

Hi,

I'm a Scout Leader of 20 years service in city centre Edinburgh, working with young people who live day to day in an urban setting. Over the years I've noticed a marked, positive difference in their behaviour and attention levels when my young people spend time in woodland; particularly after overnight experiences. Having easy access to simple off-grid bothy-style buildings would be a major enabler to providing our young people with vitally important outdoor experiences and a positive contribution to their mental wellbeing.

For this reason, I'd like the future planning framework to make it a legal obligation for local authority planning departments to positively support the approval of applications for recreational huts (SPP Type 23A) made by individuals and groups. Further, local authority planning officers should undertake professional re-training to better understand the considerable benefits of this type of building, and how to categorise applications correctly as 'recreational huts' and not tourism businesses or holiday accommodation.

It is obvious that Scotland is underserved by simple hut structures for recreational use - because there are, practically speaking, none available for use by our young people. My experience of taking Scouts to Norway is the reverse where co-operatives and clubs can make suitable buildings available without fuss.

Please give very serious consideration to placing an obligation of positive support for S23A applications on local authorities for bothy/hutting buildings. By definition, these are environmentally insignificant structures and are hugely important to the mental wellbeing and development of the next generation.

Scott Richards