

# International camps in the UK



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Scouting in the United Kingdom has a long tradition of locally organised international camps. This range from about 1000 to 10,000 participants and the organisers can be Districts, Counties/Areas or countries of the UK. This fact sheet is designed to support the organisers in addressing some of the important issues which can arise. The guidance and examples of good practice are drawn from feedback provided by organisers of past events.

Each year, the International Office co-ordinates a meeting where past and future organisers share their experiences.

The guidance given in this fact sheet is based on feedback at these meetings and is offered under the following headings:

1. International involvement
2. Programme
3. Services and technical arrangements
4. Co-operation with others
5. Finance and financial planning
6. Structure and staffing
7. Publicity and public relations
8. Contingency and emergency planning
9. Additional information

## 1 International involvement

Most of the major regional or County organised camps in the UK are referred to as 'International', yet the degree to which this description is accurate varies between camps. There is a great variation on the proportion of international participants, ranging from 10% up to 50%. In general, the highest percentages depend on a number of conditions:

- A long history of international camps
- A requirement that UK participants host overseas Scouts
- Relatively small camps of around 1000 participants
- Repeat bookings dependent on on-going relationships

For those starting from scratch some pointers on achieving maximum potential international attendance are:

- Start your promotions early
- Build upon existing Group and Twin Town links
- Send material to the International Office for mailing
- Complete the World Scout Bureau form to register on their listings (available on [www.scout.org](http://www.scout.org) – the form must be counter-signed by the International Office)
- Establish a website
- Send information to the preceding World Scout Jamboree
- Select Scout Centres from the 'Where to stay in Europe' guide to send posters
- Create a basic information sheet in English and add other languages as an insert
- Be aware of when school holidays take place across Europe

## The Scout Association

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- Ensure there is liaison within your region/country to avoid unnecessary clashes of camp dates
- Liaise with other camps to place or receive participants ensuring that all those who want to participate can do so
- Before the camp, ensure that you have as much information as possible about your visitors
- Check if the visiting groups have their own insurance and if not offer a suitable policy like the one offered by Scout Insurance Services
- Ensure you are aware of dietary requirements and religious obligations
- Establish direct communications with incoming groups to make them feel special and allocate a special 'host' to ensure there is follow up on arrival at the camp
- Make sure the group is a member of WAGGGS or WOSM by asking for the written consent of the appropriate International Commissioner (if you have problems, contact the International Office). Individuals (eg international staff members) need to be checked in the same way
- Send regular newsletters to all visiting groups and carefully explain terminology which may not easily translate to another language
- Consider how to help visitors who need a British visa to obtain one (we have a special fact sheet, details on page 12).

During the course of the camp the following are possible ways of increasing international understanding:

- Establish 'International Patrols', ensuring there are at least two participants from each country
- Have an International Challenge to recognise joint activities between UK

participants and visiting groups/individuals

- Have an International Centre/Tent where visitors can mount displays and have their needs addressed
- Have an International Fair that allows all groups to present aspects of their Scouting to the entire camp
- Ensure that acts of worship reflect the faiths of all participants

For those camps offering home hospitality either before or after camps, there is a fact sheet giving guidance, available from the Information centre (see details on page 12).

After the camp it is good to follow up the visit with a report on how you think things have gone. You may wish to conduct an informal evaluation with leaders of visiting groups either at the end of the camp or shortly after they have returned home.

- Ensure you have adequate information so that you can write to your visiting groups, possibly with information about the next International Camp
- Ask for suggestions on how the camp can be improved
- Encourage on-going pen pal links to maintain contact with groups
- Encourage UK participants to visit their new friends or take part in camps in other countries

## 2 Programme

The programme of any International Camp is probably the single most important aspect in the eyes of the young participants. Staffing the programme, ensuring the safety of participants and utilising the opportunities to create a real feeling of achievement for both providers and those taking part will be the largest task for any camp organisers and plans should be started as early as possible. There are many approaches to the provision of programme and the main controlling factor may well be the cost of the

camp. At the time of writing, camp fees have ranged from about £90 to almost £225 and this difference is reflected in the extent to which programme costs and food costs were incorporated into the camp fee.

- Generally, a lower camp fee reflected less provision of a central programme
- Larger camp fees incorporated many specialist activities
- Most camps made provision for additional activities, and reflected this in additional charges at point of participation
- The larger the camp, the greater the degree of organisation. A major feature of most camps is the selection of a theme to link all aspects of the camp, programme and organisation together. From past experience, it is advisable to steer clear of Disney themes due to problems over copyright and potential expenses from the purchase of licences.

The programme can be divided into four aspects:

- Large, camp-wide activities for universal participation
- Sub-camp activities, usually evening based
- Ticketed/organised daily programme
- Drop in activities, non-ticketed

Taking each of these areas in turn, some pointers on maximising the potential are:

#### **Large, camp-wide activities**

- Balance the number of set piece events, such as the opening and closing, to ensure that they meet a real need and are not simply a PR event which is boring for young people
- Ensure that loud events, like concerts, do not unduly disturb the neighbours, who must be informed well in advance

- Simple, participative, symbolic gestures can be very effective, for example sub-camps raising their scarves en masse creates a dramatic corporate identity if all are seated together and each sub-camp has a different colour
- Take care over the length and number of speeches, as many overseas guests will not understand a word!
- A camp wide activity on the last day helps to release time for dismantling some activities

#### **Sub-camp activities**

- Have a good energetic team with adequate budget and equipment
- Have a recognised rest period at meal times
- Challenges in international patrols break down barriers
- Have some co-operative games, just for the fun of it
- Use a sub-camp Patrol Leaders Council for feedback and for spreading messages
- Have a few board games available for quieter moments

#### **Ticketed/organised daily programme**

- If you need a ticket allocation scheme, establish an efficient method of distribution, including a swap shop for the exchange of activity tickets
- Take care that sufficient space is available and, if necessary, prepare to bus participants off-site
- Balance the adventurous with the less physically demanding
- Ensure that all activity providers are authorised to run their activity
- Activities should reflect the range of ages of participants

**Drop-in activities**

- Badge swapping should be restricted to youth participants
- Involve overseas leaders in providing their own activities
- Involve commercial operators such as leather craft
- Encourage exchanges of addresses for pen pals and group links

**Some useful tips**

- Establish 'Camp Time' by advancing clocks and watches, say two hours, ensuring there is no noise after 2300 hrs instead of 0100, which saves a lot of problems with local inhabitants
- Shopping trips or visits to places of historical or national interest gives the programme staff a break
- Establish satellite camps for short-term visitors or families
- Offer a day of rest to avoid over exposure or exhaustion and allow normal patrol and troop activities to take place
- Encourage troops to host their Beaver Scouts and Cub Scouts by providing sub-camp based activities
- Use a passport or identify card system for people control
- Use a suitable computer programme for organising activities, scheduling and ticketing

**Some problems which may arise**

- Advertising high profile activities, but only making these available to a small number of participants
- Inadequate supervision, often due to not involving leaders from the participating groups

- Lack of a clear understanding on the proficiency of leaders from other countries
- Visitors wishing to take part in activities, for which they are not covered for insurance

**At the end of the camp**

- Review the success of each activity by consulting the programme staff for future reference
- Ask the young people for their thoughts on the activities

**Global Explorer:**

The International Office operates a scheme for encouraging the international aspects of the programme of camps. There is a fact sheet on this (see page 12).

**3 Services and technical arrangements**

With rising living standards around the world, there is an increasing expectation that the standard of services offered at international camps will be reflected in better quality and more sensitive sanitation and waste disposal.

Assuming that direct water provision is possible at an acceptable pressure level, organisers need to remember that about 80% of this water will also need to be disposed of.

**In the early stages**

- Involve local planning officials so that they are on your side
- Local councils have Health and Safety officials who may give guidance. Environmental Health Officers may also be helpful.
- Investigate if it would be cheaper for the Country/Area to purchase equipment for future use, rather than pay high rental charges
- Appoint a good Quartermaster who can control all equipment on in a business-like way, booking in and out

- Consider using a site, such as a County Showground, which already has site services installed
- Consider the benefits, on a long-term basis of upgrading facilities on the local Scout site
- Visit event suppliers' conferences/trade shows
- Liaise with other camp organisers to negotiate jointly with suppliers or to borrow from those events not taking place that year
- Consider the Army or TA for equipment and expertise
- Look at the various telecom companies to see which can offer the best, all in, service. BT have been very helpful in providing pagers, faxes, internal telephones, radios and pay phones
- Make sure you have adequate insurance cover
- Consult the 'Showman's Guide', available from libraries
- Set-up times vary from two to seven days

#### **During the course of the camp**

- Establish a good procedure for controlling equipment which is lent out
- Liaise with local police to ensure that intruders are firmly dealt with
- Computers and high cost equipment on site raise the cost of insurance and require adequate security
- Commercial companies may be interested providing some of the services, such as banks, supermarkets, souvenirs
- Provide a graffiti area to discourage vandalism

- Ensure that attention is given to fire prevention, including the provision of fire breaks, alarms, extinguishers
- Consider separating waste material and recycling

A major topic to consider is the provision of showers and cleanliness of sanitation provision:

- Many countries will not participate if there are no showers or if they are inadequate
- Small toilet rolls disappear quickly. One solution is to provide large dispensers
- Liquid soap dispensers are hygienic and cost effective
- It may be best to hire a cleaning and disposal company to maintain good, consistent standards
- Be careful to provide adequate and hygienic surroundings for religious obligations, for example washing before praying
- The quality and reliability of showers is often more important than the quantity
- Take care to use a reputable company with adequate back up potential

#### **Food**

- The cost of cold storage equipment is offset by reduced wastage
- Bringing in commercial caterers for staff catering ensures a good quality product with limited financial risk and reduces the need to provide additional equipment
- Be aware of the increasing diversity of diet of young people, including larger numbers who are vegetarian, those with dietary problems and those with religious requirements

#### **Other services which need to be considered are**

- Fire fighting and links to local fire service

- First Aid/First Response provision and links to local hospitals, paramedics and doctors
- Emergency provision of accommodation in the event of a major disaster
- Links to local emergency planning service
- Adequate litter bins and a litter patrol

#### **4 Co-operation with others**

An international camp is a high profile event and can offer a great opportunity to co-operate with commercial, service and charitable organisations. By far the most important partner group is Girlguiding UK. There are a number of methods of operation in conjunction with the Guides as follows:

- A Scout-run event to which Guides are invited (recognising that a majority of European Associations are mixed or merged organisations)
- A real partnership, with joint leadership and responsibilities
- A nominal partnership, with token representatives in the management and operation of the camp
- A partnership based on positions of responsibility being filled on the merit of individuals

Each of these operations requires careful forward planning and good communications to ensure that all who are involved are aware of what is going on. In addition, there are different ways in which the two headquarters are involved. Overseas participation by Guides will often be co-ordinated by the Girlguiding UK's at national level. Another consideration is that Guide and Scout Counties are often different with Guide Counties usually smaller than Scout Counties/Areas. Also, if Guides are to be involved, be sure that activity rules are compatible.

#### **Associated groupings**

- Most Districts and Counties have support networks which can provide varying degrees of support.
- Scout Fellowship and Trefoil Guild members have a wealth of experience and expertise for programme, organisation, useful contacts and the time to donate to the success of the event
- The Rotary Scout Fellowship at national level ensures the potential of a close working relationship.
- Specialist teams, such as communications teams, archery teams, karting
- Chaplaincy teams will have links to local churches and can help to establish meaningful pastoral care and appropriate activities and religious observances
- National support networks Fellowships such as UK-Arab, Serbia and Montenegro, Russia, UK-Africa, GAPP, Kandersteg etc, will provide advice, help and contacts

#### **Local government**

- Never overlook the huge support which can be forthcoming from local authorities.
- Keep local councillors informed of your plans
- Liaise with departments of the local councils to help in providing leisure venues and loan and hire equipment and expertise
- Apply to relevant committees for grant assistance
- Education committees can provide coaches and mini-buses

- Twin-Town Committees can provide useful contacts for overseas Scout and Guide groups
- Specialist youth groups, part of the statutory youth sector, often have a speciality, for example circus skills, drama groups, climbing teams

#### **Other useful contacts**

- The Territorial Army
- British Red Cross
- St John's Ambulance
- St Andrew's Ambulance
- WRVS
- Local police
- Local fire service
- Local national societies-Japanese, German etc.
- Local ethnic groups
- Forestry Commission (or Forest Estates)
- Local media

#### **Commercial partnerships**

The following is a list of types of companies which have provided services to previous camps. Approaches should be made to local managers and they should be provided with a good quality presentation pack, outlining the objectives of the camp, the impact the event will have on our young people and the impact Scouting has on the community locally, nationally and internationally.

- Banks
- Glass engravers
- Craft specialists
- Local newspapers
- Coach operators
- Train operating companies

- Catering and the licensed trade
- Camping equipment suppliers

#### **Additional programme provision**

In an effort to maximise the impact of programme on the participants, it is useful to make contact with organisations with specialist advice on topics which may not be fully covered within Scout circles.

- Aid agencies – for example: Oxfam, UNICEF, Action Aid, Christian Aid, CAFOD, SCF, DfID and locally based organisations
- Local Council for Voluntary Youth Service
- Duke of Edinburgh's Award
- Prince's Trust

Finally, try to involve the entire Scout County by keeping all Sections informed about what is being planned. This will help to maintain interest, reinforce Sectional links and reveal a wealth of talent, which can be involved during the camp.

### **5 Finance and financial planning**

The success of any major event may, eventually, be measured by its ability to break even-or not! This means that careful consideration needs to be given to all aspects of financing the event. The Finance Committee needs to be established early to ensure that full consideration is given to all financial aspects of the camp, certainly before the camp's fee is set. Of prime importance will be the responsibility to underwrite the camp. Charity legislation requires Counties/Areas to make careful provision for money administered by charities. The County needs to have official representation on the Finance Committee of the camp if the County/Area is underwriting the camp.

You may need to discuss the possibility or need for VAT registration, if this is not already in place. It is possible to have a temporary registration. A staff bar, commercial catering and certain hire costs are subject to VAT, while activities are exempt.

Given the need to estimate certain expenditure and income, adequate provision will need to be made for contingencies. In addition, standard budgeting would suggest increasing costs by 5 % for each year removed from the event. As the single largest element of the camp's revenue, the camp fee should adequately reflect the requirements and expectations of participants in the camp. In fixing the fee, the committee will need to consider which services will be provided within the fee:

- Will the fee include cost of food?
- Will the fee cover the complete cost of programme?
- Has the cost of hire of the site been agreed?
- Upon what are prospective numbers based: past experience, advance publicity, competition from other camps, other major international events such as a World Jamboree?

In reconciling the income and expenditure, there are a number of key sources of income.

- The fees of participants
- How many are expected?
- Is the overseas fee the same or more?
- The fees of staff - how many staff? - the same fee as participants or less? - does the fee include food?
- Catering and retail outlets - need for commercial contracts - agreed percentage of profits Commercial sponsorship - based on well documented presentation - accept payments/services in kind
- Grant aid - local government sources - consult directory of grant making trusts - Connect Youth cannot give grant aid to international camps

#### **Expenditure items include:**

- Site hire costs - own site or outside body

- Site services - central and sub-camp - consider tenders for some or all services
- Programme costs - central, sub-camp, ticketed, spare-time
- Administrative costs - publicity, committees, post, fax, phone, insurance, guests
- Contingencies and emergencies

When budgets have been compiled, in consultation with the team leaders of the various areas of operation (programme, services, administration etc.), the team leaders should be allowed to manage their own budgets, with regular reports to the finance committee. Any major over-spends or reallocation of finance needs to be agreed in advance.

#### **Collecting the fees**

- There may be an advantage in offering an early payment discount
- UK banks often charge for receiving electronic transfer of money, so ask those paying in this way to meet these costs
- Consider taking fees in instalments to meet cash flow requirements During the camp
- The finance committee should hold regular meetings to ensure adequate control of expenditure and to meet contingencies
- There needs to be good supervision of finance and adequate provision for safe storage and removal of money

#### **6 Structure and staffing**

Any camp depends on the quality and to some degree, quantity of the staff involved in bringing the programme and services to the participants. They are the human face of the event and a key function of the camp organisers will be to establish their own teams. It must be stressed that, in keeping with the policies of The Scout Association, all unknown Leaders and adults who are going to be working with young people

are checked out using the CRB procedure through the Records Office at Gilwell Park. There can be no exceptions to this policy and those unwilling to agree cannot offer their services. Additionally there are differing opinions on the use of Explorer Scouts as staff, especially if there are Explorer Scout participants in the camp. If Explorer Scouts are used, then it is useful to establish a Staff sub-camp to give the necessary privacy to staff and ensure that differing standards can be accommodated. Without exception, all existing International Camps are split into sub-camps. This helps to make the organisation of the camp more easily manageable. The sub-camp may be used for:

- Maintenance of camping standards
- Sub-camp activities
- Spare time activities
- First aid/first response
- Catering

Most camps have a large programme team, which is further sub divided into teams for individual activities, such as water activities.

- It is probably best to allow activity leaders to recruit their own staff and to offer the appropriate training
- Be careful that outside helpers comply with Scout Association policy and rules
- There should be adequate ratios of staff to participants
- Good recruitment will result in staff knowing what is expected of them, possibly through the provision of a job description, and utilising the skills available

The staff will be drawn from a range of sources:

- Leaders from within the County/Area
- Leaders from other Counties/Areas
- Explorer Scouts
- Overseas Leaders

- Specialist adults not directly connected to Scouting
- Staff from commercial and other partners

There are a number of approaches of utilising the Leaders from the participating groups:

- The booking policy should indicate an ideal 'Leader to youth ratio' to ensure there is less boredom of those Leaders
- Participating group Leaders can be enrolled as staff, in advance of the camp
- Use of International patrols and good sub-camp scheme frees up Leaders for other duties
- Establish a 'Job Market' to allocate tasks
- Provide skills training sessions for visiting Leaders
- Don't ask visiting Leaders to do the jobs that no one else wants to do

### **Specialist helpers**

- Many camps rely on specialists for aspects of their camps. It should be emphasised to all such staff that the camp is a Scout event, and activities and program should be conducted in keeping with Scout Association policies and rules.
- It is useful to have serving police officers on security staff
- First aid facilities are often better provided by experts in the field such as Red Cross and St John's Ambulance. Otherwise doctors and nurses who are Scout Leaders will be more sensitive to the need of the camp
- Serving fire-fighters have the knowledge and the expertise to cope with the many potential dangers on a camp and may have access to equipment which may be lent to the camp
- Commercial catering staff will be more aware of the need for hygiene, otherwise

careful attention needs to be paid to appropriate training for new staff

### **Services for staff**

To get the most out of your staff here are some useful tips:

- Provide a crèche facility
- Try to include at least one day off
- On a rotation basis, offer some activities to staff and Leaders' Staff club

Most camps provide a separate facility for staff and Leaders so that they can have some time to themselves. Some points to consider here are:

- The area should be out of bounds to youth participants
- The area should be removed from the main camp area to avoid undue noise
- Care should be taken over underage drinking (one system is different coloured identity cards)

## **7 Publicity and public relations**

A major international camp will make a huge impact on local publicity for Scouting. The success of the event will depend on many things, not least the advance publicity to maximise the numbers taking part and having got the participants there, telling as many people as possible about the successes of the camp. Don't forget that many Districts and Counties have Media Managers and Public Relations Officers. Use them!

There are a number of aspects to consider:

- Consider an on line booking system
- Advance publicity to potential participants
- Provide a poster for each Scout Group in the County/Area
- Provide a road show and visits to Groups and Units in the County/Area to maximise local attendance
- Use the County Secretary network to get information to all UK Countries/Areas

- Send information to the International Office for direct mailing to European Associations
- Complete the World Scout Bureau form for inclusion in a mailing to all Associations in membership of WOSM
- Use twin-town committees to make contacts
- Consider the content of invitations to go overseas
- Distribute information at other international camps and the preceding World Scouting Jamboree
- Use business contacts and those going on holiday to establish new contacts
- Establish a web site

### **Practical information to participants**

- Establish a regular newsletter to build up information
- Try to get contributions from overseas participants
- Send the camp booklet well in advance, but with accurate information
- Provide specimen press releases for participating groups

### **Quality information and potential supporters**

- Prepare a brochure and invite different levels of sponsorship, relating to amount of money or support involved
- Give regular updates to sponsors to maintain support
- Give talks to sponsoring companies and organisations
- Send samples of materials featuring the logo of sponsors to them

### **Publicity during the camp**

- Make contact with local newspapers, radio and TV stations well in advance
- Have a special press day

- Use well briefed Explorer Scouts/Scout Network members as escorts for visitors
- Have a special postal frank
- Have a VIP tent with lots of youth hosts
- Distribute general Scouting PR material as well as specific information on the camp
- Have a number of open days for the public or have one special one which gives all the right messages
- Encourage overseas participants to phone or fax reports to their local newspapers

#### **After the camp**

- Prepare a video or slide presentation to be given to sponsors
- Send a full report to sponsors
- Send a copy to those who didn't offer sponsorship this time
- Send a report to the International Office
- Prepare a special certificate of thanks to all staff
- Prepare a special certificate for all staff
- Send a report to participating groups, possibly with some advance information about the next camp
- Give a good presentation to the County and Sectional meetings to maintain the momentum for next time

### **8 Contingency and emergency planning – a checklist**

Please note that this is general guidance only: you will need to develop detailed plans based on a careful assessment of the situation in your area.

- Take advice (for example from the Environmental Health and Emergency Planning Departments of your local

authority, the Fire and Police Services and the Health Service).

- Build your links carefully, well before the event
- Appoint one member of the planning team with the responsibility to develop and test the contingency and emergency plan
- Involve as wide a range of people as possible in preparing the plan (use staff meetings to brainstorm ideas, etc)
- Test the plan to see whether the proposed procedures will work
- Record the plan carefully, make sure that it is up to date and that everyone who needs one has a copy (make sure you have back up copies off site)

#### **What might happen?**

- Accidents (e.g. nearby motorway or airport)
- Acts of nature (e.g. storm)
- Acts of criminals (e.g. public disturbances)

#### **What preventative action do we take?**

- Have a proactive risk management programme with risk assessments fully completed and recorded
- Have clear health and safety instructions for staff and participants
- Encourage a safety culture amongst support staff and adult leaders
- Ensure that medical, fire-fighting and security arrangements are in place
- Put a reporting system in place (with frequent reviews) so that problems can be spotted and prompt action taken
- Have a clear contingency and emergency plan and be prepared to implement it

### What should our contingency and emergency plan cover?

- Management structures which ensure that there is always (24 hours a day during the event) a duty officer who can make decisions
- A clear command and control structure which the duty officer can implement quickly
- Operations centres (one on site, another off it, all with communications and other necessary equipment) for use by the command and control structure
- Methods of raising the alarm on the site
- Communications, both routine and emergency
- Medical care and counselling
- Dealing with hazardous materials
- Fire-fighting
- Site layout
- Emergency security and evacuation arrangements
- Emergency transport
- Liaison with local authorities (with named contacts agreed before the event)
- Media contacts (remembering the requirements of Policy, Organisation and Rules)
- Arrangements for contact with parents/guardians of participants
- Arrangements for follow-up and review after implementation of the plan

### 9 Additional information

The Information Centre can supply the following additional fact sheets:

FS260023 Home Hospitality Guidelines

FS260070 Global Explorer – a programme for international events

FS260071 Visas for Scouts visiting the United Kingdom

You can contact the International Office:

By email: [international@scout.org.uk](mailto:international@scout.org.uk)

By fax: 020 8433 7114

By phone: 0845 300 1818

By post to:

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