Scouts Activities

on the

National Cycle Network

Scouts Scotland

TRANSPORT SCOTLAND
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Scouts Activities on the National Cycle Network

Get in touch

Why not take a picture while completing one of these activities? Or while using this booklet?

Share your experiences on the National Cycle Network on our social media pages:

@SustransScot

@SustransScotland

@sustrans

Contact the Sustrans Scotland team at scotland@sustrans.org.uk or phone us at **0131 346 1384** for more information on the National Cycle Network or this booklet.

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Introduction

This resource pack is full of fun and educational activities to encourage you to get active, explore your local environment and improve health and wellbeing.

Sustrans Scotland and Scouts Scotland have teamed up to design activities that educate young people like you on sustainability and active travel, equipping you with essential skills and encouraging lifelong learning.

The activities proposed in this booklet mostly take place on the National Cycle Network. Please take extra care on the paths as there can be a high volume of users. If you stop on the path to rest or observe wildlife, remember to be aware of your surroundings.

A bit about Sustrans

Sustrans is the charity making it easier for people to walk and cycle.

We connect people and places, create liveable neighborhoods, transform the school run and commute. We do this because it leads to happier people, stronger communities and greener local environments.

Sustrans is the custodian and creator of the National Cycle Network. It is Sustrans' role to care for it, improve it and champion a long-term vision for its future.

Join us on our journey. www.sustrans.org.uk

The National Cycle Network

The National Cycle Network is a UK-wide network of on-road and traffic-free paths for everyone, connecting cities, towns and countryside. The Network is open to all, whether you're on foot, bike, wheels or horse. You'll know you're on the National Cycle Network when you see this sign:

Scotland is home to 762 miles of traffic-free paths, which use a variety of canal towpaths, forest roads and railway paths. The Network runs through both of Scotland's national parks: Loch Lomond and Trossachs, and the Cairngorms, and connects all of Scotland's major cities.

Discover more about the Network at www.sustrans.org.uk, where you can find an interactive map of all routes and paths.

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A bit about Scouts Scotland

Scouts Scotland believes in preparing young people with skills for life, and celebrating diversity while standing against intolerance. They give young people the opportunity to have fun and be adventurous while developing the skills they need to succeed, now and in the future.

Skills such as teamwork, leadership and resilience have helped the Scouts succeed in careers such as teachers and social workers, astronauts and Olympians.

Discover more about Scouts Scotland at www.scouts.scot

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Scouts
Scotland

Inclusivity, young people and community impact

The activities in this pack are designed to be accessible to every Scout, and can be adapted to meet your needs.

BEAVERS cubs SCOUTS

Each activity has parameters within which it can be changed or scaled up or down by the Scout Leader, allowing young people to shape how they complete the activities.

By partnering with Scouts Scotland, we aim to get more young people walking, cycling, scooting and wheeling safely by creating fun and safe environments to learn in.

Skills and learning objectives

The activities contained within this pack have a wide variety of development opportunities. These include but are not limited to:

- Teamwork and social skills
- Health and safety
- Communication
- Care, respect and inclusivity
- Personal development
- Positive community impact and engagement
- Empowerment and independence
- Sustainability
- Confidence to overcome challenges
- Cooperation
- Strengthening connection to communities
- Leadership

Preparation and equipment

Before undertaking any of the proposed activities, leaders should always assess risk and ensure that enough adults are present to ensure a safe environment for the activity. This is particularly important as these activities are probably held away from the usual meeting place.

> Scouts Guidelines on assessing risks during activities can be found on the Policy and Organisation Rules, together with links to Risk Assessment documents and checklists: www.scouts.org.uk/safety

In addition, please read through the national Scottish Outdoor Access Code and make sure your Scout Group understands them.

The code can be accessed here: www.outdooraccess-scotland.scot

For each activity we suggest that you pick a location along your local, traffic-free National Cycle Network route.

A basic list of the required items is provided with each activity. Other equipment might be necessary, such as outdoor clothing on rainy days!

Activities

Bike maintenance activity (M–check)

Being able to fix a bike is an essential part of riding it. You will need to be able to carry out basic repairs and safety checks to make sure yourself and others are safe while riding. Bike maintenance is a life skill which you will be able to use on your own bikes as well as your friends'. You will also have the opportunity to share these skills with your friends.

Activity

Carry out an M-check on your bike (see overleaf). Pay particular attention to making sure your brakes are working properly and there are no loose parts. Discuss why each part you check is important for safety, and what could happen if it was not working. Additionally, discuss how you would fix any potential issues with your group.

Using one of your own bikes, or a spare inner tube, work in teams to fix a flat tyre using a puncture repair kit. Use your team-working and communication skills to work together. You will learn essential problem-solving skills which can be transferred to other parts of life.

If you want to make this activity more challenging, try fixing a puncture blindfolded! Working in teams, the person repairing the puncture should be blindfolded, while the rest of the group give instructions to complete the task.

After the activity, why not find a friend or family member to teach your new bike maintenance and repair skills to.

Leaders' notes: Leaders and/or guardians should supervise while the group carries out this activity in teams. Adjust this activity's challenges depending on what it is suitable for your group and help them with the necessary equipment.

Useful resources:

Puncture repair guidelines: www.sustrans.org.uk/puncture-repair

For general tips and advice visit: www.sustrans.org.uk/our-blog

Skills & learning:

- Teamwork
- Bike maintenance
- Safety checks
- Safety awareness

Essential kit:

- Bikes
- Punctured inner tube
- Puncture repair kit

Badges available

Beavers: Cyclist Activity Badge

Cubs: Skills Challenge Award
Cyclist Activity Badge

Scouts: Skills Challenge Award
Cyclist Activity Badge

How to perform an M-check

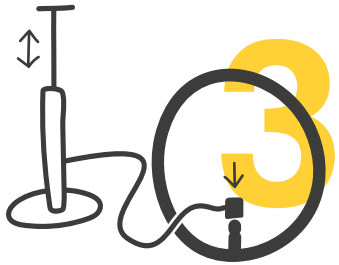
An M-check is a basic inspection to make sure the important parts of your bike are working properly.

Rear wheel

The rear wheel should be tightly fitted. Check the quick release lever is securely closed, or the nuts on both sides of the wheel are secure.

Spokes

The spokes should be of equal tension and not loose. Pluck each spoke with your finger. The sound from each should be similar.



Tyres

If the tyre is soft, then attach your pump to the valve and pump up. (Note, there are two types of valve fitting). Recommended tyre pressure is usually written somewhere on the tyre.

Sadddle

Check your saddle isn't loose and that you haven't exceeded the limit marked on the seat post. Use an allen key to tighten the seat post clamp.

Chain

The chain should be clean and oiled. (Note: don't use too much oil as this will pick up more dirt and make it more difficult to clean).

Pedals

Make sure the pedals spin smoothly and that your cranks are on tight, spin smoothly, and don't creak.

Stem

Check that your front wheel and stem do not move independently, and that your handlebar clamp bolts are tight.

Perform this check by standing in front of the bike, holding the front wheel between your knees, and twisting the handlebars. You can tighten the stem bolts and the handlebar clamp with an allen key.

Headset

Check if there is any rocking or clicking in the headset. Firmly grasp the head tube with one hand and apply the front brake with the other. This will steady the bike so you can shake the headset to establish any rocking or clicking in the bearings.

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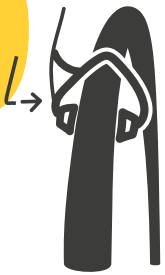
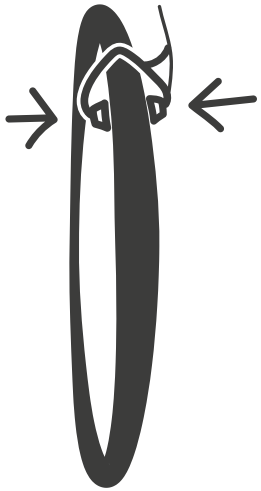


Brakes

Ensure that the front and rear brakes are working properly. If the brake lever pulls against the handlebar grip, the brake cable needs adjusting. This is done by loosening the brake cable anchor bolt, pulling the cable tighter, and tightening the anchor bolt again.

Both sides of the brake mechanism should move when the brake is applied. If this is not happening, turn the small adjustor screw on the stationary side until both sides are moving again.



Most brakes have these adjuster screws. The brake block must pull flat to the wheel rim. If this does not, use an allen key to tighten the block in the correct position. This is done whilst applying the brake.

Finally, check the front brake by applying the brake and pushing the bike forwards, and check the back brake by applying the brake and pulling the bike backwards.

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Frame

Look for any cracks or damage on the bike frame. In particular, focus on the area where the frame joins the head tube.

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Front wheel

The front wheel should be tightly fitted. As with the rear wheel, check the quick release lever or the nuts on both sides.

Don't forget to check your front spokes and tyre pressure too.

Sustainable areas

Exploring and protecting the environment helps us all enjoy a greener, healthier future. Discuss what 'sustainability' means, and why it's so important that we respect the planet. Think about what has stopped people from caring for the environment in the past, and how we can work together to change this.

This activity provides an opportunity for you and your friends to understand the impact littering can have on the environment, and how small steps can have a big impact on your local community.

Activity

Commit to cleaning a section of National Cycle Network with your group once every two weeks for three months. Your group leader could also invite another Scout Group to join in with your clean ups and talk to them about the paths in their areas. What are the most common types of litter you find? Does the path seem to get more littered over certain days? Why do you think this is?

Remember to throw away the litter safely and recycle where you can. You could arrange a visit to a landfill facility, discovering how the recycling process works for each different material.

> **Leaders' notes:** Plan the outings on the most suitable path of National Cycle Network for your group. Supervise the activity, making sure each participant has the right equipment. If possible, organise a visit to a landfill facility for your group.

> **Useful resources:**
>
> Recycling information, advice, activities and much more: wasteless.zerowastescotland.org.uk
>
> Find more on the Sustrans website about the Love Your Network grant, which funds practical community projects on the Network.

Skills & learning:

- Environmental and sustainability awareness
- Reasons why people act unsustainably, and what can be done to encourage sustainable behaviour
- The recycling process
- Why recycling is important

Essential kit:

- Litter pickers
- Gloves
- Sanitiser
- Bin Bags

Badges available

Beavers: Community Impact Staged Activity Badge

Cubs: Community Impact Staged Activity Badge
Environmental Conservation Activity Badge

Scouts: Community Impact Staged Activity Badge
Environmental Conservation Activity Badge

Engineering and infrastructure

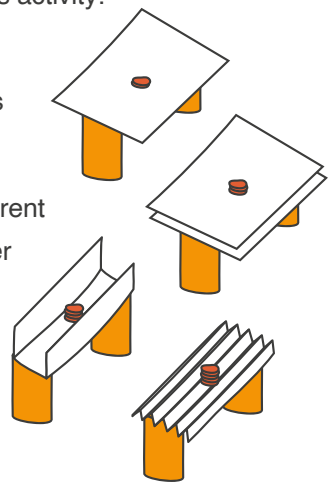
What impact does engineering and infrastructure have on our communities? Buildings, roads and bridges enable us to move around by car, bike and foot, and are an essential part of all of our lives.

Activity

Visit different areas of your community with your group and leader. Try to include a bridge, a roundabout and a straight piece of road.

Discuss what you think helps the safety of people on bikes and walking, and what makes cycling and walking more dangerous. Think about speed limits, blind spots and the type of road and its materials. Discuss how these might be different in towns and cities and the countryside. Next, try to complete this activity:

Build a bridge using two empty toilet rolls and one piece of paper. Test its strength by placing 1p coins on it. How many can it hold before falling apart?



See what happens when you fold the paper in different ways: try with two pieces together, folding the paper up at the sides, or like a fan. How many coins do you think each bridge will hold? Write down your results and use this information to build the strongest paper bridge ever!

Leaders' notes: Plan to visit suitable areas within the local area and to complete the activity together. Guardians are advised to supervise this activity if completed individually and/or at home.

Useful resources:

Take a closer look at how we are improving paths along the National Cycle Network in Scotland: www.sustrans.org.uk/about-us/our-work-in-scotland

Skills & learning:

- Safety
- Rural vs urban infrastructure
- Terrain impact on cycling and safety
- The importance of maintaining path surfaces (tarmac, gravel, natural etc)

Essential kit:

- Paper (try to use pre-used paper)
- 1p coins
- Toilet rolls

Badges available

Beavers: Builder Activity Badge
Hikes Away Staged Activity

Cubs: Hikes Away Staged Activity

Scouts: Hikes Away Staged Activity

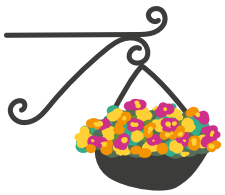
Community impact

Local people have lots of information about their areas, and have great ideas about how we can help to make them better. Community engagement is a great way to hear about the needs and hopes of communities.

Think about areas you interact with every day. You probably have lots of useful information that many people don't know about. Do you have ideas to improve your community?

Activity

Discuss what might make your community more attractive. You could think about things like hanging baskets, a flower planter or a wildflower bed. Choose a particular area for your project. Make sure to get permission before you start working. This will most likely be from the council.



Create a survey to find out what people in your community think about your idea. For example, if you would like to install hanging baskets on your High Street, you could ask local business owners and residents whether they like the idea or not.

Look at the survey results for positive and negative comments to check if there are any problems to solve.

You can then begin to work on your project. For example, you can start making baskets and deciding on the types of flowers you will put in them.

> **Leaders' notes:** Follow and sustain your group during this activity, for example helping them in the process of contacting the council and building the community survey. Analyse the responses and help the group choose the most suitable project.

> **Useful resources:**
>
> Find useful inspiration and ideas about different engagement events and projects on Sustrans' website: www.sustrans.org.uk/our-blog/projects
>
> Community21 have an online neighbourhood and community-led planning tool: www.community21.org

Skills & learning:

- Community impact
- The planning process
- Quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis
- Project management

Essential kit:

- Resources for community project (eg flower seeds, gardening tools).
- Computer, printer, paper and pens for surveys

Badges available

Beavers: Community Impact Staged Activity Badge

Cubs: Community Impact Staged Activity Badge

Scouts: Community Impact Staged Activity Badge

Led walk or bike ride

What is it like to be a leader? Leading a bike ride or walk will give you the chance to be one. You can manage your group, make sure everyone is safe and boost your communication skills. Carrying out a led walk or ride will encourage your group to travel actively and get more involved in the outdoor environment.

Activity

Your Scout Group Leader will travel with you on a chosen traffic-free path along the National Cycle Network. You will be asked to discuss things like safety and sustainability. What would make your walk or ride safer? What kind of transport is best for the environment?

You will be asked to find some interesting features along the route and mark these on a map so you can tell your group about them during your leadership duty.

If possible, it is a good idea for the whole group to stop at a busy junction or roundabout to discuss the challenges you might face and how everyone can navigate it safely.

> **Leaders' notes:** To carry out a led walk or ride, you will need to pick a traffic-free route of suitable distance and difficulty to suit your group. You can do this with your section. Encourage them to consider the age range of their group and the terrain they'll be walking or cycling on. Create a rotation of who will lead, and how they will communicate with the rest of the group.

> **Useful resources:**
>
> On Sustrans' blog you'll find advice and additional resources on cycling and walking safety for children, as well as general cycling information: www.sustrans.org.uk/what-you-can-do/children-and-families/cycling-kids/cycling-safety-children

Skills & learning:

- Leadership
- Communication
- Group management
- Individual and group safety
- Event planning
- Navigation

Essential kit:

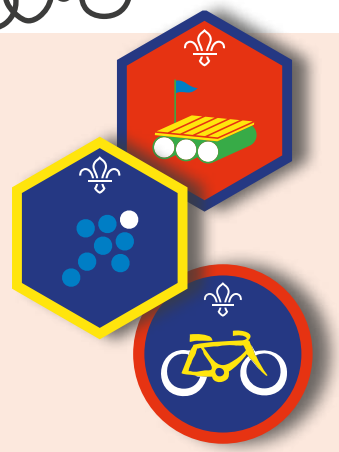
- Bikes (optional)
- Navigation equipment
- Safety equipment

Badges available

Beavers: Cyclist Activity Badge
Adventure Challenge Award

Cubs: Team Leader Challenge Award
Adventure Challenge Award

Scouts: Team Leader Challenge Award
Cyclist Activity Badge
Adventure Challenge Award



Wildlife

Identifying wildlife is a fun hobby, and it's educational too. The National Cycle Network is a great place to spot lots of wildlife. The traffic-free paths provide a safe and hidden environment for many species, and a quiet space for people to walk or cycle as they discover new animals and plants. Common wildlife to spot are birds, hedgehogs, butterflies and bees.

Activity

Your Scout Group Leader will take you on a walk for an hour along a traffic-free section of the National Cycle Network. Take the wildlife ID sheets at the back of this booklet with you. You should decide on a particular aspect of wildlife to identify, and keep your eyes open for as many of this species as you can during your walk.

Please remember to leave everything as you found it, and don't damage any of the wildlife's environment.

Talk about your discoveries with your group, thinking about why the levels of different species might vary at different times of day or year. Why are some wildlife populations in danger?

> When you're finished, use this website to record the information you've found about each species: www.brc.ac.uk/irecord/sustrans-enter-record
>
> This helps to keep count of the numbers of species in specific areas.

> **Leaders' notes:** remember to choose the most suitable traffic-free path on the National Cycle Network for their group. Leaders and guardians should also help the group to complete the wildlife online records, if required.

> **Useful resources:**
>
> The Wildlife Trust has various online resources and information on all kinds of wildlife. Visit their website to find out more: www.wildlifetrusts.org
>
> The Wildlife Trust – Guide on planting flowers for pollinators: www.wildlifetrusts.org/actions/plant-flowers-bees-and-pollinators

Skills & learning:

- Wildlife identification
- Record keeping

Essential kit:

- Wildlife ID sheets (back of booklet)

Badges available

Beavers: Hobbies Activity Badge

Cubs: Naturalist Activity Badge
Environmental Conservation Activity Badge

Scouts: Naturalist Activity Badge
Environmental Conservation Activity Badge

Health and wellbeing

Physical activity, like taking part in sport or playing with friends in a local park, improves our health and wellbeing.

Being active benefits our physical and mental health, and is a great way to connect with friends and family. Remember to always exercise safely.

Can you think of any physical activity you can do with your group?

Activity

Travel along a 2-5 mile traffic-free section of the National Cycle Network in three different ways (cycle, walk, run, scooter, mobility scooter) in one month. Alternatively, plan a journey along three different routes.

Record this activity in your physical activity diary, which you can find at the back of this booklet.

Add the activities you already do, like going to karate, swimming or playing football. Not all physical activities have to be carried out on the Network. Take a note in your diary of any exercise you want to include.

Do you think you were more active than usual? Think about how you have felt during this month. Did you notice any benefits?

Leaders' notes: These activities will give young people essential skills in planning and carrying out journeys, as well as encouraging a healthy lifestyle. Scout Group Leaders and/or guardians are advised to supervise this activity.

This activity will help your Scouts to meet the government's recommended activity guidelines for 5-18 year olds.

Useful resources:

You can learn more about suggested guideline levels and amounts of physical activity for young people and adults through the NHS's Activity Guidelines: www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise

Skills & learning:

- Exercise safety
- The importance of physical activity in wellbeing
- Knowledge of the National Cycle Network

Essential kit:

- National Cycle Network map
- Physical activity diary template (back of booklet)

Badges available

Beavers: Explore Activity Badge

Cubs: Hobbies Activity Badge

Scouts: Physical Recreation Activity Badge

Volunteering

Volunteering is a great way to look after your community and help those around you. There are lots of voluntary opportunities available. What do you think these are?

Think about potential opportunities like spending time and sharing your enthusiasm with older people in our communities. Think of ways you can enjoy the National Cycle Network together.

Activity

Your group will act as a guide along a local, traffic-free National Cycle Network route for another group of Scouts, elderly people or a differently abled person in the community.

Spend time thinking about local landmarks, interesting facts about the area, local plants and animals, and ways in which the route could be made accessible to all users. Each of you will present one different topic.

Remember to interact with your guests, and ask if they also have any interesting things to share with you.

> **Leaders' notes:** Remember to create a plan of who will speak, when, and what they will be talking about. Take the group on your tour, making sure each of your young people gets a chance to act as guide leader.

> **Useful resources:**
>
> There are different ways you can easily and quickly give your time to help Sustrans. Have a look on the website to check out how you, your family, your friends or school can get involved: www.sustrans.org.uk/volunteer

Skills & learning:

- Communication
- Teamwork
- Assisting others
- Tour guiding
- Planning a tour

Essential kit:

- Food and water
- Any special arrangement or equipment needed to assist people with different needs
- Scripts for touring speeches

Badges available

Beavers: Explore Activity Badge

Cubs: Local Knowledge Activity Badge
Communicator Activity Badge

Scouts: Local Knowledge Activity Badge

Extra resources

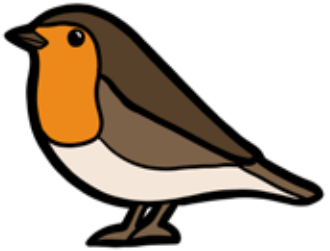
ID sheets ☑

Birds

Bullfinch ☐

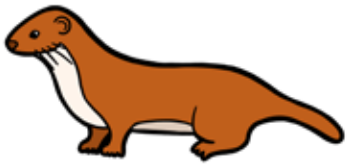
Swallow ☐

Blue Tit ☐



Robin ☐

Mammals



Weasel ☐

Fox ☐

Mole ☐

Otter ☐

Grey Squirrel ☐

Red Squirrel ☐

Butterflies

Orange Tip Butterfly ☐

Green Veined White Moth ☐

Comma Butterfly ☐

Small Copper Butterfly ☐

Small Tortoishell Butterfly ☐

Red Admiral Butterfly ☐

Painted Lady Butterfly ☐

Peacock Butterfly ☐

Bees

Tree Bumblebee ☐

Early Bee ☐

White Tailed Bumblebee and Buff Tailed Bumblebee workers are almost identical. Have a look for their queens instead.

White Tailed / Buff Tailed Bumblebee ☐

Buff Tailed Queen Bee ☐

White Tailed Queen Bee ☐

Common Carder Bee ☐

Red Tailed Bumblebee ☐

Leaves

Sycamore ☐

Hazel Leaf ☐

Ash Leaf ☐

Horse Chestnut Leaf ☐

Hawthorn Leaf ☐

Beech Leaf ☐

Flowers

Meadowsweet ☐

Rosebay Willowherb ☐

Coltsfoot ☐

Oxeye Daisy ☐

Red Campion ☐

Knapweed ☐

30-day diary

Example: RUN FOR 30 MINUTES

Day 1:

Day 2:

Day 3:

Day 4:

Day 5:

Day 6:

Day 7:

Day 8:

Day 9:

Day 10:

Day 11:

Day 12:

Day 13:

Day 14:

Day 15:

Day 16:

Day 17:

Day 18:

Day 19:

Day 20:

Day 21:

Day 22:

Day 23

Day 24

Day 25:

Day 26

Day 27:

Day 28:

Day 29:

Day 30:

Sustrans Scotland and Scouts Scotland have teamed up to create a resource pack full of fun and educational activities all about active travel, health and wellbeing.

Each activity has been designed to educate young people on the benefits and challenges of active travel, giving essential skills and encouraging lifelong learning.

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