

15th (Oxford) Sevenoaks Scout Group

Annual Report 2016-17



Meet the Team

Group Scout Leader	Lesley Rutter
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Beaver Scout Leader	VACANT
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Assistant Beaver Scout Leaders	Jan Padgett Rachel MacGadie
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Cub Scout Leader – Seeonee Cub Pack	Jonathan Booth
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Cub Scout Leader – Waingunga Cub Pack	VACANT
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Assistant Cub Scout Leaders	Mark Whittock (S) Karen Gorbutt (W) Chris Gorbutt (W) Jo Toogood (W) Ian Davis (W)
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Scout Leader	Sam Norris
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Assistant Scout Leaders	Gary Norris Russ Hearsum Richard Snook
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Group Chairman	Sean Forrest
Group Secretary	Sarah Yates
Group Treasurer	Wesley Kerslake

Group Scout Leader Report

Firstly, I would like to say how happy I am to be back full time at Otford Scout Group as your Group Scout Leader! After stepping down from my District role in December, I was very pleased that I could return to Otford and such an amazing group of people.

This year has been a very busy year for the Group. We sadly said 'Goodbye' to Little Akela of Waingunga Cub Pack and Gary Cutts, Assistant Cub Leader at the same time and, as we had been unable to find any adults to take over running the pack, I am very grateful to Jonathan for looking after Waingunga in the interim.

As you are probably aware, the Group has started to tidy up the Scout hut and grounds ensuring the whole area can be a safe and usable space after the erection of the fence. Following Planning instructions, we painted the fence in front of the hut and have also planted bushes to 'soften' the appearance to the passing public.

In November, we held our annual Firework display and I am pleased to say it was our best ever turnout! We raised over £3,000 which was put towards the cost of moving the fence inwards along the footpath as per OPC's request. As you can imagine, this has put a huge strain on our Group funds we now need to look for more ways to raise funds as our coffers are rather depleted.

I am now looking at ways to take the Group forward, with numbers ever increasing we are looking at the possibility of another Beaver Colony and Scout Troop. Scouting in Otford is very popular and this is something I will be considering over the coming months.

Our facilities at the Hut and grounds are now much better than before and we will be looking into providing overnight sleeping provisions plus improved toilet and shower facilities.

As the Group grows and more facilities are created, we will need people to help keep everywhere tidy and I am starting a monthly working party on the first Sunday of the month for a couple of hours to address this. It doesn't need to be the same people every time but 4 or 5 people for 2 hours will make a lot of difference. If this takes off, I plan to open an Active Support Section for Otford Scout Group and if anyone would like more information about this then please catch me this Friday evening at the party or give me a call.

Finally, I would like to give my heartfelt thanks to the Leaders and members of the Executive Committee for all the support they have given me. Without your help and support, the Group would not be the success it is today.

Lesley Rutter.

Group Scout Leader.

The Group Chairman Report

The past year has been very busy and productive for Otford Scout Group. Beavers, Cubs and Scouts are all thriving with attendance numbers in all sections at full capacity. There is again a waiting list of around 19 children wanting to start beavers and log jams of children wanting to move up the from Cubs to Scouts and Scouts to Explorers.

I would like to say a big thank you to all the leadership teams and parent helpers who give up much of their spare time to make this Scout Group a fantastic place for the young people of Otford. Thank you all for your hard work and dedication.

In particular, I would like to thank Jonathan Booth who has stepped in to lead the Thursday night Waingunga Cub Pack for the last year as well as still running the Monday night Seeonee Cub Pack after the departure of Graham Still last year. Without Jonathan stepping in to take on this extra role with help from some of the parents the Thursday night Cub Pack would have had to have closed. I am now happy to report that we have four additional volunteers who have come forward as Assistant Leaders to take over the running of the Thursday Cub Pack and Lesley Rutter along with Jonathan have been and will be helping them to settle in to their new roles.

I would also very much like to thank Lesley Rutter and I am delighted to advise that she is now our permanent GSL (Group Scout Leader) who after many years in the role of District Commissioner has decided to step down from her District duties and concentrate on the group leadership role for Otford Scout Group. Lesley has a wealth of experience in everything scouting and is a fantastic asset to the Group.

All sections of the Group have successfully completed many challenge and activity badges over the course of the last year with most Beavers achieving the Bronze Chief Scout Award by the time they move up to Cubs and I believe around 10 Cubs also having achieved their Silver Chief Scout Award recently too. A small group of cubs also took part in and won the District Trophy for the District Cub Challenge & Quiz this year and went forward to represent the District in the Kent 'Quiz & Fizz' Challenge where they did extremely well. There was a well-attended Summer Camp at Downe last August attended by Beavers, Cubs and Scouts. There has also been a cub Winter Camp and Spring Camp attended by cubs from both Seeonee and Waingunga packs. 2016 was the Centenary of the Cubs and many activities were organised and well attended by members of the cub packs and it culminated in a night hike up Otford Mount to view celebratory fireworks in December. The whole Group took part again this year in the St Georges Day Parade through Sevenoaks which was also very well attended. Scouts are more popular than ever and we are looking at the possibility of creating another Troop due to number of people wanting to continue in the Group once leaving cubs, again we are looking for someone to step forward and take on the well worth and rewarding challenge of being the new Scout Troop leader.

I would like also to thank all the parents and helpers who give up their spare time to support the group helping at evening meetings, camps, events and the hut tidy-up day a couple of weeks ago. The parent rota systems in place are proving to work well and without parents support many things done by the group would simply not take place. The Group can only flourish and grow with the continued help and support of the parents and we look forward to as much support in the coming year as you can manage.

Fundraising this year has again been very successful for the group with money being raised at the Bonfire Evening and Village Fete our main annual fund raisers. As you may have noticed a lot of funds raised have been spent in the last year of so vastly improving the Scout Hut and surrounding grounds including the erection of the perimeter fencing, new electrics and oven, new flooring, shelving, vital structural work to the building etc. etc. Obviously this has an impact on how much money we have left in the bank and fund raising at the moment has never been so important. The improvements that have been made the Scout Hut are fantastic making it a much more useful and pleasant asset for the whole group and the wider community. Other Scout Groups have made use of our facilities; we have had overnight camping on the site now it is safe and secure. We now have The Forest School using the facility to enhance Otford Primary School children's learning and knowledge through outdoor lessons and activities. The Brownies now use the hut on Tuesday evenings for their meetings. Other local clubs and groups are making use of the re-vamped facilities which benefit the whole community.

The Group is going from strength to strength and we are looking forward to another exciting year for the 15th which will no doubt surpass the excellent achievements of this year. Thank you all for your continued support.

Sean Forrest Group Chairman

Beaver Scout Report

This has been another exciting year for the Otford Beaver Colony. With plenty of scouting activities for our young people.

The Colony is currently full with 24 members and a waiting list that includes 23 children old enough to join us but with no space to accommodate them. In the last year 8 beavers who have left are now currently invested in Otford Cubs.

I am pleased that since September we have awarded a total of 166 badges. These include 38 Activity Badges, 30 Challenge Badges, Staged Activity Badges, Nights Away and I have been proud to award 8 Chief Scout Bronze Awards.

The summer holidays 2016 concluded with 8 Beavers joining the Otford Cubs at their Summer Camp in Downe for one night under canvas. We all enjoyed the adventures of the Tunnel Trail, joined in with International Day, launched water rockets, started our own fires, made dampers that we cooked on sticks and took part in a traditional camp fire. Everyone who attended earned their Camp Craft Activity Badge, most finished off their Outdoor Challenge Badge and all gained a Night Away Badge. Many thanks to Jonathan for letting us piggy-back on all his camp organisation.

In September, our Beaver Colony join up with many others in the district to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of Beavers with an Olympic themed sleepover. We hiked from Otford over to Greatness where we took part in many different activities linked to water, adventure, food, nature and fire. There was also a mass sing-song around the campfire. My personal highlight was discovering that some of my Beavers thought crickets tasted better than dark chocolate!

At our meetings this year, we have had visits from the RNLI and local PCSO, we have also had a tour around Sevenoaks Fire Station and completed the Tesco Farm to Fork trail. Our weekly activities concentrate on trying to complete the six Challenge Badges during the time that Beavers are with us, this has meant we have made bird-feeders, made nature art, did a scavenger hunt, made junk model robots, played wide games, cooked miniature pancakes, painted smile stones and much much more. We also celebrated St George's Day, St Andrew's Day, Christmas, Pancake Day, Easter, Mother's Day, and Father's Day.

As part of the My World Challenge Badge we learnt about the work of the Sevenoaks Food Bank and over a month collected donations. Thank you to all who contributed to the large box of supplies that we gave to them

During the school holidays, we will be holding a one-night sleepover at our Scout Hut and the Beavers will again be joining the Cubs at the Summer Camp at Downe.

I would like to thank Rachel for her support over the last 2 years, you will be missed, but I am very pleased that Mandy and Nicola will be joining us as Section Assistants.

Jan Padgett
Skylark

Waingunga Cub Pack Report

Nine Cubs from Waingunga along with Graham Still (little Akela) joined Seeonee on their summer camp at Downe Scout Activity Centre 24th - 28th August. The Cubs tackled archery, climbing, aerial trek, fire lighting & general Scouting skills, water rockets, wide games and camp fires. They cooked their own lunches each day using a variety of methods. At the end of the camp six had attained their backwards cooking activity badge and outdoor challenge award. Four Cubs were also awarded the adventure challenge badge. This was to be Graham's last Scouting activity before he stepped down and was, I think, a good send off for both him and Sheela his partner.

What with Gary Cutts, Waingunga's ACSL having stepped down at the end of the July term, I took over the running of the pack in September, initially for three months, then six, as the Group looked for a new leadership team to take over permanently. Having run through a short programme of Scouting skills during the first few weekly meetings, I managed to sync the programme for both Seeonee and Waingunga therefore making the task of running both Packs a bit easier.

The Pack joined the rest of the Group at Remembrance Sunday 2016

Mid way through November work started on the Astronomer's activity badge. This included star gazing from Otford Mound, a hike round Otford's scale model of the Solar System, and a moon crater experiment. From January to March 2017, 11 Cubs managed to finish the requirements and all were awarded the badge

The 16th December 2016 saw the culmination of the year's celebration of 100 years of Cub Scouting. Both Cub Packs hiked up to Otford Mound to take part in a 'Promise' party. We were joined by several parent helpers and the Rev. Worrasm of St Barts. At 19:16 hours the Cubs renewed their Promise and on cue 10 rockets were set off in the village below. This was followed by a hot dog supper before we returned to the hut, and then home

Three of the older Cubs joined Seeonee Pack for their winter camp held at Frylands Wood, Croydon between 27th - 29th January 2017, taking part in climbing, archery, and mallet making. Meetings this year (2017) have included a Radio-controlled night, one based on paper (hats, cups, planes), lollipop stick catapults, and tin can cookers.

On 4th March 2017, a team of four from Seeonee and Toby Padgett from Waingunga took part in the District Cub Challenge and quiz The combined team won the competition, lifting the District Trophy. Two weeks later on the 18th a team from Waingunga came first overall at the District cross country competition (beating sister pack Seeonee into second place).

During March the Pack attempted the chef activity badge, cooking eggs three ways during a meeting, learning about kitchen safety, keeping a food diary and finally preparing a two-course meal at home. Eventually eight Cubs were awarded the badge

With the closure of the Pack looking likely, a spring camp was organised between the 21st - 23rd April. This was initially going to be the Pack's final send-off but soon became a celebration of the Pack continuing as four parents stepped forward to form a new leadership team. During the camp, held at Wilberforce Scout Centre Biggin Hill, the Pack were treated to a Friday night film show, as well as taking part in a hike to the RAF chapel in Biggin Hill, grass sledging, fire lighting, camp fire and wide games. At camp's end, eight had attained the navigators stage 1 badge. The camp finished off with most making the effort to attend the St George's Day parade in Sevenoaks

The Pack was represented at the May Civic Service at St Barts.

In May, the Pack started on the Pioneering activity badge, learning knots and lashings. The Cubs also made their own rope as well as building a simple tripod using the skills learned. By the 8th June, 13 Cubs had been awarded the badge.

Some Cubs have made an individual effort and have been awarded the following badges for work done outside of meetings; one paddle stage 1, one nautical stage 1, three entertainers, three artists, and one book reader activity badges. One Cub, Adam Williams, completed all the work needed for his challenge badges and is due to receive his Chief Scout's Silver Award, the highest award a Cub can achieve, on the 30th June at the council offices in Sevenoaks.

There are currently 16 cubs in the Pack. This number has remained constant since I took over in September. Now that the new leadership team of Chris, Karen, Ian & Jo (with the support of Lesley - our GSL) is in place, I'm sure the Pack will now have the chance to grow. I wish them every success.

Finally, I would like to extend my thanks to the parents who have supported the Pack via the parent rota during my six months 'holding action'. They also stepped up to the mark at short notice, if I found an unfilled date, ensuring the meetings could go ahead as planned. This commitment to Scouting in Otford has ultimately helped ensure that the Pack can continue, not just for the current crop of Cubs, but for those who are to follow

Akela (Jonathan)

From the new Leaders of Waingunga Cub Pack

After running both Otford Cub Packs on a temporary basis for the last few months, Jonathan is now handing over the reins of Waingunga Cub Pack. We all thank Jonathan for all his hard work and for aiding the transition between himself and us. We are pleased to tell you that we are 4 new Leaders starting this term, Karen and Chris Gorbett, Jo Toogood and Ian Davis. We are very excited about taking on our new roles and we have been working with Lesley to put together a fun-filled diverse programme for this term.

We look forward to getting to know the Waingunga pack and to meeting you all.

Seeonee Cub Pack Report

2016 was the 100th year of Cub Scouting and Seeonee Pack was part way through a programme of events to mark the anniversary when last year's AGM was held. The first event after that AGM was a circular hike up to Otford Mound to take in the views of the village and its surrounds. During this same period work finished on the DIY activity badge with Cubs completing their second project - a bat box. 23 Cubs were awarded the badge, and five bat boxes were donated to the Group to be put up in either the hut grounds or the chalk pit.

On 23rd June, a 'Cubs 100' thank you party held at the hut and grounds; parents and sibling were invited to mark the anniversary year. There was a BBQ, birthday cake, activities, and a 'guest of honour' - a Mr Cracknell, who had been a Wolf Cub in the 1930s

On 17th July, the Pack attended Thriftwood Scout camp for a day's 'messaging about in boats'. In the morning, with parent help, the Cubs built rafts before then getting the chance to float and paddle their creations. In the afternoon, after instruction, the Cubs took to the water in kayaks. At day's end the 20 Cubs who attended were awarded both the water activities badge and the time on the water badge - stage 2.

Between 24-28th August Seeonee held a joint summer camp with Waingunga Pack, 23 Cubs in total (plus three guest Cubs from elsewhere). We were also joined by eight Beavers and six Scouts. The Cubs tackled archery, climbing, aerial tree trek, fire lighting & general Scouting skills, water rockets, wide games and camp fires. They cooked their own lunches each day using a variety of methods. At the end of the camp the younger Cubs had attained their backwards cooking activity badge, the outdoor challenge award, and the adventure challenge award. The older Cubs were able to earn activity plus awards for refreshing/improving previously held skills. They also attempted the adventure activity badge. This badge, although 'discontinued', provided an additional challenge for them

From September to November 2016 the Pack worked on the Fire safety activity badge culminating in a visit to Sevenoaks fire station. Requirements completed, the majority of the Pack (20 Cubs) were awarded the badge. A handful had theirs awarded by the fire fighters who had shown them round the station.

The Pack took part in the Remembrance Sunday Church service and parade

In November work started on the astronomer's activity badge with the Cubs taking part in star gazing, a hike round the Otford Solar System model and moon crater experiments. 21 Cubs successfully completed the requirements and were awarded the badge

The 16th December 2016 saw the culmination of the 'Cub 100' celebration. Both Cub Packs hiked up to Otford Mound to take part in a 'Promise' party. We were joined by several parent helpers and the Rev. Worrasm of St Barts. At 19:16 hours the Cubs renewed their Promise and on cue 10 rockets were set off in the village below. This was followed by a hot dog supper before we returned to the hut, and then home

Between 27th -29th January 2017 we held our winter camp at Frylands Wood, Croydon. There was a full turn out of Cubs plus three from Waingunga. The Cubs took part in climbing, archery and mallet making. The hut was so cold we contemplated burning it down to keep warm!

Meetings at the start of the 2017 included a radio-controlled night with recent Christmas presents being flown, driven and crashed, one themed around paper (hats, cups, planes), lollipop stick catapults, and tin can cookers used to cook mini pancakes

On the 4th March 2017, a team of four Seeonee Cubs and one Waingunga Cub took part in the District Cub challenge and quiz. The team built up an unassailable 30-point lead, therefore lifting the District trophy

Two weeks later the Pack fielded a cross country team for the District competition, coming second overall, only losing out to our sister pack Waingunga who lifted the trophy

During March the Pack attempted the chef activity badge, cooking eggs three ways during a meeting, learning about kitchen safety, keeping a food diary and finally preparing a two-course meal at home. Eventually ten Cubs were awarded the badge

A Spring camp was held Between the 21st - 23rd April at Wilberforce Scout Centre Biggin Hill. Although primarily for Waingunga Cubs, eight from Seeonee joined them for a Friday night film show, a hike to the RAF chapel in Biggin Hill, grass sledging, fire lighting, camp fire and wide games. The camp finished off with all the Seeonee Cubs making the effort to attend the St George's Day parade in Sevenoaks, where they meet up with others from the Pack

On 29th April, the four Cubs from Seeonee Pack who had been part of the District Cub Challenge and quiz travelled down to Lower Grange Farm to represent Sevenoaks District in a County run quiz. The team came a very credible third place. After a packed lunch, they were able to enjoy a fun activity on the County caving bus.

The Pack was represented at the May Civic Service at St Barts

In June, the Pack started the Pioneering activity badge tying knots and lashings, building a simple pioneering project and making their own short length of rope. The entire pack gained the badge

On 10th June ten Cubs visited the Neasden Hindu Mandir and took part a tour of the temple, followed by a religious ceremony. The Cubs and leaders joined other worshippers, receiving a blessing via the flames of candles.

Several Cubs have made an individual effort and have been awarded the following badges for work done outside of meetings; two martial art activity badges, two home help activity badges, one stage 4 sailing badge, two swimming stage 3 badges. Other Cubs have attained the following badges; personal challenge, skills challenge, our world challenge and team leader challenge. A handful of cubs have turned out to all, or nearly all meetings, days out, camps etc this last year and each have attained between 10 to 13 staged, activity, and challenge badges. In this day and age, with competing clubs and an ever-increasing amount of homework, this achievement reflects their commitment to Scouting

Six Cubs, Anthony Holmes, George Forrest, Sam Yates, Jess Robson, Laura Holmes and George Booth have recently attained all seven challenge badges and having more than fulfilled the other requirement of having at least six activity/staged badges, are due to be awarded the Chief Scouts silver award. This is the highest award a Cub Scout can receive. The Cubs will be attending a ceremony on 30th June where their achievement will be recognised

Last year, Seeonee had 24 Cubs. As the prospect of Waingunga closing loomed large, numbers were run down so as to absorb as many Cubs as possible from our sister Pack. Thankfully Waingunga are now set to continue so we can now work our way back up to a full complement. The Pack ends this period with 18 Cubs

Thanks goes to Mark Whittock, the ACSL for Seeonee, for his support at meetings, camps et and his friendship without. And to those parents who regularly commit to help, sometimes with next to no notice. And to Lucy, the power behind the throne!

Jonathan Booth

Akela

Scout Leader Report

We started with 25 Scouts as of the last AGM. We have had some reduction in numbers for various reasons and have 20 on the books now. We have a regular turnout of 16 Scouts.

Recent activities: patrol boxes, tents, fire craft, tree planting, CPR training by JB, Communications, Pioneering – pillow fight, DIY Skills – Rewiring plug –changing a washer- Bricklaying-Painting, have done some map reading and been on a hike. We went to Lower Grange Farm to do Rock Climbing.

Camp time in Summer changed due to lack of volunteers. Revised camp time to link up with Cubs Centenary Camp. 6 Scouts attended, completing the Aerial Trail, Archery, Abseiling, shelter building and various camp craft activities.

We have welcomed Richard into our leadership team and he has brought along some great ideas.

My continued thanks to the whole leadership team of Garry, Russel and Richard.

Sam Norris
Scout Leader

Group Annual General Meeting of 15th Otford Scout Group

23rd June 2017

AGENDA

- Welcome from the Group Chairman
- Apologies for absence
- To Approve the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 19th July 2014
- To Receive The Annual Report and Accounts for year ending 31st March 2015
- To Receive The Group Scout Leader's Nomination for Group Chairman
- To Elect the Group Treasurer and Group Secretary
- To Receive The Group Scout Leader's Nominations for Membership of the Group Executive Committee
- To Propose And Elect Members To The Group's Executive Committee
- Any Other Business At The Discretion Of The Group Chairman

Minutes of the AGM of the 15th Sevenoaks (Otford) Scout Group held at 3.30pm on Sunday 22nd May 2016 at the Scout Hut, Otford, Kent.

Present:

Sean Forrest; Chairman (SF), Sarah Yates; Secretary (SY), Wesley Kerslake; Treasurer (WK), Lesley Rutter; District Commissioner and acting Group Scout Leader (LR), Sam Norris; Scout Leader (SN), Jonathan Booth; Cub Leader (JB), Graham Still; Cub Leader (GS) and Jan Padgett; Beaver Leader (JP).

The meeting commenced at 3.30pm with SF welcoming everybody, thanking them for attending.

1.	Apologies for Absence: Mike Schwarz and Garry Norris.	
2.	Approve minutes of the AGM held on 19 th September 2015. Acceptance proposed by GS, seconded by JB and unanimously approved.	
3.	Receive the Annual Report and Accounts for the 12 months to 31 st March 2016. Following a summary of the accounts by WK, Treasurer, acceptance of the accounts was proposed by JP, seconded by SN and unanimously approved.	
4.	Receive the Group Scout Leader's nomination for Group Chairman. As acting Group Scout Leader, LR nominated Sean Forrest for Chairman. Unanimously agreed.	
5.	Elect the Group Treasurer and Group Secretary. WK was prepared to continue as Treasurer for another year; proposed by SN, seconded by GS and unanimously accepted. SY was prepared to continue as Secretary; proposed by WK, seconded by Lucy Booth (parent) and unanimously accepted.	
6.	Receive the Group Scout Leader's nominations for membership of the Group's Executive Committee. In his absence, Mike Schwarz was nominated as a member of the Executive Committee once again; SN proposed, seconded by JP, unanimously accepted pending MS' approval. James Holdak was nominated as a Parent Representative, proposed by SY, seconded by GS and unanimously accepted.	
7.	Receive Section Leaders' annual reports. Copies attached.	
8.	AOB at the discretion of the Chairman. Jude Holdak was invested into the Waingunga cub pack by GS. LR advised all present that GS will be stepping down after 17 years as a cub pack leader. LR thanked GS for his years of commitment and input into the group. She advised that the group is hoping to hold a 'farewell' BBQ for GS later in the year. LR advised that GS has been awarded the Scouting Award of Merit which he will be formally presented with on 21st June 2016. GS thanked all for their support and assistance over the years. Fireworks Display: likely to be held on 5th November, to be confirmed later in the year. SF thanked all and closed the meeting.	