

# The Regional Strategy

for South East Scotland Scouts 2018-23



**DRAFT: please send your comments to Margery Naylor, Regional Commissioner, [rc@sesscouts.org.uk](mailto:rc@sesscouts.org.uk)**

**Scouting in our Region has never been stronger or making more of an impact.**

Adventure is at the core of Scouting, and we actively engage and support young people in their personal development, empowering them to make a positive contribution to society. Scouting offers over 200 activities from abseiling and coding to drama and archery. All this is made possible by the efforts of all our leaders and supporting adults in our Region.

We now have over 7000 young people and over 2000 adults - leaders and supporting adults - according to the latest annual membership figures released in the 2018 Census.



*Aiming high at Bonaly Centre\**

This is nearly 1,000 more young people and a 75% increase in adults since 2013. In every section we have increased our numbers, particularly Explorers whose numbers have grown by 28% to 682 in 2018.

So we now have over 9000 members in our Region. It is great to see such a positive picture for Scouting in our Region, for young people, leaders and supporters. It is a huge achievement.

And most of this is down to our amazing leaders. As one of the Scotland's leading youth charities, we're acutely aware of the importance of all the leaders and supporters in South East Region who give up their time every single day to help others.

But we have over 1,000 young people on our waiting lists. That's a great testimony to how popular Scouting is in our Region. Our main priority now is to recruit more adults as leaders so that we can offer excellent opportunities for adventurous activities to even more young people. All Districts have identified the most important action we can take is to put in place a staffing structure which supports managers and leaders in recruiting more leaders.

## **What do we hope to achieve by 2023?**

*\*Please note: all photos are taken from District Annual Reports or the SES Region's website <https://sesscouts.org.uk> and are in the public domain.*

## Our Regional Strategy

This high-level five-year strategy sets out what we need to do to develop Scouting.

It does not look in detail at what is already happening successfully in our Region. It is built on what the Districts want to do, since they are the powerhouse of Scouting in our Region. Underpinning this strategy are the individual development plans of:

- ✓ The seven Districts: Borders, Braid, Craigalmond, East Lothian, Midlothian, North East Edinburgh, and Pentland
- ✓ the Water Activities Strategy and the operational plans for Longcraig and Bonaly Centres
- ✓ the Regional staff operational support plan
- ✓ The Regional Leadership Team intentions
- ✓ The Regional Executive Committee's intentions.

## Our Mission

To actively engage and support young people in their personal development, empowering them to make a positive contribution to society.

## Our Aims

The South East Scotland Scouts' Regional Strategy has been developed in line with the National Scout Strategy and sets out how we aim to make a real improvement in:

1. our leadership capacity and expertise: **People**
2. opportunities for young people to have more adventurous activities: **Programme**
3. the way our communities perceive us by creating effective partnerships: **Perception**
4. our governance and the Regional staff functions: **Performance**

Our Regional Strategy sets out in 4 sections how we hope to go forward in these 4 areas. We start by looking at what we already do in South East Scotland Region.

## Scouting in South East Scotland Region

We are one of the largest Regions in Scotland with about 7037 young people and 2313 adults - leaders and supporting adults - spread across seven Districts. We have two outdoor centres: Bonaly Outdoor Centre and Longcraig Water Activities Centre. There is a large and expanding Regional Leadership Team, a Regional Executive Committee and a Regional staff team which is located at Bonaly Outdoor Centre.

The Regional Executive Committee focuses on supporting the Regional Commissioner and the Leadership team to enable the adults and young leaders across the Region deliver a high-quality outdoor programme, leadership development and flexible volunteering.

## The challenges we face

Working together, we can all support and grow Scouting in South East Scotland Region. From our consultation and engagement activities, both informal and in formal meetings, we know that there are concerns held by many leaders and supporters who want to see:

- easier routes into becoming leaders and getting training
- improved communication in all directions (listen more!)
- better use of technology
- better use of social media

- more youth involvement
- greater transparency
- more sharing of good practice
- greater clarity about who's who in the Region
- stronger team spirit across Region
- wider engagement / consultation
- and more Regional events for adults.

They also said they wanted to see less in-fighting and adult disputes, less District insularity, less focus on profit and a greater focus on supporting youth programme, and less secrecy about decisions by the Regional Executive Committee.

We have already worked hard in 2017-18 to improve the situation in South East Region and we plan, through our Regional Strategy, to do even more.

However, the biggest challenge we face is recruiting more leaders in Districts. As one District plan states:

“The most critical challenge and opportunity for the District rests with the [RETENTION AND INTRODUCTION OF MORE ADULT SUPPORT](#) and in particular uniform sectional leaders. Further development and expansion of Scouting within the District is not possible without resolution of this issue.”

The Regional Leadership Team has identified that the most important action that needs to be taken urgently is to put in place a Regional staffing structure which supports managers and leaders to recruit more leaders.

### **The key outcomes from our plan**

By 2023 we plan to have:

#### **People:**

- Grown our volunteer adult membership from 2,313 to about 2,500 because the greatest need identified by all the Districts is for more leaders
- Strengthened our leadership and management by recruiting and training more GSLs, trustees, administrators, and members of the Regional Leadership Team.

#### **Programme:**

- Supported leaders to provide excellent programmes with opportunities for young people, for example 50% of our members will have camped at least once a year
- Developed our two Regional centres so that they provide excellent opportunities for young people and for adults
- Provided more and easier to access training opportunities for adults, which strengthens their abilities and expertise in providing activities for young people, particularly in Safeguarding and First Response

- Improved the way we communicate with everyone in the Region and Districts, for example by updating our website.

### Perception of Scouting

- Increased diversity and inclusion by working towards becoming more representative of local communities by having Groups in areas of deprivation, more girls and non-Christian faith Groups
- Ensured the awards system is used to recognise the work of our leaders and supporters

### Performance, Support and Governance

- Improved governance, support and performance which creates seamless support for operations at every level across our Region and makes best use of our resources for local Scouting's benefit
- Created a Regional staffing structure which supports leaders in the role, and particularly in recruiting more leaders, since Districts consistently identified this as their biggest problem.

Our Regional Strategy does not give the details of all that we have to do or plan to do – it is a strategic plan, not an operational plan. And some Districts have set themselves higher or lower targets for 2023, which is completely reasonable – in this plan we set targets that are manageable for all Districts. And if we jointly work together, we will all have more fun!



## 1. People

This section focuses on what we need to do to improve recruitment of and support for leaders and supporters.

### Actions

- 1. Adult volunteering:** We will work to recruit more leaders and supporters, since this is the biggest issue in the Region.
- 2. Leadership and management:** Together we will work to strengthen District Leadership Teams and increase the number of Scout Groups with a GSL. We will plan to deliver improved support for leaders by recruiting more trustees and administrators. We will create opportunities for our membership, including Explorer Scout Young Leaders, to acquire the leadership skills they need for their role. We will work to fully use the review process, thus getting the right adults in to the most appropriate roles for them.
- 3. Training:** We will work with all adult leaders to ensure they are fully trained and supported and that they are undertaking the required ongoing learning, such as the new manager training.
- 4. Safeguarding and safety:** We want to ensure that adults keep up to date about safeguarding and first response on a regular basis, so we will work to provide more courses. We also want to embed a culture of safe operating practices through more leaders completing the safety training.
- 5. Communications:** We will develop a variety of methods suitable for adults and young people, eg a revised Regional website, monthly newsletters, social media, and possibly shared communication platforms available for District use.
- 6. Diversity and Inclusion:** We wish to become more representative of local communities by targeted recruitment initiatives for example in deprived areas and non-Christian faith groups and by recruiting more girls.
- 7. Recognition:** We want to ensure that the good and positive work of everyone is recognised so that they receive the appropriate awards.

### Key Measures - by 2023 we plan to have achieved:

- 1. Adult volunteers**
  - Increased adult leaders by 5% to a total of about 2,500.
- 2. Leadership and management**
  - 80% of roles in the Regional Leadership Team are filled
  - 80% of Groups have GSLs in post
  - 50% of managers have carried out meaningful annual reviews of the leaders for whom they are responsible.
- 3. Training:**
  - 75% of full appointments for leaders achieved within 5 months, having completed the initial training

- 75% target for Wood Badges achieved within 5 years of appointment
- 80% of Executive Committees to have had training every year for new members
- All managers and supporters to have a TAMS within 1 year of their appointment

#### 4. Safeguarding and First Response

- 80% of leaders have completed safeguarding training within the Region's standard of every 3 years
- 80% of adults have completed safeguarding update training by their 5-year appointments review.
- 80% of leaders have undertaken safety training within the mandatory time frame.

#### 5. Communications

- Redesigned our Regional website and produced monthly newsletters

#### 6. Diversity and inclusion

- Opened one Muslim section
- Sought grant funding through SHQ to support new Groups and/or sections.

#### 7. Recognition

- The good and positive work of everyone is recognised by achieving a 20% increase in the appropriate awards.



Congratulations to **Graham Cullen**, GSL, who received the Chief Scout's Commendation for Meritorious Conduct

## 2. Programme

This section focuses on what we plan to do to maintain and improve our programmes for young people. All young people should experience a quality Scouting programme that has both outdoors and adventurous experiences. Young people in every section should, ideally, have a minimum of one night's away experience as part of their annual Scouting programme.

### Actions

#### 1. Youth programme (Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Explorers and Scout Network)

- ❖ We will provide good opportunities for young people to have fun and adventurous activities, for example increasing the number of nights away permits and adventurous activity permits
- ❖ Organise supported training, activities and camps, eg at Bonaly and Longcraig or with their instructors at local venues, to assist leaders wishing to develop skills and confidence to deliver the Scout programme to our youth members, especially for those Groups with limited leadership numbers
- ❖ We will work to increase our numbers of young people by reducing the waiting list of 1,000. We plan to open new sections, where appropriate, so that all Scout Groups have at least 1 Beaver Colony, 1 Cub Pack and 1 Scout Troop
- ❖ We will work towards increasing the numbers of our Explorer Scout Young Leaders and providing them with opportunities and training to undertake their role
- ❖ We will support and develop the Regional programme of international activities, such as preparation camps for Blair Atholl Jamborettes and World Scout Jamborees. Districts and sections will continue to run their own overseas expedition.
- ❖ We will work to ensure that more young people can complete their section's top award.



*Scouts having fun!*

- #### 2. Youth Involvement:
- More young people will participate in decision making to plan their section's programme and be involved in decision making at every level in the Region.

- 3. Communications:** We will create an integrated communications plan which is developed with young people and has a variety of methods suitable for young people to promote a balanced and exciting programme.

**Key Measures - by 2023 we plan to have achieved:**

**1. Programme**

- 50% of young people have completed their section's top award
- Achieved a 20% increase in permits for nights away and adventurous activities.
- in sections and on committees
- Increased membership of young people by 10% from 7037 to about 7750
- Increased Explorer Scout Young Leaders by 10% from 682 to about 750
- Opened new sections so that, where appropriate, all Scout Groups have at least 1 Beaver colony, 1 Cub Pack and 1 Scout Troop.

**2. Youth Involvement**

- 50% of young people say that they have participated in decision making to plan their section's programme
- All Regional and District committees have young people as members
- 50% of sections have set up youth forums and achieved Youth Approved Award at Bronze level.

**3. Communications**

- The Region and all Districts each have an integrated communications plan which is developed with young people and has a variety of methods suitable for young people.



*Cubs Pinewood Derby – cubs designed and build their own cars from kits given to them and over the space of one day and raced them on the specially designed track.*

### 3. Perception of Scouting in our Region

This section focuses on what we need to do to improve the way that Scouting is regarded by the public.

We know that most sections have been carrying out many activities over many years which are of benefit to their local communities or groups of people such as older people and people with disabilities.

But we also know that these activities are not widely known about, because leaders assume – quite rightly – that this is just part of the fun and reason for being in Scouting.



***Congratulations to Fraser Dunmore, a young leader, one of 300 Queen's Scouts being honoured by international adventurer Chief Scout, Bear Grylls, at Windsor Castle for gaining their Queen's Scouts Awards***

So we want, in the Region, to start to find out more about what sections are already doing. This will assist in promoting the good perception of Scouting in our Region and may assist sections either to undertake more community involvement activities or to obtain ideas about what they could be doing.

#### Actions

1. **Community Impact:** We will encourage every section to carry out one activity within the community every year for the benefit of the community. We would like this to take place in a way that ensures that young people will be empowered to make visible differences in their own community.
2. **Communications strategy:** We will start to record what sections are doing, and make this public knowledge and inform our leaders, so that they can develop the activities of their sections.

#### Key Measures - by 2023 we plan to have achieved:

1. **Community Impact**
  - 80% of sections will have undertaken some form of community activity each year
  - Our Regional staff will have set up and kept up to date a record of what community activities are being undertaken.
2. **Communications strategy**
  - We will have regular communications with the public living in the Region about what our sections are doing, in order to promote better public perception about Scouting
  - We will have developed resources for promotion of Scouting at events such as local galas
  - We will have regular communication with our leaders, eg through our monthly newsletters, so that they can develop the activities of their sections, as they wish
  - We will have arranged opportunities across the Districts for young people to make presentations to sections and Groups about international Scouting and will have set up a forum for this purpose.

## 4. Performance, support and governance

This section focuses on what we need to do to improve performance, support and governance in the Region, with particular reference to the work of all the Executive Committees.

### Actions

- 1. Governance of Executive Committees and subcommittees:** Ensure the Regional Executive Committee and sub-committees are designed to support the Regional Leadership Team by providing resources to support the 'Game of Scouting' and supply effective governance for the Region. Encourage trustees of local Executive Committees to be aware of both how the governance activities support local programme delivery and their legal and financial responsibilities.
- 2. Youth involvement:** Support the work of the Youth Involvement Commissioners, so that young people will feel confident in contributing to the decision-making processes of the Region. We will work towards having under-25 representation on all Regional committees.
- 3. Staffing:** Create a Regional staffing structure which supports leaders in the role, and particularly in recruiting more leaders, since Districts consistently identified this as their biggest problem. Work with the Regional staff team members to maintain and improve their performance, (for example by conducting annual reviews), and to develop a greater shared understanding between them and leaders about the staff's role and ability to support activities in the Districts.
- 4. Assets and Finances:** Improve transparency of the Region's financial budgeting process. Explore external funding and sources of finance.

### Key Measures - by 2023 we plan to have achieved:

- 1. Governance**
  - We will have reviewed the Regional Executive Committee structure to ensure fitness for purpose.
- 2. Youth involvement**
  - We will have achieved 50% of under-25 representation on all Regional committees.
- 3. Staffing**
  - We will have put in place a Regional staffing structure which supports leaders in the role, and particularly in recruiting more leaders
  - We will have conducted annual staffing reviews.
- 4. Assets and Finances**
  - We will have developed an operational support plan documents for the Regional staff team, and operational plans for Bonaly Centre and Longcraig Centre which clearly demonstrate how they support Groups and Districts, and including clearly stated % increases in income for the Centres
  - We will have created a 3-year capital development plan.