



# FIRST NEWS

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Newsletter of the 1<sup>st</sup> Northwood Scout Group

<https://www.1stnorthwoodscouts.org.uk>

## THE NEW BUILD IS UNDERWAY!

### New Hut Fund Raising and Progress

Since I last wrote about this in March, so much has happened that I don't know where to start. You will all have seen that the old hut has been demolished, and the work on the foundations has begun. As I write this, Geostructures (our chosen Contractor) has sunk about 25 piles, with just five more to go, so by the time you read this they will have moved on to casting the ground beams. These are horizontal steel-reinforced concrete beams, that sit across the tops of the piles to make a lattice, on which they will build the floor platform.

We obviously couldn't commit to the demolition and construction contracts until we had either cash or pledges in place to cover these major items of expenditure. We are fortunate that we now have these in place: we started with reserves of £35,000 and a capital grant from REN District of £35,000; our own fundraising produced an amazing £111,000; the Council has made a grant payment to us of £85,000; and we are anticipating an award of £30,000 from the mayor's charity – thank you to last year's mayor, Councillor Carol Melvin.

That is an impressive amount of funding to have achieved in the fifteen months since we launched our Appeal in March 2017 – a big **Thank You** to the six members of our fundraising subcommittee who have worked so hard to make this happen. We are continuing to raise more funds to ensure that we can fit out the building to the high standard we would like.

I can't leave this subject without some mention of the trials and tribulations we experienced in combining the Jumble Clear-up with emptying the hut - we had just three weeks after Jumble to clear the site! The District Van worked overtime with several extra runs to the Council Waste facility at New Year's Green Lane. Who would have thought that we would find eight removal crates full of spare tent pegs in the back of our Store Shed – even the Quartermaster didn't know we had that many. They have been gratefully received by other Groups in the District. And why did we have seven spare projector screens in the back room? Answer: one or two come in Jumble each year, and someone thought "they might come in handy"!



Make an online donation at :- <https://mydonate.bt.com/charities/1stnorthwoodscoutcenterbuildproject>

## New Hut Fund Raising and Progress (continued)

Finally, we now know for sure the reason why our old foundations were collapsing. When the contractor started to break up the foundations, he used a pneumatic spike on the end of his digger arm to puncture the surface. When he had done this two or three times, the whole floor collapsed and he estimated there was a 20cm void underneath the concrete slab. Our theory that the soil underneath had been leached away by surface water run-off from the Hogs Back is almost certainly correct.

We hope that the new foundations will be completed in October, and we can then get the new hut structure assembled on the site. If you have any of the following skills and would like to assist with the fitting out, either on a professional/commercial basis or as a volunteer, please let me know. We will need internal cladding and insulation fitting, plumbing, electrical installation and decorating.

### Richard Plume Executive Committee Member



## Chairman's Chat

I've been meaning to ring up the maternity wards of a few of our local hospitals to ascertain if they have noticed a surge in the quantity of newborns being given the name Gareth. A local lad you know - raised in Watford in 1970.

This piece is being written before the last few games are played and we cannot wait to make sure that our televisions are in good working order when the final is played. One thing is sure, sales of waistcoats must surely have reached an all time high.

Of course, by the time you read this it will be all over and hopefully the trophy will be occupying a deserved position somewhere under lock and key and with a few security guards standing by. It has to be said that the amount of entertainment we have received over the past few weeks has been incredible. You could hear a pin drop in our street when England were playing.

Has it occurred to you what an excellent Scout leader Gareth Southgate would make? Perhaps he has already been one. I understand from what I have read and heard that at the 1<sup>st</sup> Northwood we in desperate need of helpers to run our sections. I am sure that our Group Scout Leader, Mike Bennett, will have said something about this situation elsewhere in the newsletter. Please read what he has to say carefully and if you feel that you can spare a bit of your time - and it need not be a great deal - get in touch with Mike and I am sure he will be more than pleased to have a chat with you.

This year's jumble sale was a rather damp affair. Quite amazing in some respects as we had hardly any rain during the few weeks leading up to the event and then about forty minutes before opening time I heard someone ask 'Was that a drop of rain I felt?'. Sure enough it was a drop of rain and that turned into continuous rain for the whole afternoon until jumblers started going home with their purchases around 6pm.

About eight hundred people came to support us and, despite the weather, a generally good atmosphere was evident throughout the afternoon.

We were very pleased to welcome our very newly elected mayor, Cllr John Morgan and his wife Fiona who opened the event. The previous mayor, Cllr Carol Melvin, extracted the first brick from the Scout hut, signifying the start of the demolition process which commenced virtually the moment the jumble sale had been put to bed.

Once again we received a tremendous amount of help leading up to, at and after the event. I don't think we had any particularly startling items this year but it still amazes us how many lorry loads of jumble are collected, sorted and then redistributed to homes often far away from Northwood.

So it remains for me to extend our thanks to everybody who had a part to play in this year's event. We remain optimistic about continuing the tradition of holding a sale next year against the entirely new backdrop of a new hut. That alone should increase the number of attendees who will surely be anxious to see what we have been up to over the twelve months.

A few weeks ago when I was at the Scout hut before it was demolished a most peculiar feeling came over me. Every single part of the hut including the back room, den and store shed was completely empty. Plenty of dust but not a single item could be found. The clear-out was exemplary and the thought passed through my mind of the amount and variety of activities that had taken place since the hut was built all those decades ago. The amount of fun it has brought to so many of the boys and girls of Northwood is inestimable.

## Chairman's Chat (Continued)

The list of social occasions would fill many pages, not forgetting the jumble sales (how could one forget those!).

Many organisations with similar aims and objectives to ours have their Annual General Meetings around this time of year. Ours will be on the **18<sup>th</sup> September at St. Edmunds Church on Pinner Road at 18:30hrs.**

To say we are short of committee members is a gross understatement. The number of members has been declining for some years. You would think it would be a relatively easy task to find some people who are prepared to attend a few committee meetings a year and become involved in Scouting activities but we meet a reluctance for people to come forward. It seems to be a trait up and down the country but we will remain determined until we find some good hearted individuals who are prepared to help us. Please think about it because it will be your children who will be the beneficiaries. You will derive some enjoyment from such involvement too. We will look forward to seeing you at the AGM and will expect a few offers of assistance to be made when the meeting is in progress.

Involvement in Scouting sometimes results in long term friendships being created even when people move out of the district. One example is the Grove family whose boys, Nick and Richard, were Scouts for many years as well as their father Tony who was closely involved with the Group as both leader and helper.

Soon after Tony and his wife Jane settled into a very pleasant part of the New Forest, Jane, a medical specialist, felt she needed some medical attention. Subsequent periods in hospital and a hospice regrettably saw her condition worsen and in April Jane, loved and liked by many in the Group, passed away.

Several of us attended the service to celebrate her life amongst the trees in the New Forest. Many of us have fond memories of Jane and we extend our condolences especially to Tony, Nick and Richard but to many others too. I believe there is talk of planting a tree in memory of Jane.

I look forward to seeing you at the AGM.

**Paul Akers**  
**Executive Committee Chairman**

## Plant Sale, Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> July

Without a Scout Hut around which to base a Plant Sale, we thought at first that we wouldn't have one this year. However, we kept getting so many enquiries from regular plant sale customers that we thought we had better do something about it! We decided to do a cut-down version: fewer plants, less time for buying, much less effort, and reverting to where we had the first fifteen annual sales, in our front garden in Hallowell Road.

It worked a treat. We did one trip to central London in the District Van to collect our professional donations and managed to squeeze in seventy-eight trays and a hundred and fifty 6" pots of plants. Don't be fooled by "one van full"! This is a Long Wheel Base Transit, and we fitted it out with two levels of folding tables, so we effectively tripled the floor space.

We collected the plants on Friday morning, unloaded them straight onto tables in our garden, then spent the afternoon sorting them into some semblance of order. For Friday night I put up Herras Fencing across my front garden, to make sure nothing was stolen overnight (what do you mean, I'm paranoid?).

As luck would have it, Friday night was the first time for many weeks when we had a decent shower of rain, so we didn't even have to do much watering.

Come 1.00pm Saturday, we had a small queue of a dozen people, and the first hour was hectic, with six of us serving customers flat out. The rest of the afternoon saw a steady flow of customers, with a late run when a landscape gardener came in and bought up half the remaining stock.

Our final takings were £1,556, with £39 of expenses. We have donated £450 to the Northwood Live at Home Scheme, £200 to Poindexter Explorers for their 2018 Jamboree fund, and the balance of over £800 to the New Hut fund. The few remaining plants were donated to the Lions' Den Saturday market.

**Richard Plume**  
**Executive Committee Member**



## GSL Report

The summer is on us and what a summer it has been so far. The hottest since I was a child and that is more than a few years ago. Although saying that who would have guessed that during the previous couple of weeks of jumble the only time it rained was for an hour just as the gates were going to open.

Talking of jumble, didn't it go well. It was great to see lots of regulars behind the stalls as well as buyers. I hope to see you all again next year. Talking of buyers, did you know that they travel from all over London and beyond for the sale. Yes, even from South London.

The summer term has just finished and the Scouts have returned from a very hot and tiring week away in Essex. That means the holidays have officially started which gives the leaders a chance to recharge their batteries before planning the autumn term.

This term has been very strange to say the least with the redevelopment of the hut. Some of you may have noticed that progress seems to have slowed down after the initial demolition. Believe me when I say things are still on track as all the progress is now underground with new foundations being put in place. There are more details elsewhere in this newsletter.

There are several changes to the section leadership team I would like to announce. Elizabeth Spencer has had to step down as assistant cub leader and I would like to thank her for the organisational skills she brought to the cubs.

Rachel Emmerson, also an assistant cub leader, has stepped down as she has moved away from the area. She has during her time with the group arranged many visitors from the local military base to meetings which certainly kept the cubs interested on a Tuesday evening.

Sharon Miller, assistant scout leader, has stood down after many years with the group. She has brought lots of new activities not forgetting the unforgettable "fright night" experience. Many thanks for everything you have done for the group.

Jon Miller, Scout Leader for more years than I can remember, is taking a break due to work and family commitments. He's seen numerous young people through the section introducing them to his passions of climbing and hill walking. Jon has been an invaluable member of the team and deserves his well earned break.

With the changes mentioned it means there is an acute need for new leaders in all the sections. Without adult leaders the sections can't continue to be as successful as they have been in the past. That means we need people to step forward.

It doesn't need to be a leader but a sectional assistant would also be a great help. If enough adults step forward it would reduce your commitment.

With a great new hut now on the horizon it would be a real shame to limit the activities due to lack of adult leaders.

So please think long and hard about this over the summer and get in touch if you are interested.

**Mike Bennett**  
**Group Scout Leader**

## Scout Update

This term has been a really busy time. We started the term with cooking on altar fires in our hut compound, the last meeting inside this area before the hut demolition. We followed this with air rifle shooting and climbing off site, and games on the Hogs Back - 'Jedi Training' on 4th May. After the jumble sale we did tent pitching and a lightweight overnight hike into Chalfont Heights then onto Phasels Wood the next day and a climbing session on the Sunday.

We went abseiling, took part in the District camp at Phasels Wood and did nature walks exploring the Hogs Back and to Oxhey Woods and Sandy Lodge and back. We took part in the district water activities day at Bury Lake, had an overnight bivouac at Pear Wood in Stanmore, then sailing at Bury Lake. We finished the term with a barbeque at 2nd Northwood which we used as a base to depart to our summer camp at Thorrington in Essex the next day.

On summer camp we used the climbing wall, went rafting, did air rifle shooting and a 3D maze. We visited Colchester Castle, Brightlingsea beach and the air museum at Duxford. Following the air activities theme, the highlight of the week was the trip to a gliding club at Wormingford where all the Scouts and some adults were passengers in a glider and are now close to passing an Air Activities badge.

Next term will bring its challenges, not least no HQ. We're expecting to meet most Fridays at the 2nd Northwood HQ behind St Edmund's Church in Pinner Road until at least Christmas.

**Jon Miller, Scout Leader**

## Scout Summer Camp

We are just back from summer camp at Thorrington near Colchester, with a mixed group of Northwood and Northolt Scouts and leaders

A large open camp site was swapped for a smaller shady one due to a burst water pipe (in the hottest week of a very hot July).

With high temperatures, raft build and go became an excuse for getting in the lake as the rafts fell apart. The climbing tower was the highest we've ever seen and a challenge to the ablest climbers. Others climbed routes a mere twenty feet ( a massive challenge for eleven year olds).

With the offer of cheap glider flights and Duxford air museum fairly nearby, the Airman's badge became a rare possibility. The traditional two day hike and sleepover off site was reduced to camping at the gliding club for an early start. Sharon got the first flight. Someone said "Oh my gosh!" and the others were stunned to silence as the forward motion turned into a vertical climb. The gliding club crew (not one under seventy) worked like demons getting everyone up in the sky and back again

The camp broke early as a huge storm with rain, thunder and lightning was forecast for Friday.

One proud Scout said to his dad "Dad I nearly died" interpreted as "I've never been so excited in all my life".

**Kerry Horgan, ASL**



*Above are the scouts rafting and gliding while on camp.*

## We Need You!



1914 - 2018 - 1st Northwood Scouts  
- 104 years old  
1918 - 2018 - Royal Air Force  
- 100 years old

**WHICH WILL MAKE IT  
TO ITS NEXT BIRTHDAY?**

**1st Northwood Scouts needs YOU!**

**Volunteer NOW!**

## Cub Catch-up

What a busy term; I think we are all ready for the summer break!

Back in May the term started with Jumble preparations and of course the Big Day itself. The Cubs loved racing each other to deliver the leaflets in super quick time and then were amazed at the amount and variety of jumble that they helped collect and sell; it all seems a distant memory now as we've done so much since.

With no Scout HQ to meet in we have spent a lot of the term outside and didn't have to change any activities due to the weather; well, we nearly had to arrange to go inside because it was too hot! The Cubs pushed themselves to go as high as possible on the Gladiator Challenge at PACCAR; to show their accuracy (or not) with Air Rifle Shooting; their skill as horse riders; and got completely wet with wobble and paddle boards on a gloriously warm evening at HOAC.

Utilising Rachel's contacts, the Cubs were spellbound by a visit from an Ice Maiden (one of the all female military team who crossed Antarctica (see <http://exicemaiden.com/> if you want to find out more). They also learned about life aboard a ship and 1st Aid Skills from Naval Medics whilst a Marine told them all about the kit he has to carry and taught them how to move around quickly and quietly so that they wouldn't be spotted.

They still found time to visit Ruislip library to complete their Book Readers badge, participate in some sports for the Athletics Badge and get totally wet again at the end of term meeting!

There were also three District run activities during the term. Two teams enjoyed themselves taking part in the District Football which was our only cold and rainy activity in the term. In contrast, the District Cub Sports Day was almost too hot and between races everyone hid in the little shade there was. We came away from Sports Day with medals from a range of events. Finally there was District Camp at Phasels which is described by the Cubs below.

All too soon the end of term arrived. Our last meeting saw us present a hundred and forty-four badges from Scouting birthday badges (number of years you've been a member) to Athletics, Book Readers and Challenge Badges. Two Cubs completed their top award, the Chief Scout Silver Award - congratulations to James and Thomas. They also moved on to Scouts along with Bjorni and Florian; three to our Scouts and Thomas to a group in Manchester once the family have settled in their new home.

We said goodbye to Rachel as she has been posted to Wiltshire for her next Army role and to Liz as she has to give more time to work and family. Liz has offered to assist with some of the planning, for which I am very grateful. We have been supported during the term by two excellent Young Leaders in Joseph and Connor; we hope they will continue next term. And of course we couldn't manage without Alan stepping in whenever we need an extra pair of hands.

We look forward to seeing everyone after the summer break.

**Christine and Rosa.**

## Cub Snippets

My favourite activity at cubs is camping. It has loads of fun things to do there like zip wires and archery. You can build tents of all sorts of sizes and you can sleep with your friends. It is really good to camp so you can learn to survive in the woods. *By Rohan*

I liked almost everything we did in Cubs this term. Working for badges and playing games and meeting interesting visitors and listening to their talks. The leaders worked hard to keep us interested and learning all the time and we are lucky to have them. The best thing I enjoyed is Camping and I look forward to going up to Scouts and doing even more outdoor adventures. I am excited about the new Scout hut and the good times we will have in it. *By Anya*

I really enjoyed the group camp because I got lots of badges for my blanket, especially activities like potholing, laser tag and the 3G gyroscope. *By Nikola*

I loved riding Robin the horse he was so nice. The girl helping me ran to make Robin go fast and the wind was in my face. I could see everything when we went for a long walk. When we got back we had a slice of cake for Nikola's birthday. A fantastic day. *By Manuel*

In Cubs there were many things I enjoyed doing including Air Rifle Shooting, Horse Riding, Wobble Boarding and Paddle Boarding. My favourite was Horse Riding because the horse I rode was elegant as it trotted along and the lady who guided the horse and me was nice and had a lot in common with me. *By Matilda*

There were many things I enjoyed but I mostly enjoyed the wobble boarding. There were moments I disliked and one was changing into the wet suit. The other was being warm in the wet suit and then you get cold falling off the wobble board. I enjoyed it because it was something I had never done before. I have never swam in a lake, it was something new and another achievement in life. *By Mason*



*Here we see Cubs at camp, enjoying wobble and paddle boards, riding and air rifle shooting.*

## Explorer Report

Explorers is as busy as ever. Lots going on.

The Duke of Edinburgh scheme is being enjoyed by all ages in the unit, planning Gold practice expedition, Silver assess expedition, and Bronze practice and assessment

It's Gilwell 24 time. The minibus departed 6<sup>th</sup> Northwood at 7.30am - a bit early for some but ensured we'd arrive for the 9am start; we returned about 10am the next day.

The aim of Gilwell 24 is to take on the challenge of staying awake for twenty-four hours. There are activities laid on for the whole time, anything from wood turning and brick laying to inflatable slides, mountain boarding, mini tank driving and scuba diving, to name a few.

The main stage has music, tug of war and competitions. This year the screen on the side of the main stage was going to show the England – Sweden world cup game. There are always so many people from so many places; Chubby's was there as normal to make sure we didn't go hungry over the weekend.

After signing in and being given our Gilwell packs that consisted of a lanyard ID, map of the site and our Gilwell t-shirt (this year it's black and pink) we headed to laser tag. Then we took in Quads, Go-Karting, revolving climbing wall, 7-cycle coBi, high ropes and segways.

In the evening we took in the disco and the cinema to watch the Lego movie in the main arena in the early hours of the morning and watch the sun come up. A good time was had by all and we're already looking forward to next year.

For the last meeting of term twenty-eight Explorers went to Liquid Leisure water park at Datchet. It is a great place, everyone had a good time.

**Doug Horgan, AESL**

## 13th Annual Bike Show

A group of Bikers called "The Posse" meets regularly at The Gate pub in Northwood. They are holding their 13th Annual Bike Show on Saturday 11th August at The Gate, and all the proceeds from their Fun Day will be donated to our New Hut Fund.

As well as lots of interesting motor cycles to see, there will be many games and competitions for all the family, a Hog Roast and lots more. Please get along and support them in supporting us! Open 12.00 noon until late.

**Richard Plume, Executive Committee Member**



## Beaver Blog

Beavers have been busy getting wet on the Hogs Back in this super summer. No complaints from the children but plenty from the leaders who were absolutely drenched almost before the evening began. If that was not enough water for them they also had boating at Bury Lake in Rickmansworth with not a cloud in the sky. But they all came off the water wet.

Jumble was fun watching the Beavers delivering leaflets to the many houses in Northwood. They moved like a swarm of bees racing between houses stopping for nothing. Moving jumble from the lorries and vans they always wanted to carry the biggest and heaviest box or bag and always looked disappointed when they were only given a small bag or box but they always came back for more.

Getting their hands dirty is something Beavers do with much skill and enthusiasm so given the opportunity to do a little gardening across the road in Hillside School they gratefully accepted the challenge and what a good job they did too.

A small group of Beavers with parents joined Group Camp at Phasels. For many of the Beavers (and some parents) this was their first camping experience. They had a great time and I'm sure we'll be seeing them on future camps.

When Beavers return next term they'll be meeting on a Wednesday from 5.30pm; this change is to help the current leader's logistics. More details to follow later in the holidays.

**Mike Bennett, GSL**