

3.5 Induction and retention



Welcoming a new member

First impressions are always important if a Scout Fellowship wants to encourage a visitor to become a fully fledged member. The first hurdle has been passed – a potential new member has walked through the door.

Now is the chance to make them feel welcome and ensure they walked back for a second visit. To do this you need to:

- create a friendly environment/atmosphere
- make them feel comfortable
- introduce existing members and consider appointing a “buddy”
- pass on and explain the contents of a welcome pack
- ask for feedback and collect their completed questionnaire
- tell them about the next meeting – what, where, when, who to contact
- ensure that someone contacts the new member nearer to the date of the next meeting, offers them a lift and reminds them of the details
- ensure that they join in, organise an event fairly quickly and have tasks to complete and report back on.

A welcome pack could include:

- Aims of the Scout Fellowship
- Membership contact list
- Programme diary
- Frequently Asked Questions (and answers)

- New member's questionnaire
- Joining procedures
- Subscriptions details.

The questionnaire for a new member could include:

- Name, address, telephone, fax, e-mail
- Job title and employer
- Past Scout Association experience and links
- Interests, hobbies, pastimes
- Name, address and telephone of the person to whom to pass the completed questionnaire.

Retaining members

The key concern now is to ensure that the new member comes back for repeat visits, becomes actively involved and a key member of the Scout Fellowship team.

In addition to the actions for welcoming new members, the Scout Fellowship could consider:

- keeping and regularly updating member records
- regular communication to/between members (telephone, newsletter, letters, e-mails, diary)
- creating positions of responsibility
- regularly reviewing the programme to ensure it is interesting
- organising special activities such as a particular sport, expedition, party, meals, competitions
- regularly re-assessing what the members want to do, have time to do and have experience/ knowledge/qualifications to do
- use people, make them feel wanted and valued – more people leave an organisation through lack of activity, than anything else.

Remember: complete the Scout Fellowship Healthcheck on a regular basis.