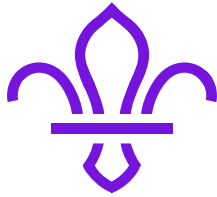


Scouts

1st Northwood



Group Scout Leader Report

It is good to see some form of normality coming back into Scouting which has helped the section leaders put on more exciting activities.

All sections have been to the water activity centre at Bury Lake in Rickmansworth and had an exciting time on the water. It was great to see them enjoying themselves and of course getting very wet!

We have been lucky in the summer term with the weather as, most evenings, all sections have held their activities outside. I know it rained a couple of times but when has rain ever hurt anybody?!

The schools have broken up for the Summer holidays so hopefully you have managed to get away for a break; something that we all deserve after what has been going on in the world over the last year.

Hopefully restrictions will be relaxed even more for Scouting activities when the sections come back in September and I know that I am looking forward to when we are properly allowed to camp again.

The annual Plant Sale went ahead again this year and was successful. It was good to see the parents that supported the sale although it was surprising, that overall, so few parents came along as there were plenty of bargains to be had by all.

The Scout Group is a charity and does not normally obtain much in the way of grant income, so it has to be self-sufficient. The funds raised by the subs do not cover the cost of running this Scout Group. In fact, it costs approx. £6,000 per annum to cover the costs of the Scouting Centre, minibus and general maintenance. None of this is paid by the section termly subs.

The funds raised over the years, led by the Group Executive, paid for our new Scouting Centre, minibus and other equipment that is used by the sections, which is why it is important that when fund raising activities are put on that we get as much support as possible from the families of our young members otherwise we will have to look at increasing the subs we charge each term.

Mike Bennett
Group Scout Leader

Plant Sale

Another Summer, another plant sale, plant sale number twenty-nine!

Little did we realise that, when we raised £112 at our first plant sale back in 1993, we'd still be at it in 2021! But we should know better. If you run an event two years running, it becomes an institution and people expect it to happen every year. We're proud to say that we haven't missed a year - even last year we held a 'click-and-collect' sale - and have raised a total of £33,500.

This year's sale took place over the hottest weekend of the year, 17th and 18th July. We erected gazebos to provide shade for the buyers and the plants coped OK with some judicious watering each evening.

The donated plants were up to the usual high standard, filling the area alongside the Scouting Centre with glorious colour and exotic perfume. Thanks to those who donated plants and the team of helpers who made the event happen.

We raised £1600 which we have shared between 1st Northwood Scouts and MHA Communities West London (formerly Northwood Live at Home). Thank you to everyone who braved the heatwave to support these charities, we hope you are enjoying your purchases.

Richard & Ros Plume



Chairman's Chat

Welcome once again to 1st News.

As I sit in my favourite chair to relax and I cast my eyes over the many plants obtained at our recent plant sale, held over the weekend of 17/18th July at the Scout Centre, an important aspect of this annual event came to my mind, namely the absence of parents. The amount of support we received from parents who have children in the Group was very disappointing. We are more than happy to organise events of this type with the objective of raising funds from which your children benefit and are puzzled why you do not support us by coming along. As all the material we sell is in pots, you will not encounter any difficulties establishing the plants in your garden.

Plenty of publicity is given to the event, mainly by email which we assume you read. We would be most interested to hear from you either by contacting the various Leaders in the Group who will pass your comments on or, if you prefer, by sending me an email at paul1945ginkgo@aol.co.uk. We believe it is important that we receive feedback so that we can take your comments into account before we organise our next fundraising event.

Undoubtedly one of the most significant achievements accomplished over recent times is the commitment of all our Leaders to keeping their sections functioning during lockdown. Not an easy task but they have dedicated their efforts which has resulted in Scouting at 1st Northwood excelling in so many respects.

The long-awaited news that sections could return was more than welcome. It is gratifying that the numbers of children returning is at least equivalent to those who attended before lockdown. They are not only returning to meetings but should also be content with the state of the grounds around the Scout Centre which are looking very respectable. The 'shop window', namely the grass area, is completely clothed. The planters provide a touch of colour and the new hedge running the length of perimeter fence is putting on some encouraging growth. We have a new front path and drainage system by the entrance gate, a secure store for our Calor Gas cylinders and a remote controlled, ceiling-mounted projector inside the building. An effective outside lighting scheme has been installed in readiness for the dark nights which are not so very far away.

Although we have mentioned it many times before, scrap metal continues to accumulate and we are grateful to all those who either save it for us or bring items to us for disposal. While the amount of income we receive from this material fluctuates due to factors beyond our control, it is certainly a worthwhile exercise.

We hope you have found this newsletter of interest.

Kind regards.

Paul Akers
Executive Committee Chairman

Below are some more pictures of the Plant Sale



Cub Collation

So, we have survived the last Scouting year and what a year it's been from smaller group meetings, to Zoom and finally back to face to face with minimal restrictions by the end of the summer term. The Cubs have taken it all in their stride and succeeded in completing many badges - we presented one hundred and thirty-six activity badges during the year and invested sixteen Cubs, most of whom had come up from Beavers. We were very pleased at the last meeting of term to be able to award Oliver his Chief Scout Silver Award - the top Award in Cubs. This follows Thomas who completed the Award in the Spring. Thomas has moved on to Scouts where Oliver will join him along with Ethan in September - we wish you all well on the next stage of your Scouting journey.

Over the last term the Cubs have enjoyed learning how to light fires and cook on them without lots of utensils completing their Backwoods Cooking badge on the way. We went for a hike around Pinner Wood Farm which meant we completed the Navigator badge that we had started on Zoom. Hillside School kindly lent us their field for an evening where we completed the Athletics badge before a small group represented the Pack at District Sports Day. Two trips to PACCAR saw the Cubs complete crate stacking and the Zip Wire - some overcame initial fears of the Zip Wire and then wanted lots more goes!

With much improved weather at the end of term we were able to enjoy two trips to Bury Lake (Rickmansworth) for canoeing and stand-up paddleboards. And then the final meeting of term, Alan set up the slippery slide on the Hogs Back so that everyone who wanted to finished the term very wet!

Managing all the changes and restrictions over the last year would not have been possible without the support of all the parents who stepped up to fill the parent rota. When we were running double sessions we needed four parents each week as our Young Leaders weren't able to attend due school exams. Following on from this initial help we are very pleased that Samantha and Carlos have agreed to take the next step and become Section Assistants. This means that they will complete some basic training and that meetings can continue if either Akela or Baloo can't attend without calling in a leader from another section. Baloo has also agreed to move from being a Section Assistant to an Assistant Section leader which is a great support to me. Whilst we have this good news on leadership, we do still need more parents to step forward and offer regular help and to complete at least basic training so that we can offer the experience of Cubs to even more young people. If this is of interest to you or a friend or neighbour, do get in touch.

Enjoy the rest of the summer break. If you are looking for something to do, especially on a wet day, take a look at The Scout Association Book Club, <https://www.scouts.org.uk/volunteers/running-your-section/programme-guidance/scouts-book-club/>

Akela (Christine) and Baloo (Parina)

Below we see the Cubs crate stacking, at District Sports Day and at Bury Lake



Scout Report

Scout numbers have reached a high, so much that we currently don't have any space for new Scouts. I can't remember the last time I said that. We were very pleased to invest eleven Scouts at the end of term (catching up as we didn't do many on Zoom). I am also very pleased to welcome Ian to the Group. He came along to borrow some tables and ended up volunteering to join the Scout section as an assistant.

The Scout section has been busy with several training sessions based on map and compass. The end result was a hike from the hut on a lovely summer's evening with the Scouts using the skills they had acquired and taking us around the local area on a route that had been set for them. Things started to go wrong the moment we left the hut with a heated debate if we should turn left or right! After that little hiccup everything went to plan and they successfully navigated us back to the hut where we were greeted by their parents at the end of the evening.

A very successful trip to Bury Lake in Rickmansworth allowed the Scouts to get their wet feet, if not their whole body, with paddle boarding or kayaking on offer. This will be followed up in September as the District Scouts are running a water activity day which will be offered to the oldest Scouts first as spaces are limited. Don't worry if you don't get to go as you will get your chance in the future to attend as this activity has run for at least the last five years and will hopefully run for many more.

Trips to PACCAR allowed everyone to challenge themselves on the archery range and high rope course. I am always surprised by how fearless the scouts are when climbing high up into the trees; maybe wearing a safety harness has something to do with it but rather them than me.

Fire lighting is always a popular event on the programme and is well attend. The evening run by Alan Kershaw, our very own survivalist was as entertaining as ever. I would have thought that they would have worked out by now that wherever you stand around a fire the smoke will always find you!

Enjoy your summer break and we look forward to a busy Scouting year in September hopefully without the disruptions of the last eighteen months.

Mike Bennett
Group Scout Leader



Beaver Blog

The Beavers have had a very active term to make up for being stuck inside for so long. We made our own birdfeeders to help nature in our local area, then we had two trips to PACCAR for crate-stacking and orienteering, which the Beavers appeared to really enjoy! We held our own socially distanced Highland Games including shot-put, hammer throw and broad jump. We designed our own machines and some of us later built our designs at home.

After half-term, we had our District quiz on Zoom - our Beavers did fantastically well but weren't quite good enough to reach the podium. Our best quizzier was Max who came seventh out of fifty! We learned about animal tracks, diets and habitats while tracking around the Hog's Back as well as going on a mini-beast hunt, and a hike at Oxhey Woods. Our most exciting session this term was definitely canoeing at Bury Lake in Rickmansworth! The Beavers all really enjoyed themselves and learned a lot about paddle-sports. And everyone managed to stay in their canoes! Our last session of the term was a fun splash day with the Beavers all having a go on the slip-n-slide, rigged up by our wonderful Alan, and helped by our brilliant Young Leaders, Jack and Luke.

The District held the annual sports day, and 1st Northwood came equal third, which is fantastic! We also had the Beaver Bonanza to celebrate thirty-five years of Beavers, with loads of party games, a magician, and most importantly, cake!

All our Beavers have worked really hard throughout the term and each and every one earned at least one badge. We also had two Bronze Awards, to Marco and William. Bravo! A huge thank you to all our parent helpers, and an extra special thank-you to Helen and Kirsty who have gone above and beyond by helping out last minute at the Beaver Bonanza.

We can't wait to continue our "proper" Scouting next term with many more exciting activities planned.

Panda (Wendy) Beaver Scout Leader
Bluebell (Gabrielle) Assistant Beaver Scout Leader

Here we see the Beavers enjoying sports day, in the woods and on Bury Lake



Explorer Round-up

Despite the disruption caused by last minute isolation notifications and the normal absences for exams we managed to continue to offer weekly meetings to the Explorer Unit throughout the last term. Attendance was regularly above thirty-five so split meetings took place most weeks,

The unit has challenged themselves with fire lighting, pioneering and construction at the Scout HQ including trying to light a floating fire - one group succeeded! We also had trips to PACCAR, Bury Lake and Top Golf adding variety to the programme.

We were also able to re-start the Duke of Edinburgh programme as the restrictions on camping were lifted with training sessions on using Trangia stoves, pitching tents, menu selection and route planning as part of the weekly meeting.

This led to a practice walk for the bronze groups followed by two groups completing their assessed expeditions. Then it was the turn of those ready for silver and gold with a practice expedition in the Chilterns, permitted by the adjustments made to the award due to Covid. The groups did very well so fourteen Explorers are off to Brecon at the end of August to complete their assessed expeditions.

We hadn't invested any Explorers whilst meetings were on Zoom or restricted in numbers, so we had a special end of term meeting to invest thirteen of the unit, some of whom have been with us almost a year now. We also said goodbye to our older members who have turned eighteen; we hope they will continue as Scout Network members or even as section leaders.

Doug Horgan
Assistant Explorer Scout Leader

Here are the Explorers hiking, at Bury Lake and enjoying crazy golf.

