



Communication Plan



About this document

This document outlines the Communications Strategy for **Durham Scouts**. It is intended to guide how we communicate across the County — both internally and externally — to ensure clarity, consistency, and effectiveness.

The plan will be reviewed and updated **annually**, or sooner if significant changes are required. It has been developed using national guidance from **The Scouts (UK)**, combined with local input and practical experience from within Durham Scouts.

Version History

Date	Document Version	Document Revision History	Document Author/Reviser
28/03/2020	1.0	Initial draft	Jamie Ion <i>County Communications Manager</i>
05/01/2021	1.1	Review & Updating of Social Accounts	Jamie Ion <i>County Communications Manager</i>
21/05/2025	1.2	Major review and update.	Jamie Ion <i>County Communications Manager</i>

Contents

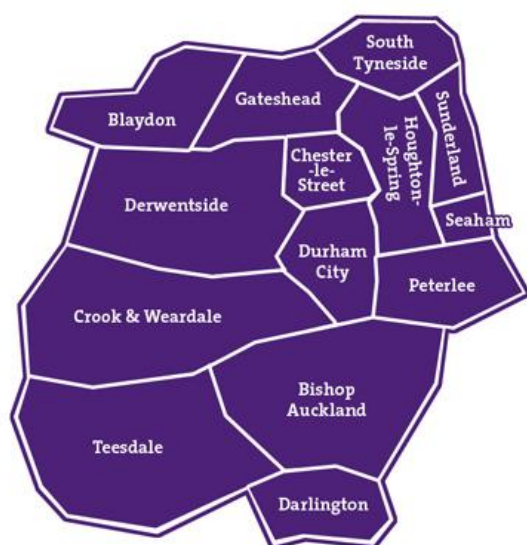
Communication Plan	1
About this document	2
Version History	2
Contents	3
About us	4
Objectives	4
Durham Scouts Communications Team.....	5
Our strategic plan	5
Methods of Communication	6
External Methods	6
Internal Methods.....	6
Full List of Platforms & Services.....	6
County Event social channels.....	7
Key messages & Audiences	8
Brand Guidelines.....	8
Communications Flow	9
Communication Routing.....	10
Feedback and Continuous Improvement	11
Emergency Communications	11
How to Get Support.....	11
Related Policies & Guidance	12
County Policies.....	12
National Scouts UK Guidance	12

About us

Every year, **Durham Scouts** helps over **6,000 young people** enjoy new adventures, experience the outdoors, interact with others, gain confidence, and work towards reaching their full potential.

We are made up of **14 Districts**, which together support over **100 Scout Groups**. These Groups run sections including **Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Explorer Scouts**, and **Scout Network**, either on a weekly or flexible basis.

Each District and Group is led and supported by dedicated **volunteers** — not only those delivering programmes, but also those who contribute through **support teams and Trustee Boards**. Across the County, we also provide **learning opportunities, events, communications support**, and much more to ensure every section can thrive.



Objectives

The purpose of this Communications Plan is to ensure that all communication from Durham Scouts is clear, consistent, timely, and aligned with our mission to support young people and volunteers. This plan provides a framework for both internal and external communications across the County.

Our key objectives are to:

- **Raise awareness** of Scouting in County Durham and the opportunities it offers to young people and adult volunteers.
- **Support recruitment** of both youth members and volunteers through targeted, engaging communications.
- **Promote events and activities** effectively to ensure strong participation and community engagement.
- **Strengthen internal communication** between the County, Districts, Groups, and volunteers to improve coordination and morale.
- **Protect and enhance the Durham Scouts brand** by ensuring all communications are professional and in line with national guidance.
- **Provide guidance and consistency** for those involved in communications, including volunteers managing platforms or promoting events.



The Communications Team is one of several specialist teams within the **County Support Team**, alongside others focused on **growth and new provision, digital systems, community engagement, and property and equipment**.

Each year, the Communications Team typically leads or contributes to:

- Managing the **County website** and associated digital systems
- Running **external communications**, such as press releases and public updates
- Providing **direct support** to members and Groups upon request
- Taking the lead on **external output** for some of Durham Scouts' biggest and best events
- Managing **internal email communications** to members
- Capturing **photos and videos** to maintain a growing County media archive

Our strategic plan

All communications work within **Durham Scouts** is guided by two key strategic documents:

- The national **Skills for Life** strategy from **The Scouts (UK)**
- The **Durham Scouts County Development Plan**

This Communications Plan supports the delivery of both by providing a clear framework for how we manage and deliver **external communications** across the County.

It sets out:

- The **platforms and tools** available for communication
- How to use them **effectively and consistently**
- The **principles** that underpin all communication activity — clarity, inclusiveness, timeliness, and alignment with Scouting values

By aligning our communications with these wider strategies, we help ensure that everything we say and share supports the long-term growth, development, and visibility of Scouting in County Durham.

Methods of Communication

External Methods

- Social Platforms
- Local newspapers, Radio & TV
- Email Communications (MailChimp)
- Website

Internal Methods

- Social Platforms
- Microsoft 365
- Website

Full List of Platforms & Services

Service Type	Service Name	Location	Notes & Uses
Facebook Page	Durham Scouts	https://www.facebook.com/durhamscouts	External social media
Twitter Page	Durham Scouts	https://twitter.com/durhamscouts	External social media
Instagram	Durham Scouts	https://www.instagram.com/durhamscouts/	External social media
Facebook Page	Durham Scout County Explorers	https://www.facebook.com/DurhamScoutsExplorers	External social media
Facebook Page	Durham Scouts Young Leaders	https://www.facebook.com/durhamyoungleaders	External social media
Facebook Page	Durham Scout Network	https://www.facebook.com/DurhamScoutNetwork	External social media
Twitter Page	Durham Scout Network	https://twitter.com/durhamsnetwork	External social media
Website	Durham Scouts	https://durhamscouts.org.uk	External & Internal Comms
Email	Mailchimp	-	Internal & External Comms
Flickr	Durham Scouts Gallery	https://www.flickr.com/people/durhamscouts/	External
YouTube	YouTube Channel	https://www.youtube.com/c/durhamscouts	External
Facebook Group	Squirrel Volunteers & Supporters	https://www.facebook.com/groups/durhamsquirrelvolunteers/	Internal
Facebook Group	Beaver Volunteers & Supporters	https://www.facebook.com/groups/143786182977770/	Internal
Facebook Group	Cub Volunteers & Supporters	https://www.facebook.com/groups/327518474321762/	Internal
Facebook Group	Scout Volunteers	https://www.facebook.com/groups/163235637520159/	Internal

Service Type	Service Name	Location	Notes & Uses
	& Supporters		
Facebook Group	Explorer Volunteers & Supporters	https://www.facebook.com/groups/774187779457101/	Internal
Facebook Group	Durham Scouts – Network Group	https://www.facebook.com/groups/durhamscoutnetwork/	Internal
Facebook Group	Archery	https://www.facebook.com/groups/949327281791110/	
Facebook Group	Climbing	https://www.facebook.com/groups/70464073084	
Facebook Group	Camp@Home	https://www.facebook.com/groups/DurhamScoutsHomeCamp/	Internal

County Event social channels

From time to time, social channels may be created or removed for some of the events we run in Durham. This includes Confido, Cubboree and the Geoffrey Gordon Cup.

Service Type	Service Name	Location	Notes & Uses
Facebook Page	Confido	https://www.facebook.com/cnfdo/	External social media
Instagram Page	Confido	https://www.instagram.com/cnfdo/	External social media
Facebook Page	Cubboree	https://www.facebook.com/cubboree/	External social media
Instagram Page	Cubboree	https://www.instagram.com/dscubboree/	External social media
Facebook Page	Geoffrey Gordon Cup	https://www.facebook.com/thegeoffreygordoncup/	External social media
Instagram Page	Geoffrey Gordon Cup	https://www.instagram.com/scoutsggc	External social media

Importantly, for all social media channels, we follow our social media policy to ensure that all channels are operated correctly. This ensures continuity and a single communication style. We use a social media tool called buffer to help manage this effectively.

Key messages & Audiences

While each communication may have a specific purpose, all should broadly reinforce these key messages:

- **Scouting empowers young people** with skills for life.
- **Scouting is fun, adventurous, and inclusive.**
- **Volunteers are the backbone of our movement**—anyone can help make a difference.
- **Durham Scouts is an active and supportive community**, committed to delivering high-quality Scouting across the County.

Audience	Needs	Preferred Channels
Current Volunteers	Updates, resources, recognition	Email, Facebook Groups, Website
Young People & Parents	Activity info, news, joining details	Website, Social Media, Printed Materials
Prospective Volunteers	Clear info, personal stories, easy next steps	Website, Facebook, Event Promotion
Wider Community / Partners	Awareness of impact, calls to action	Press Releases, Social Media

Brand Guidelines

Durham Scouts follows the brand guidelines set out by **The Scouts (UK)** to ensure consistency, recognisability, and professionalism across all communication.

Where possible, all communication materials (including social media posts, posters, presentations, and newsletters) should:

- Use the official Scouts fonts, colour palette, and logo formats
- Reflect the tone and visual style of national Scouts materials
- Avoid the use of unofficial branding or outdated logos
- Use high-quality images that reflect the diversity and energy of Scouting

You can find full guidance and downloadable assets via the [Scouts Brand Centre](#).

Communications Flow

The following methodology is used when any internal or external communication needs to take place. All communications will go via the County Communications Manager & Communications Team to ensure all messages are on-brand and follow the guidelines. These can be raised by emailing communications@durhamscouts.org.uk

Support Request Received

A message is received by the comms team requesting something to be passed onto members. In normal times, 7 days notice should be given before its expected comms to go out. 10 days for website related items. The more notice provided, the more effectively comms can be planned and included in our plans.

Request Evaluated

Message is quickly evaluated for priority to see where it fits into the comms schedule and how quickly it needs to go out. (within 1 day). If required, further information is requested.

Assets Created

Any associated images to go out on social are created or sourced. This could also include adding or updating content on our website.

Content Scheduled

Based on the content, social media and emails are scheduled to go out to the various channels. Our channels are divided by section / role / level so we can really target. Comms is sometimes targetted multiple times in the lead up to an event.

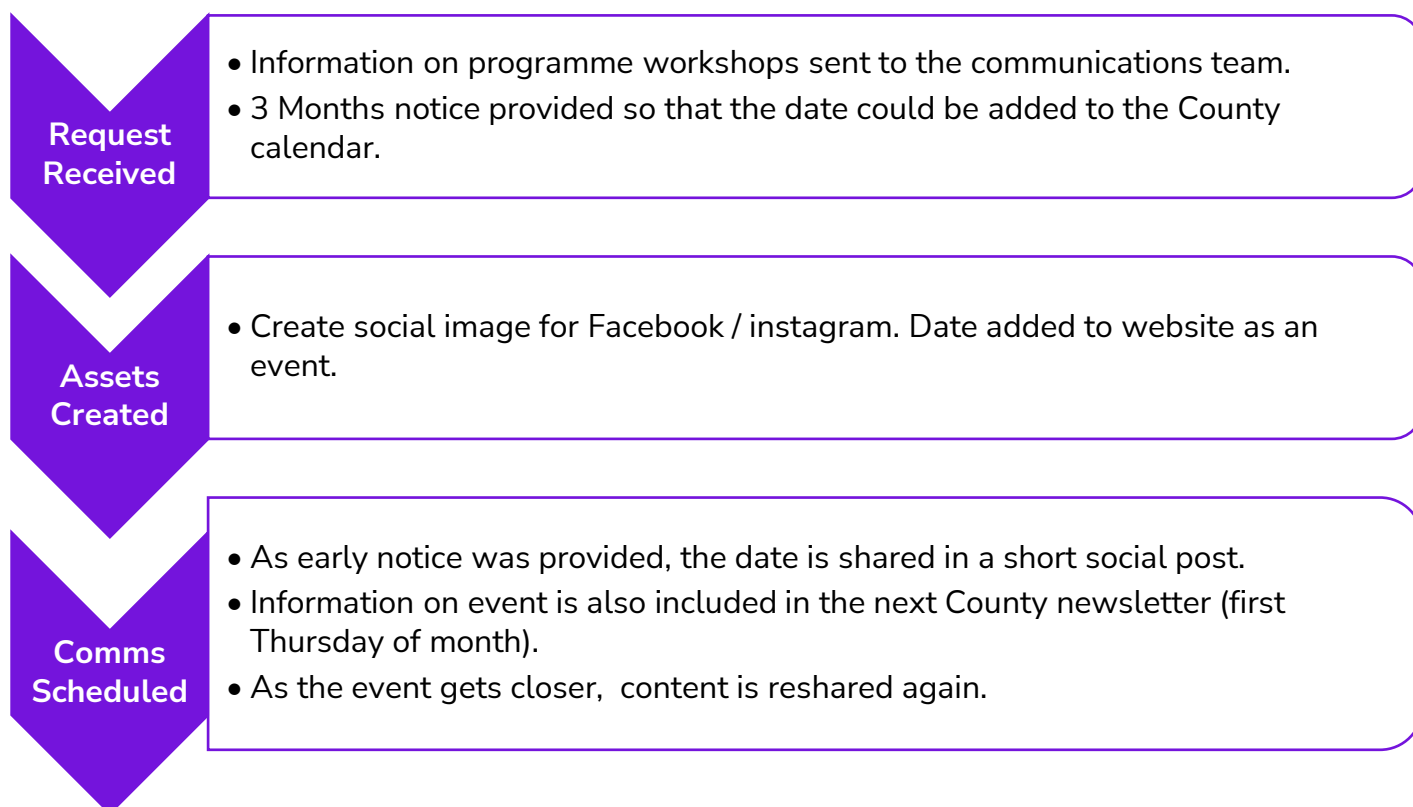
Schedule Activated

Content is sent out to members via email and various social channels. Depending upon the importance this could have been anything from 1 days to 2 weeks after the original message was received.

Communication Routing

The most important part of this entire process is that communication is routed via the Communications team. This is to ensure that items reach the correct target audience at the correct time with no clashes with other items. It's impossible to give every example of how communications will be routed through the various channels (due to the large number of possibilities), however, this is an example of how a communication could be routed.

Example: Programme Workshop Notifications



Feedback and Continuous Improvement

Durham Scouts values feedback from all members to improve how we communicate.

- The Communications Team will review this plan annually and update it as needed.
- Suggestions or concerns about communications can be sent at any time to the Communications Team.
- Open dialogue helps ensure our messaging remains clear, inclusive, and effective.

Emergency Communications

In the event of a critical incident or emergency that may affect Durham Scouts' reputation or safety:

- **The County Communications Manager** must notify **The Scouts UK Headquarters (HQ)** immediately.
- All public statements, media enquiries, and external communications **must be managed through HQ's Media Team**. No individual or County-level communication should be released without HQ approval.
- Communications will be timely, factual, and respectful of the privacy and safeguarding of those involved.
- Volunteers and members should **not respond to media enquiries directly** and must refer all enquiries to the County Communications Team, who will coordinate with HQ.

For more information on Scouts UK's media and crisis protocols, see:

<https://www.scouts.org.uk/contact-us/media-enquiries/>

How to Get Support

For all communications-related support, including media requests, event promotion, or assistance with digital tools, please contact the County Communications Team at:

communications@durhamscouts.org.uk

We welcome your enquiries and look forward to supporting your communication needs.

Related Policies & Guidance

All communications within Durham Scouts must follow key County and national policies to ensure they are safe, inclusive, and legally compliant. Below is a summary of the most relevant guidance for communications and media activity.

County Policies

Digital Media Policy

Covers the use of digital tools and platforms, including:

- Photography and videography guidance
- Consent and safeguarding considerations

Social Media Policy

Provides direction on how Durham Scouts uses social media channels, including:

- Moderation of Facebook groups and other platforms
- Appropriate use of personal vs. official accounts

Privacy Policy

Explains how Durham Scouts collects, stores, and uses personal information, including:

- Data collection and retention practices
- Transparency and individual rights

Data Protection Policy

Ensures compliance with UK GDPR. Covers:

- Secure handling of member data
- Sharing and storing media responsibly
- Reporting concerns or data breaches

All County policies are available at: durhamscouts.org.uk/about-us/policies/

National Scouts UK Guidance

Policy, Organisation and Rules (POR)

The national governing document for Scouting in the UK. Relevant sections cover:

- Communications responsibilities
- Use of media and technology
- Leader conduct and accountability

Safeguarding Policy

Sets the framework for protecting young people in all Scouting activity. Particularly important for:

- Using images or stories involving young people
- Managing online safety
- Reporting concerns appropriately

National safeguarding resources can be found at:

durhamscouts.org.uk/about-us/safeguarding-reports-and-making-complaints/