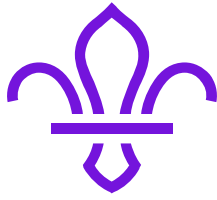


Scouts

1st Northwood



Group Scout Leader Report

We are back! Yes, I know it is hard to believe but all sections will be going back to face to face Scouting after Easter - subject to no changes being announced by the Prime Minister. Scouting on Zoom is a great option to have when we can't meet up but you can't beat real face to face Scouting and I know all the Leaders are looking forward to it. The Leaders have done a marvellous job keeping the sections going since before Christmas but the young people really do want to get back.

When we do return, the good news is that we can hold meetings inside the Scouting Centre as long as social distancing rules are followed and maximum numbers are followed. We will cap the maximum number of young people for meetings inside to fifteen which will mean that the sections may need to run two shorter meetings on the section evenings and will also need some additional help. When we are outside, we can manage larger groups. It really is vital that parents advise the section leaders if their child will be attending a meeting or not so that they can plan ahead and maximise attendance.

The success of the Leaders over the last year has to be celebrated. Each year we complete a census for the Scout Association which records the number of members in each section at the end of January. In the lead up to census there was much talk of a drop in membership and the impact this would have nationally. Within our District we saw a drop in total membership of about 20% so I am very pleased to report that 1st Northwood was one of only two Groups to grow - it might have been just 2% but at the end of a very challenging year and compared to even the local trend we have done amazingly well so THANK YOU to all the Leaders and committee for keeping us going; to the parents who supported us by enabling the young people to participate at home; and finally to all the young people who have joined us on our Zoom journey - WELL DONE to you all.

I must thank the Committee for organising building work around the grounds of the Centre whilst we have been away. The work may not be easy to spot but it certainly will make a difference later in the year during the winter.

Finally, I must congratulate Christine Bennett who was awarded the Silver Acorn for distinguished service to Scouting in the St George's Day Awards. Normally it would be celebrated with an event at Windsor Castle but unfortunately that has been postponed due to the pandemic so was presented over a District Zoom meeting.

Mike Bennett
Group Scout Leader

A Vote of Confidence!

I was contacted by the Council to ask if they could use our premises as a Polling Station on May 6th for the Local Elections.

We couldn't see any reasons why not, especially since the Council has been so supportive financially in the construction of the building.

They duly visited and were somewhat overwhelmed by the wonderful new building and facilities.

It will work very well for them in organising a one-way system for social distancing, in through the front doors and out through the emergency doors the other side.

And we get paid for it!

Richard Plume
Executive Committee Member



Chairman's Chat

Normally this edition of the newsletter contains all sorts of information about our jumble sale which is usually held in May. Regrettably, due to COVID of course, for the second year the event will not be taking place. We simply cannot predict with any confidence how well things will be going in May and whether we would be able legally to hold the event, nor whether our many helpers will have any appetite for attending and helping at a large gathering such as ours. The risks to all of us are completely unacceptable.

We have considered holding it in September, but that should be the time when Scouting really will return to normal and it would be unfair to stop all the sections from meeting in the Scouting Centre for a month or more while we gathered and sorted the jumble. We debated several alternative options in committee and I'm afraid that none of them were viable. It is entirely understandable that many of you are disappointed but hopefully it will not deter you from giving us your full support when the time comes to hold the event again and life gets back to whatever normal is.

Whilst we are not collecting or storing jumble at the present time, we are continuing to collect scrap metal and wiring. Just about any item will be acceptable - brass, copper, lead, radiators, steel etc. When we have accumulated enough to fill the Scout van we take it to the scrap metal company in Harefield in exchange for a cheque. All you need to do is bring the items to the Scouting Centre, preferably when it is occupied, and leave the items to the left hand side of the building. If you have a problem or query please contact one of the Leaders. With the amount of building work and general house renovation taking place locally at the moment we remain optimistic that this source of income will continue at least for the foreseeable future.

Some really excellent news was announced at a recent meeting of our Executive Committee in that Christine Bennett has been honoured with one of the highest awards that the Scouting movement can bestow, namely the Silver Acorn. Indeed fantastic news and so well deserved because Christine is a unique individual who, as District Commissioner for the Ruislip, Eastcote and Northwood district, allocates a vast amount of time and expertise to Scouting in the area. We are extremely fortunate to have her wise counsel and extend our warmest congratulations on this achievement.

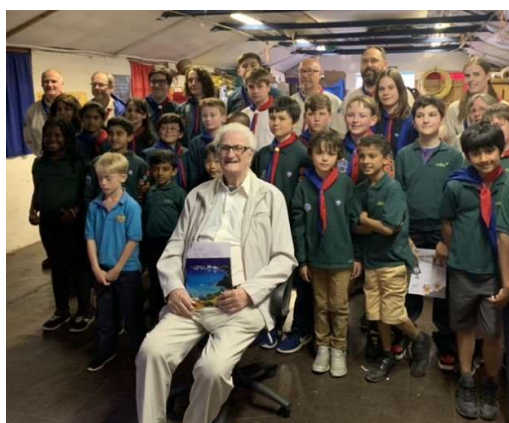
Many of Christine's positive qualities go a good way towards making the Group so successful, for our Leaders provide an outstanding level of Scouting for all of the youngsters who we regard ourselves privileged to have as part of the 1st Northwood "family". They have endured an extremely challenging time over the past year and I know how very grateful they are to have the backing they have received from many of our parents.

Sadly, rarely does an issue of this newsletter get published without including news that one of our members has passed away. On this occasion we have to report that Harold Talbot passed away at the beginning of February. Harold was a Scout member for fifty-two years and was able to attend the presentation of his fifty year service award at 2nd Northwood in 2018. He was ninety-four years old. His first appointment was as a Group Executive Committee member at 2nd Northwood and then Chairman and Group Scout Leader for seven years. He became an Honorary Group President in 2018. In addition to all of these roles he was an enthusiastic helper for many years at the 1st Northwood Jumble sale and several of us remember the effort he put in to ensuring his stall was in good shape before the event opened. We extend our condolences to his children Karen and Clive and the rest of his family at this sad time.

So, until we meet again through these pages, enjoy the next few months ahead and remember to continue to take great care of yourselves.

Paul Akers

Executive Committee Chairman



Harold Talbot 1926 - 2021

Cub Collation

We've come to the end of another term where we have had to meet on Zoom the whole time, but we are very excited to be able to plan for face to face meetings after Easter as the Covid restrictions are gradually lifted. The Cubs have not been deterred by Zoom with a good turn-out all term. We have seen over eighty percent of our members at some point over the term and were very pleased to report one more member in the Annual Scout Census than we did last year, whilst the majority of Packs saw a drop in membership so thank you all for your support in what has been a challenging year.

So, what have we been doing to keep everyone coming to Cubs? For most of the term we had a theme of festivals introducing Cubs and Leaders to new festivals and refreshing knowledge of others. We started with Burns Night where the learning was supported by a Kahoot quiz and we made some shortbread before moving on to Candlemass and Imbloc (a Celtic festival) led by Joseph and Connor, our Young Leaders. Jess Mindel (an old 1st Northwood and Poindextor member) joined us to teach the Cubs about Jewish festivals including Rosh Hashanah, Purim and Passover. We were joined by Lisa (one of our parents) to discover the Chinese New Year traditions and then Baloo (Parina) finished with St Patrick and St David. Challenge the Cubs and see what they remember!

Alongside festivals we have completed Escape Rooms; taken part in Bobble Hat Challenges (part of the County Beaver week in memory of local leader Brunell Sweeney aka Badger) and learnt digital coding skills with Joseph and Connor. We also had a visit from Mountain Girl Anna who shared her enthusiasm for mountains and hiking whilst teaching the Cubs some navigation skills which we will test out when we can go on a hike together. We then completed the term with an Easter cooking evening making spiced biscuits and chocolate nests.

But that's not all we've done - on our Chinese New Year evening we were joined by Teji Barnes, Mayor of Hillingdon, who, as she couldn't invite youth groups to the Mayor's Parlour, asked if she could join our meetings instead and visited one meeting in each of Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers in the District. She showed us a Chinese New Year gift she had been sent, joined in with the Kahoot quiz and bravely answered all the Cubs questions. Below are the words that Oli and Dan wrote for the County Newsletter:

"On Tuesday 9th February, the Mayor of Hillingdon joined us for our cub meeting. We were delighted to meet her and learn about Chinese New Year together. We were able to ask questions about her job, we found out she supports some charities and has her own YouTube channel. We really enjoyed her visit!"

We also joined in with the Group Rainforest Camp - more details elsewhere and the County Elevate Camp - also described elsewhere.

I think we are ready for a rest over the Easter holidays but will be ready for the return on 20 April!

Thank you to all the parents and older siblings who have helped their Cubs over the last year take part in the many activities on Zoom. Without you we would not have been able to do all the activities we have done - you are all now honorary Leaders. Having discovered what fun it can be perhaps you'd like to join us face to face to help out too?

Akela (Christine) and Baloo (Parina)



Group Activities

Spring Rainforest Camp

With half term approaching and government rules keeping us all apart and local the Leaders decided it was time for another virtual camp. The Group obviously agreed as we were joined by forty-three different young members and six adults over the weekend, plus of course parents and siblings.

With a theme of Rainforest, the camp comprised everything from making a toucan to learning about the rainforest. We also watched birds dancing and joined in and then built our dens with a rainforest theme. Dinner was cooked together with many discovering the delights of a cracking burger followed by fruit salads in which that we challenged everyone to include an exotic fruit. The day finished with a virtual campfire and Luke perfecting his rendition of Cecil which he first did last summer!

After a good (?) night's sleep in their dens most people enjoyed pancakes for breakfast on Valentine's Day before coming back together for a Kahoot quiz to see what we had learnt over the weekend. From the photos and smiles plus requests for another camp soon I think everyone enjoyed their weekend.

Elevate Activity Day & Max's Big Camp Out

We can't take the credit for the Elevate Activity Day that was arranged by GLMW, our Scout County, but what an amazing day it was! We had members from every section taking part in the activities that were hosted on Zoom and Facebook. There were thirty activities to choose from, all linked to the Air Activity badges from making a paper Concorde to air themed cakes, talks from the Battle of Britain bunker volunteers to London Air Ambulance, tours around different aircraft with the RAF and much more. The day was supported by British Airways, the RAF, London Air Ambulance and several other companies and gave us an insight to life in the air industries. It finished with information on Mars and a bedtime story!

As part of Elevate, members were encouraged to build a den with a space or air theme. We decided to link this in with Max's Big Camp Out. For those who haven't heard about Max, he was a Cub in Devon who asked his parents if he could sleep in his tent and be sponsored to raise funds for his local hospice. This was important to Max who had been given a tent by his neighbour and told to have adventures. Not long after Max saw how the hospice supported his neighbour at the end of his life. Max's Mum said yes and set up a Just Giving page to raise a £100 - she wasn't convinced anyone would sponsor Max but was happy to make the donation herself. That small step of asking to sleep out in a tent turned into a year under canvas; much publicity and support from many celebrities including Johnny Wilkinson and Little Mix. On the weekend of Elevate, Max invited children around the world to join his camp as he reached his milestone of a year and we took up the challenge! Max has now raised over £600,000 including a donation from 1st Northwood.

Having had a night in their dens after a busy Elevate day, we had a short catch up on Sunday morning to hear what 1st Northwood had done. By including a night of camping into the weekend, some of our Group have completed two consecutive months of camping - there is a District challenge to camp at least one night a month for the whole year - I wonder how many will succeed! Look out for our next camp details next term. *(Pictures from Elevate are on this page, from Rainforest Camp on the next).*

Mike Bennett

Group Scout Leader





Beaver Blog

For most of this past year we have been virtual Beaver Scouting on Zoom, and now, fingers crossed, after Easter we will be returning to face to face meetings..... Yeahhhhhh!

This last term we have been lucky enough to have some more special guests: Alison, Louis' Mum, joined us to tell us about the NHS and letting us know how the vaccines work and how they are given. It was so interesting and we all learnt a lot. Thank you Alison.

We also learnt about the Chinese New Year with Max's Mum Lisa. It was so much fun. Thank you Lisa.

We also had Yuval, our Assistant Leader's husband, join to teach us about programming computers and we learnt some really cool stuff about creating graphics and making them move for the Digital Makers Badge. Thank you Yuval.

Our Young Leaders Emma and Jack ran a meeting about sign language and disability for the Disability Awareness Badge. They were amazing and we learnt so much. Thank you Emma and Jack.

We have also explored The Green Cross Code, animals, navigating/code breaking, room escape adventure and we also did a session on skills:

- Tying shoelaces
- Telling the time
- Rolling/ folding a neckerchief
- Learning your address and phone number.

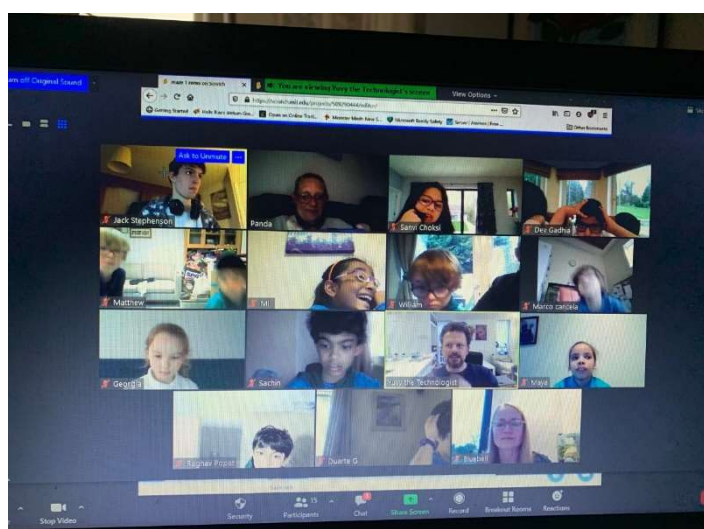
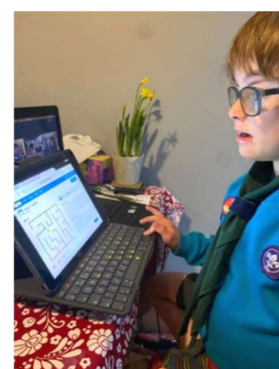
We also took part in the Elevate Camp, Max's Big Camp Out, Badger's Bobble Hat Walk Week, and Get Fit Feb events AND still had outdoor adventures with our families too.

As you can see, we packed in quite a lot and lots of badges still being earned! Huge thanks to parents for being surrogate Leaders and helping so much. We are so very proud of our Beavers for helping us by being there on Zoom and being so enthusiastic every week. THANK YOU BEAVERS YOU ARE AMAZING!

We are all VERY excited to get back to a little normality when we return, we can't wait to see you all in person.

Panda (Wendy) Beaver Scout Leader

Bluebell (Gabrielle) Assistant Beaver Scout Leader



Explorer Round-up

As I write this, we have received the news that the Covid status of Scouting has been moved down from Red (no face-to-face meetings) to Amber (currently meeting outside but with inside from 12th April) so after Easter we will be back.

So that we can see as many Explorers as possible, we have planned to take part in activities at PACCAR Scout camp site where we can have several smaller groups at a time. It will be good to see everyone again after another term of Zoom.

Whilst Zoom isn't ideal, we are very pleased with the number of Explorers we have seen over the term taking part in a range of activities.

Cooking continued to be popular on Zoom and a bonus for the Leaders who don't have to clean up! Twenty-eight had a go at making beef burgers or halloumi burgers with a side order of homemade potato wedges. Thank you to Callum for sharing his favourite burger recipes. Twenty-nine future Jamie Olivers joined Zoom for pizza making from scratch and a similar number learnt how to make bread whilst also having a discussion with Teji Barnes, the Mayor of Hillingdon who joined us for an evening that also included a Kahoot quiz.

Our other meetings have included quizzes (Kahoot is always popular), a games night using break out rooms and Escape Rooms.

A Duke of Edinburgh Award catch up evening was held to support those already working towards the award and encouraging our many new members to join the scheme which will work for both the Duke of Edinburgh and Chief Scout's Awards.

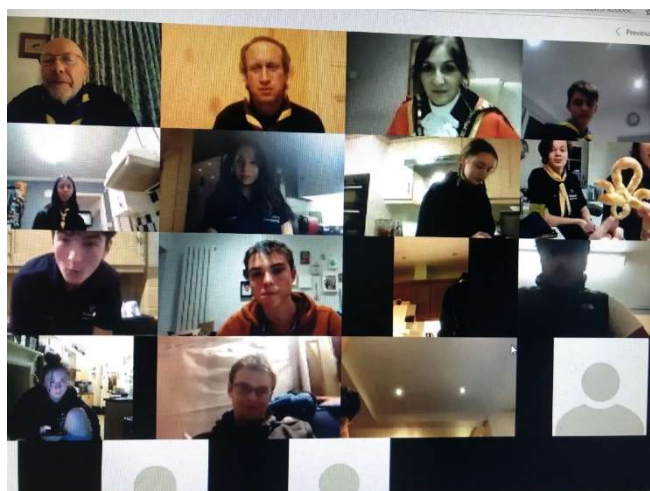
We had an evening watching clips of Al Gore's 'An Inconvenient Truth' about global warming with discussions in break out rooms and plans for what we could do to minimise our impact on the environment.

Inspired by his recent training courses, Doug2 ran an international evening that was interesting and engaging using small break out rooms to discover National Parks around the World and work out locations on Geoguesser (give it a go, it's quite a challenge!).

Thank you to everyone who helped make Explorers on Zoom work - Leaders, Explorers and especially parents for their support in the kitchen - we hope the Explorers all cleaned up at the end of the sessions.

Doug Horgan

Assistant Explorer Scout Leader



Scout Report

The Scout section is still going strong with more young people joining all the time. It really is great to seem that they are still interested in doing something different rather than playing on their game consoles.

Cooking seems to be a firm favourite activity with the Scouts as well as the Leaders. The Scouts, assisted in the background by their parents, have learnt how to make a Victoria Sandwich cake and a Swiss Roll - which I also made under direction of Christine who kindly led our cooking evenings. From the photos and emails received, they all looked very good and I'm told tasted good too.

Staying on the creative activities the Scouts have built their own battery powered car which was organised by Sharon. A big thank you for sourcing all the equipment needed to make the cars and of course running the activity.

Escape rooms have been popular, with us pitting our brains against some very difficult puzzles to escape from an Egyptian pyramid and also to catch a thief. Thanks to Connor for finding these for us.

Finally we picked up an activity that we have not done for many years. We used to prepare small sketches with the Scouts as part of the Troop meeting but haven't tried for some time. Zoom seemed an ideal opportunity to give a radio style short play a try. The Troop was split into two breakout rooms so that they could practice their scripts and then came back together to present to the other team. All who took part got involved and did very well - maybe we'll try it face to face again one day.

We wish everyone a good Easter break and look forward to seeing you next term.

Mike Bennett

Group Scout Leader

Here is some of the Scouts' handiwork:-



Nethra



Chandler



Harry



Angad



Mannan



Benjy



Laura



Chandler

Scouting Centre Improvements

We haven't been idle at the Scouting Centre during the lockdown, lots of jobs have been done and one or two are still in progress:

- I called in a company to review our fire extinguishers, and they have said that none of ours are certifiable to the British Standard, too old. Therefore we have ordered new ones: two foam type and two CO2 type, positioned appropriately inside the building. Leaders and Adult Helpers, please familiarise yourselves with the locations when we restart face-to-face meetings.
- We have produced a Fire Safety Plan for the premises and copies will be made available soon to all Leaders and Adult Helpers. The document spells out all the fire safety measures which we have installed and covers procedural aspects too.
- We have done Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) on all our electrical equipment. This is an annual requirement.
- We are getting some additional drainage installed across the front of the building. At the moment water emerging from beneath the brickwork runs across about ten feet of concrete before entering a drain, which is not satisfactory. We're also tidying up the uneven concrete just to the right inside the main gate.
- We have bought a ceiling-mounted projector for the main hall. It will be both wired into our network and accessible by wi-fi. It's on the jobs list to install it soon.
- We bought new saucepans and frying pans for the kitchen in the January Sales – bargain prices from John Lewis, and we got Easyfundraising on the purchase!
- I have replaced the PIR-activated lights round the back of the building. When we had the new electrics installed, we reused the old lights from the old hut – that was a mistake, they only lasted a few months. They will mainly be used by the local cats and foxes but will also be invaluable for us when we want something from the store shed in the dark.
- We shall shortly be installing a gas cage round the back of the building, for safe and secure storage of our camping gas cylinders.

Richard Plume

Executive Committee Member

Reuse, Recycle, Raise Funds!

Way back in 1964 when you could ride a motorbike from the age of sixteen, my Dad bought me a second-hand Honda 50 for £80. I used it for many years, driving locally to youth club etc and longer journeys to Loughborough, Worcester and the really big one - from Walsall to Slough. When I lived in Slough, Richard was living in Knebworth so we used to meet once a week in the station car park at Rickmansworth, now built on with flats and a large Waitrose. Not sure I'd want to ride a Honda 50 on the A412 these days! The Honda 50 moved with me to Ickenham and then Northwood. It was not used much until about 1993 when we decided to dismantle it and our son, Stephen (who went on to become District Commissioner) built a go-kart powered by the Honda 50 engine. He built a wooden chassis and mounted the engine and rear wheel assembly into it, with steering front wheels from a pram, no doubt from jumble, and a couple of stabiliser wheels at the back. That worked pretty well, he even used it to transport boxes of jumble across the field one year. Since then, it had been parked in our front garden under a green tarpaulin. While tidying up the garden, I offered to donate what was left of the engine and rear wheel assembly to Richard's scrap metal collection and raise a few £s for 1st Northwood.

BUT, on the advice of a neighbour, I decided to advertise the parts on eBay with the amazing result that they sold for £156! The buyer is planning to find a chassis and build a new motorbike, so my dear old Honda 50 lives on.

Best of all, I listed it as a charity sale on eBay and one hundred percent of the takings went directly to 1st Northwood. Why don't you dig out an item you no longer use, list it on eBay and raise funds for your Scout Group? When prompted to name your charity, be sure to select "Ruislip District Scout Council" and the money will find its way to 1st Northwood.

Ros Plume

1st Northwood Supporter

*The Honda 50 and what
it became*

