



## Group Lead Volunteer's Report

All the sections came back after Christmas with an action packed programme for the past term.

Both the Cub and Scout sections participated in the annual district swimming galas and did really well. Well done all.

We heard the sad news that Kerry Horgan, one of our old Scout leaders passed away in February. I have known Kerry since I was twelve years old (when he was my Scout leader) and I have some great memories both when I was a Scout and when we were both leaders. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

It is that time of year again that the Group puts all the planning that has been going on behind the scenes into effect for the annual jumble sale. You will soon be receiving an email from the Executive committee and individual sections giving details of the many ways that you can help the group with this event.

Please do not hesitate to volunteer your help as we need everyone to make this a success. This is the only fundraiser that the Group has. It provides funds to run the headquarters and minibus as well as providing equipment for the sections.

Finally, I have to say a big thank you to Parina (Baloo) and Gabrielle (Bluebell) who hung up their woggles this term. Both stepped forward almost eight years ago when the Beavers and Cubs were short of leaders.

They were initially section assistants but soon became Assistant Section Leaders and then, for Bluebell, Section Leader; with the change to team-led sections they were both key members of both their section teams and of the group.

They will be missed although both will continue to be seen around as parents of young people in the group for a bit longer yet. Thank you for all you did for the group over the years.

**Mike Bennett**  
Group Lead Volunteer

## Spring is Sprung!

I thought how brilliant the daffodil display along the verge on the Hogsback is this year, see picture. Many of you may not know, but we planted these bulbs back in 2011 – the bulbs donated by Jacques Amand of Stanmore. The second picture shows our team hard at work, digging out the trenches and lots of Cubs getting covered in mud.

**Richard Plume**  
Executive Committee Chairman



## Cub Collation

The Cubs have kept themselves as busy as usual over the Spring Term.

This term always includes some swimming sessions to prepare for the District Gala in February. We had a small team who all swam well including some medal winners; well done to all who took part. While some Cubs were swimming, the others found out about Chinese New Year, including making spring rolls. They also learnt knots and did some pioneering towards their badges.

Some of the Cubs joined the District Cubs at a sleepover at AirHop; an evening of trampolining and some crazy golf followed by pizza and a film. They were then supposed to sleep... some were very good but others kept the leaders awake until the early hours. The morning came all too quickly for breakfast and another bounce before it was time to go home. An exhausting but enjoyable sleepover.

The half term ended with pancakes - every section cooked pancakes, I think the hut smelt of them by the end of the week!

Back from half term and the Cubs practiced basic coding using Scratch as part of their Digital Maker badge. Some sessions on map reading and first aid completed more badge work and prepared the cubs for the District Cub hike; a Sunday afternoon walk around the Ruislip/Harefield area from Bayhurst Woods.

The Spring term wouldn't have been complete without Easter Treats to finish; making cards, egg rolling and of course chocolate nests.

Thank you to Raksha and Chil and the parents who have helped out this term.

The final thank you goes to Baloo (Parina) who, after nearly 8 years, has hung up her woggle. Parina started as a Section Assistant when the Pack was at risk of closing due to a lack of leaders. She then became my Assistant Leader taking on much of the administration behind the scenes of weekly meetings. For the last eighteen months with the Scout Association changing the leadership structure, we have officially been a Team although that is the way we have always worked. Thank you Parina for your time and commitment; enjoy some rest and a quieter Tuesday night.

**Christine Bennett**  
**1st Northwood Cub Pack - Leader**  
**Ruislip Eastcote Northwood**

*Below we see the Cubs at the swimming gala and also their first aid victim!*



## Scout Report

The troop attended the annual Chilly Goat camp at Phasels Wood Scout Camp in January to learn lots of new camping skills and, of course, to camp in the cold. This is often the first time that Scouts encounter camping in the winter and this time it was only the low temperatures they had to put up with. We have had snow, frost and winter gales in the past.

In February some of the troop attended Feb Freezer with the Explorer unit and had a great time. It is really useful for the older Scouts to get to know unit members which helps them when they move sections.

We had a visitor recently who ran an evening on making planes out of old drinks cans. This is the first time we have tried this and it really caught the imagination of the troop who got to work designing, cutting and putting the plane together. Then came the test flights which provided a vast range of results. Some crashed into the floor as soon as they were thrown yet some only stopped when they hit the end wall. I think that the most amazing thing was that nobody had any cuts or grazes from cutting up the cans. Thank you Sharon for putting this together for the troop.

Throughout the term we have been working towards completing the Money Skills badge. We have gone through budgeting, value for money, understanding payslips, scams and frauds by using games and other fun activities to help them understand these vital skills for life.

A night hike and sleepover was held with the troop travelling by the Metropolitan Line to Rickmansworth and then walking back to the headquarters via Moor Park Golf course. After returning to the headquarters the troop were treated to a hot supper and a film to watch into the early hours of the morning.

With the annual swimming gala on the horizon we thought it was time to take the section swimming. They all completed various stages of the swimmers badge. The Gala at Northwood College went well with the troop represented by nine swimmers who had a fabulous time and gained multiple medals. Well done to the team.

We finished the term with another visit from Sharon to host a music night for the Scouts. There were lots of instruments to try and some of the Troop showcased their musical abilities. There was lots of noise (I don't think we designed the hut as a music venue - it was very loud!) and everyone had a fun evening to finish the term. Thank you Sharon for your help.

### Mike Bennett Group Lead Volunteer

*Below we see Scouts enjoying pancake making, pyramid football, music night and metal plane making.*



## Beaver Blog

It's been another busy and exciting term for our Beavers! This year marks the 40th anniversary of Beavers, and we kicked off the celebrations with an evening of team games, reflecting on what our Promise means and some imaginative thinking about what Beavers might look like when it reaches its 140th birthday! In our next session, the Beavers worked towards their Navigator Badge. They explored the features of maps, located the Scout hut on an Ordnance Survey map and drew their own maps of the hut. One of the highlights was a fun (and challenging!) activity where they guided each other across a grid while blindfolded, using only compass directions.

The following week, the Beavers turned their attention to earning their Builder Badge. With junk modelling materials sourced from WRAP (Watford Recycling Art Project) and brought in from home, they embraced a space theme. After designing their ideas and listing the materials they needed, they set to work building their creations. By the end of the session, we had an impressive array of aliens, rockets, lunar modules and space stations, showcasing some fantastic creativity!

We then enjoyed a visit to the Ark Synagogue, where the Beavers learned more about Judaism. They had the opportunity to see the Torah scrolls and try on prayer shawls and kippahs. It was an incredibly informative evening for both Beavers and adults. Thank you to the Synagogue for their hospitality. To round off the first half of term, we held a pancake-making evening. The Beavers worked brilliantly in groups to prepare the batter, before cooking and enjoying their delicious pancakes! At half term, we said goodbye to Rishi, who swam up to Cubs after earning his Chief Scout's Bronze Award - congratulations!

After half-term we worked on our Safety badge, covering road, rail and water safety. The Beavers also identified hazards that had been setup in the kitchen, learnt about what to do if a stranger talks to them and how to call the emergency services. We then had two space-themed sessions, perfectly timed with the recent Artemis II launch. The Beavers learned what Earth looks like from space, how moon craters form and what life is like aboard the International Space Station. A particular highlight was using (and eating!) Oreo biscuits to explore the phases of the moon.

We then had a Saturday session where we visited Merchant Taylor's School to make use of their pool for our Swimmer Stage 1 and 2 Badges. Thank you to Helen for joining us from Cubs for the afternoon to assess the Beavers' swimming. They had a great time in the water! At our penultimate meeting of the term the Beavers worked towards their International Badge. Activities included playing a Spanish game, matching flags to countries, learning greetings in different languages and tasting dips from around the world. Tzatziki was a clear favourite, although plum sauce proved less popular!

For our final session before the Easter holidays, we headed to the Hogs Back for an egg hunt. Using maps to locate hidden eggs, the Beavers put their navigation skills from earlier in the term into practice. They also took part in a Log Chew, sharing their ideas and voting on activities and badges for next term. We finished by awarding badges for the term, including a Chief Scout's Bronze Award for Alex, who also swam up to Cubs.

Finally, we said a big thank you and goodbye to Bluebell. After joining as a Section Assistant in 2018 and becoming Leader in Charge in 2021, Bluebell is stepping down from this role, although we will still see her at some Scouting events. Bluebell's dedication, enthusiasm and creativity have made a lasting impact on the Beavers, and she will be greatly missed. Thank you, Bluebell, for everything you have given over the past eight years.

## The Beaver Leaders Team



## Explorer Round-up

The Explorers have kept themselves busy over the Spring Term with a variety of activities from cooking over fires (pizza pockets and smores; both times they cooked it rained!) to bowling. Some of them went along and helped WRAP move to their new building; Two months later some were back again for another move, hopefully they'll be able to stay there for a while now. Like all other sections, they cooked pancakes - fifty-five Explorers cooking was a challenge but they succeeded although they triggered the smoke alarms!

Thirty Explorers were joined by five Scouts for February Freezer Camp at PACCAR. It was a challenge due to the weather - very wet and muddy at the start and end; cold overnight but sunny during the main activities on Saturday. They had a range of activities to take part in from Lego making to Zip Wires and crafts to Clay Pigeon shooting. All had a good time although the hut was covered in mud when we got back and had a lot of tents to dry

The second half term saw us return to Hillside School to get their garden ready for the summer with winter debris cleared and seeds sown. They also enjoyed wide games, a trading game and Easter cooking. This half term saw a group of fifty travel to central London to take part in the Monopoly Run - playing the game of Monopoly by visiting all the locations on the traditional board with the help of an App.

There were around nine thousand participating in the event; multiple games were taking place so there's no overall winner but lots of team winners. Our results varied from £6,425 in the "bank" at the end of the day to minus £6,857; some played more seriously than others who enjoyed their day out in London!

Alongside all of the unit activity we have run multiple training sessions for Duke of Edinburgh expeditions during the year. The first expedition took place over the Easter weekend in Oxfordshire. Three teams spent three days walking with their full kit from the Didcot area to Wallingford and then down to just outside Henley. They had to cope with the tail of Storm Dave making it colder than expected and very windy; all survived although a lot of feet need to recover before they do more walking.

A rest for all over the remainder of the holidays before we return for an active summer term.

### Christine Bennett Poindextor ESU - Leader

*Below are the Explorers at Feb Freezer and during their Monopoly Run.*



## Chairman's Report

It's a busy time of year for your committee and Leaders, with Jumble Sale approaching and the summer activities for our sections being planned. Most of the major arrangements for Jumble Sale have been made – marquee ordered, permission from Council to use the Hogsback, Collection Leaflets printed, vehicles booked for collections etc. All we need now is your help! The article below sets out what you can do to make this year's event a success. One extra plea from me: please can anyone help with cleaning and checking over the bicycles that come in Jumble. Bikes are a big money spinner for us, but people won't buy them unless they are clean and checked. Please contact me ([richard.plume@bronzesilvergold.co.uk](mailto:richard.plume@bronzesilvergold.co.uk) or 07775 627795) or Nimesh our Treasurer if you can spare a few evenings to help with this.

We are very close to ordering a solar panel installation to be fitted onto our south-facing roof. Our installation will also include storage batteries, so that we can store cheap off-peak electricity and use it in peak times. I'm not yet sure if this will be installed before Jumble Sale or after. We estimate that our payback time will be about six or seven years - we have the capital funds, so it seems like a sensible and eco-friendly deal.

The Scout Association is under close scrutiny from the Charity Commission regarding risk assessments for all its activities, following the inquest into the death of a Scout on Snowdon eight years ago. Your committee is taking on board all the new guidance that has to be followed for this.

**Richard Plume, Executive Committee Chairman**

## All About Jumble – How it Works

Almost every year since 1925 the 1st Northwood Scout Group has run a jumble sale. Until you see it, it's difficult to appreciate the scale of the event – it is not just a few tables in the hall, it is a major event that takes lots of planning and requires lots of support, with sale day being the culmination of a month of activity. Just look at the video (<https://www.1stnorthwoodscouts.org.uk/annual-grand-jumble-sale/>) which shows the final weekend of the preparations, the sale and the big clear up.

To get to jumble day (6th June) we deliver leaflets to local areas over three separate weeks. This is done on a Tuesday evening (5th, 12th and 19th May) and is the meeting for Beavers and Cubs on those weeks. Scouts will be expected to help but still get their Friday meeting out and about somewhere as the HQ becomes unusable. Parent help will be needed to supervise the young people as they run up and down paths posting the leaflets – all you need are comfortable shoes and to be able to hold and hand out the leaflets for the members to post through letterboxes.

On the Saturday afternoon after each leaflet delivery (9th, 16th and 23rd May), we return to the local area to collect jumble. This is either left out ready for us or politely requested following a knock at the door. Accompanied older Beavers and Cubs can help on the Saturday, but we'd really appreciate Scouts, Explorers and parents who will be able to move the donations. While the majority of volunteers will be out collecting donations, others will be at the HQ unloading vehicles and starting to sort. After the first Saturday, the HQ will be open during weekday evenings to thoroughly sort and prepare the jumble. If you can spare an evening or more please do go along and help.

In the week of the sale, if you are available on the Thursday or Friday (4th and 5th June) during the day then your help setting up the sale would be appreciated. Again on Saturday morning (6th June), the final stalls need setting up before the afternoon sale when around two hundred volunteers are needed to sell all the donated items. Finally, on Sunday (7th June) the leftovers need to be recycled or disposed of, the field needs to be returned to the public and the HQ needs to be ready again for meetings.

As you can see, the jumble sale is a big project and it really does need every family to get involved. We have around 150 young people either in 1st Northwood or Poindextor Explorers. If each family came on one evening to help sort plus a Saturday, we'd get lots of the work done and reduce the pressure on the small team who have been involved for many years.

Why do we encourage you all to get involved? Well, you may have noticed that we don't run lots of fundraising activities in the Group. Jumble is our focus and it raises funds that ensure we can run the HQ, provide camping and other equipment, allows us to have our own minibus and, importantly for families, it allows us to keep subs at a very low level. Without a successful jumble we'd have to consider adding around £100 or possibly more to the annual subs.

The other side of jumble, away from the finances, is that it is a big community event. The sorting and collecting is a sociable way to get to know more people in the Group. Refreshments are provided and there's always someone around to ask if you are not sure what goes where or if we sell an item. Contact Roxana Peters (email [roxana.peters@virginmedia.com](mailto:roxana.peters@virginmedia.com)) and get involved.

**Christine Bennett**