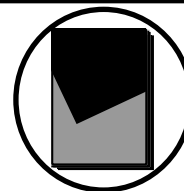


# 1.1 What is the Scout Fellowship?



It is a group of adults who have one thing in common – a wish to support Scouting. A Scout Fellowship welcomes men and women of all ages, interests and backgrounds. There is no need to have been involved in Scouting or Guiding before, all that is required is a willingness to give some of your time to Scouting. In return you will make friends and be able to join with others doing whatever you decide. A Scout Fellowship has its own social and activity programme.

The aim of the Scout Fellowship is “**Providing Active Support**”, with the emphasis being very much on supporting the youth programme in an active manner, at all levels of the Association from the local Scout Group to National level.

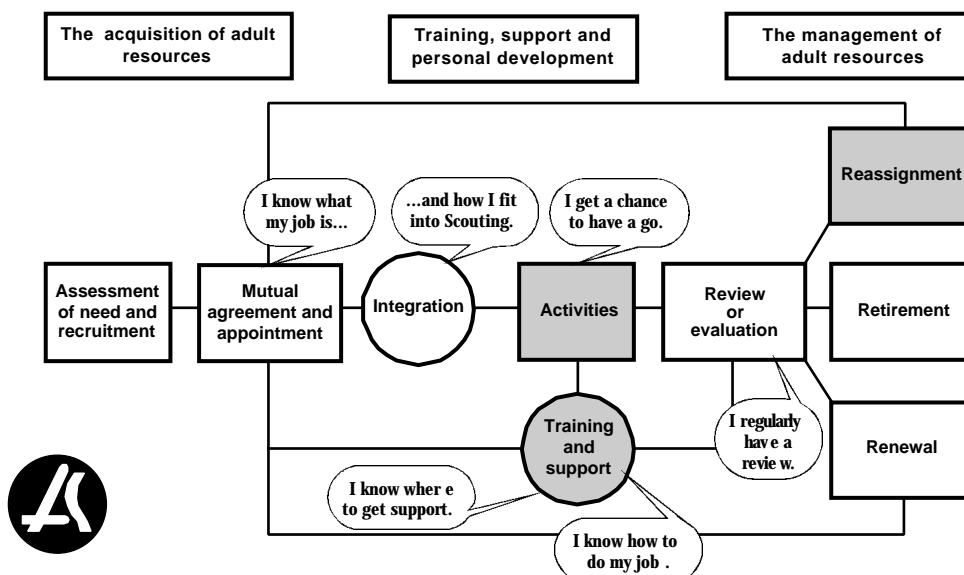
## So what do we mean by “Active Support”?

Active Support encompasses the talents of the Scout Fellowship of all ages and abilities, whether it is physical, mental, geared to a particular technical skill or general support. It could be as a badge examiner, a mentor to new leaders, catering for courses, running pioneering courses, assisting with hill walking, rock climbing etc. We all have something to offer as far as supporting Scouting is concerned whatever our age or ability.

In fact, active support means just about anything!

The Scout Fellowship is a large part of the ‘backbone’ of the Scout Movement – supporting the young people and voluntary leaders wherever help is required. The key to our success is our flexibility – we’re here to help.

## Adults in Scouting



The shaded areas of the Adults in Scouting model shows where the Scout Fellowship fits in, **providing active support** for activities and training & support. We are also there when adults need to take a breathing space from a leadership, commissioner or administrative role - an obvious choice for some when it comes to reassignment.

## **Where are Scout Fellowships formed?**

A Scout Fellowship may be based around a Scout Group, District, Area/County or a particular task, like canoeing, caving or Gang Shows. The best solution for one area may not be right for another, but this flexibility of approach has always been the strength of the Scout Fellowship. The 1999 Committee of the Council review of the Scout Fellowship highlighted this flexible approach and allows us to tailor the local organisation of Scout Fellowships to fit the different needs around the country. In fact following the review, it was agreed that all other adult-only support groups must be registered as Scout Fellowships. Even though these groups may not actually be set up and run as 'traditional' Scout Fellowships, they are an integral part of the Scout Fellowship so far as support, communications and administration are concerned. It is not compulsory to have the words 'Scout Fellowship' in the name of a group - any appropriate name can be used.

## **The advantage of being part of the Scout Fellowship**

The advantage to the Scout Association is that it can better understand who is supporting Scouting and make sure that groups who were not formerly affiliated are in fact an official part of the Movement.

The advantages to the groups is that they will find it easier to know what's going on in the Association, they will find it easier to be heard and represented when necessary and it will be easier for them to receive additional support if and when needed. As an official part of the Scout Fellowship, those members will also enjoy discounts at a wide variety of camping and outdoor shops (not just our own Camping and Outdoor Shops) and will also be covered by the Association's insurance.

Such groups can join in and mix with the wider Scout Fellowship as much or as little as they wish - the choice is theirs.

## **So who belongs?**

The members are likely to be:

- Existing and former Leaders
- Existing and former Administrators
- Parents of Members and former Members
- Older Venture Scouts
- Friends who have come along and enjoyed themselves

In fact just about anyone!

Members of the Scout Fellowship are Associate Members of the Movement and may become Full Members if they wish by making the Scout Promise. All members pay an annual membership subscription.

## **How is it organised?**

This rather depends on the size of the Fellowship and tradition. Most Fellowships have someone who co-ordinates the activities, usually a Chairperson, who in turn has the support of a Secretary and Treasurer. In a larger Fellowship, there may well be a committee who turn the members' ideas into a programme; in a smaller group this may be done by the members working together.

## **What are the benefits of being a member of the Scout Fellowship?**

- A Scout Fellowship provides an adult with the opportunity to become connected to Scouting.
- A Scout Fellowship can help an individual find their own place in Scouting by providing links and introductions within the Group, District or County/Area.
- A Scout Fellowship meets regularly but members can join in a way that suits them.

- A Scout Fellowship can provide Active Support to Scouting either through regular commitments or through responding to calls for help on specific issues.
- A Scout Fellowship enables members to keep in touch with friends they have made in Scouting, and make new ones.

### **What will you have to do?**

Since the Scout Fellowship is intended to provide Active Support to Scouting, you would be expected to show support in a way that suits you. This may be giving up the occasional evening, or a day or two each year to help organise and run activities, supporting the young people, leaders and other adults. You will also find yourself drawn into the social activities of the Scout Fellowship and may spend the occasional evening wineing and dining or walking with new friends. The truthful answer is that we ask you to take part as much as you feel able to; but, like our uniformed leaders, we recognise that you are giving your time and skills voluntarily.

### **The Support Structure for Scout Fellowship**

The Scout Fellowship is therefore an umbrella organisation consisting of Scout Fellowships that operate in a traditional sense at either the Group, District or County/Area level or more specialised groups who may perhaps operate more independently.

The strength of the Scout Fellowship section is at a local level and it is there that most of the work is done and most is accomplished. To support these Fellowships there is a support structure in place, which is probably more flexible than that of any other section in the Association.

Following the 1999 Review, local Commissioners and Group Scout Leaders now have a role to support their Scout Fellowships. It is their responsibility to encourage the formation of Fellowships at all levels to support local Scouting, and to ensure their success and accountability. The annual review and remit gives us all the opportunity to identify new areas requiring support so the people at the 'coal face' get the help needed. They also have the responsibility to agree with the choice of the Chair or Leader of each Scout Fellowship, and ideally this will be done through discussion and agreement with all interested parties.

Ideally, within the Scout District, the District Commissioner should appoint an Assistant District Commissioner for Scout Fellowship - the ADC (SF). It is their responsibility to support the various Scout Fellowships in the District (which may exist as Group based Fellowships, a single District Fellowship, etc.) Each Scout Area/County should appoint an Assistant Area/County Commissioner for Scout Fellowship - the AAC/ACC (SF). It is their responsibility to provide effective communications to and from the Districts, provide support to the Districts and co-ordinate the activities of the District Fellowships when they may need or wish to operate together.

The AAC/ACCs (SF) will in turn communicate through their Regional Representatives to the National Commissioner for Scout Fellowship.

The National Commissioner currently has a National Scout Fellowship Team consisting of Scout Fellowship representatives from Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland, as well as a representative from each Scout region. There are also representatives from the Venture Scout Section and Trefoil Guild. This team is supported by the professional staff in the Programme and Development Department at Gilwell Park.

Following the Review, our move at Headquarters into the area of Adult Support brings us fully into the mainstream of Scouting, giving us the support and help that we need as Fellowship members. It acknowledges our important role and through our working with the other strands of Adult Support, will enable us to encourage greater integration of the Scout Fellowship at all levels of Scouting.

This National and Regional structure makes full use of modern communications such as e-mail and Scoutbase in order to provide the shortest possible lines of communication.

The support structure is therefore fairly flexible and allows communications and co-ordination where necessary to supplement the excellent work done at the local level.

**Support Structure for the Scout Fellowship**

