

Producing a welcome pack

Providing basic information

A welcome pack is the first stage in the induction process. It aims to give an adult new to Scouting a variety of information that will be useful to them, mainly in their first few weeks. It can take a variety of formats but is usually a folder containing information to help the newcomer through the process. It must be emphasised that it is not, and never can be, a replacement for face to face contact. It can be more detailed than what you say to the newcomer and they can look through it in their own time. It will add credibility and substance to any discussions you have with them.

A welcome pack can be of great benefit so long as it is tailored to the individual and the role they are about to take on. It should:

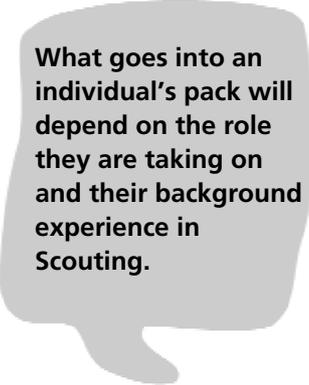
- make them feel welcome
- inform them about their role
- be motivational
- be seen as a useful resource and not a pile of papers to be 'binned' at the first opportunity
- answer questions and enable the person receiving the pack to use it as and when required.

What goes into an individual's pack will depend on the role you are asking them to take on, and their background experience in Scouting. However, it would be worth investing the time to create some standard sheets of information. You could then choose from them when putting a pack together for an individual.

The welcome pack is likely to be one of the first pieces of information that your new recruit will receive. First impressions are worth a lot, so think about how the information is presented. A standard pack that is colourful, designed on a computer, personalised and put in a glossy folder will let people know that thought has been put into inviting them to help. It will also help reassure them that support will follow.

The Induction Toolkit contains some background information about Scouting, each of the Sections, and on some specific roles. This can be copied or printed and used in conjunction with local information.

The pack should also refer to the Appointment process and the *Adult's Personal File* that adults taking out a Warrant will receive with their Provisional Appointment.



What goes into an individual's pack will depend on the role they are taking on and their background experience in Scouting.

Tips on producing a welcome pack

The following are some tips on writing the welcome pack and advice on what to produce:

- The title and opening paragraph need to grab the attention of the reader.
- Avoid witty titles that detract from the purpose of the document.
- The opening paragraph should act as an introduction to the document.
- Aim for a maximum of one side of paper on any subject.
- The words used should be easy to understand.
- Avoid jargon and abbreviations, as these might make reading difficult.
- Use short sentences arranged in lots of paragraphs, together with bullet points to help make the document easier to read.

Having written your document, let a number of people read it - some with knowledge of the subject and others without. Their comments should allow you to judge how good a job you have done and whether there is anything you need to change.

Content ideas for a welcome pack

The following is a suggested content for a welcome pack. Which sections you decide to include will vary from person to person depending on their past involvement with Scouting and whether they are new to the local area. Don't be afraid to add other things as you think of them!

Front page

This should be clear and if possible colourful, with pictures representing Scouting, together with the name of your Group or District.

Welcome letter

A standard letter from the GSL or DC welcoming them to their role, thanking them for offering their time, and explaining where they are in the appointments procedure.

Contents page

This should be a clear and easy to use guide to what's inside your welcome pack.

Background information on Scouting

Taken from *The Induction Toolkit*.

Information about the local area

For people new to the area; details of where they can find local shops, places of worship, libraries, tourist information centres, schools etc.

Map of the District

Showing key meeting places, Group/District Headquarters, Scout Shop and local campsites.

District history

A *brief* background of Scouting in the District.

Contact sheet

Names, addresses, phone numbers and email addresses of their team members, other Leaders and supporters in the District.

Meeting details

Dates, times and venues of the key meetings they will need to go to, and some information about the purpose of these meetings.

Role description

If agreed.

District structure

Diagram of the structure of support in the District.

FAQs

Frequently Asked Questions and Answers.

Training diary

What training is available, where and when, referring to the *Adult's Personal File* or other information that explains the training requirements.

Resources

Where to get help and support, Scout Information Centre contact details, website addresses.

Yellow Card

Child Protection guidelines available from Headquarters.

Executive Committee publications

For members of Executives only.

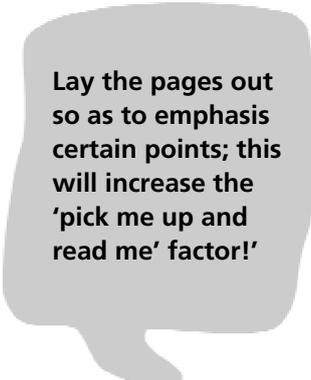
Induction plan

A plan to ensure the individual has access to the information they need in the first few months.

Do's and don'ts

Do!

- Use people with appropriate skills in laying out documents and the technology to produce good quality results.
- Use a typeface which is easy to read and a standard page layout and style for all documents included in your pack.
- Lay the pages out so as to emphasize certain points; this will increase the 'pick me up and read me' factor!



Lay the pages out so as to emphasize certain points; this will increase the 'pick me up and read me' factor!

- Leave space around the text; this stops the text being hidden when the documents are punched or bound together.
- Include good quality graphics or illustrations.

Don't!

- Over use capital letters as these are not easy to read.
- Use lots of different styles and sizes as this detracts from the readability.
- Cram solid blocks of type onto every page; this will not add to the overall presentation.
- Copy copies as the quality will become poor.

What to include

Select from the list above which would be most appropriate to the individual. The contents page of *The Induction Toolkit* explains which sheets should be included in the welcome pack for different roles in Scouting. This has been designed to complement the information that should be locally produced for individually tailored welcome packs.

The golden rule for producing a welcome pack is to only include what the newcomer needs at that time.

It is also useful to let people know that there are a variety of resources available to support them in their new role, once they are settled. You could give them a Scout Information Centre Catalogue, but make sure first that any relevant materials have been passed on from the last person in the role!

Get some feedback

After adults have read their welcome pack, ask them how useful it was. Some possible questions could include:

- Are there any other things they would have liked?
- Should some items have been missed out?
- Was the pack easy to read?
- Was the pack helpful?
- Was the pack given to them at the right time?

This feedback will help you next time you issue a pack. But don't forget that different individuals will have different needs and expectations.

Giving someone a welcome pack is only one of the first steps in induction. It needs to be followed up with a plan on how to make sure the adult has all the information and support they need in the first few months.