



# Volunteering at Gilwell Park

A short guide to your placement

# Welcome to the adventure...

Congratulations! There are just a few short weeks to go until you join us for what we hope will be an exciting, challenging and hugely rewarding experience as a member of our volunteer team at Gilwell Park Scout Activity Centre. We value each and every one of our volunteer staff and the contribution they make to the successful running of our Activity Centres. Your time, energy and enthusiasm help to ensure that thousands of children and adults each year are able to participate in top quality outdoor experiences, challenge themselves, and try something new.

We hope this short guide will provide you with all the practical information you need to prepare for your placement, so make sure you read it thoroughly and complete the pre-placement checklist. We're here to help though, so if there's anything you're still not sure about then don't hesitate to email Pip, the Centre Coordinator, on [pip.crockett@scouts.org.uk](mailto:pip.crockett@scouts.org.uk).

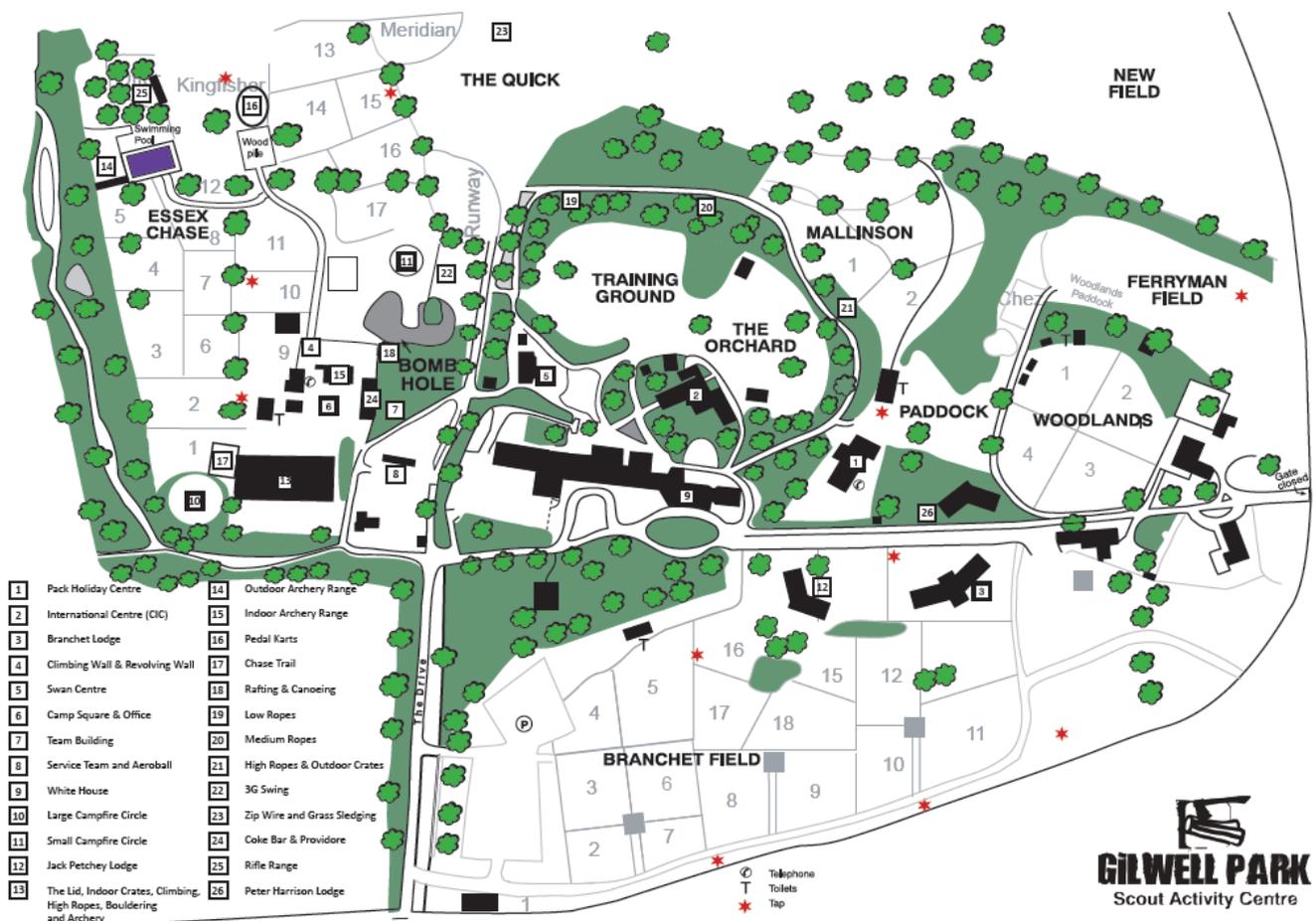
Good luck with all the preparations and we look forward to welcoming you to the Gilwell family very soon!



The Clock Tower, Camp Square

## About Gilwell Park

Gilwell Park is widely regarded as the 'Home of Scouting'. For almost 100 years, the site has been used by the Scouting movement; initially by Baden-Powell to train leaders, and more recently as a site for residential and outdoor activities for Scout and other groups. Since 1919, the estate has grown from 53 acres to over 108 acres, and today also offers conference and training facilities.



Gilwell Park is one of 9 National Centres which are owned and run by the Scout Association. The other eight are Downe, Great Tower, Woodhouse Park, Ferny Crofts, Hawkhurst, Youlbury, Yr-Hafod and Crawfordsburn. The centres cater for Scouts, Guides, schools and youth organisations and offer a wide range of facilities including indoor accommodation, camping and adventure activities. You may have the opportunity to visit one of our other centres during your placement. If you'd like to find out more about Scout Activity Centres, visit [www.scoutactivitycentres.org](http://www.scoutactivitycentres.org).



Volunteer staff team, Spring 2012



See-saw

## Your Placement

### Travel arrangements and arrival at Gilwell Park

We expect all of our volunteer staff to organise their own travel to Chingford Rail Station, which is approximately 2 kilometres from Gilwell Park. All London airports offer good connections via tube and overground train to Chingford. We may be able to collect you from this point, or it may be easier to take a taxi (a 5-minute journey costing around £4.50). Taxis are easily available from the Premier Cars office, directly on the left as you exit the station. It would be useful to change some money into Pounds at the airport to cover your travel from the airport to Gilwell Park.

The same applies to your departure from Gilwell Park. We will take you to Chingford Rail Station, but we expect you to plan and finance your onward journey. Remember - you must be at the airport at least 2 hours before your flight departs, and you must allow at least 1.5 hours by public transport to get to all London airports. We will allocate you one day before your departure date to pack your belongings. Please take this information into account when you are booking your flight home.

There are four major airports serving London – London Heathrow, London Gatwick, London Stanstead and London Luton. A smaller airport, London City, also has limited services. The attached info-sheet - **Travelling to Gilwell Park** - gives further detail about travelling to Chingford from your chosen airport.

## Initial Training

We currently have four cohorts of volunteers arriving each year, in March, May, July and September. On arrival at Gilwell Park, every new volunteer undergoes an intensive training period to ensure they have the skills required to successfully take on their allocated role. You may have the opportunity to gain some nationally-recognised qualifications.

Depending upon the length of your stay, you will complete between 2 and 8 weeks of training. The exact content of your training will depend which role you have been allocated to. All staff arriving in March and September will complete some training with volunteers from across the 9 National Centres – this is a great opportunity to make contacts from elsewhere in the UK!



Oksana gets down to business...



Heewon tries out the pedal karts



Energisers in the Lid

## Your duties and working hours

Your everyday tasks as a volunteer at Gilwell Park will vary depending on the role you are performing, the time of year, and the needs of the centre. You will have been allocated a role prior to your arrival.

As an **Activity Instructor**, you will be trained to assist our Activity Centre team by delivering a variety of activity sessions, from orienteering to archery, climbing to campfires. You will have the opportunity to supervise and lead groups of both children and adults, providing an outstanding level of customer service and ensuring that all activities are delivered to the highest health and safety standards.

As a **Maintenance and Housekeeping Assistant**, you'll be part of our Maintenance team, ensuring the smooth running of all Gilwell Park's activities, and helping with the upkeep and repair of our grounds, buildings, equipment and vehicles. You'll help to make sure our accommodation and

conference areas are always looking their best, and that our guests' first impression of Gilwell Park is an outstanding one.

As **Reception, Conference and Housekeeping Assistant**, you'll be helping to ensure all our clients receive an excellent level of customer service throughout their stay. You might be helping out behind Main Reception, assisting the Conference team with arrangements for a wedding, or ensuring the Whitehouse bedrooms are spotless for incoming guests. You'll be the first port of call for guests, with a big smile and an excellent knowledge of Gilwell Park.

You can find more detail about your individual duties in the relevant **Role Description**.

In all roles you'll also be expected to help in the general maintenance and upkeep of the Activity and Conference Centres, including cleaning buildings and toilets, greeting guests, showing them to their accommodation and camping areas, and assisting in the on-site shops. You will need to be flexible and adaptable regarding the duties assigned to you – gaining a breadth of skills is all part of the experience!

On average you'll be working a 40-hour week, although you could be asked to undertake more hours during busy periods and less at quieter times. A typical day runs from 8:30am until 5:00pm, although you will also work some evenings and split shifts. In our busy months you might work longer days; even up to 10 hours. You'll be allocated at least one day off per week but this won't always be the same day. During quieter periods, you'll get two days off per week, although they won't necessarily be at weekends or on consecutive days. Remember – Gilwell Park is a 7-day operation! As a member of volunteer staff, you'll also be entitled to holidays, with the number of days depending on the length of your stay.



High Ropes training



Kayaking in the Bomb Hole

## Accommodation

On-site accommodation will be provided for the duration of your placement at Gilwell Park. We have two volunteer staff buildings, The Den and Gilwellbury. Throughout the year, we also use temporary accommodation including Bunk-a-Bins (cabins with two beds and a bathroom) and rooms in the Whitehouse.

You'll be allocated a bed in a shared room according to the number of volunteers and length of your stay. Please bear in mind that it is impossible to take requests regarding roommates and particular accommodation so try to be as open-minded as possible – each building has its pros and cons! You'll share a bathroom with up to 8 other volunteers. We will provide bedding; you are responsible for keeping it clean and returning it in good condition when you depart. You will have access to a laundry with both washing machines and tumble driers.



Bedroom, Gilwellbury



Living room, The Den



Gilwellbury



The Den

## Food

A three course meal is provided in the onsite restaurant each day. An allowance is provided on a weekly basis to the accommodation buildings dependent upon the number of people living there at the time. This money covers all other meals throughout the week. You will be expected to discuss with the other household members the meal requirements for the week, budget and shop for the ingredients. On arrival you will discuss with your other housemates how jobs such as cleaning and cooking will be delegated. Sharing recipes from around the world is all part of the experience, so be prepared for meals which are different to those you are used to!



Kitchen, Gilwellbury



Kitchen, The Den

## Language

English is the spoken language of the site and you will be expected to communicate in English. Communication is a big part of your role and you will be given specific training in how to deal with the needs of the guests. You may occasionally be called upon to communicate in your own language to some of our overseas visitors. There are likely to be other speakers of your native language staying on site with you, however we will encourage you to speak English in order to ensure your English improves as much as possible during your stay. The majority of our volunteers are not native English speakers and we are always happy to help with language barriers. There may be the opportunity for you to take part in English lessons.

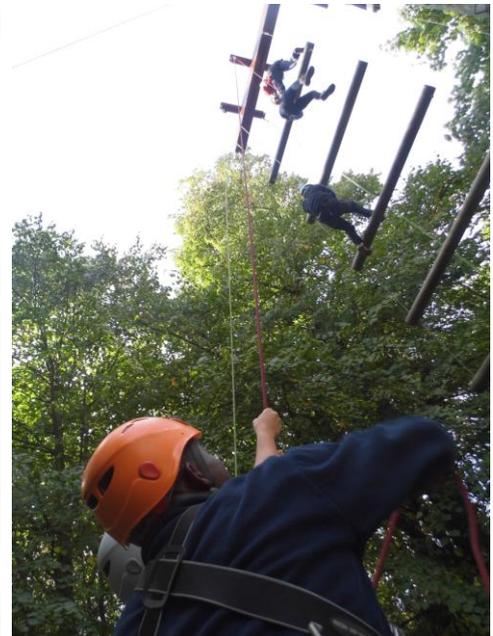
## Personal Development

During your placement with Scout Activity Centres, you will develop a wide range of skills. This includes practical skills, such as delivering specific activities or learning to drive a tractor, and transferable skills such as communicating with a variety of people, and working as part of a team.

In order for you to recognise and record the formal and informal learning you undertake during your placement, we have recently introduced individual Personal Development Logs. The PDL allows you to record experiences and training, log any particular successes or areas for improvement, and set out your learning objectives. Completing your PDL will enable you gain as much as possible from your placement and to articulate what you've learnt, which is particularly useful for future applications and interviews. In addition, every volunteer will complete Mid-Term Evaluation with a member of Centre staff. This is your opportunity to set some targets for the second half of your placement. Keeping your PDL up-to-date during the first few months will help to make this meeting as productive as possible.



High Ropes



Jacob's Ladder

## Expenses

If you are volunteering for over 3 months, you will receive a weekly expenses payment (usually between £35 and £45 depending upon your circumstances and the length of your stay) which will be paid either in cash or directly into a UK bank account. If you are staying for 6 or 12 months, we can assist you to open a bank account during the first few weeks of your placement.

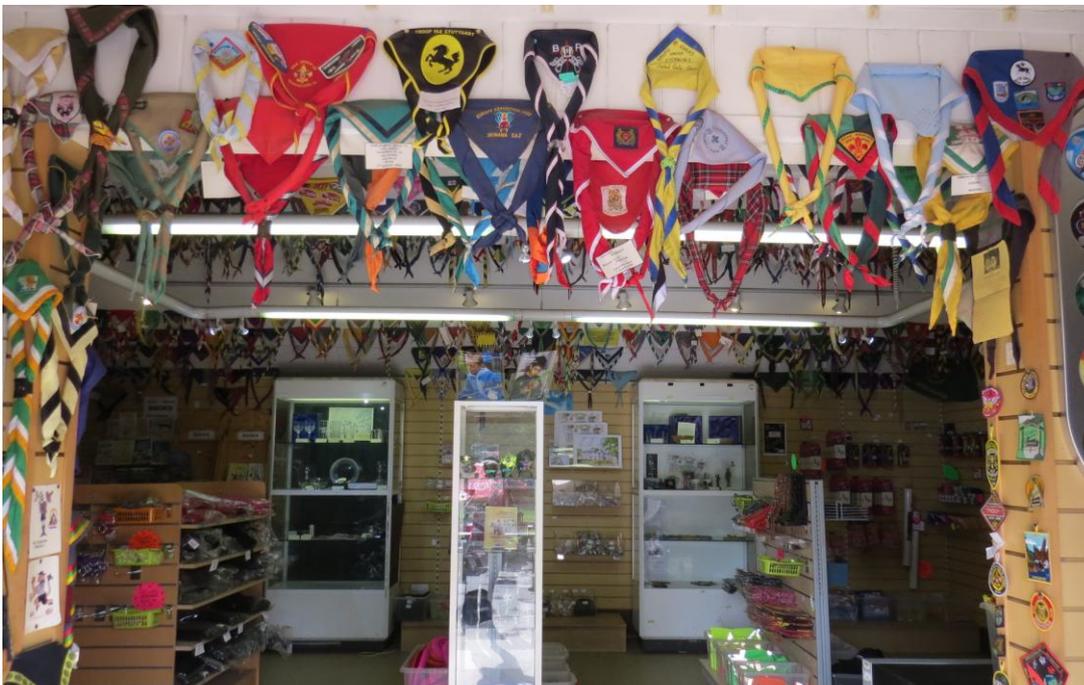
## Keeping in touch

If you plan to bring a laptop, tablet or mobile phone, there is Wi-Fi access across the site. You will also have access in the evenings to the staff computers in the Programme Office which you can use for checking emails etc. In addition, both accommodation buildings have a telephone, which is available for you to use for short calls. If you are planning to make a lot of international calls, we will help you to arrange a phonecard, although this will be at your own cost.

You can give the following mailing address to your friends and family:

*NAME, Volunteer Staff Team, The Scout Association  
Gilwell Park  
Bury Road  
Chingford  
E4 7QW*

You and your friends and family can also keep up-to-date with what our volunteers are up to on our Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/pages/GPAC-Volunteers/219389071549030](https://www.facebook.com/pages/GPAC-Volunteers/219389071549030) or **GPAC Volunteers**.



**Our on-site shop, The Providore**



**Eric, our Volunteer Shop Manager**

## Insurance

You will be covered by The Scout Association's insurance policy for the duration of your stay. You do not need to take out additional insurance at your own expense, although you may like to consider some form of travel insurance for the journey to and from the UK to cover any lost luggage, delays or cancellations.

## Social activities

We have a modest budget for social activities and outings for our volunteers. As a team, you can organise your own evening activities, such as a themed dinner or quiz night in one of the lodges. In addition, Centre staff will organise evening activities in London or the local area. Previous staff socials have included cinema, ten-pin bowling, ice-skating, and the Millennium Eye. Wherever possible we try to organise these activities on a monthly basis.

## Uniform and kit

All volunteers are issued with uniform and a name badge which they are expected to wear whenever on duty. Your uniform will be issued during training and it is your responsibility to keep it clean and return it in good condition when you depart. Remember, you'll be working in a customer-facing environment so it's important that you are presentable at all times. Please note that some uniform may be second-hand. This is an approximate list of the uniform you'll be provided with:

- Activity trousers x 2 pairs
- Activity shorts x 1 pair
- Polo-shirts x 3
- Fleece x 1
- Jacket x 1
- Safety boots x 1 pair
- Waterproof jacket x 1
- Waterproof trousers x 1 pair
- Work gloves x 1

You will also need to bring some additional kit with you:

- Toiletries and towels
- Casual clothes and shoes
- Warm clothes, including a hat and gloves
- Games, books or DVDs (optional)
- Laptop, tablet or mobile phone (optional)
- Full Scout uniform (if applicable)



Taking a break in Camp Square



Archery training

## The local area

The town of Chingford is located about 2 kilometres (or a 25-minute walk) from Gilwell Park. It has a number of pubs and restaurants, and a few shops, a chemist, and plenty of banks and ATMs. There are three or four small grocery stores to purchase supplies from, although most of the weekly shopping is done at a large supermarket – Tesco – in nearby Waltham Abbey.

Liverpool Street Station in London is around a 25-minute journey from Chingford Station. You will have opportunities on your days off to explore the surrounding area and central London, and we can give you lots of tips for things to do and see in the capital – just ask!



Maps of the United Kingdom and London showing the location of Chingford



Big Ben and the Houses of Parliament



St. Paul's Cathedral

## Pre-Placement Checklist

<b>Within 1 week of interview</b>	Receive your offer letter and <b>Volunteering at Gilwell Park</b> guide	
<b>Within 1 week of interview</b>	Accept offer and email colour copy of valid passport to <i>pip.crockett@scouts.org.uk</i>	
<b>6 months before placement</b>	Ensure you have a valid passport, with at least 6 months remaining after your placement finishes	
<b>3 months before placement</b>	Receive sponsorship letter and begin visa application process (if outside EU)	
<b>On receipt of visa confirmation</b>	Book flights	
<b>6 weeks before placement</b>	Plan travel from airport to Gilwell Park Return completed <b>Arrival Form</b> and colour copy of valid driving licence (if applicable) to <i>pip.crockett@scouts.org.uk</i>	
<b>1 week before placement</b>	Pack!	