

The Unit and its links



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Introduction

The links between each of the Sections is the responsibility of all Leaders in the Section. The Explorer Scout Leader, in particular, will need to build up links with both local Scout Troops, and any local Scout Networks nearby. These are the Sections that Explorer Scouts will join from between 13½ and 15, and leave to between 17½ and 18½. This factsheet will give you information regarding how these links can be established and effectively maintained.

The Moving-On Award

There is a Moving-On Award from Scouts to Explorer Scouts and from Explorer Scouts to the Scout Network. The Award allows young people to get to know members of their new Section, whilst also completing their time in their current Section.

Links between the Scout Troop and the Explorer Scout Unit

There are many ways in which good links can be maintained with the Scout Troops. As a list of Members aged 13+ should be kept by the District, a key part of the links is ensuring this list is kept up to date. This list will show which young people are within the age-range to transfer and it allows opportunities to send them a birthday card or another item advertising the possibilities available in Explorer Scouting.

An effective way of building relationships with Scout Troops is to visit them on a regular basis. Both Explorer Scouts and Leaders should visit the local Scout Troops, allowing Scouts to get to know them by name. It is even more effective if you can

find out the names of older Scouts before you attend.

Some Explorer Scouts may be attending Troop meetings anyway as a Young Leader and they should prove invaluable ambassadors for the Section. Encourage the Explorer Scouts to talk about the activities they do and what they enjoy about Explorer Scouting. The Unit could also visit the Troop to run a series of activities.

Many Explorer Scouts will not want their parents / carers to be closely involved in their Scouting activities, but Leaders should still make the effort to let parents/carers know what is happening. They will still be needed for transporting their young people around. Their support will also be useful for fundraising and other initiatives.

The Leadership Team will need to consider the activities taking place during the meetings that Scouts attend as part of their Moving-On Award. It is usually better if a wide range of activities are offered, rather than just one or two similar ones.

Links between the Explorer Scout Unit and the Scout Network

Links between the two senior Sections will be different to the other Sections in Scouting. It is, however, essential that these links are established and maintained to ensure the Explorer Scouts get to find out about the opportunities available in the Scout Network. The key difference is that local Scout Networks are run by the members, rather than Leaders and therefore they use a different system of management.

In order to maintain good links, it is important for the Explorer Scout Leader to get to know where the local Scout Networks are based and who the

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Co-ordinators are. There will be a County/Area Scout Network Commissioner within the County/Area and there may be County/Area Scout Network Leaders responsible for supporting the Scout Network in particular parts of the County/Area. By knowing who these people are, you will be able to easily contact nearby members of the Scout Network.

It is important that your Explorer Scouts find out about all the options available. Some may wish to join a nearby local Scout Network, others may wish to join a more specialist Network which draws members from a wider geographical area. They also have the option to become a Section Leader or Helper or join the Scout Fellowship.

If the Explorer Scout is moving away from the home County/Area to go to University or College, they should be encouraged to sign up to the Scout Network in their new County/Area. There may also be a Student Scout and Guide Club at the institution which offers Scouting activities.

Each County/Area should have a database of Scout Network members who get regular communications with information about activities, events and opportunities. In order to attract potential recruits, it should be possible to maintain a list of potential members (Explorer Scouts) aged 17, and contact them directly with information on how to join and where local Networks are established.

The County/Area Scout Network will also be visiting Explorer Scout Units to aid recruitment, and these visits should be taken as an opportunity to build relationships with local Scout Networks.

Other Awards

There are other Awards and badges that can be used as tools to support the linking process such as The Duke of Edinburgh Award's.

Partnership Awards

There are three Partnership Awards available to all Sections:

- International Friendship Award
- Environment Award

- Faith Award

These three Awards provide a good opportunity for an Explorer Scout Unit to work with the other Sections in a Scout Group and with local Scout Networks. Information on these Awards is in *The Unit Programme* and *The Explorer Scout Membership Pack*.

Explorer Belt

The Explorer Belt is open to Explorer Scouts aged 16 or over and members of the Scout Network. An Explorer Belt expedition can provide an excellent opportunity for young people in both Sections to work together and therefore cement the links between the two Sections. Again, more information can be found in *The Unit Programme* and *The Explorer Scout Membership Pack*.

Moving Away

If a young person is moving away from the home area, the best method of finding a new Unit or Scout Network is to contact the Scout Information Centre. They will provide a local contact in the new area. Contact details are provided at the base of this factsheet.

Summary

In summary, the best links between Sections are maintained when Leaders know each other and take time to meet members in the Sections of the neighbouring age groups. There are many good schemes to encourage these links and the best system is the one that works for your Unit locally. Therefore, each Unit should develop their own system of links that ensures that all Scouts move on to the Explorer Scout Section and all Explorer Scouts find a Scout Network to join.