

**Developing and Promoting a  
Scottish Junior Ranger Scheme  
February 2012**



**GUIDANCE FOR JUNIOR RANGER SCHEME  
SUGGESTIONS FOR A START UP TOOLKIT**





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## SCOTTISH COUNTRYSIDE RANGERS

... “occupy a very special place in the public enjoyment and interpretation of Scotland's landscape. “ They deliver and support environmental education as well as many other conservation, interpretation, access and maintenance tasks in the countryside.

We need to encourage more young people to take an active interest in sustaining their environment. By establishing Junior Countryside Ranger groups , we can promote the ranger profession, provide opportunities for young people to develop practical environmental skills and, most importantly , in an enjoyable way, ensure they become responsible stewards of their planet.

### **Aim of a national programme:**

To support Ranger services and other organisations to set up and run programmes of activities for 11-18 year olds, focussing on activities related to their local, natural environment.



## **Key Principles of The National Junior Countryside Ranger Programme**

### **SCRA will support schemes across Scotland to deliver:**

- ④ Schemes that involve, are relevant to, reflecting the desires of participants
- ④ A focus on local aspects and involvement with the local community and the active citizenship of the young people
- ④ Fun, environmental, learning experiences, using local partners
- ④ Input from or engagement with local ranger services in most sessions



## Introduction

This toolkit aims to provide basic guidance to those setting up a Junior Countryside Ranger scheme. It is important to note that there will be lots of variation within the groups of Junior Rangers, amongst their leaders and between partner organisations; also differences between their local communities and their surrounding environments. This will mean that some of the suggestions in this guidance may not be relevant or specific to your group and you will have to tailor them to establish your own principles and aims. Details of some established groups with similar aims can be obtained by contacting <http://scra-online.co.uk/>

Establishing a pro-active network of organisations and groups with a similar ethos will help to maintain focus, overcome challenges and share good practice. Working in partnership with existing organisations, perhaps even without setting up a new group, can have the benefit of administrative job sharing/support and is regarded favourably by local authorities and other funding bodies.

This should be regarded as a working document and will be all the better for input from the young people themselves – in the initial planning stages as well as at regular plans and reviews throughout their activities with the group. The participants need to take ownership of their organisation and its activities for them to be sustained and for the essential mentoring of new rangers process to work.





## Recruitment : Young People

Maintaining the interest of young people after the age of 13 is quite a challenge and, for it to be successful, you need to have a large enough group of enthusiastic participants to sustain core attendance. Varied strategies need to be deployed to ensure a sense of ownership.

- ④ encourage young people to plan a varied programme of activities including the options of outdoor recreation, camping, bushcraft....
- ④ gauge the frequency of sessions and meetings carefully
- ④ keep in touch with what the participants enjoy most and ensure there are opportunities for flexibility and choice during sessions
- ④ link up with the local youth group, Wildlife Explorers, RSPB Phoenix , Young Archaeologists' Club for specific projects, then build on the relationships created and new networks identified.
- ④ use the young peoples' IT skills to set up safe social networking
- ④ facilitate accreditation, gaining awards, recognition and CV extras
- ④ young people themselves will be the best sales persons – have the older members of your group visit the local primary school to encourage new recruits through joint ECO school , nature club, outdoor learning activities
- ④ establish a mentoring system, using leadership trios
- ④ link in with transition activities Primary 7 – Secondary 1 , short S2 cross curricular courses , activity weeks, ECO school groups





## Recruitment : Leaders and adult helpers

Youth group leaders need to be interested in and enjoy working with young people. Youth leaders working in environmental learning and conservation need to be interested in and capable of inspiring others in their fields.

It is a challenge for all organisations to sustain volunteer support and many strategies need to be used to encourage people to give their time freely. Relying on parent helpers can sometimes work when the group are younger but once they reach secondary school it is not the definition of “Where it’s at!” Here are some handy hints.

- ④ keep communications positive, pertinent and persuasive, listen to what is not said as well as what is spoken
- ④ encourage a wide variety of visiting experts to share their skills
- ④ have a large enough pool of leaders to ensure rota turns are few – know when to let folk step back for a spell
- ④ gauge the frequency of meetings and sessions sensitively
- ④ ensure allocated adult roles are appropriate to levels of enthusiasm, experience, confidence and interest
- ④ maintain links with individuals in wider networks - school integrated learning communities on a local level, regional biodiversity officers, Countryside Rangers, biological recording groups and with national organisations Forest Education Initiative, Scottish Natural Heritage, Scottish Environmental Protection Agency
- ④ identify a publicity person with skills, make links with local media
- ④ use safe social networking to recruit and share challenges and successes





## Safety considerations : facts sheets and templates

Before working with a group of young people a working document on Health and Safety must be produced. This can be based on generic examples but must demonstrate that you have checked Health and Safety legislation relevant to working outdoors as well as showing that you will be working within Child and Vulnerable Adult guidelines. This regularly reviewed, and dated, document needs to be easy to read, well structured and may refer to the source policies from the partner organisations you are working with.

Some example templates can be found at the end of this document [????](#)

All local authorities have their own version of the government guidelines for outdoor excursions .

<http://www.youthworkessentials.org.uk/>

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2004/12/20444/48943>

<http://www.youthscotland.org.uk/>

**Youth Scotland** have a comprehensive suite of templates for policies and procedures relating to working with young people in a safe, inclusive, well managed environment.

Becoming affiliated to Youth Scotland and adhering to these procedures, would also bring the benefit of being covered by their insurance policy and keeping up to date with youth work development, funding and a variety of training opportunities .





## Safety considerations : facts sheets and templates

### **Aspects of H & S which should be included in the handbook**

1. Describe your Group/ Junior Countryside Ranger, who is **responsible** for running it, how are you **insured**?
2. **Staff /helpers** - what **ratios** adult : young person do you work to, are they **CRBS/PVG** checked? Is there induction training?
3. **Risk management** and risk benefit assessment – who is responsible ? What RAs are carried out?
4. **First Aid** – who is responsible, who arranges training, what kit is carried? Where is the Accident Book kept?  
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/>
5. Accident and **Emergency** procedure – who to contact, who is responsible , what happens to the rest of the group?
6. **Cancellation** procedure – under what weather conditions , staffing ratio would you cancel. How do you let people know?
7. **Toileting** procedure – hygiene equipment, staffing role, leave no trace aspirations?
8. Parent/carer **consent** –
9. Use of **photographs/media** – and where?
10. **Tool / Fire** use - ratios, safe practice procedures, PPE requirements, campfire cooking , food hygiene procedures
11. **Lost Child** or Missing Participant Procedure - how will you ensure everyone is with you, what will you do if someone is lost? Who carries mobile phone with good signal? How long before dialling 999?
12. **Transport** - are parents delivering and picking up? If the group decides to use a minibus – is the driver qualified -MIDAS certified or mature enough not to require it?
13. **Equal Opportunities** statement
14. Do not forget to include a signature and annual review date.







## Administration and Good Practice

### Sessional Operating Procedure

1. What to do before the session –
  - Risk Assessment of **site, activities and participants**
  - **Register** – consent forms check, emergency contacts up to date...
  - **Staffing ratio** - allocating roles
  - **Equipment check**
2. What to do **during** the session - **ongoing RA , head counts**
3. **After** the session - head count, transport check , tool check
  - evaluate/review and plan for next session

### Safeguarding Children Procedure

1. Who is responsible on the day and on behalf of the group?
2. What to look for, how to listen to children and what not to say
3. What to report in the event of concerns
4. What happens if staff or helpers are accused?

### Confidentiality Policy

1. Who/where are records and registers stored
2. What information is carried out on group sessions?

### Behaviour / Anti-Bullying Policy

This is a good one for all participants to get involved in - the young people themselves setting their Code of Conduct, Behaviour Boundaries , Rules

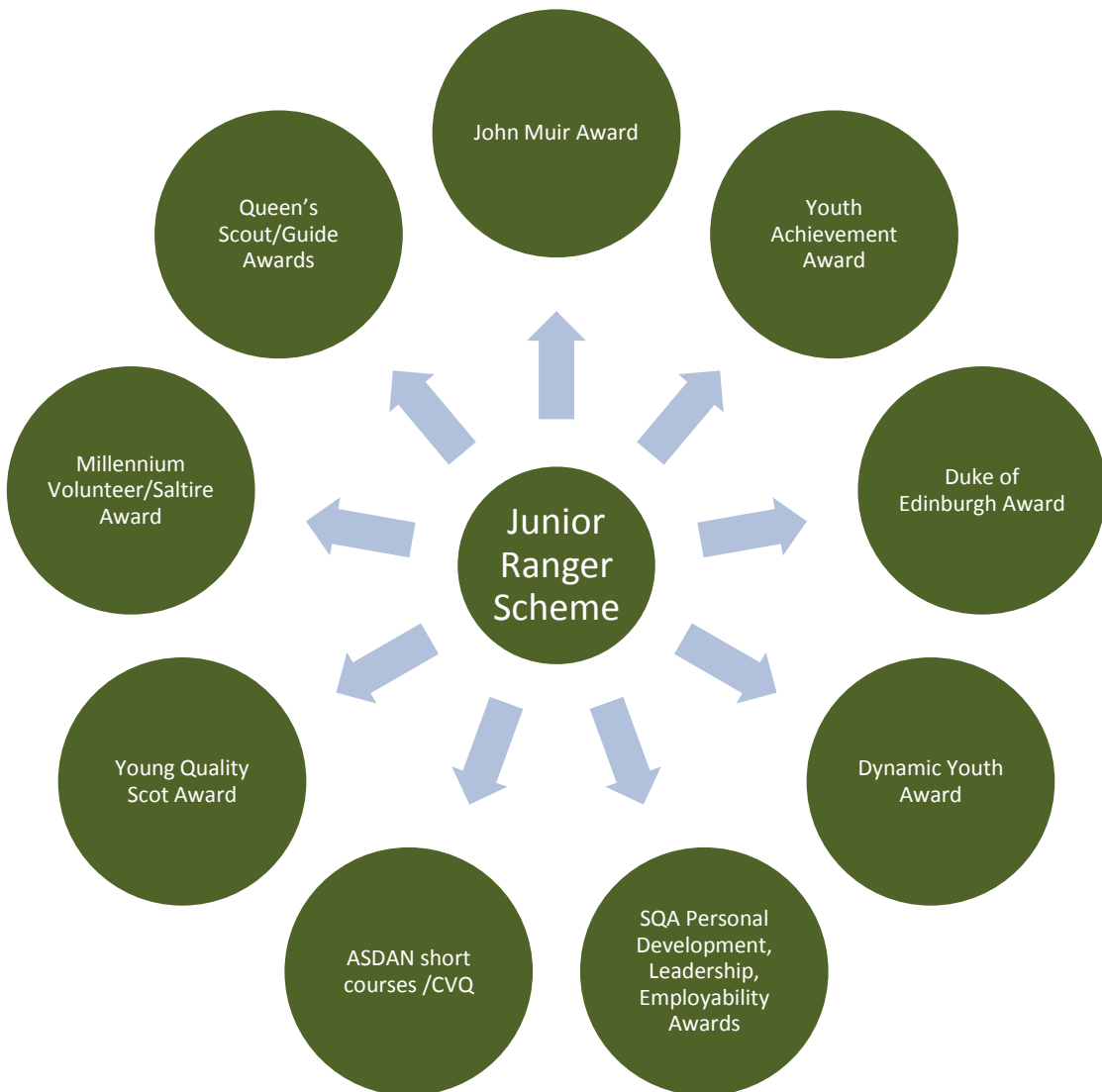




## Awards and Accreditation : 2012

Young people involved in junior ranger groups benefit from their experiences. These can include gaining new soft skills, developing social and personal confidence in different situations, being able to pass on their environmental knowledge , share experiences, win awards and achieve new leadership goals all of which meet Curriculum for Excellence priorities and add depth to CVs. A comprehensive list of all potential Awards and accreditation can be found at -

[http://www.sga.org.uk/files\\_ccc/Amazing Things 3rd edition.pdf](http://www.sga.org.uk/files_ccc/Amazing Things 3rd edition.pdf)





## Links to the Curriculum for Excellence

### confident individuals

- feel able to make suggestions
- participate in new activities with new people
- choose to have a healthier lifestyle
- research and organise own transport to site
- demonstrate prior/new skills, knowledge to others
- carry out risk benefit analysis - inform/advise
- demonstrate focus and ambition

### successful learners

- identify & achieve new cross curricular skills including literacy & numeracy and link these to new outdoor learning situations
- use technology to build up evidence of learning
- develop practical skills using tools in the outdoor workplace
- achieve relevant accreditation – SQA units - Skills for Work, Core Skills, AH projects
- Duke of Edinburgh, John Muir, HSE cert
- review, evaluate & reflect on achievement regularly

## Junior Rangers and Curriculum for Excellence

### effective contributors

- work willingly within group and also independently
- communicate using phone, video, presentation
- develop appropriate vocabulary
- improve listening skills
- take initiative in solving problems
- encourage others to sustain effort

### responsible citizens

- inform staff when unable to attend or if late,
- carry out risk benefit analysis - inform others,
- take part in conservation/maintenance tasks
- assist / volunteer with other groups - help lead,
- help with setting out / clearing up afterwards
- maintain respect for others and the environment



## Links to the Curriculum for Excellence

**Building the Curriculum 4 : Skills for Learning Life and Work** highlights the benefits and suggests how these skills need to be embedded, developed and applied across learning and in different contexts in all levels of the Curriculum for Excellence. Identifying and working with partner organisations in the wider community is emphasised.

<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/buildingyourcurriculum/policycontext/btc/btc4.asp>

Local partnerships, with existing and new organisations, can help support, engage and inspire the delivery of a Junior Countryside Ranger programme. More and more the developing networks within Integrated Learning Communities (ILC) are the vehicles for exemplar outdoor learning – often the more varied the organisations involved, the more sustainable is the legacy because the workload is spread throughout the network. An added benefit is that funding bodies almost always look more favourably on partnership project applications.

**How Good is our Community Learning and Development?**

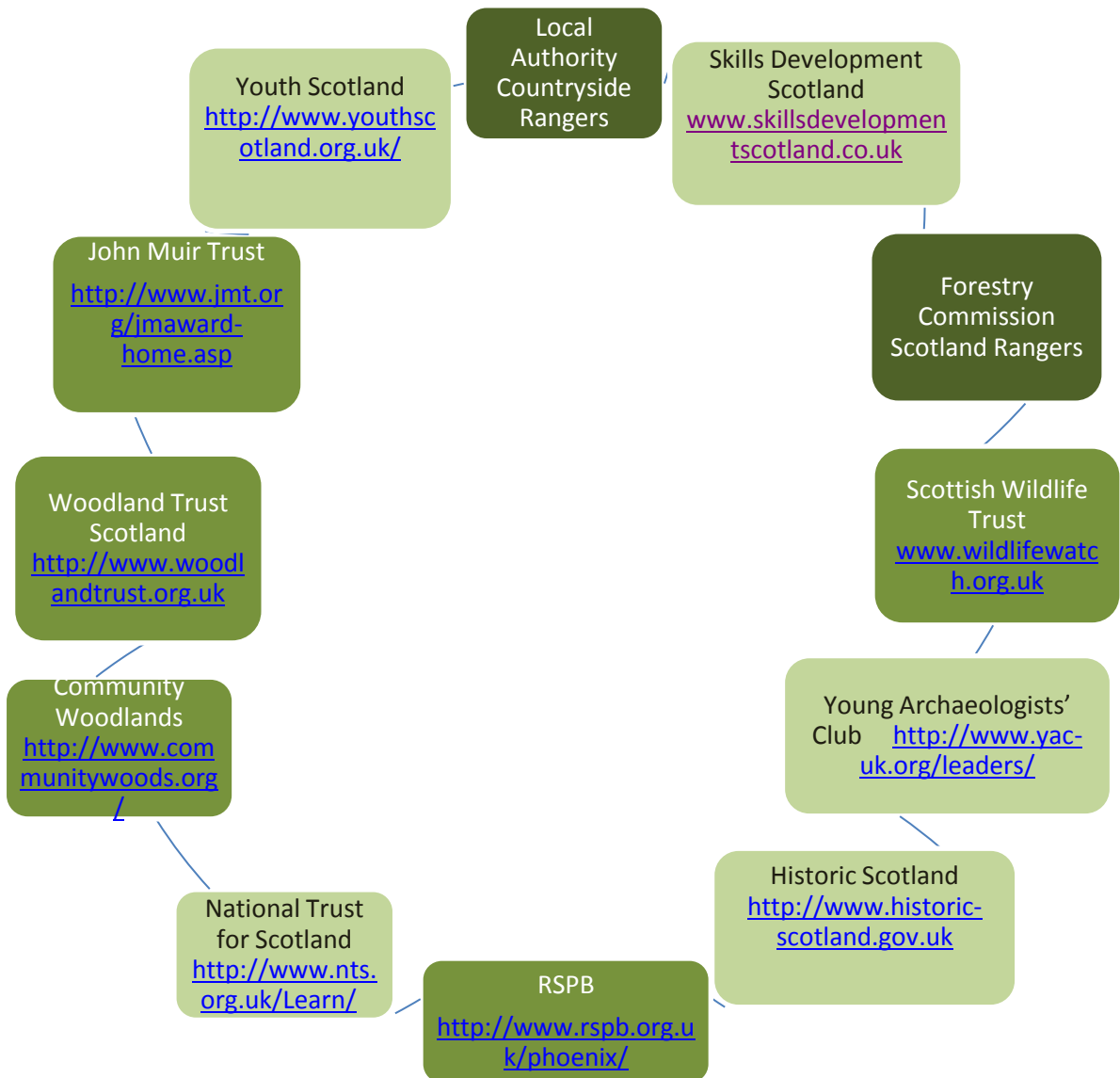
<http://www.hmie.gov.uk/documents/publication/hgio2cld.pdf>

Emphasises the positive impact on the community and all the stakeholders within it of all ages working together and building community capacity by doing so. Junior Countryside Rangers could be an important cog in the mechanics of this process by volunteering within the community, being appreciated as responsible citizens.





## Some Potential National Partners :



### Junior Ranger Scheme (or similar) examples in Scotland currently

- Cairngorm National Park <http://www.cairngormslearningzone.co.uk/junior-ranger.html>
- Culzean ECOS group <http://www.culzeanexperience.org/education.asp?sub=6>
- Bin Ranger Club - Huntly Peregrine Watch
- <http://www.huntly.net/community/groups/details.php?name=Bin+Ranger+Club>
- Bell Baxter High School , Glenrothes & Auchmucky Junior Rangers



## Potential Funding Sources : Subject to change

Funding a Junior Countryside Rangers' scheme can be approached in a variety of ways. Participants can raise funds themselves or pay an annual fee to cover costs. Positive media coverage and partnership funding applications are useful introductory tools when asking for support.

### Locally targeted sources

- 🌐 businesses needing/seeking green credentials
- 🌐 businesses with links to outdoor pursuits, wildlife tourism
- 🌐 the local authority's project specific environmental fund
- 🌐 or its youth project fund - councillors' discretionary budget (though this may change with present Scottish Government)
- 🌐 offering partnership placements for young people (vulnerable 16-19 year olds) who are eligible for Activity Agreements

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Education/edandtrainingforyoungple/16pluslc/activityagreements>

### National funding information and sources

<http://www.youthscotland.org.uk/news/funding-news.htm>

<http://www.awardsforall.org.uk/scotland/>

<http://www.hlf.org.uk/howtoapply/Pages/starthere.aspx>

<http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/>

<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-7EPEED>

<http://ccf.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/howtoapply.aspx>