

‘Scouting is an affordable way of providing a range of exciting and adventurous activities for your child’. In a 2010 survey, 75% of parents said Scouting provided the best value for money compared to other extra-curricular activities like sports and martial arts groups, youth clubs and drama or music classes.’ The Scout Association.

The District Executive Committee recognises that there are occasions when financial support is required in order to ensure young people can enjoy the wide benefits of scouting. In order to ensure support is available the committee has agreed how it will support financial hardship cases through the following policy.

Policy intent

To ensure no young person is prohibited from scouting activities on the grounds of financial hardship.

District strategy

- *To support Groups and Units identify and support hardship cases impacting their members.*
- *To encourage Groups and Units to support hardship cases from their own resources.*
- *To signpost where financial support is available that Groups and Units may access.*
- *To provide support where required and is financially viable.*
- *To promote to Groups and Units the availability of District funds in support of hardship cases.*

Process

- *Applications should be made to the District Commissioner, normally by the GSL or ESU Leader.*
- *All applications will be made and held on a confidential basis although a record of the application and the outcome will be made.*
- *Each application will be considered on an individual basis against the guiding criteria – see below.*
- *A report on funds provided will be made to the Executive Committee without naming applicants or recipients.*

Guiding Criteria

The following are for guidance only and each case will be considered on its merits:

- *There is an expectation that the individual or family as well as the Group or Unit will make some financial contribution and the District will not normally expect to pay 100%.*
- *The funding might relate to the payment of membership subscriptions, purchasing uniform or activity clothing or activity fees for an individual.*
- *The District will not fund the repayment of loans, deficits on events or any kind of retrospective funding.*
- *Any funding by the District will be limited by available funds.*

Other sources of funding

- The Harpenden Society, see <http://theharpendentrust.org.uk/index.php/how-we-help/care-fund/>
- Turn2us, which includes a search tool to help identify where hardship funds are available. See https://grants-search.turn2us.org.uk/?_ga=1.144739700.1945960225.1491807264

The Scout Association advice on individual 'financial hardship'

The Scout Association has a number of funds they manage to support individual members in 'financial hardship', something which can be a difficult subject to discuss with young people, parents and leaders. Young people and adults who are carers or are considered 'looked after children' (in care) would be eligible.

Evidence that can help you make best judgement of 'financial hardship' would be if a family is in receipt of one of the following:

- Free school meals*
- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- an income-related employment and support allowance
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit (provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit) and have an annual income that does not exceed £16,190 as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs*
- Working tax credit
- Universal Credit
- Housing Benefit
- the Guarantee element of State Pension Credit

*Free school meals are provided to all pupils in the lower years of primary schools in England and Wales, so the other indicators are more valid in these circumstances.

A national fund available for support for uniforms and camps and more information on the funds and ways of considering financial hardship can be found at:

https://scouts.org.uk/media/61648/factsheet_hq_grants_to_support_local_scouting_july_2010_edition_1.pdf

<http://members.scouts.org.uk/documents/factsheets/Standard%20application%20July%202010%20Edition%201.pdf>

The policy will be reviewed from time to time.

September 2017