

# On-Line Meetings

## **You Don't Have to be Face-to-Face to Meet Online!**

While face-to-face Scouting is suspended it's still possible for youth members to meet virtually with one another and their leaders.

Leaders can organise online meetings of their sections to keep young people in touch with Scouting and to help support young people through the completion of badges and awards from home.

Using online teleconference or web-meeting applications (e.g. Microsoft Office Teams, Google G-Suite Hangouts, or even Facebook Messenger, Apple Facetime etc - which are free for charities to use) it is possible for leaders, supporters and youth members to speak online, to share documents and screens and - with the use of a webcam - to see one another.

Using such technology allows plenty of programme ideas to take place - opening and closing ceremonies can be adapted, badge and award requirement can be explained and work completed at home can be shared, you can run virtual campfire singalongs, test home-made musical instruments, play word games etc - just use your imagination or use some of our Scouting from Home resources and ideas.

Internet Relay Chat (IRC) provided by ScoutLink can provide a secure, moderated means for your sections to meet together or with other Scouts from around the world. Please contact ScoutLink at [help@scoutlink.net](mailto:help@scoutlink.net) if you would like to set something up for your section. The more technical minded of you could even consider setting up your own IRC channels (see <http://www.irchelp.org/> which has the advantage of low bandwidth requirements suitable for mobile devices at low cost).

Encourage everyone to wear uniform for on-line meetings - even if they're not on camera it will still feel like a normal meeting.

## Important Things to Remember

- Leaders should ensure that appropriate safeguarding guidance is followed with respect to all on-line communications with young people. At least two adults must be involved in any on-line meeting (why not ask parents to help?)

- Parents/carers of younger members should supervise their on-line meetings
- Remember that minimum age requirements apply to most social media accounts
- Please cover Internet safety with young people in initial on-line meetings
- Meeting on-line can be tiring and screen time should be limited. Meetings may therefore be shorter than usual
- On-line meetings should be supported by other means of communication with youth members and parents/carers, typically using Online Scout Manager messaging or social media such as Facebook and Twitter for regular updates between on-line meetings
- Additional efforts may be needed to ensure that on-line meetings are not the only way to participate in a Scouting at Home programme (e.g. two or three friends meeting at one house, with a trusted adult supervising). This way we can include those members for whom regular Internet access may be a challenge or who may not have a computer or web camera.
- Leaders will need to ensure that all participants play an active part in online meetings, giving everyone a chance to be heard and take part