



Questions about Squirrels

Merging NISA and TSA

What's the section going to be called?

The new section will be called Squirrels.

When will things start to change?

We'd like to welcome existing Squirrel Dreys into The Scout Association by September 2021.

What are the main steps in the merger process?

We're running webinars to provide more detail on why we need to do this, and provide ongoing advice and resources. Both the Northern Ireland Squirrel Association and The Scout Association will be investing in legal advice and providing guidance to support Dreys through the merger process.

Why's a merger the best way forward?

Mergers protect trustees of Squirrel Dreys, Scout Groups, The Northern Ireland Squirrel Association and The Scout Association particularly regarding any potential for legal challenge related to historical incidents, assets and liabilities.

What are the benefits of merging?

You'll be joining the world-wide family of Scouting and be able to access an extensive range of member resources, digital tools, vetting / safeguarding support, insurance cover, legal services, and quality programme that is simple to deliver, fun and impactful for the children. The new tools and processes will reduce external charity and Drey unit administration.

Will I be able to give my feedback?

Yes absolutely, we welcome feedback. Over the last two years Squirrel Dreys have generously shared their programme ideas, knowledge and experience from your pioneering work in Northern Ireland over the last twenty-plus years. We've held a number of Drey visits, and workshops including a face-to-face consultation event at Crawfordsburn Scout Centre to gather views and ideas. You're welcome to provide additional [feedback and raise questions here](#).

When would a membership fee be payable?

Annual membership numbers would be collected on 31 January 2022. Adult volunteers and Network members don't pay a UKHQ membership fee. The membership fee for 2022 has not yet been agreed.

Where can I find out more about the Early Years pilots?

The extensive research, member consultation and independent evaluation exploring Scouting for four- and five-year-olds can be found here: scouts.org.uk/early-years

Will my length of service and prior learning be recognised?

Yes. The Scout Association and The Northern Ireland Squirrel Association are working on a process to automatically transfer these records across. Training advisors will be able to assess your experience and existing training and see if it maps to training modules at TSA.

There may be some instances where additional training will need to be completed (like safety and safeguarding) to be compliant with TSA's policies. Once the mergers between Dreys and Scout Groups are agreed and signed, you can start any extra mandatory training.

What will the children wear?

The children will wear a sweater and Group scarf. The brand identity is currently in development, including the colour palette for the uniform.

If you have another question that we haven't answered, you can [ask us via this form](#).

scouts.org.uk/squirrels-NI