

Looking ahead

Well, this past year was certainly like no other in living history! The pandemic has impacted on all our lives in so many ways – personal, work and scouting to name just a few. Thankfully, there is now light dawning in the form of reducing rates of infection, growing rates of vaccination, lighter evenings and improving weather.

Some volunteers have learned new skills (especially around the virtual world), others have gone above and beyond supporting their local communities whilst for some work pressures meant a break from scouting.

One thing we can all agree on is that having managed to keep scouting going, in one way or another, throughout a pandemic the future is bright.

The pandemic has had an impact on mental health and well-being for all ages so do encourage use of the many resources and support options available.

We hope some of the suggestions and links in this newsletter will be of use to many of you. It focusses on the continuation of “remote” scouting and starting to think about what the return to face to face will require - - and most importantly all those adventures that still lie ahead. Who knows what lockdown diets will have done to us all when we try to put our full uniform on again?!

What does your “window” look like?

There will be further national, regional and local support and campaigns to help with adult recruitment during 2021. This means it is important that each Section, Group, Unit and District takes a quick look at their “window” in the form of any online presence ([websites](#) and / or [social media](#) platforms) as well as the public view of any buildings and external signage.

For various reasons some have not yet been updated to the new branding, have out of date contacts or information, have had no “posts” since last year - and a few have a combination of all that.

Please have a think about what you need (and can maintain), remove what is no longer used and have everything else updated ready for when possible volunteers or parents / carers of young people come looking for you. It is also a factor that may be considered when you contact potential business or grant organisations for funds. If your “window” makes it look like you are “closed” then they may not reach out to, or support, you.

Any queries please e-mail communications@cambridgeshirescouts.org.uk

County Commissioner's Message - Chris Ward

Thank you

Thank you all for everything you are doing for Cambridgeshire Scouts; rest assured you are making a significant contribution to the lives of thousands of young people during these challenging times.

Awards

Proud to say that despite the pandemic many young people have still earned some of the Top Awards. This includes two Queen's Scout Awards which will be presented before Easter. Well done everyone!

Congratulations also to :

- George Devine, former Assistant County Commissioner and HQ Commissioner (International), on the Award of the Silver Wolf and the British Empire Medal (for community service in Fen Ditton)
- Nigel Poulter, County Treasurer on being awarded the Bar to the Silver Acorn
- Hinchingsbrooke District Commissioner, Aidan Joy, on receiving the Award for Merit
- District Commissioners Ian Bullard (Fenland) and Aidan Joy (Hinchingsbrooke) plus Deputy County Commissioner and Local Training Manager (Crafts Hill) Ian Dugdale on achieving their latest Wood Badges
- Andy Bendon (former County Training Manager and long-time County training team volunteer) on the Award of the British Empire Medal for services to the Red Cross in Cambridgeshire

Congratulations from all in Cambridgeshire Scouts to you too Chris, for completing your County Commissioner Wood Badge!

Cambridgeshire Scouts in Action

Have you submitted items on one of the Facebook groups or direct to the website yet (either by the news form or e-mail to communications@cambridgeshirescouts.org.uk)? Please consider doing so – and encourage your young people to be involved in writing them. Here are a few items from this year so far.

[Hinchingsbrooke District's Ocean Adventure Day](#) featured in the [Hunts Post](#), and District Commissioner Aidan Joy was also interviewed on BBC Radio Cambridgeshire the day before.



Making armpit fudge was popular with 1st Hemingfords at the UK [virtual Winter Camp!](#)

3rd Ely Cub Scout Alex became a [YOPEY Befriender](#), writing a letter to care home residents



[50th Cambridge Cub Pack](#) made lots of new animal friends!



[1st Earith, Bluntisham & Colne](#) Cub Pack failed to catch a haggis on Burns Night, so baked these yummy shortbreads instead! Meanwhile the Scout Troop made and installed these “poo bag” dispensers around their 3 villages as part of community projects.

[1st Papworth](#) Scout Troop used the retro game of Pac Man to help with navigation and local knowledge badgework



Look out for lockdown fun from 2nd Chatteris and 11th/9th Cambridge on the county news once we have more details on their recent events!

Focus on... Programme

Scout Active Support Units (SASUs)

We are pleased to confirm that there are now 5 units for activities. These are designed to support volunteers to learn and develop skills in the respective areas – to help them in turn to teach and support our young people.

If you, or anyone you know (scouting or not), are interested in learning more or joining the relevant Unit then simply [contact](#) the appropriate manager – Bushscout (Ian Dugdale), Events (Elaine Chamberlain), International (Mark Royle), Mountain (Tony Best) and Water (Simon Keen).

Scouting in 2021

Feeling “Zoomed out”?

At the start of the first lockdown Zoom (or equivalent) was probably part of the appeal, but a year on it is understandable why young people and volunteers alike feel some of that novelty has perhaps worn off! There is also the challenge of how to turn previously used programme ideas and meetings into a version that can work remotely.

Remember that there is nothing to say meetings have to take place according to normal meeting dates, times or frequencies – it is all about what our volunteers are able to offer. We know that in some Districts some sections / Groups are delivering a programme together on a regular basis, such as some of those in Ely District.

If you have not already done so why not consider reaching out to other scouting volunteers (in your Group, District, County or indeed anywhere in the world) to discuss whether they could organise just one thing for your section, or perhaps “buddy up” to take turns to run one themed meeting but for multiple different groups of young people. As a global scouting family we are all in this together, and our combined strength is also what will help us get through.

Ideas and inspiration

In addition to the wealth of ideas and links on pages 2 & 3 in the [County Newsletter in January](#) here are some more:

- When adding some events to the County website we will try and include relevant badges / resources to aid with programme planning. Examples already include [National Hearth Month](#) , [Star Count](#) and [Founders Day #ThankTwo](#) in February as well as [Science Month](#) and [Census](#) in March.
- As we do not know when F2F scouting will be permitted, or what any restrictions will be, some events will be updated with more resources nearer the time, so for now perhaps note as a date for programme planning. In 2021 these already include [St George's Day](#), [Trash the Trash Day](#), [Jamboree on the Trail](#), [Tokyo Olympics & Paralympics](#), [World Scarf \(Necker\) Day](#) , [Jamboree on the Internet & on the Air](#) and the [APEX Challenge](#)
- This year sees the 100th anniversary of the Royal British Legion. Celebrations will take place all year but key events are the [actual 100th anniversary](#) itself, [Remembrance Day](#) and [Remembrance Sunday](#)
- [1st Digital Scouts](#) are starting to provide weekly sessions for all sections
- The [East of England Winter Challenge](#) is continuing for now
- The Scouts have added recent updates about [lockdown programme support](#) and [online scouting examples](#)
- Tune in to [Scout Radio](#) on 13th February for activities, music and of course a disco (where from 8pm that evening Cambridgeshire Scouts Network member, and [Queen's Scout, Laura Fagg](#) will be on air)
- The County Team are working on a County Commissioners Challenge (with an occasional badge) for all sections, watch out for details before Easter
- [25th World Scout Jamboree](#) in 2023 (Korea) is something to look forward to. The UK Team are currently [recruiting to a range of volunteer adult roles](#) (must be 18+ at the time of the event). More details about applying to be part of the Cambridgeshire Contingent as an adult or a young person will be shared later this year.

Return of Face to Face (F2F scouting)

In addition to the information on page 4 in the [County Newsletter in January](#) another area to consider, now the lighter evenings and better weather are hopefully heading this way, is just where you can physically deliver scouting. Many normal locations are “out of bounds” (such as schools) and even those with their own buildings may be limited on numbers due to COVID secure requirements. Parks, nature reserves and other open areas are certainly one option.

There are some scouting locations already listed on the [website](#), so we are looking to add to that list – and to create suggestions for other potential buildings / outdoor sites not already listed as part of “[Things to do in Cambridgeshire](#)”.

A reminder that there were [updates to Policy, Organisation and Rules \(POR\) in January](#) so check for changes made.

Picking your brains!

Please feel free to submit your own ideas and suggestions for all the above. This includes volunteering to “lead” or join a team providing programme resources for any particular event, as well as places or tips related to planning for the return of F2F scouting. This can be done by popping details onto the closed [County Facebook Group](#), via communications@cambridgeshirescouts.org.uk or contacting the event organiser.

Snippets from

Support

Census 2021

Good progress is being made with the returns, with all sections due for approval by mid-February. Whilst some numbers have understandably dropped it is great to see some Groups did grow, despite a challenging year.

Office 365 / MS Teams

We are pleased to announce that Russell Challis has joined the team as an IT Support volunteer, bringing a wealth of practical experience. In due course more information about his role in expanding use of Office 365 and MS Teams will be shared.

County Office

Unfortunately, the building was flooded just before Christmas. An insurance claim has been made, and the landlord is being extremely helpful with regards to relevant repairs and flood prevention steps.

Perception

Shouting for scouting

The [Brand Centre site](#) is simple and free to use, as is the font. You can amend and download items for free, ready to print locally or use on websites etc. Please use it for all your internal and external publications, e-mails, posters, signage, and online presence.

Week in week out young people across the county engage in a huge range of activities, all thanks to teams of volunteers. Please do share what you all get up to, as that can inspire others and help raise the profile of scouting in general – which in turn aids recruitment and access to funding etc.

#ThankTwo

For [Founders Day \(22nd February\)](#) The Scouts are running a campaign to recognise scouting volunteers. "This time – after what's frankly been a bit of a rubbish year – we want to double the amount of gratitude shown." Do let us know what you get up to!

Recruiting

There is a wealth of updated [recruitment information and resources](#) available already, and much is ideal for tapping into those parents who have perhaps enjoyed some of the activities the young people have been doing remotely / virtually.

If you have not already looked at what [opportunities are available](#), why not do so now – roles already listed range from specific Districts to much wider.

[Submit news](#) or request support and submit opportunities by emailing communications@cambridgeshirecouts.org.uk

Growth & Development / Protect

The team continues to offer support around all aspects of scouting in a pandemic, from funding to risk assessments. Remember that your COVID risk assessment is separate to each activity risk assessment. Note also that the lack of a District Chair or Executive team should not prevent a section from obtaining approval to return to F2F. Your District team is there to help you through this process and County is available to assist all involved as required. Any queries not already covered on [The Scouts](#) or the [county website](#) should be directed to f2freturn@cambridgeshirecouts.org.uk

Project plans are in place to support 3 Ely city Groups and Hinchingsbrooke District, and we will be helping Peterborough with some potential new provision in the Autumn.

To find out more about the new Growth SASU, and how you could help support growth and development across the county, please contact david.briston@cambridgeshirecouts.org.uk

People

Training

Thank you to everyone for the continued efforts to ensure outstanding mandatory training and reviews are being completed, it is great to see the numbers decreasing each month.

Keep any eye on the county [calendar](#) for details of online courses already available (from [Young Leader](#) to [Module 11](#) (Admin)), and those which will be added soon (including Module 36 (Making Reasonable Adjustments) and Mental Health First Aid). There is also the invitation from Norfolk Scouts to join in some / all of the training, ideas exchange and social sessions in their "[Big Weekend](#)".

Welcome Back Plans

If you have a volunteer that you have not been in touch with for some time, please reach out. See how they are doing and discuss what scouting in 2021 may look like for them – hopefully agreeing a plan (if not a date) to welcome them back where they have had to take a break.

Scout Active Support Units (SASUs)

To find out more about the new Inclusion SASU contact Caroline Spaxman or the new First Aid one contact Lynne Radbone

Adult Awards Scheme

It is good to report that we received 23 new [Awards](#) in county during December alone, and to hear news of various awards being presented to volunteers across the Districts.

In addition to your local District support the [County Awards panel](#) are always available to help anyone who would like to know more about how to nominate someone or need help with wording the nomination.