

# Pennine District Scout Council

## Hardship Fund Policy

### Purpose / Overview

The Pennine District Scout Council Hardship Fund is a discretionary fund that is available to support young people and leaders who are experiencing financial hardship. It is designed to ensure that all members within Pennine District can continue to participate in Scouting opportunities, regardless of any changes in their circumstances.

The fund is not aimed at financing whole group block applications purely to reduce the cost of a trip or activity. The fund should also be regarded as supplementary to any fundraising efforts, rather than a request for the total amount required.

Your group should be the first port of call for help for those families experiencing financial hardship. As such, it is the expectation of the Pennine District Trustee Board that each group will have their own Hardship Policy in place.

We recognise however, that some groups will already have huge strains on their resources. The primary consideration of the Pennine District Trustee Board Hardship Panel will always be the young person; if they are a keen and active member, then we will do everything we can to enable them to continue their participation.

The hardship fund is a separate fund under the responsibility of the Pennine District Trustee Board Hardship Panel.

### What do we fund?

The Fund is to be used primarily for providing financial support to young people in Scouting, aged up to 18. Examples include subscriptions, uniform, activity equipment, activity/event attendance costs and other justifiable Scouting expenditure, at the discretion of the Pennine District Trustee Board Hardship Panel. The beneficiaries must be from families in financial hardship and be supported by the Group Scout Leader (GSL) or Explorer Leader, in consultation with their section leader.

Adult leaders from Pennine District can also be supported, in exceptional cases of hardship, with the support of their GSL. The individual must demonstrate that they cannot raise the funds themselves and put forward a case for how Scouting will benefit from a grant being awarded.

Any member of Pennine District with a particular financial need can apply. Financial need is defined as the difference between a particular cost, and what the applicant can afford to pay or raise.

Priority will be given to individuals, or parents, in financial hardship, or who fulfil one or more of the criteria below:

- In receipt of Universal Credit, Income Support or Working Tax Credit.
- In receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance.
- In receipt of free school meals.
- Recent redundancy.
- Young carer.
- Convalescence after illness.
- Disability.
- Recent death of parent.
- Young person in part time work (with less time to fundraise).
- Young person in need of additional support in the form of a carer.

## Commitment to Scouting

The applicant must demonstrate a commitment to their group. The following is a minimum:

- Membership of the Association.
- For adults, six months of regular attendance, confirmed by their relevant section leader, and all necessary training completed.

Dependent upon the need for the grant, feedback may be requested. For example, a recipient may be asked to share details of the experience or the expertise gained, to their own or other groups within the district.

## Applications

- Must be received at least two months prior to the funds being required. However, in exceptional circumstances (such as a last-minute opportunity), the Pennine District Trustee Board Hardship Panel may consider an application submitted with a shorter timeframe.
- Must be supported by evidence of cost.
- Must be supported by evidence of financial hardship of the group.
- Must show some fundraising attempts on the application form.

## How to apply?

Before applying for a one-off or ongoing grant, applicants will need to answer the following questions:

- What the money is needed for?
- What are the benefits to the individual or group?
- Details and date that any grant is required?
- What local funds or other sources are available?

Any request for ongoing grants will be reviewed on a regular basis.

Once you have answers to these questions, then please complete the application form.

**Please follow this link to download the application form: [Pennine District Scout Council Hardship Fund Application Form](#)**

**Completed application forms should be sent by your GSL to: [chairman@pennine.gmnscouts.org.uk](mailto:chairman@pennine.gmnscouts.org.uk)**

To help us deal quickly with your application, please make sure you have satisfied all of the following:

- Allow at least two months for an application to be processed.
- Provide as much detail as possible on the application form.
- Only apply for future expenditure. Retrospective funding will not be awarded.
- Be prepared to provide any additional information if this is requested.

Once an application is received, you will receive an acknowledgment by email.

## Confidentiality

Information relating to individual hardship cases may be highly personal and as such will be treated with the strictest of confidentiality, in line with the Scout Association's GDPR Policy. Any application and follow up discussion of a hardship case will be recorded in confidential minutes.

## Policy revision

This Hardship Fund Policy was adopted by Pennine District Trustee Board on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2023.