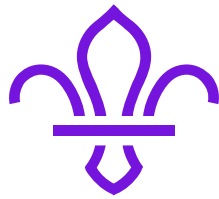


Scouts 1st Northwood



Group Scout Leader Report

All sections are back or should I say were back. As I write this report we are still in Lockdown (2nd time) so all sections are meeting on Zoom.

Due to the confusing situation relating to the end of Lockdown and Christmas, the leaders have taken the decision that all sections would not meet face to face until January. I know this will be disappointing to many of the young people but we feel that an extended break is needed.

As the section reports tell, all the sections were back between Lockdowns and some great activities were undertaken while we could meet face to face.

We knew it would be difficult to run meetings following the social distancing rules but I am really pleased to say that the young people adapted really well to the changes. There were a few grumbles at first but they all settled in quickly.

All sections met outside at first following government guidelines which was fine initially due to the kind weather. However it didn't take long for the nights to draw in and the temperatures to drop. The Group Executive kindly put up additional floodlighting which worked a treat. Unfortunately they couldn't do anything about the weather!

I want to take time to thank all the leaders and committee members who have put in additional effort during the last nine months. Without their help the sections would not have been able to meet and continue to provide Scouting activities for all.

Also, a big thanks to the parents who have supported the leaders with whatever activity idea they have had on Zoom by providing resources and for being willing to drive to alternative locations whilst we can't offer use of the minibus.

Mike Bennett
Group Scout Leader

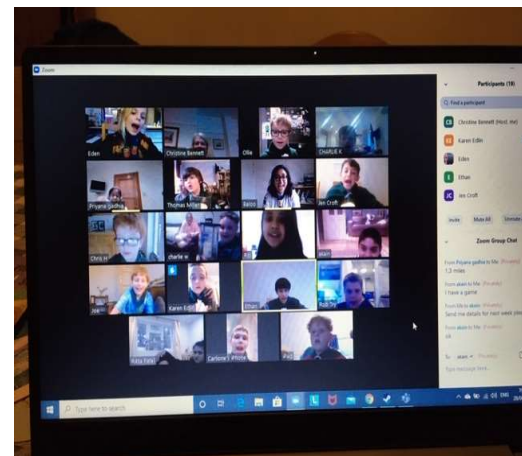
What is Zoom?

Everybody is using it but what exactly is Zoom? Well the official description is -

Zoom is a cloud-based video conferencing service you can use to virtually meet with others - either by video or audio-only or both, all while conducting live chats - and it lets you record those sessions to view later. Over half of Fortune 500 companies reportedly used Zoom in 2019 and during 2020 has hit even greater heights, recently claiming 300 million daily Zoom meeting participants.

Below is an example of the Group using Zoom for a virtual meeting.

Editor



Chairman's Chat

I have, especially during lockdown, become quite partial to carrying out some decorating. Whether or not this results in me being awarded with some Brownie points is immaterial but last weekend I was entertained whilst painting, courtesy of Zoom, to some of our Cubs and Scouts making some excellent rafts. This was the beginning of the Northwood Virtual Winter Family Camp. It was good to watch and observe their skills and patience, ably led, I believe, by Connor, one of our Scout Young Leaders.

The camp lasted the whole weekend with den making, cooking breakfast, visiting speakers and no doubt other exciting things but, unfortunately, I didn't manage to tune in to all of it. Congratulations to everybody who organised the event and participated by giving up their whole weekend by entertaining the boys and girls at 1st Northwood with constructive techniques.

Apparently Zoom has enabled our Group to undertake a far greater number of activities than would be the case if this form of technology had not been available.

Our Annual General Meeting has taken place recently, yes again on Zoom. Apparently one parent participated and the meeting was a rather short one. All the officers and committee members were re-elected for another twelve months. I appreciate your support and that of the Executive Committee which will hopefully enable me to carry on as chairman for the coming year.

Every year for as long as far back as I can remember many members of our Group have attended the Remembrance Day service at the war memorial in Northwood. Thanks to Leo Mindel we were able to watch the service courtesy of Zoom.

Many people help us in all sorts of different ways when the Jumble season is in full swing. On the day of the sale both those who work at the event and the jumlbers require refreshment, usually in copious quantities. A lady who has risen to the challenge by running the tea stall for many years is Noreen Longden. She was one of those ladies who, irrespective of the weather or how she was feeling, would not let you down. Sadly Noreen's health went downhill and she passed away in September. She was a friend of many in the Group and many others too and will be missed in more ways than one.

I am sure there are many of us happy to see the year 2020 finish. It has not been an easy time for many. Let us hope that next year will result in us experiencing better times for ourselves as well as our families. So until the next newsletter, please take care, stay safe and may your Christmases be as enjoyable as possible. Kind regards.

Paul Akers
Executive Committee Chairman



Noreen Longden 1936 - 2020

Scout Report

It was a huge relief to be able to meet up again face to face and put on activities for the Scouts in September; we had done enough on Zoom. Activities had to be amended and games changed to follow guidelines but we did it. It was also nice to see some new members join so a big welcome to Zeiad, Mazen, Mannan, Aariz and Zain.

We had a fun night at PACCAR Activity Centre when we all met up and had a go at Abseiling and the Gladiator Challenge. It was a cold and damp evening but the Scouts were in high spirits and encouraged each other while they took turns on the activities.

We thought it would be good idea once back to give the young people a refresher on some basic camp skills including building camp fires, cooking on Trangiers and pioneering. I was surprised by how many could remember how to tie a reef knot!

Unfortunately, all too soon we were back on Zoom with quizzes, learning about recycling, making bread rolls and, possibly a bit late in the year, thinking about online safety.

With the success of the Zoom weekend camp in the summer we thought that it would be a good idea to do another one. Weather was not as good as before so no sleeping outside this time but it was still a huge success with a variety of styles of den being built.

I must thank all the parents for all your support while we have been running activities on Zoom from helping with knots to finding resources.

Hope you all have a good rest over the Christmas period and see you all back, hopefully face to face in January.

Mike Bennett
Group Scout Leader

Cub Collation

Well, we've survived another very unusual term - well done everyone. Since the last newsletter we have had a summer programme shared by all sections (see separate report), returned to face to face Scouting and then reverted to Zoom - what a term!

Let's start with the Face to Face which we managed for six weeks. The Cubs were very excited to be back even it meant staying in their square that had been marked out on the grass at the HQ and not playing some of the normal games. Our first meeting back saw us trying out socially distanced games and decorating Kindness Rocks which were later delivered to St Vincent Nursing Home. We made use of PACCAR being given permission to open and had two sessions for Cubs to try abseiling and archery which was thoroughly enjoyable and went on a walk from St Vincent's back to the HQ. We had a session learning how to use tents ready for when real camps are finally back on the programme and just one meeting inside due to bad weather for some problem solving. Under the Scout Association Covid rules for face to face Scouting, we are only able to have fifteen young people present at any one time. With twenty-five Cubs who could attend, Baloo and I agreed that we would run two short meetings each week rather than splitting the Cubs into groups who would meet alternate weeks. The Cubs adapted well and we covered lots in the shorter meetings greatly helped by our two young leaders, Joseph and Connor.

Our second trip to PACCAR was two days before Lockdown2 started which allowed us to hand out activity bags as the Cubs finished the session ready for meetings back on Zoom. With the help of these bags, parent support and ideas from the 1st Virtual Scout Facebook Group we have continued to provide a varied programme. The Cubs have learnt about Remembrance Day whilst making their own wreaths and how to reduce pollution. They've made bread rolls and had a Science night with experiments to do and a chance to discuss them with BBC Star Gazer Mark Thompson. As if that wasn't enough they were also invited to join the Beavers for Mark's Star Gazing evening too.

With everyone stuck back at home the Leaders decided they should organise another Virtual Camp so we held our first ever Group Winter Camp - see report elsewhere in this edition.

We have been very lucky at 1st Northwood to be able to meet throughout this strange year. There are many Groups around the Country that are not so fortunate and are struggling to retain members and with their finances. As a result, the Scout Association launched a fund raising event called Race Around the World encouraging those who can to donate funds and log miles walked during November. The Cubs have taken up the challenge and to date have collectively walked 165km since half term (they have one day left to log their walks) and made a donation to the central Scouting fundraising. Well done Cubs.

The leaders across all sections have agreed to stay on Zoom until the New Year so, as I write this, we are planning various Christmas activities including a virtual trip to the Panto. Hopefully we'll be back face to face in the New Year but however we can meet, we'll be back with the Cubs for more fun and games.

We must thank the parents for supporting the Cubs through a very challenging year - without you getting involved in the Leaders ideas the Cubs wouldn't have had so much success or retained so many members so Thank You to all parents for your support.

Akela (Christine) and Baloo (Parina)

Scouts 1st Northwood



Group Activities

Summer Survival Programme

With many families unable to go on holiday and other activities limited during the school summer holidays, the Leaders decided to run four weeks of Group summer activities for those who wanted to participate. These were open to Beavers, Cubs and Scouts and we were pleased that for every meeting we had representation from each section. As this was (hopefully) a one-off summer programme, we wanted it to be special, so this is what we did.

We arranged for children's author Conrad Burdekin to virtually visit. He led a storytelling evening encouraging the young people to participate and showing them how sometimes making up a story as you go can give some fun and memorable tales! The next week was in the kitchen with scones being made and eaten! We also had to have the debate on how to pronounce the word and landed 50/50 between the southern and northern versions! Scones were followed by a visit from Colin Watkins, a relative of one of our members but more importantly a magician who entertained us all and saw lots of laughs before we had a final week of crafts making stitched bookmarks and decorative pin wheels.

From the feedback we know the young people and their parents enjoyed having something extra to do over the holidays.

Winter Virtual Camp

Camp opened on Saturday morning with flag break shared from the Bennett garden before Parina got everyone moving with a scavenger hunt. We then handed over to Connor (Scout young leader) who led a session on raft building - don't worry they used twigs and string not barrels and rope! Lots of success with photos and videos shared of rafts floating in sinks, baths and bowls.

After this first Zoom session everyone was sent off to build a den and help make lunch before coming together again in the afternoon. On the second Zoom session Wendy hosted a tour of everyone's den - there were a lot of fairy lights so we must be heading to Christmas! This was followed by Gabrielle showing everyone how to make marshmallow snowmen - again lots of photos were shared before the snowmen were eaten.

A quick clean up and it was time for Christine to lead the pizza making. With pizzas in the oven the young people were left to tidy up and eat before coming together again for the evening entertainment. We were joined by Max from Drumming's Cool Drumming School who led everyone in successfully playing plastic pots and metal pans as drums. From the smiles I'm guessing it was well received even if a bit noisy!

Sunday morning saw everyone back together again to hear how the young people, and some parents, had got on sleeping in their den. A quick straw poll showed the earliest risers were up at about 4am! At least being at home they had the TV to watch and keep them quiet unlike real camps.

Parina made sure everyone was wide awake with another scavenger hunt before we were joined by Chief Superintendent Claire Clark who told us about her journey from a new PC to her current role before bravely facing questions from the young people. These ranged from 'have you arrested anyone famous' to 'what is your favourite fruit' - all led to discussions about different aspects of policing even the fruit question! A thank you and goodbye to Claire saw Gabrielle leading us through a selection of cryptic codes to find out who had kidnapped Baloo before we finished with a Kahoot quiz won by Mili.

Final instructions to share photos of the young people tidying up their dens before the flag was lowered and another successful camp closed.

Mike Bennett

Group Scout Leader

On the next page are some pictures of the Winter Virtual Camp



Beaver Blog

Well I must firstly say what a year we have had! Many changes and uncertainties but being true Scouts we have successfully found a way around it all and with the help of Beaver parents, Beavers and Leaders we have been carrying on regardless and having so much fun. A huge thank you to everyone for the enormous effort to make it work, we really do appreciate it.

What the Beavers have been up to:

- Painted Kindness Rocks for care homes, to bring a bit of cheer!
- Learnt about the Countryside Code.
- Learnt about healthy bodies and how to keep them healthy
- Went Zip Wiring at PACCAR, even the leaders had a go!
- Made Backwards Biscuits and learnt about how to make the perfect campfire.
- Made poppies and learnt about Remembrance Day.
- Attended the Beavers District Quiz
- Attended the Group Winter Virtual Camp with some very special guests.

As I write we are looking forward to a special stargazing meeting with astronomer, author and BBC presenter Mark Thompson and a science spectacular also with Mark Thompson and his country wide theatre show brought to Zoom.

Then there's Christmas coming up with crafts and special guests with a little navigation and compass work thrown in.

As you can see we have achieved so much even under difficult times.

Have a lovely Christmas as much as you can.

Panda (Beaver Leader) & Bluebell (Section Assistant)



Explorer Round-up

We were very happy when Face to Face meetings were able to resume at the end of July and, as reported last time, the Explorers dived into activities at PACCAR campsite. As September arrived, we were able to have meetings with up to fifteen Explorers and five leaders at a time. We split the Unit into three groups that would rotate across three activities over consecutive weeks so everyone would get a go at all the planned activities. The rotation was cooking on Trangiers (*light-weight cooking stoves*) at 1st Northwood, cooking on fires at 6th Northwood and a hike from Croxley Green.

The Group cooking on fires aimed to spend a short time making a fire leaving plenty of time to prepare and cook kebabs on skewers for the main course followed by S'mores (*toasted marshmallows placed between two chocolate digestives*) for dessert. An evening cooking on fire always goes down well with the Explorers and when the biscuits ran out they were quite happy to toast marshmallows!

Meanwhile at 1st Northwood cooking on Trangiers was a reminder of lightweight camping skills necessary for expeditions including the Duke of Edinburgh. Each Explorer had their own Trangier so they could cook dinner for one and maintain social distancing. Not everyone has used Trangiers before and for some it's been a while since last used so it was a challenge for them to assemble and use the Trangier safely and then to prepare a meal. It was good to see how they quickly picked up something new and that there were some good examples of peer teaching taking place.

The final group met at Croxley Green station and walked to Rickmansworth along a set route with a quiz to answer on the way. It was good to see them back at "real" Scouting even if the majority didn't think to bring a torch for a hike in the dark - luckily most of them had a mobile phone with them!

Running three separate activities every week for three weeks was only possible with support from parents so we must say a big Thank You to the parents who helped the leaders on these nights.

Other face to face meetings included a welcome back games night, a Duke of Edinburgh catch up session and another trip to PACCAR for the Gladiator Challenge and Leap of Faith. Leap of Faith is challenging. First you climb to the top of a large wooden pole; once at the top you have a metal triangle to launch yourself at and catch like a trapeze - don't worry, they do wear a harness and helmet! As the evenings goes on the metal triangle is moved further away from the pole. On the Gladiator Challenge the aim is to race another person to the top; there are different sections to climb up including bars, tyres and a cargo net. Everyone had a good evening.

Having got back to face to face Scouting, we then saw ourselves back on Zoom - initially for a quiz so we could have a bigger number of Explorers attending at the same time but then, due to Lockdown2, we stayed on Zoom.

The rest of the Explorer's programme this term will be tweaked so we can run on Zoom. We had planned to do some pioneering so it turned into tabletop pioneering with the Explorers making catapults using pencil and rubber bands instead of staves and sisal. It was definitely a challenge and maybe more difficult than you would have first thought. Ten pencils, some rubber bands, a spoon and an object to fire from the catapult when construction is complete, only having two hands and being all fingers and thumbs as you use rubber bands to connect pencils. Some people were more successful than others. Some snapped pencils on the way whilst others ran out of rubber bands and used hair bands; all had a go and most succeeded including me who is always all fingers and thumbs when it comes to rubber bands! Well done for having a go.

We've also had a games night and, at the Explorers request, made gingerbread. We will continue to evolve and adapt and challenge ourselves and the Unit in the days ahead whilst continuing to provide life skills and keeping everyone connected until we are able to have the whole unit together again face to face.

Doug Horgan

Assistant Explorer Scout Leader

The next page shows two Explorers tackling the Gladiator Challenge

We Need Your Help

As you know, we didn't hold our main fundraising event, the Jumble Sale, in 2020 and while we hope we will be able to hold one in 2021 there are no guarantees. So we have to do more to find alternative sources of funds to keep 1st Northwood running, and we're asking **everyone** to come up with some new ideas that will work while we still have restrictions on face-to-face activity. If you've got even an inkling of an idea, please get in touch.

I'm willing to bet that most of you who are reading this do some of your shopping online, and currently nobody gets any spin-off from your purchases. Well, we already have two online shopping-related ways of raising funds: **Amazon Smile**, which as the name suggests gives us a percentage of everything you spend on Amazon; and **EasyFundraising** which is a similar concept, but works on dozens of other retailers, including most of the big ones like John Lewis, Curry's, etc. They're both very easy to use, and with only twenty people signed up to EasyFundraising, we've taken over £600 in the last two years. Think how much more we could benefit if the parents of all our young members signed up!!! Details on how to join these schemes are given below.

We also collect scrap metal all the year round; over the years we have made over £10,000 from this source, believe it or not. So if you or your neighbours are having some plumbing done, and there are old radiators or better still old taps and copper pipes being disposed of, PLEASE put them in your boot, and drop them off at the Scouting Centre on your next visit. Plastic-covered copper cable from old electrical appliances is one of our biggest sources of funds, we get almost £1 per kilo for it! Please don't throw it in the bin.

Selling on eBay is another lucrative activity for us. Mike Bennett and I hold back lots of interesting bits and pieces from Jumble each year and get good money for them on eBay. So if you're thinking on getting rid of something that could be worth a few pounds, why not sell it on eBay and direct the funds into our online eBay account? Or bring it along to a meeting for us to sell instead. Again, details below.

- Please register and support 1St Northwood Scout Group each time you shop on Amazon by clicking on this link: <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!
- Register at **easyfundraising** by clicking on this link: <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/1stnorthwood/?invite=TLHI6S&referral-campaign=s2s> 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.
- **Selling on eBay**. When you list an item for sale on eBay you have the option of donating a percentage of the proceeds to a charity. From the drop-down list select **Ruislip District Scout Council** and whatever you donate will find its way to 1st Northwood.

Richard Plume
Executive Committee Member

A Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to All Our Readers

