

Camps, Events and Payment Policy and our Hardship Fund (info for parents)

Payments through OSM/GoCardless

We use OSM and GoCardless to collect both event and subscriptions payments.

We do not accept payment by any other means. This is to reduce admin time for our volunteer leaders and finance team.

When your child joins the group and we have set up their record on OSM, you will receive an invitation to make payments through the system. This involves setting up a Direct Debit with your bank through a company called GoCardless. GoCardless process the payments on behalf of OSM.

Please note, a Direct Debit is set up between GoCardless and your bank. Neither the Scout Group or OSM store your bank account details. Once this link has been set up between GoCardless and your bank you will be able to make payments through OSM.

If your child changes sections within the group e.g. they've moved up, you will be asked to authorise the payments in the new section (but can use the existing GoCardless Direct Debit), and won't need to reenter your account details.

Please help the leaders by regularly logging in to OSM and checking the status of your account and payments.

Events

Details of events taking place outside of the normal weekday evening programme are made available through the OSM (Online Scout Manager) Parent Portal. Each of these events has a confirmation deadline stated in the event invitation email.

The parent portal may allow you to make changes to whether your young person is attending the event but only up until the confirmation deadline date.

If there are no places available to sign up to, please use the reserve list and a leader will contact you if it is possible to offer your child a place on the event.

Young people marked as attending after the confirmation deadline has passed have made a commitment to attend the event and any necessary payments must be submitted.

If a young person 'drops out' after the confirmation deadline it can cause big problems. We may have to pull an entire team from a competition (because of minimum numbers) and often people drop out at too short notice for someone else to take part which is unfair on those on the reserve list. This aside, it adds an administrative headache to already hardworking volunteers, so please be sure your child wishes to take part before you mark them as attending.

Event Payments

If an event has an associated payment, OSM will automatically send you a payment request email (or emails in the case of multiple payments) if your child is marked as "attending" on the Parent Portal.

Event payments are due on the date specified in the payment email/on OSM. Young people marked as attending after the confirmation deadline has passed have made a commitment to attend the event and any payments must be submitted. If there is a reserve list for the event, we reserve the right to offer your child's place to another young person if the event payment/deposit is not submitted within 1 week of the due date.

If you have a subscription setup, the payment will be automatically initiated on the due date. A subscription can be setup at any time on the Parent Portal. If you do not have a subscription setup, you will need to manually initiate the payment by clicking "Pay Now" in the Payments section of the Parent Portal.

Please note we are unable to cancel payment requests or offer refunds for events once the confirmation deadline has passed. This is because we buy event tickets and base our event budget on the number of young people that are signed up to attend after the confirmation deadline date. Full refunds will of course be given if an event is cancelled, or if we can find another young person to take the place of your child.

If you will have difficulty making a payment, please contact the leaders in confidence.

Making Activities Accessible

If the cost/money is making it difficult for your child to attend an event, please let us know - we have a Hardship Fund (see overleaf) and there'll always be a way in which we can make things happen.

We would never want a young person to miss out on an opportunity because the cost of taking part is a challenge – please email the leaders in confidence and we will help.

Subscription Payments

Membership subscriptions are due monthly, on the first day of each month, for all 12 months of the year.

OSM will automatically send out payment requests and if you have a subscription setup, the payment will be automatically initiated on the due date. A subscription can be setup at any time on the Parent Portal.

If you do not have a subscription setup, you will need to manually initiate the payment by clicking “Pay Now” in the Payments section of the Parent Portal.

Hardship Fund

We are committed to providing opportunities for all young people to engage with Scouting in accordance with the Scouts' Equal Opportunities Policy.

We recognise that there are circumstances where members of the group may be unable to meet the financial commitments for key Scouting events, but their participation would be both deserving and of significant benefit.

The Scout Group maintains a Hardship Fund, which is administered in accordance with the guidelines set out below. Applications are always considered on a case-by-case basis.

Any member of the Scout Group with a particular financial need can apply; financial need is defined as the difference between what it costs to attend and what the applicant can afford to pay.

The fund will provide:

- Support with attending Scouting activities/events in the UK or abroad
- Support with the purchase of uniform
- Support with the payment of membership subscriptions
- Support for those that may require additional support/needs to access Scouting

Grants are usually provided on a matched funding basis (i.e., the recipient is usually expected make a financial contribution alongside the group's contribution) but in some circumstances a grant without matched funding would be appropriate.

Members meeting one or more of the following will be prioritised access to the fund:

- Young Carers
- Child/Young Person in care
- Recent death of Parent (within 12 months)
- In receipt of Job Seekers Allowance /Benefits
- Convalescence after illness
- In receipt of Free School Meals
- Physical/mental health issues (applicant's own)
- Recent redundancy (of applicant or next of kin, within 12 months)
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Total household income level below £23,000 (in line with Gilwell fund)
- Young person in Part Time work (less time to fundraise)

Applications to the Hardship Fund must be made in writing to the Group Lead Volunteer who will obtain agreement of the Trustee Board. Information relating to individual hardship cases will be treated as strictly confidential.

Updated: January 2026