



21st Romsey (Nursling & Rownhams) Scout Group



Scout Association reg: 10014441

Charity no. 302269

Membership Fees 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019

Why Membership Fees?

The Scout group has a number of financial commitments related to the operation of our headquarters, payments to the district, county and national Scout Associations, programme, equipment, and insurance. Contributing to the Group's income to cover these costs through payment of a membership fee is a condition of membership.

The Group Executive Committee has set the Membership Fees for this year as:

- Each Beaver: £120 per year, payable in instalments – see below
- Each Cub or Scout: £141 per year, payable in instalments – see below

Some of the aspects considered by the Committee when setting the fees are listed at the end of the document.

The normal payment method will be by monthly direct debit, due on 25th of each of the 12 months of the year, commencing April 2018, therefore:

- **Each Beaver: £10.00 per month**
- **Each Cub or Scout: £11.75 per month**

Members who currently pay termly (4 months at a time) can continue to do so but, as announced at the 2017 AGM, this option is being phased out as running different schedules in the Online Scout Manager (OSM) system is confusing, with the risk of omission or duplication.

If you are unable to pay by direct debit please contact the Group Scout Leader (gsl@21stromsey.co.uk) before the first payment is due, in order to arrange an alternative method which is mutually acceptable.

The actions you need to take for each option are summarised below:

All – ensure that we have your current email address and that you are receiving emails from OSM and My.Scout. Check your junk mail if necessary and add them to your safe-senders list. If you are not sure, ask the leader of your child's section to send you a test email.

All – Gift Aid the fee if you can

If there is a UK tax-payer in your household we hope that you will choose to Gift Aid the payment. This means that for every £1 you pay we can claim another 25p from HMRC at no extra cost to you. For the Group this equates to several thousand pounds a year for hardly any work at all.

In March or early April you will be sent an e-mail link asking you, if you can, to make an online Gift Aid declaration on our administration system, OSM. If you have more than one child in the Group you may have to make separate declarations, but don't worry it's very easy to do.

Those already paying through the OSM-GoCardless system:

You do not need to do anything unless/until your child changes section (see overleaf). Direct debit amounts will be changed with effect from 1st April.

If you are on the termly, "pay now" option the amounts will be updated from 1st April and payment requests will be automatically emailed to you as they become due, at the beginning of June, October and February. If you'd like to change from termly to monthly payment by direct debit please contact the Group Scout Leader by mid-April (gsl@21stromsey.co.uk).

Those changing section (whatever time of year):

As the schedules are section-specific the old one will be cancelled automatically as the young person moves up and you will need to subscribe to the schedule of the new section. A link to do this will be sent from My.Scout. Membership of Scouting does not cease when moving between sections, so the young person will be added to the new schedule as soon as they have moved up, not when they are invested in the new section.

As stated previously, the option of paying termly (4 months at a time) is being phased out, so the new schedule will be for a monthly direct debit.

Those new to the Group:

Further information will be provided, but you will be sent a link from My.Scout to set up the direct debit.

What if I can't pay?

It is the policy of the group that no young person should be excluded from Scouting activities on financial grounds. If you are not able to pay please discuss this in confidence with the Group Scout Leader: email gsl@21stromsey.co.uk or phone 023 80736159. We can then arrange some subsidy from Group and District funds. Ideally your request should be made by 15 April, well before the April payment is due, but we realise that circumstances may change and requests will be considered at any time.

The possibility of changing circumstances also means that discounted fees from the 2017-18 financial year will *not* automatically renew for 2018-19; please apply again.

Further information:

Detailed guidance on the payment method and consequences of non-payment can be found in the members area of the Group website: www.21stromsey.co.uk. If you have further questions about the fees please contact the Group Scout Leader rather than leader of your child's section.

Appendix: Why is the increase needed?

Amongst other things the Executive Committee took into account ...

General inflation on our bills	In January, when the fees were considered, the national rate had just been reported as 3% - equivalent to between £3 and £4 on the membership fee.
Increase in the amount required by the district, county and national Scout organisations	For every young person we are levied a fixed amount per year. This has increased by £2 per person this year.
Badge "inflation"	Over the past year the amount we spend on badges has soared from around £7 <i>per young person</i> per year to nearly £12. This is partly owing to the effectiveness of our programmes, but also because of (a) the increasing number of badges that are available, some of which are "special" ones that only last a year, and (b) the cost of badges themselves, which has risen from 50p per badge a few years ago to 65p now.
Falling income from fund-raising	The Group's 2017-18 income was massively bolstered by a £2000+ donation from the Co-op Community Fund. It's unlikely that this will be repeated and, as discussed at the AGM, other income from fundraising has been gradually falling. Encouraging the use of methods which aren't labour-intensive, such as EasyFundraising, has only been partially successful. In addition we are aware that Sainsbury's will no longer be issuing Active Kids vouchers – it's unclear what, if anything, will take their place, but the result is we will be unable to use this route to obtain around £350-worth of equipment per year.