

2.2 Why start a Scout Fellowship?



There are two main reasons for starting a new Scout Fellowship. Either:

- no Scout Fellowship currently exists or
- a need has been identified that cannot be covered by the existing Fellowship's remit.

Types of Scout Fellowship

There are different types of Scout Fellowship providing support at various levels.

Group

Many parent committees or supporters associated with individual Scout Groups become Scout Fellowships.

District

The majority of Scout Fellowships are organised at Scout District level, purely because this used to be the only place to organise a Scout Fellowship before the rules became more flexible.

The Scout Network and the Scout Fellowship

In addition to joining the Scout Network, Explorer Scouts reaching the age of eighteen may also choose to join the Scout Fellowship. Existing members of the Scout Network wishing to provide support to Scouting may also join the Fellowship.

Area/County

Area/County based Scout Fellowships are relatively rare and are usually set up for specific purposes such as supporting a regular or ongoing Scout Area/County event or activity. Examples might include a Campsite Service Crew, Climbing Activities Team, and the team of people who come together every year to run a Area/County Camp

Regional

Regional based Scout Fellowships are very rare, although often serve a purpose supporting large Regional based activities such as conferences and camps.

National

National based Fellowships exist for a number of reasons. Many people may have more in common with their work colleagues, or certainly spend more time with them than with their Community. For these reasons Fellowships can be attached to a place of work. Scout Fellowships may have different remits, although they must be one of the above types.

Activity based

Any Activity based Scout Fellowships such as a Climbing Team, Hills Team, Caving Team etc. may be formed to support these activities. These will normally be based at the Area/County level but could be the specialist role of either a Group, District, Regional or National based Scout Fellowship.

Young people in the Fellowship

The Scout Association has no special category for 'Young Fellowships', however, depending on the remit, you may find that some Fellowships have a larger number of young members than others. For example, a Fellowship that runs Abseiling and Climbing every weekend may have a younger profile than a Fellowship which supports the Area/County Training Team. All members under under age of 25 are automatically members of the local Scout Network, and can combine service and support through the Scout Fellowship, with a varied programme of activities in the Scout Network.

Day Time Fellowships

Scout Fellowships do not just have to meet in the evenings or at weekends. With many people who work shifts, and the growing number of people who retire from work early, it might well be worth setting up a Scout Fellowship for individuals who can provide support during the day. Assistance could be provided for local community projects, or at the local campsite for example.

Special Needs

Some Scout Groups have units set up specifically to cater for people with Special Needs, such as a Hospital Scout Troop. A Scout Fellowship in these groups can help members to continue their Scouting activities.

New vs existing Fellowships

When a group of people are thinking of starting a Fellowship, they need to consider what they feel their remit would be and look at what Fellowships already exist in the area. The decision to start a new Scout Fellowship or to add to an existing Scout Fellowship should be discussed by the three parties involved i.e. the Responsible Commissioner, the new members and the members of the potential Fellowship whose remit may be extended.

Issues to consider when starting a new Fellowship or adding to an existing Fellowship:

- Will the remits be substantially different or could they work together?
- Does the existing Fellowship want to extend its remit?
- Is the proposed new Fellowship too specialised to make it viable?
- Will a proposed new Fellowship attract membership that is not attracted to the existing Fellowship?

Ultimately the answer will come from the question: "What structure is the best way to provide Active Support to the Scout Movement?"