

## **GSL Report - AGM 2008**

This last year has, at last, seen a degree of stability on the leadership front. I have not been trying to 'persuade' adults, to the same extent as last year that any leadership role within Scouting is very fulfilling and enjoyable.

Scouting at 1<sup>st</sup> Sunningdale is extremely popular at present. The numbers on the waiting lists for both Beavers and Cubs is testament to this. The Scouts also have a healthy number in their Troop.

We owe the leaders and their helpers a huge debt of gratitude for the work they put in to make 1<sup>st</sup> Sunningdale such a successful, thriving Scout Group. Thank you, Hilary, Rosa, Harriet, Simon, Mark, Norman, Dave, Shaun and Dominic. We must also thank their 'other halves' who accept the sacrifices of family time to Scouting, not just on the Colony, Pack, Troop meeting nights but also weekends and other nights to attend the various leaders meetings.

We now have our own website which is full of interesting information of what is going on in the Sections. Thanks to Julian for setting this up.

On the training front, Hilary and Mark are now able to take climbers up the wall at Earleywood. Hilary, Mark and Norman have passed their validation for Modules 1, 2 and 3 and are now waiting for their Warrants. Shaun is organising kayak training for Leaders, Scouts and Explorers in order for us to make full use of our seven kayaks, which are now being stored at Wraysbury Yacht Club.

Julian, Geoff and I have met up with the Commodore of Wraysbury Yacht Club, Chris Ryder-Richardson (an ex-cub/scout parent) with the intention of using our kayaks on their lake. Our Group are also being given the opportunity to camp on an island there and sail in their yachts.

I have already mentioned the waiting lists. We now have a problem with the Beavers and Cub waiting lists. There are forty one children, of which sixteen are six, on the Beaver waiting list and eighteen on the cub waiting list. Currently we have a relatively young Cub Pack, which as a result means we will not be moving any Cubs to Scouts before Easter 2009. Some of those on the cub waiting list are unlikely to get in to 1<sup>st</sup> Sunningdale Cub Pack as we have to take Beavers as priority entrants, and any Cubs or Beavers who move into the area. Hilary has a number of cub age Beavers whom she feels would benefit from moving to cubs now.

What is the solution?

I know 1<sup>st</sup> South Ascot are unable to increase their pack due to a shortage of leaders and 1<sup>st</sup> Ascot are full. All the parents of children on the waiting lists are told if they take an active part in Beavers or Cubs (becoming an Assistant Leader) then their child would get a place. This offer has not been taken up by any of the parents.

What about a second Beaver Colony and Cub Pack? Again it comes down to having the adult leaders and helpers to run the additional Colony and Pack. In the longer term, we have to take into consideration

there will be a number of Cubs who will move up to Scouts at the same time, thus freeing up a number of places.

I must thank the Committee who have ensured the smooth running of the Group. You may have noticed our old Q store building has been demolished and is being replaced with a much more substantial building. The new building will include a room, which I am sure will be very useful. We must thank Geoff Adams, our President, for all the work he has put in to get a grant, planning permission and quotes for the work.

I need to address the position regarding Explorers at Sunningdale. I know there are a number of youngsters who could greatly benefit from an active Explorer Section. Currently Graham Winstone is keeping it going in Sunningdale, but in a limited capacity due to other commitments; however, in order to increase numbers he needs more adult help. One of our big success stories this year has been the Three Towers Explorer Hike where three of our Explorers came fourth out of twenty two teams. The team consisted of George Winstone, Saul Jones and Anthony Maine, well done lads. If anybody is interested in helping Graham with this extremely challenging, exciting and rewarding section within Scouting, please do let me know.

We are looking for parents to join the Executive Committee. I feel we need parents in all the playgrounds we have Beavers, Cubs and Scouts. The Group needs a proactive committee, not only to ensure the smooth day to day running of the Group but also to involve all the families who have children in Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers. We need to do more to involve families than just the parent and child AGM camp; quizzes and other social functions would be fun, as well as a source of income. This will become more important as we approach our one hundred years in 2010. This is something we should be planning for now. What are we going to do to mark such a special occasion? Should we contact all those who have had an involvement with the Scout Group in the past? Did we ever wear the blue tunics I have been told we were entitled to wear as one of the earliest Scout Groups? Exciting times ahead. Be part of it! If you are interested and would like to know more, please do talk to me or one of the Committee members.

Parents, please get involved with 1<sup>st</sup> Sunningdale Scout Group in any way you can.

Doug Home

Group Scout Leader

1st Sunningdale Scout Group