It’s important to understand the inclusion need and essential to always maintain confidentiality. Sharing a few scenarios and potential approaches:

* **Young person wants to be involved but is not able or comfortable to return to face-to-face Scouting:** This may be due to many reasons e.g. they are shielding or otherwise nervous to potential exposure despite social distancing measures. People may also be ill or need to self-isolate and therefore misses one or more face-to-face sessions - this may well happen at short notice.

It is important to be flexible with regard to badge criteria and encourage the young people to continue their Scouting at home if they can. HQ have published guidance to support Leaders in providing [flexibility across the full badge scheme](https://www.scouts.org.uk/volunteers/scouts-at-home/activities-and-badges-to-do-at-home/adapting-the-programme-during-coronavirus-crisis/why-were-adapting-the-programme/).

It may be useful to document the activity and provide equipment so it can be completed at home, or to invite them to continue online with your own or another section of the same age within your District. It won’t always be possible or appropriate but consider if you can adjust the programme and set up a live web-meeting to link up those who are face-to-face with those who are not.

* **Leader wants to be involved but is not able or comfortable to return to face-to-face Scouting:** Again, it’s important to recognise there may be many reasons. Some Leaders will naturally be more tentative than others, and this may be affected by their work or family situation. This must always be respected and never questioned.

It may be useful to discuss how they can contribute in other ways e.g. delivering the online programme, managing essential enabling activities (badge management, equipment co-ordination, communication).

* **Young person is not able to reliably follow social distancing requirements, or could necessitate a Leader to breach the 2m gap:** If you have a child with additional needs which raises this concern, discuss as a Leadership team and with the family as to what reasonable adjustments may need to made in order to support their participation.

The safety of the full group should be considered, and it may be helpful for a parent/carer to join the section meeting to provide 1on1 care.

Berkshire Scouts are fortunate to have worked alongside our local [Me2Club](https://me2club.org.uk/) charity for a number of years. The charity has published a range of COVID-19 guidance documents and also signposts many useful resources – [accessible here](https://me2club.org.uk/parents/covid-19-resources/). Groups within Wokingham and Reading are invited to contact the Me2Club team for further guidance – they may also be able to provide practical face-to-face support. For other Berkshire areas, you’re welcome to email info@me2club.org.uk – they may be able to provide informal advice.

* **Family not able to pay Subs:** With many losing work or being furloughed, some families are finding that money is tight. If not in place already, consider asking the Group Executive to develop a process to support short and mid-term hardship situations e.g. waiving or deferring Subs for the hardship period, covering an individual’s activity cost from central funds.
* **Young person or Leader is not able to join online meetings as they do not have the necessary equipment and/or internet:** It’s important to consider existing and emergent socio-economic situations.

It may be useful to include activities which do not depend on the internet e.g. treasure trails, badgework as home.

* **An otherwise confident Leader is not comfortable to lead a meeting:** There are many reasons why this might arise.

If this is due to lack of experience, it may be helpful for them to simply join or shadow another Leader within the Group or District to see how they run things – whether virtual or face-to-face. It may be possible to discuss and identify a small, familiar part of the meeting which they are happy to try initially. Some may be nervous in front of parents in the virtual setting so consider if they need to be present.

* **Young person or Leader has compromised hearing and/or sight so struggles with large group interactions online or face-to-face meetings:** Every person is different so it may be best to explore the challenges and see if you can come up with practical solutions. It may be helpful to reach out for expert support and guidance. For example, the Royal National Institute for the Blind [Children Young People and Families Team](https://www.rnib.org.uk/cypf-contacts) and their related [Sight Advice FAQ](https://www.sightadvicefaq.org.uk/coronavirus-information/CYPF) or the Action on Hearing Loss (Royal National Institute for Deaf People) [coronavirus position statement](https://actiononhearingloss.org.uk/about-us/research-and-policy/coronavirus-policy-statement/) which consider the key issues and publishes [communication tips](https://actiononhearingloss.org.uk/coronavirus-response/communication-tips-for-the-general-public/).
* **Young person is fearful of the online meeting noise:** While web meetings are second nature and familiar for many, some find them daunting or over-whelming.

As always, it’s best to discuss the concerns and agree tactics together. It may be useful to tone-down the experience e.g. reducing the scale by using breakout rooms, reducing their exposure by supporting them to have their camera and/or audio off.