



## Introduction

Welcome to 1<sup>st</sup> Cheddington Scout Group! You are joining a large and active group - we hope you will enjoy it! This document is to tell you a bit about Scouting in general, and 1<sup>st</sup> Cheddington in particular.

What has made Scouting the world's largest voluntary movement for young people? The answer lies in Scouting's appeal to a young person's desires for fun and adventure and its provision through attractive and active programmes. It provides opportunities for developing in young people the qualities that make good citizens: honour, self-discipline, dependability, respect for others and self-reliance.

Scouting aims to prepare young people to take a constructive place in society and does so, not by preaching at them, but by making the whole thing into a game in which it is fun to take part. That, more than anything else, is the secret of its appeal. However, in any game there have to be rules. The rules of the Game of Scouting are embodied in the Promise and Law.

Young people learn by doing, and Scouting offers activities to capture their imagination and enable each individual to find something in which to participate, develop skills and gain confidence. As far as possible, these activities take place outdoors as in camping, hiking, caving, sailing, mountaineering and many others, alongside a training programme which is structured from Beaver Scouts to Explorer Scouts.

Scouting at 1<sup>st</sup> Cheddington is for boys and girls from 6 to 18 years. It teaches what is not learnt at home or at school and it assists their character development. However, they rely on adult volunteers to make it all possible, either as leaders to run their meetings, camps and so on, or as supporters to provide the material requirements and assist the leaders with the running of activities.

We hope your child will enjoy being a member of our Scout Group and will continue through the family of sections.

When your child joins the Group you also become members of the Group Council, which usually meets once a year at the Group AGM. To ensure the Group continues to survive and flourish we expect you to support your child by helping with a section, with the general running of the Group and with at our fund-raising events.

Please complete the paperwork included with this letter and return it to your child's section leader as soon as possible.

Should you have any questions which this document does not answer, please feel free to contact me direct and I will be more than happy to answer them. As the head of the team of Leaders who will be guiding your child through the Scout Group, I take this opportunity to thank you for your interest. I look forward to yours and your child's association with the 1<sup>st</sup> Cheddington and once again I emphasise that we are here to help with any enquiries you may have.

### 1st Cheddington Scout Group

Scout Headquarters, Station Road, Cheddington, Buckinghamshire, LU7 0SG

**Patron:** HM The Queen **President:** HRH The Duke of Kent **Founder:** Robert Baden-Powell OM **Chief Scout:** Lt Cdr (Hon) Bear Grylls RN

And finally. We have a fantastic website [www.cheddingtonscouts.org.uk](http://www.cheddingtonscouts.org.uk). which can be a source of inspiration for adults as well as children. Please visit it to find out more about us. We are also on Facebook, search for "1<sup>st</sup> Cheddington Scout Group".

Ian Hale  
Group Scout Leader

## **The Scout Association**

The Scout Association is the largest co-educational youth movement in the UK with 500,000 members. There are more than 28 million Scouts worldwide. Membership is open to all, whether as a youth member, adult leader or a supporter.

The aim of The Scout Association is:

*To help young people achieve their full physical, intellectual, social and spiritual potential as individuals, as responsible citizens and as members of their local, national and international community.*

This is achieved by taking part in a variety of activities and new experiences, at weekly meetings and outings and expeditions, exploring the outdoors, participating in teams and by taking responsibilities. In short, being a member of the scouting movement, whether as a Beaver, Cub, Scout or Explorer is all about having FUN and being faced by exciting and challenging things for young people to do. As a young person grows and develops, so does the level of activity and challenge provided. Everything we do is geared toward the age and ability of the individual, encouraging them to learn new skills and 'grow' in their knowledge of themselves and the world around them – particularly in the role they have to play in society.

1<sup>st</sup> Cheddington is just one of the eight Scout Groups in the Vale of Aylesbury District. In turn, the district is one of twelve in Buckinghamshire County, and nationally we all fall under the umbrella of the Scout Association, which has its headquarters at Gilwell Park in Essex. The Scout Association is a member of the World Organisation of the Scout Movement, which, as the name suggests, is the worldwide umbrella group for Scouting in nearly every country across the globe.

More details of the Scout Association and Scouting in general are available from the national website [www.scouts.org.uk](http://www.scouts.org.uk).

## **Our Scout Group**

The Aim of our Scout Group is to provide an exciting framework of activities that enable a young person to develop through learning from these experiences they have shared with their friends.

A Scout Group is split down into Sections, which enable its Members to work with people of a similar age. Our Scout Group consists of four Sections:

- Beaver Scouts aged 6 to 8 years
- Cub Scouts aged 8 to 10½ years
- Scouts aged 10½ to 14 years.
- Explorers aged 14 to 18 years

The Sections meet on the following nights and times:

<b>Section</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Meeting Night</b>	<b>Meeting Times</b>
Beavers	Endeavour	Monday	18:30 – 19:30
	Discover	Thursday	18:30 – 19:30
Cubs	Tigers	Tuesday	18:30 – 20:00
	Wolves	Wednesday	18:45 – 20:15
Scouts		Friday	19:30 – 21:00
Explorers	Cetendone	Monday	20:00 – 22:00

All meetings take place at our Scout Headquarters in Station Road and all are open to both boys and girls.

The Scout Group operates under a number of policies:

- Membership
- Behaviour
- Health & Safety
- Medical Treatment
- Data Protection

These policies are detailed on the Group website and we ask all parents to read these when first becoming involved with the Group.

### ***Group Scout Leader (GSL)***

The Group Scout Leader is responsible for the links between the Beaver Colony, the Cub Pack, the Scout Troop, the Explorer Unit of the Group, the uniformed and non uniformed members of the Group, and the Group and local community.

The GSL does not run a particular section but keeps an overview on them all and ensures the development of Scouting at the Group level. The GSL leads the leader team at the Scout Group and is responsible for nominating the Group Chairman.

### ***Leaders***

All leaders are over 18 and are also known as 'Scouters'. In this and every Scout Group, all leaders are volunteers and are unpaid. They offer their service for no reward other than the satisfaction of knowing that it is their help which makes the Scouting the young people enjoy possible.

The qualifications required to be a Scouter are straightforward; namely an acceptance of the aims and methods of the Scout Association and a willingness to accept the Scout Promise. A comprehensive training Programme exists to augment the knowledge and experience gained whilst working with all sections.

All Leaders are checked by the Disclosures and Barring Service (previously Criminal Records Bureau) on appointment, on renewal of appointment or on change of appointment.

Leaders have to be formally assessed for their ability to take their members camping and are awarded a permit based on their experience and level of ability. All Leaders have a first-aid qualification which is renewed every three years. Some leaders are authorised to lead adventurous activities (hill-walking, climbing, sailing and canoeing) having completed training courses and assessments appropriate to those activities.

We do like to welcome new blood to our leadership team and would love to hear from parents who feel they have something to offer (we cannot do everything!). After all, it's only one night a week.

### **Group Executive**

The management of the Group is the responsibility of the Group Executive Committee and its membership is made up of parents, leaders and supporters appointed at our Annual General Meeting.

The aim of this committee is to manage the funds which have to be sufficient to enable:

- The continuance of an active Scouting Programme
- The maintenance of Group property and equipment

The Group Executive Committee runs our fundraising activities. The majority of its members are parents who have volunteered their services. It is hoped that all parents will be considering helping on this committee at some time during their child's membership of 1<sup>st</sup> Cheddington Scout Group, as fundraising is crucial to us if we are to continue to provide Scouting for all young people in the village who wish to join.

### **The First Few Weeks**

No matter what the section or age, every child who joins has some apprehension... Will I know anyone? Will I like what they do? Will I understand what I am supposed to do? All are reasonable questions so we like to make sure that your child WANTS to join.

For the first few weeks, we ask for no money and don't ask you to buy a uniform or anything like that. Once we are happy that your child is happy and really does want to join, the Leaders will talk to you about getting the uniform and ask you to fill in various items of paperwork. The most important of these is the Young Person Information Form, giving us your child's details and some details about you and how we can contact you if we have to. This enables us to understand your child and their personal circumstances. Your child will then be invested into the group by making a simple promise at a ceremony that you will be invited to watch

Your child will now be immersed into the Scouting experience. They will get from Scouting as much as they want to put into it and the same will count for your relationship with Scouting. As a Leader team we aim to give your child as many opportunities as we physically can and we appreciate your support. You may now be hearing about events coming up because you've received a letter from a Leader or because you have registered to view our calendar on the Group website and you have downloaded the information from there. Whatever way the information arrives, please take time to read it properly; there may be some very important information in there and your child may miss out on something due to errors.

You will hear about outings and residential experiences such as camps:

- With all such activities, you will be required to complete a form to give permission for your child to take part.
- There may be some personal/medical details required.
- There will be instructions about payment.
- There will be a closing date.
- Please ensure that you take it all in and follow the instructions – they will be there for a reason.

We are sure your child will enjoy their time at 1<sup>st</sup> Cheddington but if you have any questions, please ask a Leader at the earliest opportunity.

## Fundraising

Sadly, nothing in this world is for free and running an active Scout Group costs a lot of money. All of that money has to come from somewhere.

As a Scout Group we have to pay money to The Scout Association and to our Scout District and County for every member of the Group to be a member of The Scout Association and receive its privileges, such as insurance cover when undertaking activities.

In addition we have to pay the costs of running the headquarters including rates, utilities and maintenance.

All of this money has to be raised each year. The Leaders and all of the people on the Committees are 100% voluntary and receive no payment – if anything they often pay out a lot of money, as well as their time. Behind the scenes there is a small dedicated team of Leaders, parents and friends of the Group helping to raise this money and provide what the Group needs to exist and then flourish.

We ask that all parents help us to achieve this – We are a registered charity and any time and energy you can give us will be appreciated. The majority of our income is from membership subscriptions; however we also raise money through other means such as the Village Fireworks and the Christmas post delivery.

If, at any time, you have suggestions for the provision of better Scouting please let us know. We need your help to raise our already very high standards!

## Subscriptions

Membership subscriptions are levied three times a year on 1<sup>st</sup> April, 1<sup>st</sup> September and 1<sup>st</sup> January. They are calculated on an annual basis and revised annually. Please pay the subscriptions promptly to your section leader each term.

The current subscription is £40 per term.

The Scout Group uses Gift Aid to increase the money received by the subscriptions. The Scout Group reclaims the tax as a recognised and registered charity in the same way as other well known charities e.g. Cancer Research. The tax is reclaimed as it has already been paid through the donor's taxed income. This means that for every £1 of subscriptions you pay, the group can claim back 28p.

This is obviously a very advantageous method of the group increasing its annual income and is put to good use in the equipment and activities that the group provides. **Please ensure you tick the relevant boxes on the application form included in this pack to enable us to claim this tax rebate.**

## How Can We Help?

Running a large and successful Scout Group takes a lot of work, and it couldn't be done with the help and support of parents. There are many ways you can help, so every family should be able to find something that will fit with their skills and time commitments.

There are two areas where help is needed: firstly in the leadership team, directly involved with providing Scouting for young people; and secondly, in supporting roles - for example, fundraising, administration and maintenance of the hut. Both areas are equally important - we couldn't operate without leaders, or without a hut to meet in!

Within the leadership team, the most direct way to help is to become involved with one of the sections and help regularly throughout the year at Beavers, Cubs or Scouts. You don't have to help in the same section that your child is in, if you feel you are more suited to a different age group, and no experience is required. A regular commitment doesn't necessarily mean you have to turn up every week - if you feel you only have time to help out once a month, that is fine. However, it will help the leaders running the section if they know in advance which weeks you can help. All of our sections also operate a rota which needs parents to come along occasionally and provide some assistance at meetings.

Another possibility which also involves helping directly with a section is to help out on camp. There is always a lot to do on camp, so extra pairs of hands are always appreciated – again, no previous experience is required. If you can't come to the whole camp, you might be able to help by providing transport to/from the camp, or by helping with loading and unloading of equipment at the Group stores at the beginning or end of camp.

If you would rather not have direct contact with young people, there are still many ways to help. The Group Committee, which is responsible for the Group's assets and finances, is always on the lookout for more volunteers - this might be to fill a specific named post, for example treasurer or secretary, or just to sit on the committee and help with organising and running fundraising events.

There are also specific roles which are not committee posts, for example, to look after hut bookings, marquee hire, or bookings for the Group minibus, or to be responsible for collection of subscriptions or maintenance of the Group's camping equipment. In addition, help is often needed at fundraising events.

There is also a lot of maintenance work needed every so often at the hut, for example, small electrical or plumbing jobs, painting and decorating, or weekly cleaning. If parents are willing to help with these tasks, this saves the Group from having to pay to have them done commercially.

The Group is run by a team of volunteers but cannot survive without your contribution. There are all sorts of ways you can help, either formally by signing up as a leader or assistant, or by taking part in other activities such as fundraising or cleaning. The membership form at the back of this pack allows you to decide how you are able to help; please offer help where you can.

## **Paperwork**

Included with this document are a couple of forms for you to complete and return to your section leader. These are explained below.

### ***Young Person Information Form***

The need for information about you and your child is of great importance to us. For example, the need to have the name and address of the family Doctor and for the child's National Health Service number (issued at the time of registering the birth) is not

so we can have access to any confidential information. **It is a Scout Association requirement for when we take your child away to camp, on outings or any activity away from our own District when, in law, we are acting in “loco parentis”.**

Religious beliefs and particular dietary or health requirements must also be known, if we are to avoid causing offence or problems when we organise events, camps and outings. We also need to know your child's ethnic background including race and county of origin for statistical purposes.

The form that you are being given will ask all these questions and provides you with an opportunity of advising us, in the strictest confidence, of any particular problems or situations that exist at home. Single parents, children with surnames different to that of a parent, recent bereavement, divorce or separation etc. can be traumatic situations for young children to cope with and show themselves in many different ways. Our leaders cannot be expected to handle such situations if they are unaware of the genuine circumstances.

**It is imperative that all details of any medical condition are fully disclosed, for the well being of your child and for the protection of our leaders who may otherwise be unable to take appropriate action in the event of an emergency.**

Our Leaders must be aware of this type of problem so that they can react and handle the situation in the way in which they have been taught. Again, we stress that any such information will be kept in the strictest confidence with access strictly limited to people who need to know.

The benefits of having computerised records are many. We can quickly deal with the annual census return; prepare attendance lists with all the associated data needed when we take parties on outings and camps. Please keep us advised of any changes to your address etc. We make the maximum use possible of the Internet and circulate news and information to parents via e-mail, where and when available.

The Scout Association is exempt from having to register under the **Data Protection Act** but we are obliged to advise you that the information given to us is held in a data retrieval system and is used by the Scout Association. You are entitled to decline to provide information if you do not wish it to be so stored but in such a case, you are invited to discuss the matter with the Group Scout Leader. If you do provide the information, your signature on the form confirms your acceptance of having it stored in our system. Please accept our assurance that nobody outside of relevant people within the Scout Association can ever see this.

### ***Supplemental Information Form***

Although the official form enables us to collect most of the required information about you and your family, there are a couple of extra questions, we, as the Scout Group, also need answering. Please can you also complete this form and return with the main form so that we can plan ahead and fully involve the family. *Please note that we do not automatically add siblings to the waiting list unless specifically requested to do so.*

## **And Finally...**

Everything in this document and a lot more is included in our Group's Website [www.cheddingtonscouts.org.uk](http://www.cheddingtonscouts.org.uk).

The website provides information on Scouting, our Scout Group and each of the sections. As well as news and reports of past events, the website includes details of up and coming activities and events and a group forum. Our plan is that the website, supplemented by our Facebook page, will form the main communication from the group to the section members and their families.

In order to protect the confidentiality of our section members, certain sections of the website are only available to registered members. You will find the application for this access on the website itself.

The group's Facebook page is also a closed group, meaning the information on it is only visible to approved members. Please search for "1<sup>st</sup> Cheddington Scout Group" on Facebook and ask to join the group to be kept up to date with everything as it happens.