

DIGITAL SUPPORT TO GET THINGS DONE

WHY ?

In the research undertaken across a wide range of volunteers over a period, we have learnt that

- The volunteers of tomorrow expect engaging digital support in all aspects of their volunteering. We do not have that today, so it is a gap we need to fill if we want to attract and retain great volunteers.
- Our current systems are no longer ideal for purpose and do not make managing membership easy.
- Some of the current content, activities and information is not easily accessible on all digital devices. Often fine on a PC or laptop but very challenging to try and use on a tablet or smart phone.

WHAT ?

Advances in both digital technologies to deliver and retain content as well as in digital devices to receive and transmit has meant the need to review the systems that we use in Scouts and produce and provide an up to date, robust and simpler system for all our volunteers.

The development of the new management system is not just a replacement for Compass, it will bring together several strands of information channels and data storage into one, easily accessed and navigated place. The new system will provide

- Better tools: easier to use, more flexible, less time consuming
- A much wider range of interactive possibilities like arranging permits
- Simplified processes
- Volunteers much more in charge of their own learning and own information
- Multiple great tools accessed via the scouts.org.uk with a single sign-on

The membership system will incorporate three areas covering

- New member joining
- Membership records
- Your learning

It has a much more up to date “look and feel” utilising tiles and simple descriptions and links. This will reduce the number of “clicks” required to navigate the system.

Want to see more, click on this link below to see our latest video on the new Membership System (August 2024)



**Everything is
straightforward
and easy to use.**

[CLICK HERE TO RUN VIDEO](#)

HOW ?

In designing the new membership system, there are a set of 8 digital principles being built into the foundations of how the project does things, they are:

- We put people at the heart of everything we do
- We are bold and open to change
- We create digital-first, responsive and accessible services
- We use data and insight to drive our decisions
- We measure, test, and learn
- We engage, collaborate and partner
- We provide safe and secure services
- Our systems are flexible, sustainable, and interoperable

WHEN ?

In November 2023, the build of the new Membership System was completed. A comprehensive programme of testing followed by a wide variety of individuals, both volunteers from within Scouts as well as Scouts Staff members. This large pool included individuals with varying levels of IT skills to ensure the system was user friendly. That element of testing went very well, and the feedback was very positive and strong.

The systems testing however identified some concerns around the ability to transfer significant amounts of data to the new system. With a much enhanced functionality, there is a requirement to receive, hold and use significantly higher levels of data than any current systems. Consequently, planned roll out to the Early Adopter Cohort was put on hold whilst further work was undertaken with the system developers and our HQ teams. It is vital that the system is fully robust and operational when we come to transfer all current records and information so, additional time is being spent to resolve the challenges.

Since the beginning of 2024, extensive testing at various levels has been undertaken and, so far, progress is good. It is still not possible to provide a “go live” date and therefore, Compass remains our primary data source.

A MOVE TO DIGITAL PROCESSES

The new digital system will support a range of local processes which will significantly reduce the amount of time volunteers need to spend doing ‘admin’. There are two Groups of local processes which will be available and usable at the date of Transformation. Specifically:

- Group 1 - existing local processes which are amended by the new digital system, and which must be used from day 1
- Group 2 - local processes that can now be supported by the new digital system, but do not need to be used from day 1 (they are useful processes, but the digital support is not imperative from day 1)

Group 1 includes:

- Managing your local structures (Inc. teams, sub-teams, and organisation details)
- Volunteer Joining Journey
- Notifications (Automated Messages, Emails)
- Managing our volunteers (Inc. their teams & accreditations)
- Permits (Activity, Nights Away)(including tracking)
- Volunteer Role Change process
- Appointment Reviews
- Dashboards & Reporting

- Good Service Awards
- Learning (Growing Roots (mandatory) & Branching Out)
- Suspensions (Adults)
- Managing my personal details

Group 2 includes:

- Nights Away Notifications and authorisations
- Adding qualifications
- Grant applications
- Actions
- Minibus Permits
- Attracting new volunteers (recruitment)

WHAT ABOUT DIGITAL INCLUSION ?

Scouts is 'digital first' in the way it supports its volunteers, but it is not "digital only".

We know that digital is key to improving the volunteer experience in Scouting:

- Research shows that most potential volunteers expect it
- It is how most parents and carers expect to interact with their children's activities
- Most existing volunteers rely on digital tools to run their Scouting, as seen in the high usage levels of Scouts.org.uk and the adoption of OSM by 80% of the Movement
- It's a cost effective way of providing volunteers with the support they need, which in turn helps us keep the membership fee low

We understand that in the UK today research shows:

- 99% of people between 16-54 have smartphone access
- 90% of 55-64 year olds have smartphone access
- 94% of households have Wi-Fi
- 99% of the population describe themselves as regularly online

But Scouts cannot be 'digital only' because we want to support all our great volunteers and they will not all be digitally engaged. There can be barriers of accessibility, connectivity, affordability, and confidence in using digital services, even if they are online. 10% of adults in the UK lack confidence in using online digital services.

These days we expect that all Groups have some sort of digital engagement with Scouting, whether keeping in touch with HQ, County and District support, or keeping parents informed about what they are up to. We want to support as many volunteers as possible to be part of this. Here is how we plan to help:

Accessibility:

Scouts will make sure that our digital services are as accessible as possible so that disability is not a barrier to participation. All digital products will be checked against modern industry standards for usability by all,

- Providing alternative text for images, links, and non-text content
- Ensuring sufficient colour contrast between text and background
- Providing transcripts and captions for multimedia content
- Providing clear and consistent navigation and headings
- Ensuring that all forms and input fields are clearly labelled
- Providing descriptive and meaningful link text
- Allowing for keyboard-only navigation and ensuring that focus is visible and easy to navigate
- Ensuring that content is easily resizable without loss of functionality or content
- Providing user controls for any time-based media to allow users to pause, stop, or adjust playback
- Scouts has recently updated our brand colours which have been tested with accessibility in mind.
- Our new colour palette provides guidance on pairings to comply with WCAG 2.1 guidelines for colour contrast and readability.
- These updates are currently being rolled out across all digital products and included in the new content design.

Connectivity and Affordability:

Services are being built to run really well on smartphones, the most commonly used digital devices in the UK.

For Groups operating in areas of deprivation the availability of devices and connectivity may be a barrier. There are many local charities across the UK that support local good causes with repurposing devices and training volunteers – many of them have been busy recently helping refugees from Ukraine. There are also national charities that can support with grants and businesses that provide charity rates. The Good Things Foundation support charities with devices and training nationally. Details of such opportunities will be signposted on the Scouts website.

Building Digital Confidence: Our Digital Skills Framework: For those who are online but are not confident doing a wide range of tasks digitally Scouts has introduced a Digital Skills Tool which features some online training. In addition, there is a digital champions network that can provide personalised support.

This will include support on the new adult membership system but also on general digital tools like email, spreadsheets, and video meetings. These skills will be useful in their personal life, in work and at Scouts, building digital citizenship in our volunteer community. Details and link is below.

Helping those who are not online: Proxy users:

For those volunteers who don't work digitally today and don't want to make the shift then Scouts will have a 'proxy' route for somebody else to complete certain digital tasks for them. They will have a say in who does this for them. There will be a small workload locally to provide this service, and of course the more volunteers we get on line the smaller this workload will be.

The proxy route should be treated as the backstop when all other means of supporting a volunteer to engage online have been tried. If volunteers subsequently get themselves set up with an email address, then it will be easy to get them a log-in to the system and retire the proxy support.

The proxy route will give volunteers the ability to get the help they need with the most common admin tasks in Scouting: updating profile information, accessing communications, applying for permits, requesting nights away authorisation, etc.

Currently, the new online learning tool will not support the proxy user model, so anyone without a Scouts systems log in who needs to complete learning tasks will do them in offline / workbook mode, with a member of the local Volunteer Development team updating their learning record in the system.

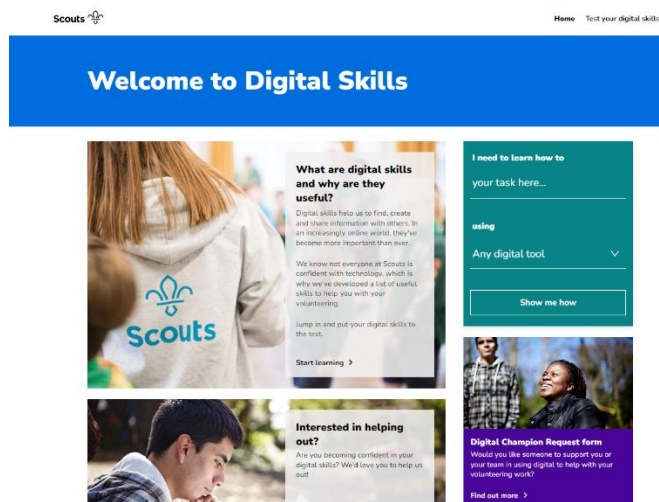
Some roles can only be done by people with system access, e.g.: roles involved in approval processes in the system: appointments, permits, activities, etc, just as today a lot of administrator and manager roles can only be done by people who can access Compass.

WHAT NEXT ?

Transformation will see Scouts move into an increasingly digital world and it's important we support our members to reap the benefits from the digital tools available to us. That may mean learning new skills or knowing where to look for sources of information.

To help our volunteers learn about, understand, and use digital tools, the Scouts website has a dedicated area that provides useful information and training. Click on the following link to find out more.

[DIGITAL SKILLS](#)



Compass Clean-Up

In preparation for the migration of data from Compass to the new Membership System work has been underway for over a year, led by your Group Scout Leader, District Explorer Scout Commissioner or District Commissioner to ensure that all your personal details recorded on Compass are correct. This includes adding an Emergency Contact if not already in place.

This work is not a “one – off” and needs to be conducted and completed as ongoing routine. When adding new members, ensure that all elements are complete such as Role Variant, E-Mail address and Emergency Contacts.

Please remember to review and check your own data periodically to make sure that any changes to e-mail addresses or mobile numbers are updated.

In addition, the County Training Team have been working through all training records to try and update as much as possible. Again, it is your personal responsibility to check and flag any matters you believe are incorrect.

New Membership System Sign -On

Watch out for details closer to Transformation about how to sign into the new Membership System. There will be instructions and I am expecting some simple “how to” videos.

Log in will be via the Scouts.org.uk Website and you will need a unique* e-mail address to do this. Compliance with GDPR is essential and the system will only recognise one e-mail address against one membership. You can select to have a secondary e-mail address to receive information, if you choose but it is not essential, you can use the same e-mail address for Sign -On and to receive / send mail messages.

*Unique to Scouts i.e., a shared e-mail address is permissible so long as only one party is a member of Scouts. If two or more parties are members of Scouts, even in different Groups, Districts or Counties, only one will be accepted. Following extensive work, the number of cases that this applies to in Somerset is now down to single figures and continues to be checked and reminders sent to those impacted.

It is possible to use a business or work mail address (subject to the above) however, some corporate systems have firewalls and mail blocking software to protect from hackers and spam. This may result in you not receiving important messages about things like expiring learning or permit applications etc.

Keeping Up to Date

Over the coming weeks and months, information and actions will be required from all members. It is therefore important that you keep up to date with information and act promptly, where activity is required. This will ensure that you, your Section, your Group, your Unit, your District, and your County are “Transformation Ready”.



Alan Henderson
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The information contained in this document is understood to be correct in respect of the plans and progress associated with the National Transformation Programme at the time of publication (March 2024). As with any strategic change programme operating with agile methodology, content and detail are subject to change without notification E&OE.