



KENT
SCOUTS

ANNUAL REVIEW
2021/22





This years county review booklet is a snapshot of the fantastic scouting that has been made available for our young people in Kent

Scouting in Kent has continued to adapt and overcome the challenges of COVID continuing to support our young people, providing fun and challenging activities mixed with adventure that ultimately provide skills for life.

Scouting is more important than ever to the lives of so many young people and we must continue to support them with all we do.

The fantastic scouting provided across our Districts and by our County teams would not be possible without the commitment of millions of hours invested from our adult Volunteers, from Commissioners trustees, leaders and supporters.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all!

I hope you enjoy reflecting on the year of 2021/2022 and take a moment to remember your personal journey and the impact you have had on the young people you work with.

Stay safe

Dean - County Commissioner



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01

COUNTY TEAMS
Sections and more...





SQUIRREL SCOUTS

WOW! What an amazing year!

Squirrel's officially launched in September 2021 and it has been a huge success.

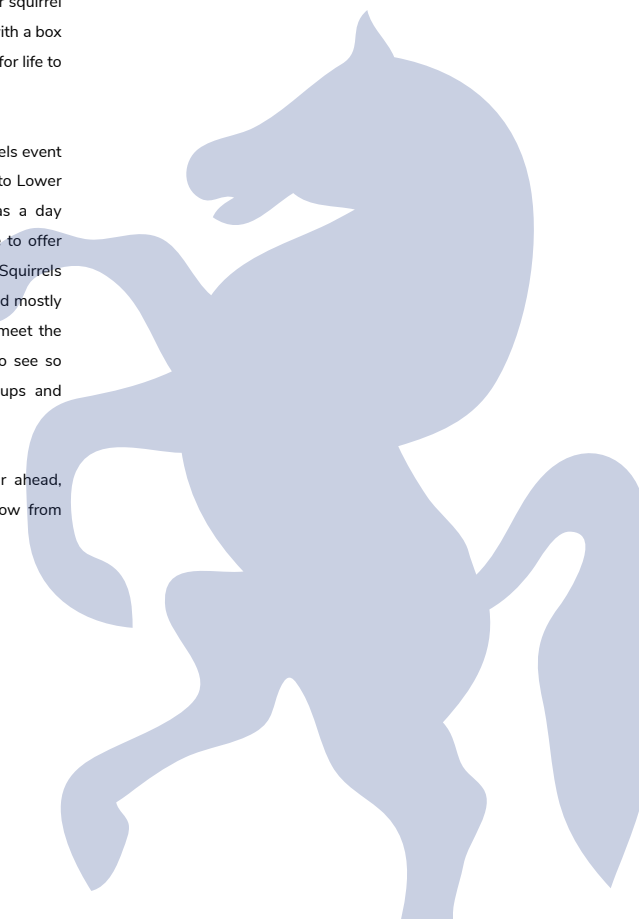
In September, Kent's first 9 Squirrel Drey's opened for 4 and 5 year olds to experience Scouting for the first time. Since our launch we are proud to share that we have 34 Squirrel Drey's across Kent and this number is increasing all the time.

At Chatham Dockyard, the Squirrels County Team were really pleased to meet so many people who were excited to begin the squirrels journey within their own group. It was lovely to share programme ideas with those already running and hear positive comments and success stories from those groups who were already up and running.

With support of the Growth and Development team, early years training has been well received by our squirrel leaders and has provided groups that attended with a box full of resources which will help them bring skills for life to many more 4 and 5 year olds.

In July 2022 we held our very first County Squirrels event which saw us welcome over 100 young people to Lower Grange Farm for Squirrels GO NUTS! This was a day jam packed of fun an adventure. We were able to offer our youngest members the opportunity to meet Squirrels from other groups, try things for the first time and mostly importantly have fun together! It was great to meet the leaders of our existing Squirrels Drey's and also see so many parents and carers supporting their groups and having fun themselves.

We are very much looking forward to the year ahead, supporting Squirrel Scouting to continue to grow from strength to strength across the county.



BEAVER SCOUTS

It has been great to see so many Beavers back out and about this year, with such a wide range of activities on offer. We have also been able to run our first county activities since lockdown which is fantastic..

Our first activity this year was the popular Winter Walks. We were lucky with the weather and there was a lot of fun had at both Lullingstone and Brockhill, so much so that we have a third event running in November at Trosley. The Beavers were able to take part in a range of activities, including den building, making cars from woodland items, geocaching and everyone was invited to have a hot chocolate made over an open fire. We have had some great feedback from adults and beavers alike.

Over the year a huge number of county Beaver challenge badges have been ordered. It has been great to go out a visit some colonies and give them out too! We are always happy to pop into meetings where we can, if you have badges to present, please ask us along and we will do our best to find one of the team to be there. We have also seen our first Invicta Challenge badge presented in quite some time! Well done that is quite an achievement.

District events are well and truly back on the map! We have been to a fabulous variety including Christmas parties, challenge days and a fabulous water activities day. We have been invited to many more this autumn, again please get in touch if you have anything you would like us to attend in the future.

2021 saw us beginning to build and expand the Beaver team, Patrick and Abby have come on board as county Beaver leaders to help us to visit more districts and

colonies as well as being part of our county events. We are looking for more people to join our team so if you or someone you know would be interested please get in touch.



CUB SCOUTS

It took a little while to get back up to speed after the pandemic and we had a few changes to the team too but it is fair to say that Cub Scouting in Kent is now back with a bang!



There have been some amazing visits this year so far to Packs around the County and this is without a doubt our favourite part of the role - seeing Cubs in their natural habitat, doing things like getting grubby planting hedges, making rope, playing wide games, building tee pees - the list goes on and it has been wonderful to get out and meet so many of you. So far this year we have been out to 9 Districts across 12 visits but would love this list to be longer and to be able to see as many of you as possible across the rest of the County so please keep inviting us out to see you, we will always do what we can to get there!

In February lots of Cub Leaders joined us at Kingswood for the leaders sleepover and this was brilliant - we enjoyed a full weekend jam packed with challenges, networking, idea sharing, supporting each other with any worries at the ending of restrictions and mostly just enjoying seeing each other again. Special thanks to Janice for the wonderful campfire in the yurt.

Our first big event for the Cubs since getting back together was to Legoland in May and oh boy was that an adventure - it is fair to say that we staged an invasion that day with over 1200 of us descending on the park. After getting everyone in and acquiring some much needed coffee, we set off for some wild Cub spotting and the team certainly had a bit of a 'moment' seeing those splashes of green everywhere we looked. Hannah was thrilled to invest a

new Cub in the woodland walk (a rare area of serenity actually, set away from all the delighted screams) and we bore witness to many a challenge accomplished on the bigger rides. It was really special to be there and be a part of the adventure. Huge thanks to everyone who helped on the day and helped with the organisation ahead of the day too - a lot goes into one day out and it couldn't happen without the support of so many awesome people.

Looking ahead, we will have visited Hever Castle by the time this is published and are really looking forward to more fun around the castle and gardens. We will be doing another investiture and will most likely get a bit lost in the mazes - more on this in next year's report! We will also be holding a forum later this year too and will put together a report following that of how the Cubs would like to shape their own adventure.

As a team we are expanding and growing ahead of building an even bigger 2023, so if you fancy supporting Cub Scouting in Kent please do get in touch. Next year of course is Cuboree year and planning is already in full swing to make it the biggest possible adventure for the Cubs, themed around the London Underground.

Details of our upcoming events and how to contact us are on the website - we look forward to seeing you all soon!

Hannah would like to say a massive thank you to everyone on Team Cub and the wider 4-14s team - whether you come on visits, support events ad-hoc, take photographs for us, or provide moral support when things are tough, you are amazing and none of it could happen without you. Special thanks also to Melvin for all of the support and encouragement he gives to Hannah and the team. Then finally a very special thank you to Stuart who started off as an ad hoc media consultant some years ago and ended up as Hannah's right hand man at the heart of everything we organise - you are a legend.

SCOUTS

The last year has seen the Scout team regroup and building the team to enable us to support the Scout section more and also spread the workload over a bigger team.

The team took part in ReActiv8 where we were able to meet with many Scout leaders and give out information on the team and some planned activities and more importantly get feedback as to what Scouters wanted from us.

The team has been out and about to District Scout meetings, and we look forward to other invites and will do our best to attend.

We will be reintroducing the County Patrol and details will be coming out soon on how the youngster can get involved.

It was decided to start off with just a few activities this year and we have the Paintball sessions running at both ends of the County and the Up and Down session in Folkstone. With a bigger team we are hoping to be able to run activities at either end of the County to make it easier for Scouts to attend and we plan to roll out more activities next year.

In the planning stages for the coming year ever popular survival skills course, A 24 hour cycle challenge and we hope now that we are all back together again the County award presentation event for those that have achieved their Chief Scouts Gold award.

SCOUT ACTIVE SUPPORT

The County Scout Active Support Team has continued to support throughout the last year, offering advice and guidance to Units and also organising activities for young people. Covid unfortunately meant the cancellation of some of our usual activities and trips, but we are working hard to ensure that they will happen in the future.

The popular Adventure Days were held twice – in October 2021 and in May 2022 which meant that over 1500 Cubs and Beavers came along and had a go at over 20 different activities including bouldering, zorbing, archery, water rockets and pedal carts.

The Christmas season was slightly hindered by the resurgence of Covid, but nonetheless we held parties in the barn and over 300 youngsters enjoyed themselves and Father Christmas made nightly appearances. To the delight of the young people, it even snowed in the barn every night!!

The team continue to support Macmillan and have held an annual World's biggest coffee morning for ten years raising over £3000 for Macmillan Cancer.

ReActive8 gave us a chance to reconnect with our Scouting friends and colleagues and we launched "Ahoy" an event for Kent Scouts to be held at the Historic Dockyard, Chatham in October 2022. We started our celebrations for 75 years of Scout Active Support – in some guise or another with plenty of cake and balloons! We have special cloth and pin badges on sale and to mark the occasion.

Units around the county have continued to support their Districts with camp site service and maintenance, Gang Show support and helping out where needed with sections and Groups, as well as organising some District events as well as the recent Kent International Jamboree.

Thanks to everyone who has helped or supported in some way whether it be at county or local level – Scout Active Support Members are the backbone of our movement – able to give advice based on experience and help in many of ways, always ensuring that young people are able to get the most out of life and the opportunities that arise.





GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

The Growth and Development team reformed in September 2021 offering support to groups and sections reopening using Scoutmate, Scoutmate Gold and the Four Week Challenge badges.

As restrictions were lifted the team started to get out and about more; during October we attended an Opportunities Fair at Mid Kent College and distributed posters and flyers to businesses and community venues, then in November we led an interactive assembly at Twydal Primary School.

As in previous years, the team were hands-on supporting section meetings and running open evenings including at Hextable in Swanley, and Murton and Bapchild in Sittingbourne.

A new initiative for G&D in January 2022 was supporting Group Scout Leader inductions. New GSLs were offered the option of face to face or virtual meetings to go through the new induction check list with the aim of breaking down any barriers they had encountered. The support was well received with more than 12 inductions complete by April and more being added to the list.

To support the reopening of Scouting in spring 2022 the team organised 'ReActiv8', an event which took place at the Historic Dockyard, Chatham. It was well attended with more than 500 people visiting the 55 stalls in a marketplace packed full of places to go, things to do, campsites and crafts. The leaders attending were able to catch up with old friends, have a look around the dockyard and get inspiration for their Scouting in Kent.



Kent Scouts **ReAct**  **v8**
2022

INCLUSION

This year for the inclusion team has been busy, involving the many aspects that fall under the term inclusion and has been broken down into the areas where the team had the most impact.

Events

This year saw the return of many events across the county with which we have been involved. From Scout-led events such as Reativ8, we talked with and got to know many Scouters across Kent and the County Youth conference hosted online by the Youth Shape team, where we held a webinar about making scouting more inclusive. To non-Scout-led events such as Canterbury Christ Church University's education day discussing social sustainability and how inclusion relates to the discussion and the Headstart Kent Celebration & Learning Event, where we had the opportunity to connect with many other youth organisations in the region.

Mental Health

This year the team took over the Good Mental Health Badge and has begun to restart promoting it around the county at Reativ8 and being our lead talking point at the Headstart Kent Celebration & Learning Event. Alongside incorporating mental health topics in the program, the team is also moving to support leaders within Kent and beyond through the newly launched community signposting boards allowing scouters to share online resources around many areas from resilience to eating disorders, giving leaders a jumping-off point when exploring these topics.

Learning Opportunities

The team has provided numerous learning opportunities to people in Kent and beyond, through our highly successful resources on autism, transgender guidance, sensory toys and breathing cards, along with the ever-increasing number of Module 36 sessions being run by the team to expand the knowledge around reasonable adjustments within Scouting.

Lower Grange Farm (LGF)

The Inclusion team has been working with LGF staff to make the site even more inclusive for visitors and patrons.

These developments have been implemented across the site by creating a designated quiet space for events and incorporating visual signage and timetables. These provide further support to young people and adults with communication differences. These adaptations go together with the bespoke training for supporting people with additional needs delivered to the staff of LGF.

Impact beyond Kent

The team's primary focus is supporting young people and volunteers in Kent; however, many things we do, have a positive impact outside the county. Our social media reached far and wide, spreading the information and activities and combined expert knowledge of the team to Scouters across the UK and beyond. Along with many other inclusion teams asking us for support in establishing themselves in their own counties.

To summarise, it has been a year of positive adaptations and progress in establishing the team's name and mission within and beyond Kent. There are many new opportunities we are looking forward to in the coming year.

ADULT TRAINING

The Adult Training Team has continued to focus heavily on first aid training over the past year in an effort to support our volunteers remaining compliant with the latest rules. Our excellent trainers have offered over 2770 learning opportunities for the various combinations of first aid provision with a take up rate of around the high 50%. This is a great achievement and we'd like to pass on our thanks to every trainer, training manager, training adviser, line manager and volunteer for helping to take Kent from one of the least compliant counties in the country for first aid, to one of the most compliant in little over a year. Well done all. It is worth noting now however, that in three years' time everyone who has updated their first aid recently will be due to update it again – get in early to avoid a last minute rush to maintain compliance.



Wood badge training has returned to the face to face annual calendar, although with less multi module days offered due to a lack of demand. Our calendar now sees two full multi module days with a varied level of take up so far. We continue to offer courses as the need is shared with us, using our great network of TAs and Local Training Managers.

Nights Away training has returned and has continued to flourish with all spaces booked up on our bespoke courses. A huge thanks to the nights away team for their efforts – all their courses are highly commended by participants and the networking opportunities have been fantastic.

Our team of Local Training Managers and Training Advisers continue to work hard to keep records up to date, identify learning required, validate learning and ensuring provision is made. They have been an immense support for line managers in getting people up to date with their mandatory on going learning and signposting volunteers to access resources. I would like to thank each and every one of them for their dedication and continued support in what can be a challenging, but rewarding, role.





LOWER GRANGE FARM

Lower Grange Farm has played host to over 40 different schools, youth groups, charities, guides and scouts for residential experiences and full activity days. In numbers that is over 2000 young people spending a day or longer experiencing the variety of adventures available. For many this marked their first adventure since restriction where eased after the pandemic. For many others it was their very first taste of adventurous activities. Among those who visited are Kent Association for the Blind, 21Together, and We are Beams. All charities that support people with additional needs and disabilities. Our centre has been able to offer adapted programmes that truly ensures that everyone is able to take part in our adventures.

Squirrels have landed at the centre too with a few groups bringing their Drays to have a go at activities like the ever popular Cavebus, foam sword fencing, archery and pioneering. Lower Grange Farm have been committed to adapting our activities to accommodate the new section as well as grow our range to ensure our smallest guest have big adventures too.

The centre staff have begun to train as forest school teacher and will be offering a forest school on site to pre-schoolers, homeschool groups and schools. The trail programme was popular among young parents and childminders alike. As resources and training continues the forest school will grow to provide further outdoor education for young people across the county.

Beaver and Cub Adventure Day, organised and run by the amazing LGF SAS team was a sell-out event with over 30 activities available for colonies and packs to try. Lower Grange Farm expanded on the annual event creating two new events to invite each section in scouting to a full day of activities. Squirrel's Go Nuts was free to all the Dray's in the county and had them climbing, fencing, caving and bouncing all day. They finished the day with a whole group sing-song and dance. Connect 22 offered Scouts and Explorers 28 activities including Bag Drop, Quad Bikes, Go Karts and Mountain Biking, our over age 10 activities. Troops and Units competed in Tug-O-War and archery competitions. While the leaders and instructors competed in who had the silliest hat.

Lower Grange Farm moved to Detling Show Ground for the week for Kent International Jamboree. Offering archery, rifle shooting, go karts, laser clay shooting, body zorbs, nerf wars and disc golf to the 3000 participants camping there.

The climbing centre has continued to offer NICAS levels 1-4 where young people attend weekly sessions to continuously develop their climbing skills. Our competitive squad have competed at several public competitions and show promise in their futures in climbing. More schools have started offering GCSE climbing to their PE students and coming to our centre as a provider of quality tuition and support through the course. The centre now offers more opportunities for over 18's to learn and develop their climbing skills through open climbing sessions and

specialised courses in learning the skills. Going forwards we are developing early years provision in the centre by introducing a scheme from NICAS called Wild Climbers for 3 – 7 year olds. The centre may also see some improvements and new additions made to it to expand what is in offer.

New activities have been introduced to the site as part of its continuing development and commitment to offering a wide range of experiences to our young people. Staff and activity volunteers trained to be able deliver Circus Skills which have proved to be an exciting activity to those that have tried their hands already. Football Golf has been added and trialed at our event days. Fencing, Go Karts and Quad Bikes have been big hits with our bigger visitors. Our newest addition is the Fun Bus, a double decker soft play bus that was tested out first by the Squirrels. In the coming season we will be introducing a Virtual Reality experience with brand new VR Headsets.

This year has seen the growth of our activities volunteer team who have made the big days possible. Huge thanks go out to everyone that has continued to support our centre and been integral to the continued success. So many young people have had life changing experiences thanks to their time, skills and support throughout the year.

Moving forward we are widening the range of activity badges that can be run and earned at the centre as well as training our staff to provide DofE Awards in full to young people. We will continue to update our programme and add new features and activities to keep our centre fresh for every visit. We will host more county wide events so that more and more people can experience the amazing centre and all it has to offer.



ACTIVITIES

The Kent Scout Activity Teams have had a busy time since restrictions were lifted either running their own events or supporting District events and training sessions.



It has been another successful year for the Microlight Team providing over 450 flights over 30 sessions. The team introduced a unique badge during the year as part of the microlight experience. To earn the badge, scouts learn about flying with a session in the hangar including sitting in a vintage aeroplane and finding out how the controls work. The team goes from strength to strength with a good squad of pilots and ground crew. There are now eight pilots and as many ground crew looking after the visitors to Old Hay.

Our Paddlesport Team re introduced their training and experience days with opportunities for both youth members and adults at Bewl Water and Kent Scouts Watersport Centre at Conningbrooke Lakes, Ashford. The team also supported a number of Districts with river paddles, one being a night paddle.

The restrictions hampered the return of some of our hill walking and mountaineering expeditions. This has been frustrating but none the less understandable and The IMC continue to work proactively with our chosen venues and look forward to offering our full programme during the coming year with South and North Snowdonia and the lakes scheduled to offer youth and adult training, logged hours and fantastic trekking.

We continue to support our adult members who need safety boat training or permits as well as offering



dinghysailing experiences with opportunities to gain qualifications through partner organisations.

To find out about all our activity providers, training, permits or event support please visit activities.kentscouts.org.uk

TOMAHAWKS

The 2021-22 period saw a flurry of activity for the Tomahawk Unit.

The first major activity was the Beaver and Cub Adventure Days, held at Lower Grange Farm in October 21. Approximately 800 young people had the opportunity to try their hand during the four sessions, split over the two days, many of them for the first time, despite some pretty relentless rain on the Sunday!

In November 21, back-to-back courses were held at LGF and in Sevenoaks to train new leaders from across the County, staff from LGF and some Scouters from farther afield also. Further training courses were held in March, at Adamswell Campsite for members of Tunbridge Well District and in East Sussex for leaders from Crawley District. These sessions provided more than 50 leaders with the skills to deliver the activity to young people locally within their groups and districts and to support county events.

Funds raised from the course fees have been invested into buying equipment for the Unit to use at its activities and events and to lend to groups who do not have their own.

The Unit, bolstered by a tranche of new leaders, has supported several local events, including Sevenoaks District's St George's Activity Day (attended by around 400 young people), Sevenoaks Reconnect Kent Activity Day, Kemsing Scouts Village Picnic, Igtham Scouts camp at Hamlet Wood, 1st Sevenoaks Scouts and the Explorers at St Paul's Maidstone. The Beaver and Cub Adventure Days returned in May 22 with another 800 young people able to take part.

PADDLESPOrts

The past year has been all about getting young people back on the water.

We have returned to a full programme of activities at Conningbrook Lake putting over 400 young people through our wide range of water activities. The number of leaders and support staff getting on the water has been great to see and this year through the hard work of our team we have been able to introduce Sailing to our list of session activities.

Bewl Water has also seen a welcome return to a full programme of dates with a marked increase in numbers and a new selection of boats arriving this year. We have also seen a major increase in permit training and assessments at both Bewl and Conningbrook which is great news looking forward and we hope to see this trend continue into next year.

Across the county we are seeing more and more Groups and Districts returning to the water and with over 200 paddlesport permits issued this last year the future is looking wetter.

A big thanks must go out to our busy paddlesport team

who donate so much of their time to running activities, training and assessments.



COMMUNITY IMPACT

As we came back to Scouting, we relaunched our County Community Impact Day on the second Saturday in October each year. Back in October 2021 a number of groups earned their Shelter4Shelterbox badge by raising money and awareness for the disaster relief charity. For October 2022, four years on, we will once again be holding our Big Cardboard Sleepout For Porchlight and new for October 2023 we are planning an event for Dover based charity LionAid.

In November we launched a new initiative which we hope to develop in future years in partnership with the Royal British Legion – an activity pack of resources called the Poppy Pack. The Poppy Pack contains factsheets and programme ideas including how to research your local War Memorial.

Many groups around the county have been responding to the crisis in Ukraine with different initiatives – some collecting items and some raising funds to help those affected by the war. Quite a number held car washes at very short notice and the total raised we are aware of is in the region of £10,000+. All money going to DEC charities. And closer to home using skills learned in pioneering, Woodchurch Scouts created a new Outdoor Learning Environment for their local Special Needs primary school. We also had five runners enter the London Landmarks Half Marathon back in April to raise some awareness and funds for Kent Scouts.



At the Kent International Jamboree (KIJ) we worked closely with a number of different charities to deliver bases on the theme of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We partnered with one of Scouting UK's Million Hands charities Save The Children to deliver activities educating young people about refugees and migrants. Scouting initiated charities Harambee For Kenya and Scouts Against Malaria. The Royal British Legion, Porchlight, Shelterbox and LionAid also had a presence helping us with bases as ongoing charity partners of Kent Scouts.

The County Community Impact team is now four strong – Alan Noake, Matt Sims, Alison Sims and Helen Smith.

Follow along with our plans and events on our Kent Scouts Community Impact Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/kentscoutscommunityimpact>

INTERNATIONAL

With the reduction in international COVID restrictions Kent Scouts are travelling again. There have been over a dozen overseas events as well as a large number of international visitors at KIJ 2022 and already visits Abroad forms are being submitted for 2023 and 2024.

After seven years of planning the Kent Scouts REQUEST2021 Antarctica Project team (8 from Kent and 2 from Scotland) made it down to the Antarctic Peninsula on the tall ship Bark Europa. They were raising awareness of Scouting's strong links with the frozen continent 100 years after two Scouts sailed on the Quest with Sir Ernest Shackleton back in 1921. Thousands of young people have benefited from their outreach programme and each of the participants has completed their own personal project to earn a prestigious iceberg award. Find out more on www.request2021.org.uk



After cancelling the last two Global Projects to Kenya in 2020 and Uganda in 2021 a team of 22 successfully made it back out to Ghana in August 2022. Plans are well underway for Zanzibar23 and Kenya24.



Also, during the summer of 2022 there has been the Kent International Jamboree with nearly 30 countries present, an Explorer Belt team in Norway visiting Oslo & Svalbard and a team of 11 from Sevenoaks climbing Mount Kilimanjaro.



David Wraight is Assistant County Commissioner (International) and Alan Noake is Assistant County Commissioner (Global Projects). Both are supported on a project-by-project basis by a pool of other Kent Scouts leaders.

Follow along with our plans and events on our Kent Scouts International and Global Projects Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/kentscoutsglobalprojects>



LGF ACTIVE SUPPORT

The last year has been as busy as ever after the easing of lockdown. We have continued to meet on Tuesdays although some members have given additional time to the site. We complement the site maintenance team and carry out all kinds of works. We have erected after considerable ground works ,two new cabins located behind the barn to store tables and chairs with easy access into the barn. These are fully functioning with power and light.

We have also completed the planting of some 3400 hedge row plants and trees to mark off camping fields and also the permissive footpath has been opened to the public whilst our application to formally move the existing footpath is considered by the Council. This has also involved relocating the kissing gate to Grange Lane and providing access. Many walkers are now using this and reports are favourable.

Our Team have also constructed a Camp Fire Circle with an impressive gateway and the Circle has had much use. There has also been garden weeding , grass cutting and generally keeping the site looking in good condition to welcome our guest and visitors as well as painting of fences again to enhance the appearance of the site.

Thanks to all the volunteer team for all their hard work throughout the year.



02 DISTRICTS

Grassroots Scouting...



ASHFORD

Since taking on the role of DC in June, we have had some amazing times as a District!

Our new ADC Comms (Max) has spent the last few months developing a brand new website for us. Our fantastic team of ADCs and GSLs have all contributed and have really made it their own. Thanks to our new Facebook page and volunteers willing to moderate it, our new joiners have grown and we now have several new sections opening this September! Really exciting!

Our usual great programme including activities such as water sports at our local lakes are still ongoing and becoming more and more successful! Explorers also have their usual brilliant programme, including our recent sandcastle competition, Well done Charing Vampers! The ADC Cubs brought us a fantastic Cub Camp which our lovely County Cubs team came down to visit! Our ADC Beavers set up a brilliant Activity Day at a local group's hall. The beavers got to enjoy shooting, archery, carnival games and bouldering! A great effort from all involved.



As a district, we are really proud to also have announced Jacob Bodman as our new DYC. Jacob is incredibly enthusiastic and has already met with our Explorer and Network Commissioners to begin to formulate a plan to ensure that both the groups and the district are fully youth shaped. Our planned 2024 all-sections camp is the first challenge which Jacob is going to need to ensure is youth shaped but we are certain he is up to the task!



Of course, a large part of the last few months has been KJ! I feel both our kids and our leaders represented what Ashford and Scouting are all about. They threw themselves into every activity, had an amazing camp set-up and made loads of new friends. Even being hospitalised didn't stop one of our scouts from hopping onto the stage to receive his Queens Scout Gold award!

Upcoming plans include our really successful Porchlight Sleep-out in October, an all-leaders fun day later this year, Soapbox derby in 2023, an all-sections camp in 2024, American exchanges visiting us here in 2025 and us visiting Texas in 2026!



CANTERBURY, WHITSTABLE & HERNE

All 13 Groups in the District have returned with record numbers of young people. We now have the challenge of managing age relevant lists of young people who want to be part of the Scouting adventure, with dozens more each month contacting us to join. With our reach across Canterbury, Whitstable and Hernebay covering 9 secondary and many primary schools it is unsurprising that demand is high coming out of restrictions and young people recognising just how great the outdoors can be.

All our Groups have provided a strong balanced programme with all sections experiencing nights away.

Two Groups have started Squirrel Dreys with a further two Groups opening up the section during the coming months.

The District celebrated St Georges Day with a parade through the City of Canterbury and service at the Cathedral. In attendance were the 1st Whitstable Scout band and the 2nd Whitstable Sea Scout marching band. It was a real celebration of our return to Scouting with representatives from local organisations, the High Sheriff and Mayors Office in attendance.



DARTFORD

The Census in January 2022 showed Dartford District had 1,162 members, this comprised of 899 youth members supported by 263 adults - split across 12 Scout Groups, 7 Explorer Scout Units, 1 Young Leaders Unit and one Scout Active Service Unit.

Our District Executive is led by William Ward as Chair.

Shaun Ford and Jacqui Wilkinson, still head-up Team DC, with the help of Adam Waydick (ADC Beavers) and David Celino-Stock (ADC Cubs). Our District Vice-presidents Peter & Wendy McLean continue to support us and the rest of the District Team.

The District has almost returned to normality, our numbers across the board dropped during lockdown, but are seeing a slow but steady rise in the number of enquiries for places throughout all the sections.

In November, we had our first District event since coming out of lockdown. We attended the local Remembrance Parade and had the biggest contingent in attendance.

In January 2022 we held a selection weekend at Buckmore Park for the next WSJ participants. We have six Scout/ Explorers attending and they have begun the arduous task of fundraising.

The Young Leader Unit has seen an increase in numbers, with some of them attending Winter Camp at Thriftwood in February 2022. Whilst at camp, one YL completed their YL Belt, turned eighteen and has gone on to become an Assistant Scout Leader and Assistant Section Leader at our first Squirrel Drey

In March 2022 we opened our first Squirrel Drey at 9th Dartford. The Drey has proved very popular with a great number of enquiries.

Groups have been camping again, it has been wonderful seeing the young people back having fun and we have also had District Beaver and Cub events

The District headquarters, Scout House, is continued to

be used by sections for sleepovers, either camping in the grounds or sleeping inside, District events etc. Scout House accommodates the District Scout Shop which sells uniform and badges.

Looking forward, we will be opening another Drey, which will be based at Stone, in September 2022 and will be reinstating special presentations for completion of Chief Scout Awards.



DOVER

We have had a successful year returning to face-to-face Scouting. We started this year off with our...

District Funday- We organised a funday to celebrate coming back to face-to-face Scouting following the Covid pandemic. All the Groups in the District attended, and we welcomed over 170 children and adults on the day. Each Group offered an activity for the Young People to try!

Remembrance Sunday. The town service was well attended, and all the Dover town Groups had representatives at the main service. A very proud moment to see all the sections represented so well and receiving positive feedback from other attendees.

St George's day. We were invited to join the Zeebrugge memorial parade to remember those who lost their lives in the Zeebrugge raid on the 23rd of April 1918. There was an excellent turn out from all the Groups. After the service we renewed our promises and presented awards gained by the Young People and Leaders.

Cub day at Legoland. Many of our Groups attended the County Cub Day and had a fantastic time at Legoland this included the adults!

Beaver Badge day was organised by the District team for Beavers to undertake their camp craft badge. The day was a huge success with the Beavers undertaking various activities to gain their badge and to understand the joy of camping in Scouting.

WSJ. We had 12 Scouts apply for our allotted 3 places. District organised a selection day which included the Young People teaching the other participants a skill, as well as other team building activities. The 3 participants have worked extremely well together and have already raised all the money they require to attend, a year before the jamboree commences.

We had one Group attend KIJ this year and they have reported that they had a wonderful time, thank you to all that helped to make the camp such a success.

We have been holding monthly drop-in sessions at which

Leaders can drop in to see the DC's to have their DBS's completed, have training queries answered or just come for a chat. This has been an excellent way for us both to not only complete some of the paperwork but to be accessible to leaders to support them in the excellent job that they are doing.

Training compliance. We have worked hard to improve our compliance for mandatory training in the past year. Almost 100% of Leaders are now compliant and thanks to the information that we receive from County we can keep up to date with those who's training is outstanding. Thank you to everyone for working so hard to make the District compliant.

Census We have had an increase in YP according to the 2022 census and secured the highest increase in the County. Our census figures showed an increase of 74 Young People rising from 179 in 2021 to 253 in 2022. Our adult Leader numbers remained steady at 95 but since the census we have attracted more adults who wish to help in some capacity at Scouts.

Squirrels We have 2 dreys starting in September 2022 however they offered taster sessions before the summer holidays which were well attended. We have at least another 2 Groups who are interested in commencing a dray and we have been pleased with the interest shown in starting the junior section.

Dover feels like it is really working well and has turned a corner. We have an amazing group of Leaders who will go the extra mile to provide Scouting opportunities for Young People. As DC's we have been actively going out to visit the Groups to present awards and to be visible to the leaders. This has been very rewarding, and we feel we have improved the links between District and Groups.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all our Leaders, volunteers and Young People for being the best team ever.

FAVERSHAM

2021-2022 has been a busy year for Faversham Scouts, as we continue our recovery from the pandemic. The district continues to have 4 groups each with Beavers, Cubs and Scouts; as well as running 2 successful Explorer units and Network.

The year started as the country was emerging from lockdown but all our groups returned to face-to-face Scouting as soon as restrictions and their circumstances allowed, and have been busy ever since. Numerous activities have been on offer at both group and section level: cooking, hiking, boating, first aid, science, town challenge, international, pioneering, den building, craft and much more - as well as a return to nights away activities which were greatly missed during the pandemic.

It has also been fantastic to see District events return this year, with several events for the Beaver and Cubs sections, as well as our online St George's day celebration!

In April 2021 the District gathered on Zoom for a St George's day promise renewal.



In late February, 40 Cubs took part in the annual district indoor games event! They competed in board games ranging from Scrabble to Dominoes, as well as a Lego tower building challenge, with the 7th Faversham Cub Pack being crowned winners and taking home the coveted Snowball Trophy.

Unfortunately Network weren't in a position to run the infamous District Challenge for Scouts and Explorers this year but we are sure it will make a return better than ever this coming year! In August 2021 Network did have a camp of their own at our District Campsite Shepherd

Park, a weekend of hiking, cooking and socialising. 31st December 2021 was the end of an era for Faversham Network as our long serving District Scout Network Commissioner Peter White stood down after many years in the role, we continue to look for a replacement for Pete but hopefully his good legacy continues in the meantime.

Our Explorer units continue to go from strength to strength with membership of both units being very healthy, there are varied programmes enjoyed by both units including: go-karting, paracord creations, expedition/camp planning and preparation, angel throwing and much more Red Pandas ESU enjoyed a camp in October 2021 and February 2022. There is also a full programme for DofE and Young Leaders in the District.

Our strong executive committee remains a great support for Faversham Scouts and this year have worked on increasing efficiency of certain aspects of the district's affairs, notably with new teams setup to manage Shepherd Park and also our other District owned properties. Plans continue for the further development of Shepherd Park, the installation of WiFi coming soon!

Fast forward to the year ahead, we're looking forward to continuing doing what we do best, delivering Skills for Life to our young people. Our Scouts and Explorers are off to KIJ this summer and later in the year will hopefully see the return of our District Challenge.





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GILLINGHAM

Gillingham District have 11 Groups all running with Beaver Colonies, Cub Packs and Scout Troops. We also have 5 Explorer Units and have opened 5 Squirrel Dreys which are all full with Young People.

Over the last 18months the District have run events for all sections.

Squirrels had a Christmas party at Monkey Bizz with a Father Christmas visit back in December. Then a Royal Family Teddy Bears Picnic at Buckmore Park in May.

Beavers & Cubs took part in activities at Medway Park Leisure Centre to gain the Beaver Health & Fitness Badge & Cub Athletics Badge.

Scouts and Explorers took part in a Paintball event in March and then a Water activity day in June at Yalding.

Many Groups have had many of their own event and activities from camps, sleepovers and Queen Jubilee celebrations. Also 4 Groups had Scouts and Explorers attend KJ for a great week of meeting new friends & having fun.



GRAVESHAM

Another great year from Gravesham Scouts. This year we celebrated Hopehills 70(+2) Birthday, which we combined with the Jubilee weekend. We had a huge turn out and was loved by everyone who joined in. We have also had our first Squirrel Unit open (1st Northfleet).

We have also held lots of other exciting activities for all sections on water and on land.

And here are some of the events we have held this year in Gravesham:

Open Archery Course; District Winter Camp; Scout/Explorer River Paddle; Clay Pigeon Shooting; Beaver Outing; Hill Walking - Leader Training; Cub Badge Day; Beaver Cross Country; Easter Hillcraft; St George's Parade; Beaver District Hike; Scout/Explorer Incident Hike & Service Camp; Beaver Sleepover; Kontiki; Cubs on Water; Beaver Sports Day; Cub 5-a-side Football & Sport Evening; JP Bond Camping Competition; Open Archery; Leader Paddling Trip; Beavers on Water; Kent International Jamboree; Beaver Activity Day; Scout District Hike; Autumn Hillcraft Shakedown; Autumn Hillcraft; Cub Blockcar Finals; Remembrance Parades; Cub Treasure Hunt; Christingle; Beaver Christmas Party.



ISLE OF SHEPPEY

This year Sheppey Scouts have been busy getting back to Scouting as we recover from the pandemic. Many of our young people have been camping with their groups, taking part in county activities and learning skills for life.

The Scout section successfully organised a sponsored walk to raise funds for KJ.

Our Beavers joined up for a visit to visit the panto in December where they watched Sleeping Beauty.

The District Explorer unit have successfully run their own youth led quiz night to help raise funds towards activities and camping. This was very successful and there are plans for another next year.

We successfully teamed up with Sheerness Town Council to provide an activity day for the public to promote Scouting on the Island and celebrate St George.

Sheppey attended the Kent International Jamboree as a District this year and enjoyed a fun week of unforgettable moments. Many new friendships have been formed and memories made for years to come.

Plans are currently underway for a District camp involving all sections next Summer. This will be the first District camp including all sections in the district since 2015.





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Interested? Speak to a leader at your local group or visit www.kentscouts.org.uk/get-involved

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MEDWAY

2021 /22 saw a welcome return to face to face Scouting with the obvious multitude of precautions and measures in place to avoid returning to the dark days of lockdown again.

This did limit the District Team with regards to larger activities and events and the focus was therefore very much on supporting Groups and Leaders to get back up and running, including growth, recruitment, and training.

The Jan 21 census had shown a significant drop in numbers and it was pleasing to see numbers increasing as the year went on proving Scouting was as popular as ever. Circumstances had changed for many adults and leaders, hence our recruitment of new adults and support from across the District was vital to fill gaps and helping Groups in keeping sections running.

Training has been a hot potato for everyone involved in Scouting over the past two years and after a lot of perseverance it is pleasing to see the District in a very healthy position now with regards to training compliance. Nights away were very limited but a few Groups held smaller, local camps as well as expeditions to complete Chief Scout Awards for those that were restricted or moved Sections during lockdown.

Buckmore Park, the Districts campsite was key for many Groups as we came out of lockdown, utilising the vast open spaces and open air for weekly meetings and activities.

Buckmore Park itself continued to progress with the rebuild of its infrastructure with the focus over the last

year on the installation of spacious, shiny new toilets and showers. This has been a monumental effort with extensive groundworks and installation of a new water main.

January this year saw the introduction of our first Squirrel Dray's and these are proving very popular.

2021 into 22 was indeed a challenging year but the ingenuity and resourcefulness of everyone involved in the District has been outstanding to see.

Covid wiped out a District Camp planned for June 20, and we promised as soon as it was safe to do so, we would restage it, no one anticipated waiting as long as we did, but it was well worth the wait. April this year saw over a 1000 young people and adults descend on Buckmore for a fantastic weekend that exceeded all our expectations, lots of fun was had by all as we celebrated St Georges Day, 70 Years of Buckmore Park and of course getting back to normality.

Our sincere thanks go to everyone involved with Scouting in Medway Towns and Buckmore Park.



ROMNEY MARSH

Thanks to Team Romney Marsh for your ongoing support. It has been a very mixed year, adjusting to the new 'normal' and life's everyday challenges. Proud to say Romney Marsh is a very active district with some very committed Leaders who are great Scouting Ambassadors. Thank you to every Leader and Supporter – Romney Marsh benefits hugely from your unending support.

Our successes of the past year:

- Groups have offered amazing programmes and re-established the F2F Scouting Adventure.
- Youth Shaped Scouting – Thanks to Don RMDS for organising District audit and to those who attended – Results have now been shared and are generally positive. Agreement we need to share among Sections and use as a tool for moving forward.
- Training Compliance improving – Reminders from TSA effective
- Groups making amazing progress. Publicity – we have had good press coverage. We are in the process of trying to get the District website & FB page working effectively.
- District Explorer Unit established and gaining momentum.
- Hikes, Camping and Scouting Skills are back on our agenda. 1st Lydd, 1st St Mary's Bay & 1st Dymchurch had an excellent camp at Buckmore Park where 2 Leaders gained their Nights Away Permits. 1st New Romney & 1st Dymchurch had an amazing time at KIJ and so did the VIP visitors, who were completely blown away by all the Jamboree had to offer.
- The Young Leader programme is gaining momentum. Sadly we don't have any WSI participants but one keen youngster who is preparing to go to Kenya in 2024.

Plans for the Future – WIP:

- District – Working as a team to deliver the best possible Scouting programme/Adventure we can comfortably manage.
- District – Attracting & retaining Leaders. Leader reviews due – DAAC to action
- New team at TSA, keen & enthusiastic. Changes planned – via TSA/Kent Scouts & our dedicated

Change Champion – Updates to follow.

- Offer exciting programmes throughout the sections, use outside agencies/visits/parents where permitted and working within current guidelines. Grow the Sections/Groups
- Sections to work together – share programme ideas across District
- District events to be re-introduced as appropriate/when time/guidelines permit
- Formally appoint District Chair and District Youth Commissioner
- Build in an element of future proofing, via succession planning – Recruitment Drives – Encourage parents, family focus. TSA virtual support sessions available. ...
- Combining Groups – 1st Dymchurch & 1st St M Bay – WIP – to date this has gone well. The Summer Term will be testing but will allow the group to explore possibilities and find direction.
- Extend YL Programme – sharing ideas and Youngsters delivering to Beavers/Cubs
- RM Scouting actively welcomes any youngsters locally, displaced from The Ukraine
- Squirrels – there is an appetite to set up a Dray, we need to consider the most effective way of doing this.

In conclusion, thank you to everyone involved in the Scouting Adventure. Thank you for everything you do and here's to another successful Scouting Year.



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Cubs are 8-10½ years, they learn practical skills while having adventures.
Scouts are 10½ -14 years, they gain confidence and resilience.
Explorers are 14-18 years, they take the lead and learn to work together.
Network are 18-25, they hone employment skills and achieve awards.

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SEVENOAKS

We started the Scouting year with a fantastic online St George's Day celebration, led by our District Youth Commissioners, alongside a series of daily challenges for young people to take part in at home in the month leading up to the broadcast including a "build a wooden dragon" kit. As brilliant as these remote celebrations were, it was great to end the year looking forward to getting the district back together again with an outdoor celebration in the same format as we had enjoyed for the first time in 2019.



During the year the focus was on recovery and support to get everyone back to meeting face to face as well as planning for the future. Residential activities were a high priority and almost all groups managed to run these for the first time since March 2020, with several summer camps taking place. The district has made a good recovery and almost returned to the same overall number as before the pandemic with some groups and in particular our Scout and Explorer sections experiencing significant growth too! We also launched our iScout in Sevenoaks Newsletter to support district communications.

A Scout troop has been reopened having been dormant for several years and another group opened Scouting's newest section for 4 and 5 year-olds, a Squirrel Drey - joining nine others in Kent and 200 in the UK that launched this section. We have been overwhelmed by demand as well as the number of new parent supporters for this age range; this section is being run totally by adults new to Scouting and we are making plans to open two further Squirrel Dreys in other groups in the coming year.

The World Scout Jamboree selection took place in the Autumn term and was our largest face to face District activity of the year. It enabled over 50 young people, the largest number of applicants Sevenoaks has ever had, to come together for a weekend of team challenge activities,

cooking a Korean meal in patrols and camping with new friends.

In the Spring term we started to make use of some of the District's new paddleboards running several paddleboard sessions for interested adults as well as young people. This then inspired us to apply for KCC Reconnect Grant to enable more adults and more young people to get out on the water

We postponed our four-yearly whole district camp, Mag7, in 2022 and we have started preparations in earnest to hold this event in 2023; 28th April to 1st May.



SITTINGBOURNE

Since the last AGM the district has had some lows but more impressive highs. The District has had some challenges with having to cancel our yearly district carol service which had been renamed carols by campfire for 2021. Since then all of the groups in the District have returned to their meeting places and groups are building back up there numbers.

Despite the end of 2021 sending us many challenges including we are starting to slowly rebuild. We have seen a steady increase in members apply for permits that had expired throughout Covid which is great news.

We started off at the beginning of 2022 with a selection day for the WSJ Korea. During the day we were supported by Sheppey District. This was a great opportunity to share ideas during the planning and the day brought it back what scouting is there for.

We went on to have an awards celebration for the young people at a local theatre. The event was over two sessions one session Beavers and Cubs. The second Scouts and Explorers. They all really enjoyed themselves especially the McDonalds or Fish and Chips!

The annual leader's awards celebration went ahead. A member went around the room and counted up the number of years people in the room had been involved, 1046 years!

We have started to hold District events. A first being inviting parents along to stay at St. George's day. The day was a big success with our car parks full. During the day we were able to recruit a few leaders which was really welcomed. Our ADC's have been very busy with organising a reconnect event for the general public. The event was aimed to recruit more leaders. The day was really good fun and we hope to do an event like this again. More recently the newly formed Cub team held a fun day. Scouts teaming up with the explorers for the JOTT 2022. The Beavers due to hold a fun day in October. Cubs arranging a trip to Dover and the Scouts will be supporting the Porchlight cardboard sleep out. We are in the planning process of the district carol service which I

am sure will be a great success.

Some highlights in the District was opening a Squirrel dray at Upchurch. The leaders at Unchurch worked really hard to open the section. They are at full capacity with a waiting list which is amazing. 1st Sittingbourne celebrating 15 years anniversary. 5th Sittingbourne celebrating their 90th Anniversary!

What's in store for next year? We hope that to continue to develop the district by opening more squirrel drays. Improvements to our campsite such as the new obstacle course going in. Refurbishing the bounding wall and much more.



SWANLEY

All Swanley groups returned to face-to-face scouting after the easing of the pandemic restrictions, a huge relief to everyone. There were some very enterprising meetings held during the acute Covid-19 time, aimed at reducing risk of transmission, with Eynsford and Farningham Scouts going right through winter 2021-2022, meeting outdoors every week and growing their numbers at the same time.

Young member numbers in all groups are steadily increasing and particularly at New Barn. Horton Kirby Group opened the district's first Squirrel section in October and our new recruits are having a great time.

Most groups managed to get at least some members away for an overnight experience and all groups were able to provide some exciting activities and day trips, including, in October, going to the LGF Adventure sessions for Cubs and Beavers. The top awards in each section were achieved by some of our longer-standing members and all these achievements are due to the dedication of the leaders.

I am very pleased that, in adherence to our promise, many groups took part in service to the community, including, but not limited to, raising funds for Shelterbox (Eynsford and Farningham) and Ukraine (Ash Green), community tree planting (Longfield and Hartley) and litter picking (various).

Much appreciated and necessary work has been undertaken at Farningham Woods campsite, including adding new toilets, planting hedges, cutting back overgrown areas and starting to increase trees.

Some groups were able to instigate renovations and improvements to their meeting halls, thanks to the prudent use of grants and empty hall time that resulted from the various Covid-19 measures, and they are now much better equipped to go forwards and face the future. We are very proud that Jacob Hare, 17 at the time of the award, a long-standing member of Horton Kirby Scout Group, had his outstanding service within Swanley and Sevenoaks districts and brilliant attitude, while coping with a deteriorating eye condition, recognised by the awarding of the well-deserved Cornwell Badge.

There have been many changes at district and group level. We have said goodbye to some long-standing members,

including the much-missed Brenda French, and hello to new members. It has been a very difficult few years for everyone, but for some more than for others. A huge thank you to everyone who helps our district in any way- you are all a valued member of Team Swanley.



THANET

We solved problems, we learned new skills, we had adventures, we 'slept' under the stars and we earned LOADS of badges and awards... the young people here in Thanet have had an action packed year!

Our Explorers and Networkers have been on D of E and Queen's Scout expeditions exploring Thanet, Canterbury and the Lake District. We attended KJ, Slept Out for Shelter Box and established two new Explorer units along the way. As a number return from their adventures in Ghana, the journey to WSJ and Zanzibar 2023 and even Kenya 2024 is underway for others.

Scouts have been loving getting back to their nights away this year. Several troops were represented at KJ and others have been off having water activity camps, Jubilee camps and lots of other adventures. Our new shooting range at Marshside also attracted lots of visitors this year with the Scouts doing Tomahawk throwing, shooting and archery at their Master At Arms badge weekend. More adventures were had at Marshside in our annual pioneering and emergency aid events too.

Cubs celebrated the full return to Scouting by visiting Legoland and enjoying a district camp, making full use of the campsite facilities. We were delighted to be able to celebrate loads of Chief Scout Silver awards at a ceremony at Hornby. There was a great turnout from the Cub section at our Cross Country and Quiz and Fizz events too.

Beavers have been busy getting back to regular meetings over the past year and introducing nights away through a district camp experience. Regular events like the Beaver Sports Day were back on the calendar and proved a great hit with the chance to enjoy the outdoors and make new friends. The Beavers are looking forward to their annual district hike in September to launch another year full of adventure!

Squirrels have had a taster session and we have two Dreys due to open in September with a further two in planning for the next term. Our volunteers have embraced the learning opportunities and worked hard to get prepared for the new term.





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WEALD

As restrictions eased in 2021, more sections reopened face to face meetings and Weald saw a 26% increase in youth membership between the February census and October head count. Very few groups / sections managed to get in a camp in this year though.

We were once again able to host an event for JOTI at Goudhurst HQ but this was a scaled down version with participants being required to bring their own devices to log in with.



In November I hosted an awards presentation evening in Cranbrook, in order to clear some of the backlog of awards I had accumulated at home. This was the first time many of our leaders had seen each other since the pandemic began so it was a lovely social event. As well as length of service awards and wood badges handed out, it was great pleasure to award my DC predecessors Jan Ashley and Cathy Mummery with their Bar to Award for Merits, and an Award for Merit for Jeff Lewis of 2nd Tenterden.



Headcorn Explorers have been unable to return as the leaders have moved on, so when Goudhurst Explorers faced closure for the same reason, I stepped in to keep the section alive. The Explorers have decided to adopt the name Chimera after their favourite climbing centre in Tunbridge Wells. Our other unit in Tenterden (Caxton Explorers) remains strong and we look forward to running some joint activities.

2nd Tenterden hosted a cooking competition for the Scouts section and then emerged as the victors of it.



We had a disappointingly low number of applications for the World Scout Jamboree so as a consequence all four young people who applied, received a place. They have been enjoying the pre-camps and are doing well with fundraising. All four are part of Unit 66.

Many of us followed the voyage of ReQuest21 very closely as our former DC took part in it, and we have been privileged to attend talks by Cathy Mummery about the adventure.





SKILLS FOR LIFE

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