

Slinfold Scout Hut Statement of Community Benefit

1. Executive Summary

There is an urgent need to provide a purpose-built, modern facility for the Slinfold Scout Group to replace the existing inadequate facility and establish a secure operational base into the future. The current site lacks the capacity and facilities to generate the activities required and the physical building is in poor condition and deteriorating.

The existing Scout hut no longer meets modern operational requirements. Limitations in size, accessibility, energy efficiency and storage significantly constrain training programme delivery and reduce opportunities for wider community use. The building is increasingly costly to maintain and is not capable of accommodating future growth in participation. An outline specification for a new Scout hut is at Appendix A.

Serving 80 local young people supported by 13 dedicated adult volunteers, the new hut will directly secure the continuation and growth of non-formal youth education, life skills training, and community cohesion within the village.

2. Direct Youth Provision & Social Impact

The primary function of the proposed building is to sustain essential community youth services that are operating at or beyond capacity:

- **Sustained Engagement:** The Group currently serves approximately 80 young people from Slinfold and surrounding rural communities across all age group sections (Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, and Explorers). Demand for places is consistently high, often exceeding capacity, demonstrating a sustained and growing need for youth facilities within the parish. The proposed development will ensure that future generations continue to benefit from accessible local Scouting opportunities.
- **High-Volume Provision:** The Scout group delivers 400 hours of structured youth activities annually. This represents significant, direct investment in early intervention, physical health, mental wellbeing, and personal development for young people in the village.
- **Volunteer-Led Investment:** The Scout group is anchored by 13 adult volunteers, representing thousands of hours of unpaid community contribution each year. The social and economic value generated through this unpaid community service significantly exceeds the direct operational costs of the organisation. A fit for purpose Scout hut ensures these volunteers can operate safely, efficiently, and effectively.
- **Future Sustainability:** Further development in Slinfold will increase housing, resulting in increased numbers of young people and increase demand for youth activities, such as Scouts.

3. Community Value & Multi-Use Potential

A new Scout hut will extend its use beyond Scouting activities and contribute towards the long-term social sustainability of Slinfold and act as a vital social infrastructure asset:

- **Intergenerational Cohesion:** Scouting bridges generational divides through community projects, village clear-ups, and civic events, strengthening local social capital.
- **Addressing Local Facility Shortages:** In Slinfold, as with other rural communities, accessible public meeting space is limited. The new building will provide a flexible and affordable venue available for wider community groups (e.g. local playgroups, parish meetings, fitness classes, other youth organisations, social gatherings, and local event headquarters).

The Scout Group has been an established and valued part of village life for many years and enjoys strong support from residents, volunteers, parents and partner organisations. Through participation in community events, and charitable activities the Group contributes substantially to the social fabric of Slinfold. The provision of a modern Scout hut will ensure these benefits continue for future generations and will strengthen the village's community infrastructure:

- **Poppy Appeal and Remembrance Sunday:** The Scouts provide a number of house-to-house collections within the village that benefits both the appeal and the young people involved. The full Scout Group are also a core element of the Remembrance Sunday parade and church service, where they always parade their colours and conduct the collection.
- **Parish sporting and charity events:** The Scouts provide organisational and operational support to the running of several parish events, such as Village Day, Open Gardens and the Alf Shrubbs running races.
- **Dog Poo Bags:** The Scouts provide and maintain dog poo bag holders at strategic locations in the village and ensure they are functioning and refilled to provide a service to residents and visitors to help the village streets remain clean and tidy.

4. Policy Rationale & Material Considerations

(Aligned with standard UK National Planning Policy Framework principles on community facilities)

- **Retention and Enhancement of Community Infrastructure:** Planning policy strongly supports development that retains and enhances community facilities, ensuring villages remain sustainable, vibrant places to live.

- **Health and Social Wellbeing:** A Scout hut directly delivers against local council objectives to promote healthy lifestyles, reduce youth isolation, and provide safe, inclusive spaces for young people.
- **Inclusion, Accessibility & Safeguarding:** A purpose-built facility will provide a safe, inclusive and fully accessible environment for young people of all backgrounds and abilities. Modern design standards will improve accessibility for individuals with mobility impairments, ensure full compliance with modern accessibility standards (DDA), support safeguarding requirements and ensure equal participation in Scouting activities.
- **Sustainability:** The new Scout hut will meet modern energy efficiency standards, lowering carbon emissions and include innovations to ensure future sustainability and resilience.

Further information regarding the planning policy considerations are provided in Appendix B.

5. Consequence of non-development

The current site and building are sub standard and inadequate and failure to deliver a replacement Scout hut would have substantial adverse social consequences. Without a modern, fit-for-purpose Scout hut:

- The group risks losing the capacity to support 80 young people, leading to longer waiting lists and displaced youth. Local young people would experience reduced access to structured youth provision, outdoor learning opportunities, volunteering pathways and personal development activities.
- There is a significant risk the group will reduce in numbers due to young people and their parents choosing not to join an organisation without modern, fit for purpose facilities.
- The village loses a multi-generational community hub, community organisations would lose access to a valuable meeting venue, and the village would be deprived of an important element of its social infrastructure. Over time this would undermine community cohesion and reduce opportunities for participation in local civic life.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Outline Specification for Slinfold Scout Hut

Appendix B – Planning Policy Justification

Appendix A - Outline specification for new Slinfold Scout Hut

Community facility to be delivered as part of the 38-dwelling residential development.

1. Purpose

The Developer shall design and construct a new headquarters for the management and operation of the Slinfold Scout Group, whilst providing the flexibility for wider community use under the control of the Scout Group. The facility shall be completed and operational before first occupation of the residential development.

2. Site Requirements

The Scout Hut shall be located:

- In a central village location.
- Within safe year-round walking distance for young people and carers.
- With safe pedestrian access from surrounding residential areas.
- With unrestricted 24-hour vehicular access.
- With sufficient turning and access arrangements for servicing vehicles and minibuses.

3. Building Size and Capacity

The building shall provide a minimum Gross Internal Area of approximately 280 m² to accommodate the Scout Group's current and future needs.

The facility shall be designed to support:

- More than 80 young people.
- Multiple Scout sections operating simultaneously.
- At least 13 volunteer leaders.
- Future growth and waiting lists.

4. Accommodation Schedule

Main Hall

- Minimum clear floor area of approximately 112 m².
- Clear-span design with no internal columns.
- Suitable for all Scout indoor activities.
- Durable heavy-duty floor finish.
- Minimum internal height of 4.5 metres

Kitchen

- Provide a large catering kitchen including:
 - Commercial-grade appliances.
 - Serving hatch to hall.
 - Adequate food preparation areas.
 - Storage for catering equipment.

Toilets

- Essential provision of the following (exact numbers to be confirmed in detailed spec):
 - Male WC facilities.
 - Female WC facilities.
 - Accessible disabled WC.
 - Hand washing facilities compliant with current Building Regulations.

Leaders' Room / Office

- Provide a dedicated office and leaders' room including:
 - Secure storage.
 - Data and telephone provision.
 - Workspace for administration and meetings.
 - Sufficient floorspace to enable overnight sleeping to supervise activities.

Showers

- Provide shower facilities suitable for Scout and outdoor activity use (exact numbers and layout to be confirmed in detailed spec).

5. Storage Requirements

The facility shall include extensive secure storage for a variety of equipment including tents, camping, climbing and activity equipment, pioneer poles, rope, crates and consumables.

The storage should comprise:

- Internal Storage
 - Large lockable equipment stores directly accessible from the hall.
- External Storage
 - Secure weatherproof stores.
 - Secure lockable compound.
- Trailer and Equipment Compound
 - Dedicated secure compound for:
 - Scout trailers.
 - Mobile towers.
 - Activity equipment.
- Minibus Storage
 - Secure parking space for the Slinfold Scout Group minibus.
- Drying Area
 - Dedicated heated and ventilated drying room or drying area for:
 - Tents.
 - Wet equipment.
 - Camping gear.

6. External Activity Space

The site shall include a usable outdoor activity area suitable for :

- Tent pitching.
- Outdoor instruction.
- Games and activities.
- Group gatherings and ceremonies.

The outdoor area shall be level, secure and directly accessible from the building.

7. Building Construction

The Scout Group's preference is for a traditional brick-built building, designed to provide a robust and low-maintenance facility with a minimum 60-year design life. The building needs to be highly durable and vandal resistant and designed for extensive community use.

8. Energy Efficiency and Comfort

The building shall incorporate:

- High levels of insulation.
- Underfloor heating throughout the principal accommodation.
- Low-carbon heating systems.
- LED lighting.
- Energy-efficient ventilation systems.
- Solar photovoltaic panels where feasible.

9. Parking and Access

The following parking and access provision is required (exact numbers and layout to be confirmed in detailed spec):

- Dedicated parking for Scout users and visitors.
- Accessible parking bays.
- Secure cycle parking.
- Dedicated minibus parking.
- Trailer storage and manoeuvring space.
- Emergency vehicle access.

10. Security and Access Control

The facility shall remain under the management and control of the Slinfold Scout Group.

The design shall include the following security and access controls (exact specification and layout to be confirmed in detailed spec):

- Secure access controls.
- Intruder alarm system.
- CCTV coverage.
- Lockable internal and external stores.
- Controlled access arrangements enabling community hire whilst maintaining safeguarding and child-protection requirements.

11. Community Use

The building shall be designed flexibly to accommodate community use including activities such as:

- Youth organisations.
- Community groups.
- Elderly residents' groups.
- Educational and play schemes.
- Church groups.
- Fitness and wellbeing activities.
- Private functions and parties.

However, all such use shall remain subject to the management, safeguarding policies and booking control of the Scout Group.

Appendix B – Planning Policy Justification

Formal Policy Justification Note – Provision of a New Scout Hut East of Hayes Lane, Slinfold

1. Purpose of Note

This note sets out the **planning policy justification** for requiring the developer of the *East of Hayes Lane* site to deliver a **new Scout Hut** as part of the Section 106 agreement. It demonstrates compliance with national policy, Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) policy, and the statutory tests for planning obligations.

2. Policy Context

2.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF requires local planning authorities to:

- **Plan positively** for the provision and enhancement of community facilities.
- **Guard against the unnecessary loss** of valued facilities.
- Ensure development supports **strong, healthy and safe communities**.
- Secure **social, recreational and cultural facilities** needed by new residents.

A Scout Hut is a **community and youth facility** directly aligned with these objectives. The development will increase the number of children and young people in Slinfold, thereby increasing demand for youth provision. Delivering a new Scout Hut is therefore consistent with national policy requirements to provide infrastructure that supports community wellbeing.

2.2 Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF)

Policy SD1 – Strategic Policy

Requires development to contribute to the **social infrastructure** needed to support sustainable communities.

Policy CP5 – Community Facilities

Supports the **retention, improvement and provision** of community facilities. Where development increases demand, new or expanded facilities should be secured.

Policy INF2 – Infrastructure Provision

States that development must provide or contribute to **infrastructure required to meet the needs arising from the development**, including community buildings and youth facilities.

The Scout Hut is clearly **infrastructure required to meet the needs of the development**, given the expected increase in children and young people and the absence of alternative youth facilities in the village.

3. Statutory Tests for Planning Obligations (Regulation 122)

A Section 106 obligation must be:

3.1. Necessary to make the development acceptable

The development will generate additional demand for youth activities, community space, and safeguarding compliant facilities. Slinfold's existing Scout Hut is outdated, undersized, and unable to meet current or future needs. Without new provision, the development would exacerbate an existing infrastructure deficit.

3.2. Directly related to the development

The new facility will serve residents of the development and the wider village. The site is within **safe walking distance**, meeting the requirement for youth accessibility. The Scout

Group is the primary youth organisation in Slinfold, making this the most direct and proportionate form of mitigation.

3.3. Fair and proportionate

A 38dwelling scheme typically generates **30–40 children**, including **10–15 teenagers**, creating measurable demand for youth provision. The scale of the proposed Scout Hut is proportionate to both the development impact and the needs of the existing community.

4. Local Need and Evidence

4.1 Existing Deficiency

Slinfold lacks a modern, fit for purpose youth facility. The current Scout Hut cannot accommodate:

- 80+ young people
- Multiple sections operating simultaneously
- Future growth and waiting lists
- Community groups seeking space

This deficiency is recognised locally and has been raised through community engagement and parish discussions.

4.2 Role of the Scout Group

The Scout Group is the **principal youth provider** in the village, delivering structured, safeguarding compliant activities. It also provides wider community benefits, including:

- Elderly residents' groups
- Fitness and wellbeing activities
- Church and community organisations
- Educational and play schemes

A new Scout Hut therefore delivers **multifunctional community infrastructure**, maximising public value.

5. Site Specific Justification

5.1 Location Suitability

The East of Hayes Lane site is one of the few developable locations that meets the specification requirement for:

- Central village accessibility
- Safe year round pedestrian routes
- Direct access from residential areas
- Space for outdoor activity areas
 - Adequate parking and manoeuvring space

This makes it uniquely capable of accommodating the Scout Hut.

5.2 Integration with Development

The facility will:

- Serve new residents directly
- Provide a focal point for community cohesion
- Support sustainable travel (walking and cycling)
- Enhance the social infrastructure of the village

6. Conclusion

The requirement for a new Scout Hut at East of Hayes Lane is:

- **Fully supported by national and local planning policy**

- **Necessary** to mitigate the impact of the development
- **Directly related** to the needs arising from the new dwellings
- **Proportionate** in scale and cost
- **Delivering longterm community benefit**

It therefore meets all statutory and policy tests for inclusion within a Section 106 agreement.

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