

Romford District Explorer Scouts



International Expedition to Switzerland 2026

Dear Parents & Explorer Scouts

Some of you may already know about our plans for our 2026 Expedition to Kandersteg International Scout Centre, (KISC) in Switzerland. The Event will take place in the **summer of 2026, leaving the UK on the evening of Tuesday 28th July and returning on Saturday 8th August**, during the school summer holidays.

You will find enclosed within this letter an outline programme and a link to sign up to attend. The programme should give you an idea of what to expect, although it will not be finalised until next year. It may seem like the summer of 2026 is a long way off, but to organise an Expedition of this size takes many years of planning. It actually started many months ago. I also want to give you as much time as possible to be able to pay the camp fee, apart from a deposit needed to be returned to secure your place. The balance is to be paid by monthly Standing Order.



We expect to be taking 80 to 100 young people and leaders to Switzerland. Our main mode of travel will be overnight coach, as per previous trips, with a number of people flying. We will also have at least one equipment van with 2 or 3 leaders going ahead of the main party. It is huge logistical effort to get the whole Expedition from Romford to Kandersteg.

Romford Explorers has almost 140 Explorer Scouts across six Units, as well as dozens of Scouts aged over 12 & ½ who would be eligible to attend. Our aim is to get as many of those young people as possible to attend. We have previously taken Explorers to Kandersteg in 2014, 2018 & 2022. On our last trip in 2022, we took 74 participants. This time we will have between 16 and 20 adult leaders providing catering, programme content and activity supervision. Accommodation in Switzerland will be on the main campsite in tents, with some indoor accommodation. We also have the use of a building for our catering operations and our main eating area as well as managing the whole expedition.

It is important that you do not take too long to decide if you wish to attend. If you have any specific questions about the trip, then drop me a line.

We need to finalise our numbers promptly so that we can offer the opportunity to older Scouts who will move into Explorers over the next 18 months. It is therefore important that you decide as soon as possible if you wish your son or daughter to attend.

If you would like to attend, you need to complete the application form via our web site, and then arrange paying your deposit, which is £100.

The total cost of the camp is £1180.00. Your space on the Expedition will be confirmed upon receipt of the deposit. There will be a maximum number of participant places, therefore it is important that if you wish to take part you commit to the trip as soon as you are able too.

If you would like to sign up for our 2026 trip, head over to our website now. You will find a copy of this information letter and a short video of what to expect on the expedition. You will also find the Google sign up form. Either click on the link below or scan the QR code.

<https://www.romfordscouts.org.uk/members/kandersteg-2026>

After the deposit has been paid, you will then need to pay 16 x equal payments of £60.00 a month, via bank standing order starting in February 2025 and ending in July 2026.

After the £100 non-refundable deposit, as further payment milestones need to be met, they will become non-refundable (subject to some medical reasons for withdrawal) as the trip progresses, these are as follows.

31st May 2025	£340 <i>(including the original £100 deposit)</i>
31st October 2025	£640 <i>(including the original £100 deposit)</i>
10th July 2026	£1180 <i>(including the original £100 deposit)</i>

I appreciate that this trip is a long way off and more money than a normal camp. The cost of a trip should not be a barrier to anyone attending. Romford District Explorer Scouts is committed to providing International Opportunities for all our young members and if you would like to discuss any aspect of the expedition, including finance, please contact me via the email address below.

Regards

Andy

Andrew Mann
Kandersteg Expedition Leader

E-Mail: k26@romfordscouts.org.uk



Kandersteg
International
Scout Centre



Kandersteg – Switzerland 2026

Outline Programme - on these next two pages is an example of our itinerary for the 12-day trip. All the days are examples and they are not necessarily what we will be doing on those actual days. The final programme will not be finalised until spring 2026.



Tuesday 28th July: Meet at Romford location at approx 6pm to depart the UK. Travel on luxury coach (DVD, toilets, etc) and travel to Dover. We will depart on a 10pm crossing to Calais and then sleep as we travel through France and onto Switzerland.

Wednesday 29th: Arrive at KISC early afternoon, unpack sort tents and room allocation, take some time to acclimatise to the 1200m above sea level height of our camp site and generally get a feel for the whole place. There will be over

2,000 Scouts and Guides on site from all around the World.

Thursday 30th: Easy day of a walk into the village and then up to Lake Oeschinensee at 1578m for lunch and a swim in a real Alpine Lake. Before coming back down, we will spend some time on the summer Rodelbahn and a gentle walk back down to the site for dinner.



Friday 31st: A trip into Interlaken, approx 25 miles from the site for a half-day session on the river rapids, wet suits supplied. Can you last the two hours it takes to travel on your inflatable rib boat to the bottom? A truly amazing trip.



Saturday 1st August: As well as being Swiss National Day, it is also World Scout Scarf Day. It is the day Scouting celebrates its founding, from way back in 1907. The day is filled with games, activities and celebrations with over 2000 Scouts & Guides from around the World, ending in a parade with all 2000 plus from the campsite at dusk to the village to celebrate. A day not to be missed.

Sunday 2nd: Will see us heading for the Mountains, with a short cable car ride first and then a walk through the Valleys with a stop at one of the famous Alpine rest stops (Swiss café).

On the way back, we will stop at one of the local Mountain Cheeseries, to sample some of the locally made cheese, before a lazy evening spent on site resting after a strenuous day's walking.

Monday 3rd: At the halfway point, Monday will see us head South towards the Italian border to Brig and a day spent at the Brigabad thermal pools. This is the chance to chill out, take in some sun and play in the pools, ride the highest water chute in Switzerland or swim in the Olympic size pool.





Tuesday 4th: We see us depart in the afternoon for a hike to Gfellalp to spend a night in a Mountain hut. At 1850 metres, the views are breathtaking and well worth the extra steps at the end to reach the summit. We will cook our dinner and stay the night like the old time Mountain herders.

Wednesday 5th: Waking up at 1850 metres is an amazing feeling, the fresh mountain air cannot be described in this leaflet, it must be experienced. It takes a couple of hours to get down and we have a well deserved brunch cooked for us,

before spending the afternoon exploring Kandersteg Village and some time out in the swimming pool.

Later that night, we will join 2000 Scouts from around the World at the International campfire. It is trully an amazing night. Particularly as thousands of Scouts and Guides try to sing "Alice the Camel" or "Bananas of the world unite" being lead by 100 Explorer Scouts from Romford !



Thursday 6th: Will see us travel to Interlaken for a morning of Canyoning – this is described as "navigating down a fast-flowing mountain stream in a gorge using a variety of techniques, such as abseiling, climbing, sliding and jumping". A canyon itself, is a natural gorge that has been carved out of the mountain over thousands of years by the water current, hence all the rocks are smooth.



This was a new activity in 2018 and remains one of the most popular. The afternoon will be spent exploring the town before heading back to KISC.

Friday 7th: Our last day on site. We intend to make the most of the day, complete our challenge badges, visit the local village shops for those last-minute gift purchases and the chance to visit Blausee and the amazing crystal clear waters, before leaving Kandersteg for the last time at 3pm and heading home with a well deserved stop at Mc Donalds for dinner.

Saturday 8th: After driving through the night towards Calais, we aim to depart France on the 07.00am Ferry and arrive back at Romford at approx 10.00am on the Saturday morning.

Walking will be a big part of the Expedition. We do not want to come all the way to the Alps and then not spend some time on them. We will split Explorers into groups depending on their fitness and ability and will walk different routes.

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