

Annual General Meeting 2021



Table of Contents

<i>Welcome by the District Commissioner.....</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>District Governance Structure.....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Beavers.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Cubs.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Explorer Scouts.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>International.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Media.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Training.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Group Reports.....</i>	<i>8</i>
1 st Atherstone.....	8
Coleshill.....	8
1 st Hartshill.....	8
1 st Meriden.....	9
2 nd Sheepy.....	10
Water Orton.....	10
<i>Awards.....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Our Thanks.....</i>	<i>12</i>

Welcome by the District Commissioner

I firstly would like to take this time to welcome you to our annual report.

The last eighteen months has not been like anything we have experienced within our lifetimes and within our scouting history. Over the weekend just gone, many volunteers from across UK Scouting joined together virtually at this year's Gilwell Reunion. At this weekend we often have an opportunity to meet and join up with friends, old and new from our wonderful organisation and particularly at this year's reunion we witnessed the handover from Tim Kidd to Carl Hankinson as our new UK Chief Commissioner. Throughout the handover, Tim and Carl spoke on theme of journeys and the journey which the organisation has gone through over the last 18 months.

Within my report to you all last year, I started with reflecting on the journey which the previous year as well as spending some time looking back on the challenges which we were presented with due to the devastating effects of the global covid-19 pandemic. I felt when writing my report this year that I should start with a similar sense of reflection and continue this theme as we across the District not only look back at our journey since September 2020 but look forward to the next twelve months.

It very much goes without saying the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic has impacted not only scouting in Atherstone but across the country. The pandemic has also affected us all in many different ways including both personally and professionally but also brought with it a period of uncertainty. Despite these challenges and in the true spirit of scouting we have risen to them and progressed through these times with great positivity. We are now fortunate to be in a position to have seen many of the restrictions ease and to now gather a sense of feeling for the return to the a level of new normality.

As the restrictions have eased, many of our groups have seized the opportunity to return to face to face with many groups already starting to plan night's away experiences. This is to continue the outstanding work which has taken place throughout the last twelve months as we dealt with the various restrictions in place. All of our Groups across the District have continued to deliver some amazing scouting opportunities and where possible, I have been grateful to get out and about to visit a number of groups and sections to see this first hand.

The journey of the District over the last twelve months as I am sure you will agree has been one which has not been unique to us but similar to many other Districts across the country. We have used this as great opportunity to allow us to develop and look at a number of key areas and to focus on sustainability. As a District we have not stopped with continuing to build on key areas of work from the previous year and commenced several new projects with the anticipation that these will further support our Groups and our District. Some of these areas of work have included a focus on awards and recognition of our young people's achievements when they have completed their top awards. It has also included other areas of development such as our district scout and badge shop. We have also been successful in securing essential funding to ensure sustainability to further enable us to deliver our vision of skills for life. Utilising this funding we have been able to purchase expedition equipment for use by all across the district whilst also being able to provide financial support to groups in difficulty and particularly with the annual membership fee.

A few months ago, we reported our annual census figures to Headquarters. As a District we have unfortunately reported a small reduction in our overall membership. It is however, key that as we continue through the journey over the next year we maintain our provision to be in a position when required to offer Scouting to more young people. I am comforted that our reduction was in keeping with the average across the County and I am confident that we will emerge from the pandemic stronger and more prepared to welcome new members and volunteers. I particularly would like to extend a warm welcome to everyone who have joined us over the last year. Recruitment does remain a priority for the District and across the District, we have all been working hard to establish connections to support with this.

As we look forward to our journey over the next twelve months we will continue to explore opportunities to provide additional support across the District to as we aim to deliver sustainable and safe scouting with a vision of growth to lead us forward into the future. I am immensely proud to be able to continue leading Scouting in Atherstone, and would like to take this time to thank each of our young people, their parents and carers and our adult volunteers and supporters for your commitment, hard work and dedication to ensuring that we can all gain and share skills for life.

Phil Cracknell
District Commissioner

District Governance Structure

The District Scout Council is the electoral body, which supports Scouting in the District. It is the body to which the District Executive Committee is accountable.

District Executive Committee

Ex-Officio Members

County Chair	Mr Andy Walker
County Commissioner	Mr Nigel Hailey
District Chair	
District Commissioner	Mr. Phil Cracknell
District Youth Commissioner	Mr. Charlie Flick
District Secretary	Mrs Jenni Taylor
District Treasurer	Mr Malcolm Walters
District Explorer Scout Commissioner	Mr. Steven Gill
District Scout Network Commissioner	

Elected Members - Elected members are elected at the District Annual General Meeting.

Nominated Members

Assistant District Commissioner (Activities)	Mr Andrew Ward
Group Scout Leader (1St Meriden / Hartshill)	Mr Gerry Russell
Group Scout Leader (1 st Wood End)	Mr Michael Clarke
Appointments Advisory Secretary	Mr Steven Wright
Appointments Advisory Member	Mrs Susan Wright

Co-opted Members - Co-opted Members are usually co-opted annually by the District Executive Committee.

District Structure

District Vice-President	Mr Leonard Jacob
District Chair	
District Commissioner	Mr. Phil Cracknell
District Youth Commissioner	Mr. Charlie Flick
District Secretary	Mrs. Jenni Taylor
District Treasurer	Mr. Malcolm Walters
District Chaplain	Reverend. Michael Brandsma
Assistant District Commissioner (Beaver Scouts)	Mrs. Natalie Gardner
Assistant District Commissioner (Cub Scouts)	Mrs. Claire Bailey
Assistant District Commissioner (Scouts)	Mr. Richard Gunton
District Explorer Scout Commissioner	Mr. Steven Gill
District Explorer Scout Leader (Young Leaders)	Mrs Lesley Gill
Explorer Scout Leader - Oddesey ESU	Mr. Mark Jones
Explorer Scout Leader - The Ballers ESU	Mr. Richard Gunton
District Scout Network Commissioner	
Assistant District Commissioner (Activities)	Mr. Andrew Ward
District Nights Away Advisors	Mrs. Lavinia Colclough
	Mr. Stuart Mann
Assistant District Commissioner (International)	Mr. Stuart Mann
Assistant District Commissioner (Adult Support)	Mr. David Handley
Assistant District Commissioner (Growth & Inclusion)	Mrs. Fiona Rouse
District Media Manager	Mr. Jordan Mann
District Development Advisor	Mr. Dave Cracknell
District Advisor	Mrs. Michelle Whitney

District Training Team

Local Training Manager	Mr. Phil Cracknell
District Training Advisors	Mr. Andrew Bailey
	Mrs. Barbara Clinton
	Mr. David Hanley
	Ms. Lynda Spratt
	Mr. Stuart Mann
	Mrs. Belinda Bollands

Appointments Advisory Committee

District Appointments Secretary

Mr. Steven Wright

District Appointment Committee Member

Mrs. Susan Wright

Group Scout Leaders

1St Atherstone

Mrs. Wendy Ketch

Austrey and Warton

Vacant

Coleshill Scout Group

Vacant

Hartshill

Mr. Gerry Russell

Mancetter

Mr. Geoff Wood

Meriden

Mr. Gerry Russell

Sheepy

Mrs. Barbara Clinton

Water Orton

Mr. Stuart Mann

Wood End

Mrs. Naomi Gunton

Beavers

I took on the role of ADC Beavers back in March. Unfortunately, due to lockdown and the restrictions we had, the Beaver Scout Section have not been able to meet and get together. Some groups had been meeting via Zoom and when allowed to do so, some went back to face to face scouting. Unfortunately, some groups have not yet be able to return and continue to meet via Zoom.

I am looking forward to being able to visit the different colonies before Christmas, whether face to face or on Zoom, also bringing the Beaver Scout Section together in the future.

Natalie Gardner

ADC Beavers

Cubs

Over the last year for the Cub Section, we have held a couple of virtual meetings which have been mainly attended by Mancetter, Atherstone and Hartshill.

These meetings have provided us with an opportunity to have an informal catch up with Leaders from across the District and these are open to all Leaders who are involved with the Cub Section. If you are interested in attending, please get in touch with me.

I am keen to get out and visit groups and have been in touch with some groups already in the District.

I'm looking forward to continuing with supporting cubs and leaders across Atherstone and hope that we can grow as a section and a district.

Claire Bailey.

ADC Cubs

Explorer Scouts

It's been an unusual first year in post.

However, I have got to know the explorers in both Odyssey and The Ballers with regard to their DofE awards, joining in with those who are in network completing awards and our virtual In The Cloud Unit, aimed at supporting Young Leaders who do not attend an actual unit.

This summer 15 explorers completed their Bronze expedition, and 4 their Bronze award, 7 have completed their silver expedition, and we are expecting at least 1 award sign off. 4 explorers/network have completed their gold expedition, 3 their residential section and we are expecting 2 Gold DofE awards to be completed before the end of 2021.

Onwards to this coming year where I look forward to working with the unit leaders, supporting some aspects of their programme they request, and providing some District Explorer events.

Steven Gill
District Explorer Scout Commissioner

International

When I first took on this role and discussed my plans, I didn't expect the first 18 months in a global pandemic. We have seen all of the International camps being postponed or cancelled and wondering when such events will go ahead. However, during the past nine months, vaccinations happening globally, there is light at the end of the tunnel. In 2023 we see two major events: the World Scout Jamboree and our District is Scouts and Explorers attending Haarlem Jamborette. Selection for World Scout Jamboree starts very soon in Warwickshire, and there are still young people places available for Haarlem Jamborette.

I know from when I first travelled as a young person on an International trip and as a leader the importance and significance of these experiences. I look forward to meeting and assisting participants as they get closer to these fantastic events. Unfortunately, with the pandemic and my focus on keeping my Scout Group running, I have not been able to do more to bring International experiences to District. The plan is, as we all start to find a new balance, I can help more to bring International Scouting, not just to those travel in the next two years, but to section nights and other events. So, I ask if you have any ideas or want to discuss International Scouting; please get in touch.

Stuart Mann
ADC International

Media

Despite the challenges young people and adult volunteers have faced over the last 12 months, everyone has been resilient and overcome what has been thrown in front of them. It has been great to see and hear many groups continue their weekly Scouting adventures virtually while restrictions did not permit this. In turn this allowed volunteers to review their processes and adapt to a new style of delivery.

Additionally, it has been great to see leaders emailing me and telling me all about their young people gaining their Chief Scout Awards and Top Award badges. Following the easing of restrictions, I can see a higher volume of awards being awarded so please do not hesitate to share this information with me so I can share this on our social media channels.

Following last year's report, the districts presence has become broader and better established in both a digital and in-person presence.

As always if you need any advice, have any concerns, or you would like me to see you during a section night or event then please get in touch with me.

Jordan Mann
District Communications Manager - Media

Training

Training has continued to thrive over the last year and has remained a key priority for us within the District. Our team of District Training Advisors have continued

to work with adult volunteers across the District to validate and support leaders to complete their modules and wood badges. We have also welcomed some new Training Advisors to the District Training Team.

I am pleased to announce that within the last twelve months we have seen 26 woodbages be awarded across the District. This was an Increase from the previous year and I wish to extend my sincerest congratulations to all of our leaders who have been awarded their wood badges within the last twelve months.

Through using various platforms we have had a big push on our compliance training. This is vital to ensuring that our adult volunteers remain up to date and current with the latest Information and knowledge to deliver safe scouting. Particularly as part of this focus we have looked at the getting started training, safeguarding and safety courses. I am pleased to report that we now only have a few leaders outstanding on this training and many of them have joined us through the last couple of months, so thank you all for your hard work in achieving this.

Delivering safe scouting is a key for the District and it is everyone's responsibility to be up to date with training. This includes ensuring that they remain up to date with First Aid training through the various methods of training which are on offer.

Please do continue to keep an eye out for further opportunities to complete your wood badge modules as well as several other exciting training opportunities which are due to take place in the forthcoming twelve months.

Phil Cracknell

District Local Training Manager

Group Reports

1st Atherstone

Wendy Kech

Group Scout Leader

Coleshill

Throughout the pandemic of 2020, we kept in touch with all the parents, giving them things to do that would earn them badges.

We also delivered 9 doorstep Bronze awards, with the help of the Mayor of Coleshill.

Throughout the year we managed to keep all our beavers, only losing those that were moving up.

In 2021 we did start back in January by doing Zoom meetings. By end of June when we finished till September, we have roughly 22 beavers coming back, with only 2 that haven't become of age for cubs.

Deborah Bromage

Assistant Group Scout Leader

1st Hartshill

Again, during the year 2020-21 there has been continued progress at the 1st Hartshill Scout Group although there have been ongoing challenges caused by the Covid – 19 pandemic.

Partly due to these challenges the work on of redeveloping the Group HQ building has been delayed. The pandemic and the resultant lockdowns have meant that our discussions with Warwickshire County Council (who own the building) about the HQ development have taken far longer than expected as Council staff were not available and/or on furlough.

The non-availability of Council staff has also been the cause of frustration in our negotiations over a new Lease for the HQ.

Despite all of these difficulties and frustrations the Group as a whole has thrived, with the total number of young people members (Beavers, Cubs, and Scouts) reaching 75 at the 2021 census. This means that the Group is now the largest in the District.

The Scout Group has assisted with the development of a new Explorer Scout Unit (Ballers), which is based at the Hartshill HQ. There is a partnership agreement in place between the Group and the Unit, which is now meeting on Monday evenings.

During the 2020 – 2021 year there have been periods of Covid – 19 lockdowns, which has resulted in no face-to- face Scouting activities, however the section Leaders have maintained their programmes by using virtual technology. Towards the end of 2020 there was a short period when F2F Scouting was allowable within certain parameters, including having Covid-19 Risk Assessments being completed and approved by the District Executive Committee. The three Group sections (Beavers, Cubs and Scouts) and the Explorers all operated with their Risk Assessments approved.

Following this short period of F2F Scouting, the lockdown was again reintroduced until the spring of 2021, when once again F2F Scouting was again allowed.

Within the different constraints the Group and its sections has continued to offer Scouting experiences to its members. These experiences have included:

- A Cub Scout virtual camp
- A District virtual camp
- The Care for Care Home project
- The District (virtual) Walk to Poland event
- Section rambles around Hartshill
- Section Zoom meetings
- Scout Zoom meeting with overseas Scouts
- Investitures of Beavers, Cub, Scouts and Leaders
- A Group Zoom meeting at the end of 2020
- Planning for D of E Award scheme
- D of E Expedition

None of the Group activities would have been possible without the Group and section Leadership Teams together with the Group Executive members.

Natalie Gardner leads the Beaver Scout section, Dawn Stringer leads the Cub Scouts, while Richard Gunton leads the Scout section. Richard also leads the Explorer Scouts Unit. The Leaders are all supported by teams of Assistant Leaders.

During the past year a number of new Assistant Leaders have been appointed, they are all very welcome here at 1st Hartshill. New Leaders are invested as members of the Scout Association and undertake training. To help the new Leaders settle into the Group, Richard prepared a Group Welcome and Induction pack which is proving very useful.

As well as working within the Group a number of our Leaders have also taken roles in the Atherstone Scout District Team, Natalie Gardner became the Assistant District Commissioner (Beaver Scouts), Richard Gunton is the Assistant District Commissioner (Scouts), while Naomi Gunton took on the role of Group Scout Leader for the 1st Wood End Scout Group. Naomi has also continued her work on developing our Web Site. Dave Handley who was our previous Cub Scout Leader became the Assistant District Commissioner (Adult Support).

The Group is supported by a very active Executive Committee (Trustees), chaired by Dawn Stringer. Like the sections and Leader meetings the Executive has continued to meet via Zoom. The 2020 Group AGM was held in September 2020 via Zoom.

Over the past year a lot of work has been undertaken by the Executive (especially the chair) in preparing the HQ for the future. There is a new, up to date electrical supply and the electrics have been updated to ensure that they meet modern regulations, this new supply is independent of the school from which it was previously connected. The kitchen has been repositioned and modernised. There has also been a lot of negotiation with the County Council about a new lease. This new lease is now in force and lasts until October 2027, this gives us more security of tenure that we previously had.

Thanks, for the continued success of the 1st Hartshill Scout Group goes to many individuals, organisations, and companies. Amongst these are obviously the Leaders and Executive members, the young people themselves, the parents, the local County Councillor, the Parish Council, and our financial supporters.

Gerry Russell
Group Scout Leader

1st Meriden

Once again, the Covid -19 pandemic has created challenges for the 1st Meriden Scout Group during 2020 - 21, face to face Scouting was put on hold for almost the whole of 2020 and well into 2021. It was not until the spring of 2021 that we were once again able to meet the young people F2F. The Leaders have maintained contact with the Beavers, Cubs and Scouts via social media and virtually via Zoom. The Cub section embraced Zoom more than the other sections, so several Cubs were able to undertake badge work at home.

Despite all the difficulties and frustrations caused by Covid-19 the Group as a whole has continued to work with the young people of Meriden and the local community.

At the time of the 2021 annual census, taken in March 2021 the number of young people members (Beavers 6 to 8 years of age, Cubs 8 to 10.5, and Scouts 10.5 to 14) was only 34, which is lower than it has been for many years. However, since coming back to F2F Scouting the numbers have risen so that we now have 48 youth members. The Group also works closely with the Odyssey Explorer Scout Unit (14 to 18) which is based at the Meriden HQ where there are 8 members. There is a partnership agreement in place between the Group and the Unit, which meetings on Monday evenings.

Prior to restarting face to face meetings, we had to produce a Covid-19 Risk Assessment document to show how we would operate and what procedures we had in place to mitigate the coronavirus. This document had to be approved by the Atherstone Scout District Executive. We also had to purchase materials to ensure that the HQ was Covid safe.

When we did restart, we undertook most of our activities out of doors, to help when there was rain our marquee was erected on the ground by the side of the hut. Unfortunately, on the night of the 'big' storm the marquee pegs were torn out of the ground and the marquee itself was blown over the fence. When it was rescued the metal poles were all twisted and the top and sides ripped in a number of places. So, we are now raising funds to purchase a replacement.

Amongst the activities the young people have undertaken there has been;

- Axe and Fire safety
- Pioneering
- Cooking
- Cycle safety
- Cyclist
- Map Reading and compass work
- Making shelters from waterproof sheets
- Planning for D of E Award scheme
- D of E Expedition

None of the Group activities would have been possible without the dedication of the Group Leadership Team and the Group Executive members.

Our new Beaver Scout Leader (Eleanor Willis) has settled in very well into the section and the Group as a whole, a new Assistant Beaver Scout Leader (Scott Kirton) has also been appointed.

The Cub Scout Leader (Andy Ruthven) continues to manage the section with help from Lynda Spratt and Millie Simpkin.

Mark Jones and Lynda Spratt run the Scout section. Mark also is the Leader of the Explorer Scouts.

All the sections also benefit greatly from assistance from the Young Leaders.

New and experienced Leaders in Scouting undertake training to ensure that their Scouting knowledge and Skills are kept up to date. Over the past year a lot of this training has been carried out via virtual media.

The Group continues to take an active role in village matters, for example a wreath was laid at the war memorial to commemorate Remembrance Day, Group members raise the Flag on the village green for royal and special occasions as directed by the Parish Council, we also include items in the local Meriden Magazine for each edition

Over the past year the Group has received financial support from the Meriden Sports and Recreation Trust, this money was used to purchase pioneering equipment and also to purchase materials to help to keep the Scout Hut Covid secure.

Thanks for the continuation of the 1st Meriden Scout Group during a very difficult period goes to many individuals, organisations, and companies. Amongst these are obviously the Leaders and Executive members, the young people themselves, the parents, the Parish Council, and our financial supporters, including the Meriden Sports and Recreation Trust.

Gerry Russell
Group Scout Leader

2nd Sheepy

The past year has undoubtedly been a struggle for Sheepy, particularly financially. However, on the 'Scouting front' whilst we have not had any F2F Scouting since we closed our doors to Covid back in March 2020 our section leaders have kept in touch with all our younger members and encouraged them with lots of ideas and projects to engage them into Scouting activities.

To this end, we have many scouting badges due to be presented when we return to F2F Scouting in September 2021.

As GSL of Sheepy I am very proud of the fact we have a great leadership team along with a very supportive Exec committee.

Our leaders have taken the time during lock down to ensure they are all up to date with their essential training. We have welcomed a new ASL who will be joining us F2F in September and I am pleased to say he has already completed all his essential training modules which means his role is already 'Full Membership' rather than 'Provisional' even before he meets the young members of his section. We have two other new leaders arriving in Sept so our time during lock-down, as you will realise, has also been spent on recruitment.

To this end, we are looking forward to opening our doors to both new leaders and younger members. Happy days ahead at Sheepy for 2021-22... providing of course we can afford our 2022 annual membership fees. 2021 wiped out any donations we received for equipment as we had to use it on membership fees instead!

Thanks to all our group Leaders/Executive and Young Members who are eagerly looking forward to returning to F2F Scouting, I can honestly say Sheepy is a group I am very proud to be part of.

Barbara Clinton
Group Scout Leader

Water Orton

As with many others, the past year has been a rollercoaster, with some lows and highs along the way. Sadly, we have had members and leaders step away from Scouting, but that has is balanced with a bounce back from new members and an ever-increasing waiting list. Nevertheless, we kept an active programme during the various lockdowns and restrictions, running weekly virtual sessions, camps, and challenges. With the virtual sessions, we have found that some of the ideas we ran with may make it to our ongoing programme, with virtual camping weekends and challenges. In addition, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts, have all managed to keep up with many of their core badges, with many still able to earn the relevant Chief Scouts awards.

The return to face-to-face Scouting has been fun and challenging too. Preparing risk assessments, planning sessions, ensuring our young members, leaders and parents all had the information they needed encouraged us to better use elements of technology for better communication. So, in addition to the increasing paperwork, we have worked to ensure we can make it as streamlined as possible to focus on delivering Scouting to our young people. Our waiting

Awards

Good Service Awards

Chief Scouts Commendation for Good Service

David Handley
Dawn Stringer
Denise Makepeace
Jenni Cartwright
Jenni Taylor
Lynne Holden
Malcolm Walter
Matthew Braddish
Richard Buchanan
Wendy Ketch

Award for Merit

Andrew Ward
Geoff Wood
Heather-Anne Boulstridge
Keith Mann
Lynda Spratt
Michael Clarke
Natalie Gardner
Sally Bayliss
Susan Wright

Bar to the Award for Merit

Barbara Clinton
Stuart Mann

lists are longer than I would like, with keeping our numbers reduced, so we could use the building if needed has not helped. The plan now is to balance our numbers and leaders to ensure we can adapt to the changes we still may face in the future while keeping the Scout Group programme full and active.

Stuart Mann
Group Scout Leader

Silver Acorn

Fiona Rouse
Steven Wright

Long Service Awards

5 Year

Andrew Bailey
Candie Bell
Deborah Bromage
Donna Green
Sophie Holden

10 Years

Dave Cracknell
Jenni Taylor
Lynne Holden
Matthew Braddish
Paul Slater
Phillip Williams
Richard Buchanan

15 Years

Lesley Gill
Steven Gill

20 Years

Michael Clarke

25 Years

Natalie Gardner

30 Years

Allannah Brennan

Ann-Marie Deakin

Mark Jones

50 Years

Malcolm Rathbone

60 Years

Gerry Russell

Woodbadge

Andrew Ward

Barbara Clinton

Claire Bailey

David Handley

Dawn Stringer

Deborah Bromage

Denise Makepeace

Edmund Wallace

Fiona Rouse

Gail Clarke

Gemma Seedhouse

Gerry Russell

Heather Wiggins

Leanne Miller

Lesley Gill

Mark Jones

Mark Neate

Matthew Braddish

Naomi Gunton

Natalie Gardener

Paul Slater

Richard Bucannan

Richard Gunton

Steven Gill

Stuart Mann

Susan Smith

Our Thanks

Atherstone District Scout Council would like to thank the following organisations for their generous financial support through grant funding to support Scouting within Atherstone District within the last year:

- Leslie Sell Trust
- The Higgs Charitable Trust
- North Warwickshire Borough Council

We would like to thank all of our volunteers, supporters and young people for the support and commitment which has been provided to us over the last twelve months. We look forward to the next 12 months of Scouting.