

DISTRICT SCOUT LEADERS MEETING

16th May 2013

Hobbs Hill Wood School

PRESENT.

Andy Glass	District			
Jason Farmer	District			
Simon Fancourt	1 st Apsley			
Justin Stratton	2 nd Hemel			
Gavin Howard	1 st Kings Langley			
Richard Haynes	1 st Leverstock Green			
Matt Smith	1 st Warners End			

APOLOGIES.

Clive Borgeat, 1st Hemel; Dee Wilmore, 1st Apsley; Jan Madden, 7th Hemel, Graham Stevens, 1st Apsley.

Andy opened the meeting at 8.00pm welcoming all present and thanked them for coming.

There not having been a Scout Leaders meeting for such a long time there were no previous minutes to approve. There being no specific agenda it was advised that we would use a similar format to the Cub Section meeting until such time as attendees decided what they wanted from these meetings, and the format to be used.

Andy gave an update on the District Team in that Russ Dyble is now the DC and Andy has assumed the role of DDC responsible for the 6-14 age group. It was advised that finding ADCs for the sections is a priority with the hope being that this can be completed for the start of the next Scouting year in September. It was stressed that simply revisiting the previous model used within the District was not something that would happen and that using the skills of people to supply parts of the role would be considered. It was also stressed that this is not an exercise in taking the best Leaders from Groups, it is an exercise in making sure that the District team supplies what is needed by the Leaders to ensure that quality Scouting is available to as many young people within the District as wish it. It was also stressed that people having two roles would be considered, provided they are able to fulfil both roles to the correct standard. It was also mentioned that anyone filling a District role will be subject to a review in March of 2014, this is to ensure that the roles are being filled adequately and that managing the role effectively is taking place.

At this stage it was advised that Jason Farmer has been approached and has agreed to take on the role of ADC Scouts. Jason joins the District Team from 1st Bennetts End, where he will continue to be Scout Leader in addition to his ADC role. It was advised that the exact split of ADC duties to be filled by Jason is still to be determined. Jason stated however that his first wish is to get out and about to visit Groups to spend time with young people and Leaders to find out what they want from his role and from the District. He also stated his wish to make sure that Groups work collaboratively in

supporting each other to ensure Scouting is made widely available regardless of the number and resource available to each Group.

A. Review of recent and forthcoming events:

1. St Georges Day. The revised format this year was generally considered to have been a pleasant change. Feedback that the arena part of this event run by John Larkin was excellent was put forward. The suggestion that some sort of map would have helped to ensure the YP were able to identify the various programme zones would have been worthwhile. The turn out was also suggested as being disappointing. This varied from Group to Group with some believing that the change away from the town increased numbers from some Groups with others believing that it reduced their numbers participating. It was again raised that not having a presence in the town centre was negative. The question was asked if there is to be a feedback exercise of some sort to gauge opinion on the different format used this year.
Action: Andy to find out if this is intended to happen. Discussion took place around the possibility of having a District Family Camp to celebrate St Georges Day in 2014. The possibility that this might be too much was raised with a short event being considered preferred. If doing a camp the option of single day participation would be popular as some Groups traditionally camp around this time of the year and managing expense for families was thought worthwhile. An alternative to a parade for this event was put forward as being a carnival type event. **Action:** Andy to make sure this feedback is given to organisers of this event going forward. The suggestion was also made that alternating differing event types might be worth considering.
2. Mayors Reception. Andy fed back that this had been well received by those attending. Feedback that communication on this event had been disappointing was brought forward. The initial suggestion had been that this event was only for the older sections and that the subsequent decision to extend this to all sections should have been better communicated. It was suggested that some Leaders were unaware of the fact that they had YP participating.
3. 1st Kings Langley advised they had recently run a weekend camp at Lees Wood for Cubs and Scouts. Theme of the camp had been Back to Basics and the programme had been a great success with the YP.
4. Pinewood Derby. A reduced version of this event took place recently with three Groups participating. Suggestion was it was again popular and it is intended to extend this again as a possible District Event.
5. Holland Training Camp took place at Lees Wood with 107 attendees. Weekend was advised as having been a great success.
6. May Camp. 2nd Hemel have again undertaken their traditional May Camp. It was attended this year also by DieHards, a London Group affiliated to 2nd Hemel. It was advised as being planned to run this event again next year and to potentially open the opportunity to other Groups within the District to participate.
7. Cooking and Campfire event. 10th July at Phasels. Letter for this event were made available at this meeting. Intention is that Scouts will help run the bases for the younger sections. It was discussed and agreed that offering an extended activity to

this evening with activities considered more appropriate for Scouts will take place. Letter in this regard to be prepared by ADC Scouts and forwarded to Maureen Shelley for 'corporatising' prior to being sent out. There is to be no additional cost for this additional activity to avoid any confusion amongst parents.

8. Go Carts. This event will again be run this year by 1st Leverstock Green at Hobbs Hill Wood School. This will take place on Wednesday evenings starting after Half Term between 6 and 8 pm. YP can attend on their own for a cost of £2 and should wear a Group scarf to identify themselves as a member of Scouting. Groups wishing to take part should book via Richard Haynes. Letters about this activity will be available within the next week.
9. Nimrod. This event, organised by the Explorer Section for Scouts will take place July 13th/14th at Phasels Wood. Letters are available and will be circulated with these meetings minutes. All returns are required by July 8th. There can be no late entries after this date as outside catering will be supplied and needs to be booked; therefore numbers cannot be changed after this date. It was agreed that encouraging entries for this event is essential, to this end if any Group is struggling to make a team or has numbers in excess of requirements, they should advise the ADC Scouts who will look to make up extra competing or training groups with any excess YP. Should there be YP from a Group wishing to take part and there are no Leaders available, please let the ADC Scouts know and we will see what can be worked out to support your YP and to allow them to participate.
10. District AGM. Taking place 21st May at Phasels Wood. A last plea was made for photographs to include in a presentation for this evening.
11. County, On Yer Bike. This is a County event taking place on July 7th to raise funds for the County Capital Appeal. Event is taking place in and around St Albans with an entry cost of £9 per family with sponsorship received going to the County Appeal. This has been the subject of discussion with the County Office around whether or not Hemel District would participate. It has been agreed and advised subsequent to this meeting that Hemel District will instead organise their own activity on this date where we will run a cycling event using the Nickey Line, sponsorship from this event will go to the County Appeal but we can substantially reduce the entry cost and logistics if running this locally.
12. Holland. Dates for this International District Camp are August 1st~10th. It was advised that there are 115 participants from a number of Groups across the District taking part. This is a great example of an activity where YP from many Groups are able to participate with a Leadership structure which need not come from their Groups. This is considered a great example of an activity we are able to offer to all YP across the District, regardless of the attendance of Leaders from their Group.
13. Lochearnhead 2014. This was discussed at length. It was requested that paperwork for Lochearnhead be made available as soon as possible to allow parents to start paying for this to make sure they are able to manage finances. It was advised that the substantive cost for this event is the travel and that at this time firm prices for that are not available. It was advised that the intention is to have the paperwork available for this at the beginning of September. There was a request for this possibly to be available slightly earlier, 1st Apsley intend to run a mailshot around

the August Bank Holiday and would like, if possible, to include this paperwork in this messaging. It was generally discussed that enthusing YP for this activity might be considered in the same way as took place for the Holland trip eg by having someone attend Groups to discuss with the YP the benefits and experiences available at Lochearnhead. It was generally felt that the uptake by simply sending out letters could be improved if the YP were engaged positively. It was also discussed at this stage the methodology and timing of advertising this type of high cost activity. It was suggested that allowing parents to stage pay over an extended period of time would allow a greater number of YP to take part, the counter to this obviously being that until definitive costs are available taking money from parents did not feel right. Making sure there is a balance between timing and understanding costs is obviously important and is important that we address.

14. Green Beret. November 15th at Gilwell Park. It was noted that we currently have the Green Beret Champions in Hemel District, 1st Leverstock Green taking the honours last year with other top 10 entries from the District. It was discussed that Hemel would again be running a number of bases for Green Beret this year. If anyone is interested in taking part please make sure ADC Scouts is made aware to let the organisers know. It is expected that Sean D'Arcy will again lead on organising bases.
15. Sailing event at Mersea. This was generally felt to have been a PR failure. It was suggested that communication around this regular event had been poor and has lead to a substantial reduction in the number of YP taking part.
16. Jamboree selection event. The next World Scout Jamboree will be taking place in Japan in 2015. Hemel District will be granted numbers for attendance at this as part of the County, numbers of places available will depend on our membership of YP with dates of birth within the required range. A selection event is scheduled for October 26th to ensure we are able to determine the best participants from the District, allowing them time to engage with Jamboree Contingents, undertake training and fundraising for this fantastic opportunity. It was requested that some sort of article on WSJ, including the applicable date of birth range be place on the District website to encourage participation. **Action.** Andy to make sure this takes place.
17. Scouts/Explorers transition. This was discussed and the fact that a meeting between Scout and Explorer Leaders is intended was discussed. Feedback that a questionnaire before this meeting would be worthwhile was brought up. The idea being that potentially contentious areas might be more likely to be raised, and also the fact that working out what the most common issues are would allow any meeting to be focused. It was also suggested that keeping any such meeting to a manageable number would be a benefit to make sure it delivers. Involvement of some YP in this questionnaire to make sure their input is listened to was also considered worthwhile.

B. District/County News/Future Meetings:

1. Andy showed Leaders the spreadsheet being proposed by the District to manage planning and scheduling of future events. This is considered beneficial to make sure we are able to manage the production of letters to make sure they are supplied as required on a timely basis to Leaders and YP as well as managing the workload for Maureen who produces most of this information. It is also intended as a method for us all to be able to manage requests to parents for various activities in an attempt to ease the potential burden of numerous requests arriving at one time. Feedback received was that this form would benefit from having a column added detailing to which Sections the entry applied. **Action.** Andy to bring this to the attention of Russ.
2. County Bushcraft Day- 16th March 2014 at Harmergreen Wood. Letters will be made available for YP/Leaders although it is also hoped to encourage parents to take part in what is a popular activity. Intention being that this may encourage more people to participate in this type of activity going forward. Section specific activities are expected to be available at this event. This is in no way intended to usurp the fantastic Bushcraft activity we have available in the District, but is considered another way of encouraging and enthusing YP from all sections, and potentially parents, to get involved.
3. Intention is that going forward there will be two meetings per term for Leaders. One will continue in this type of format where sections will meet independently at a location agreed. Second meeting per term will be all sections together, lead off where needed by a short session run by the DC, followed by break outs into individual sections. Sessions with DC will be short, sweet and to the point. In the event that there is nothing of note to be shared by the DC this session will be cancelled and individual section meetings only will take place.
4. 25th July: All sections meeting at Phasels Wood. Plans for this meeting include an activity swapping session and potentially some brain storming to determine the wishes/needs of each section. In addition it is intended to have a barbecue and to run some of the onsite activities for Leaders. This is to act as thank you to Leaders for their participation and to engender some form of social activity across Leaders.
5. 5th September: All sections, venue to be decided but probably Hobbs Hill Wood School.
6. November 2013: Scout Section Leaders. Date, venue, format and agenda to be determined by ADC Scouts from his fact finding visits to Groups within the District. It was put forward that having a constructive reason for these meetings is essential, it has also been noted since this meeting that there is a perception that attendance at these meetings is often avoided as they are seen as an opportunity for District to try and give Leaders another job to do. Managing this perception and having these seen as worthwhile opportunities to learn from each other is going to be a priority for the ADC.
7. January 2014: All sections.
8. March 2014: Individual sections.

C. AOB:

1. Communications. This brought up the subject of Leaders ensuring that their contacts are kept up to date with the National Scout Database. This is where the District site takes it's e mail address feed from and it is essential that e mail addresses in this database are kept up to date. Leaders can update this information themselves at <http://scouts.org.uk/home/> If this is not possible let Andy know and he can update this information for you.
2. District Diary: A general warning to double check timings on events within the District Diary. There is known to be an issue which is currently showing times as one hour earlier than the actual event.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.45 pm.