



**5th Dartford Scout Group  
Annual General Meeting  
Sunday 7 June 2015**

**Activities Report  
1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015**

Our special thanks to Lloyds Banking Group Community Fund, Sainsbury's Crayford,  
Dartford Borough Council and AKD Contracts



## **1 Welcome from the Chair**

I would like to welcome everyone to 5th Dartford Scout Group's activity day and AGM. The AGM is part of the necessary governance of any Scout Group and it is the job of the Group Chair to support the Scouting aims of the Group and to ensure that money and facilities are available to pursue those aims in the interests of our young members.

The AGM and the individual section reports in this newsletter cover April 2014 to March 2015.

During the financial year, we ran a small operating surplus, which is invested back into the Group and we have also been able to replace and improve equipment for climbing and archery and to replace some of the tentage.

Our fundraising team, including Lyn Medcalf and Lesley Bauckham and led by Karen Hannah, continues to do a fantastic job. The New Hall Fund stands at around £120,000 and we are now applying to obtain the larger funding needed to build a new hall, from organisations like Sport England and the National Lottery. The Council has confirmed that it will support us during the final phase and there will also be County Council capital grants available at the latter stages of the project.

However, we need to get you, the wider 5th Dartford family, involved in the New Hall project again. The most important non-Scouting aim for the next year is for you, our kids and parents, to get enthusiastic about having a new building - and to get you to put your time into getting enough money to make that a reality.

I am sure lots of you will have seen the new Cricket Pavilion in Hesketh Park. I am excited to tell you that we have just instructed the architects responsible for that building to begin the feasibility stage for our new building, which will include initial design drawings, based on the vision that you see pictured in our entrance hall.

The success of 5th Dartford relies on people like you volunteering to help the 5th Dartford family.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity, on your behalf, to thank Paul, our Group Scout Leader, and his team of section leaders, assistant leaders, activity leaders and all other helpers. His team of dedicated volunteers are critical to the success of our Group and of the wider 5th Dartford family. Thank you to you all for your time, energy and commitment.

Scouting is a fantastic modern success story. Our kids will be better adults, because they were once Scouts. The 5th Dartford family are an excellent example of that and I thank you all for your support.

Neil Young  
Chair, 5th Dartford Scout Group

## **2 Group Scout Leader's Report**

I would like to thank all of our leaders, instructors and helpers for the time, knowledge and skills they give freely, and congratulate them for making Scouting safe, enjoyable and fun. With their investment we have again experienced an increase in our membership this year. Many of our youth members are achieving their Bronze, Silver and Gold Chief Scout Awards with the Explorer Scouts actively working on their Duke of Edinburgh Awards and many other activity awards.

As usual we are one of the most camped Scout groups in the area, however this year we did not hold our usual Easter Camp, instead we supported DartJam 2015 the biennial District Jamboree, where more than 70 of us camped at Skreens Park, actively taking part with the leaders providing support and running activities. I would like to congratulate both Ben and Chris for being captain of our Cardboard Canoes and their success in the first, second and third race.

As a group we invest in our leader training and equipment, taking pride in our ability to offer a wide range of adventurous and exciting activities here at the hall, and the fantastic donation of the climbing wall staircase has been a great addition and has proved its worth already being used on evening climbing sessions and badge activity days. Our thanks to AKD Contractors for their generosity and support.

Fundraising for our new hall has been making steady progress, with credit going to our fundraising team for reaching out to the local community and applying for funding from the Sports Council, National Lottery and other organisations. Our next event is at the Dartford Festival (18 and 19 July) where we have hired a mobile climbing wall - please come along and support us.

We will start our Centenary celebrations on 4 December 2016. We have had an initial meeting and are looking to ensure that we provide celebrations that all can afford and be involved with and have plans to celebrate with:

- a special Centenary neckerchief and badge, free to all our members;
- a dinner dance;
- an AGM/Open Day celebration;
- a Family Camp affordable and local for all members; and
- a Summer Camp which will see us returning to the '5th Dartford Field' in Les Maingys, Guernsey, where 5<sup>th</sup> Dartford have camped historically.



There will be more information on these events nearer the time. These are our celebrations - please get involved and enjoy our fantastic achievement of 100 years of continuous Scouting.

I would like to say a special thank you to our executives who support the Scouting side, enabling us to run such an active programme of events. They provide the governance to our group, ensuring that we achieve the high standards expected and ensuring that we are fully compliant with the Scout Association and Charity Commission rules and best practices.

Yours In Scouting

Paul Boreham

Group Scout Leader

### 3 Fundraising Report



The 5th Dartford has had a successful year fundraising for the new hall, a staircase for the climbing and abseiling wall, Summer Camp, the World Jamboree, lights and equipment. Many thanks go to our fundraising committee, our leaders, instructors, parents and younger members who have all supported the 5th Dartford Scouts in so many different ways. Special thanks to Karen, Neil, Paul and Lesley for all their hard work and effort in co-ordinating paperwork and events etc. Many thanks too to Dartford Council, Sainsbury's, Lloyds Banking Group, the Rose and Crown, the Oddfellows, BT, Wakeham Trust and Linklaters LLP for their generosity to 5th Dartford.

A number of very successful events have been run to gain funds including a quiz evening (a big thank you to Del and Wendy), toy and Teddy Tombola, raffles, carol singing, bag packing, supporting the Masonic Craft Fairs and the Dartford Festival. Coupled with various donations, the 5th Dartford has had a good year and we hope to do even more next year.

Lyn Medcalf

(on behalf of the Fundraising Committee)

### 4 Section Reports

#### 4.1 Philpott Beavers

With a full colony of 24 we started the year off in the usual way with St. George's Day in Central Park with the weather being very kind to us.

Next came the busy month of May when 38 Beavers and their families took part in Jamboree on the Trail from Central Park to Sutton-at-Hone and finished very wet and very muddy but all in good spirits. Four days' later we paid a visit to Pets at Home in Crayford where the staff showed us (and let us handle) Rabbits, Guinea Pigs, Snakes and a Bearded Dragon. This was followed at the end of the month with four Beavers and their families joining in the Group's Family Camp at Thriftwood with the highlight for them being the Cardboard Canoe Race.

In June the weather turned hot so a Colony meeting spent at the Penney Close playground turned into a really fun event and, with the weather holding for the Group's AGM three days later, lots of Beavers got a chance to 'Have a Go' at climbing and abseiling.

Into July and a Mini-Olympics at Roseberry Gardens and finishing the season with our annual Water Games night with a mad 10 minute water fight at the end.

After the summer break we were back with our 'All Colony' Halloween Party attended by 43 Ghosts, Skeletons and Witches. Ooh Spooky! And a week later we were making a Guy,

burning him on a camp fire (thanks Skippy) and, along with the District Beaver Leader, singing lots of camp fire songs.

The Group's 98th Birthday Parade and party started the festive season off followed by Carol singing on a very cold Saturday afternoon at Sainsbury's Crayford and then our Last Night Christmas Party.



Into the New Year and 12 Beavers attended a Science Day hosted by the staff of The Oasis Academy at Hextable - a very hands-on experience for them, especially being allowed to light Bunsen Burners, which was a real treat for a six year old.

Along with all these activities lots of badge work has been achieved and many Bronze Awards gained. My thanks to all my Assistant Leaders and Helpers who all turn up every week and do such a grand job - your help is very much appreciated. Keep up the Good Work!

Auntie Beaver (Wendy Hurd)

#### 4.2 Peacock Beavers



Once again another year has passed all too quickly. It has been a very busy year with the Beavers doing lots of activities and meeting many challenges. Badge work continues every week, with the boys receiving many badges in all different categories.

The boys had a visit to Hobbycraft where they made a Halloween mask - they thoroughly enjoyed getting sticky and much glue was used! The staff at Hobbycraft remarked how well behaved they were. We joined Philpott Beavers for another excellent Halloween Party; the boys all dressed in Halloween costumes and scared all the leaders. Food and games pursued and things got very messy. Our thanks to Auntie Beaver for inviting us.



Then there were the usual events: Jamboree on the Trail, the Birthday church service and celebrations and the St. George's Day Parade – all of which were well attended and enjoyed by all.

We have had many boys gain their highest award that they can gain in Beavers – their Bronze Award. Many boys have moved on to Cubs where they will have new challenges to meet ... and more exciting camps to attend. We wish them well and hope they enjoy themselves.

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking Debbie, without her commitment I would be at a loss. Her ever-eagerness for thinking up different craft and continuing badge work is endless. Not forgetting Dave who helps at the end of the evening usually washing cups and clearing up - thank you again. Thanks also to Jess, George, Isobel, Jake and Kyran without whose help - running around with the games - us 'oldens' wouldn't cope.

Also I would like to thank Jim my husband who puts up with a lot – and also for all the cleaning that he does – those rubber gloves are forever falling to pieces. Last but not least may I take this opportunity of thanking you, the parents and guardians, for your support because if you didn't support us there would be no 5th Dartford Peacock Beavers.

Yours in Scouting

Maggie

### 4.3 Edwards Beavers

Edwards Beavers have had a very strong year with our numbers growing considerably as well as the number of leaders and helpers expanding.



We have managed to visit Christchurch which all the Beavers enjoyed with one even dressing up in ceremonial robes. We had several Beavers attend the District Science Day where they all became investigators and learnt about acidic and alkaline based chemicals. We have had a good turn-out at the Birthday Parade and St George's Day Services where all the Beavers had a smile on their face. As always badge work is key and it is one that we are really pushing through with the Beavers. A lot of the older ones are close to finishing their Bronze Award which will be nice to complete before they move up to Cubs.

The Beavers have enjoyed the use of the group's facilities. We have had a lot of fun with an archery session where all the Beavers (and some leaders) enjoyed popping balloons to get a lolly but with all of them improving over the night.

As always a massive thank you goes out to Lyn, Dorothy, Claire, Bev, Shea and Matt. They have been coming down each week, helping out and getting stuck in no matter what the task is. Without them I would be lost and Edwards Beavers would not be as successful or large as it is now. Thank you as always.

Vicky Watts

### 4.4 Leigh Pack

I'd like to firstly welcome two young new leaders to our pack - George Boyd, who is a former Cub of ours, and Becky Boreham who is one of our Explorers.

District events which we took part in this year included visits to the Cyclopark, sports day and the swimming gala (as for the overall results, it's the "taking part" that counts).

As autumn approached we did pumpkin carving for our Halloween lamps and making guys for our firework party which once again was held at Tracy's house (sorry about the burnt lawn Colin, but at least we got rid of some of your old wood!)

December tradition now is the ice skating at Hawley Garden Centre and a wonderful visit to the panto at the Miskin Theatre where, this year, we saw a very unusual take on Alice in Wonderland.

Silver awards went to Jack Crafter, Joseph Tuffee, Harry Mccarron, Jordi Connor and James Withers.

We had an Easter egg hunt with a difference using maps and compasses and when we returned from the break we had our fitness challenge.

We have been concentrating a lot this year on traditional skills such as map reading and knots, preparing the boys for the big leap into Scouts where they will need these on the adventures they will be taking part in.

We have had a big intake from Beavers so our numbers are looking very healthy and we have had to open up another six.

One night we went for our own version of MasterMind where our boys chose their specialist subjects. It was very trying to find questions on some of the subjects, John Humphreys had never had to ask about X Box Call of Duty!

We have just returned from our DartJam camp which was a great success and very much enjoyed.

I would like to say a big thank you to Tracy, Tina, Amy and Jacqueline for their hard work - we have a great team effort.

Many thanks

John Akela

#### **4.5 Collins Pack**

Yet another great year for Collins Pack, thank you to John, Sean and all the other parent helpers for making this possible. It is good to have James Pay come and visit us during his University breaks and for him to be awarded his Wood Badge on his last visit. We have had a good number of boys attain their Silver Chief Scout Award and the recent District Jamboree camp has helped more progress in theirs.

I am sure the Cub Pack is looking forward to another great Scouting year next year. Darren Watts

#### **4.6 Phillips Pack**

With 23 invested members we have had another busy year with lots of badge work. April began with archery, Personal Safety badge and of course St. George's Day parade.

In May we went to Roseberry Gardens for a games evening and started our Global Challenge badge - we cooked and tried foods from different countries.

We did the Emergency Aid badge in June, we had a great time making fake wounds to bandage - there was a lot of "blood"! 8 Cubs attended the Cyclopark for a day of cycling activities.

July was an outdoor month with more games at Roseberry Gardens, climbing and a water fight on our last evening.

September and October we started our Home Safety and Local Knowledge badges and included the ever-popular visit to the fire station where the Cubs were shown around the fire station, given a talk about the work of the Fire Service and got to sit in the fire engine.

We had a visit to the Civic Centre where the Mayor talked to the Cubs about the history of Dartford and showed them around the chambers. Two Officers from Kent Police came to give a talk about personal safety and answer the many questions put to them by the Cubs.

With help from Jason O'Brien we did our Pioneer badge in November and had quite a few weeks of tackling various different knots. We also attended the Gravesend Treasure Hunt organised by Gravesend District Cubs, it was a very wet day but the thought of McDonald's at the end kept everyone going and it was a very enjoyable day.



We attended the Birthday Parade in December and had a Cub party afterwards with lots of games and pizza. During our meetings we made Christmas crackers, had a Christmas party and on our final night before the Christmas break we went to Hawley Garden Centre for ice-skating.

January saw us starting our Disability Awareness badge, the Cubs painted pictures using their feet to hold the paint brush, they made sandwiches using only one hand and played football whilst blindfolded.

In February we began our Faith badge, the Cubs found out about a religion other than their own, they wrote a short prayer and visited Christchurch where they were shown around and given a superb talk by Lyn Parkinson.

March was Artist's badge month and time to make cards and gifts for Mother's Day.

Also during this this year 11 Cubs received their Silver Awards and had these presented to them by the Mayor at the Civic Centre.

We had 14 Cubs attend the District games day where they took part in a variety of races. 6 Cubs took part in the District Swimming Gala where Andrew Harding won two of his races.



In April 17 Cubs had a sleepover in the Scout Hall with an evening of games and sausage and chips. The following day we all went to Tower Bridge for a visit, we were able to look through the glass floor and see the bridge opening. We finished with McDonald's and arrived back at the hall with some very sleepy Cubs.

In May, for the first time, Cubs went to Archery Camp. There were 3 Cubs from Phillips Pack, they really enjoyed it and, in Kay's words, "they did us proud".

I have to say a huge thank you to Kay O'Brien for all her help and support, Phillips Pack really wouldn't survive without her. Also, thank you to James and Megan O'Brien who come along every week to help and to Mrs Cox for helping with subs.

Tracy Gardner

#### **4.7 Burne Troop**

As of April 2015 Burne Troop had 17 invested Scouts.

*Events:*

As a troop we always strive to have a varied set of activities. These are organised at troop, District, County and National levels. Highlights for the year include:

- Johnston Trophy (14 May). Activities on the day included a hike and cooking a £5 meal for four. Another great result with Burne Team coming 2nd overall.
- Cricket Competition (14 June) A very well-supported event, at which I am pleased to say we did very well.
- Night Hike (14 October). Again another event everyone enjoyed. Burne Team A won the award for the fastest team.

- RNLI Evening (15 March) Thank you to Sean for organising a very informative presentation from the RNLI. It was also good to see other members of the Group turn out to support the evening
- Mystery Evening with a Bang (15 February). The Scouts built real jet engines using jam jars and rockets from tin foil.

*Camps:*

During the year Burne Troop took part in the National Winter Camp, Group Easter Camp, National Archery Camp, Group Summer Camp and the National Scout Shooting Competition Camp.



*Badges:*

This year Scouts from Burne Troop have gained many badges including Model Maker, Fitness Challenge, Outdoor and Outdoor plus. Also 2 Scouts achieved the highest Scout Award, the Chief Scout's Gold Award.

*Change of Leaders:*

Burne Troop said goodbye to Jason the assistant Scout Leader in July with a barbeque and a signed 5th Dartford T-Shirt. Jason has moved abroad for a couple of years to teach. We wish him well. However, on the plus side, we have gained a new helper, Clive Rayner. Welcome Clive.

Tim Roscoe

#### **4.8 Earley Troop**

*Troop Nights:*

This year we have seen 5 Scouts come of age, 4 of whom achieved their Chief Scout Gold Award and all of them now invested in the Johnston Explorer Scout Unit. We invested 13 new Scouts, but 4 of them and 3 others have moved on to other interests. Our invested

total remains at 31 and our evenings continue to provide a wide and varied programme with a mixture of practical Scouting, games, tutorial, faith and discussions.

Examples of some of our evening activities are, but not limited to, Pioneering assault course, Target shooting, Archery, White Water Rafting, Bouldering, Abseiling, Fire lighting, Back Woods Cooking, Climbing, Trading post, science night, Axe and Saw, Navigation, Knots and Lashings, Health and Fitness, Table-top Rally, Rocket construction and launch and so much more.

*Awards:*

4 x Chief Scout Gold awards, 4 x Expedition, 14 x Creative, 19 x Adventure, 2 x Fitness, 10 x Outdoor, 3 Outdoor +, 4 x Promise, 2 Community, 18 Water activity, 2 x 1 Night Away, 7 x 5 Nights, 2 x 10 Nights, 4 x 15 Nights, 2 x 20 Nights & 1 x 35 Nights Away (Total Nights Away currently held by troop is 437) and 47 assorted activity badges.

*Activities and Events:*

19 Earley Troop members attended Easter Camp at Thriftwood Activity Centre for fishing, canoeing and backwoods skills.

20 of the troop represented the troop at the St. George's Day parade.

9th National Archery Tournament in Phasels Wood, attended by a party of 18 including 4 from the Earley Troop. An excellent camp for those having taken part in a 7 week tutorial prior to the competition and a silver medal won by Megan in the under 14s Field Targets.

17 May saw the Johnston Trophy District competition attended by 4 Earley Scouts, who would have won, were it not for forgetting the washing up.

District Tug-of-War: This year we entered two teams consisting of 8 Scouts each, but no medals this year.

20 Scouts from the troop joined in a Night Hike from Green Street Green to Hope Hill campsite to demonstrate their mapping skills by torchlight. This has proved to be a favourite activity with Scouts and features as an annual event as we arrive and leave before the Cubs arrive for their camp.

18 of our members participated in the return of the District cricket tournament on a beautiful early summer's evening.

A good number of Earley Troop attended the 2014 Summer Camp in Bournemouth, with great weather, pioneering, Overnight Hike, sailing, canoeing, an astronomy night in the New Forest and much more.

12 Scouts attended the District nocturnal adventure, where they had to navigate in small groups from one activity base to another unaided and did very well, putting their navigation skills to good use.

8 members of the troop attended Bisley with other group members to compete, once again, in the National Scout Air Rifle Championships.



Remembrance Parade was again well attended, with the Scouts making the effort to look smart and attentive.

5 lads represented the troop at the District Swimming Gala, which was well attended by Cubs and Scouts alike.

On the 6 December 2014, accompanied by family, Ben, Henry, Nathaniel and Angus of the Earley Troop attended the County's Chief Scout Gold Award presentations, where they were commended for their achievements as Scouts by dignitaries from within the Scouting movement – Well done lads!

An excellent turn-out for Birthday parade and church service, which saw 20 Earley Troop members arrive at church looking smart and 17 of them attending a paintball adventure afternoon thereafter.

9 Members of the troop attended the National Winter Camp at Gilwell Park for white water rafting and far too many activities to list - a cracking camp for the young folk, but not for the feint hearted.

*Leadership:*

Paul has continued to be an excellent support, but sadly Louise, who had been with us for a year or two, had to leave us when a new job opportunity required that she take a university course, which left no time for Scouting. However, the door is open for her return once she completes her further education.

Chris Pike has remained with us and, now a father himself, we'll have his lad's name down for membership too. New to the team this year is Delia Davidson who has moved in to the invested role of Assistant Scout Leader, having previously been an Assistant Cub Scout Leader on a Thursday evening. Delia brings with her a wealth of experience, especially for the younger members who may feel a little daunted by the big adventure jump to Scouts. In this year, we have also had assistance from two Explorers, Jack and Tom, who are

working on their Duke of Edinburgh awards and we hope that, after their required service period concludes, they will continue to support the troop.

I'd also like to thank Kerry for collecting the subs following the handover from Julie, who had done it for so many years. Additionally, thanks to Karen, Kev, Nick and Graham who have helped out on occasions with food preparation or activities where extra hands and eyes were required.

Finally, thanks to the young people with whom we gladly share our time, experiences and adventure; whose ideas, opinions and enthusiasm help shape the programme to make the Earley Troop the success that it is.

Yours in Scouting

Jason O'Brien



#### **4.9 Johnston Explorers**

Membership has grown since last year to 28 lively folk who are planning their own programme and are actively involved in the Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme. A number have completed their Young Leader training and are now looking to complete their missions where they are providing assistance.

The Explorers have actively taken part in Easter, Summer and Winter Camps and competed at the National Target Shooting competition at Bisley, the District Monopoly Run, the County Bog Seat Challenge and National Gilwell 24. They also took part in the Edinburgh Chase night navigation exercise, with 4 teams successfully completing the course.

Thanks to Jim and Maggie for looking after the finances and subs and Neil, Jason and Keith (among others) for assisting on section evenings.

Yours in Scouting

Dave Monteith