



Bedfordshire Scouts

Development Update

Census

Taking into account all District figures in this year's census, the initial outlook is that there is an increase of around 1.3%. We are currently waiting for the Network figures but are confident that we will show an overall increase in the number of people involved in Scouting in Bedfordshire.

We are going to be looking at the figures and will be offering support to those Groups who have 10 or more young people on their joining lists. We will also be looking to see where numbers have decreased so we can work with the Group and District to ascertain the reason for this and if any support is needed.

Local Development Officer

Jo Cockcroft, our Local Development Officer, leaves us in early April. Jo has done some fantastic work around the County and has given Groups and Districts ideas for running evenings to help recruit adult volunteers. Jo will be starting a similar job with the Royal British Legion and I'm sure you will join me in wishing her good luck in her new job and thanking her for the work she did in the County.

Training

Last year 112 wood badges were awarded in Bedfordshire. This is the highest figure for many years and credit goes to Chris Bent and Local Training Managers for chasing people up and getting Training Advisers to validate some of the learning people have undertaken. 33 wood badges have already been awarded in 2011.

Annual General Meeting

This year's County AGM will be at 7:30pm on Wednesday 11 May at The Rufus Centre, Steppingley Road, Flitwick. This will be John Duley's last event as County Commissioner and the first event for the new County Commissioner. I'm sure that both would like to see a good turnout from all adult members.

Scouting skills weekend

Over the weekend of 16th/17th April there will be a Scouting skills event. This is aimed at all leader and Explorers. The weekend will give people the opportunity to try out some new activities and hopefully give them the confidence to try that activity out with their Beavers, Cubs, Scouts or Explorers. Activities will include fire lighting, pioneering, different cooking stoves, different types of ovens, axe and saw etc. If there are activities you want, e.g. map and compass, knots, programme ideas, please let me know and I'll arrange for it to be included. The event is being held at Boyd Field, Henlow.

County Support Plan

One of the aims 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 Team can talk to leaders who run sections and also to talk with the young people.

Another of the aims is to attend at least one section leaders' meeting in every District this year. The idea 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 and Tom

Eastwood 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.

Charity Trustees

There has been a recent change to POR whereby a Beaver Scout Leader, Cub Scout Leader or Scout Leader no longer has to be a Charity Trustee of the Group. They must indicate at the AGM that they are willing to be a Charity Trustee and therefore a member of the Group Executive Committee. If they do not "opt in" they will not be a member of the Group Executive Committee. Please ensure all Group Chairmen are aware of the changes and the need to ensure people "opt in" or "opt out" at Group AGMs. Where there is a partnership agreement between a Group and an Explorer Unit, the same rule applies to an Explorer Leader.

Southern 50.

This year Explorer Units from Ampthill and Woburn, Biggleswade and Icknield took part in the Southern 50. One of the teams from Ampthill and Woburn will be awarded the shield for being the first Bedfordshire Explorer team to complete the 50k hike and a team from Icknield will be awarded a shield for being the first Bedfordshire team home in the 30k hike.

Safeguarding

You should all be aware that safeguarding training is mandatory for all leaders and they must have attended a module when

they are having an appointment review. The modules are being run by a small team of trained personnel and they are being delivered around the County. Please ensure you attend one of the modules; they last for approx 2 hours.

2011 Jamboree

The 36 young people and 4 adults who are going to the Jamboree have been very active. They have met on a regular basis and, amongst other things, have been cooking, Morris dancing, camping, getting to know one another, and pioneering. They've also been bag packing, painting and litter picking to raise money for the Unit. They fly out in late July spending a few days in Copenhagen. After the Jamboree they will spend a few days on "Home hospitality (ho ho)" in Croatia before flying back. I'm sure that all 40 of them will have a time to remember for many years to come.

Young Leader training

I've had the pleasure of attending several young leader training events across the County in the last few months. One of the noticeable things is that they appear on the whole to be involved in the programme planning process and are also involved in helping run activities and games on Colony, Pack and Troop nights. This for me is most gratifying and proves that we are using "the leaders of the future" the right way.

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 your District Commissioner know. The criteria

and form can be obtained from www.scouts.org.uk

Stand up banners/display stands

If you are planning to run an event in the community and want to borrow some stand up banners or large display boards, please feel free to ask me. We have a few sets in different parts of the County. They are free to borrow.

Network

It is likely the number of people in Network has increased again this year. 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.

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 be only too willing to sell you a few.

First response training.

A reminder that you should complete your First Response (module 10) in the first year of your appointment. You must also have a valid First Response or equivalent when your appointment is reviewed. If you have not attended a First Response module, please sign up for one as a matter of urgency.

Climbing course.

Last year, several Districts provided John with details of people who wanted to be assessed so they could get an Adventurous Activity Permit for some activities. We were also provided with

details of people who wanted to be qualified to lead Archery and Shooting sessions. Some courses on archery and shooting have been run and we are now turning our efforts to get people assessed for artificial wall climbing. I have written to people on the list, inviting them to one of two events we are running. If there are any spaces not taken up, I will be contacting DCs to see if they have any people who would like to be assessed.

Annual Review

Each year we have to produce a document for the Charity Commissioners regarding activities and financial details relating to the last year. We also use this document to report matters at the AGM. This year is going to be different as we are going to have two reports. There will be one for the Charity Commission which will include all the legal details, e.g. finances, risk assessments etc. The second document will be 'punchy' and colourful! It is being put together by six Explorer Scouts and can be used for giving to local businesses, local authorities, Councillors etc. We hope it will give people a much better 21st Century view about Scouting. Out will go the long reports by members of the County team and in will come some short snappy items from young and not so young people.

Alternative Jamboree

People who applied for the Jamboree but were not selected were offered a weekend in Holland. Twelve young people took up the offer and they are due to spend the weekend of 9th to 12th April in Holland.

2012 County Camp

A couple of months ago, Rita issued a letter regarding support for a County Camp in 2012. The vast majority of responses I received were positive and we are therefore moving forward with it. The camp is planned for Phasels Wood and is scheduled for the first weekend in May.

The committee will be meeting shortly to look at activities, logistics, costs etc and this will be fed back via your DC. If there are any activities you would like to see at the camp, please let me know.

Girl Guiding

John, Chris and I meet regularly with members of the "Core Team" of Girl Guiding Bedfordshire. One of the reasons is to see if there are any areas where we can work together, e.g. training, events etc. We have provided them with details of all DCs and the areas they cover and they have reciprocated. We will all be meeting up in the next few months to see if there are areas where we can work together. If there events which you carry out with your local guide group, please let your DC know so it can be fed into our next meeting.

Beaver Colonies springing up

Recently, Arlesey set up a second Beaver Colony and this removed sixteen young people from the waiting list. I understand they run a parallel programme so there is only one lot of planning to be done. If you want to know more about how they went about setting this up, please contact Jan Brooker – DC Biggleswade or Stuart McQuire – GSL Arlesey.

I'm also aware of a Colony due to start in Amphill and Woburn in May. The leaders are currently going through their "Getting started" training. The Colony is being set up in a local village and the attendance of Richard Winslade at school assemblies has resulted in a good number of potential Beavers. If you want to know more about how this was set up, please contact Jo Winslade.

Beavers to camp

As you are aware, Beavers are now permitted to camp and the residential experience can last longer than 24 hours. We know there has been a mixed reaction

to the announcement. Most people feel the extension of time is a good step. Some are unsure about Beavers camping. If you are thinking of taking Beavers to camp, please discuss the matter with people who have experience of taking young people camping. What we want is for people's first experience of camping to be enjoyable and not one that will put them off going again in the future.

John Duley

As you know, John Duley is standing down as County Commissioner at this year's AGM. John has been CC for five years and has led us through several years of continued growth. It was John's idea to employ an LDO and the idea has been a great success. John is the only CC in the region to have an ACC for every section. He has been very supportive to DCs over numerous items, whether it was safeguarding, POR or just general support. He was very supportive when the County camp committee asked for some financial support for the 2007 camp. He was also instrumental in how the selection process for the 2011 Jamboree Unit should be run. John has been an asset to us in the County and I hope you will all share with me in wishing him and Jane good luck in their new roles in the North West.

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 contact your DC.

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