



## Scout Network in Derbyshire: *setting up a new Network*

*This information document is one of several aimed primarily at District Commissioners, District Explorer Scout Commissioners and other adults in Scouting interested in setting up a Scout Network in their District. Similar documents are available which provide useful information on what Network is, how it operates and how it fits into the wider Scouting provision in Derbyshire.*

*It has been prepared by the Derbyshire Scout Network Team to ensure that it is locally relevant, but is based on the rules and guidance included in the Policy, Organisation and Rules of the Scout Association and the Network Essentials publication. The latter is available from Scout Shops and is recommended reading for anyone involved in starting a new, or running an existing, Scout Network.*

For further information, please contact the County Scout Network Commissioner or Chairperson. Please see the Derbyshire Scout Network website at [www.derbyshirenetwork.org.uk](http://www.derbyshirenetwork.org.uk) for up to date contact details.



# Scout Network in Derbyshire:

## *setting up a new Network*

### Introduction

Scout Network has been developing across Derbyshire at an increasing rate. This means that new Networks have started up at a range of locations across the county, and not just around Derby itself - this is great news and we hope that this will continue.

However, there does need to be some control and coordination with regards to the set up of new Networks and this document is aimed at providing the necessary support and guidance to those people wishing to set up a new Network. It is only the start, however, and further support and guidance should be sought by contacting the County Scout Network Commissioner. You should also consider reading the document "*Scout Network in Derbyshire: what it is and how it works*" available on the website or from the Derbyshire Scout Network Chairperson or Commissioner.

### Why set up a Scout Network?

The full UK Scout programme runs from 6 to 25 years of age, with Network being the senior section for young people aged 18 to 25. In the same way that it is important for there to be a suitable provision of the younger sections across the county, it is equally important for there to be a sufficient Scout Network provision across the county.

Network allows young people to carry on in Scouting beyond the age of 18 and is a good way of keeping people involved into their adult life. It is flexible enough to allow members to remain involved even if they spend time away at university or if they work irregular hours. It provides a venue for them to work on the Queen's Scout Award, Explorer Belt and other awards.

There are a number of opportunities available to young adults in Scouting; including not only Network but also Fellowship and leadership or skills instructor roles.

However, it should be remembered that the full Scouting provision for young people runs from the age of six, right up the age of 25; with Network being the fifth and final youth section of the Scout Association. An Explorer Scout reaching the age of 18 - or any other person in Scouting aged 18-25 - should therefore be given the opportunity to join Network. Whilst there is nothing to stop young adults from taking on a leadership or other role in addition to - or, indeed, instead of - joining Network, the priority should be to allow them to have the choice of whether or not to join Network. Young adults should not be recruited into an adult role in Scouting at the expense of being a Network member.

Network is not a support unit like Fellowship; having said that, a Scout Network can still be a useful source of additional adult help. This could be in the form of the organisation or running of particular events or activity; whilst suitable individuals could still be approached to take on a regular leader or instructor role. In fact, many Network members do take on an adult role in Scouting alongside their participation in Network, which allows them to extract maximum benefit from Scouting and continue with the award scheme whilst still giving something back and volunteering for the movement.

### Who can set up a Scout Network?

Many of our newly set up Networks have been instigated by former Explorer Scouts that are looking to continue in Scouting but have discovered that there is no local Network available to them, or Explorer Scout Leaders. Therefore, many of our existing Networks have grown from Explorer Scout Units and retain close links to them - which we have found to be very important for future recruitment. Alternatively, District Executives may decide that they would like to have a Scout Network in their District. In either case, it is very important that the proper procedures are followed prior to launching a new Network. The opening of new Networks is the responsibility of the County Scout Network Commissioner in cooperation with the local leaders, members, District Executive, etc. - and so he/she should always be involved in any plans to set up a new Network. It makes sense for Network to be led locally for logistical reasons and

because you will know your potential members, but to get the County Scout Network team involved at an early stage.

In many cases, new Networks are instigated by persons with little or no prior experience with the Network section and therefore we have created this pack to provide information on how those people wishing to set up a new Network can get the necessary support and guidance. Network is very different to any other section in the way that it is structured and operated, and is also very different to the old system of Venture Scout Units.

The Scout Network section is flexible and Networks may either be set up as either part of the County or District. In the majority of cases, we have found that it is most appropriate for Networks to be set up at District level, but to retain close links to the County Scout Network - the exception being county-wide specialist Networks. The link to County is very important as, whilst responsibility for a District Network remains with the District Executive, Network is coordinated from a County level and all Networks are expected to be a part of this. It is important that the District Executive fully understands what Network is, how it works and provides the necessary support - this may include start up finance, finding a "District Network Leader" and provision of a suitable meeting place. The Derbyshire Network team are more than willing to assist with this, perhaps by running a Network information evening or presentation.

It should be noted that Networks cannot be set up to be group based or attached to a single Explorer Scout Unit. They should be District based and link with Explorer Scout Units from right across their District. Therefore, it is not possible for every Explorer Scout Unit to set up a Network for their ex-members and in most cases it is unlikely that it would be suitable to have more than one Network per District. The exception to this would be where there are large Districts with geographically distinct towns each capable of supporting their own Network.

Further details on the Network structure are included in the document "*Scout Network in Derbyshire: what it is and how it works*" available on the website or from the Derbyshire Scout Network Chairperson or Commissioner.

## How do we set up a new Scout Network?

Before a new Network can be created, a number of things need to be considered and various people consulted in order to ensure that it is feasible and appropriate to set it up. Therefore we have come up with the checklist on the following pages, which has been adapted for local needs from the form created by the national Network team. The checklist should be completed by the District Commissioner or other appropriate person, and approved by the County Scout Network Commissioner - who should be involved throughout the process and will be willing to provide support and guidance.

If you are considering setting up a Scout Network or are being asked to do so, we would recommend that the first step to take is to get in touch with the County Scout Network Commissioner. The CSNC is there to support you and an informal discussion should help to identify potential issues and opportunities. Following this, it may be appropriate to invite potential members and other interested parties to a Network information evening at which the way forward can be discussed.

Perhaps the most important thing to ensure is that the potential members are involved throughout and make their own decisions as to how the Network will be run locally and the programme. Whilst all Networks are required to have a suitable adult appointed as Network Leader, the section should be member-led - the role of the Network Leader, County Scout Network Commissioner and other adults should be one of support and guidance, rather than actually running the Network.

We would also highly recommend purchasing a copy of "Network Essentials" from Scout Shops. This is an excellent publication and very useful for providing general information on how to structure and operate a Network. Locally, the document "*Scout Network in Derbyshire: what it is and how it works*" is available as an additional free resource providing details on how the Network is run in Derbyshire.

## Key Contacts

County Scout Network Commissioner: Lucy Robinson 07895 475117 / [csnc@derbyshirenetwork.org.uk](mailto:csnc@derbyshirenetwork.org.uk)

County Scout Network Chairperson: Dan Weaver 07742 833724 / [chairperson@derbyshirenetwork.org.uk](mailto:chairperson@derbyshirenetwork.org.uk)

## Checklist for the set up of a new Scout Network in Derbyshire

Before a new Network can be created, a number of things need to be considered and various people consulted in order to ensure that it is feasible and appropriate to set it up. Prior to the setup of a new Network, the following checklist should be completed by the District Commissioner or other appropriate person, and approved by the County Scout Network Commissioner. Consultation with the County Scout Network Commissioner is encouraged throughout.

District in which the new Network is proposed		Select >
New Network proposed by	Name	Email address
	Role Select >	Phone

	Criteria	Good practice	Comments
1	Number of members	<p>There is no fixed number of members for the establishment of a Scout Network, as the viable figure will vary depending upon local geography, population and other aspects.</p> <p>Remember that the Network structure is very flexible and the programme can be adapted to suit local needs - for example, with small numbers it may be appropriate to begin by meeting monthly rather than weekly.</p> <p>All parties should be satisfied that there are enough prospective numbers (consider founding members and expected future members from local Explorer Scout Units) to establish and maintain a Scout Network.</p>	
2	Conflicts with other Scout Networks	<p>It is necessary to consider whether potential members would be better served by an existing Scout Network. A new Network will only be approved where it is clear that there is a need for one and that there is no suitable provision already in place locally.</p>	

		<p>This does not necessarily limit the number of Networks per District but it must be demonstrated that the Networks will not conflict with each other and that there is a genuine need for more than one Network in the District; e.g.: in large Districts it may be viable to have a Network based in each of the main towns.</p>	
3	District Executive Committee support	<p>Where a Scout Network is established within a District, the District Executive must be aware of the responsibilities that they are taking on by agreeing to host a Scout Network in the District.</p> <p>This could be achieved by running an information evening for District Executive members.</p>	
4	Engagement with the County provision	<p>Where a Scout Network is established within a District, the District has a responsibility to encourage all members of the hosted Scout Network to take part in the wider County Scout Network programme.</p> <p>The County Scout Network Commissioner and Chairperson should be involved as early on in the process as possible.</p> <p>Although District Executives retain responsibility for District Networks, all Networks are expected to get involved in the County Scout Network. At a basic level, this includes having representatives of the Network attend County Scout Network Committee meetings, but it also extends to joining in - and perhaps hosting - joint activities. All Networks in Derbyshire are entitled to two voting representatives on the Committee; although all members are welcome to attend.</p>	

5	Setup costs and funding	<p>Where a Scout Network is established within a District, the District Executive needs to bear reasonable set up and implementation costs until such a time as the Scout Network becomes self-funding. You may also wish to consider applying for any setup grants that may be available from the Scout Association.</p>	
6	Effective leadership	<p>All parties need to be satisfied that an individual is available who is willing to take on a leadership role.</p> <p>A District Scout Network Leader should be appointed by the District Commissioner. The role of a Network leader is very different to a leader with other sections in that their priority is to provide support and guidance to the members of the Network and to allow and encourage the members to take responsibility for running the Network itself.</p> <p>The District Scout Network Leader is responsible to the District Commissioner, but works closely with County Scout Network Commissioner, Chairperson and Leaders.</p>	
7	A plan for developing the Scout Network	<p>A plan should be formulated to facilitate the development of the Scout Network. This should include local initiatives - such as developing links with local Explorer Scout Units - as well as joining in with County Scout Network initiatives.</p> <p>Once up and running, the Network members should be fully involved in the ongoing implementation and development of this plan.</p>	
8	Appropriate meeting venue	<p>The Scout Network should be offered a suitable venue at which to hold meetings; for example a group headquarters via a partnership</p>	

		<p>agreement. Note however that although the Network may be based at a group HQ, the Network cannot be group based - it remains a District-wide entity.</p> <p>All parties should agree the level of any charges that will be incurred by the Scout Network.</p> <p>In a District, this should be overseen by the District Executive and agreed in the same way as Explorer Scout Units have hosting agreements with Groups and the District.</p>	
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Completed by	Proposer (above) <input type="checkbox"/> or complete details below Name Role Select >	Date Email address Phone
Approved by District Commissioner	Name Signed	Date Email address Phone
Approved by County Scout Network Commissioner	Name Signed	Date