



## GSL, Group Chairs & District Team and Exec Meeting

Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> November 2013

7.45pm for 8pm start. Finished at 9.45pm

Hobbs Hill Wood Primary School

### 1. Apologies and introductions

Apologies - Andy Glass (1<sup>st</sup> BE & Deputy DC), Richard Haynes (1<sup>st</sup> LG), John Larkin (2<sup>nd</sup> HH), Simon Fancourt (1<sup>st</sup> Apsley), Robert Salt (1<sup>st</sup> WE), Keith Gower (District Chair), Linda Jermy (Shop & Youth Enquiries), Alan Johnson (1<sup>st</sup> KL), Debz Allen (SAS).

### 2. District/County Update – for information and brief discussion where appropriate (Russ)

#### GR8 BIG B@SH

Russ thanked everyone who made it possible for youngsters to attend (either by volunteering or taking their group) – despite the short notice of the event due to the Chief Scout's schedule.

A request from feedback has been circulated by the County should you have anything you wish to share – email [admin@hertfordshirescouts.org.uk](mailto:admin@hertfordshirescouts.org.uk) if you haven't received the form and wish to make comment.

#### Young Leader training feedback

Over 30 Young Leaders took part in the first of a newly-designed young leader training session. Training will take place one evening per term, with each evening offering all YL modules (except first aid). YLs will be allocated to the correct session depending on their experience.

Russ relayed that a very interesting range of experiences were shared by the young leaders attending – some saying they are given nothing to do whatsoever, through to some who felt they were left to run the evening whilst leaders "stood in the kitchen all evening drinking tea".

Please remember that YLs can be incredibly useful and should be given specific tasks to take responsibility for but they are still youth members and should not be used in place of adults or left in charge of a whole group.

#### Treats for Troops

Jason thanked those who supported this event – over 100 Scouts/leaders attended (only 4<sup>th</sup> Boxmoor not represented) and packed a total of 308 shoeboxes with treats for soldiers serving overseas at Christmas.

A number of our local Scouting ambassadors attended and were very impressed with our efforts – Mike Penning (local MP), Gary Lewis (Headteacher, Kings Langley Secondary School), Mark Mitchell (Chief Executive, Community Action Dacorum) and Bert Chapman (Borough Councillor and former Mayor).

#### Appropriate use of DBS (CRB) checks

Russ explained that the district has received a complaint via HQ from a parent who had been asked to complete a DBS check, despite not taking on any particular role in the group. He had been informed this was "policy passed down by the district" – it is not and to request a check without good reason is unlawful (under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974). The criteria for checking adults in Scouting are laid out in POR 3.26:

*No person aged 18 or over may be permitted to undertake any responsibilities or involvement within Scouting until the appropriate enquiries have been made.*

*The enquiries must include a Personal Enquiry (see Introduction) to Headquarters as described below, in the case of a person who:*

- wishes to become a Member or Associate Member; or
- may have unsupervised access to young people; or
- will have involvement with the handling or management of funds; or
- will be assisting with overnight activities (including Nights Away); or
- may be helping out once a month or more

*Personal Enquiries must be repeated for all adults in the above categories every five years. Where possible this should be carried out at appointment review.*

The likelihood is that many executive committee members may not have been checked – Russ asked each group to check this and action between now and the annual census (using the AA form). They do NOT have to be members of the Association so will not be charged the annual membership fee (unless they wish to be members).

### 3. Forthcoming events

In the interests of time, specific questions were taken, rather than going through each event in detail.

- Green Beret – 15<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> November (Jason Farmer)

Over 70 young people are taking part as part of a district-coordinated hub, enabling Scouts from a number of troops who have not taken part in Green Beret over recent years.

Russ explained that there has been an update to the rule change as a result of representations made in the last few days – he accepted the principle that Scouts should be challenged by bases they haven't previously seen but to restrict the number of bases Scouts from a district contributing lots of adult support to the event was unfair.

- Astronomer Badge Day – 23<sup>rd</sup> November (Andy Glass)

Letters have been distributed, over 120 Cubs have signed up.

The proposal is to use a similar date each year as a badge day – the resources for which would be purchased from the Cub section budget and made available to sections at other times.



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- Pinewood Derby – 7<sup>th</sup> December (John Larkin)  
Take-up so far is just under 60 cars, so approx. 40 left – please remind everyone that they can enter.  
A workshop on 30<sup>th</sup> November has been arranged to do most of the weighing/checking before the day to enable more racing to happen and give ideas to those who haven't entered previously.
- Christmas hike & entertainment (Scouts) – 13<sup>th</sup> December (Jason Farmer)  
The Scout section has agreed an event at Phasels on this date where Scouts will walk from their own HQ to Phasels Wood where there will be a disco – troops to provide the part food.
- Christmas Party (Beavers and Cubs) – 15<sup>th</sup> December (Andy Glass)  
Information is out – the request for a different entertainer from previous years has meant that the two sections will be combined as Colonel Custard could only fit one session in one that day.  
The proposal is to use a similar date each year as a Christmas celebration – alternating between a party and visit to local pantomime.
- Swimming badge day – 8<sup>th</sup> February (Andy Glass)  
We are in final negotiations with Sportspace to hire the flexi-pool for the afternoon / early evening in order to facilitate youngsters achieving the staged swimmers badges, particularly where section leaders are not confident taking the section swimming.  
Sportspace's preference is to work together in this way, rather than sections turning up on a usual evening as slightly different arrangements for supervising may be needed.  
The proposal is to use a similar date each year – alternating between a swimming badge day and traditional swimming gala.
- Pet care day (Beavers) – 23<sup>rd</sup> February (Andy Glass)  
Andy is discussing this event with two potential venues/partners – the date may need to change (this was being discussed simultaneously at the Beaver section meeting and will be advised very soon).  
The proposal is to use a similar date each year as a badge day – the resources for which would be purchased from the Beaver section budget and made available to sections at other times.
- District Family Camp – 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> September 2014 (Russ Dyble)  
Russ reminded everyone of the date of this event, which will happen alongside Phasels Wood's ASAP camp in order to make use of the huge range of activities provided through this event.  
We will work with Phasels to address issues from this year around queue-management and may run some of our own activities too. More details early in 2014.

#### **4. Group Updates (GSLs)**

Main items of interest:

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Hemel membership has risen gradually during this year and John feels the group is in the best state it has been for some time.
- 1<sup>st</sup> Leverstock Green will almost certainly close one of their Beaver Colonies from January as on leader is moving to Kent and another is stepping down. Others have been identified but none are willing to leader a colony.
- 1<sup>st</sup> Apsley are still raising money to improve their building and will be joining a conference call organised by HQ to support groups looking to raise money for significant investment in buildings.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Boxmoor are hoping to take back responsibility for the building (which is currently being used as the District HQ) – Russ explained that the building had been self-funding over the period the district has been responsible for it.

#### **5. Sectional matters not covered above**

Beaver Scouts (Andy Glass) – attendance at leader meetings is increasing, thanks!

Cub Scouts (Andy Glass) - attendance at leader meetings is increasing, thanks!

Scouts (Jason Farmer) - attendance at leader meetings is increasing, thanks!

Explorer Scouts (Rich Hirons)

- Linking event will take place on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December, starting at 1<sup>st</sup> Kings Langley and ending at Phasels Wood – details out this week.

Scout Network (Russ Dyble)

- A new leader team has been identified to take over from January 2014, subject to approval by the appointments advisory committee.

Activities (Chris Tems)

- Chris is hosting an informal gathering of anyone interested in activities / activity permits on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> November at the Snow centre. GSLs, the team and individuals who have expressed interest previously have been invited directly but anyone is welcome.
- HQ are currently consulting on changes to the way archery and rifle shooting are managed



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### **6. Main topics for discussion**

#### Promise Renewal Event – April 2014

Proposal is for exclusive hire of the XC at Jarmans Park with activities for Beavers/Cubs, then Scouts/Explorers with a cross-over period in which time we renew our promise together.

The cost implications were discussed – the meeting felt that despite the feedback from this year's St. George's Day event that charging may have reduced attendance that a nominal fee of £2 per head should be charged.

A proposal will go to the district executive on 14<sup>th</sup> November.

#### District budget for 2014 (Russ Dyble)

Russ ran through the proposed budget for 2014, there were two comments:

- The meeting felt the district/group development line should be increased from £500 to £1,000 and suggested we consider a number of activities where parents and young people participate together to encourage them to consider getting more involved.
- The proposals for funding the Promise Renewal event should be amended according to the feedback in the item above.

#### Fundraising for groups, district and jamboree (Karen Moxom)

- Quiz night  
Now 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2014 – proceeds will be split between groups and jamboree/lochearnhead
- 100 or 200 Club  
Agreed that this was a good idea – we need to assess whether there's enough interest for a 100 or 200 club – agreed to run an online "register of interest" and promote through sections and online media.
- Christmas bag-packing  
Details will be out w/c 18<sup>th</sup> November – profits will be shared on a "per session" basis, between groups and jamboree/lochearnhead

#### World Scout Jamboree / alternative jamboree experience

- Russ explained that he was currently discussing the level of contribution from the families
- We discussed whether there was support from the groups to continue the arrangements whereby one third of the cost is met from the district's reserves, held in the "international fund" – there was unanimous agreement that this was acceptable.
- Russ explained that the district will form a working group to fundraise towards the overall cost – groups with youngsters attending (and others) will be invited to join this but that in a change from previous years, the groups would not be responsible for the balance as we cannot impose this onto groups. Of course, groups are very welcome to make contributions to the fundraising if they wish!

#### Training provision for those reaching appointment review

- Steve explained that we have written to approximately 15 adults who have an appointment review due in March 2014 but have not completed their wood badge training – asking them to attend a session on 4<sup>th</sup> December where we will discuss the experience to date and validate any outstanding modules if possible.
- This is not "an easy ride" but if learning can be evidenced, we are happy to validate.
- Russ re-iterated that the letter is positive in tone – acknowledging that they have been doing a good job and will have brought skills from outside Scouting as well as learning new experience "on-the-job".
- The importance of this is linked directly to maintaining credibility with parents that all our volunteers have the knowledge/training required to undertake their role satisfactorily.
- If leaders can't make the 4<sup>th</sup> December, they have been offered a one-to-one session.

#### Structure and regularity of GSL/team meeting

- Russ proposed holding GSL meetings and team meeting separately now that there is good attendance from groups and almost all roles on the team are full.
- Simon expressed the view that having everyone in the same room was very helpful
- Russ also floated the idea of running 3 x GSL/Team meetings per year, with 3 x meetings of GSLs and 3 x District Team separately (i.e. the same total number of meetings for the participants).

### **7. Forward planning (in outline only)**

- Quiz Evening – 22<sup>nd</sup> March
- Sports Relief (for all sections) – 23<sup>rd</sup> March  
Please note the date, likely to be at Hobbs Hill Wood.

### **8. Dates of future meetings**

Next meeting – 4<sup>th</sup> February 2014 – 8pm at Hobbs Hill Wood for GSLs/Chairs and the District team  
Russ to propose dates for the rest of 2014, in line with discussion in items 6.