

MODULE 13

Growing the section workbook
Appendices



scouts.org.uk/appointment



APPENDIX 1:

DISCUSSION POINT 2 – VOLUNTEERING RESPONSES

'No one asked me.'	Ask them! Don't assume that people know you need help or that they would be comfortable offering it. Talk to those around you and get to know parents. Once you find out more about them, you may be able to ask them to do specific tasks or activities. You could also look at creating a rota system that works – perhaps one which is run by one of the parents.
'I've spoken to people who just moan about volunteering.'	Be an ambassador for scouting – speak positively and passionately about it – your enthusiasm could rub off on others.
'Scouting doesn't look like much fun.'	Give parents the opportunity to experience the fun of scouting – reference using camps to recruit parents and emphasise that any involvement should be a positive experience.
'I don't have the time to help out.'	Be flexible – explain the different ways they can get involved and how they can give as much/little time as they want. Be understanding and accepting, and work with them to identify how they could help.
'I'm not needed.'	Many parents will just pick up and drop off their kids and don't realise that help is needed. Make sure they know that help is welcomed, and when they offer, make a point of giving them something to do. There is nothing worse than feeling like a spare part.
'I don't have the skills to help out.'	Be flexible, as above. Get to know them better and see what their skills are, so you can provide better direction. Depending on what they are interested in doing, promote the training that they can access to help them.
'I don't understand scouting.'	Dispel some of the myths about scouting: show them the opening/closing ceremonies and explain why they are done; explain the uniform and the left handshake, and so on. Remove the invisible barriers.
'I don't really see myself in the leader's shoes.'	Be a role model, someone that others aspire to. If they're a current youth member, make sure they know that they don't have to become a leader and that there are other options.
'Nobody explained I could be a volunteer at 18.'	Encourage young leaders and explorers. Let them know the options that are available to them.
'I don't want to be a leader.'	Ensure that people are aware of the different roles available. Also try to recognise and reward all roles in scouting.
'I left and went to university elsewhere.'	Be flexible. You could offer to contact the local scout group for them, link them up with a scout network or the Student Scout and Guide Organisation (SSAGO). Accept that some young people will not have time to be involved in scouting while at university, but they could stay in touch so they can help during holidays.

APPENDIX 2:

DISCUSSION POINT 4 – VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT EXAMPLES

ANSWERS MAY INCLUDE:

Example 1:

Section assistant, occasional helper, scout active support member (explain the differences in the roles). They may want to find out more information about what 'irregular' means, and about Johnny's skills and interests.

Example 2:

Helping out on camps or at activities, or perhaps remote volunteering in terms of managing the group's or the section's accounts. It is important to remember to ask though, rather than just assume – she may not want to do anything related to her degree. There is also a possibility that there is a group close to the university.

Example 3:

Find out if other parents are interested – all can share the role of section leader or be part of a parent rota. Could arrangements be made for a crèche or sharing babysitting?

Example 4:

There could be opportunities on the executive committee. If she has a particular skill then perhaps something related to this or opportunities at district or county level in supporting other adults, like the role of the training adviser, badge manager or quartermaster. There may also be a need to tackle the issues as to why she doesn't want to volunteer with young people. Maybe there is a misunderstanding about what this entails.

APPENDIX 3:

DISCUSSION POINT 4 – VOLUNTEERING CASE STUDIES

Supporting the group through scout active support

A group in London (Hainault) set up a scout active support unit. The group scout leader wanted to give an opportunity for people to support the group without being a leader or part of the executive committee. The group scout leader also wanted to ensure that those whose circumstances changed could stay with the group in some way. The unit provides adults with a chance to get involved in a way that suits them best. This group also recognised that some parents in their area found it difficult to pay their children's subscriptions. So they decided to waive the subs if parents gave their time instead.

Northampton's district scout active support unit is happy to receive help and support in whatever way people can offer it. Members range from 18 to 80-years-old, with a wide variety of skills and experiences. They are classed as one unit, but within this there are a number of satellite units operating which members can attend when available. Members of these units are asked to give a service, either through the other units, or as a leader/helper in a scout group or explorer scout unit. Members are asked to pledge a minimum of just 10 hours per year, which they can spend doing anything they choose.

Teams within teams

A beaver colony in Bedfordshire has four teams of leaders who each take a weekly section meeting once a month. This makes it less stressful for the individuals. These different groups of leaders have a programme-planning meeting at the start of every term. They then do a week each in turn. This way everyone only runs a meeting every four weeks and leaders don't have to commit as much time. Not only is it better for the leaders but it is good for the beavers too. They interact with different types of people, rather than the same ones all the time. It's good for their development.

Parent rota up and running

A group in Lymington Green sent out a questionnaire to find out parents' skills, hobbies and professional backgrounds. Based on the responses, they invited parents to camps and trips and have regular parent helpers who attend section meetings when they can. As a result, they have successfully recruited more volunteers by highlighting to parents that whatever their skills or background, there are roles for them in scouting.

The largest scout group in the UK – 5th Penwortham (South Ribble)

The 5th Penwortham has four beaver colonies, three cub packs and four scout troops. In the last 15 years the group has expanded threefold. Whenever there was a need for a waiting list, they opened a new section. They find the leaders and away they go. With so many children, there is greater potential to find leaders and people to help – they currently have around 600 parents to ask. They use family camps and parental involvement in section meetings to ensure that parents know what scouting is about. They become more familiar with the different ways they can get involved and are consequently more likely to help out.

More variety, less time spent planning

A beaver colony in the North West has leaders who volunteer on a rota basis. Each of the leaders takes it in turns to:

1. run the evening
2. be the assistant providing practical hands-on support (for example, for activities needing cutting and sticking)
3. be an extra pair of hands
4. babysit for the other leaders' younger children.

All four are section leaders, but the person in role number one on each evening is in charge. The people in roles three and four do not have to plan anything, which means that each person only has to plan for two weeks out of four.

TYPES OF VOLUNTEERS

Gemma – the mum

Growing up in scouting, Gemma became a section leader when she was 18. After getting married and having a child, Gemma felt that she was no longer able to give the time to her leader role. She looked at the other roles she could volunteer for but was not able to commit to the time for the training. The group scout leader then spoke to Gemma about joining the group scout active support unit, as it would allow her to volunteer for as little or as much time as she could, and she was happy to continue her role in Scouting as part of the unit. Gemma now provides active support to the beaver scout colony and supports the section leader and young leaders in delivering the programme. The unit has meant that Gemma is still involved in scouting. Her volunteering is flexible which suits her at this time in her life.

Cathy – the section leader's wife

Cathy's children are members of a cub pack, so she saw first-hand the positive experiences they take from scouting and knows what it means to them. Cathy didn't want to be a leader, so joined the group as a parent representative on the group executive committee and was very quickly taking an interest in the group's social events and fundraising matters. When the scout active support unit was formed one of its strands was 'social and fundraising' and Cathy was the ideal person to be the group active support co-ordinator for this. She joined the unit and now heads up the social and fundraising team. Cathy is part of a team of six parents who are responsible for organising social events for the group as a whole and making grant applications dependent upon the needs of the group. The group has been awarded a £500 grant for publicity and their website, and Cathy has just submitted two further grant applications for the group.

Whether it's being part of organising a quiz night or open evening, or sending grant applications, Cathy feels that it's good to give back to something that has given her children so much. She feels that if adults have roles that fit around their lifestyles, and are doing something they enjoy, then they are more likely to stay.

Ian – the parent

Ian had never been involved in scouting, but when his partner's children joined the group, he soon realised that it offered something to young people and adults that he wanted to be part of. Scouting gave him the chance to do the things that he loved doing and to share his knowledge with like-minded people.

He was in the army for a number of years and is now in the building trade so felt that he had plenty of knowledge and experience to share with the group. However, Ian didn't want the responsibility of being a section leader but wanted to learn more about scouting. He joined the group scout active support unit on the building and grounds team and then became part of the activities team. Since joining the group, Ian has been part of two group workdays and has qualified as a National Smallbore Rifle Association (NSRA) tutor which has allowed the unit to offer a new activity to the group. The activities team has already run a shoot day for the scout troop and has taken this activity to scout camp and will soon open it to the cub pack.

APPENDIX 4:

DISCUSSION POINT 5 – INFORMATION AND SUPPORT FOR NEW VOLUNTEERS

IMMEDIATE INFORMATION

- Welcome information about the group and scouting
- Information on child protection policy

During first few weeks:

- be introduced to other adults in the section
- be introduced to the young people
- be given a guided tour of the premises and outline fire, first aid and safety procedures
- be involved in an activity (for example, a game)
- be given group contact details.

Within first month:

- meet the other adults in the group
- fill out a form with your details (again) if you are going to be a leader
- take part in a variety of activities
- take on responsibility for an activity such as a game or practical activity
- discuss the principles of scouting with an experienced leader/manager
- be given some material containing programme/games ideas.

Within three months:

- take part in a section leader's meeting
- take part in a scout group's meeting
- attend a district activity
- be given a copy of the district directory
- meet with the district appointments sub-committee
- be supported in planning and leading a full meeting
- begin training
- be supported in planning several activities within area of responsibility.

APPENDIX 5:

DISCUSSION POINT 6 – BARRIERS TO RECRUITING YOUNG PEOPLE

Potential barrier to recruitment	What actions could you take to overcome this?
Young person doesn't know anyone in the section	<p>Have an open evening, so parents and young people can come. This way the young people are not the only ones who don't know anyone. It gives them a taste of scouting and they get to meet those already in the section.</p> <p>Having 'buddies' within the section who are assigned to new young people may help this. This is particularly useful when moving from one section to another.</p>
Unaware of what scouting has to offer	<p>Be a good presence in the community. Show people what you do.</p> <p>Give young people a chance to try out scouting before they commit.</p> <p>Taster days or sessions give young people an insight into scouting.</p> <p>Get the local district or county media team to help promote what scouting is all about.</p>
Busy with other extra-curricular activities	<p>Are there other groups where the section meets on a different day or time? Could you run a weekend meeting? Try and do something that doesn't clash with other activities.</p> <p>Or you could support those other activities and work together with other organisations.</p> <p>If the young people don't want to join now, what about next year, when the clubs and societies change? For those already in scouting, stay in touch in case they want to return.</p>
Better things to spend money on	<p>If money is a barrier, what can you do to reduce this? Can you highlight how scouting is good value for money? Or do you need to have access to funds to help those who need it? Could you get a fundraising team to support the group so any financial burden is eased?</p>
Feel that scouting doesn't represent their background/ interests or cannot accommodate their needs, such as a physical disability	<p>This is about being as open and flexible as possible. The invisible barriers, like where you meet and when, and the scouting ceremonies and language, can sometimes put people off.</p> <p>The best way to get a diverse range of people involved is to embrace the diversity of the community around you, and be flexible enough to make adjustments that suit everyone.</p> <p>Make sure that any recruitment events target the right audiences.</p>

Past experience of scouting	<p>If someone has had a bad experience of scouting then you need to find out why. It may be that if they experience it again, they might be pleasantly surprised. Young people may be able to gain a fresh perception of scouting by joining a section in a different group or joining an older section when they have reached the right age. Give them a chance to experience scouting.</p>
Stereotypical/outdated image of what scouting is	<p>Dispel those myths. Show them scouting is relevant to young people today.</p>
Not enough volunteers to run the section	<p>If this is a barrier then some action needs to be taken to help. Can you recruit new people? If so, from where? Could you have volunteers from the parents of young people within the group? Are there volunteers in other sections who could help out in the short term?</p>
Attitude of current volunteers	<p>Your team needs to be in a position to want to recruit. Are they role models for Scouting? Are they engaged in growing the section? If young people or parents constantly see a negative image of scouting, or only hear people grumbling, it won't encourage others to join.</p>
Venue/time/day of meeting	<p>Could this be changed? Could the young people go to another group?</p>

APPENDIX 6:

DISCUSSION POINT 7 – HEALTH CHECK STATEMENTS

Statements	Comments
Some sections have no girls	RED. There should be girls in every section, and although section leaders may say that they are open to girls but none want to join, or that girls prefer the Guides, they should be actively encouraging the recruitment of girls.
There are 15 young people in each section	AMBER. This will depend on demographics and geography, but a healthy section should have 18–24 young people plus. It may mean thinking about the volunteer support or venue if these numbers have not been reached. Use the programme-planning tool to help.
50% of young people achieve their chief scout award before moving on to the next section	AMBER. Could more young people achieve these? Why aren't they? Young people get a chance to achieve these awards which is important so that they have a challenging programme. These awards help to retain young people.
All young people in sections have a chance to provide input on and discuss the programme	GREEN. All young people should get this opportunity, from beavers to network. Obviously the format will be different for each section.
50% of of young people go from beavers to cubs	RED. What is stopping the others? Is there something that could be done to help this? Could they go to different groups, or could more joint activities be run to promote the next section Are they using the moving-on award?
There are young leaders in each of the sections	GREEN or AMBER. It's great that there are young leaders, but how are they being used? Are they supported? Are they part of a young leader unit?
All sections have one residential experience a year	AMBER. The young people are getting an opportunity for a residential experience, but there is potential for them to get at least two a year. What more could they do to ensure an active programme?
There are no young people on waiting lists.	GREEN or AMBER. If there are no waiting lists because all young people who want to join can, this is great. But it may be there are no waiting lists because leaders have decided not to keep one, so they turn young people away without monitoring it.
No increase on last year's census figures	RED. Even if leaders think they have enough young people in their section, they should be trying to grow.

All leaders and assistants are reviewed at the review date set	AMBER. They are getting reviews which is good, but they should be having more than just the formal review after three or four years. Are informal reviews happening?
Programme-planning meetings are held once a year	AMBER. Ideally programme-planning meetings should take place every term.
Leaders leave out the programme zones they find difficult to deliver.	RED. Leaders have a responsibility to ensure that all the programme zones are covered.
Young people play their favourite games every week.	AMBER or RED. It's great that young people get to do what they like, but is the programme challenging and progressive? Could more variety be included? Is this an easy option?
Five of the parents are involved in helping the section.	AMBER or GREEN. How many young people are there? Could there be more involvement from parents? They could be great advocates for getting other parents involved in scouting.
The section attends district- and county-run termly activities and residential experiences	GREEN. This is a great opportunity to meet others in the district and county and increase the enthusiasm and pride for scouting.