

**5th Dartford Scouts Group Executive Meeting
Tuesday 28th February 2023 19:30 @ Scout Hall**

Agenda

1.Apologies: Karen Hannah

2.Welcome from the chair.

Russ welcomed those attending; Paul Boreham, Bryn Alcock, Alice Bloom, David Bloom, Del Hurd, Jason O'Brien & Tim Roscoe and the meeting commenced @ 19:40.

3.Update on intruder 4/5 Jan by Chair and others involved. Any lessons learnt?

Russ reminded the Executive of how the intruder gained access, the criminal damage caused, theft of Group property and the repairs effected. Sadly the police and council had not offered much help or guidance, the police failed to attend and despite the individual being well known to them with eye witnesses, clear photographs and CCTV recording of the actual break in, were taking no further action as they felt unlikely to secure a conviction. A crime reference was obtained and our insurers have paid out on the stolen equipment to the value of £2,900, less £100 excess. Some items have already been replaced and new rifles and pistols will be purchased once we have received current prices.

4.Update from GSL on future development of 5th Dartford Site.

Paul advised that we had been approached by a company interested in developing our site to include flats above a new hall and facilities. Although some 3D images had been requested they were yet to be received. Paul laid out some small plan views, which whilst smaller than our existing hall, offered two new halls with kitchenette facilities, wet room & office space. The benefit of the proposal in its current form is that we would not incur the cost of the build and would remain freeholders of the land, with the developers covering the build cost and their margin from the sale of the flats. Alice pointed out that some of the layout may need to be adjusted for privacy purposes as would be overlooked when our wall was in use. The proposal is still subject to planning, but the meeting agreed it was worth looking in to it further.

5.Info from the Chair regarding Land Registration.

Russ read out the following received from solicitors:

“Hi Russ

Thank you for your email.

The situation now is as follows.

The most recent conveyance that is held by the Scout Group which proves absolute ownership of the land, is the Indenture dated 18 December 1922. That document sets out that the land was transferred from The Territorial Force Association of the County of London to (1) Albert Brackenbury Leigh, (2) William George Phillips, (3) Edgar James Edwards and (4) Arthur Harold Painter.

While you have been able to provide me with much useful background information, which sets out the Scout Group's use of the land over the years, that does not amount to the same, in law, as a conveyance setting out a transfer of the land to the Scout Group.

The Land Registry would not therefore register this land with what is known as 'Absolute Title'. Absolute Title is most commonly found with property ownership. It shows that the person owns the land free from any third party claim and is relied upon by future purchasers and lenders.

There are now two options available.

1. The first option will be to apply to the Land Registry with the information available. In support of the application I would prepare a Statement to be given by you containing much of the background information that you have given to me including the fact that the land has been occupied by the Scout Group for all these years.

If the Land Registry was not satisfied with the evidence, they may reject the application completely. Though, I believe the more likely result will be that they will register the land in favour of the Scout Group. However, they will register it with a lesser quality of Title than the 'Absolute Title' mentioned above. I suspect they will register the land with what is known as 'Possessory Title'. This is the same level of Title that is registered when registration takes place following a successful application in proving what is colloquially known as 'squatter's rights'. The legal terminology for that though is 'adverse possession'. Title such as this signifies, that the land is potentially open to a claim from a third party that they have an interest in the land and can challenge the ownership of the registered proprietor. It is not therefore ideal though may be the best solution in the circumstances.

Once land has been registered with 'Possessory Title' for at least 12 years without any successful challenge, the Title can then be upgraded to 'Absolute Title'.

2. The second option will be to apply to the Charity Commission and provide all the evidence that is held and seek an order that the Official Custodian is to be registered as the owner of the land on behalf of the Scout Group.

I cannot guarantee whether such an application would be successful with the Charity Commission so there is a level of risk that the time and cost is incurred and we do not get the result that is hoped for. They may not be convinced by the evidence held.

The application can be made online and will involve submitting details of the Scout Group, details of the land and the evidence of ownership to the land.

Most of that has been obtained. Though, I would equally suggest submitting a Statement from you as is suggested with option 1.

The fees incurred so far in the matter are £950 + VAT.

To proceed with option 1, I would have thought that the final legal fees will be in the region of £1,350 + VAT plus any third party expenses. Such as those incurred with the Land Registry.

To proceed with option 2, I would have thought that the fees for dealing with this will be in the region of £2,100 + VAT plus any third party expenses. Though, if the application is not successful and a subsequent Land Registry application is not made then, the fees will be slightly less and in the region of £1,800 + VAT.

Kind regards

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It was agreed by all that we would pursue option 1, Possessory Title, then in 12 years time apply for Absolute Title.

6. Group Census / Capitation.

Paul confirmed that the group census had been completed as of 31/January and we currently have 83 youth members. Capitation costs to HQ £36, County £12.50 & £5.50 to District, making £54 per youth member, which we do not charge separately as it comes out of subs.

7.OSM/CAF Update / discussion.

Paul advised that all sections had now transitioned to CAF and subs were now being paid directly to Group and that OSM pre-payment cards had been issued for section budgets where wanted, although expenses can still be claimed the old way if required with receipts posted to OSM as an unpaid item.

Paul asked Jason to investigate if there was any discount to be had as a group for using OSM .

8.Badge / T-shirt Accounts (Del Hurd)

Del informed that as the District Badge shop was now also on CAF banking how would our badge shop account be topped up. Paul said that we could top up the account directly from our account and sent an email to Team DC to clarify how this would be received.

Del said that owing to some of the Explorers requiring much larger sized activity shirts a new order had to be placed to hold sufficient stock and that prices had now increased to £10 per T-shirt. It was agreed that all T-shirts, regardless of size / stock held, would be sold at £10 to avoid confusion. An invoice was produced for the order for Del to be reimbursed.

9.Section Reports.

Earley Scout Troop:

Paul reported 21 members, with 2 to move up to Explorers after summer and 5 recent joiners. A program was in place up to summer and leadership to include himself, Keith Furlong, Andy Balfe and Kevin Wells, although Kevin taking time out overseas for family reasons. Expedition being planned for older Scouts. Paul asked for the support of 2 Explorers for Friday evenings.

Burne Troop:

Tim reported 11 members, with 1 new walk in and leadership including himself, Robert Courtney, Clive Rayner and Chris Roscoe. Program in place up to Easter and Christopher refereeing at the upcoming District 5-a-side , although can only get 3 YP to attend, Paul noted that he would be helping out with paperwork and had 7 YP interested, so the group could enter 2 mixed teams. There are only 5 teams entered in the competition out of 11 groups in the District. Tim noted that Abigail Roscoe, his daughter, had not been adequately credited by District for her efforts to secure road closures from KCC, so that we could have a proper St George's Day Parade this year.

Johnston ESU:

Jason reported youth numbers at 30 with a good number coming from the two Scout Troops at 3rd and the program is very much week by week with leadership still just himself and Kay. DofE not happening since Sean and Dave no longer active with the section since the pandemic, although some YP are doing it through their schools.

Collins Pack:

David reported 15 cubs, 13 boys, 2 girls. 1 to go up to Scouts in May and expecting to Beavers to start linking. Working on Skills Challenge badge now, then the World Challenge. On 30 March will be at Scout House for fish 'n' chips & movie night and have 11 attending 'Cuboree' at Kingswood, Ashford 29-31 September. David said he would like to do a cub camp this year and have his nights'

away permit validated. Paul added that he would look to support that camp.

Philpott Beavers:

Alice reported 12 beavers including two girls, with 4 due to join soon, two of them currently Squirrels at 3rd, but will be joining us as elder sister already in group. Leadership including herself, Del Hurd, Ashley Hurd & Bryn Alcock. Jason asked if David Lenney was still with the section, but Paul advised he moved due to work, but was now Scouting in Gravesham District. There are two Beavers to receive their Bronze award, but due to the ADC for Beavers standing down there was nobody to present the awards before the District event. Paul volunteered to make the presentations.

10.AOB

Jason noted that we were still short on uptake for Easter Camp with only 27 signed up out of a possible 36, so a final push to get more commitment from members. We have good leadership attending: Jason, Kay, Paul, David, Del, Ashley, Clive, Robert and Bryn.

Paul informed that we have George from County coming to us on 25/3 to renew our Archery permits and that some folk had recently renewed their shooting permits. Jason asked if we could look to renewing climbing equipment and climbing permits and Paul said we would look at that after archery.

11.Close

Russ thanked everyone for coming and closed the meeting at 21:10