

**START YOUR
SCOUTING JOURNEY.**

**Welcome to 3rd Hitchin
Scout Group**

It's great to meet you!



On behalf of the Leaders, Helpers and Trustee Board, I would like to welcome you to the 3rd Hitchin Scout Group.

About Us

We are a Church sponsored Group at Walsworth Road Baptist Church. Things have changed quite a bit since we started in 1929, we are now open to boys and girls, but we are still providing the fun, friendship and adventure that is at the core of Scouting.

Did you know? In the UK there are over 400,000 young people and 26,000 adults who experience scouting every week

We are a large Group. Every week we provide activities to ~ 100 young people aged 6 – 14 years old. We have:-

- A Beaver Colony called Otter for our 6 – 8-year-olds
Otter meets every Tuesday
- A Cub Pack called Wolves for the 8 – 10.5-year-olds
Meet Every Wednesday
- A Scout Troop called Phoenix for 10.5 – 14-year-olds
Meet every Monday

Weekly meetings are in term time unless otherwise advised by the leaders

After 14, young people leave us to join Explorers, which is a town wide group, although some choose to return to us as Young Leaders (YL).

Our Group is run entirely by volunteers who do everything from running weekly meetings to helping keep our kit van maintained and on the road. Please consider helping us, you don't need any prior experience just enthusiasm, a sense of humour, and some spare time.

We are part of The Scout Association (TSA) and you can find all sorts of information on their website. Our <https://www.scouts.org.uk/> chief scout is Bear Grylls



Bear says

**“Two things matter in life:
following your dreams and
looking after your friends.
That's what I love about
Scouts.”**



Scout Promise

One of the ways Scouting is different from other youth groups and clubs is that to become a member both young people and adults are required to make a promise. This is done at an investiture ceremony, which we always invite parents to come along and watch, and where we present the Group necker and membership badge.

As we are a church based group we use the standard wording of the promise which makes reference to God. However, Scouting is available to people of all faiths as well as people who are humanist, atheist or have no affirmed faith and therefore an alternative wording of the Promise is available. Please speak to your Section Leader if you have any questions regarding this.

Church Parade

As a Church sponsored Group, all members are expected to attend the four to five Parade Services held each year at our Church (usually February, March, May, September and November).

Additionally, in April all Scout members in Hitchin meet up for an afternoon service to celebrate St. George's Day. For this parade and the November Remembrance Service, we do expect 100% attendance.

All parade dates are announced at the start of the year (when we are able to). Meeting times will be advised by the Section leaders and reminders sent out the week prior to the parade. Members who are unable to attend a parade service must e-mail or phone their Leader prior to the Sunday to give their apologies.

Did you know? Scouting was started in 1907 by Robert Baden Powell. Since then over 500 million people worldwide have made their Scout promise



Uniform

Full uniform, as outlined below should be worn to all weekly meetings, unless told otherwise by a Leader.

Section	Shirt	Trousers
Beavers	Turquoise crew neck sweatshirt	Scout Navy blue activity trousers
Cubs	Dark green crew neck sweatshirt	Scout Navy blue activity trousers
Scouts	Teal green long sleeved shirt or blouse	Scout Navy blue activity trousers Leather Scout belt and buckle

We don't expect uniform to be purchased immediately, as we appreciate sometimes a young person may wish to join a section to try and see if Scouting is for them. However, you will need to have uniform before your young person is invested, usually after they have been with us for 3 or 4 weeks.

The Group Scarf and woggle are presented at the Investiture or Promise ceremony, if these are lost or need replacing, they can be purchased from your Section Leader.

Scout Shop

Uniform can be purchased from the Hitchin Scout Shop on Monday evenings (in term time) from 6.00pm to 8.00pm and on some Saturday mornings details can be found on the district website

<http://hitchin scouts.org/scoutshop>

Please use our Scout shop rather than the internet or other suppliers, they offer a friendly service with the opportunity to try items on or take them home to try and all profits come directly to supporting Scouting in Hitchin.

Did you know? Scouting has been voted the UK's most inspirational and practical charity.



How We Keep Your Young Person Safe

We're committed to ensuring that Scouting is both enjoyable and safe for everyone who takes part, along with providing parents with peace of mind. The leaflet 'Safe and Sound' is produced for parents and has all the information you need about keeping your child safe. Search online for 'Scouts safe and sound', ask your leader for a copy or pick one up in the Scout Shop.

Child Protection

Becoming a Leader with us involves having a Criminal Record Check, sometimes known as a 'police check' or DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) and being interviewed by an Appointments Committee. Anyone else who helps with young people in Scouting is also asked to complete a DBS check.

We have a clear code of behaviour which is given to all adults working in Scouting, regardless of their role. This is commonly known as the 'Yellow Card'. You can find a copy of this by searching online for 'Scouts Yellow Card'. There is also a copy on the notice board in the upstairs hall. All Leaders at 3rd Hitchin have a copy of this card.

If you have any concerns about your child's safety, please contact me directly using the details below or speak to someone at Scout Headquarters – you can find out how to contact them on their website <https://www.scouts.org.uk/>

Training

All our Leaders take part in an extensive training programme which consists of nineteen modules covering things such as first aid, safeguarding, managing behaviour, and managing the programme. Some training has a fixed validity period and must be renewed every few years to make sure Leaders are using up to date information.

Discipline

It is important that for the enjoyment and safety of others that each member behaves in an appropriate manner, showing respect to all Leader, helpers and other young people. We expect members to remember their Scout Promise and the Scout Law in particular

- A Scout is friendly and considerate
- A Scout has self-respect and respect for others

There may be times when a young person is excluded by a Leader, from a game or activity due to their behaviour, when that behaviour is having a disruptive effect on other members or potentially putting others at risk. Continued occasions of misbehaviour will be discussed with you to find a resolution. Ultimately a young person may be asked to leave the Group, although we would only do this as a last resort when all other avenues have been explored.



Contact system- Parents and Leaders

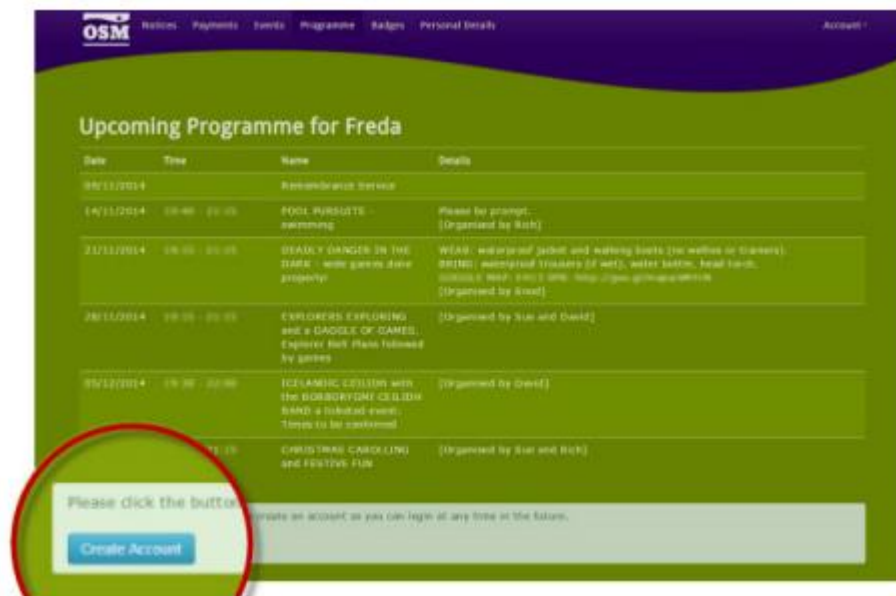
This is run via a system called OSM: -



OSM is a web-based programme we use to manage all our administration and payments. After your young person has decided to join the Group, we will send you a link to sign up to this and create a My Scout account within OSM.

Once you have access to OSM/ My Scout you will be able to:

- Update your contact details – It is your responsibility to make sure your contact details are kept up to date. We will use this information if we need to contact you e.g. if your young person is taken ill or in an emergency
- Check your young person's badge records
- See the weekly programme
- Sign up and pay for camps and events, etc.
- Pay subs and sign up for gift aid!



If you have any questions about OSM / My Scout or you think you're not receiving any emails, please email karen@thirdhitchin.org.uk or sam@thirdhitchin.org.uk and they'll be able to help.

Photographs

A picture tells a thousand words, so they say, and we often use pictures of young people to show what we're about. Photos and video clips are available for viewing via Twitter and Facebook. We also use pictures in displays and presentations. We will never identify your young person or the specific location. When you sign up to 3rd Hitchin Scout Group (done via email) you will be asked for permission for us to use photos of your young person.

Insurance

It is the responsibility of each individual member to look after their own possessions. No responsibility for the personal equipment/clothing and effects can be accepted by any Leader. The Scout Association does not provide automatic insurance cover in respect to such items. This includes personal items taken on camps and activities.

Did you know? In 2016 the 900 members of Hitchin Scouting spent a total of 4108 nights away. This includes sleepovers, camps, night hikes and indoor stays.



About the Money

Our Group is financially self-sufficient, relying on subscriptions (subs), fund raising and gift aid, for its main sources of income. Additional charges are made to cover the cost of camps, activities and events.

We believe everything we do provides excellent value for money and we work hard to keep our costs low without compromising the quality of our offerings. We can only do this with your support at our fundraising events and the generosity of all our voluntary helpers who give their time so willingly.

In Scouting, we don't want any young person to miss out because of the family's financial circumstances. Information about financial help is available from your Section Leader.

Subscriptions

The level of subs to be charged for the calendar year is reviewed and agreed by the Groups Trustee Board. Payment is via direct debit at the start of each term.

Your payment covers the annual charges made by Scouting nationally and locally, the running and maintaining of all our equipment – including our base at Woodside and our kit van. We also make a donation to the church for the use of the buildings and the weekly costs of meetings, badges and leaders expenses.

Gift Aid

We ask that all parents make a declaration via OSM for Gift Aid unless they do not pay UK income tax.

Gift Aid is a scheme set up by the Inland Revenue through which charities can claim back tax. Every time you pay membership subscriptions, you pay with money that has been taxed. Gift Aid pays that tax back to Scouting – on average this is 25p for every pound spent.

The Group claims over £2,500 each year from the Inland Revenue. Without the benefit of this income, there would have to be an increase in the amount of subscriptions.

Fundraising

In addition to the regular financial commitments, the Group needs to raise additional funds to purchase the larger items of equipment. The Group owns an equipment van and numerous tents, all of which only have a certain life span.

From time to time, a large fundraising event is arranged, and we look to all parents and members to give their full support.

Did you know? Scout Leaders contribute the equivalent of 37 million hours of voluntary work every year – worth an estimated £380 million pounds



How We're Organised

We are part of Hitchin District and Hertfordshire County Scouting. In our Group we have:-

Group Trustee Board

Our Trustee Board assists in the running of the group and have specific responsibility for our finances, our public image and the recruitment of leaders. The committee is made up of leaders, parents, and other interested people. The Committee usually meets four times a year (January, April, June and September), with an AGM held around May.

Group Scout Council

When your son or daughter becomes a member of our Group, so do you. All Parents become part of The Group Scout Council, the electoral body, which supports Scouting in the Group. It is the body to which the Group Trustee Board is accountable. Parents are encouraged to attend the Annual General meeting (usually held in May/June), at which the Trustee Board is elected.

Leaders and Helpers

We are lucky in having a very dedicated team of Leaders and Helpers. All are unpaid volunteers, who have normal day jobs, bills to pay and families to look after. People volunteer for different reasons, and while some give many years of service others just do a short time while it fits in with their life – All are welcome and valued equally

How can you help?

There are many ways in which parents can help:-

- Warranted Uniformed Leader - No previous experience of Scouting is necessary. Training is provided and the Group pay for your uniform!
- Helper - become a helper at the weekly meetings or join a parent rota and help occasionally
- Group Trustee Board member
- Administration - offer to undertake some of the "back office" tasks i.e. trip or activity coordinator, badge record keeper etc.
- Camps, activities, trips - offer to help pack the van ready for camps, put up or take down tents, go on a trip and take responsibility for a small group of Beavers etc.

I am sure your young person will thoroughly enjoy their time in Scouting, please don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any queries

Karen Theakstone
(Acting) Group Scout Leader
3rd Hitchin Scout Group

Email - Karen@thirdhitchin.org.uk

Did you know? Eleven of the twelve men who have walked on the moon were Scouts

