

Hatfield Forest District

CENTURION Explorer Scout Unit (ESU)

Last Revision 2023-10-13



Welcome to Explorer Scouting!

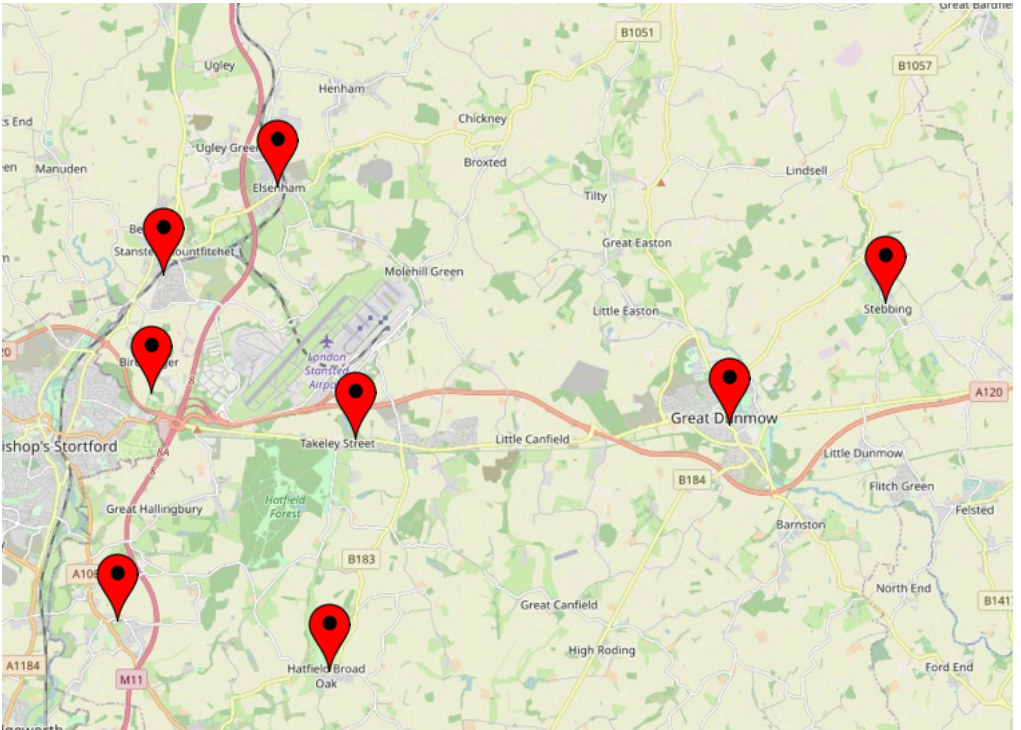


About the Unit

The current Centurion Explorer Scout Unit was formed after merging units from Great Dunmow and Stansted. Explorer Scouts as a section was started in February 2002 after a national restructuring of the age bands for Scout and Venture Scout sections. In Hatfield Forest District we average around 26 members at most meetings.

This guide is both new and regularly being revised. Please report errors or updates.





Where are we?

We welcome Explorer Scouts from anywhere in Hatfield Forest District. We regularly meet on **Fridays 1945-2145 in the Takeley Scout HQ** behind the Jubilee Memorial Hall. Occasionally we meet further afield.



Who are we?

First and foremost we are all volunteers. Most of us have full time jobs and families, and scouting does come second to these. Having said that, we all do our best to provide a balanced and engaging programme for our young people and opportunities for fun and adventure. Planning and execution of the programme can be very time consuming and involves a great deal of paperwork.

We volunteer in Scouting because we love seeing our young people succeed in their endeavours and take a great deal of pride in watching them grow into wonderful human beings.



I'm Roger and I'm Explorer Section Leader (ESL) for Centurion ESU. I've been in-role since 2021 and also assist with the Scout section in Great Dunmow with which I'm still involved. I also scouted in the mid-nineties before "Explorers" was a thing. I currently instruct Archery, Air Rifles, Tomahawks, hold an L2 Powerboating permit and have interests in technology, music and amateur radio, running a JOTA/JOTI event most years.



Terminology & Acronyms

There is a lot of terminology and jargon to familiarise yourself with when becoming involved with scouting. Here are a few useful to Explorers.

Explorer Scout Leader, Young Leaders (ESLYL) - the person responsible for running the young leader programme.

Assistant Section Leader (ASL) - a qualified leader who assists the section leader.

Young Leader (YL) - a young person (aged 14-18), often but not always an Explorer Scout, who assists during meetings of younger sections. Young Leaders often volunteer as part of the Duke of Edinburgh Award programme.

Section - one of the age ranges in scouting - Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Explorers, Network.

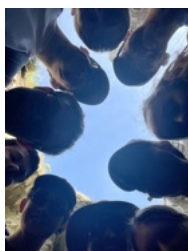
District Explorer Scout Commissioner (DESC) - responsible for oversight of one or more Explorer units in a district.

District Commissioner (DC) - responsible for oversight of all scouting in a district.



What do we do?

If you've been in the Scout- or Guide- Movements for any length of time, some of this should sound familiar. Explorers do a lot of the same activities as Scouts aged 10-14 but to a higher level. This may involve skills, strength, intelligence or consideration for others, to name a few qualities. Overall the focus is on fun. We try to promote a positive, friendly, inclusive culture, often working in teams to achieve our goals.



Lochgailhead, 2022



Thriftwood, 2021

Skills

We try to develop our skills, whatever they may be, and improve our knowledge of the world around us - the environment, its populations, cultures and challenges. We promote giving back to our communities, often volunteering for local, national and international organisations, and aligning in particular with the goals of the Duke of Edinburgh and top scouting awards. Skills may even be tested in competitions with other Explorer units at county-, national- or international level.





Lochgoilhead, 2022

Camps & Expeditions

Camps and expeditions form some of the activities Explorers look forward to most in each year. We try to support a range of camps and expeditions in a variety of situations over the course of each year - these may include short overnight or weekend lightweight camps locally (for example Priory Wood campsite, Skreens Park, Thriftwood, Thorrington etc.); weekends nationally (for example Lake & Peak District National Parks); and week-long, or potentially longer, national or international camps (for example Lochgoilhead, Trossachs National Park, Scotland or Ardèche, Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, France summer camps).

Periodically summer camp plans are also enhanced/disrupted by sending members of the unit to events like the World Scout Jamboree (2023, South Korea).





Kerrera, 2022



Adventure

Being an Explorer Scout means that new possibilities for adventure open up. As your abilities and your confidence in yourself and those around you grow, opportunities allow for more challenging terrains, conditions and activities. Some of these opportunities may be within County or National Scouting, supported by Scout Active Support Units (SASU) or groups like the Essex Scout Mountain Activity Team (ESMAT) who run expeditions throughout the year, to Snowdonia, Lake District, Peak District, Cairngorms, or further afield to the Alps.



Derwentwater, 2021



Duke of Edinburgh Awards

The age range of Explorers, 14-18 years old, naturally overlaps with the age ranges for working towards the Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) Awards. Many Explorer Scouts will have the opportunity to complete their DofEs (Bronze, Silver and/or Gold levels) through school, but some may not. For those we aim to offer the necessary expedition practice and actual through the unit. Occasionally we may advertise or offer expeditions and residentials in coordination with other units. The volunteering aspect can also be achieved through the Explorer Scout Young Leaders Scheme (see below).

Top Scouting Awards

The Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme is a widely recognised achievement on CVs and in job interviews but did you know that DofE stages directly correspond to other top awards in Scouting? The DofE Bronze feeds into the Chief Scouts' Platinum award, the DofE Silver into the Chief Scouts' Diamond, and the DofE Gold into the King's Scout Award which is the highest achievement in UK Scouting, with another significant award being the Explorer Belt expedition.



<https://www.scouts.org.uk/explorers/awards/>



Fundraising

The Explorer Unit does not operate like regular village- or town scout groups. It reports directly to the District and is not affiliated to any specific Scout Group. It does not have sections of its own. As a result the pool of leaders and parents who can provide support for events and fundraising is significantly smaller. Explorer units generally do not have a large store of equipment, nor their own premises and therefore do not tend to come with all the bells and whistles of most scout groups. Operating Explorer units in these conditions can be particularly challenging.

In order to try to tip the scales more in our favour, Explorers are regularly invited to help with fundraising events. Sometimes this is with specific aims in mind, such as supporting participants from the unit attending Jamborees, and at other times this is for the unit itself (to subsidise camps or improve equipment), or for other charitable causes. The Explorer unit and its leadership team cannot do this alone and needs the support of its network of parents and friends of the unit. When asked, please consider donating some of your time, that most precious of commodities. It is always most welcome.



District Fundraising, 2022



Explorer Scout Young Leaders

Explorer Scout Young Leaders are Explorers who volunteer alongside adult leaders in a Squirrel Drey, Beaver Colony, Cub Pack or Scout Troop. They're a valuable asset to any leadership team and play an active role in the section, bringing a range of fresh ideas to the table and acting as positive role models for the young people they work alongside.

All Young Leaders in the Squirrel, Beaver, Cub and Scout sections who are between the ages of 13.5 and 18 must be members of a Young Leaders Unit.

The Explorer Scout Young Leaders' Scheme is the training programme for Young Leaders. It contains 11 modules and four missions for them to work through whilst volunteering in their chosen section. Modules give Young Leaders the skills and knowledge to be successful in their role, while missions allow them to put everything into practice with support.



Where do Explorers come from (and where do they go)?

Scouts, Guides and elsewhere

Explorer Scouts come in all shapes and sizes, from all walks of life, and from many backgrounds. With Explorers being part of the Scout Movement, you can expect most Explorer Scouts to have moved up from the Scout Section around the age of 14, but it is quite common to have a small number of members to be from Guides, or Cadets, or to have come from outside the movement.

Scout Network

On turning 18, Explorer Scouts are considered as adults and although they must leave Explorers, they then have the option of being invested into the Scout Network, the last, adult section for 18 to 25- year olds. This can (but doesn't have to) involve also becoming a leader in any scout section, and undertaking leader training. Handily, any Young Leader training counts towards Leader training.

Scout Network is self-organised and does not have regular meetings. It is very possible to organise your own trips, expeditions and social events. Scout Network may be facilitated by university SSAGO (Student Scout and Guide Organisation) societies, especially if there is a strong university presence in your locality.



Equipment / What do I need?

Uniform

When you're invested into Explorers (a short welcome ceremony) you'll be given your scarf (also known as a neckerchief or necker), your district badge, unit name tape, and sometimes a woggle for your necker.

Full uniform is worn several times throughout the year - special awards, investitures and Renewal of Promise, Remembrance Day, and other formal occasions. Required items of uniform clothing include trousers, shirt/blouse, and belt may be purchased from several different online scout shops (search online).

As a unit we also encourage Explorers to buy their own named/branded, casual, black hoodie which can be worn with the scarf for most meetings instead of full uniform. There may be some second hand uniform available so do please ask.

Hoodies can be customised and ordered from *Handmade by Raksha* [here](#).



Badge Placement

One of the most common questions is where to place a specific badge. Badges are awarded and given for several reasons, most commonly based on a level of demonstrable skill and/or knowledge in a particular activity. Some of these are staged badges (e.g. Sailing Level 5; Nights Away Level 35) where only the latest stage is displayed on the uniform, and others may be one-offs (e.g. Lifesaver; Performing Arts).

Still further badges may be insignia such as UK Contingent, Young Leader, or You-Shaped Award. All types of uniform badge have a specific placement position. Other, non-uniform, badges (e.g. camps or events) are commonly sewn onto a blanket.

<https://www.scouts.org.uk/explorers/explorer-uniform-and-badge-placement/>

Camps & Expeditions

There is often some anxiety around equipment for camps and expeditions. The core requirements tend to remain the same - appropriate clothing for the environment and weather, comfortable walking boots and a decent rucksack with around a 65 litre capacity. Packed rucksacks should not weigh more than 25% of your own bodyweight.

All camps and expeditions will come with a recommended kit list which will have specific provisions for the conditions and activities. The unit may have some equipment available to borrow - please ask if you need to.



Medical, Dietary & SEN information

When joining the unit, as a parent or guardian, you will receive an invitation to manage the electronic record of your young person. This allows the addition of required information such as emergency contact details and medical, dietary, allergy and SEN information. You are strongly encouraged not only to complete all the information in the electronic record, but also to speak to one of the leaders to talk about any needs the young person may have.

Queries / Problems

Please contact the explorer section leader in the first instance. If your query is not resolved to your satisfaction please contact the district commissioner.



Subscription Fees

The fees currently set are £20/month but these can be waived by agreement, if a parent/guardian becomes a regular leader and/or requests hardship assistance (please speak to the district commissioner or treasurer).

Governance

As with all scouting in Hatfield Forest District, Explorers is governed by the board of trustees who maintain responsibility for all financial, safety and safeguarding matters. Please contact the district chairperson for more information.

Social Media



<https://instagram.com/centurionsesu/>



<https://twitter.com/centurionsesu>



<https://www.youtube.com/@centurionsesu5748>



