

Case studies

Real stories of parents supporting Scouting

It's easy for parents to get involved in Scouting. Here are some different experiences of parents who have enjoyed helping out.

Ian – Group Scout Leader

'I was a Cub Scout and then a Scout until I was 12 years old, but then had little involvement with the Movement until my son joined Beavers. There was no Scout Section in the Group as the previous Leader had left five years ago, so when the time came for my son to move into Scouts, he faced the prospect of joining the waiting list for another Group. By co-incidence, the Group's Beaver Leader was planning to open a Scout Section, and he gathered some parents together to ask them if they would become a warranted Leader. My primary concern was the amount of time that would have to be given over to running the Troop, and we were all concerned about work pressures interfering with programme events and letting down the Scouts by not attending. The solution was to establish a 'co-operative Leadership'. This ensured that there were enough Leaders when work commitments prevented some from attending.

Initially the Scout Leadership team consisted of four dads. We all took on the role of Assistant Scout Leaders with no one person in overall control. Despite concerns over work commitments I think over the last year not one of us have missed more than two Troop nights! I initially worked as the Troop Secretary, but I have just taken on the role of Group Scout Leader.

Volunteering as a Scout Leader gives me an opportunity to make a difference to children's lives in the community. I've found it fun and fulfilling. The training, which seemed daunting at first, was not only essential when running a Troop night, but also teaches you many skills that are used regularly in the workplace. By volunteering as a parent Leader, many mums and dads already know me, communication with them is easier, and recruitment of Scouts is easier as you are in contact with many of your children's friends. We recently recruited four new Beaver Leaders using the same 'co-operative leadership' strategy.'

Christine's story – Section Assistant

'I was involved with Scouting when I was younger, but had to give up due to study and work commitments. When two of my sons were old enough, they joined the village Scout Group. I realised that there was a lack of local adult support for the Group, and it felt like the right time to get involved again. I've always believed in the Scout Movement, and wanted to be part of and contribute to an organisation I hold in such high esteem. I spoke to the Cub Scout Leader about volunteering again, and I am now a Section Assistant. As I work part-time and have three children, I job-share the role with another adult, and we cover alternate weeks.

Since starting the role, I've had so many opportunities to try activities that I wouldn't have done otherwise, such as rock climbing and going to Gilwell Park for an open day, which was a fantastic inspiration to me as a new volunteer. This summer I also spent several days helping out at a local Jamboree and it was great to meet so many people from all over the UK and abroad committed to one cause. I believe my enthusiasm and commitment have been an asset to the Group, and have enabled the adults and young people to enjoy Scouting and grow. You get out of Scouting what you put in, for me it's something to be proud of.'

Andrew - County Commissioner

'I used to be a Cub Scout some years previously but had lost contact with Scouting before I met my wife. She and her family were very involved and I started to go along to events to support them. I found that I enjoyed working with young people and felt I had something to offer. When my son became a Beaver I decided it was time to give something back and offer my skills and experience to Scouting.

I made contact with a County Commissioner who was very supportive and active and agreed to find me a suitable role. I began volunteering as a member of the District Executive Committee, became District Secretary, then District Commissioner and finally County Commissioner. I really enjoy being part of a team, contributing to the success of Scouting, working with young people and understanding the issues they face today. Through using my work skills, I believe I have provided leadership, direction, structure and professional administration to the District and County.'

Tina's story - Beaver Colony Administrator

'I first got involved with Scouting through my daughter. When she joined Beavers, I got chatting to the Chairman of the District at an event. I mentioned that I work in administration, and she said that the District was looking for someone to help with administration for the monthly newsletter. I felt this was something I could do easily, and without committing too much time, so I asked her to tell me a bit more about what it would entail. I now send out the newsletter once it has been written and printed by other volunteers. I like being able to help my daughter's Group in a way that suits my skills and availability. There's no pressure and everyone works to their own schedule.'

