult across our county to have the opportunity to be involved.

As of the 2018 annual national scout membership census, we have 4,777 youth members supported by 1667 adult members in leadership and organisational support roles.

### #JustOneMore

If every section across our county grows by one member a year for the duration of our plan we will meet our growth target of 6000 youth members by 2023.

## Your group's actions

### Go for growth

We want to ensure we are providing the opportunities scouting has to offer to as many young people as we possibly can. That's why we are challenging you to take our going for growth challenge!

The challenge consists of a collection of badges designed to help you publicise your group or unit and grow your membership. The badges cover: publicising your group in the local community, bringing your friends, easy linking between sections in your group or with a local explorer unit or scout network, growing your adult membership and community awareness and involvement.

Each area has its own badge or series of badges, which everyone, young people and adults, can gain and wear on their uniform.

Action	Support
Use our going for growth badge scheme to help your group get noticed in your community and grow.	Find out more about our going for growth badge requirements, download tools and resources and order our free badges at <a href="https://southlondonscouts.org.uk/g4g">southlondonscouts.org.uk/g4g</a>
<b>Take our just one more challenge</b>	
If every section across our county grows by one member a year for the duration of our plan we will meet our growth target of 6000 youth members by 2023.	
Action	Support
Support the sections of your group or your unit to achieve our 'Just one more' target. This is to declare at least one more youth member per section than they did the previous year on the 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023 annual censuses	Use our Going for growth badges to recruit just one more young people into your section each year. Download tools and resources and order our free badges at <a href="https://southlondonscouts.org.uk/g4g">southlondonscouts.org.uk/g4g</a>



## Effective Executive Committees

The group executive committee plays a vital role in the running of a scout group. They make decisions and carry out administrative tasks to ensure that the best quality scouting can be delivered to the young people in the group. Successful scout groups have pro-active executive committees!

### Our benchmark executive committee guidelines

To ensure that quality scouting is delivered successfully within a scout group we believe that the following 'benchmarks' should be met:

- has a chair, treasurer and secretary and at least 3 committee members
- works in partnership with the group scout leader
- meets at least 3 times a year
- ensures that adequate annual financial resources are available to sustain the group and its sections
- publishes an annual report and end of year accounts
- holds an annual general meeting
- proactively promotes the opportunities to join the group (both young people and adults) in the local community
- regularly communicates with parents and advertises the opportunities to get involved in the group

To enable our scout groups to have proactive executive committees, we will:

1. Run the association's executive committee training modules in the form of regular induction and support days for executive committee members
2. Look into provide the association's executive committee training modules as videos that can be viewed along with access to relevant resources on the county website
3. Update our online executive committee tool kit to ensure it provides the best possible guidance and support to scout groups
4. Provide guidance to help groups hold effective and timely AGMs with reports and accounts that conform to current scouting and charity commission rules and procedures
5. Ensure group executive committees are kept up to date with new and relevant scout association practice, policies & procedures
6. Develop tools and resources to help groups with the recruitment of executive committee officers and members
7. Provide an information pack for groups to use with their existing and new executive committee members
8. Create a support network for group and district executive committee officers and hold regular meetings to enable them to discuss hot topics, issues and best practice
9. Explore ways in which one executive committee could govern two or three scout groups



## Effective support for explorer scout units

Explorer scouting is a district provision, and so the governance of explorer scout units is the responsibility of the district executive committee, in much the same way as the governance of a beaver colony, cub pack or scout troop is the responsibility of the group executive committee. This means that a number of the organisation and financial aspects of explorer scouting in the district are managed by the district executive committee.

### Your group's actions

#### Good governance is key

Your group executive committee plays a vital role in the running of your group. They make decisions and carry out administrative tasks and support your leadership team to ensure that the best quality scouting can be delivered to young people in your sections.

Action	Support
Ensure that our benchmarked executive guidelines (see above), are in place in your group and that your executive committee proactively supports you in the running of your group.	Book a group health check workshop with our development officer to review the different areas of your group and form a plan of action.





## Other things that your group or unit can do to help achieve our places aims...

### Growth (youth members)

1. Use our retention ideas to help improve retention between, and within the sections of your group and local explorer scout units in particular
2. Use our county friendship award badges to help grow your sections
3. Help reduce your waiting lists by passing details of members waiting to join to the district to manage and place
4. As necessary, explore ways that we can help you open any sections not currently running in your group
5. Ensure that you are delivering an amazing programme 50% of which will be outdoor based (that's takes place outdoors or has an outdoor theme)
6. Use our county section link badges to help move young people up to the next section
7. Ensure that youth (and adult) recruitment materials are available at your bag pack or public fundraising and community events

### Effective Executive Committees

1. Maximise gift aid collection in your group or unit – visit [southlondonscouts.org.uk/ourplan](https://southlondonscouts.org.uk/ourplan) to download our 'how to guide' and templates
2. Help your member's families pay using an online payment system (which will provide a more stable cash flow and less administration for your leaders)
3. Consider financing and sharing activity and camping equipment with neighbouring groups
4. Explore additional funding sources such as raffles etc run by local groups or company sponsorship



# South London Scouts

## County Development Service



Our County Development Service works alongside new and existing volunteers and in partnership with our Scout Districts, Scout Groups and local communities to support the growth of local scouting and help ensure that we continue to provide life changing adventure to even more young people.

To help achieve our mission the County Development Service provide support and guidance in the following areas:

### Growth

- **Adult recruitment:**
  - Maintain ongoing channels and explore new channels to assist with adult recruitment across the County.
  - Attendance at targeted adult recruitment events.
  - Supporting districts with targeted adult recruitment drives.
  - Assist with parent engagement.
- **Opening new provision:**
  - New Scout Groups – *generally starting with Beavers and then moving on to Cubs and Scouts in time.*
  - Explorer Scout and Scout Network Units.
  - Scout Active Support Units (specialist, Group, District, County Units)
  - Sections in established Groups (helping groups achieve the full family of scouting)
  - Support for targeted youth recruitment events (as appropriate and when minimum standards are met).
  - Supporting districts with targeted youth recruitment drives.

### Development

- Facilitate Group health check workshops to assist Scout Groups to plan for the future to ensure they can continue to provide quality scouting to more young people and work smarter
- Run growth and recruitment workshops (to support the increase of more adult involvement)
- Facilitate district development days and assist with prioritising needs and producing a district development plan

### Support for line managers

- Support District Commissioners and Group Scout Leaders with growth and development initiatives
- Group Scout Leader inductions
- Provide resources and advice to DCs to assist them with the appointment of Group Scout Leaders

## Resources

Provide:

- Recruitment leaflets (adult and young people)
- Pop-up banner and recruitment stand equipment loan
- Section taster evening activities and games equipment
- Going for growth tools
- On-line tools and resources

## Support to growth facilitators

- Contribute to the induction of growth facilitators at all levels of the County
- Support volunteers at all levels of the county that have responsibility for growth

Contact Matt on 07766 540 057

or email him on [matt.butterfield@southlondonscouts.org.uk](mailto:matt.butterfield@southlondonscouts.org.uk)



**Get your scouting growing!**

**Badges to help promote the amazing things you do and help retain your members as they move to the next section.**



[www.southlondonscouts.org.uk/g4g](http://www.southlondonscouts.org.uk/g4g)