

1st Burley-in-Wharfedale Scout Group



Scouting Report for AGM June 2015

This report covers the period April 2014 to March 2015 and is to celebrate the fantastic work of all our leaders, in providing scouting opportunities for the young people in Beavers, Cubs and Scouts.

All the sections have again had a busy year with lots of badges being gained, including the first Chief Scout Silver Awards being achieved by cubs in Forster Pack. This is the highest award available to cubs. It is not only the young people who have achieved badges though as we have also had a number of leaders complete their adult training.

As well as achieving badges, there have been many events which the young people have taken part in. A few highlights from during the year are:

Beavers have had a fun year which included attending two district events - a French themed event at Curly Hill last summer (to celebrate the Tour de France) and Chinese Capers in Otley.

Watson Pack (Monday Cubs) helped tidy up the railway station garden as part of community week and raised over £200 for the local children's charity "Make a Dream" with help from Burley Gardeners. The cubs have also had joint sports day and camp fire evenings with Brownies and a joint water sports session at Reva with Forster Cubs. Traditional scouting activities such as pioneering, backwoods cooking, map reading and camp skills have been enjoyed on pack nights.

Forster Pack (Friday Cubs) have had a visit from local policemen and visited the fire station in Otley, where the cubs enjoyed using the hoses! Summer Camp in May 2014 was a joint camp with Watson Cubs at Bramhope and had a lot of activities for everyone.

Both cub packs have participated in district competitions such as swimming and football. Forster Pack were runners up in May 2014 but next year I will be able to say they were victorious as they won the football competition last month.

Scouts started the year focussing on building the Eiffel Tower for the village. Since September, the weekly programmes have concentrated on traditional scouting skills such as navigation, outdoor cooking and pioneering. The scouts have taken part in several night time walks, the first was more challenging for the parents than the scouts as it was the first time their child had taken part in such an event. They have enjoyed a back to basics weekend camp and taken part in the annual district Torch Race.

There have also been a number of events which we have attended as a group. St Georges Parade last April wasn't as well attended as usual as it was in the Easter school holidays. However, we were represented by a small number of young people and other leaders still gave their time to be marshalls for the road closures. At the Remembrance Parade in November we again had very smart young people and were very proud of how they conducted themselves during the morning.

One of the most memorable group events of last year was the building of the Eiffel Tower for the Tour de France. Although this was led by the scouts, it was amazing to see the whole group taking part and having pride in something which started as a pie in the sky idea in a meeting. A lot of people were sad to see it on the bonfire in November and hoped it could have found a permanent home.

A group event which I am extremely proud of, but shouldn't be mentioning until next AGM, is the St Georges Day Parade in April of this year. For the first time since 1990, 1st Burley Scout Group won the District Trophy for the smartest group. I did ask if we were awarded this just because we hadn't won it for a while but were assured that wasn't the case. My time in the carpark before the parade started where I was rolling and straightening 40+ neckers obviously paid off.

Over the last twelve months, the section leaders and myself have worked to improve the progression and transition of the young people through the sections. We have to follow scouting rules regarding progression but we also want to be fair to all young people. We continue to have full numbers in beavers and cubs and waiting lists for these sections. In fact, the number of young people on the beaver waiting list eligible to have a place in September would justify a second beaver colony. Scouts have had lower numbers attending than previous years, which I know has been a concern to some people in the group. However, had those concerns been raised with myself I would have explained that this was intentional. Since the second cub pack started we have known there would be a peak in 2015-16 when a high number of cubs would be due to move to scouts at the same time. As forecast, this is impacting on scout numbers in September 2015 and again in January 2016. Also as predicted, there may have to be creative solutions to accommodate the increase since there is not a time slot during the week for a second scout troop to be started.

Our District Commissioner regularly talks about the 'scouting family'. In Burley we have an extended family as our group consists not only of young people and leaders within scouting but also from guiding. As with all families, there are times when we are all

united and working well together and times of friction and tension. During the last year I feel we have experienced both these scenarios in our group, amongst the scouting family and within the extended family. However, we must all remember that everyone connected with our group are volunteers and give a lot of time and energy for the benefit of the young people of our village. We should all try to be tolerant and supportive of each other. The first line of our scout promise is 'I promise to do my best' and the most we can ask and expect from individuals is that they do their best.

The last and most important part of my report is to say Thank You to everyone who has supported the scouting sections during the last year, so....

Thank You to the leaders, assistants and sectional assistants who spend much more than the 'one hour a week' on scouting activities.

Thank You to the families of all our adults for their patience and understanding. They are the people who know how much time you really give to scouting.

Thank You to the parents and volunteers who help with everything from assisting at the weekly meetings, transporting young people to and from events to taking tents home to dry.

Finally, Thank You to all the young people who are part of our scouting family. They are the reason we so willingly give our time and energy.