

# Guidelines for Beaver Scout Residential Experiences



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## Purpose

Residential experiences in the Beaver Scout section very often give young people their first experience of a night away from home without their parents/carers. They are the young person's first taste of residential Scouting and it is vital that any 'introductory' experience of the activity should be of a good quality. This will ensure that a young person is not put off by a bad experience.

## Participation

Residential experiences are part of the Balanced Programme and they should be offered to all Beaver Scouts within the Colony. This could be as part of a District run event, a residential experience run jointly with another Colony, as part of a Group camp, or it might be just as a single Colony.

The activity offers the following benefits to young people:

- The fun and excitement of spending time with friends
- More time for extended activities
- Completing part of the Outdoor Challenge
- Contributes towards the Nights Away Staged Activity Badge
- A link to other sections, for example at a District or Group residential experience
- Encourages a sense of independence

## Duration

Residential experiences for Beaver Scouts must be for one night only. The venue should be close

enough to allow parents/carers to have access to their child should it be required. This will be only in exceptional circumstances, and 'dropping in' should be discouraged.

As an example, the residential experience could begin at 9am on Saturday morning and finish at 5pm on Sunday afternoon. This will enable Beaver Scouts to take part in two full days of activities with a night away in the middle.

Family Camps are a different type of residential experience and can be for more than one night (see factsheet FS120083) and are another option.

## Accommodation

Please see POR rule 9.57 for guidance on the definition of what indoor, campsite and green field means.

For indoor residential experiences, the venue should have suitable kitchen and washing facilities available.

There must be separate sleeping facilities for adults, Young Leaders and young people and there should be separate sleeping facilities for males and females. However, this may not necessarily mean separate rooms for the male and female Beaver Scouts. If there is only one room available for the Beaver Scouts' sleeping accommodation, as an example, you can put up screens or dome/pop up tents to provide separate sleeping areas.

It is good practice to have separate toilet and washing facilities for males and females and for adults and young people.

If you choose to run a residential experience outside, i.e. camping, there must be alternative

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accommodation in the event of adverse conditions. If the accommodation you are using is no longer habitable then you will need somewhere that is safe, sheltered and can be slept in.

It is highly undesirable for Beaver Scouts to go greenfield camping, due to the basic facilities this type of camping can offer.

Whether using Scout premises, public buildings or camping facilities, steps should be taken to ensure that there is adequate security to prevent access by the general public.

A phone should be on hand for the whole time that the residential experience takes place. This should be either a mobile phone that works or suitable access to a landline.

### **Nights Away Permit**

The person in charge must hold an appropriate Nights Away Permit. This doesn't necessarily have to be the Colony Leader – see factsheet FS120800 Nights Away Permit Scheme for further information on the appropriate permit needed.

### **Leadership team**

All adults should be known to the Beaver Scouts and must have been the subject of the personal enquiry process set out in POR Rule 3.26.

It is important that there is an opportunity for parents/carers and Beaver Scouts to meet the leadership team before the event. It is recommended that a pre-event briefing meeting takes place when all involved, including parents/carers and Beaver Scouts are present. It will give leaders the opportunity to reassure the parent/carers about the event, discuss the plans for the event and explain how the InTouch system works. It will also give parents/carers and Beaver Scouts the opportunity to ask any questions they may have.

There must be enough adults attending the residential experience to meet the recommended minimum ratio of 1 adult to 6 Beaver Scouts plus the leader in charge (as detailed in POR rule 3.7(g)). It is desirable that the leadership team is a balance of male and female adults. Members of

the leadership team should be nominated to take responsibility for different areas of the residential experience (eg: first aid, catering and programme). You need to make sure you have enough adults to supervise the young people and run the programme at all times, bearing in mind that some adults will be unavailable at certain times if they are assisting with the catering or other tasks.

### **Planning**

Early planning is essential; please see the guidelines in the Nights Away resource for further information. There is also a checklist at the back of this factsheet.

It is recommended that camping takes place during the summer months when the nights are lighter; the weather is warmer and slightly more predictable. Although the winter months are not recommended for camping, as an alternative, indoor residential experiences are great fun at any time of the year.

Ideally the venue should be visited at least six months before the event so that you are satisfied that the facilities are adequate for your residential experience. This also provides plenty of time for planning the event to take place and planning the programme.

As part of the planning process, you will need to carry out the necessary risk assessments for the residential experience. More information on carrying out risk assessments can be found in factsheet FS120000 and in the Nights Away resource. The information in the Nights Away resource includes details about fire risk assessments for both indoor and outdoor events.

The completed form Nights Away Notification Form (Form NAN) should be with your District Commissioner at least seven days before the event, although it makes sense to send this as soon as possible to give the District Commissioner time to deal with any problems or queries.

Whenever any activity or event is run within Scouting it is a requirement that an InTouch

system is in place (POR 9.3). This is to ensure that everyone involved is aware of how communication will take place between leaders, participants and those not on the event. There will be details of who is present should anything go wrong and there is a system in place in the event of an emergency. More information can be found on the InTouch factsheet FS120075.

### **Parent/Carer Communication**

You should provide full information on the event, including the times, dates, venue, InTouch details, and kit list etc to parents/carers. It is also important that parents/carers provide the leader in charge with information such as medical conditions including allergies, special dietary requirements and contact information that will be valid during the event.

The Nights Away Information Form (FS120082) can be used to provide all the relevant information (including a basic kit list).

### **Programme**

A programme of fun, energetic items and skilful activities should be balanced by periods of quiet relaxation. A programme needs to be developed to build on the particular opportunities of the site and should be suitable for all.

For more information on programmes for residential experiences please see the Nights Away resource.

### **Headcounts**

During the outing or activity, remember to perform regular headcounts of the young people in your care. A headcount is an effective method of ensuring the group is together and complete.

Conducting headcounts are equally important on everyday Scouting activities as they are on more adventurous activities. A headcount should be conducted where there is a change in environment during the activity; examples include:

When changing direction on a walk, perhaps to a new path, ensure the group is together and complete.

In an urban environment, conducting a headcount both before and after crossing a busy road will ensure the group remains together.

You will need to find the way that works best for your section to conduct the headcount. Examples of how you can do this could be:

- To make sure each young person has a buddy, they keep an eye out for their buddy and if they can't see them alert, one of the adults. The buddies can be paired up when a headcount is done.
- Ask the young people to form into their lodges/sixes/patrols and conduct the headcount from this. You can involve the young people in the process.
- Get the section into group sizes that are easily divisible. For example, if you have a group of 20, get the young people into smaller groups of five.

### **Further Information**

For further information on residential experiences see Nights Away and chapter 5 of Colony Essentials. Colony Programmes and Colony Programme Plus volumes one and two provide a wealth of ideas for developing a great programme.

Other factsheets relevant are:

FS120800: Nights Away Permit Scheme

FS120082: Nights Away Information Form

Form NAN: Nights Away Notification

FS120075: InTouch

FS120000: Risk Assessments

FS120083: Family Camps

### Checklist for organising a Beaver Scout Residential Experience

- Decide to run a residential experience
- Check that the adult in charge has the appropriate Nights Away permit
- Decide on the leadership team
- Discuss possible venues and dates
- Visit possible venue and check facilities and available dates
- Set date and venue
- Organise the checking of all adults attending the camp, via the appropriate regional vetting authority, i.e. The Criminal Records Bureau or Disclosure Scotland or Northern Ireland procedures.
- Check that a fire risk assessment has been carried out for any indoor venue you are using. Also remember to carry out risk assessments for the activities; please see Activities – Risk Assessment factsheet (FS120000).
- Prepare a draft programme (including a wet weather alternative, menu and arrange transport and cost for the event.
- Caterer sets menu around programme
- Check appropriate equipment is available and book
- The leadership team agree the activity and their area of responsibility e.g. first aid, catering, security
- Invite the Beaver Scouts to the residential experience with full event details and kit list using a form, such as the one available on FS120082
- Collect and bank all fees
- Check and prepare equipment
- Finalise the programme and catering needs
- Set up an InTouch system (see Fact Sheet FS120075)
- Send the Form NAN to District Commissioner at least seven days before the residential experiences
- Check that you have medical and contact information for everyone attending, as well as guidance for any young people on medication
- Carry out the residential experience and have a great time
- Detailed review by the leadership team and include the views of the Beaver Scouts as part of the review
- Settle all accounts and produce income and expenditure account
- Thank all those involved for their efforts and contributions