

15th Sevenoaks (Otford) Scout Group

Annual Report 2023/2024



AGM: 13TH SEPTEMBER 2024

Meet the Team

Group Lead Volunteer - Jan Padgett

Beavers

Beaver Scout Leader - Jan Padgett

Assistant Beaver Scout Leader - Nicola Blain

Section Assistant - Anthony Holmes (off to university in Sep 2024)

=====

Seeonee Cub Pack

Cub Scout Leader – Jonathan Booth (until August 2024, pack now closed)

Assistant Cub Scout Leader - Mark Whittock (until August 2024, pack now closed)

=====

Waingunga Cub Pack

Assistant Cub Scout Leaders – Jo Toogood

Section Assistants - Mirisa Du Toit & Glen Nunes

=====

Scouts

Scout Leader - Richard Snook

Section Assistants - Richard Ellis, Lily Ellis (off to university September 2024)

=====

Board of Trustees

Group Chairman Florian Pixner

Group Secretary- Becky Hill

Group Treasurer - Graham Westwood

Trustees - Sara Yates, Robert Simmons, Jan Padgett, Jo Toogood, Rik Snook

=====

15th (Oxford) Sevenoaks Scout Group – September 2024

Chairman's Report

Hello everyone!

What a year it's been! Our Beavers, Cubs, and Scouts have been going strong, and we're lucky to have around 75 amazing young members at Oxford, with around 1000 more across the district joining in on the Scouting fun.

I hope you enjoy reading the Section Leader's Reports – they've packed in loads of brilliant activities this year. Some of the highlights include a winter camp at the Wilberforce Scouts Centre in January, and the Summer Camp at Butcher's Coppice Scout Centre near Bournemouth in August, sleepovers and countless badges, awards and activities.

Of course, none of this would be possible without our amazing Leadership Team, Executive/Trustee Committee, and the fantastic parent helpers. Thank you all so much for your dedication and hard work over the past year!

This year hasn't been without its challenges. We had a temporary closure of our scout grounds due to safety concerns over sinkholes in the area. It was a challenging time, but our section leaders were determined to continue providing memorable experiences for all sections with inventive excursions providing weekly field trips in the local area. We wouldn't have been able to navigate a successful reopening without the tireless efforts of all leaders and trustees with both Sevenoaks District Council and Oxford Parish Council, who were always on hand with their support and communication. What really touched us was the overwhelming support from the Oxford Scout community and the entire village – your backing made all the difference. A massive thank you to everyone who rallied around us during that time!

I'd also like to take this opportunity to give a heartfelt thank you to Jonathan Booth and Mark Whittock, who are stepping down as Cup Leaders after a combined Scouts leadership experience of around 60 years of incredible service. Their commitment and dedication to Scouting have been nothing short of amazing, and they've made a lasting impact on so many young lives over the years. I am grateful to have seen firsthand the positive influence they've had on my son.

Jonathan and Mark, we are so grateful for everything you've done, you'll both be sorely missed!

Sean Forrest, who has been the Chairman of the Otford Trustee Board for over 10 years, is stepping down after an incredible tenure. Since his sons were in Beavers and Cubs, Sean has shown unwavering dedication, and now, with his sons off at university, it's time to express our deep gratitude for his leadership. His commitment has left a lasting mark on the group. I'm honoured to step into the role of Chair and look forward to continuing the great work Sean has done.

Just a word about me to introduce myself, my journey into this role began as a parent helper for my son's scout journey in beavers and cubs at events like the MAG 7 Camp, fundraising BBQs and the winter camp.

I grew up in the German Alps and made the leap to the UK back in 2005. Since 2011, my family and I have called Otford home, where I live with my wife and two kids. By day, I'm a senior executive at a global data company in London but when I'm off the clock, I'm passionate about the great outdoors and you'll often find me tinkering with my beloved vintage

campervan, which has been known to take the family on a few memorable adventures! Seeing firsthand the passion and joy of the volunteers and the amazing experiences the young people have, I couldn't resist getting more involved – and now, here I am! I can't recommend enough for parents to get involved too, whether it's a little or a lot. It's a fantastically rewarding and wholesome experience, and it makes such a difference to the Scouting community.

Here's to another brilliant year ahead. Stay safe, stay well, and let's keep the adventures going!

Florian Pixner (Chairman)

15th Sevenoaks (Oxford) Scout Group

Beaver Scout Report

Another busy year of Beaver Scouting seems to have flown by.

The Oxford colony has been full for the majority of the year with any vacancies arising being quickly filled by young people on our waiting list. There are currently 12 children on the waiting list who are old enough to join that we don't have space for.

In the last year we have had 8 Beavers move up to fill Cubs places in Oxford and four of these have gone with their Chief Scout Bronze Award (the highest available at Beavers).

I am pleased and proud that in the last year we have awarded a total of 194 badges. These include 55 Challenge Badges, that are the building blocks of our scouting programme, 83 Activity Badges and 21 Nights Away Badges.

Weekly meetings have had a varied programme of recognising calendar events such as Remembrance, Christmas, St George's Day, and Easter. We have also completed the Safety, Global Issues, and Experiment badges. We also had a visit from our local police officer and I hope we didn't annoy the neighbours too much as everyone had a turn of sounding the siren on her car!

The enforced closure of the hut back in the spring did change the plan somewhat but it was a good chance to get out and about scouting in the village with bird watching, navigation and nature hikes.

We held an indoor sleepover at the hut that was attended by most of the section and they all earned their Air Activities badge alongside a Night Away and the valuable experience of a first camp for most of them.

There was also two Sevenoaks District Beaver Activity day; a fun January Beach party and a Scrap Heap Challenge - where Otford Beavers came home with the trophy on the day for the best space themed model.

I would like to thank Nicki for her support over the last year, it wouldn't be possible without you and to Anthony who will be heading off to university, but we hope will pop back to see us when he is back in the village.

Jan Padgett (Skylark)

Beaver Scout Leader

Waingunga Cub Scout Report

Waingunga meets on Thursday during term time. Since the last report and up until September this year we have been running with an average of 15 Cubs.

Due to the closure of the Seeonee pack which met on Mondays we now have 23 Cubs so will return to full strength with 4 Sixes. We have 11 over 10s, 6 over 9s and a further 6 over 8yrs.

Since the last report we have issued 79 badges. Including Challenge badges, Hikes, Cyclist, Backwoods Cooking, Time on the Water, Emergency Aid.

We have lost our Bagheera this year to a work promotion but have found a Shere Khan to take his place. Glen Nunes has completed the appointments process and will be invested with a scarf this term. Our Sahi (Mirisa du Toit) is still with us and we have 3 further regular parent helpers who have completed DBS and S&S training. Ideally we would recruit another uniformed leader.

Since the last report was submitted I have gained my night's away campsite permit having been camp leader for a 3 night camp at Cudham Shaws Activity Centre where Scouts participated in various activities including tomahawk, archery, cave bus, zorbs, grass sledge, shelter building, air rifles etc.

We continue to enjoy our usual varied program which includes all the Scouting basics of maps, knots, hikes, fires, cooking, international festivals, national and holy days such as St George and Burns Night.

Our program during 2024 was mostly offsite activities due to the unfortunate temporary closure of the hut due to fears over the ground stability. Happily these fears were proven unfounded with a ground radar survey and we reopened at the very end of the summer term for a highlight which was our Pinewood Rally.

Other notable meetings included, paper boat races on the river Darent, Pond dipping in the palace woods, dumpling making for Chinese New Year, matchbox rockets (although quite fiddly to make) & planting up the Hut planter troughs with bulbs that gave a very nice display in the spring.

Summer Camp 2024 organised by Jon Booth was the major highlight, 5 days at Butcher's Coppice Scout Centre near Bournemouth for 8 Cubs and 16 Scouts – activities plus a visit to Swanage with open top bus ride across the Poole harbour chain ferry and a day on Brownsea Island.

Looking forward to the upcoming Scouting year we hope to include the Sevenoaks Christmas pantomime and Crash Out on Cavalier at Chatham.

Joanne Toogood (Hathi)

Mirisa Du Toit - Sahi

Glen Nunes – Shere Khan

15th Otford Scout Group – Waingunga Cub pack Leaders (Thursdays)

Seeonee Cub Scout Report

A fairly quiet year this year... especially the later part.

The Cubs tackled the scientist badges during the autumn/winter period of 2023 with most finishing off the requirements and being awarded the badge. We also have a couple of evenings making the recycled plastic bottle poppies in readiness for Remembrance Sunday. We finished off the year with a bit of Christmas Craft... the Cubs mahjong Reindeer out of small logs, twigs and tinsel.

We kicked off 2024 with our traditional winter camp which struggled to attract anything like the previous years attendance numbers. We used to bank on almost full turn out, but this year... 8 Cubs! Not to worry; they had a great time, covering a range of skills - axe, saw and knife work, fire lighting, 1st aid, and route planning with last day hike. We also squeezed in Baloo's Friday night film show plus games and a camp fire.

We then made a start on the pioneer badge, resurrecting some forgotten knotting skills in everyone and finishing off with rope making and a catch-up season for those who had missed one or two meetings. This resulted in the whole Pack getting the badge.

It was probably around this time that both Mark and I decided that this was to be our final year as leaders. We started to put together a programme that contained some of our old favourites, as well as introducing the Cubs to the 'Pinewood Rally'. After the Easter break the Cubs returned with their Rally creations and we had a great night of racing with everyone looking forward to meeting up with the other sections for a grand inter-section championship.

Unfortunately these plans were scuppered by the closure of the hut (no doubt this will be mentioned at the AGM)...and we found ourselves marking time whilst waiting for our spiritual home to be reopened. In the meantime, we decided to mark the 110 years of Otford Scouting by hiking to the old meeting places used by the Scouts since 1914. This culminated in finding the 'lost Scout Hit of Kemsing' (a one time meeting place for Otford Scouts) where we swept the area with Baloo's metal detector in an effort to confirm the find. We turned up an old pot, part of a camp bed and... a Scout belt buckle! Location confirmed!!

With the hut being reopened we held a number of Cub's choice meetings, smores, fire lighting, water pistols and a games evening before finishing off ready for the summer break.

And in the background Mark and I had been planning what was to be our 'last hurrah'. We decided that we should end our time as leaders at the place where it all began... Brownsea Island. As the take up with our own Cubs was very low, we decided to involve Thursday

Cubs and the Scout Troop, bringing the total of happy campers to 24 Scouts (which included 8 Cubs). As Mark remarked... this was a proper Scout holiday, no pressure to earn badges just days out, games and activities. The highlights - the £2 bus ride on an open top bus... in the rain, fish and chips on the beach with the centrepiece visit to Brownsea Island. The perfect place to end...at the beginning! Thanks to all those who made the camp both possible and thanks to the Scouts for turning out and being good fun to be around. Particular thanks to Lucy for her (almost unseen) work behind the scenes and to Mark for his friendship both in and outside of Scouts.

In the words of Douglas Adams... Goodbye... and thanks for all the fish!!

Jonathan Booth (Akela)

Mark Whittock (Baloo)

Seeonee Cub Leader

Scout Leader Report

This year at Scouts we have been as busy as usual. The autumn term was a mix of traditional scouting activities such as wide games, archery and tomahawks, night hikes and fires.

Extra activities started in January with Scouts attending a climbing badge day at Lower Grange Farm and we took part in the Monopoly Run - a live game played around London involving thousands of Scouts.

We have had numerous fun evenings outdoor cooking, pinewood rally race cars, hikes, some led by the scouts patrols themselves such as a hike to the chip shop in Dunton Green, a quiz, cookie cooking and a nerf night. During the enforced time away from the hut we were building rope bridges between trees, had an athletics evening on Otford Rec, a scavenger hunt in the village and push go kart racing with Kemsing Scouts.

One of the highlights of Scouts this year was the microlighting which was enjoyed by all - and it was great to get flying after being aborted twice in 2023 by the weather.

Summer camp this year was attended by 16 Scouts at Butchers Coppice Scout Centre, Bournemouth which involved a day on Brownsea Island visiting the place of the very first Scout camp ever. I am proud to award another three Chief Scout Gold Awards this year.

Thanks to Richard And Lily Ellis for both helping out. Special thanks to Jan for her support running the Scout troop and Claire Bell for Admin.

Rik Snook (15th Otford Scout Leaders)

15th Sevenoaks (Otford) Group Scout Council - Annual General Meeting
13th September 2024
Location: Otford Scout Hut

Time: 7pm

Agenda

1. Introduction and welcome

2. Apologies for Absence

3. Approve the Minutes of the previous AGM

4. Governance Topics

4a. *To adopt the model constitution from Policy, Organisation and Rules*

4b. *Note the Group's Financial Year*

4c. *Agree the number of members that may be elected to the Trustee Board*

4d. *Agree the quorum for each of the Group Scout Council (including this AGM)*

5. Review of the previous year

5a. *Group Scout Leader's Review of Scouting in the Group*

5b. *To receive and consider the Annual Report of the Group Trustee Board including the:*

6. Making appointments

6a. *n/a*

6b. *n/a*

6c. *To approve the Group Scout Leader's nomination of the Group Chair*

6d. *To elect the Group Secretary*

6e. *To elect the Group Treasurer*

6f. *To elect persons to the Group Trustee Board*

6g. *To approve the Group Scout Leader's nominations to the Group Trustee Board*

6f. To appoint the Independent Examiner/Auditor

7. Closing Remarks

Annual General Meeting 15th (Otford) Sevenoaks Scout Group

23rd June 2023

Location: Otford Scout Hut, 7.00pm

1. Introduction and welcome

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, with members of the 15th Otford Scout Council, Jo Brookbank (Sevenoaks District Commissioner) and approximately 50 parents and children.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Joanne Toogood (Waingunga Leader).

3. Approve the Minutes of the previous AGM

Sean Forrest (SF, Chair) reported that the minutes had been previously reviewed by the Group Executive Committee after the previous AGM and asked the Group Scout Council to agree that they are a true record of that meeting.

Seconded: Sarah Yates (SY); Approved with a show of hands

4. Governance Topics

4a. To adopt the model constitution from Policy, Organisation and Rules

SF proposed that the model constitution from Chapter 5 of Policy, Organisation and Rules is adopted and copies of this were available at the meeting.

Seconded: Jan Padgett (JP); Approved with a show of hands

4b. Note the Group's Financial Year

SF asked the Group Scout Council to note the charity's financial year is 1st April to 31st March.

4c. Agree the number of members that may be elected to the Trustee Board

SF recommended on behalf of the outgoing Trustee Board that 4 people can be elected and proposed that the Group Scout Council approved that recommendation.

Seconded: SY; Approved with a show of hands

4d. Agree the quorum for each of the Group Scout Council (including this AGM)

SF reported that this Group Scout Council must agree at its AGM the quorum - the minimum number of Group Scout Council members that must be present at a meeting of the Group Scout Council. The recommendation from the outgoing Trustee Board is that the quorum

should be set at 15 people and asked the Group Scout Council to approve that recommendation.

Recommended: JP; Approved by a show of hands

SF noted that the Group Scout Council must agree at its AGM the quorum for Trustee Board meetings, and any sub-committee meetings. The Charity Commission statement of good practice is that the Trustee Board quorum should be set at one third of Trustee Board members plus one and that the sub-committee quorum should be set at one third of Trustee Board members plus one. The recommendation from the outgoing Trustee Board is that the quorum should be set as per the Charity Commission good practice statement. The Group Scout Council is asked to approve that recommendation.

Seconded: SY; Approved by a show of hands

5. Review of the previous year

5a. Group Scout Leader's review of scouting in the group

JP thanked all the leaders for their volunteering time, without which, scouting activities would not happen. The group applauded in recognition. JP reported that this year activities have ranged from sleeping in cardboard shelters to fundraise, completing a London at height challenge, cooking 600 burgers and hot dogs at the village Coronation BBQ, Dungeon & Dragon days, a 45 km scout hut hike or huts in the District, the brilliant MAG7, the chance of up to 6 nights away along with activities such as archery and paddleboarding. Microlighting is due to be scheduled next month having been postponed due to the weather.

MAG7 was a real team effort and again, it couldn't be run without parent help. JP asked that there were two upcoming summer camps which are short of parent volunteers and an upcoming maintenance day at the hut on Sunday 2 July from 12pm.

JP said that if any parents have interests outside of scouting and want to get involved and be trained in activities such as paddleboarding or archery and can spare a weekend of two a year they are very welcome to join an activity team.

5b. To receive and consider the Annual Report of the Group Trustee Board including the annual Statement of Accounts

SF noted that the Group Trustee Board had approved the Annual Report and Statement of Accounts. A report on the accounts will be received once the Board has appointed a new Independent Examiner.

Graham Westwood (GW) updated the meeting stating that the group started the year with just under £40k in the accounts. Receipts amounted to £15.5k, £9k from subs and Gift Aid, £3.5k from camps and activities and £1800 was raised from hut hire. Expenditure included

£5k for District subs and £8k on camps and activities. Other expenditure related to general maintenance. Rising electricity costs had also affected expenditure. Funds raised at the village Christmas Fair included a donation to Porchlight. This year fundraising events include the Coronation BBQ, Village Fete and Christmas Fair. The year ended with a total of just over £31k in the account.

SY added as part of the account there is ring fenced funds for costs at the hut such as subsidence if it were to occur (approx £10k) and a smaller amount ring fenced is the Otford Players donation to be used for activities.

6. Making appointments

6a. n/a

6b. n/a

SF noted to the Group Scout Council members that the next part of the meeting sets up the charity to be well-led during the period until the next AGM. Particularly, the Group Scout Council appoints a Trustee Board to ensure good governance for the charity over the next year.

6c. To approve the Group Scout Leader's nomination of the Group Chair

SF handed chairmanship of the meeting over to the Group Scout Leader.

JP nominated Sean Forrest as Group Chair and asked for a show of hands as approval. Approval given by show of hands.

6d. To approve the Group Secretary

SF noted that the 'Group Secretary' is an elected appointment, and as required, Becky Hill (BH) has been formally proposed and seconded. Since there were no other nominations by the closing date a show of hands is required to approve Becky's election. Approval given by a show of hands.

6e. To elect the Group Treasurer

SF noted that the 'Group Treasurer' is an elected appointment, and as required, Graham Westwood (GW) has been formally proposed and seconded. Since there were no other nominations by the closing date a show of hands is required to approve Graham's election. Approval given by a show of hands.

6f. to elect persons to the Group Trustee Board

SF noted at this point that the following people had been proposed and seconded to be elected to the Group Trustee Board:

Jan Padgett (JP) - Group Scout Leader

Sarah Yates (SY) - Group Scout Leader

Rik Snook (RS) - Scout Leader

Jonathan Booth (JB) - Seeonee Cub Leader

Joanne Toogood (JT) - Waingunga Cub Leader

Sean Forrest (SF) - Group Chair

Becky Hill (BH) - Group Secretary

Graham Westwood (GW) - Group Treasurer

BH noted that the following have been formally proposed and seconded in writing by the due date:

Robert Simmons (RS)

All elected by a show of hands.

6h. To appoint the Scrutineer/Independent Examiner/Auditor

GW proposed Wendy Everett.

SF noted that Wendy Everett had been proposed and seconded and is qualified for the role. Approved by a show of hands.

7. Closing Remarks

JP stated a number of Chief Scout Awards had been given in the period (Bronze, Silver, Gold) with four bronze (Beavers), three silver (Cubs) and two gold (Scouts) awarded. The Gold award represents a lot more commitment and effort and two scouts, Ben and Sam had achieved the award, the first in a long time.

JB also presented his Cub of the Year award to James, as voted for by the Cubs.

Jo Brookbank (JBr) gave a huge thanks to all attending and their support to section leaders and the Trustee Board and that it was great to see good attendance at the AGM. JBr asked that any volunteering time parents could offer was very welcomed.

JBr presented a number of awards including wood beads for Richard Bell (RB) following recent completion of further training and who renewed his Scout promise.

Another award, an Award of Merit, which has been delayed in presentation, is to Mark Whittock (MW), Seeonee Cub Assistant Leader for his long service. Due to MW's absence, JP agreed to present at the next cub meeting.

JBr also presented a Silver Acorn award to JB in recognition of his contribution to scouting and a Chief Scout Commendation to JP for her efforts.

Lastly, JBr informed the meeting that Anthony, one of the Young Leaders, had recently been awarded the first John London Award for his contribution to scouting which had been presented at the recent MAG7.

SF thanked everyone for coming and drew the meeting to a close.