

Census

You will be pleased to know that the census figures for the County have increased for the third successive year. We now have 6,038 people as members of the Association. This does not include over 350 adults who are occasional helpers. The figures show an increase of 63 Beavers, although there were minor decreases in Cubs, Scouts and Explorers. Bedford District showed the biggest increase of 71 people – this equated to an 8.7% increase.

Several of the County team have looked at various parts of the figures and we can provide details of age profiles for any Group in the County, plus details of every section in every Group in the County for the last 10 years. If you want to see any of the information that pertains to your District/Group, please let me know.

Local Development Officer

Jo Cockcroft, our Local Development Officer, returned to work on 1 March. As you are aware, Jo gave birth to her first son in November but then contracted swine flu and was very ill for a period of time. It was very pleasing to see Jo recently, along with pictures of Jacob. Jo is someone who can help you with trying to recruit adult volunteers. If you would like to submit a bid to get Jo to help you, please contact your District Commissioner.



St. George's Day Awards

There are times when some people in the County have to keep secrets and one of them is when some adult members are due to receive awards. This year's recipients of St. George's Day awards are:

Bar to the Silver Acorn:

John Duley – County Commissioner
 Trevor Gough – County Scouter

Silver Acorn

Malcolm Hooley – GSL Colmworth
 John Shepherd – Group Treasurer Sundon Park
 Matthew Slade-Pedrick – DC Leighton-Linslade
 Gillian Wareham – Group Sectional Assistant Sundon Park

Congratulations are due to them all for the exceptional service they have given to Scouting over many years.

Jamboree auction

On Friday 23rd April there is an auction of numerous items with the proceeds going to the Jamboree fund for 2011. It is being held at Biggleswade Conservative Club and commences at 7.30 pm. DCs have details of some of the items for auction.

Annual General Meeting

This year's County AGM will be at 7:30pm on Wednesday 12 May at The Rufus Centre, Steppingley Road, Flitwick. Rosie Spencer – Chief Commissioner for Girlguiding Anglia will be speaking about their centenary.

County Support Plan

One of the items in the County support plan is to attend every District event (provided we know about it). One of the reasons for this is so members of the County Team can talk to leaders

who run sections and also to talk with the young people.

Another of the items is to attend at least one section leaders' meeting in every District this year. The idea of this is that if there are items that are common to several Districts then the County will do something to help alleviate the issue. This also includes John or me attending a District Executive meeting and a GSL/Team meeting in every District.

O.D.1

O.D.1 is a boat moored in the Solent that can be used by older Scouts and Explorers from Bedfordshire. This is an incredibly useful resource and is really something different for young people to use. If you are interested in taking people on the boat, further details can be found on the County website www.bedfordshirescouts.org.uk

Print centre

One of the additions to www.scouts.org.uk is the facility to design your own invitations, stationery, posters and flyers etc. This is a very useful resource. I'm reliably informed they'll have one for Newsletters in the near future.

Training

Last month Chris Bent put some ideas to the District Commissioners regarding residential training courses in 2011. He has asked for responses by the end of this month. Hopefully your DC or ADC will have spoken with you or made you aware of Chris's ideas. He has also detailed to the DCs some evening training in different parts of the County starting in September this year.

AGMs

In March we issued to all DCs a document about "procedure and good practice at AGMs" and for them to cascade to GSLs and Group Chairmen. The feedback we have had has been mostly positive and for those of you who are new to the post of Chairman it will help you at possibly your first AGM.

Updates publications, factsheets and rule.

Rob Lyon – (Regional Commissioner) has recently issued an email to all District Commissioners of recent changes to factsheets etc.

InTouch

This replaces the Home Contact system. Districts can implement it between now and September this year. There is a presentation that some Districts have used to explain the changes. Early indications are that it is very useful and beneficial.

CRB and ISA

In the latter part of last year and the early part of this year, a substantial amount of work was done with regard to ensuring every adult member in the County had a valid CRB clearance. Some of this was in preparation for the Independent Safeguarding Authority and the legal liability that people must be registered. One of the rules is that a new CRB form is requested every five years – you may like to check if yours is due for renewal. Details regarding the ISA are coming out over the next few months with items in Scouting magazine and notification to CCs for them to cascade.

2010 Beaver Leaders forum

Following the success of the Beaver Leaders' skills day last year, Anne Cladd has arranged another one for this year. It is being held on Saturday 16th October at The Hills Lower School, Stancliffe Road, Putnoe, Bedford, MK41 9AT. Letters are going out to all adults who are involved with the Beaver section. The invitation is also open to Young Leaders.

Completing your training

Chris Bent has been having telephone conversations with people who have not completed their training within the three year time period. In some cases people only have to validate a few items whereas in others they still need to complete and have validated a module or two.



Cub Leaders' skills day

Alan Burnham had planned to run a skills day for Cub Leaders and young leaders last month, but due to less than 20 people saying they would attend, we made the decision to cancel it.

Wood badges in 2009

In 2009, 65 people in the County were recommended for the award of their wood badge. This was nearly as many as were recommended in 2007 and 2008 together.

Scouting skills weekend

Over the weekend of 17th/18th April there was a Scouting skills event aimed mainly at Scout and Explorer Scout leaders. The weekend gave adults the opportunity to try some pioneering, plus use different cooking stoves and see different types of tents etc.

2011 Jamboree

The 36 young people who are going to the Jamboree next year have been very active recently. They spent a weekend at Henlow doing some work on the camp site and they have also been at Bromham doing some mapping exercises. They are also raising a considerable amount of money to help fund their adventure. If you have not signed up as a "friend of the Jamboree" please do so and receive regular updates from the team.

Scouts.org.uk

If you have not had a look at www.scouts.org.uk, recently you will not have seen the changes to it. It is a very useful source of knowledge, especially "Programmes on Line". If you are "not signed up" please do so as it will give you plenty of programme ideas. Whilst you are there, please check your record and update as necessary. Adding your email address will also mean we can get information to you as we are using electronic means of communication more often.

Good service

Is there someone in your District/Group who deserves to be recognised by the Scout Association? The Scout Association recognises "good service" in a number of ways. Two of these are "Chief Scout's Commendation for Good Service" and "The Award of Merit". If there is a member of your Group who you feel deserves to be recognised, please let me know. The criteria and form can be obtained from www.scoutbase.org.uk

Young Leader training

At a regional meeting recently one of the sessions several of the County team attended was that of young leader training. This has led to some thoughts on the importance of Y/L training, how it can be used if and when that person wants to take out an adult appointment and how the County can support the delivery of it. I shall shortly be emailing a number of people connected with the Explorer section or Young Leaders to get their views. I may also be contacting some of the Explorers or ex-Explorers to get their opinions.

Network

The number of people in Network has increased again this year and I know that Karl Collins has had recent discussions about forming another Network Unit in the County. Although we know how many 17 year olds there are in the County, we do not have details for them. If you have people in your Explorer Unit who are 17, please let Karl have their details so he can contact them about joining Network.

Going public

If you are planning on holding a recruitment campaign for both adults and young people and you want to borrow banners or display boards then the County have some you can borrow. All DCs are aware of the banners etc we have. We also have a limited supply of leaflets. There is also a selection of leaflets ranging from Beavers to Network to Adults available from the Scout Association.



Training Advisers

We are short of Training Advisers in several Districts in the County. Chris Bent and the Local Training Managers are always on the look-out for people who might want to become one. Could maybe you help someone with their training? This might be a new leader of a close by Group. Maybe you could help them with their personal learning plan, recommend the modules that would be useful and validate some of the learning. If you are interested, please contact your Local Training Manager as I'm sure they'll welcome you with open arms.

Bedfordshire Contingent badge

Have you got one of the Bedfordshire Unit badges for the Jamboree? If you have not and you want one or one for every member of your Group, please contact Gerry Pope (ACC International) as I'm sure he'll will only be too willing to sell you a few.

Joining lists

When we looked at the census information, we also looked at the number of young people on joining lists. There were 329 of Beaver age, 101 of Cub age and 44 of Scout age. Where Groups had 10 or more for a section, we wrote to them asking if they wanted to use Jo Cockcroft to help. Resources have been offered to three Groups who responded positively.

Satellite Beaver Colony

A satellite Beaver Colony has recently been opened in the County. It is based at a school and is aligned with a Group six miles away. The Colony is run by 12 adults on a rota basis with most of them only having to attend one week in four, although in truth some of them attend every week to help.

We are currently working with one of the Local Authorities to see if we can set up another satellite Colony at a lower school. There is then the possibility that we would look at a satellite Cub Pack at a middle school and Scout Troop at an Upper School.



Expedition training weekend

There is an expedition training weekend on 15th/16th May at Bromham. This is aimed at Explorer and Network members who are planning an expedition this year. Places are limited to 30 young people and 10 adults. For further information, please ask your DC or DESC.

Assessment to get Adventurous Activity Permit.

In the next few days, I hope to be able to detail some dates for people to be assessed for a climbing permit and also a kayaking permit. Once we have arranged these, then we will be trying to offer some dates where people can be trained in climbing and kayaking so that sometime in the future they can be assessed for a permit.

Stop press

When comparing the number of teenagers in Scouting in 2010 against the 2001 figures, Bedfordshire has the best increase on the mainland. We have shown a 63% increase in this age range over the last 10 years. Much of this is down to leaders running adventurous activities at Troop, Unit and Network meetings and as a result of this friends of members are saying "How do we join?" and we are retaining more people, especially in the 15 and 16 year old age range.

Future editions

This newsletter was easy to put together as there have been and are lots of things going on in the County. If you want any further information about any of the items in this newsletter, please feel free to contact your DC.

Written and issued by:
 Nigel Taylor
 Deputy County Commissioner
 Bedfordshire Scouts.

Tel 01525-633134
nigel.taylor14@ntlworld