



First News Autumn 2011

Chairman's Report

Graeme Robson & Shane O'Reilley Co-Chairman

Just a short entry from us this term due to the excellent reports that you can find below. We would like to draw your attention to the Forthcoming Event schedule and ask you to put the dates in your diary. Thanks to those that helped paint the outside walls, to all parents that help out at section meetings and if you can help out at one of the events it would be greatly appreciated.

Scout Report Autumn 2011

Graham Dawson Assistant Scout Leader

Last term we managed to provide a balanced program of activities including: Raft building on Horseshoe Lake, Cycling at the Look Out, Field Games Craft work such as building various types of fires and erection of traditional patrol tents. Building fires from wood allowed us to practice our backwoods cooking with sausages, corn cobs and eggs. The scouts were also shown the various paraffin and petrol and gas compact hiking stoves before being challenged to cook an egg with a can of coke. We also had an evening at the Coombes building bivouacs.

Scout Camp by Alex Spalding

This year scout camp was at the Isle of Purbeck, and was lots of fun. We took part in a range of activities from canoeing to rock climbing and even building our own bivouacs to sleep in. This involved a group of us making a shelter out of logs, branches and ferns. It was the best nights' sleep on camp! We even went to the beach and it was warm enough for us to swim. We all had a great time.

Cub Report Autumn 2011

Deb Parker Cub Leader

The summer term seemed to fly by this year. Luckily we weren't stopped too badly by the weather. We started the term off as normal with practicing for the St. George's Day parade, which this year thanks to a late Easter was not held anywhere near the 23rd April. I was glad to see that we had such a great turnout and the Cubs all saw me get presented with a medal of merit, which is given by the Chief Scout for services given to scouting. Embarrassing!!

The rest of the term saw us doing fund raising boxes for Japan with 4 other Packs in Wokingham which raised about £150 for Japanese Cubs. 1st Wokingham contributed about a third of the total which is excellent. I would also like to thank everybody who has helped with fund raising for the walls, I really can't thank you enough.

The boys have put tents up in the hall and became human pegs. We have done pioneering and built chairs to carry a team member on and have races. We completed our cycling badge (which will come out this term), cooked sausages on open fires and played lots of games outside. Plus, we all got soaking wet on the last night. So another fun packed term.

Beaver Report Autumn 2011

Kim Linder Assistant Beaver Leader

The Summer Term saw a smaller than usual colony due to uncertainty over the future of the leadership team, however the Beavers still enjoyed a jam packed program thanks to the continued support of parents.

We were yet again well represented at the St. George's Day Parade which was lovely to see. We had a keep fit session in the HQ led by a personal trainer – many groans and sighs were heard (mostly from the adults!), made 'Rainbow Kebabs', hiked around the Coombes, played rounders against the dads for Fathers Day, pond dipped at Popes Meadow, made 'Bug Biscuits', picked our own at Gray's Farm, learned how to put up tents and about tacking signs..... and finally got VERY wet at our end of term 'It's a Knock Out' Games Night – it has been a busy and auction packed term!

We have been able to award a number of badges and the whole colony gained their 'Health and Fitness' and 'Explorer' activity badges as well as their Outdoor Challenge Badge among others.

Following the AGM we are pleased to welcome Penny McBain back into her role as ABSL and are excited to be able to offer places to 7 new Beavers. As a result we will now be at full capacity and are looking forward to another successful term ahead.

Family Camp 28th - 30th May 2010

We also held our first family camp and thank you to all the beaver and cub families that attended; it was a great weekend - see the reports written by a two mums below.

Angie Price

I'm very much a fair-weather camper. I don't like being cold, wet, or my hair going frizzy and my golden rule is never to go camping before the end of June!

So, how did I find myself in the middle of a field on a threateningly-cloudy day, trying to put up our tent in the wind and using up a precious extra day of holiday on the late May bank holiday weekend? The answer is simply: the first family camp for 1st Wokingham.

I went there expecting to be miserable, made to join in with the 'fun', being told what to eat and generally being forced to be a happy camper. In fact as I arrived I even volunteered my services for cooking duties in order to take a background role and was deflated to be told that 'it was all in hand' but there'd be some jobs to do....

The tent went up, there were ample numbers of trolleys to use to move kit from car to tent and plenty of willing helpers to do it. Tasty sustenance was provided quickly and efficiently, clearing up was done, as everyone did their bit, and lunch was all finished well before the promised activity session. Here we go..... sigh!

Orienteering, great fun! Kirsty set us off running through the forest with a compass, following a set of directions to collect clues. We soon realised that the family ahead of us had taken a wrong turn and we were in with a chance of beating them home, so went for it. One poor group really had their mettle tested when the decimal point was missed off the number of degrees they had to turn and they were trying to work out how many full turns they had to make to find 835 degrees. It made for some good-natured banter.

The clues made up an anagram which had to be solved. There was some disagreement over the spelling of the word, but hey, who's being picky? Akela got her own back later anyway, which was to be expected.

Next, refreshments. Squash or coffee and a choice of homemade cake, the first of many such wonderful sessions. This was quickly followed by a ball game, taught by Kerry, something between rugby and rounders, I have no idea what it was called (Ed. Danish Long Ball) but it was a laugh!

The rather one-sided game (I'm not bitter) was halted by the dinner whistle. More great food, with the cubs astounding parents by eating everything they normally wouldn't.

And so it went on. Campfire and marshmallows, hot chocolate and bed for the kiddies and some parents. The leaders and the rest sat around the campfire nattering and partaking of surreptitious mugs of something nice until the late/early hours.

Day two was more of the same, Dave, Kerry and Baloo treated us to crate climbing and a blind trail, there was plenty more cake, a lovely lunch and a wander in to Windsor for another treasure hunt around the town and of course the obligatory ice

creams. A quick stop at Waitrose replenished the adult's campfire-mug-filling stocks. On our return we were worrying what Akela might say if we couldn't eat dinner, so opted to walk back rather than call for the offered lifts. That evening we had an even bigger campfire in a lovely setting down by the lake. The cabaret was a giggle and thanks (I think) to some of the parents, the cubs now have a couple of extra songs in their repertoire. Some of the adults also got well-in to the spirit of things that evening.

Day three, sadly (did I say that!!!) was packing up and clearing away although there was one more bit of challenge on the agenda, to build a weapon to aid storming the castle. The queen didn't need to feel too threatened though, as we would have to have been practically nose to nose with the archers to have had any hope of hitting the walls - with the wet sponges.

All in all, everyone had a fantastic time, even the most reluctant of us. The atmosphere was great, the activities entertaining, the children were polite, the parents all pitched in with the chores, but the key ingredient was that the leaders were brilliant and had obviously put an immeasurable amount of effort into planning and running the weekend. For that, a HUGE thank you from all of us!

Roll-on the next 1st Wokingham, all-inclusive break in the back garden of one of the UK's premier addresses!

Lizzie Hewitt

The first ever family camp took place in the beautiful Bears Rails campsite in Windsor Great Park with 10 families taking part. All agreed it was a roaring success.

The leaders had made sure that there would be no boring moments with an action-packed itinerary. One of the first activities was orienteering – amazingly, nobody got lost. Also going on was crate climbing which involved stacking milk crates one-on-top-of-the-other whilst also attempting to climb up them. Almost everybody had a go, including the very youngest campers, but the undisputed climbing champion was Penny McBain who managed to climb to the top of every crate available – 19 in total!

Other activities included a blind trail in the woods, ballista building, songs around the campfire and a treasure hunt in Windsor where the children showed remarkable stamina, walking 2.5 miles of The Long Walk each way with very few complaints. The children spent the time between activities enjoying a variety of wide games and collecting firewood whilst enjoying the freedom of the park. The adults enjoyed getting to know each other and we spent a couple of memorable evenings chatting around the campfire until the small hours.

As you can imagine, we all had hearty appetites with all that fresh air and exercise. Luckily, the leaders really excelled themselves and the catering was first rate. It's amazing we could manage all that activity after so much good food! All in all, we had a brilliant time and can't wait for next year.

Forthcoming Events

For full details about these events then please visit our web site at <http://www.firstwokingham.org.uk/group/events> or look on the notice board in the entrance hall to the HQ.

4th February 2012	Fund raising	Quiz Night (HQ)
7th May 2012	Fund raising	May Fayre (Wokingham Town Centre)
2nd to 4th June 2012	Social	Family Camp (Provisional)
28th July to 4th August 2012	Young People	Scout Camp (Snowdonia, North Wales)

Hut Cleaning Help

Whilst the main hall gets a clean after some section meetings the whole hut does need a proper clean about every four weeks. It takes two people about 1 1/2 hours to clean the hut. We need a minimum of two adults (over 18 years), but more people will speed up the process. Also you can volunteer for more than 1 session! The hut will be available for cleaning all day on Saturday, all day the following Sunday. For the remainder of 2011 the cleaning sessions that we are seeking volunteers for are:

Cleaning Session	Saturday	Sunday	Response so far
11	5 Nov	6 Nov	Lizzie & Darren Hewitt
12	3 Dec	4 Dec	

If you can help us the please contact Keith Winter via email at keith@firstwokingham.org.uk or telephone on 0118 978 8518 and state:

- i) what session you can do,
- ii) which day and start time you prefer, and
- iii) names of people

Keith will then ensure that the hut is reserved for that day/time and generate the rota. We will of course ensure that the keys to the hut are available at the time you need them and all cleaning materials you will need are ready for you. Please look at your diaries and volunteer.

Thanks in advance

Keith Winter

Graffiti on Scout Hut Wall

As many of you know we have been having problems with graffiti on the scout hut for many years but this has mainly been on the back wall that only we see. However, this year we have had the front wall "painted" where it is seen by all. In April we painted a mural on the car park side but still had three walls of horrible scrawls to look at. We had a successful fund raising at the Summer Fete and at the annual BBQ. Especial thanks to Darren Hewitt who then managed to raise additional sums so that all the planned work could be funded.

Over the summer the three remaining walls have been painted terracotta and covered in anti graffiti varnish. The seals at the top of the roof have been repaired and painted black and our hut now looks great. Thanks to Darren Hewitt, Dick Moodie and Keith Winter for completing this task

Vandalism and Anti Social Behaviour

The night we finished painting the hut vandals struck and pulled down a drain pipe and later we have metal stolen off of the roof. These were reported and Police incident numbers obtained. Please can we ask anybody who sees acts of vandalism or antisocial behaviour at the hut to report to the police and get an incident number. Send incident numbers to Keith Winter via <http://www.firstwokingham.org.uk/contact/> who will keep a record.

The police non-emergency number is 0845 8 505 505 and the hut address is
1st Wokingham Scout Hut
Redlands Farm Park
Ewendons Lane
Wokingham
RG41 4DX

Termly Subscriptions

Payment is due at the first meeting of each term as this ensures that your child is insured and also helps with our banking. If there is any problem with payment, please contact us so that we can discuss other arrangements. At the request of parents, a box has been placed on the wall just inside the main hall doors on the right hand side. If you have subs. payments or payments for events then feel free to place your envelope with the payments and information slip into the box. For security reasons the box will be emptied at the end of each session.

Newsletter Input or Comments

If you wish to submit material for the next edition of the newsletter, or have any comments about this newsletter then please contact the Editor at firstnews@firstwokingham.org.uk