

LEADING THE WAY

Gordon Weston investigates what being a member of the Young Leaders' Scheme means, with a little help from old friends Tim and Liz

EXPLORER SCOUTS

Over the past few months, our new Explorer Scout, Liz, has been finding out more and more about the Section. This month, Liz is having a discussion with her District Explorer Scout Commissioner, Tim, and she's trying to find out a little more about the Young Leaders' Scheme.

Liz I am thinking of joining the Young Leaders' Scheme and am unsure who is actually in charge and what I need to do to join. Can you help me?

Tim I am delighted to help you, Liz! In fact, I am responsible for the Young Leaders' Scheme and, as I think you are aware, there is a Young Leaders' Unit that all of the Explorer Scouts on the Young Leaders' Scheme have to belong to. This Unit is a little different from the other units in the District as it only meets once a month.

Liz If the Unit only meets once a month what do they do and who attends?

Tim Basically the meeting is an opportunity for all Young Leaders within the District to get together, share their

experiences and also take the opportunity to do any relevant training.

Liz Is that it?

Tim Well no, not exactly. As a Unit they can still organise their own activities, independent of anything else happening within other Units. Many of the members will belong to another Unit, just as you do, Liz. However there will be some Explorer Scouts who belong to no other group, apart from being a Young Leader. This is an opportunity for them to take part in



Being a member of the Young Leaders' Scheme means you also belong to a Unit of Young Leaders. This Unit enables members to run activities independently from other Explorer Scout Units, and allows Young Leaders to get together, share their experiences and organise training

activities with others of their own age.

Liz Does this mean that they can take part in all the District activities for Explorer Scouts?

Tim That's right. They can participate in any activities that they wish. It may also be appropriate for them to join in activities that other Units, such as your own, are putting on. Basically the set-up for this Unit is as flexible as that for any of the Units within the District.

Liz At one of our earlier meetings, you mentioned that every Explorer Scout has a mentor. Mine is one of my Unit's Assistant Explorer Scout Leaders. Will this now change?

Tim Not necessarily. However it is important to remember that a mentor is there to support you and help your development. It may be appropriate to have a mentor just for your work as a Young Leader. This may be one of the Leaders of the Young Leaders' Scheme locally or it may be a Leader in the Section in which you are working as a Young Leader. It is important that your mentor has all the qualities needed, and we would look at this carefully before making any decision.

Liz How long do I have to be a member of the Unit?

Tim The answer to this is as long as you are in the Scheme! There are some Explorer Scouts in the District who want to be a member of the Young Leaders' Scheme and nothing else, so this is their experience of Explorer Scouting and they will be a member of the Unit for the whole time that they are a Young Leader. Others may only wish to stay in the Scheme whilst they complete a service

element of their awards. This flexibility is one of the strengths of the Scheme.

Liz You said that we may do some training. What does this entail?

Tim At the moment, The Scout Association is reviewing its training for adults. It has been decided that the new Young Leaders' Scheme should complement the new Adult Training scheme, but I still don't know the final detail of the training involved. Those nice people at Gilwell Park assure me that the Young Leaders' Scheme training pack will be available in the autumn, so there isn't too long a wait now. Until then, we use a great deal of common sense and make any training suitable for our members.

Liz How is my work in the Young Leaders' Scheme recognised? Do I get a badge?



Tim The answer to the second question first. No, you don't get a badge. The answer to the first question is that the work you do in the Young Leaders' Scheme will be outlined on your annual Certificate of Achievement. If you are a member of the Scheme for a limited time, then a Certificate of Achievement will be completed at the end of your commitment, ensuring that all your work in this special project is recognised.

Liz Am I right in thinking that we share our Unit with the District next door? Who runs it?

Tim Yes. Because of the numbers on the Young Leaders' Scheme it was decided that our Unit would cover both the next District and us. In our case, our Assistant District Commissioner (Adult Training) was keen to be involved and they co-ordinate the training. Both the District Explorer Scout Commissioner from the next District and I also help to run the evening, because we enjoy it! If the Young Leaders' Unit continues to grow at its present rate, then it is likely that each District will need a separate Unit. At the moment, we're happy as we are! Is there anything else you wish to know?

Liz Not at present...but when can I start?!

