



ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21

1st Upton St Leonards Scout Group

The Scout Group is an educational charity, excepted from
registration with the Charity Commission

Registered with The Scout Association – unit number 10016255

Table of Contents

Group Overview	3
Beaver Scouts	5
Cub Scouts.....	6
Scouts.....	7
Thank You	8
1 st Upton St Leonards – the year ahead	9
Contact details.....	10



Group Overview

Once again, It is important to remember when reading this report that the period under review is April 2020 to March 2021 which will always be remembered as the year of the Lockdown. Apart from a brief period during the autumn term, the Covid-19 restrictions meant none of our sections were able to meet in person or indulge in many of the activities that normally make up the Scout year.

However, that doesn't mean that we just gave up on our young people and shut ourselves away. In fact like many in Scouting we looked for new ways of delivering our programme that kept everyone as safe as possible while providing our members and their parents with some relief from home schooling and daily exercise routines. Fortunately the weather was very warm and dry throughout the spring and summer which made it much easier for all of us to get outdoors as much as possible.

In particular we were pleased to offer our young people a taste of camping with our first virtual camp over the May Day bank holiday when we also marked the 75th anniversary of VE day. Forty young people and their families and twenty adults camped in their gardens or slept in their dens enjoying a range of activities throughout the weekend.

It was at this time that we also gained new skills, in particular running meetings over Zoom where we quickly learned about the mute button, breakout rooms, virtual backgrounds and filters as we adapted our games and programmes to the online environment.

In July, we again pitched our tents in our gardens and joined in the Scout Association's Great Indoors Weekender when many members and their families again took part in a range of activities and during the summer holidays some of our leaders devised and distributed a Summer Fun Activity Pack which was full of activities for all sections to try at home which hopefully went some way towards making up for no camps or sleepovers this year. Six members even completed the required nine activities and gained their Great Indoors Badge.

In September we began to plan for a cautious return to face to face Scouting and during the Autumn term the Cubs and Scouts began to meet with lots of risk assessments, much washing of hands and all socially distanced. However as Christmas approached, so did Lockdown II and by January we were back on Zoom where we remained until Easter.

However, that didn't stop us coming up with new ideas and activities and in December 33 Beavers and Cubs took part in a virtual Christmas Sleepover and in February the Beavers, Cubs and Scouts took part in an Air Activities Day when

30 Cubs and Beavers gained the Stage 2 Air Activities Badge and three Scouts gained Stage 3. The response from the Group to the virtual Cotswold Marathon in February was especially pleasing with 30 young people and adults signing up and walking a massive 1073.8 miles during the four weeks of the event with 19 completing the Gold 30 mile route.

Finally, after Easter we began to return to proper meetings with first the Cubs and then the Scouts meeting under the Covid restrictions and finally in June the Beavers returned too. We got outside as much as we could including seven sessions of Tubing for some of us, but more about that next year.

Once again all leaders and committee members have completed their mandatory training, including first aid which was quite a challenge via Zoom and the Executive Committee has continued to keep an eye on us, checking we kept everyone as safe as possible and ensuring we remained solvent despite the uncertain financial situation, meeting six times during the year which was much more frequent than usual.

Our annual accounts are to be found in a separate document being set out in the format prescribed for small charities like ours by the Charity Commission. Fortunately they show that our Group remains in a healthy financial situation. Although our receipts for the year were unsurprisingly lower than normal, so were our costs since we paid very little rent to the Village Hall and the Community Centre, for which we are most grateful. We also received a significant grant from the Lady Downe Trust which together with another from Lloyds Bank meant we were able to meet the cost of our new Group scarves without dipping into our reserves or charging parents for which I am most grateful. We also received just over £3,000 from HMRC on account of Gift Aid which has replaced the money we would normally look to raise from fundraising.

For now, I would most sincerely like to thank all our Leaders and Trustees who have shown so much commitment and enthusiasm for Scouting here in Upton and the surrounding area and look forward to a rapid return to normality as we finally learn to live with the dreaded virus.

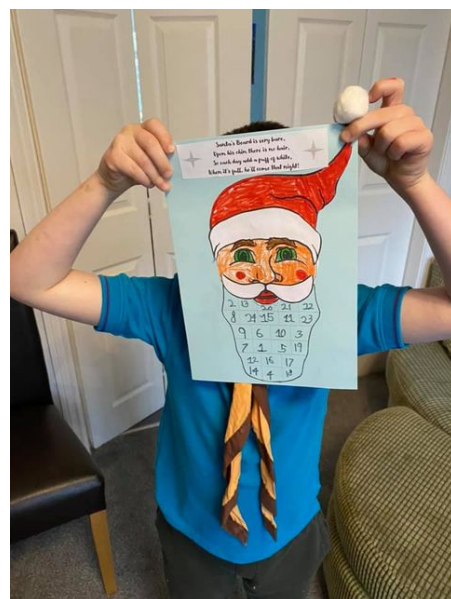
Paul D. Trott
Group Scout Leader and Acting Chair

BEAVERS

At the beginning of the year under review we had, on paper, three Beaver Scout Colonies. However, in November, we formally took the decision to close the Coopers Edge Colony due to lack of leaders. However those Beavers who wished to either transferred to one of the Upton Colonies or moved up to Cubs. We were nonetheless sorry to see the Colony close after it had made such a promising start.

It seemed quite risky to reintroduce the Beavers to face to face meetings and we weren't sure how well they would cope with the necessary Covid restrictions which they didn't have to follow when at school. The Beavers did not therefore meet in person throughout the year 2020-2021. A good number of them did however take part in the Zoom sessions that Rishona and Rosemary provided and several brought their brothers and sisters along too. Some parents said the children found the games and activities a real joy after a day of home schooling and not seeing their friends.

A good number of Beavers also took part in the virtual camps. Sixteen Beavers were recorded as taking part in the May Day camp, together with many family members, seven on the summer camp, fourteen on the Christmas sleepover and ten took part in the Air Activities Day. By taking part in these activities, the Summer Activity Pack and the Zoom sessions a total of 68 badges were awarded during the 12 months to 31 March 2021, including two Chief Scout's Bronze Awards. A fantastic achievement in such challenging circumstances.





The Cubs were understandably sad not to be able to meet together in person but most of them made up for it by taking part in the Zoom sessions and virtual camps and returning to Cubs as soon as they were able, despite the social distancing and other restrictions that were in place. These restrictions also meant some new games had to be learned, such as “human skittles”, “real life table football”, “human battleships” “foot golf” and “air hockey”. They also managed to try out firelighting and playing a wide game, in many cases both for the first time. We were also able to have a socially distanced Christmas party but it really wasn’t the same.

After Christmas we were forced back on to Zoom but we still managed a good range of games and activities and two Cubs (and three Beavers) took part in the virtual Cotswold Marathon which bodes well for the future.

Fifteen Cubs and their families took part in the May Day camp, seven the Great Indoors camp, 19 the Christmas sleepover and 20 the Air Activities day so despite all the restrictions the Cubs had a pretty busy year.

As a result of a lot of hard work and activity the Cubs managed to earn 172 badges during the year 2020-2021 including three Chief Scout’s Silver Awards. Well done Cubs and thank you parents for your support and encouragement.



SCOUTS

As with the other sections, the Scout Troop stopped meeting at Easter 2020 and did not return face to face until November and then only until the second Lockdown in December. Seven Scouts nonetheless took part in the May Day Camp and three joined in the summer one.

After Christmas the Scouts resumed meeting via Zoom which was enjoyed by a reasonable number although it was a bit like school for some. Dominic Trott arranged most of the sessions from his flat in Yorkshire but in cyber space distance is no object.

Three Scouts also took part in the virtual Cotswold Marathon with all achieving the Gold route while six took part in the Air Activities Day.

Sadly, Sophie decided to stand down as a Leader with the Troop in January and she is now concentrating her efforts in Stroud & Tetbury District, where she lives. We are grateful to Sophie for all her hard work with the Troop.



THANK YOU!

The Christmas sleepover weekend was an especially memorable one and I know that this was all down to lots of hard work and organising.

Thank you for a lovely day; so much planning must have gone into it and we appreciate it very much.

Thank you for everything you have done in your bid to keep it going through the Lockdowns

Lovely weekend full of activities, thank you for organising.

A big thanks to you and everyone at USL Scouts and Beavers ensuring that the members are still getting their virtual meetings, though I'm sure we're all looking forward to the real ones again soon

Thank you again for all of your hard work over the year and for all you are doing now. We've found the meetings, sleepovers and camps to be a great source of fun for our family and appreciate the amount of effort it must take for you and the other leaders: thank you.

We have all enjoyed the virtual sleepover events and zoom calls through the last 10 months – we really appreciate the effort the Scout community have gone to in these difficult and strange times.

We appreciate all the hard work that has gone into planning the Cubs' sessions by the leaders this year.

1st Upton St Leonards – our aims for the year ahead

More sleepovers, camps and expeditions



We still need to get more of our young people on camps and sleepovers, so that camping becomes a means to participate in a range of exciting activities and experiences. Helping our Beavers, Cubs and Scouts enjoy spending time away from home is a key aim for us.

Looking after our assets



Although we have made good progress with our Executive Committee, we still need a dedicated Chair and more non-leader committee members. As our Trustees, this is a key role within the Group and an issue we must address. During the coming year, we hope to work with the Village Hall to improve the sheds in which our equipment is stored.

Leadership opportunities for all



Leadership skills are immensely valuable for young people and adults alike, but we can only offer them to our members if we have a reliable team of adults to lead them. We need more leaders if we are to continue to operate the five sections we currently have.



The 1st Upton St Leonards is an established Scout Group that offers young people of all backgrounds and abilities fun, friendship and adventure while developing their skills for life. With two Beaver Scout Colonies, two Cub Packs and a Scout Troop our friendly leadership team (all volunteers) is kept very busy and is always open to new members joining it.

We meet at the Village Hall and the Old School Room in Upton St Leonards. Enquiries from prospective members – young people and adults – are always welcome. Just complete the form on our website.

#SkillsForLife #GoodForYou

Contact Us

If you would like any further information, please contact the
Group Scout Leader, Paul Trott.

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