



# FIRST NEWS

Issue 99 April 2020



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

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

## Group Scout Leader Report

Scouting and the world has changed since I last wrote my GSL report for the 1st Northwood News. Scouting in the UK, if not the world, has been suspended for an indeterminate length of time which means we had no choice but to cancel our Grand Jumble Sale for 2020.

This is our main fund raising event for the year so the group must tighten its belt a little to ensure we get through these trying times. Fortunately the Group does have some reserves which will ensure that we will be there when Scouting returns.

Also postponed is this years District Family Camp which will now take place in June 2021.

With no regular meetings being held the sections have sent out some activities that can be completed at home which will go towards individual badge work. Please keep the pictures and reports coming in of the activities that you are doing. The Cubs and Beavers have made Easter cards which will be sent to members of the Northwood Live at Home scheme. I am sure that will bring a smile to some peoples faces.

The Scout Association has also put something together for the members to take part in and keep themselves busy:

"While we normally love the great outdoors, we've pulled together some inspired indoor activity ideas (if we do say so ourselves) to keep kids entertained while schools are closed due to Coronavirus. Keep your kids learning new skills and having fun (and avoid hearing 'I'm bored' every 30 seconds) all in #TheGreatIndoors." This can be shared with friends and families, even if they are not in Scouting at <https://www.scouts.org.uk/the-great-indoors/>

Please get involved and let the section leaders know how you are enjoying the activities.

Lots of Scout Counties around the UK are also putting together ideas of what you can do at home. One we can all join in is the World Record Overnight Sleepover being organised by Northumberland Scouts on 30th April.

Build a shelter or pitch a tent in your garden or front room and sleep overnight (with a parent if outside.)

You could also :

- Pack a bag
- Build a den at home / pitch a tent in the garden/ hang up a hammock (whatever you can)
- Sleep in your shelter of choice
- Build a 'campfire' (real or virtual)
- Take part in a "Scouty activity" with your family (get in touch if you need ideas)
- Help with cooking a meal

If you are really keen, you can do it every day in April!

Send a photo to [1nscouts@renscouts.org.uk](mailto:1nscouts@renscouts.org.uk) and it will count for a night away and we'll submit numbers to Northumberland Scouts.

Stay safe and see you when Scouting returns.

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

## Scout Report

The Scout section has had a busy time since the Christmas break.

The Scout Association have several badges that have been sponsored by commercial companies and one of them is Games Workshop who sponsor the model making badge.

We were lucky enough to have a local store who invited us along for an evening learning about designing and making models in general. The Scouts made several models, which they were allowed to take away with them but also paints and paint brushes were provided to enable the figures to be painted back at the Scouting centre.

They also participated in several games at the Games Workshop store which seemed to go down very well.

Pancakes went down well as ever and my fear of finding a pancake stuck to the ceiling in the new kitchen didn't happen!

The troop welcomed Dan Hall, who is our District Development Officer, to assist in the Scout section. He is helping the Troop for several months to build up the membership of the Troop and also to find new adults to assist with running the activities on a Friday night.

He visited several of the local schools to publicise what we do on a Friday and to invite them along to a taster evening which was well attended and enjoyed by all. Several of those who attended have decided to join which was fantastic news for the troop.

The annual Scout Swimming competition was attended by eight Scout Groups from our District at Northwood College. We didn't win but those that participated all swam well.

Scouting is currently suspended but there is still plenty to do at home as I mentioned under the GSL report so please have a look as I am sure there is something for everyone.

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



*Above we see the Scouts making models*

## Cub Collation

It seems a long time since we were having actual Cub Meetings at the Scout HQ although it's only three weeks since we had to stop. When we were meeting, the Cubs were their usual busy selves.

We found out about Chinese New Year and had a go using chop sticks in a relay race. Thanks to the support of parents we completed part of the Skills Challenge Award with the Cubs learning to iron, make cups of tea, polish their shoes and sew.

Parents were back again to help with our pancake night - every Cub managed to cook their own pancake which was quickly devoured; the leaders didn't get a look in!

A trip to Highgrove pool was enjoyed by all; I'm sure that Baloo and I got as wet supervising from the side as the Cubs and parent volunteers did in the pool. This session was a warm up to the District Cub Swimming Gala also held at Highgrove in early February. Our small team did very well with all of them achieving a bronze medal in their respective races. They also showed the important Scouting ethos of giving everything a go - well done team.

Our final meeting before we had to stop was a trading game where the Sixes had to choose which activities to do to earn tokens to see who could have the most at the end of the evening. The activities ranged from writing out the Cub Promise to building a paper boat; from tying knots to first aid. It was a successful night and one we will run again when we are back together.

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## Cub Collation (continued)

Since our meetings have stopped, we have sent out activities for the Cubs to do at home which are linked to what the programme was each week. This has seen them share posters about St Patrick, start on their My Faith and/or World Faith badges and create Easter/Spring Cards for members of Northwood Live at Home who are on their own at this challenging time.

More activities will be shared after Easter for those who want to keep on Scouting.

Stay safe and keep in touch.

### Akela and Baloo.



*To the left we see the Cub swimming team and Cubs attempting to cook pancakes on candles. Above they learn to iron, sew and shoe polish.*

## Explorer Round-up

So, we've come to the end of term, missing the last few weeks due to suspension of face to face meetings.

Before we had to stop we were regularly seeing more than forty members at meetings, which kept us on our toes! Many of the meetings were split with different groups participating in different activities; we are grateful to 2nd Northwood who have allowed us to use their HQ as our second base so we have half at 1st and half at 2nd.

Our meetings have covered internet safety and personal choices/consequences thanks to talks from Chad Lake (part of the County Safeguarding Team) and Claire Clark. We have practised mapping skills with a car rally style challenge in the hut and a compass trail from 2nd Northwood to 1st Northwood and back (for those that succeeded!).

As is usual in the Spring Term we started preparations for Duke of Edinburgh expeditions. Unfortunately the practice and assessed expeditions have had to be postponed until we are able to travel again but hopefully the Explorers are working on other sections of the Award whilst staying at home.

The weekend before the lockdown we were lucky enough to once again participate in Monopoly Run Live. Just as it sounds, we play a game of monopoly by visiting the relevant London landmarks instead of going around the board. You can go in any order you want and travel by foot, tube or bus (running optional).

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## Explorer Round-up *(continued)*

It was an early start as the three Explorer, one Network and one Leaders team met at Northwood Station at 8.15am on a Saturday morning (a time many Explorers only see when they are out with us!) to travel to Waterloo Station where the game starts at 9.30am. Some of the teams planned their routes on the journey; others decided to just see what happened.

It was organised chaos at Waterloo which has to be seen to be believed. There were a hundred and nine "mini games" taking place with seven teams in each. None of our teams landed in the same group so we'd have to wait for the final results to see who won.

The aim of the day was to visit as many sites as possible and either buy them if you got there first or pay rent; all controlled by an app. There was also a quiz and challenges dropped in during the day like taking a team photo on a bus and with a statue wearing your coats to score extra points but, as in Monopoly, you could receive a speeding ticket or be paid dividends.

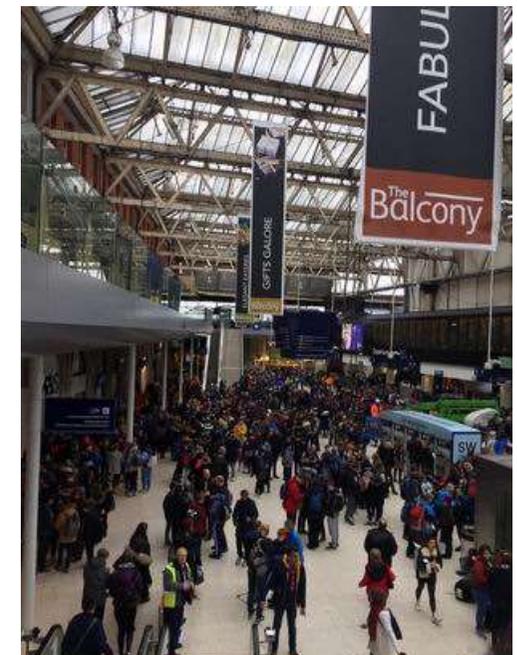
The day finished at 5pm with some very tired young people. We have to congratulate Molly, Rosie, Sophie, Connie, Aishi and Jess for not only winning their mini-game but also being the highest scoring team from the five we entered - we still owe you cookies!

Stay safe at home, join in the challenges we send out and keep going with your Duke of Edinburgh so that you are ready to get going again when face to face meetings resume.

**Christine, Paul and Doug**



*Explorers tackle a knotty problem and enjoy their Monopoly Run.*



## Beaver Blog

This blog is going to be strange to write as so much has changed in all our lives and all over the world, I will try my best though!

We started in January learning about Chinese New Year with the help of one of our fabulous Beaver Mum's running the whole meeting. Thank you so much it was amazing.

Then we had coding lessons and problem solving, again with help from brilliant parents.

We learnt about global issues, made biscuits for Valentine's Day and learnt about random acts of kindness also with lots of help from parents.

Our Young Leaders led a meeting making pancakes on tin cans which was really successful and tasty - Yum!

We learnt all about St David and his special day. About Wales with drawing and colouring.

We had a very special guest, Becca, who taught us all sign language and we learnt to sign the Beaver promise, how to sign our names and lots of other words, it was great fun! Thank you Becca you were amazing

That was unfortunately our last meeting as just before the next meeting we had to take a pause in Scouting due to that naughty virus that makes us keep washing our hands!

The Leaders made a pack of badge work and activities to send out to all our Beavers so they could carry on Scouting at home if they wanted to, and we can report that most have and are sending us absolutely brilliant work. Lots of badges are still being earned which is awesome.

We also keep in touch with parents by WhatsApp Group and we are all sending and getting great ideas to do while spending time at home. We want to thank everyone for being so wonderful and keeping in touch and helping each other in the most challenging of times. Here's to resuming meetings very soon as we miss our Beavers very much. Please everyone

**STAY HOME, STAY SAFE, SAVE LIVES**

**Wendy Wiggins  
Beaver Scout Leader**



## Group Finances

With the arrival of Coronavirus and the lockdown that has followed, we thought it appropriate to summarise how the Group will operate financially over the coming months.

The Sections (Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers) all have to pay their annual capitation charge to the Scout Association at this time of year, and the figure this year is just over £40 per head. We recover this money from the termly subscriptions that you each pay. We would ask you to kindly continue paying subs which we will reduce this term to £15 (termly contribution to capitation and allowance towards badges) even though face to face meetings have been suspended. Online activities are being organised at Group, County and HQ levels and we will do our best to keep our young members active and interested.

To maximise the subscriptions you pay we collect gift aid via HMRC. For us to do this we need you to accept this option on OSM. We will resend the link but if you have any questions please contact Mike Bennett on [mike.bennett@renscouts.org.uk](mailto:mike.bennett@renscouts.org.uk)

As you would expect, we have had to cancel this year's Jumble Sale, so our single fund-raiser of the year has gone. But of course, we still have ongoing fixed costs that must be paid even if meetings are not being held; for example, our rent, water rates, buildings insurance, minibus insurance etc. As a minimum, we will still have about £3,000 of costs to cover. The Jumble Sale normally pays for more than just this, and if as we hope the meetings restart, then we will have other costs, of running the minibus, electricity, cleaning etc. All these costs are met out of our Jumble Sale income and NOT the subscriptions that you pay to the Beavers, Cubs or Scout sections.

We would therefore like you to help us with fundraising, and the most straightforward way to do that is to sign up to Easyfundraising and Amazon Smile. Most of you will be doing ever more online shopping, and by using these systems we can earn around 1% of everything you spend. And that's a lot of money! Also please pass on this message to your friends and neighbours, they can help us too.

Register at easyfundraising by clicking on this link: <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/invite/TLHI6S/> and select "1st Northwood Scouts New Hut Appeal" as your good cause. Then whenever you make an online purchase at any of the stores listed on their site, such as Boots, John Lewis, Expedia, Argos, eBay and hundreds more, you place your order via easyfundraising instead of going direct, and we get a donation.

We also have a similar scheme in operation with Amazon Smile. Please register and support 1st Northwood Scout Group each time you shop on [smile.amazon.co.uk](https://smile.amazon.co.uk) When you are asked to choose your charity use the drop-down box to select 1st Northwood Scout Group. Note the format with a capital 'S' in 1st – beware there is also a 1st Northwood Scout Group on the Isle of Wight!

Another way to support us is to make a direct donation. This can be done either :-

a. By cheque, made payable to 1st Northwood Scout Group, and sent to the Treasurer, Malcolm Smart at 16 Lichfield Road, Northwood, HA6 1LZ.

b. By online payment direct into our Group bank account at CAF Bank. Sort Code 40 52 40, Account Number 00030543.

Parents have in the past helped by organising fund-raising activities. For example, the quiz nights that helped raise funds for the new hut. We'd love to hear what groups of parents would like to organise once activities return to normal. Please help us financially to get through these difficult times, so that we are here to spring back into action when the restrictions are lifted.

### The Group Executive Committee

### Scouting Centre in Bloom

We hope you had a chance to enjoy the superb display of daffodils and wallflowers in the planters around the new Scouting Centre. Thanks to Paul Akers for all his hard work in planting them, it was worth every bit of effort. The bulbs of course came from Jacques Amand, the specialist bulb supplier in Stanmore who donate their end of season stock to us each year. We hope that those of you bought some from us have enjoyed a good display in your gardens.

### Richard Plume



## Replacement of the Neal Hut

Many of you will have noticed that the Neal Hut, the slightly lop-sided hut next to the main gate, has disappeared. The demolition took place one weekend in March, see picture of the motley crew assembled for the job! It was always our intention to replace it as one of the final steps in the Scouting Centre replacement project. The Neal Hut was so called because it was donated to us by Morton Neal in the late 1970s; he was at the time the Managing Director of Harry Neal, the local building company that built much of the housing in Northwood between the wars. Morton Neal was also the Scout County Chairman for many years.

We have ordered a replacement hut from Passmores, who also supplied our new Scouting Centre, so it will blend in nicely. We have already laid the new foundation and were all set for delivery of the new hut on Friday 27th March, when suddenly the world as we knew it came to a halt. So, we are awaiting a new date for delivery. Something to look forward to!!

### Richard Plume

#### Before.....



## Chairman's Chat

How is your period of hibernation (lock down) going for you? We are certainly living through very trying times and there is no doubt that the majority of the nation is helping those in greater need than themselves.

Scouters are well trained to help others in the hour of need or to summon support when required. I know many of our boys and girls have been helping others and many residents in the local neighbourhood have been very appreciative of the help and support they have received.

I am sure that there will be many stories to share when Scouting is allowed to resume and I am sure that many if not all of our members cannot wait to get back to attending meetings, for communication by other means is not quite the same no matter how advanced you are with modern technology.

#### After!



I cannot help thinking what a mess we would have been in at the new Scouting Centre had the Corona virus struck several months earlier. The practice of social distancing would have been tricky while trying to undertake tasks connected with fitting out the new building.

Had this almighty spanner not descended into our works we would have commenced collecting jumble for the sale in a few weeks time. Perhaps we are in need of a break but only a temporary one until next year when we will be writing to you again and generating your support for another jumble sale which I am sure will be forthcoming.

Until the next edition, please take great care of yourselves and don't forget others who may be in need.

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