



MEETING MINUTES – GROUP LEADER’S MEETING

MEETING INFORMATION

Objective:

Date: 30/01/2017 **Location:** The Scout Hut
Time: 20:15 PM Start **Meeting Type:** Spring Term 2017
Called By: Christopher Holliss - GSL **Note Taker:** **Chris Holliss**

Attendees: **Christopher Holliss, Mark Skelton, Catherine Stacey, David Kelly, Paul Drussel, Claire Clegg, Andy Petch**

Apologies: **Sally Mitchell, Annelize Fagan, Davryn Fagan, Ajanta Hilton, Graham Brown, Rakesh Odedra, Victoria Sweeney, John Drake, Karen Drake, Lorriane Bullock, Grant Tomkins**

1. Welcome & Apologies

Chris welcomes and thanks everyone attending. Andy Petch explains why is in attendance that it is for Chris to complete his training module which goes towards his GSL Woodbadge.

Andy sent an email stating:

“Thank you for letting me observe your leaders’ meeting last evening.

I was very impressed with the positive relaxed atmosphere. It is obvious that the Group has recruiting problems but I thought that there was a willingness to overcome these.”

2. Review of previous minutes

The minutes were verbally read out by the GSL and what actions have been taken from the last meeting.

3. Leader and executive – Arrivals, Moving & Departures

Arrivals: No new arrivals

Leaders - Departures: Ruth Hayes - Assistant Cub Scout leader & Andrew Smart – Assistant Beaver Scout leader, John Drake & Karen Drake are to leave at the end of Spring term 2017.

Additional Role: Davryn – Conker Beaver Leader is also to be a Wolf Cub Leader

Executive – Departures: Adam Chambers – Chairperson & Yasmin McLaggan - Waiting List Coordinator

To date we are still looking for new leaders & section assistants;

Thumpers - 1 leader, 1 Section Assistant

Conkers – 2-3 leaders, 1 Section Assistant (Sally will be moving up to Wolf with her son in the Summer)

Birchwood – 2-3 leaders, 1 Section Assistant

Wolf – 1 leader

Colne - 1 leader, 1 Section Assistant

Ver – 2-3 leaders, 1 Section Assistant (The group has no one to replace John & Karen Drake)



4. Overview of the group and its current status

Section numbers come 30th January 2017 ready for Census 2017;

Thumpers	23, 4 Girls moving up to 24 Feb
Conkers	18, 3 Girls moving up to 24 Feb
Birchwood	19, 8 Girls moving up to 24 Feb
Wolf	19, 3 Girls moving up to 24 Feb
Colne	20, 3 Girls moving up to 24Feb
Ver	24, 12 Girls (Do not know its future)

Waiting list numbers come 30th January 2017 ready for Census 2017;

Beaver 51 children aged between 1yrs2mths to 7yrs. 9 have been offered positions and waiting reply.

Cubs 0

Scouts – 2, Due to the uncertainty of Ver we have put all movement from Cubs to scouts on hold.

ALL sections are to have a parents Rota – suggestion to tell parents to sign up or be allocated date. ALL parents must do a min. of 2 meetings a year. The only exception is another present leader of a different section.

Mark - mentioned that at some meeting he doesn't need another person. It was discussed and agree that we require the parents to get involved to try and get new leaders. Make the parent take over and run a game or an activity if and when possible.

This year we must find our required leaders to keep our present sections open.

An Executive team

The group was able to recruit parents to fill all the key executive rolls and more. They have meet regularly each term discussing the items raised by the group leader meeting and have worked well.

Gift Aid

Through the work of Chris Holliss and John Occleshaw the group has successfully put in a historic claim for the past 4 years to which we received from HMRC on the 20th December 2017 the sum of £7900. This has now been put into the groups savings account which has been ring fenced.

New Building

The new equipment storage building (David's man cave) had been planned, purchased and built over the course of the year which we have been told could be one if not the best with the district and that we should be very proud of it.

New Electrics & Lighting

The group had accepted the kind offer of help from one of the parents of Wolf "Steve McDonald" and at cost helped test, rewire and installed new sockets, switches and lighting through the whole of the main building.

Hot water

A new electronic water tap was install giving much need hot water into the kitchen area that had been missing for many a year.

Implementation of a group safety processes

The group safety processes were reviewed and agreed by the majority of leaders which has been implemented and placed within the group P&P. This covered Risk Assessments and InTouch details being sent to the GSL before the activity, meeting or event when away from the group's HQ. Good safeguarding such as publishing photos within the parents area on the group website within a couple of weeks of them having been taken.



New Equipment

Over the course of the year the group has listened to leaders, spotted the group's short falls in equipment for both camp and meetings and has spent in the regions of £2000 - £3000.

Much to do

Although the group is improving every month there is still so much to do.

Both leaders and the executive must continue to build upon the work that has been done over the course of the past year.

The executive's key focus must be on improving the building and compound while still supporting the leadership with the ability of improving the group's equipment as and when required or when finances allow. Although the lack of fund raising can be laid upon the executive the group as a whole must look to ways of improving its poor ability in raising funds away from the normal subs and rental of the hall. All the group's leaders must start to look at recruiting new leaders. A group always has its ups and downs but the group cannot afford to slip back into its old ways of being reactionary and panic when a leader do happen to call it a day. This year we need to find those new leaders be that in Beavers, Cubs or most importantly at present Scouts to allow the group to keep its present 6 sections open and to avoid some children's disappoint if sections close.

Christopher Holliss's GSL Journey thus far

It has now been my privilege to be the group's GSL for the past 13mths.

I do not use the word privilege lightly but I have seen the care, attention, dedication and some madness from the group's leaders which has driven me to make sure that every single one of you gets the support you deserve be that from myself, Group, District or Association.

Every month has brought many varied challenges, be those ones that I was aware of before taking on the role or not.

Management is hard enough in any normal working environment let alone the volunteer sector and like any manager you always hope that you have more victories than failures. However nice the victories over the past 13mths have been I will always focus on the failures as they are the things that a manager should look to fix if they can?

Without a shadow of doubt the two hardest difficulties has been with the group's communications to each other and recruitment. Items such as email between leader to leader, failure to read meeting minutes or group's policies and processes has caused some discord and in the process caused myself a great deal of personal stress.

I have always sort the viewpoints of some trusted leaders within the group as well as my GSL training advisor to clarify my views while also opening up certain choices to the leadership team as a whole to which I will continue to do so.

Although I am the group's present GSL it is far from a dictatorship and not set in stone.

I see myself as a captain of a team and if at any time the team feels that there needs to be a change with someone with better skills for the job I will be the more than happy to step aside being the first one to say welcome and offering my support.

It is my hope that I will be able to help us all enjoy our time within the group and I hope that you feel I have been and continue to be worthy as your GSL.



5. Membership forms & DBS

All future members are sent when joining by the waiting list coordinator both a membership form to be completed and handed back to the sections leader upon their child's 1st full meeting (As per the group's P&P). Sections are then to give these membership forms to the GSL so the group records can be amended. When a child leaves please let the GSL and treasurer know.

Chris has full access to Compass & Atlantic to do DBS checks.

The group cannot bring back its process of having at least 1 parent for each member DBS checked automatically as this not allowed. If a parent requires a DBS to help out at a camp or sleepover then you must contact the GSL and request that an ID check form be sent to the parent for the process to begin.

6. Subscriptions

Subs will be going up. It was planned to go to up to £42 to be the same as the capitation fee that the group pays for every child under 18 within the group. This would then allow the group to not be dependent upon the rental of the hut to the playground which has become unreliable of late. However the information received from the scout association, county and district last year was incorrect and the capitation fee is in fact £43.50 per under 18. Although the group will take advantage of the early payment discount bringing the payment down to £42.50 the group's capitation cost for this year will be £5227.50.

The group's executive will be speaking about this at their next executive meeting and finalise the fee which will be relayed to all sections along with an email letter for sections to send out to parents explaining the reason for this increase.

Please can all sections amend their OSM subs payments schedules once you receive this information and make sure your section has the next few terms set up with the correct dates for the money to be taken set (Please look at the groups P&P).

Sections are responsible for the collection of termly subs and should chase nonpayment. Please review the group's P&P about this.

Claire – Is there still help for low income families?

Yes! Although the group doesn't not have a specific hardship fund it can look at keeping the present fee for those who may require this. This will of course need to be done on a case on case basis.

Action: Executive to finalise fee and relay fee and letter to leaders.

7. Equipment

Chris and David are to again ask the group's executive to release another substantial amount of group funds £3000 - £4000 to purchase new equipment now that the group has the use of the new equipment storage building and the clear need for extra amounts of present equipment.

A lot of this will be camping equipment for the use of all sections and to allow two sections to go away at the same time.

Chris and David have again asked leaders to contact them with any equipment ideas be that for camping or normal weekly meetings.

New equipment for weekly hut based meetings will be in clear storage boxes for ease of finding t and for their up keep. They will eventually have the scouting badges upon the boxes to show leaders what those items could be used for.

The group will be targeting certain pieces of equipment that we can acquire via the Sainsbury's vouchers. Please take some time in the next few weeks to go onto the Sainsbury Active vouchers website and look at the equipment available and again let Chris and David know your ideas.

Action: David to send out an equipment request email. Leaders are to reply to this email with ideas or to say that they have no present requirements.



8. Leaders training

The district has cracked down on the lack of leader training being done within groups and so it is very important for everyone to really spend some time in seeing what they need to do and how they can best achieve it being signed off if you have not done this since the last leaders meeting.

- With the group having lost both of its Training advisors come 1st March, Chris will be doing the required TA training to which he has also asked Lorraine and David if they would also become TA's.
- 1st response is a must have for all the group leaders so please look at getting this done or updated ASAP. If you are a 1st aider at work then you are already covered. Just send the TA's your certificate as proof.
Chris has arranged an evening course to be held over 2 consecutive **Wednesday's 22nd February & 1st March** starting at 6:30 pm and ending at 10pm to be held at the hut. He has already sent out an email to all those that have not presently done this course.
- Congratulations must go to Lorraine Bullock in completing her Beaver Scout Leader Woodbadge which shall be awarded to her at a section meeting very soon.
- Chris has again asked the question to all present if it would help setting aside some time like at this meeting at each group leaders meeting to quick go through training instead of having the TA's sit in a pub for 2hrs each time hoping to see someone? What works for us?
- What training do people want to do?
- Chris asked if a leader would like to go down the hut on a Saturday to learn some of the skills they will need to help them with camps etc. Things like how to put up and pack away the groups different styles of tents, how to light fires, some bush crafts and much more while having a BBQ awardwards?
- Safeguarding – this is a key training module that has to be periodically renewed. A sheet was shown around of training dates.
Claire – Can the group try and arrange a Safeguarding course on a Wednesday evening like the 1st response.

Action: Chris will contact the district / county and look into this as a possibility.

9. Key dates within the scouting and the group's calendar

- Chris handed out a key date's sheet that is put out by the county and can be view here:
<http://www.hertfordshirescouts.org.uk/county-programme-calendar-20162017/>

St Albans District events can be found upon their website where there is a calendar on the front page: <http://www.stalbansscouts.org/>

Beavers:

District St Georges Day Parade 23rd April @ City Centre
Activity Evening for Beavers & Cubs 29th June @ Tolmers
Beavers in Tents 1st July @ Well End
Paradise Wildlife 1st October
Remembrance Parade Sunday 12th November

Cubs:

County Bushcraft Day 18th March @ Harmergreen
District Archery 11th March @Tolmers
District St Georges Day Parade 23rd April @ City Centre
Dragon Boat Regatta 17th June all day @ ESSA Water Activities Centre
Activity Evening for Beavers & Cubs 29th June @ Tolmers
County night hike 23rd/24th Sept. Hemel
JoTi Oct
County Cyclocross Sun 8th Oct. Well End
6-a-side football Sat. 15th Oct.
Remembrance Parade Sunday 12th November



Scouts:

Cooking Comp. 5th Feb. @ Steveage HQ
Triathlon 12th March @ Lees Wood
District St Georges Day Parade 23rd April @ City Centre
PAW 28th April @ Tolmers
Take Away (Adventure Weekend) 23rd June @ Hamergreen
Born 2B challenged 29th Sept. @ Hamergreen
Remembrance Parade Sunday 12th November
Green Beret 17th Nov. @ Phasels Wood

10. Leadership & Group socials

We would like to try and run more of these but we have had poor response to all events the worse being Lorraine's Segway with only 5 people getting back stating if they were to attend or not and as this was the same when asked and a Christmas get together it was decided not to arrange one. Chris would like everyone to get to know one another on more of a social basis and would like someone to take up a role as leader social sec. so free some of his time up. David has said he would be the leader's social sec.

Action: David will contact leaders about future social events

11. Any other business

- **Cleaning the hut & rubbish** – There has been a complaint from the playgroup on how the hut is left after section meetings (namely the cleanliness of the floor) and that we must try harder to clean this. Chris is to ask the question to the executive if the group should look into a full time clearer to come in after meetings or early morning.
Chris has found that when sections have either done an activity or a party that they have either just placed items inside the bin shed and not into the recycle boxes as required or have placed items within the wrong bins. As a consequence the bin men have not accepted and Chris has been required to go into the bins to remove the wrong items.
If this happens again the section/s will be asked to return and sort the problem out themselves.
David – There was no room within the paper recycling boxes as the playground has filled them. The group has once again 4 green boxes for the use of paper and cardboard. 2 of these will be purely for the use of the scout group which the playground will be told.
- **Leaders Cupboard** - The group is getting more and more new activity equipment and stationary items and as such the leader's cupboard has been cleaned although some more work is required. Since being cleaned over the Christmas period it has become somewhat untidy with items not being put back correctly. Much of this caused by sections using their young leaders and occasional helps to go in and out of the cupboard to collect items. Please supervise these people and make sure that the cupboard is the way you found it. If you find it a mess you inform the GSL.
Sections such as Thumpers and Birchwood have purchased using their termly floats boxes with stationary items specifically for the use of their lodges or sixes and to give them the responsibility of keeping these boxes in order and would ask others not to use these.
- **News Items** – There is a news page on the group website which Chris has arranged this to be updated by Maria Georgiou. Unfortunately sections are forgetting to send her the information she requires to write up a nice news story to put on the site. Please when you do something out of the ordinary such as a camp, gala etc. please send the information to Maria making sure you say it is a beaver colony, cub pack or scout troop also using the terminology of lodge or six as she is not clear which is which.



- **Working Party Weekend** – There are many things that the group will be required to do to keep the hut and compound in a fit state. Things such as painting the rear of the hut which we would have like to happen last August is still required.
The group will be looking to have this maybe late March early April in the hope to be ready for the summer term.

Action: Chris to email the leaders after the executive have set the date for this.

- **Defibrillator Fundraising** – There has been some great cake sales so far and we would like this to continue. Conkers, Birchwood & Wolf have raised around £50 each in total from the 2 sales thus far with Thumpers & Colne just under this. Ver have yet to take part and hold a cake sale.

David – Is there any point having this item in the hall. Can this be donated to the community and have it in the parade of shops in How wood?

Claire – perhaps with a plaque stating the donation is from the group. All leaders present agreed and this will be requested to the executive and looked into the best way of doing this

Action: Chris to send bring this item to the executive and to find out if this is viable and how we are to go about this by talking to the St Stephen's Parish council.

12. Set date for summer term leaders meeting.

May - Venue T.B.C.

Chris would like to see as many leaders attend these termly leaders meetings and so would like to work out what evening suits the majority.

Action: Chris to sending an email to ask leaders which evening suits them. Leaders are to responded.