



Scouts

South London

Programme

Delivering quality programmes

Programme:

Scouts
South London



Providing high-quality programmes

Our Skills for Life strategy lays out our plan up until 2023 so that we can support even more adults and young people as we develop scouting's future together. With this plan we're building on the successes of our last plan 'Scouting for all', by continuing to focus on growth, inclusion, youth shaped scouting and community impact.

Our strategic objective:

We provide amazing section programmes across our county that are fun, enjoyable and high quality and are 'benchmarked' and supported by simple (digital) tools.

This means:

- Ensuring that a high-quality programme is delivered at section, group and district level across the county
- Providing programme support to leaders using new initiatives
- Running appropriate county events for all sections
- Ensuring that young people have a regular say in shaping there scouting - youth shaped.

Growth | Inclusion | Youth Shaped | Community Impact

What makes scouting different?

As Scouts, we believe in preparing young people with skills for life. We bring communities together and contribute to society. Above all, we aim to build better futures.

That's why we encourage our young people to do more, learn more and be more. Each week, over 4,700 young people across South London enjoy fun and adventure while developing the skills they need to succeed in life.

Scouting exists to actively engage and support young people in their personal development, empowering them to make a positive contribution to society. We do this by offering a diverse and exciting selection of activities and experiences, which are a key aspect of its appeal to young people. The primary method of delivery is through a programme that provides adventure and challenge to young people in an age appropriate way, aiding personal development and self-confidence.

Outdoor adventure plays a major part in the programme. Adventure does not have to be extravagant or expensive there are adventures to be had everywhere. For a beaver it is an adventure to wake up after their first ever night away on a beaver sleepover or for an explorer it's the camaraderie of spending the weekend hill walking with their unit and everything in-between.

The development needs of young people

Scouting's purpose (*to actively engage and support young people in their personal development, empowering them to make a positive contribution to society.*), explains that young people's personal development is central to what scouting strives to achieve. Therefore, when we are planning and delivering the programme, it is essential to provide activities in the context of the personal development needs of young people. These development needs are split into six key areas:

- **Fun**
Young people need to enjoy themselves and share enjoyment with others.
- **Relationships**
Young people need friends and they need to value and respect others, forming mutually positive relationships that foster a sense of belonging.
- **Development**
Young people need to develop themselves – their values, beliefs and talents – and strive to reach their potential.
- **Self-respect**
Young people need to value and have confidence in who they are and nurture their own well-being.
- **Discernment**
Young people need to make informed, reasoned and responsible choices.
- **Empowerment**
Young people need to express and act on their opinions, values and beliefs and use them to make a positive contribution, with others, as citizens of the world.

Personal development also includes social, physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual development.

The programme objectives are also broken down into five areas of personal development. These are:

- **Physical** - *There are two objectives in this area*
 - health
 - fitness

This includes the impact of diet, illness and exercise, as well as how to take action in an emergency.
- **Intellectual** - *There are three objectives in this area*
 - learning skills
 - creativity
 - judgement

These are about young people developing skills and talents, expressing themselves creatively, problem solving and making choices.
- **Emotional** - *There are two objectives in this area*
 - self-identity
 - emotional expression

Young people in scouting explore their own identity and personality, learn how to deal with and express their emotions and learn to respond to others' emotions.
- **Social** - *There are three objectives in this area*
 - relationships
 - teamwork
 - community

All of which are about how we live and work with others as part of our local, national and international communities.
- **Spiritual** - *There is one objective in this area*
 - exploring faiths, beliefs and attitudes

that are meaningful to young people individually, and to others around them.

Our leaders need to ensure that a balanced programme is provided in order to meet the development needs of all young people and young adults in all sections across scouting.

The programme framework

In scouting, the word 'programme' refers to the range of activities, challenges and experiences that young people take part in during their colony, pack, troop or unit meetings, day trips and nights away experiences.

Each week thousands of young people across South London take part in amazing programmes during their section meetings, planned by 'legions' of section leadership teams across the county. This said, there are a minority that have room for improvement in some sections/groups.

Running a section meeting for a room full of excitable young people can be nerve racking, yet very exciting and rewarding at the same time. With the right support, appropriate training and access to the right resources, our leaders soon become masters of their game.

When we deliver the programme it is not about ticking boxes – it is about delivering age appropriate fun and engaging activities in the context of the personal development of our members. In practice this means that the programme is progressive and although there are similarities in all the sections, there are also distinct, important differences.

Our programmes are structured around the badges and awards available in each section and provide young people with the opportunity to take part in adventure and challenge and gain skills for life (in an age-appropriate way), helping them with their personal development and to grow their confidence.

We know that great scouting takes place when young people, in partnership with adults, work together based on the values of scouting and use the scout method.

The values of scouting

As scouts we are guided by these values:

- Integrity** We act with integrity; we are honest, trustworthy and loyal.
- Respect** We have self-respect and respect for others.
- Care** We support others and take care of the world in which we live.
- Belief** We explore our faiths, beliefs and attitudes.
- Co-operation** We make a positive difference; we co-operate with others and make friends.

The scout methods and programme methods

The scout methods state in general terms the key ways that scouting is delivered. The programme methods build on this with specific examples of types of activities that young people should experience or take part in while they are in scouting. Overall the methods are designed to offer a framework of ways that scouting can be delivered to make sure that young people have a positive and well-rounded experience.

Scout Method	Programme methods
Scouting takes place when young people, in partnership with adults, work together based on the values of scouting and:	This means that young people get to experience or take part in the following things as part of the programme:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoy what they are doing and have fun 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having fun • Meeting new people, making friends and developing relationships
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take part in activities indoors and outdoors • Undertake new and challenging activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spending time outdoors • Games – physical and adventurous activities • Design and creativity • Visits and visitors • Camps, sleepovers, international trips and other residential experiences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn by doing • Take responsibility and make choices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working in small teams • Trying new things, and learning new skills • Teambuilding and leadership activities • Taking responsibility, giving ideas and opinions, making choices and decisions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share in spiritual reflection • Make and live by their Promise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiritual reflection • Finding out about themselves • Community action • Keeping the Promise

The programme for all five sections is based around three main themes:

1. outdoors & adventure
2. world
3. skills

And includes opportunities to experience:

- leadership
- teamwork
- challenge
- personal development

Each sections programme of activities is planned by its leadership team in partnership with the young people in the section and should incorporate elements from each theme. This will ensure we offer all young people the most interesting and diverse experiences which enables them to achieve the top award in their section.

It is recommended that the scouting programme, in all sections, should spend 50% of the time working on “outdoors & adventure” areas. This does not mean that young people need to be outdoors 50% of the time, but that the programme should have activities with an outdoor and adventure theme. Although the more time a section can spend outside the better!

A beaver sleepover that takes place indoors would still be considered as an adventurous activity, as would learning how to read a map or pitch a tent. Learning key skills that would be put into use in the outdoors are still considered to be a part of this section of the balanced programme.



ACTIVITIES



CHALLENGES



EXPERIENCES

The programme objectives

To make sure that the programme meets scouting’s fundamental purpose, a number of programme objectives set out what young people of different ages should gain from taking part in scouting. The Scout Association’s programme objectives form the foundations of our balanced programme and are used to create a programme which meets the needs of young people and achieves the association’s purpose.

Each section’s programme objectives set out what a young person should get from taking part in scouting and they should be used to help create a programme which meets the needs of young people and achieves scouting’s purpose.

The programme objectives also underpin the requirements of the badges, awards and other programme elements. This means that if a section is running a high-quality programme and young people have the opportunity to achieve the Chief Scout’s Awards and the Queen’s Scout Award, they will be meeting the programme objectives.

The objectives cover a number of areas under the topics of: physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual development. In total there are 11 objectives for each section and these are the things that a young person should be able to do by the time they leave that section. They are progressive, meaning that knowledge and skills is built up as young people get older, working towards a final objective for each topic.

Badges

Badges are awarded to encourage young people to learn new skills and to recognise their achievements. Badges can also be used to map young people's progress through the Movement and to provide an incentive for them to work on a particular skill set or challenging activity. Badges also add structure and focus to the programme. Challenge awards in the beaver, cub and scout sections provide the basis for a balance programme and are key to effective programme planning.

In order to earn badges or awards, young people must complete the requirements listed for that particular badge, these are a mixture of challenges, activities and skills they must demonstrate. Badges vary in difficulty and all are progressive through the movement, to correspond with the age and ability of the young people they are aimed at. Badges can be completed and signed off outside of the scouting section with the supervision of a specialist in the field, like a swimming teacher. Other badges can be completed during section meetings, on residential experiences, or at district or county events.

The different types of badges and awards are:

Activity Badges

Many of the badges available are activity badges and are specific to each section. These allow young people to develop existing skills and interests, but also to try new things and form new interests. They are designed to be achieved as a section working together during a number of weekly meetings or can be achieved by young people working individually outside their section, on something that is of particular interest to them.

Staged Activity Badges

These badges are available to young people from Beavers to Explorers and aim to provide an ongoing challenge through the sections. Young people can begin at whichever stage offers them an appropriate level of challenge.

Core Badges (Membership Award, Joining in Awards, Moving On Award)

In addition, there are a number of special badges, obtained upon joining or moving on from the section, or for time spent in the Scouting Movement.

Challenge awards

The challenge awards and challenge areas support the main themes of the programme. They require young people to take part in a range of activities to develop their skills and understanding in each specific challenge area.

The number of challenge awards available in each section reflects the length of time young people are in the section. There are:

- six challenge awards for the beaver section
- seven challenge awards for the cub section
- nine challenge awards for the scout section.

Each section offers challenges appropriate to the age group. Challenge awards are progressive through the sections and this is mirrored in the complexity of the requirements.

The Explorer Programme includes 15 challenge areas, split into the three main programme themes, mirroring the challenge awards in the younger sections. These challenge areas give explorers choices and variety, to support them in planning their own programme.



The table below shows the challenge awards/challenge areas for each section.

Challenge		World	Skills	Outdoors & Adventure	
Beavers	Personal Challenge	My World	My Skills	My Outdoors	My Adventure
			Teamwork		
Cubs	Personal Challenge	Our World	Our Skills	Our Outdoors	Our Adventure
			Teamwork		
Scouts	Personal Challenge	World	Skills	Outdoors	Adventure
			Creative		
			Teamwork	Expedition	
			Team Leader		
Explorers		International	Creative	Campcraft	
		Environment	Communications	Survival Skills	
		Culture	Cooking	Peer-led Nights Away	
		Visits & Visitors	Health & Fitness	Adventurous Activities	
		Citizenship	Teambuilding & Leadership	Navigation	

The full list of badges in each section and the requirements for badge can be found in the respective badge books or in the programme section of the members area on www.scouts.org.uk



Flexibility within scouting

Every young person who undertakes a badge should face a similar degree of challenge. As a result, some requirements may need to be adapted. It is acceptable to change some of the requirements of the badges to allow individuals to access the badge (for example, where there are additional needs, cultural issues or religious considerations to take into account). The requirements outlined for badges allow for some flexibility in order to obtain the badge.

The guiding principle throughout the programme should be that young people are being challenged, while having fun. Leaders may need to scale the difficulty of a challenge up or down to make sure that young people of different abilities can all experience a similar level of challenge. Usually this just takes a little creativity and common sense, and by identifying an individual's needs and providing them with appropriate support, we can include even more young people in scouting.

Adaptions to the top awards should be approved by the County Commissioner. Adaptations within the Duke of Edinburgh Award (bronze, silver and gold) needs to be approved in advance by the licensing organisation.

Adventurous activities

Adventurous activities are an integral part of scouting and is a key part of what makes it so exciting for the young people involved. The programme also offers a huge range of opportunities to provide adventure and we can provide activities in two ways:

1. scout led: Led and run by an adult member of scouting
2. externally led: Using an external, non-member instructor, centre or company.

Scout led activities and the adventurous activities permit scheme

Scout led activities are operated and managed via an internal assessment scheme called the Adventurous Activities Permit Scheme. This is designed to ensure that all members leading adventurous activities for young people have the skills, experience and personal suitability to do so. Activities that do not fall within the Adventurous Activities Permit Scheme can still take place as a scout activity. There are separate rules, governance and requirements on how to run each activity, **(these can be found in the A-Z of Activities in the activities section of the member's area on www.scouts.org.uk)**. this list links all the information leaders need to run any particular activity, and to give them new ideas of activities they could run. The factsheets '**Scout Led Activities Index**' and '**Commercially Led Activities Index**' also provides much of this information in factsheet format.

A Clear Process

'**A Clear Process**' is a resource that aims to explain how to access adventurous activities within scouting and how leadership teams could work towards providing more experiences. It's not a one stop shop for everything our leaders need to know but hopefully it will help them understand the first steps they need to take.

The Nights Away Permit Scheme

Nights away or residential events, whether camping, hostelling, sleepovers or bivouacs, form an integral part of scouting, and are something that every young person should have the opportunity to take part in.

The Nights Away Permit Scheme is an internal assessment scheme, designed to ensure that all those leading nights away events for young people within scouting have the skills, experience and personal suitability to do so. Every nights away event for young people is required to have a Nights Away Permit holder present, with the correct permit for the type of event being run. Nights Away Permits are available to members or associate members who are aged 18 and over, and there are four types available:

- Light weight expedition
- Greenfield
- Campsite
- Indoor

More information on the Nights Away Permit Scheme can be found in the activities section of the **member's area on www.scouts.org.uk**

Scouting Skills

In 1907, when Baden-Powell ran his experimental scout camp, he ran a session on practical 'scouting skills teaching young people to undertake a range of tasks that would equip them for outdoor living. Since then, scouting skills have grown in scope and include a whole range of fun, exciting and useful skills. Scouting skills include (but are not limited to):

- map reading
- navigation
- pioneering
- knots
- lashings
- fire lighting
- tent pitching
- field hygiene
- backwoods cooking
- shelter building

Learning and mastering scouting skills enables young people to live outdoors. Such skills are essential when undertaking activities such as hiking, climbing, camping, or going on expeditions both abroad and in the UK. It is only by mastering scouting skills that young people can take part in high adventure activities in remote environments.

Delivering and measuring a quality programme

To make sure that young people get as much as possible out of their scouting experience, it is important that there is a high-quality programme available for them to take part in. A quality programme will keep young people interested and engaged, help them to develop new skills and interests and encourage them to stay healthy and active. It will also ensure that their experience meets the fundamentals of scouting. In short, a quality programme is challenging, relevant and rewarding for every young person.

What we mean by challenging

- lots of opportunities for outdoor and adventurous activities in safe environments
- gaining confidence by participating in new or less familiar activities and stepping out of their comfort zones
- all young people regardless of their abilities, can enjoy and achieve

What we mean by relevant

- young people shape the programme based on what they want to learn and explore
- ensuring the needs of every young person are met
- responding to what young people are currently inquisitive about and reflecting this in the programme

What we mean by rewarding

- developing skills for life, including teamwork and leadership
- supporting young people with their progression through the sections
- young people are excited about scouting
- having fun and increasing in confidence

A quality programme should include a balance of different types of activities and opportunities. It should also be well planned and delivered by adults with appropriate skills and expertise and using a wide variety of different methods. Therefore, a high quality programme:

- has a long- term plan in place
- has short-term detailed planning
- provides challenge and adventure to young people
- is safe, rewarding and varied
- is shaped by young people in partnership with adults
- gives young people an opportunity to learn, develop and share ideas
- gives young people the opportunity to develop a better understanding of their community and the world around them
- gives young people the opportunity to gain life skills, confidence, develop self-esteem and understand relationships
- has suitable equipment available
- has enough adults to help run the games and activities
- offers a balance of each of the challenge areas for the section
- includes opportunities to achieve activity badges, staged activity badges and challenge awards each term

- enables all young people to achieve their Chief Scout's Awards for the section
- provides opportunities to engage with young people outside of their section, such as attending district and county events or taking part in activities with other sections
- provide opportunities to take part in activities away from the normal weekly meeting place
- provide opportunities to engage with the local community
- offer opportunities to experience nights away
- is delivered using a wide variety of methods
- is delivered by adults with the appropriate skills or knowledge for the planned activities
- Recruits new adults and young people
- Includes plans for unexpected circumstances, such as adverse weather conditions, sickness or emergencies

The building blocks of the programme

To ensure our leaders deliver a quality programme the following 'building blocks should be in place':

- the purpose, method and values of scouting are understood by the members of the group
- the group has a suitable meeting place
- some financial resources are available
- well maintained games, activity and camping equipment are available
- adult training has been completed or is underway by the groups leadership team
- some leaders (preferably at least one in each section), have nights away permits
- regular programme planning takes place in each section
- The group holds at least two events each year for all members of the group to take part in.

Benchmarked standards

Our benchmarked standards for a quality programme are:

- The delivery a high-quality balanced programme, run in accordance with the Association's official publications for the section which enables your members to earn badges and ultimately achieve their Chief Scout's Award, this ideally being:
- the delivery of a high-quality balanced programme, run in accordance with the Association's official publications for the section which enables your members to earn badges and ultimately achieve their Chief Scout's Award, this ideally being:
 - hold two overnight stays per year
 - attend one district event per term
 - hold one visit / day trip per term
 - invite two visitors to talk to the colony per year
 - complete one challenge award per term
 - complete one activity badge per term
 - award joining in awards and moving on awards as required
- Ensure regular opportunities are provided for young people to express their views on the programme and running of the section, and where possible act upon their views.

Programme planning

To deliver a quality programme that is packed with activities which young people will enjoy, it is vital that leadership teams plan in advance and for an extended period of time. This way they can work out very quickly if their programme is balanced and whether they are using a range of methods. They can also ensure that they have time to source the resources and materials they need. There are always times when planning a programme has not been possible and while spontaneity can sometimes be very effective, it should never be the main way of working.

The organisation, planning and commitment of the leadership team shape the success and growth of a section. Sections and groups who operate well planned, organised and balanced programmes retain far more young people, and have more potential members wishing to join. A well run section can also help to ensure happy and enthusiastic adult volunteers, who willingly commit their time and energy to the section and group.

Leadership teams should meet regularly to plan the section's programme, discuss ideas and delegate tasks and responsibilities. Leadership teams should arrange time to meet away from their regular section meetings to have time to plan their programme. Time away from the section allows the team to socialise, get to know one another and build stronger relationships.

Well planned programmes:

- give a theme and structure to the meetings or activity
- allow for consideration to be given to the detail
- provide a time schedule
- ensure that the whole leadership team knows what is going on
- allow leaders to identify the materials and resources needed
- ensure that the aim of the evening is achieved.

To establish strong connections with the other sections in the group, group leadership team meetings should also be held to share ideas for events and activities that could work across the sections.

Programme reviews using the quality programme checker

The Quality of Programme Checker is a tool designed to leadership teams plan and review their programmes, and make sure that they are delivering quality scouting to the young people that they work with.

A quality scouting programme should cover all of the areas identified in the checker. The Red, Amber and Green categories help teams identify any areas where their programme could be improved and set targets for them to reach when planning their next programme. The Quality Programme Checker for each section can be found in the programme section of the [member's area on the county web site - www.southlondonscouts.org.uk](http://www.southlondonscouts.org.uk)

Youth shaped scouting

Young people working in partnership with adults has always been something we have been proud of. Youth Shaped scouting not only improves the way we scout, but also the young people involved.

Learning to speak up, be heard and work towards improving something you are passionate about is an incredible learning experience for the youngest Beaver right the way through to our eldest Network member.

We want every young person to shape their own adventure, take on responsibility, develop skills, make decisions and influence their own scout programme.

There are lots of things that our leadership teams can do to help this happen; from introducing section youth forums to encouraging young people to record video vlogs to share and reflect on past activities and decisions made in the section. These can be in fun and exciting ways.

Youth involvement includes young people doing the following:

- sharing their ideas
- learning from and teaching each other and adults
- taking part in decision making
- assisting with planning the programme, including activities and camps
- becoming more involved in all aspects of Scouting

Our supporting document, '[Youth Shaped Scouting](#)' provides lots more information on this subject.



Our Challenges

1. When we deliver the programme it is not about ticking boxes – it is about delivering fun and engaging activities in the context of the personal development of our members. In practice this means that the programme is progressive, so there are similarities in the programme for all sections, however, there are also some differences. It is important that we ensure our adults know what these are to enable them to support the members of their section to ensure they continue their scouting adventure through the sections. The diverse and exciting range of activities and experiences that we offer are key to attracting and retaining young people and adults into scouting.
2. More adventurous/expensive activities including many district, county or national activities become cost prohibitive for young people to take part in. Giving out a kit list for a camp or a hike may challenge family budgets way beyond what they can afford to spend.
3. Adventure and life skills need to be at the heart of what we deliver to young people. They need to be inspired by the programme that they receive.
4. We often refer to what we deliver as our 'programme' but in fact it is a combination of many things – weekly section meetings, camps and other residential experiences, events, trips and so on. Truly, programme = adventure. A great delivered programme will be balanced and diverse. It will inspire young people because they will want to keep coming back for more.
5. The TSA Programme Team invest much time and money developing and refining the published programme but translating that from the book or web page into actual delivery on the ground is often a challenge. New leaders do not all have the vision and skills to be able to deliver great programme. And longer-in-role leaders often find a challenge to change/refresh what is it that they do with each development of the published programme and as the needs and expectations of young people change.
6. We all know of sections where programme is poor, and others where programme is good or great – this latter category is often characterised by good reputation in their local community, which in turn often leads to large waiting lists.
7. It is important to note that large sections do not necessarily mean that a great programme is being delivered; equally, small sections do not always mean poor delivered programme. However, size is often an indicator of effective programme.
8. District and/or county support to leaders is often not programme-focussed (to support all leaders, but especially new ones, to deliver fantastic programme) but is usually events-focussed (chess competitions, swimming galas, large district and county events, etc.).
9. There is an implicit assumption in (most) districts that groups (and units) are self-sufficient in all respects, including equipment and (often) skills. As a consequence, there is little planning that takes place locally to ensure that sufficient activity and camping skills / equipment are available to ensure that all young people get access to a wide range of activities and camping opportunities to support the delivery of inspiring programmes.
10. The county and district programme team roles need to be updated and refocused so that they focus on the provision of support to new and existing leaders to deliver quality programmes. Particular attention should be placed on supporting new adults to operate safe sections that deliver high quality accessible programmes.
11. Permit holders (activity & especially nights away) are normally created at group level rather than support being planned and maintained by the district or county, with little or no sharing of these resources. This means that new groups/units and sections have little or no access to activities needing a permit.
12. There is a Quality Programme Checker which is well regarded for youth sections. However, a similar quality checker is not available for how local scouting provision is managed e.g. for a GSL/DESC and for a Group/District Executive.

13. To provide effective focus and governance to the Explorer Scout Section in our Districts, each District Executive Committee should aspire to have an 'Explorer provision' sub-Committee. (This is currently being looked at by UKHQ. We now have the opportunity to start to get things into place before it becomes a mandatory requirement of District Executive Committees).
14. Programme is key, but the focus needs to be on being simple to understand and deliver at its core. The existence and use of a Quality Programme Checker should be placed at the heart of the definition of 'good programme' – with the continuous development being set as taking the section to 'green' on all measures. It should therefore be used by section teams, district teams, the county team, and the county training team as the summary definition of a good programme. It can therefore be used to check the quality when planning programmes and should be introduced to new volunteers early in their volunteer journey.
15. A good programme must include 'adventure' (this is intuitively clear but is also key within the Quality Programme Checker). To do this properly requires more money than most individual groups/units generate annually or can afford. We should place a responsibility on district teams (supported by the District Executive) to make available:
 - sharing of expertise (Activity Permits)
 - funding (for Activity Permit training & assessment)
 - funding, purchase and storage of equipment (canoes, ropes, etc.)
 - building relationships with local adventure/activity centres to allow cost effective access to activities

