



# A countdown for our return to face-to-face Scouting

# Introduction

*The COVID pandemic over the past year has had a profound effect on all of our lives, jobs, and families – as well as on the NHS, the economy, and the vulnerable in our society. Scouting too has been impacted massively, with social contact restricted, virtual meetings becoming the norm, and the first tentative steps back to face-to-face Scouting last summer halted as further lockdowns took us back to the start again.*

*Suddenly – hope. The scientific breakthroughs in developing new vaccines and the success of the vaccination program in the UK have exceeded everyone’s expectations. Relaxing the restrictions started in March and is gathering momentum.*

*But the return to normality – including for Scouting – may not be as easy for many people as turning on a switch. Young people are a year older and wiser, and may have forgotten why they used to enjoy Scouting and moved on. Adult leaders may be nervous about going back into busy social environments, or have got out of the way of regular Scouting commitments. Most of us know someone who has been seriously ill with COVID or continues to suffer with long COVID, and many people have lost relatives, friends or colleagues.*

*We have developed this resource to help Leaders bring their Sections and Groups back to face-to-face Scouting. To support this, we describe a countdown of five steps - “5-4-3-2-1”. Starting with advice to help people prepare, we then provide programme ideas to help guide Sections through the various steps – including both practical activities and the softer skill activities which are going to be important to a successful return to Scouting.*

*There are lots of people and resources to help you, including your District, the County Growth and Development Team, and the Programme Team.*

*When you have achieved all five steps, please let us know. Tell us your story so we can share it with other Leaders.*

*Good luck, and good Scouting!*

*Hampshire Scouts Programme Team, [programme.team@hampshirescouts.org.uk](mailto:programme.team@hampshirescouts.org.uk)*

## **5** Getting ready

Here's a checklist of key areas to think about as you prepare for a safe return. More advice is available at [scouts.org.uk/volunteers/getting-back-together-safely/](https://scouts.org.uk/volunteers/getting-back-together-safely/).

### **[ ] Check and Complete your COVID and Activity Risk Assessments**

As last year, every Section needs an approved COVID risk assessment for each phase to ensure they are ready to go back to face-to-face Scouting.

- If you've already had an Amber risk assessment approved by your District, this will still be valid – but we'd encourage you to review your risk assessment before meeting again.
- If your Amber risk assessment hasn't been approved yet, we'd recommend you complete one as soon as possible, covering both indoor and outdoor activities.

You can find all the details about COVID risk assessments and the approval process in the Hampshire Scouts Coronavirus page at [hampshirescouts.org.uk/coronavirus/](https://hampshirescouts.org.uk/coronavirus/).

Don't forget that before meeting face-to-face, all adults must have up-to-date mandatory safety and safeguarding – and you must conduct and record an activity risk assessment – see [scouts.org.uk/volunteers/staying-safe-and-safeguarding/risk-assessments/](https://scouts.org.uk/volunteers/staying-safe-and-safeguarding/risk-assessments/)

### **[ ] Re-engage your Leader team**

It's been some time since many of your Leaders have done face-to-face Scouting, even if you have successfully been continuing virtually. You need to find out if everyone is still on board and is comfortable with the return to face-to-face Scouting. This includes Young Leaders and parent helpers as well. If you need more Leaders, consider approaching parents– especially those who have been actively helping out on virtual Scouting meetings. And hold a Zoom call to brief your Leader team about the return to Scouting.

### **[ ] Prepare to support young people with difficult questions**

It's likely that some of the young people in your Section will have concerns or difficult questions when they return to Scouting. This includes those who are nervous about being part of a group again, as well as those who have lost a relative. Be prepared for how you will handle this, such as through the CARE (Curious, Approachable, Refer and Empathy) model, and who is best to provide the support. You can find out more about supporting mental health in Scouting at [scouts.org.uk/volunteers/staying-safe-and-safeguarding/supporting-life-issues-and-young-people/supporting-our-members/mental-health/](https://scouts.org.uk/volunteers/staying-safe-and-safeguarding/supporting-life-issues-and-young-people/supporting-our-members/mental-health/)

### **[ ] Contact parents and share your timelines and roadmap**

Communications are key here – it may be worth both sending out an email or letter to parents, and also holding a Zoom call where they can ask questions. Set realistic expectations with parents on when each stage is likely to start.



# 4 First outdoors meeting

*One Section, any group size – expected from Monday 29<sup>th</sup> March*

The aims of the first outdoors meeting could be to

- encourage people to feel welcome again
- remind them of fun Scouting outdoors activities they have enjoyed
- give them an opportunity to share their hopes for the future

## **Suggested activities**

Welcome

- everyone introduces themselves and says what animal they would be

Non-contact outdoor game, such as

- Outdoor scavenger hunt
- More ideas at [scouts.org.uk/volunteers/scouts-at-home/activities-and-badges-to-do-at-home/adapting-the-programme-during-coronavirus-crisis/socially-distanced-scout-activities/](https://scouts.org.uk/volunteers/scouts-at-home/activities-and-badges-to-do-at-home/adapting-the-programme-during-coronavirus-crisis/socially-distanced-scout-activities/)

Outdoor activity they haven't been able to do over recent months, for example

- Beavers – cooking marshmallows over a fire
- Cubs – cooking sausages over a campfire
- Scouts – lighting a fire and cooking a meal on it
- Explorers – cooking an expedition meal on a Trangia

Quickfire questions in small groups

- What's the most exciting or unusual activity you did lockdown?
- How much exercise have you taken today?
- What was the most annoying thing about lockdown?

Yarn or story

- Reminder of our values – e.g. Billy Monger's Comic Relief Challenge - [bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-kent-56213071](https://bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-kent-56213071)

Sharing hopes for the future

- "The Scouting activity I'm most looking forwards to doing is..."

Closing thought

- Everything that the doctors, nurses, and NHS workers have done for us and our communities over the past year
- One minute's applause – make as much noise as you possibly can



# First indoors meeting

*Group size to be confirmed – expected from Monday 12<sup>th</sup> April*

The aims of the first indoors meeting could be to

- encourage people to welcome other people
- remind them of fun Scouting indoors activities they have enjoyed
- give them an opportunity to express their feelings about recent months

## **Suggested activities**

Welcome

- everyone sits in a big circle and introduces the person to the left of them

Non-contact indoor games, such as

- Full-body Rock, Paper, Scissors
- Relay races with a 2-metre baton
- More ideas at [scouts.org.uk/volunteers/scouts-at-home/activities-and-badges-to-do-at-home/adapting-the-programme-during-coronavirus-crisis/socially-distanced-scout-activities/](https://scouts.org.uk/volunteers/scouts-at-home/activities-and-badges-to-do-at-home/adapting-the-programme-during-coronavirus-crisis/socially-distanced-scout-activities/)

Small group activities – with time for young people to chat with a leader

- Beavers – discuss in a Log Chew or lodges their hopes for the future
- Cubs – discuss in sixes or a Pack Forum their hopes for the future
- Scouts – create a campfire sketch in patrols about the future
- Explorers – create a play about the future in the style of a musical

Indoor activity they haven't been able to do over recent months, for example

- Beavers – build an igloo out of plastic bottles
- Cubs – build the highest freestanding tower with rolled newspaper
- Scouts – indoor pioneering with canes and rubber bands
- Explorers – plan and prepare for an overnight hike in July

Yarn or story

- Reminder of our values – e.g. Captain Sir Tom Moore - [bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-beds-bucks-herts-52324058](https://bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-beds-bucks-herts-52324058)

Closing thought

- Everything that key workers – supermarket staff, policemen, refuse collectors - have done for us and our communities over the past year
- Rolling bravo – make as much noise as you possibly can

## 2 First off-site visit

*Group size to be confirmed – expected from Monday 12<sup>th</sup> April*

The aims of the first off-site (non-residential) visit could be to

- help people to expand their horizons beyond their HQ to local campsites
- provide an opportunity to do more exciting outdoor activities
- inspire people to do mega-, mini- and micro-adventures

### **Suggested activities**

Welcome

- everyone introduces themselves and describes a recent journey

Adventurous activities at a campsite or Activity Centre, for example

- Beavers – taking part in an obstacle course or hike
- Cubs – climbing on an artificial climbing wall
- Scouts – trying out archery for the first time
- Explorers – abseiling from an artificial climbing wall

Quickfire questions in small groups

- What mega-adventure do you want to do next year?
- What mini-adventure do you want to do next month?
- What micro-adventure do you want to do next week?

Campfire

- End the visit with a traditional campfire and badge presentations

Yarn or story

- Reminder of our values – e.g. James Ketchell's world gyrocoptering - [bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-hampshire-49786883](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-hampshire-49786883)

Closing thought

- Everything that Scouts around the world have done for their communities over the past year – come ready with ideas from [scout.org/covid19](https://scout.org/covid19)
- Campfire closing song – think about those who have been ill or lost their lives through the pandemic



# 1

# Back to Scouting

*Group size and timing to be confirmed*

The aims of the “back to Scouting” meeting could be to

- celebrate a return to normal Scouting
- set a vision for their future Scouting experience
- encourage thinking about the Top Awards and activities now possible

## **Suggested activities**

Welcome

- traditional way of opening the meeting, eg Grand Howl

Favourite games, such as

- Beavers – Team relays
- Cubs - Keys
- Scouts – Port and Starboard
- Explorers – Crab football

Summer outdoor activities, for example

- Beavers – make a shelter out of natural materials
- Cubs – local nature hike
- Scouts – wide game
- Explorers – evening incident hike

Small group discussions

- What Scouting activities have you done before and want to repeat?
- What have you completed for your Challenge Badges during lockdown?
- What’s the top three things you still need to do for your Top Award?

Sharing hopes for the future

- “By the end of this year, I’m going to have done this Scouting activity”

Closing thought

- Everything that teachers and schools have done for us and our communities over the past year
- Campfire song – for example “Everywhere we go, people always ask us”

# Resources and Contacts

There's lots of resources and contacts available to support you in your return to face-to-face Scouting

## Contacts

- Your District support, including your DC, and your ADC (Section Support)
- The County Growth and Development Team
  - James Redfearn (County Office) - [county.office@hampshirescouts.org.uk](mailto:county.office@hampshirescouts.org.uk)
- The Hampshire Scouts Programme Team
  - Michael Collins (Beavers) - [michael.collins@hampshirescouts.org.uk](mailto:michael.collins@hampshirescouts.org.uk)
  - Simon Mainwaring (Cubs) – [simon.mainwaring@hampshirescouts.org.uk](mailto:simon.mainwaring@hampshirescouts.org.uk)
  - Teresa Ginn - acting (Scouts) - [teresa.ginn@hampshirescouts.org.uk](mailto:teresa.ginn@hampshirescouts.org.uk)
  - Andy Chatwin (Explorers) - [andy.chatwin@hampshirescouts.org.uk](mailto:andy.chatwin@hampshirescouts.org.uk)
  - Mike Baxter (DofE & Top Awards) - [mike.baxter@hampshirescouts.org.uk](mailto:mike.baxter@hampshirescouts.org.uk)

## Resources

- UK Scouts Return to Scouting pages, including latest advice on group size and timings - [scouts.org.uk/volunteers/getting-back-together-safely/](https://scouts.org.uk/volunteers/getting-back-together-safely/)
- UK Scouts Socially-Distanced Activities - [scouts.org.uk/volunteers/scouts-at-home/activities-and-badges-to-do-at-home/adapting-the-programme-during-coronavirus-crisis/socially-distanced-scout-activities/](https://scouts.org.uk/volunteers/scouts-at-home/activities-and-badges-to-do-at-home/adapting-the-programme-during-coronavirus-crisis/socially-distanced-scout-activities/)
- UK Scouts – Supporting Mental Health in Scouting - [scouts.org.uk/volunteers/staying-safe-and-safeguarding/supporting-life-issues-and-young-people/supporting-our-members/mental-health/](https://scouts.org.uk/volunteers/staying-safe-and-safeguarding/supporting-life-issues-and-young-people/supporting-our-members/mental-health/)
- UK Scouts - Bereavement Support page - [scouts.org.uk/volunteers/staying-safe-and-safeguarding/supporting-life-issues-and-young-people/supporting-our-members/bereavement-support/](https://scouts.org.uk/volunteers/staying-safe-and-safeguarding/supporting-life-issues-and-young-people/supporting-our-members/bereavement-support/)
- Hampshire Scouts Coronavirus page – [hampshirescouts.org.uk/coronavirus/](https://hampshirescouts.org.uk/coronavirus/)
- Hampshire Scouts Programme pages –  
[beavers.hampshirescouts.org.uk/](https://beavers.hampshirescouts.org.uk/)  
[cubs.hampshirescouts.org.uk/](https://cubs.hampshirescouts.org.uk/)  
[scouts.hampshirescouts.org.uk/](https://scouts.hampshirescouts.org.uk/)  
[explorers.hampshirescouts.org.uk/](https://explorers.hampshirescouts.org.uk/)
- Worldwide Scouts COVID-19 pages – [scout.org/covid19](https://scout.org/covid19)