

## **HARDSHIP POLICY GUIDANCE**

Adopted July 2018 and last reviewed October 2025

This guidance has been prepared to help local groups set up and administer a hardship fund to support local members who are finding it difficult to afford Scouting activities and events. West Devon Scouts do not fund or administer these schemes. They are run by local groups. However, to ensure applications for hardship funding are dealt with fairly and consistently across West Devon, local groups are encouraged to adopt a hardship policy based on this guidance. Note that grants are also available through the Scout Association. Up-to-date links will be provided on our website at [westdevonscouts.org.uk](http://westdevonscouts.org.uk).

### **INTRODUCTION**

In certain circumstances local members may be unable to meet the full cost of Scouting activities and events but their participation would be deserving and of benefit to the young person or adult member. Local groups are encouraged to provide hardship funding in such cases.

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

Local groups will need to decide how their hardship policy will be administered. We recommend you use the flowchart on page 2 of this guidance note. Financial constraints will, of course, need to be taken into account, but the primary consideration should always be the needs of the young person or adult member.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION**

The information we obtain about individual hardship cases is likely to be highly personal and should normally be treated in strict confidence. This is controlled by the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). West Devon Scouts have adopted a general Privacy Policy, which local groups should apply to all data they collect if they do not have their own Privacy Policy:

[westdevonscouts.org.uk/privacy-policy](http://westdevonscouts.org.uk/privacy-policy)

## **HARDSHIP POLICY FLOWCHART**

### **Recommended steps for administering a local hardship policy:**

The Group Board of Trustees allocates a budget for a Hardship Fund for the coming year. The Board of Trustees authorises the Group Lead Volunteer (GLV), in consultation with section lead volunteers, to issue grants on a case-by-case basis up to but not exceeding the agreed budget. Any further grants could be authorised by the Board of Trustees.



The Group Board of Trustees should set guidelines for the type of activity or event that will be funded and by how much. For example: camp fees could be reduced by up to half the full cost, the balance due on camp fees could be paid in installments over a three month period, termly fee (subs) might be reduced by up to one third of the standard fee.



The Group Board of Trustees reviews the Hardship Policy at the end of each calendar year and agrees a new budget for the Hardship Fund, for the coming year.

### **This is how it might work for applicants:**

An adult member or parent/guardian/carer of a youth member asks for financial assistance.



The GLV and section lead volunteer enter into discussions with the applicant or their parent/guardian/carer.



The applicant should be asked to provide relevant information about their circumstances and involvement in Scouting. We suggest that local groups might use the example application form on page 3 of this Guidance note.



The GLV and section lead volunteer assess the application and, if appropriate, offer a grant towards the relevant activity/event.



The GLV and section lead volunteer must ensure all personal data relating to the application is handled securely in accordance with the local group's Privacy Policy. If the group does not have its own Privacy Policy, they should apply the West Devon Scout District Privacy Policy (see link above).

## HARDSHIP FUND APPLICATION

By completing this form you give consent for us to collect, store and process your personal data in accordance with our Privacy Policy, which can be found at [westdevonscouts.org.uk/privacy-policy](http://westdevonscouts.org.uk/privacy-policy).

### ABOUT THE APPLICANT

<b>Applicant's Name:</b> Name of young person or adult member	
<b>Name of parent/guardian/carer:</b> If under 18	
<b>District/Unit/Group:</b> Name of your Scout District, Unit or Group	
<b>Section:</b> Squirrels/Beavers/Cubs/Scouts/Explorers/Network	
<b>Date joined Scouting:</b> Tell us approximately how long you have been in Scouting	

### HOW CAN WE HELP?

Tick the box

<b>I need help with termly fees:</b> (Subscription)	
<b>I need help with a camp</b> Date of camp: _____ Location: _____	
<b>Other:</b> Please provide details	

### APPLICANT'S PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

This information helps us assess your needs. Leaders may ask to see supporting documentation.

Please tick the box if you are on:			
Employment Support	<input type="checkbox"/>	Job Seeker's Allowance	<input type="checkbox"/>
Income Support	<input type="checkbox"/>	Working Tax Credit	<input type="checkbox"/>
Child Tax Credit	<input type="checkbox"/>	Free School Meals	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other/comments			