

What should we look for in a potential Group Scout Leader?

The biggest myth about who is suitable as a GSL is that they must have had experience of Scouting themselves! The induction, training and on-going support that a new volunteer receives will help fill in this background. So instead, we are looking for someone who:

- Is a people-person, able to motivate, support and lead a team of adults.
- Is a good time manager (able to balance personal life & other commitments).
- Is a good planner and can communicate in a timely and effective way.
- Wants to see more young people experience what Scouting can offer!

The initial training provided by the Scout Association covers: the fundamentals of Scouting, first aid, skills of leadership and working with adults, administration, and how to support and manage Scouting as a GSL.

How have others recruited a GSL?

Here are some examples of how other Groups are recruited a GSL:

- A meeting of Beaver parents was organised and a dad volunteered himself for the role – not a common occurrence but it does happen! Also, experience has shown that many mums make ideal GSLs!
- Following up former leaders (but they need to get up to speed on what Scouting is like today!).
- Someone from the Group Executive moving into the role because they see the value of the role.
- A local teacher keen to have better links between the school and Group.
- A member from the sponsor of the Group (e.g. minister or other adult from the sponsoring church).
- Experienced leader from another Group who was keen to take on a new role.

Other avenues of recruitment could include: colleagues at your work, friends or other relations of members of the Group (e.g. aunt/uncle/grandparents).

Remember, the “Six Step Approach” is crucial in any recruitment. For more info on this, visit scouts.org.uk and search for “six step approach”.

How can you get more information?

If you are interested in trying to recruit a Group Scout Leader – or are interested in the role yourself – please speak with the local District Commissioner in the first instance who will be aware of where to find additional help or the steps you need to take.

HELP MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

The role of Group Scout Leader.





JOIN THE ADVENTURE!

Ask a young person why they stay in Scouting, and they will probably say **because it's fun!** But this is only possible because of the adults that get involved - every Scout Group relies on the support and help of volunteers to enable it to thrive!

One crucial role in every Group is that of the Group Scout Leader (GSL). Ideally all Groups should have a GSL because the part they play can really help a Group develop, thus enabling more young people to get the most they can from their time in Scouting.

Group Scout Leaders do not do this on their own but as part of a team, and are supported by the local district Scouting structure, a wide network of other contacts and a valuable online reference resource.

What is the role of Group Scout Leader?

The overall purpose of the GSL role is to manage and support the Scout Group and its Leaders to ensure it runs effectively and that Scouting within the Group develops.

The main tasks that a Group Scout Leader would be asked to do are to:

- Ensure that the Scout Group thrives and has the best systems in place to support adult volunteers and develop the Group – including a Group Executive Committee and Section leadership teams.
- Provide line management and support to the Leaders in the Scout Group, including setting objectives for their work and holding regular reviews and one-to-one meetings.
- Ensure that the Scout Group has an adequate team of supported and appropriate adults working effectively together and with others to meet the Scouting needs of the sections and Group.

- Ensure that a challenging, exciting and balanced programme is offered by the Leaders to the young people in the Scout Group.
- Work with the District Commissioner and other Group Scout Leaders in the District to ensure that the District thrives and mutual support exists.

Some of the tasks for which the Group Scout Leader is responsible may be delegated to others in the Group.

What the role of GSL isn't...

Often there are many misunderstandings of what the role of the GSL is, so here are a few points to note:

- **The GSL doesn't run** the weekly meetings of the sections – in fact, they may have very little contact with young people.
- The GSL need not go to Cub camp, go on the Scout hike, canoe or play dodge ball with the Beavers.
- The GSL does not run the Group single-handed – they are not solely **responsible for the Groups' development plan, equipment, buying of badges or running a fundraising event.**
- The GSL need not be out doing Scouting every night of the week (or even every week).

What is the time commitment?

The time commitment varies for the GSL role but might average out about 3-4 hours per week. This could be used to visit the sections, have a meeting with people from the Group or plan an event. The main point here is that the time required can be moved around to fit in with **the Group Scout Leader's availability** and that of the Leaders/Executive.

What if the Group has only one or two sections?

Even small Groups can really benefit from having a Group Scout Leader and in **this situation it may be that a "cluster" of small Scout Groups could be supported** by one GSL. For example, this may lead to seeing two Beaver Colonies and a Cub Pack from two different communities **"sharing" the one GSL. This has worked in** several locations and both Groups benefited from the support given.