



Annual General Meeting 2020 – 19th October 2020

District Commissioner Report

I became DC back in January this year and when we got together last year to have our AGM and present our awards, we could have never of dreamt that by the middle of March 2020, the World and Scouting as we know it would change to where it is now. Our personal, and business lives have also altered beyond all expectations.

However, I am pleased that so many of you took up the challenge of virtual delivery of meetings, that have now become the trend, whether it be through Facebook, Zoom, Teams, Skype, or other methods. Guidance and support have been forthcoming from HQ to assist in this but unfortunately, various District events have had to either be cancelled or postponed due to this pandemic.

The wider District Team have done themselves proud by supporting the various sections over the course of last year and worked hard to put on some successful events, as well as sharing their knowledge and expertise to help others.

Now back to the year in question:

First and foremost – a huge thank you all for what you have been doing whilst we have been in this unprecedented situation! The District Team appreciate how hard every volunteer, helper and parent/carer has been working to maintain the excellent standard of Scouting within Ely District throughout this period!

Many of you will be aware of the HQ updates surrounding getting ready for the return of F2F Scouting, as the coronavirus pandemic evolves. HQ have produced a National Framework on how the resuming of F2F Scouting will work, including the approval process that goes with it. I still encourage everyone to read the latest Framework and the additional guidance as they are continually changing, and it is important that everyone understands the process and how to play your part in it.

We now have 4 Sections (1 full Group & 1 Section) that have now returned to F2F Scouting, and another 3 Sections that will hopefully be submitting their RA very soon. As I have mentioned in other meetings, this is not a race, as everyone needs to feel comfortable before returning to F2F Scouting.

We are currently at an Amber readiness level which means:

- You can still carry on running your digital program.
- Restricted size group sessions can now take place indoors and outdoors, in small group sessions of 15 plus 5 leaders.
- Scout Network programmed activities: 6 people.
- Adult activities (non-social) with no young people present: 6 people.
- Adults must wear face coverings indoors, unless they are leading an activity.
- Scouts and Explorers must wear face coverings indoors, including when using toilet facilities.

As a District, we have formed a working group to ensure that we are able to respond in a timely and effective way to the changing situation. We hope that we can continue to support and improve the delivery of Scouting within the District, supporting our Group Scout Leaders to deliver their roles effectively and efficiently.

We have started identifying ways in which we can support you through this period but if groups do have any urgent concerns, the Group Scout leader/Group chair should contact me or one of my Deputies; Paul Bean, Elaine Chamberlain or Ian Weatherall.

We are slowly starting to formulate plans for the next year, but with so much uncertainty, it is hard to confirm things in motion at this stage. I do hope that we will be able to have some sort of St George's Day event next year.

Our current priorities/activities:

Delivering the programme

- Supporting a mix of on-line and socially distanced activities
- Developing a District events programme that will facilitate this

Keeping everyone safe

- Supporting the return to face to face scouting for all sections across the District
- Supporting the transition towards Risk Assessments for all activities
- Providing training opportunities to volunteers to achieve Getting Started and Woodbadge and to keep up to date with Safety, Safeguarding and First Aid

Motivating our volunteers

- Encouraging a supportive team culture, we are all there to help each other
- Helping scout groups to recruit more leaders from a distance – will be advertising all group vacancies on the District webpage
- Celebrating our successes

Funding Scouting

District is committed to ensuring that no group will fail because of the lack of funding

Subs

With regards to financial planning, many of you will know that HQ has announced that there will be an increase in the membership fee for 2021 to £7.50 (with £1.50 going toward a hardship fund).

Following talks with County, they have agreed their fee would be a maximum of £6.00 and this could go down (£5 less than last year) and District has agreed we would match this County figure, whatever the final amount is.

Last year £52/youth member (HQ=£28.50; County=£11; District=£12.50)

Maximum for 2021 £48/youth member (HQ=£36; County=£6; District=£6)

Recruitment

- We have just recruited a new District Explorer Scout Leader – Mark Bell
- I am also proud to announce that we have 6 young people that have joined the District Team, working alongside our Deputy District Commissioners and one of these joining our Executive Committee. We are planning to appoint one of remaining 5 to our Youth Commissioner by the end of the year.

Activities

There are some great resources now available

- scouts.org.uk/coronavirus – covid-19 safe programme ideas
- scouts.org.uk/the-great-indoors

Changes

Many of the leaders will be aware of some important changes to the Scout Policy, Organisation and Rules (POR) that were introduced from 1st September 2020.

- A revised Chapter 2, with a new Safeguarding Policy and Youth Member Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Full versions of Faith Promises updated in Chapter 1.
- Appointments Table 2 has been fully revised and is now available as an Excel document for ease of use [The Appointment Process Table 2](#)
- Transition period to be applied to wood badge training to September 2021
- No transition period for Safety, Safeguarding, GDPR and Getting Started
- Instead, Mutually Agreed Restriction may be applied

Mandatory Training for all Members:

- Module 1: Essential Information
- Safety, renewed every 3 years, new on-line version
- Safeguarding, renewed every 3 years, new on-line version
- GDPR, currently once only, no renewal requirement
- Getting Started, to be completed within 5 months for Full appointment
- Trustee Introduction, for all executive members, required within 5 months of appointment
- Wood Badge, within 3 years, or move to a non-wood badge role such as Section Assistant
- First Aid, required for return to face to face scouting. It is only required for those roles requiring a Wood Badge

Transition Activities:

- Transition period for wood badge training to allow completion by September 2021
- But not to Safety, Safeguarding, GDPR and Getting Started, where Mutually Agreed Restriction may be applied
- Also use mutually agreed restrictions where a volunteer has not completed wood badge within three years of role start date in Compass, to allow time to validate remaining modules. Note this is subject to plan agreed for transition period

Another big change relates to Risk Assessments. From 1st January 2021, all activities, meetings, and events will require a written risk assessment that is documented and stored. Further information on the can be found from scouts.org.uk/riskassessments

So what is the current situation throughout the District:

HQ has set a target of 2% for outstanding Safety & Safeguarding Training.

Mandatory Training Status

	01/05/2020	28/06/2020	22/07/2020	14/08/2020	14/09/2020	HQ Target
Safety	50	13	12	9	8	3
Safeguarding	49	14	12	10	9	3
First Aid	17	13	13	13	25	N/A
Wood Badge	14	14	12	12	12	N/A

Census Data:

Census is back to January 2021, with payment remaining in April.

In January 2020, our District Annual Census was completed. This year our membership numbers were down as a total from that in 2019.

Youth Members	Male 2020	Male 2019	Female 2020	Female 2019	Total 2020	Total 2019
Beavers	126	149	35	31	161	180
Cubs	148	135	30	33	178	168
Scouts	104	101	28	26	132	127
Explorers	29	25	14	10	43	35
Network	6	9	2	3	8	12
Total	413	419	109	103	522	522

Adult Members	Male 2020	Male 2019	Female 2020	Female 2019	Total 2020	Total 2019
Section & Assistant Leaders	30	29	27	30	57	59
Section Assistants	14	19	15	16	29	35
Total	44	48	42	46	86	94
Young Leaders	11	0	4	0	15	0
Management Roles GSL's / Assistants / Commissioners	8	8	2	6	10	14
Governance Roles Group & District Executive	26	14	23	26	49	40
Support Roles	21	29	20	29	41	58
Total Adults	99	99	87	107	186	206
Total Membership	512	518	196	210	708	728

Units	2020	2019
Beavers	11	11
Cubs	10	10
Scouts	8	7
Explorers	2	2
Active Support	1	1
Groups	8	8

..... and finally

Remember, we will get through this and when we do, Scouting will be needed more than ever to bring people together but remember, as we do move forward we need to ensure that our Leaders, Parents and Helpers feel comfortable in what we are doing, as well as the need to safeguard our most vulnerable people.

For all our adult volunteers we thank you for all the time you give to support our members develop “skills for life”.

For all our youth members we thank you for making Scouting in Ely District so inclusive and supportive.

2020 has become a challenging year for us all. Not what we expected, but one from which we will all look back on how we adapted, and kept Scouting going despite the odds.