

Scouting sees biggest membership surge for nearly 40 years

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UK Scouting has experienced its biggest growth spurt since 1972, taking total membership to 499,323.

Census results, released today, show that 16,568 new adult and youth members in the UK since 31 January 2009. This is 3.45 per cent up on last year (2009: 482,448).

This impressive surge in membership – the fifth consecutive year of expansion – has helped cement Scouting's position as the largest co-educational youth Movement in the country. One of the fastest growing areas is Snowdonia and Anglesey. Falklands veteran Simon Weston is President of Welsh Scouting. He said 'Scouting has changed so much in recent years that I am anxious to learn more about the amazing range of activities now available. I hope that I can inspire more adults to give up some of their time to help with the organising and support of Scouting.'



And a large part of this growth is due to record numbers of teenagers joining. This is the fastest-growing age group with new members in the last year up 5.4 per cent on 2009. This means there are now 66,299 teenagers in Scouting – over 26 per cent more than when detailed records began in 2001 (52,481).

Giving back

Adults can get just as much out of Scouting as young people. Not only through enjoying the same activities but also by developing skills that can be transferred into other areas of their lives. For the second year running, The Scout Association has seen a rise in adult Leaders with growth up from 2.7 per cent (2,505) in 2009 to 3.1 per cent (2,871) this year.

But despite this growth, waiting lists to join Scouting remain at an all-time high due to the need for more adult volunteers.

While The Scout Association has been able to create over 13,500 new places this year thanks to 2,871 new adults volunteering their time to local Groups, there are currently over 33,500 young people waiting to join Scouting throughout the UK.

Grace, 16, said 'Scouting's awesome. I totally love being involved. I mean - you get to do so many amazing activities that you just wouldn't get to do elsewhere. It's great! I joined a couple of years ago because my friends told me I should. I'd definitely encourage others to join.'

Chief Scout Bear Grylls said 'It's fantastic to witness such a huge surge in Scouting - the biggest growth for thirty eight years - and it is proof that Scouting is appealing more and more to teenagers. Scouting is empowering, wild and fun, and offers so many adventure-based activities for young people and adults alike. My goal is for every young person that wants to be involved in Scouting to be able to be. So I hope to inspire even more adults to volunteer and help this happen.'

The top three fastest growing areas the UK are Snowdonia and Anglesey, Brecknock and Oxfordshire.

More information

The Scout Association is the largest co-educational youth movement in the UK. It strives to ensure that its young people fulfil their full physical, intellectual social and spiritual potentials by working in teams, learning by doing and thinking for themselves. Adults working in Scouting contribute in excess of 364 million hours of voluntary work each year to their local communities. [Join the adventure](#)