



Viking Explorer Scout Unit (VESU) Information for New Members & Parents



EXPLORERS

Viking Explorer Scout Unit

Introduction

Explorer Scouts are managed at a district level rather than being attached to a particular Scout Group. So although we meet in Holmes Chapel we are independent from Holmes Chapel Scout Group. Viking Explorer Scout Unit is part of Alderley District. There are currently 3 Explorer Units in the District and a Young Leader Unit (which does not meet on a regular basis but delivers the training modules and facilitates communication between Young Leaders and the different sections).

The Explorer Scout unit provides young people with the opportunities to develop their physical and personal abilities through a structured programme of activities. This programme follows the national Queen's Scout and Duke of Edinburgh award schemes. It also includes activities in the three scouting challenge areas which are Outdoor & Adventure, World and Skills.

The Explorer Scout unit actively encourages everyone in the unit to achieve the Queen's Scout and Duke of Edinburgh Awards. Their requirements are similar and can be achieved at the same time. The awards require an expedition at each of the three levels of the awards.

The activities of the unit are in three main areas:-

- Regular meetings on Thursday nights which provide opportunities to experience a wide range of activities and have fun.
- Award scheme meetings and expeditions. These are held as required to support those completing these awards, planning their expeditions and providing appropriate expedition training.
- Adventurous activities at weekends including kayaking, hill walking, survival training and camping. This also includes a one week summer expedition.

The Explorer Scouts can take part in any or all of these activities, there is no need to attend every meeting. Explorers must be a member of the Explorer Scout unit (and pay their subs) to take part in any of these activities. All the activities will be advertised to all members (by email, text, Facebook, via www.VESU.org.uk or the notice board in the HQ) whether they attend Thursday evenings meetings or not.

We meet at our HQ next to the garages off Rees Crescent, behind St. Margaret's R.C. Church. Access is by foot either down the drive from Rees Crescent or from the rear of the church.

Meetings at the HQ are on Thursday evenings starting at 7pm and finishing about 9pm. Details of events away from HQ and all Thursday meetings are posted on the unit's website (www.vesu.org.uk). Meetings away from the HQ often need parents to help with transport.

Any last minute changes to the programme will be posted on the website so please check. We have a closed Facebook group where we will post information and photos. If you want to be added to this group please search for VESU and join the group.

Young Leaders Scheme

There is an opportunity to become a Young Leader with the younger sections in Scouting, please speak to a Leader if you are interested. This can be the volunteering element of the Duke of Edinburgh scheme but is also a scheme in its own right.

Leaders

The Unit is run by the Explorer Scout Leader who is assisted by other Leaders and Assistants, all of whom are checked through the Disclosure and Barring Service (previously the CRB). All Leaders, Assistant Leaders and Adult Helpers are unpaid volunteers. They all give up their time for the benefit of the Explorer Scouts.

The Unit leader is Mike Vercoe.

He is supported by Eileen Buglass and Ollie John (Assistant Leaders), Karen Vercoe, Nicky Gilsenan & Helen John (Award Scheme Co-ordinators) and Vince Haynes (Accounts).

Kris Swinnerton is the District Explorer Scout Commissioner and helps the Unit on a regular basis.

Adventurous Activities

The Explorer Scouts will be involved in many adventurous activities including canoeing, climbing, hill walking, mountain biking and lightweight camping. All of these activities are run in accordance with the Scout Association rules for such activities. In many cases these require additional training and assessment for the Leaders. All such activities are run by suitably qualified and experienced Leaders who carry out a risk assessment for each activity.

Financing the Unit

The Explorer Scout unit needs funds to pay for resources for meetings, the running costs and maintenance of their HQ, the purchase and insurance of its camping, canoeing and climbing equipment. The unit also pays an annual fee (currently £37) for each Explorer Scout to the National, County and District Scout Associations for their Leader training support, liability insurance and training scheme.

Unit funds are raised from a membership subscription, fund-raising, gift aid receipts and grants. The membership subscription is payable in the first week of each term. The current subscription is £30 per member per term. Additional payments may be required for attendance at activities such as climbing, canoeing, and camping. Fees for these will be notified with the details of the event.

Fees are also payable for the Queen Scout/ DofE award scheme, A Dof E application fee (presently £22 for bronze and silver and £29 for gold) payable to Cheshire Scouts with the application form (from Leaders). There is also a fee for each expedition to cover the costs (mainly fuel) of the supervisors and assessors of the expeditions. At bronze the fee is £10 per Explorer and at silver £15. This fee covers both practice and qualifying expeditions. At gold level the expedition must take place in wild country e.g. North Wales or Cumbria, and the actual costs will be charged, likely to be about £250 per team. For comparison, a bronze expedition by an outside provider is about £280 (per person), £360 for silver and £510 for gold.

Payments can be made using cash, (in an envelope with Explorer's name please), cheques payable to VESU, direct payment to the VESU bank account - sort code 20-53-77, Account Number 83592170 (Your Explorer Scout's full name as reference please). Cash and cheques must be handed to a Leader.

Occasional fund raising events are organized to supplement the Unit's income. Fund-raising activities are organised by Leaders and adult supporters. Explorers and their parents are encouraged to help whenever possible. We are always looking for new fund-raising ideas and would welcome suggestions from Explorers and their parents at any time. It is particularly helpful if parents work for companies who offer £4£ support to charities, or indeed any other grant scheme. If you do, please let the Leaders know.

We would like everyone who currently pays UK Income Tax to complete the attached Gift Aid Form. This enables the Unit to claim back tax on your subscription fees and helps us to keep subs as low as possible. The unit has reclaimed more than £2500 in the last few years.

Uniforms

As our meetings are often outdoors, muddy or wet we generally wear our activity hoody with a necker when appropriate. The hoody can be obtained through the unit, it costs £20 and a purchase form can be downloaded from our website at http://www.vesu.org.uk/html/about_us.html. Neckers are issued free when the Explorer Scout is invested.

We expect Each Explorer Scout to buy the official uniform shirt for use during parades and when working with other sections of Scouting. School trousers are acceptable with the uniform.

Parents Permission Form

This form asks for permission for your child to take part in Explorer Scout events, it also asks for health information and contact details. The form also asks Parents/Carers to confirm that they are happy for their child to have their photograph taken and for those photographs to be used on the website, on notice boards and occasionally for publicity. We use Online Scout manager to store all member details. This is a secure system complying with GDPR regulations. Please keep us up to date with any changes to your personal circumstances.

Viking Explorer Scout Unit

Parents' Permission and Health Form

Leader: [Mike Vercoe](#)

This form asks for parents' permission for their child to take part in:-
 Weekly Unit meetings, weekends away, adventurous activities, Explorer expeditions & all other Scouting activities.
 In the event of your child needing medical treatment the information requested below may help the medical authorities in deciding on an appropriate course of action/treatment.

First Name	NHS Number
Surname	Latest Tetanus Date
Address	Doctor's Name & Address
Postcode	Postcode
Date of Birth	Telephone

Parent/Guardian name(s) _____
 Emergency Contact Phone Number(s) _____
 Parent Email address _____
 Explorer Scout Email address _____
 Explorer Scout Mobile Phone Number _____

- Please provide below any information which may be useful to the leaders:-
1. Any known allergies/sensitivities/disabilities and details of known precautions or remedies.

 2. Details of any medicines/diets/treatments currently being taken/followed (including dosage details) & the specialist/ hospital concerned.

 3. Any long-term medical conditions e.g. Asthma, heart condition and limb/joint problems.

*All medication should be clearly labelled. Each Explorer Scout is responsible for their own medication unless agreed with an **Explorer Scout Leader**.*

- I hereby give permission for my child to attend organised Explorer Scout Activities.
- I *do/do not* give permission for my child's photograph to be used for Explorer Scout publicity purposes.

Please inform one of the leaders of any significant changes to the details on this form.

Signed.....Date.....

Charity Gift Aid Declaration- Multiple Donations

Gift Aid is reclaimed by the charity from the tax you pay for the current tax year. Your address is needed to identify you as a current UK taxpayer.

In order to Gift Aid your donation you must tick the box below:

I want to Gift Aid my current donation and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years to Alderley District Scout Council (Viking ESU)

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

NAME OF EXPLORER SCOUT: _____

My Details:

Title _____ First name or initial(s) _____

Surname _____

Full Home address _____

Postcode _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Please notify the charity if you:-

- Want to cancel this declaration
- Change your name or home address
- No longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains

If you pay Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self-Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.