



# Scouts

## Moray

# NEWSLETTER

**Squirrels**

**BEAVERS**

**cubs**

**SCOUTS**

**EXPLORERS**

**network**

**LEADERS**



ISSUE 1

JULY 2025

# WELCOME

Welcome to the first edition of a new publication for Moray Scouts. The aim of this newsletter is to bring all groups in Moray closer by sharing information and events, training opportunities, programme ideas and general relevant information to your roles. Working in conjunction with the District Website, we aim to make information easier to access and provide a platform for support in your Scouting roles.

This initial edition will be a little sparse on content as it has been developed as the initial staging platform awaiting input from across the District. We will always be looking for content to put in the newsletter, so please feel free to submit anything you would like to share from a personal, section or group perspective.

As you should all be aware, the new online portal for membership went live at the end of last year. This replacement for the Compass system doesn't have an official name but is generally known as the Member Portal. There is a page in here dedicated to the Portal and relevant information will be posted there. By the time this inaugural edition actually hits the press after long delays, personal health issues etc, you will no doubt all have had a chance to try it out and probably have more questions than answers!

There have been a lot of changes to Scouting over the last year with the change in role descriptions and a new learning scheme being introduced to replace the original training structure for Leaders. Most of these have come to a head right before the holidays and have, unfortunately, caused a lot of issues across the country in trying to put certain elements into place and re-establishing member's original roles so they can continue to carry out tasks. Hopefully this will all be ironed out soon and, at the end of the day, it doesn't stop the everyday running of the sections and the amazing programmes you run for your young people.

Please forward all contents for future editions to: [morayexplorerscouts@gmail.com](mailto:morayexplorerscouts@gmail.com)

*Derek*

Derek C Page  
Editor

Scouts  
Moray





## Handing over the reigns

Doug McPhee, District Lead Volunteer  
(District Commissioner)

I was asked to try and look back over my time as DC in old money. To be honest I struggle to remember 10 days ago never mind 10 years.

What is easy to remember is the support from everyone and how as a District we adapted to the changes Scouting gave us. From change in permits, POR, systems and through it we have the crazy days of covid to manage and work through to keep scouting going.

I think this has had the most effect on everyone, it is strange to think those days are now 5 years passed. But I must applaud the association in this instance as it gives us plenty of ideas to keep scouting moving forward, indeed it was seen that many acting ideas went out into educational and the business aspects of the UK. Its one of the many aspects of that time all leaders should be immensely proud of themselves.

In looking back there are many things am sure I could have done better; hindsight is a wonderful thing. You will forgive me if I try not dwell on them.

What we did do over this time was, we took part in two world Jamborees sending young people to America and to Korea which for a small District is fantastic.

Every 2 years we have sent more young persons to Blair than our per capita gave us, always backfilling the numbers others could not fill, many of these patrols taking the camp chiefs pendant, show what we do is recognised, these young persons had a brilliant time, memories for life.

I look at each section and admire the young persons for their determination to get awards. I did love the Christingle service; it was one of the things I did feel bad about how it reduced in numbers from what was one of our main events, but things do change, a chilly night at Bourgh Briggs isn't always the best.

However a more positive note, was the number of sections, as well as group camps across Moray and well out of District, we have seen them go to so many varied events, camps and away days.

Moray is always well represented at National camps across all our age groups, and I am forever thankful for the leaders who take their time to attend these, where there is a camp, there is usually someone from Moray.

We have also managed to increase the permits across the district; this has led to continued replacement of well used equipment available to everyone to use as well as leaders willing to get the activity permits.

I am aware that change happens, changes to Region, POR, Scottish HQ all have a knock-on effect, safety and safeguarding work is at times intense and it is never great to have to suspend individuals' for many varied reasons. Again this went for training, having to do the training can be challenging, but with a team to support it we managed to keep on the right side to the percentages most of the time.

I would say that towards the end of my tenure the paperwork side to the job got very heavy, the role became 4 nights a week to get through the requirements of change, this is the main downside of the role the time it takes from you.

But as I said at the start, everything was made easier with a brilliant bunch of people in Moray, from exec to leaders to supporters, to parents, but most of all the young persons, they are and always will be the reason we all do this role. To give back is very special.

I met a young man working on the Edinburgh to Glasgow train recently, he knew me, I did not know him. He was collecting tickets, he stopped and said Hi Dougie, I did not have a clue, he said he had done a number of events in Moray with myself and John Innes and he just wanted to say thanks, thank for giving him the opportunity, he said he didn't know the effect scouting and Moray had on him, positively. I must admit I think I floated out the train.

I look back at my own time as a scout and my leaders Ian Barr, Roger Scott, Alan Parker & Bill Currie, I think I spent most time arguing with most of them, but latterly as I became a leader, like my train journey chat, I didn't know until I got older the effect he had and scouting had on me. I have been incredibly lucky and continue to be.

So as leaders we may not know as we teach that young person a knot, show them bearing, colour in a drawing or sing a song how we will affect them, but from looking back I can say we do an amazing job and what we give as a start in life is something worth doing, it can change lives.

My time looking back is a blur, from meetings to camps to meetings, but most done with a smile and a laugh.

To each and everyone there are so many that had an influence, but to all I say thank you for your patience, understanding and for the friendship on a 10-year journey.





Stuart Gray, District Lead Volunteer

I just wanted to say a quick hello and properly introduce myself as your new Lead Volunteer for Moray. Some of you I know well, others I've only crossed paths with at events or meetings, and plenty I've yet to meet—so I'm looking forward to changing that over the next few months!

A bit about me... I've been part of Scouting for over 20 years now. I started out in Beavers, worked my way through all the sections, and for the past 10 years, I've been a leader in various groups and roles. It's been an incredible journey, and like many of you, I know how much Scouting has shaped who I am today.

Outside of Scouting? Well, when I'm not in uniform, I seem to have taken on a whole new adventure—renovating a house! It's definitely testing my DIY skills, patience, and probably my budget... all of which Scouting has thankfully developed in me over the years! Anyone else taken on a 'project' and lived to tell the tale? Feel free to share your tips—or warnings!

So, what's next for Moray? My goal is to help us build on all the brilliant work that's been done by Dougie and the team over the years. That means keeping the best bits, bringing in new ideas, and making sure we're ready to grow—whether that's finding more volunteers, strengthening our 14-24 and Program Teams, or making it easier for everyone to get stuck in and enjoy what Scouting should be about: fun, adventure, and supporting young people.

A great example of that positive change is the launch of our very first Squirrel Drey back in June. Thanks to the hard work of the group and Dougie's leadership, it's now up and running—and I can really see the potential for more exciting developments like this across Moray in the coming years.

Over the next couple of months, I'll be visiting as many groups as I can—so keep the kettle warm and let me know when's a good time for a chat. And if you fancy getting more involved or trying something new, my door's always open (or at least, it will be once I've finished hanging it properly!).

Looking forward to seeing you all soon and hearing your ideas too—after all, this isn't about one person, it's about all of us working together.



# Squirrels

*They've arrived !!!*

Space allocated for our new Squirrel Dreys across Moray!

The newest, and youngest, section in Scouting, Squirrels are 4-6 years old and also have a dedicated programme for developing themselves prior to moving on to Beavers.

Working through a smaller range of award badges, they aim to achieve the Chief Scout's Acorn Award before moving up.

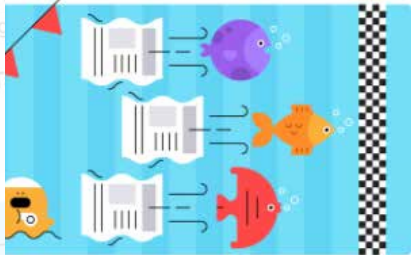




# BEAVERS

Send us your Beaver programme information and the activities you have been involved in.

## THE FLAPPING FISH GAME



**You'll need**  
Pens or pencils  
Scrap paper  
Scissors  
Newspaper

### Planning this game

Create paper fish, by drawing outlines onto scrap paper and cutting them out.

You could print out images of fish and use those, or encourage players to draw their own fish.

Make sure your meeting place is clear of obstacles and trip hazards – remember that teams might not move in a neat, straight, line!

### Making the fish

Everyone should split into small teams and give each team a paper fish and a newspaper.

Each team should decorate their fish with coloured pens and pencils. They could give the fish or their team a name, too.

### How to play

The first person in each team should flap the newspaper to create some wind. They should try to make sure the breeze catches the paper fish.

They need to flap the piece of paper and move the fish to the other end of the meeting place.

When the first person in each team reaches the other end of the meeting place, they should turn around and flap their newspaper again to take the fish back to the rest of their team.

The fish should have travelled from one side to the other and back again, using only the wind created from the newspaper.

When the first person in each team gets back to their team, the second person should use the newspaper to move the fish to the other side of the room and back again.

Teams should keep playing, taking it in turns as each person needs to move the fish to the other end of the meeting place and back again.





What have your Cubs been up to? Have they taken part in any interesting projects as of late, earned badges through dedication to the programme or demonstrated new skills to you?

## **As the dark nights start to come in earlier again, why not work towards your Space Activity Badge?**

*Find out about how the Earth moves round the Sun.*

Explain how the Sun and the Moon affect night and day and the solar eclipse.

*Astronauts have lots of different tasks to do while they're in space.*

Find out about an astronaut, and the skills they learned to become one.

*Think about what space travel might look like in the future and share your idea with someone else.*

*Learn what a satellite is and how they help us to study and protect our planet.*

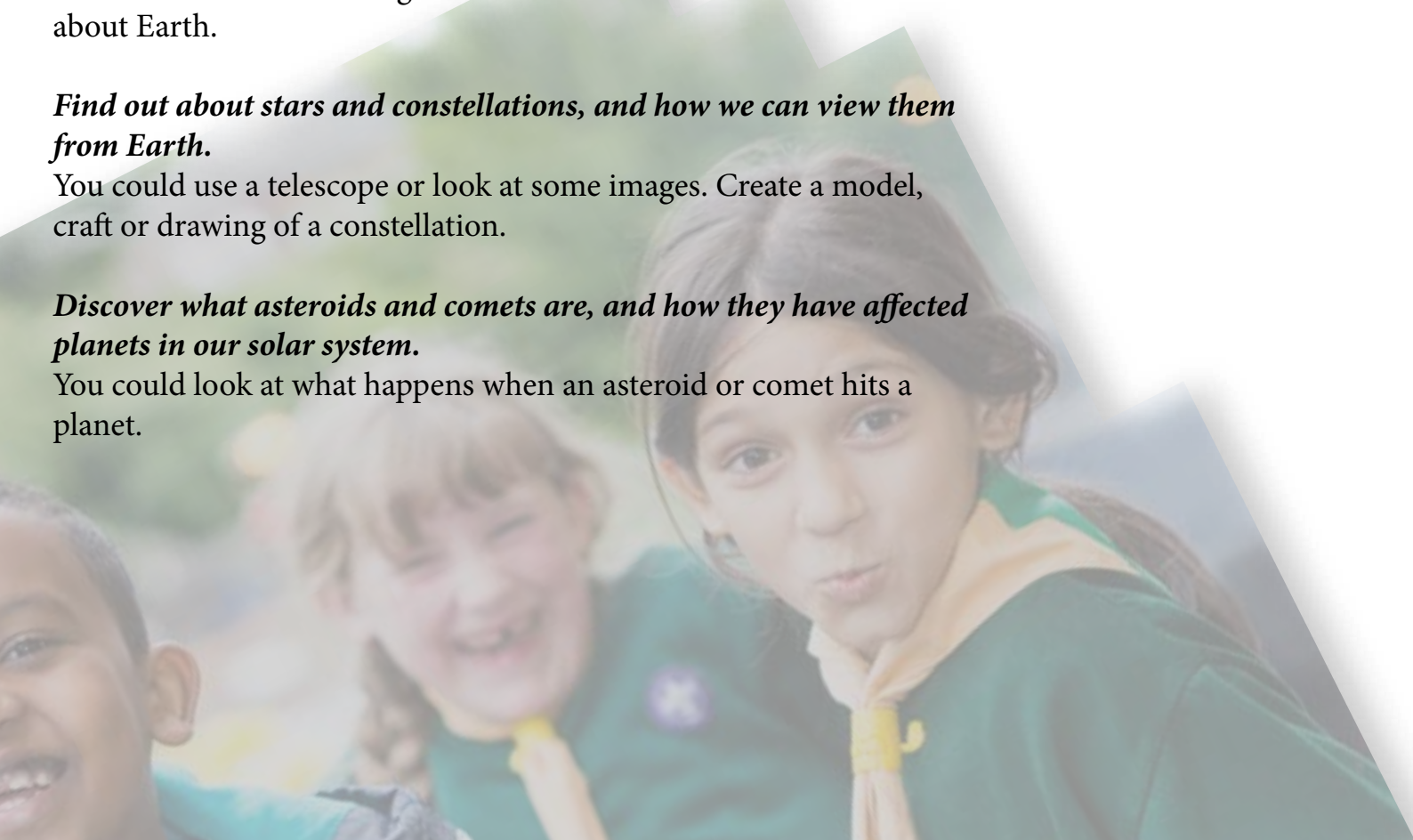
You could share interesting facts about what satellites have discovered about Earth.

*Find out about stars and constellations, and how we can view them from Earth.*

You could use a telescope or look at some images. Create a model, craft or drawing of a constellation.

*Discover what asteroids and comets are, and how they have affected planets in our solar system.*

You could look at what happens when an asteroid or comet hits a planet.





# SCOUTS

Our 10 1/2 to 14 Year Old Scout Programme goes from strength to strength within Moray, and provides the largest range of achievable award badges across the sections. Scouts gives young people the chance to progress further with life skills, developing their knowledge from Cubs and utilising that through activity and training to become more independent in their activities.



Mosstodloch Scouts have been very active this term working towards their Moray Challenge Badge by visiting a range of different places in the District. This including a recent camp in Dufftown where they ticked off a castle, a distillery and a ride on the heritage railway! They are well on their way to completing the challenge now, with many activities also being carried out in their own time.





# EXPLORERS

Some recent activities from Mosstodloch Explorers this month.  
What have your Explorers been up to?



## Light Painting



Through utilising lightsabers, torches and ignited wire wool, we have utilised long exposure photography to create a range of light painting effects at Mosstodloch Explorers. The principles are quite straightforward and can be done with most equipment, although in this case a professional Canon DSLR setup was used with a manual trigger to ensure the best images.

## STOP MOTION ANIMATION

Continuing with the photographic challenges, we delved into the world of stop motion animation and claymation techniques. Creating our own characters from plasticine then utilising a stop motion recording app on the 'phone we were able to produce a range of short videos.

Now that we have the basics in place, this will be enhanced by further productions and will also start to incorporate sounds and different effects!

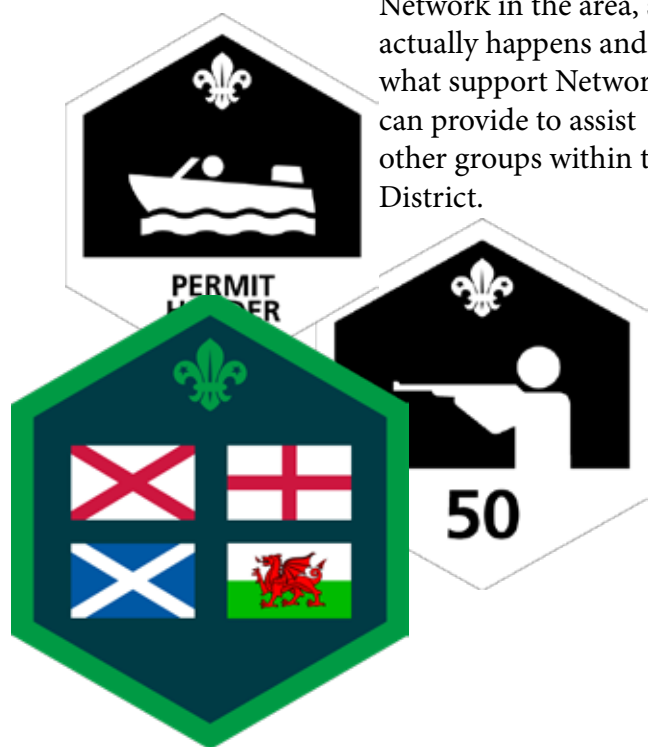




# network

This area will be utilised to provide information on the Network section to show what further opportunities for continuing the Scout journey exist after Explorers. We hear very little of

Network in the area, so we will hopefully be able to further detail what actually happens and what support Network can provide to assist other groups within the District.



Scouts of the World Award (SOWA) is a Scout Network only award that gives Scout Network members the chance to undertake a project of their choice within the themes of Peace, Environment and Sustainability and take action on their chosen issue.

Through your Scouts of the World Award journey, you'll develop skills and knowledge that will empower you to undertake a project that will make a sustainable impact on your local, national or international community, while developing your own skills.

You'll learn skills including: independence, team work, project management, budgeting and communication skills, while gaining an understanding of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. You can complete the award anywhere in the world, including your home country and this can be completed as a team, with each member playing a project management role and completing 80 hours+ of work towards the project.

Derek Page has now taken on a mentor role for this award in Moray to support any Network members who wish to work towards it. Further information can be found at: <https://www.scouts.org.uk/network/awards/scouts-of-the-world-award/>



# Leaders

# Scouts

## ONLINE MEMBER PORTAL



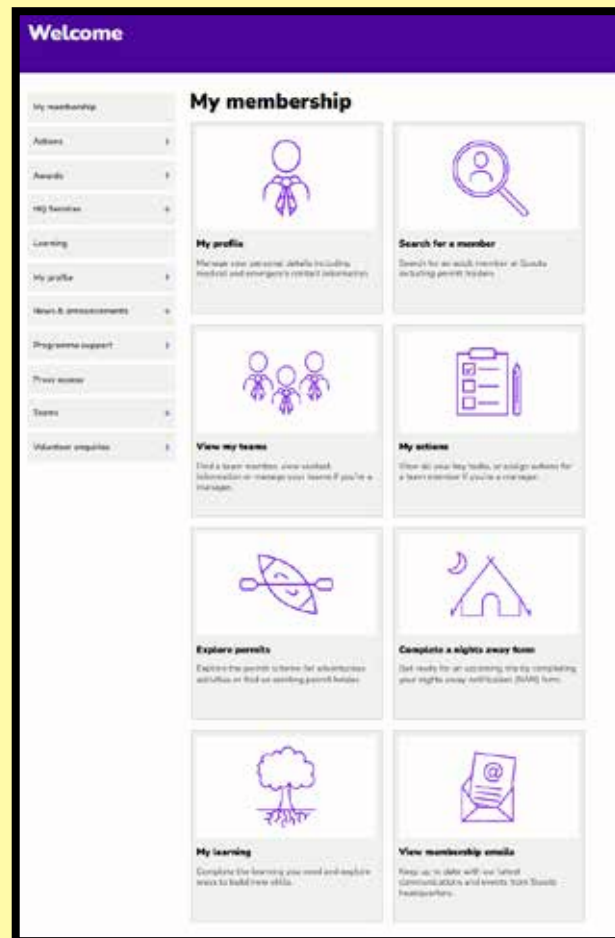
Now that Compass has gone, we should all have been granted access to the replacement membership system online. Although there are still some teething issues with the system, the majority seems to be functioning correctly and you should be able to navigate your way through the system to update your personal details and see your allocated teams.

Please ensure you check and update any personal information and report any issues that you can't resolve.

One major issue seems to be an error that looks as though the system is 'down' and not accessible. If this occurs you will need to clear your internet cache, use a different browser or use an 'incognito' tab to access it. It's a known and massively reported fault, so should hopefully be addressed soon.

Familiarise yourself with the system as best you can as it will be necessary to use for many tasks such as permit applications and Nights Away Notifications. There are a range of videos available on the Scouts Website to show you how to use it if you need them:

<https://www.scouts.org.uk/volunteers/volunteer-experience/training/>





# Leader Training

## First Response Course dates for 2025

**Remember, having a First Response or First Aid qualification is mandatory for the majority of positions in Scouting.**

Book online now at:

<https://moray.scoutsonline.co.uk/>

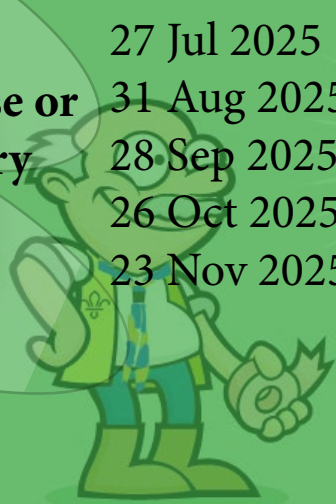
27 Jul 2025

31 Aug 2025

28 Sep 2025

26 Oct 2025

23 Nov 2025

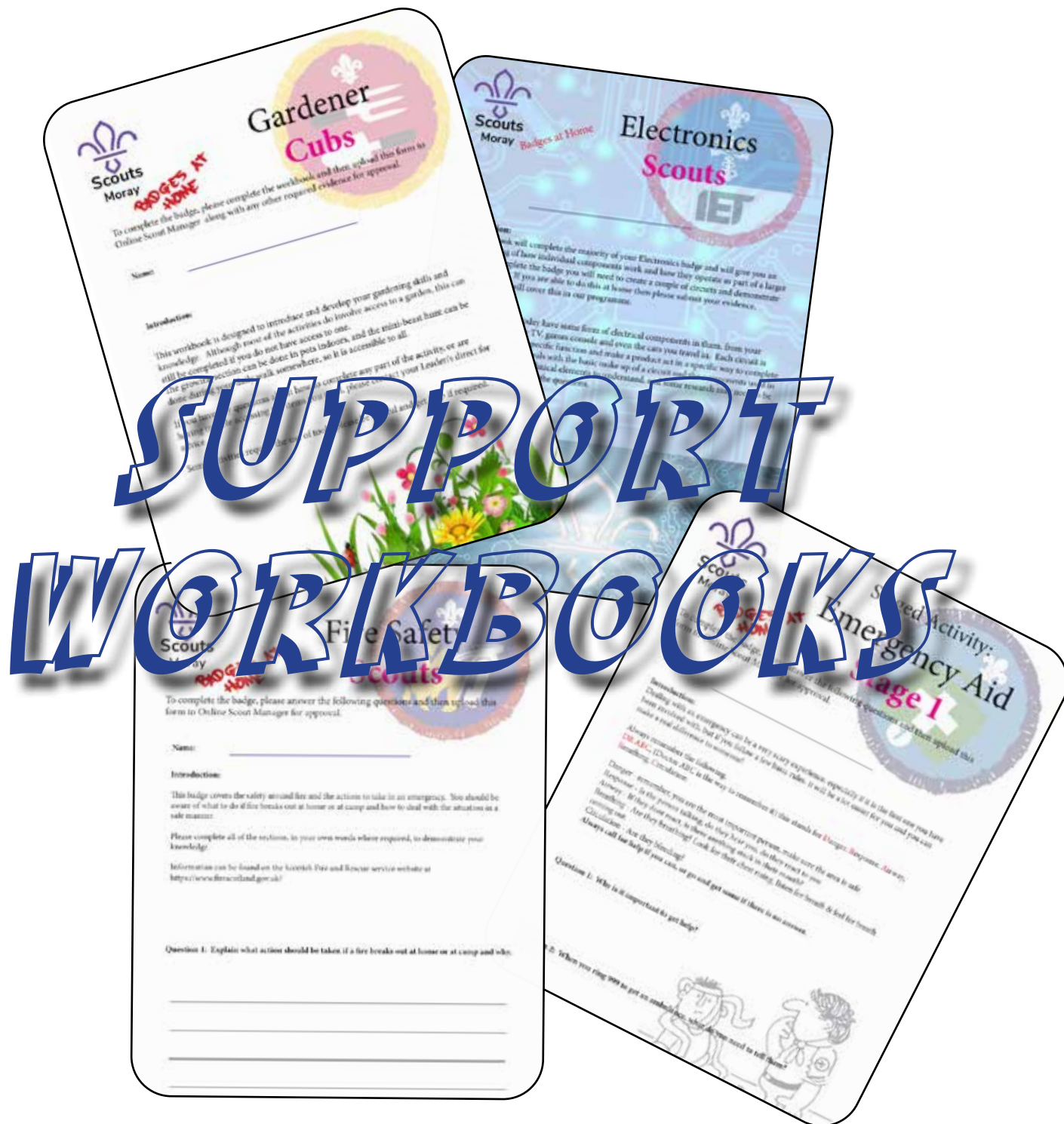


Following on from the first successful training session last year, there are now more Leaders qualified to run Tomahawk Throwing in Moray.

A further course will be scheduled later this year, and expressions of interest can be passed to Derek Page in advance.

There is also a range of new District Equipment, with sets of Throwing Angels purchased and new targets and stands soon to be available for registered users to loan.

# Scouting Resources



A range of workbooks are currently under development to enable some of the badge programme to either be run at home where this may be difficult to cover at the regular meetings or to support the actual meeting. Some are foundation elements that will cover the initial stages of badges with the requirement to complete certain elements at meetings if available resources and skills are in place. The ones shown are already completed and many more will be made available soon for download from the Website. For any queries regarding these, please contact Derek Page.



# ADVENTUROUS ACTIVITY PERMIT SCHEME

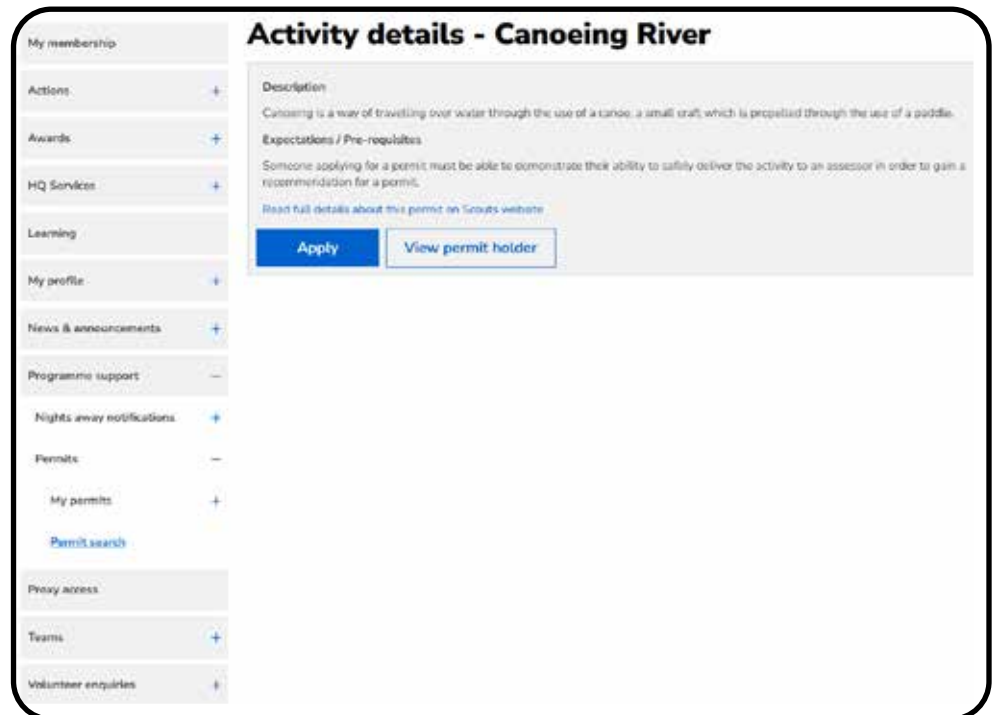
Future courses to be determined for anyone wishing to partake in training for adventurous activity permits.

A full listing of available permits and activities is listed in the latest edition of POR's.

To apply for a Permit, log onto the member portal and select:

## **Programme Support-Permits-Permit Search.**

Select the permit you wish to apply for and click the apply button. Complete the application form and click submit and the application will be sent to the relevant person for processing.



The screenshot displays the Scout member portal interface. On the left is a sidebar menu with options: My membership, Actions, Awards, HQ Services, Learning, My profile, News & announcements, Programme support, Nights away notifications, Permits, My permits, Permit search, Proxy access, Teams, and Volunteer enquiries. The main content area is titled 'Activity details - Canoeing River'. It includes a 'Description' section stating 'Canoeing is a way of travelling over water through the use of a canoe, a small craft which is propelled through the use of a paddle.' and an 'Expectations / Pre-requisites' section stating 'Someone applying for a permit must be able to demonstrate their ability to safely deliver the activity to an assessor in order to gain a recommendation for a permit.' Below this is a link to 'Read full details about this permit on Scouts website'. At the bottom of the main content area are two buttons: 'Apply' and 'View permit holder'.





# Nights Away News

## New NAN Form submissions - Digital Portal

Details regarding the submission of NAN forms through the new online system from April 1st.  
Inclusion of Risk Assessments etc.

**Apply for nights away**

For advice and information about the nights away process, visit [scouts.org.uk](https://scouts.org.uk).

Please check the [Prohibited and Restricted Areas Camping Directory](#) to make sure your site does not fall within a restricted area.

Expand the sections below to complete all the relevant information to allow your Nights Away Approver or Lead Volunteer to review your application.

**Event Information**

Type of Event \* ?

You must select an event type before you can save this form to complete later.

Hierarchy Level \*

Are you using Event Passports \*

☐ Yes ☒ No

Start Date \*

End Date \*

## Permit Applications

To apply for your Nights Away Permit on the new system, see the article on Adventurous Activity Permits, the Nights Away permit application follows the same route.



# ***MASTER AT ARMS TRAINING***

The Target Sports Team have successfully run our first Master at Arms Training Camp at Mosstodloch, utilising Lossiemouth Scouts as our Guinea Pigs for a weekend of Target Sports!:

*Archery*

*Sport Crossbow*

*Tomahawk Throwing*

*Air Rifle*

*& Air Pistol*



**MASTER AT ARMS  
TRAINING CAMP  
ATTENDEE**



*We're still not sure who enjoyed it the most, the Scouts or the Leaders! Everyone went away with a certificate and badge for attending and are well on their way to completing their Master at Arms Badge now.*

Please contact Derek Page for further details/expression of interest in future camps.

## Contacts

All personnel within Scouting can be contacted via email through the new online Portal by searching for them directly.

Thank you for reading through the first edition of the District Newsletter. If you wish to submit any content for the next edition, or have any queries or suggestions for future editions, please email:

**[morayexplorerscouts@gmail.com](mailto:morayexplorerscouts@gmail.com)**

