



**Reachra County Shield 2026  
24th – 26th April  
Discovery Sub-camp 2026**



**First Mailing**

Welcome to the Reachra County Shield 2026, in Larch Hill. The weekend promises to challenge you and your patrol/watch and we can also guarantee you a lot of fun along the way.

This Information pack is designed to give you enough information to get you started in your preparations for the challenge. In it, you will find details about the event itself and specific information about the weekend relating to programme, campcraft guidelines and more. Use it as a tool in planning your preparations.

All patrols/watches must be registered by Friday 27th of March 2026.

**All payments must be made in full on this booking. No refunds will be available after this date.**

This Information pack is designed to give you information to get you started in your preparations for your Discovery sub-camp.

The support pack will provide all the guidelines for this camp. Please give a copy to every accompanying Scouter and all participating scouts.

There will be a short (30-minute) Zoom meeting for attending scouters, Patrol/Watch Leaders and Assistant Patrol/Watch Leaders on Zoom closer to the event. The day/time will be emailed to Scouters and PL/WLs th. All PLs/WLs must attend, or the APL/AWL in their absence.

The Reachra County Shield Planning Team

reachracountyshield@gmail.com

**Book your patrol/watch place now:**

**<https://www.eventbookings.com/b/event/reachra-county-shield-2026-scout-bookings>**

**Book your Venture/Rover Scouter Staff place now:**

**<https://www.eventbookings.com/b/event/reachra-county-shield-2026-staff-bookings-venture-rover-scout>**

The support pack will provide all guidelines for this activity. It is extremely important that PLs and WLs get access to this mailing.

There will be a second information pack released once teams are registered this will provide you with the finer details of the competition.

### **Event Details**

The Reachra County Shield will take place from Friday the 24th– Sunday 26th of April 2026 in Larch Hill National Campsite. ALL Patrols/Watches must be accompanied by a Scouter (Leader) who has completed their BAS training, safeguarding refresher (if applicable) and have their Garda Vetting in date.

ALL Discovery Patrols must have 2 leaders, one to assist their patrol/watch and one to staff the event. Please note that the leader assisting the patrol with Discovery, must be available to help their patrol/watch from the start of the event on Friday evening.

**For scouters, the Discovery sub-camp is an opportunity to make all subsequent camps with your scouts easier and less work for you - and at the same time make future camps more rewarding for your scouts. The focus is on youth-led, discovery learning, with Scouters present to assist only when required.**

**Scouts should be encouraged to learn by doing.** Scouters are there to demonstrate skills only if required.

Discovery teams will not be accepted without two accompanying Scouters in attendance for the full weekend, one to help run the event programme, and one to assist on the Discovery Subcamp

### **Booking**

Booking is online and through Eventbookings.com. All payments will be electronic.

### **Cooking and Eating**

It is recommended that discovery teams cook on gas for the weekend.

### **Camp craft**

As the Discovery teams are preparation for the Shield competition the camp craft that is done on site should be similar to what is done by the competing teams.

Depending on the skill level of the patrol/watch, they should choose achievable elements for their patrols/watches while still having a functional site.

For example, if patrols/watches do not have an altar fire, they do not require a chopping area.

### **Axe & saw safety**

As part of the Discovery programme, we will spend some time on Saturday morning to refresh and practice our axe, saw and knife safety.

### **Knife Safety**

Using knives is an essential part of Scouting, however, it is even more important the Scouts know how to use their knives safely, and that they have an appropriate type of knife for the tasks they are completing as Scouts. To this end, we have some guidelines below, which we will be strictly enforcing at this year's County Shield. This is because, in recent years, we have seen a wide variety of different knives being used, some of which are not appropriate for Scouting activities.

The following knives have been deemed to be safe and appropriate for Scouting activities by the County Shield Planning Team:

- Scouting Ireland Swiss Army Knife (or similar)
- Mora Knife
- Opinel Knife

No knife that can open with one finger is acceptable. This includes knives that are designed to flick open, commonly known as 'switchblade knives'.

All knives on site will be inspected on Friday evening. Inappropriate knives that are found on site will be confiscated for the duration of the weekend for the safety of the youth members, and will be returned to the accompanying Scouter/Leader after the Closing Ceremony on Sunday.

### **Participant Details / Requirements**

All members of the patrol should be registered as a Scout in a Scout section. Patrols/Watches in Discovery can vary in size, no more than apx 10 scouts should be on a site if you wish for more scouts to attend, they should be split in to smaller teams, it's important to remember if there is a small number of attendees in a patrol this should represent the work load that will be taken on the site over the weekend. If you have a low number of scouts looking to attend, and don't feel that you have enough for a patrol/watch, we would encourage you to register those who want to attend, and we can look at merging them with another patrol/watch, if you so wish.

#### **Points to Note:**

1. Safety is a priority over the weekend, you must ensure as a Team that you keep this in mind in everything you do. Please ensure that appropriate clothing is worn

and is suitable for activities. For example, kneeling in wet, muddy ground in leggings is not appropriate, and the marking team/sub-camp team will ask scouts to change- if waterproof leggings are worn, this is acceptable. Leggings are also not appropriate for working at a fire or cooking, as they do not provide any substantial protection.

**2. Check-in is on Friday evening at 7:00pm.** Discovery teams will check in on the discovery sub camp.

At check-in, the PL / WL must have activity consent forms for all participating scouts.

Teams must provide their full weekend menu and food receipts.

Teams should provide a sketch or outline of the site layout, indicating the positions of sleeping tents, store tent, dining shelter, cooking area, food preparation area(s), rubbish bins, and, if building a fire, their proposed fire location and wood chopping area.

Gear can be dropped off at Larch Hill Campsite on Thursday night at the carpark. Gear can be brought to the designated field from apx 5pm Friday with help from leaders/parents. Larch Hill campsite staff do their best in facilitating trailers being driven onto the field. The campsite staff are volunteers, and this facility will be subject to the availability of a driver on the weekend.

**Please be advised if you do want to drop a trailer to Larch Hill early this must be arranged directly with Larch Hill.**

**No equipment may be left on site before this time as the sites will not be set up and designated.**

3. Full and correct Scouting Ireland uniform will be worn for the **Closing Ceremony**, with respect to the footwear, boots will be acceptable. **Uniforms must** be kept on-site with the scouts for the weekend. The uniform is **not** compulsory for check-in, but each group must adhere to their own group's policy on travelling. The uniform, should include, at least the following: scout trousers, belt, shirt/jumper with lanyard, kneckerchief, woggle, scout badges (Scouting Ireland Badge, Reachra County, PL/WL badges and any Adventure Skill Badges the Scout has earned).

4. Your Sub-Camp Staff are there to help you - if you require any information on any of the activities over the course of the weekend, ask the staff - if they don't know the answer, they'll find out. If you need anything or have forgotten anything, see your Sub-Camp Chief.

5. You will not need your mobile phone for any reason over the duration of the weekend - if you are that much in demand, it may be better if you stay at home with your phone.

6. All property, both personal & patrol, is entirely the responsibility of the Team Members; no responsibility will be taken by the Event Organising Team

7. The Reachra County Shield Staff are there to ensure you enjoy your weekend. Be polite to them - you might need them to help you with something. This also applies to members of your patrol. Use of bad language will not be tolerated to team members or staff.

8. Please remember that only members of the Patrol are allowed onto the competing Subcamp. Under no circumstances is anybody, Scouter or Venture, allowed to walk around the competing subcamp or on the sites, unless with the express permission of the Subcamp Chief of the Subcamp in question, in an exceptional circumstance. If you should see anyone wandering around the Sub Camp who is not a member of the Subcamp staff, please report them to your Sub Camp Chief.

9. Discovery Patrols are required to bring 2 Scouters, one to accompany their patrol for the weekend and one to assist in the delivery of the programme for the weekend. The Scouter with Discovery who is attending to accompany their Patrol/Watch, must be available, and on site in the Discover subcamp, to help their patrol get their site set up.

10. Scouts sleeping arrangements must adhere to Scouting Ireland's policy of providing adequate privacy as per the Camping Guidelines. Any scouts found in the wrong sleeping tents will result in their team being sent home from the event.

11. We currently will be camping in Kelly's Field. As this is a distance from the car park we are providing prior notice so it can be included in your plans for getting to and from the event. It is the responsibility of Scouts/Group to ensure that the equipment is on-site in time for the start of the competition. If groups are travelling as part of a mixed group on buses, please label gear correctly, as once a team checks in and brings their gear to the site.

12. We would suggest that every site makes a gateway for their site as part of their camp craft, this can be as simple or as complicated to coincide with the skills of the patrol

13. It is recommended that discovery patrols cook on gas for the weekend.

This year, we will be **adding a Hot Breakfast to the Cooking and Eating Section**, which is to be had on Sunday morning. The hot breakfast is to be included in the menu submitted at check-in.

14. Along with this Information Pack, there is a Support Pack. This outlines guidelines for the patrol/watch on what the marking teams are looking for in the gadgets/on their site. It also lists the award structure for the event.

15. There will be an opportunity for leaders, parents and other scouts to visit sites on Saturday evening if they wish to do so. Usually around 8.30 pm on Saturday, but this will be confirmed in the Second Mailing. This will be dependent on the progress of the meal and tidy-up.

16. Trade Fair: This year will see the introduction of a Trade Fair. This will take place on Saturday evening, after site visiting times. This part of the programme will not form part of the competition; it is intended to be a fun part of the programme. However, there will be an award for the Trade Fair at the Closing Ceremony. Further details of the Trade Fair will be published in the second mailing

Please remember that we like to run our closing ceremony on time. This will be scheduled in the next mailing (usually around 3pm on Sunday). It is up to your team to ensure that your priority is to attend this and pack trailers, etc., afterwards.

We look forward to seeing you at The Reachra County Shield 2026. So begin your preparations TODAY by booking your patrol/watch in, and then you can enjoy the next few weeks preparing for the event.

Yours in Scouting,

Reachra County Shield Planning Team



# Reachra County Shield 2026 Discovery Support Pack



**Dear Scout,**

Welcome to the Reachra County Shield 2026 Discovery Support Pack. The aim of this pack is to provide you with some guidelines as to what is required for each of the gadgets on your site. It also outlines the format of the cooking and eating inspections and the awards structure. We hope that this document will prove to be a great asset to you and your patrol/watch in your preparations. However, if you have any questions or would like anything clarified, please email [reachracountysshield@gmail.com](mailto:reachracountysshield@gmail.com) and we will be happy to assist you.

Yours in Scouting,

Reachra County Shield Planning Team

## **Campcraft Guidelines**

These guidelines are intended to explain to a participating Patrol/Watch what the examining team will look for the duration of The County Shield

The theme of this year's camp is Time Travellers. Scouts should incorporate elements of this into their site and their food.

Teams are encouraged to build as much of the Shield competition campsite as their skills permit.

**Please read all of this information carefully.**

## **General Information**

- The size of the site will be similar to the Polar (competing) subcamp, but will vary in size depending on the number of Scouts registered for a **discovery** patrols. Sites will be marked out in advance, and patrols should not alter their allocated site. **Note:** every best effort will be made to ensure that all patrols are given a square / rectangular site; however, some sites may vary slightly from this to take account of the space available in the camping field.

- The layout of each site is up to each participating team.
- As per the rules of the Phoenix Challenge, **ALL** Gadgets must be free-standing. Nothing should be driven into the ground, with the exception of Boundary Poles and tent pegs. 'Guy lines' supporting gadgets are also **not** allowed. Note: All holes must be filled in for final inspection.
- **Pre-fabricated gadgets are not allowed.** This refers specifically to the tying of lashings (typically tri-pod / figure of eight / sheer lashings) in advance of the competition. Any such lashings found on check-in will be dismantled. This does **not** refer to table-tops, fire trays, patrol boxes, etc.
- Patrols/Watches **are** allowed to have the different gadgets bundled together, colour coded for identification, etc. upon arrival if they so wish.
- Tents may be of any type. Tents must be fit for purpose e.g. 2-man tent sleeps a maximum of 2 scouts, tents should be suitable for the weather expected that weekend.
- Fire extinguishers **are banned** on patrol sites. Past experience has shown that, in general, Scouts do not know how to use them, and often the wrong types of extinguishers are brought.
- If cooking on an altar fire Buckets of sand and water should be provided instead (Note: Sand buckets should be covered to protect from the elements) and fire blankets may also be provided. No gadget is required for the fire point. However, a clearly defined fire point should be present on all sites. The Location of the fire point is important; it should be relatively central but not impeding general access to the site or any other gadget. Discovery Patrols/Watches are encouraged to cook on gas, and therefore, an altar fire should not be required.
- Water treatment facilities do **not** need to be constructed on patrol sites. Experience has shown that these gadgets have been rarely used correctly in the past.
- The cutting of sods is not allowed. Fire trays must be used. Fire trays should be off the ground
- Please note that no equipment or timber poles/spars will be supplied to patrols/watches.

- The campsite (tents and other equipment) should be built to a standard to stand up to wet and windy weather.
- See the Shield Campcraft Guide at the end of this document for a general overview of the site and what is expected at Shield standard.
- **The Discovery subcamp is a learning exercise and an opportunity to practice campcraft and to develop the scouts' skills.**
- **Discovery teams will have to demonstrate competent knife, axe, saw and chopping skills if they are to be permitted to do on site wood preparation. Additionally, a leader must be present to mentor them during any fire preparation and fire lighting activities.**

### **Campcraft Assessment Guidelines**

The following would be expected on a discovery sub camp

- o Sleeping Tent(s)
- o Store Tent & storage gadget
- o Dining Shelter / somewhere dry to eat with table and chairs.
- o Gateway
- o Campsite Gadgets might include:
  1. Dresser /Food Preparation Area/ wash area
  2. Waste Disposal (bins)
  3. Storage gadget (how items in the store tent are raised off the ground)
- o Boundaries
- o Fire Point
- o First Aid Kit

**Note: The gate way is a mandatory part of the site.**

**Note:** It is of primary importance that all patrols/watches build a site that is safe for their use over the duration of The Reachra County Shield. With this in mind, patrols/watches should only construct **safe** gadgets that they can competently build. i.e. bringing a fold-out table and chairs is better than a poorly constructed table & seat. While patrols/watches will not attain full marks for a fold-out table and chairs, they could still be awarded greater marks than they may have received for an unsafe table & seat.

### **(A) Personal gear**

**All participating scouts and scouters must have proper waterproof footwear, waterproof leggings, and a waterproof jacket.**

Warm daytime layers, preferably with an insulated jacket are also required.

Scouts should have a warm sleeping bag and sleeping mat.

Scouts / Scouters without proper clothing will be asked to leave the site.

### (B) Safety.

Site safety is of paramount importance. During all visits by the campcraft subcamp teams, site safety will be assessed. Patrol/Watch Leaders will be notified by sub-camp staff if any parts of their site are deemed to be unsafe, and consequently will be expected to make corrections.

The correct storage of all equipment, but especially axes, saws and gas appliances, is of great importance.

### (C) Hygiene & Cleanliness.

Along with site safety, hygiene & cleanliness are probably the most important aspects of campcraft.

Food should be stored correctly at all times. This especially refers to perishable foods. Cooking and eating utensils, as well as all work surfaces and cookers, should be properly cleaned after each use.

### (D) Availability of Water & Fire Wood.

There should be an ample supply of both on your site at all times.

Bottled water is not suitable, and a water container should be used at all times.

Water Containers should always be at least half full at all times.

**NOTE:** There may be very little supply of wood available on or near the event site, so it is suggested that each patrol/watch make provision for this in advance. Each site should have graded wood piles. Although there is permission to bring pre-chopped wood, scouts must be able to demonstrate how to chop wood with an axe and saw.

## **Guidelines for a Discovery Site**

### **Expected/Suggested order of site pitching:**

Sleeping Tent(s)

Stores/Store Tent(s)

Dinning shelter

Boundaries

Rest of site

### **Guidelines for Tentage (Sleeping/Store)**

- Tent poles must be straight and in line with the type of tent being used.
- Pegs for the guy lines must be at the correct angle 45°
- Walls must be as taut as possible to prevent water getting in.
- Doors must close correctly with no stretching or gaps between the two sides of the doors.
- Guy lines must be used correctly in accordance with the type of tent being used.
- Everything should be neat and tidy, with sleeping bags rolled up and everything packed into rucksacks.

### **Guidelines for the Site Layout**

- The site layout will be marked on the positioning of the gadgets. This will be done on the basis of usability. For example, placing the food preparation gadget, the fire and the chopping area in three different corners of your site might not be a good use of space, as they will often be used together.
- As a safety precaution, where possible, all tentage should be the furthest point from the fire
- Use of space

### **Guidelines for the boundaries**

- Correct knots used on boundaries, the round turn and two half hitches are used to start and finish, and the clove hitch is used on the intermediate boundary poles
- Boundaries taut

### **Guidelines for the table and seating**

- All Scouts should be able to fit comfortably at the table
- The table should be at the correct height and in accordance with the seating
- The table top should be a flat piece of wood and should be secured to the gadget so it doesn't move

### **Guidelines for the fire point**

- This does not have to be a gadget, but needs to be clearly identified and centrally located

### **Guidelines for the waste disposal area**

- 2 provisions for rubbish in line with Larch Hill's waste disposal policy, as follows:
  - General Waste – Food, non-burnable & non-recyclable
  - Recyclable – Cardboard, Plastic, Metal (should be clean!)
- Bins should not be over full.
- Bins must be covered, and bin bags must be off the ground.
- Structure and Lashings
- When emptying bin bags, Scouts should replace them with a new bag, ready to use.

### **Guidelines for the storage**

- It's very important that food and non-food are stored separately to prevent cross-contamination
- Equipment stored separately
- Cleaning equipment separately
- Cool box for perishable items
- All storage boxes must be raised off the ground in the form of a storage gadget.
- Food should be stored in an appropriate storage box (ideally a clear plastic box with a lid)
- All ice packs must be clearly labelled

- Uniforms can be stored in a clear plastic box, ideally in the store tent.

### **Guidelines for the dresser**

- For this gadget, you should consider its design and must be used for its intended purpose. i.e. pots, utensils etc
- Tight lashings
- Gadget tidy
- Items clearly off the ground

### **Guidelines for the wash area**

- This is a separate gadget from the dresser and will be marked for its design and function
- Lashings
- The height of the basin
- Safe structure
- Provisions should be made for the storage of water containers.
- Separate basins should be provided for utensil and personal washing.

### **Guidelines for the gateway**

- For the gateway you should consider its design and functionality
- Lashings
- **Patrol identification (sign, flag, notice board, use of theme)**
- Safety (Gate must be high enough to allow ease of access)
- Note: This is a compulsory gadget.

### **Guidelines for the dining shelter**

- Ample shelter to cover the entire patrol
- All guy lines used
- Ease of access in and out of the shelter
- Adequate cover from the elements

### **Guidelines for the food preparation area**

- Adequate space for the preparation of food
- Height of the work surfaces
- Is the structure safe to use
- Clean surfaces to prevent cross-contamination

### **Guidelines for Patrol/Watch ID**

- Patrol/Watch name and group should be clearly identifiable
- Patrol/Watch members and jobs should be clearly identifiable
- Menu should be displayed.
- There should be clear evidence of the theme throughout your site.

### **NOTES:**

- Safety will be assessed during the weekend by subcamp staff and will be a priority for patrols.
- On all gadget items, the suitability of the design, the soundness of construction and the standard of lashings are reviewed at all times.
- **All gadgets should be used for their purpose at all times.** Gadgets built but not actually in use, for example, a dresser without pots on display, etc
- Depending on the design, some of the gadgets mentioned may be combined into one gadget. Alternatively, some of their functions may be separated into different gadgets. Regardless of the design used, it is important that all the functions of the items listed below are catered for on the site, to the best of the Patrol/Watches ability.
- Scout are allowed to carry appropriate scouting knives on site. Hunting knives or unsafe knives will be taken off scouts. Or a scout misusing a knife will have their knife removed.
  - **Mora, opinel or swiss army knives are the recommended knives to be used.**

### **A note about Tri-pods & Quad-pods**

Where free-standing campcraft is used, the majority of gadgets are built using Tri-pods or Quad-pods. It is important that these items are **braced correctly**. Failure to do so can result in a structure collapsing if knocked against. This would be especially dangerous in the case of tables and altar fires.

In the case of Tri-pods, braces should be lashed on around the three sides of the structure, preferably with the braces low to the ground (especially on heavier gadgets). An alternative is a T-bar structure, although this can allow the back leg to swing if it is not done correctly.

In the case of Quad-pods, diagonal braces or braces on all four sides should be used, again preferably low to the ground.

Where one of these structures is braced by other parts of the gadget, then there may not be a need to use braces as described above. The important point is that on any tri-pod or quad-pod, none of the legs should be free to move. If in doubt use one of the above systems.

### **Cooking and Eating**

**Discovery teams are advised to cook on gas for the weekend.**

Scouts should eat healthily for the duration of the weekend. This means that adequate menus (outlining a balanced and healthy diet) are planned and followed for the whole weekend.

For the Saturday Dinner, we will have some special guests coming to visit you. Please ensure that you cook a bit extra for this meal so that it can be tasted by others. Remember, the dinner should be hot, have a carbohydrate, protein and vegetable elements to it.

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Supper	Totals
<b>Friday</b>				Hot dogs on rolls	
				Rolls x 2 €0.85 Frankfurters x 2 €0.75 Ketchup €2	€5.20
<b>Saturday</b>	Cereal, fruit, yogurt with orange juice	Wrap with salad and ham crisps and a bar with water	Spag ball	Cuppa soup & bread rolls	
	Cornflakes €3.99 Milk €2 Frube €1.32 Orange juice €1.49 Fruit €1.49	Wraps x 2 €2.15 Ham €0.79 King crisps €4.65 Mayo €3.50 Club milk €4.75	Mince €5 Pasta €0.45 Passata x 2 €0.85 Peppers x 3 €0.69 Onion €0.89 Seasoning	Soup x2 €1.65 Rolls x 2 €0.85	€43.39
<b>Sunday</b>	Sausages & beans	turkey sandwiches with crisps bar and fruit			
	Sausages x 2 €1.79 Beans €3.49	Turkey €1.89 Butter €1.59 Bread €1.89 Crisps & bar above			10.65
	<p>This is an <b>example only</b> there are several important aspects missing  This menu will not necessarily receive full marks  Receipts that match the menu must be submitted at check in.</p>				€59.24

### Sample Menu/Budget

### **Cooking and Eating inspections:**

On Friday, at Check In, the patrol/watch will submit a copy of their menu for the weekend; this can be handwritten or typed in advance.

### **Programme:**

#### **Campfire takes place on Friday Night**

#### **Saturday morning**

Site build & axe and knife training.

#### **Saturday afternoon Bases**

The Programme bases will be located within Larch Hill and its Environs.

#### **Trade Fair takes place on Saturday Night**

#### **More info**

Above is a taster of what will happen over the event. The next mailing will have more detailed information in it, detailing what you need to bring etc.

#### **Sunday Final Inspection**

**On Sunday, our final inspection will take place after the site has been striked (taken down). This will be a standard inspection to ensure your gear has been packed away properly and clean. Your uniform will also be checked at this time.**

### **The Reachra County Shield Award Structure 2026**

Every Team who enters The County Shield will, over the course of the event, be assessed on a number of tasks, challenges and standards in order to determine if points are to be awarded.

Discovery teams will be eligible to compete for awards in the trade fair and our Spirit of Scouting award. All Discovery teams will be awarded a Participation award and a Reachra County Shield Badge.

### **The Award Ceremony**

The Awards Ceremony will take place on the Sunday of The Reachra County Shield. The ceremony will be conducted in the following manner

1. Announcing Discovery sites first and then competing sites from Site number 1 onwards in numerical order the award achieved – Participation, Bronze, Silver and Gold.
2. Spirit of Scouting award.
3. The Trade Fair Award

Note Discovery Patrols/Watches are not eligible for the following awards

4. Cooking and Eating Award
5. The Bases Award
6. The Campcraft Award.
7. 3rd place will be announced and the 3rd Place Prizes will be presented.
8. 2nd place will be announced and the Runner-Up Prizes will be presented.
9. 1st place will be announced and The Reachra County Shield Trophy will be presented.

*A folder with medical consent forms, will be available for each team to take home.*