



# Welcome to Golden Hind Explorer Scout Unit

We're an adventurous Explorer Scout Unit for ages 14-17yrs. We meet at our Scout Hut on Thursdays 7.30-9pm during term time. We have around 45 Explorers and a team of volunteers. This guide provides some basic information about our unit, but if you have questions at any time email us at [goldenhindesu@1stnewcross.co.uk](mailto:goldenhindesu@1stnewcross.co.uk)

## What is Explorer Scouting?

Scouts is the world's largest, inclusive youth movement for young people aged 4-25, aimed at fostering personal development, teamwork, and leadership through outdoor activities, camping, and community service. Founded in 1907 by Robert Baden-Powell, it focuses on "learning by doing" to equip youth with skills for life.

Explorers are a go-getting group of young people aged 14 to 18. Together, they make up the fifth section of the Scouts.

## Membership fees and trip costs

Explorers is £24 per half term, paid by direct debit via Online Scouting Manager (OSM). Trips and camps are additional but costs are kept as low as possible. We offer financial support to any Explorer who needs it - just let a leader know when you sign up, or if your situation changes, and we'll arrange support.

## Online Scouting Manager (OSM)

You'll be invited to join OSM. It's an online platform that manages online payments, personal info, trip invites, sign ups, award progress and badges. Please add emergency contacts, health, dietary info, additional requirements and anything important you feel we need to know about. Invitations for trips will come to your email address, and you can RSVP using the OSM link in the email. Please try to respond to OSM, as this helps our team manage their volunteering workload.

## Communications

We send information out by email to both parents and Explorers. There are also 2 whatsapp groups - one for parents and one for Explorers. We use these to broadcast information and ETA's, info and reminders when we're out and about. Volunteers never message or email a young person 1:1, so if they want to contact us please make sure the CC or add in a parent.

## **Attendance**

We ask that explorers attend every week. We expect that Explorers will have exams and other commitments so may miss Explorers occasionally, but we ask that the young people send the leaders a note about this before each Thursday as a courtesy. It helps us to know in advance how many Explorers we'll have at the meeting and we believe it develops good communication skills. We have a waiting list at the unit, so if we don't see a young person for 3 consecutive weeks without having heard from them, we'll be in touch to find out if they wish to be a member. If they no longer wish to continue, another young person can join Scouting.

Some of our trips are subsidised by grants and unit funds. We ask that your Explorer lets us know if they are no longer going to attend a trip they have signed up for, so that another young person can take their place. We can't offer refunds when a young person pulls out of a trip, unless in exceptional circumstances.

## **Unit calendar**

[See our unit calendar here.](#)

## **Our code of conduct**

We want to create a safe, supportive and happy space for young people to be themselves and have great experiences. Young people can have challenging moments which we understand, and we are here to support, guide and encourage. However, if any behaviour is deemed unsafe, or is negatively affecting other young people or volunteers, we will need to address this with parents/carers.

## **Safety and Safeguarding**

Keeping young people safe is our number one priority and we take action to achieve this. Most importantly, all adults in Scouts are vetted and must follow our Yellow Card and [Safeguarding Policy](#), and our volunteers complete [safeguarding learning](#) every three years. Read more about [how we safeguard young people in Scouting](#), and [our approach to safety](#).

## **The “come to us” rule**

If your young person experiences an issue - whether they are feeling unwell, homesick, forgot a piece of kit, or are having a disagreement with a peer - we want them to come to the leadership team first. If your young person messages or calls you in need of support, please resist the urge to solve it from afar. Instead, your response should always be: "Have you spoken to your leaders about this yet? Speak to them and they will help you." This teaches young people that tapping into the support network immediately around them is the best way to be supported, and that they are capable of finding the solution. It is also best for Explorers to not be in regular communication with parents when they are away on our trips.

## Our Uniform

Uniform is an Explorer Shirt (long or short sleeve) which you can buy from the [Scout Store](#). We present Explorers with their Golden Hind scarf when they make their Scout promise.



If it's a smart occasion, we ask Explorers to wear school trousers/school skirt and smart shoes. Badges are part of our uniform, so we ask that they are sewn on.

## Unit equipment

Looking after the unit equipment is everyone's job. Our Explorers have access to great expedition, camping equipment and canoes which have been purchased through fundraising efforts and grants. We ask that Explorers treat our kit with care and respect.

Equipment is signed out by Explorers before a camp, taken home after the camp to be cleaned and dried, then returned the next explorer meeting. During this time, explorers are responsible for this kit. Wear and tear is expected over time, but if it's damaged, neglected or lost, we'll need to address this with the Explorer, and sometimes ask that costs are covered for repair or replacement.

## Example Kit List

Duffle bag / 65 litre rucksack
Day backpack
1 litre water bottle with your name on it
Headtorch (with batteries or powerbank to charge it)
Sleeping bag, sleeping mat, inflatable pillow
Waterproof jacket (please check this is 100% waterproof, not just showerproof)
Waterproof overtrousers
Canoe Cag (DofE Golds)
Lightweight outdoors clothing or sports clothing (things that dry quickly)
Old pair of trainers for paddlesports
Fleece
Hiking boots
Set of clothes to sleep in
Underwear
Socks (if hiking you'll need some hiking socks)
Named camping mug, plate, bowl, knife, fork, spoon
Bin bags for wet kit
Sun cream
Sun hat (wide brimmed is best)
Warm hat and gloves
Waterproof watch
Your medications (bring basics such as paracetamol / ibuprofen)
Wash bag with toothbrush, toothpaste, deoderant, period kit, and a lightweight towel
Waterproof phone pouch for paddlesports
Small pen knife (optional)
A waterproof watch

We recommend Decathlon in Surrey Quays for outdoors clothing and kit. If cost is a barrier to having the right kit, we have some kit to lend out - just let us know if you need some help.

## Our programme

Every Thursday night meeting is different and we do all kinds of things. This could be anything - debating, cooking, climbing, art, team-building, games skills training, swimming, paddleboarding, air rifle shooting - no term looks the same! Explorers are invited to run nights on topics they are interested in, and parents/carers are invited to run nights too - we'd love to hear from you!

## Young Leaders

Explorer Scout Young Leaders (ESYLs) are Explorers who choose to volunteer weekly alongside adult leaders in a Squirrel Drey, Beaver Colony, Cub Pack or Scout Troop. They're a valuable asset to any leadership team and play an active role in the section, bringing a range of fresh ideas to the table and acting as positive role models for the young people they work with. Find out more about the [Young Leader award](#). Contact us if your young person wishes to do some volunteering with Scouting.

## The Duke of Edinburgh's award



The DofE is the main focus of our Explorer programme. It's a youth award recognised by employers and places of study and has been running since 1956. Explorers can start DofE Bronze in Yr 9, DofE Silver in Yr 10 and DofE Gold in Yr 11+.

### DofE Bronze (Yr 9)

It will usually take you at least 6 months/26 weeks to complete your Bronze programme.

- Volunteering section: 3 months/13 weeks
- Physical section: 3 months/13 weeks
- Skills section: 3 months/13 weeks
- Expedition section: 2 days/1 night by Canoe on the River Medway

You also have to spend an extra three months on one of the Volunteering, Physical or Skills sections. It's your choice which one. See ideas for [Volunteering](#), [Physical](#) and [Skill](#).

## **DofE Silver (Yr 10)**

It will take you at least 6 months/26 weeks for Silver if you've already achieved your Bronze, or 12 months if you've jumped straight into Silver.

- Volunteering section: 6 months/26 weeks
- Physical and Skills sections: One section for 6 months/26 weeks and the other section for 3 months / 13 weeks
- Expedition section: 3 days/2 nights by Canoe on the River Severn

If you didn't do Bronze, you must undertake a further 6 months in either the Volunteering or the longer of the Physical or Skills sections. See ideas for [Volunteering](#), [Physical](#) and [Skill](#).

## **DofE Gold (Yr 11 +)**

For Gold, you'll need to do your programme for at least 12 months/52 weeks if you've achieved your Silver Award, or 18 months if you've started at Gold level without doing your Silver. The big difference at Gold is you'll also do a Residential section – staying away from home for five days and four nights doing a shared activity with people you don't know.

- Volunteering section: 12 months/52 weeks
- Physical and Skills sections: One section for 12 months/52 weeks and the other section for 6 months/26 weeks
- Expedition section: 4 days/3 nights by Canoe in Scotland
- Residential section: Undertake a shared activity in a residential setting away from home for 5 days and 4 nights.

If you didn't do Silver, you must undertake a further 6 months in either the Volunteering or the longer of the Physical or Skills sections.

You have until your 25th Birthday to complete Gold. Some Explorers choose to complete all elements of the award within a couple of years, where others choose to break it up over a longer period of time.

Every young person who achieves their Gold Award is invited to attend a Gold Award celebration event at a Royal Palace, attended by a Member of The Royal Family.

## **DofE Gold DofE Gold and the Kings Scout Award**

The KSA is closely linked to the Duke of Edinburgh's Gold Award, so it's worth considering working on the two awards together. Please read more about the King's Scout Award on the [Scout website](#). and have a look at the log book you'll need to keep.

## **Our Volunteers**

The unit is run by trained volunteers who dedicate huge amounts of time to planning, organising and delivering activities, as well as training, admin, paperwork, accounting, fundraising, driving, repairing kit, etc. We have an amazing team who go above and beyond for your young people. However, there is always work to be done and the unit can't run without parent support, so sometimes we may ask for help with various small jobs and your support is really appreciated. If you'd like to commit to a leader role, occasional helper or as a driver, we'll help you to get started.

## **Easyfundraising**

Golden Hind ESU is registered with easyfundraising. Over 8,000 online retailers will donate to us when you use easyfundraising to shop online – at no extra cost to you. All you need to do is sign up and remember to use easyfundraising whenever you shop online. These donations really mount up, so please [sign up to support us](#).

## **Join the Lewisham Lottery**

This is a source of fundraising for the unit. Each ticket (£1) has a 1 in 50 chance to win a prize each week, with a top prize of £25,000 - a better chance of winning than the National Lottery or the Health Lottery. 50% goes to your chosen cause (Golden Hind ESU!) and 10% to other good causes in Lewisham. [Join here](#).

## **Our structure**

UK Scout Association

London Region

South London Scouts County

Lewisham District

Golden Hind ESU (Hosted by the 1<sup>st</sup> New Cross Scout Group)

# Unit Kit Care



## Tents

- Unzip the sleeping pod, shake out leaves and dirt
- Wipe off mud with a damp cloth
- Air dry the tent (please do not put in a tumble dryer)
- Repack
- Let a leader know if there are parts missing or broken

## Trangia stoves

- Scrub the inside & outside of the trangia with a scouring pad (please do not put in the dishwasher, and please do not get the burner wet)
- Dry
- Repack
- Let a leader know if there are parts missing

## Barrels

- Shake out
- Rinse out with hot soapy water
- Dry
- Replace lid

## Dry bags

- Shake out
- Wipe with a damp cloth
- Dry

Please bring the kit to Explorers the following Explorer night and sign it in with a leader. If something is missing or damaged, please let us know so that we can fix it or replace it.