

1st Stoke Gifford Scout Group

REPORT TO GROUP ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, JUN 2014

Group Overview – by Ian Butcher, Executive Committee Chairman

This has been another successful year for the Group, with all sections healthy in terms of both numbers and their programmes, and we continue to have a healthy demand for places within the Group. As will be clear later, our finances also remain in excellent shape.

The past year has seen two events which marked it as an 'extra-ordinary' one, with the completion of our long awaited storage project (the large green container placed in the grounds of St Michaels School, by the path leading to Beaufort Crescent) and also our Group's overseas camp. Whilst I appreciate that many others were involved in both the fundraising for and the running of the Cyprus camp, I'd like to especially thank Andy Phelps for taking on the huge responsibility of organising it. I'm pleased to know that it hasn't put him off, and he's aiming to do the whole thing again next year.

As has been the case for many years, the only cloud on the horizon relates to leadership challenges. Right now we face a particular challenge with Cubs where the decision made by Geoff Cane to retire after (only) 23 years has weakened a leadership team which was already not as strong as we'd have liked. We would therefore be particularly keen for extra help there, but also for other sections, so if you are tempted (or might have your arm twisted), or know of someone else who might, please get in touch.

The Group's activities would not be possible without the support of the leaders and parent helpers who generously give up so much time, our fundraising committee and also our Executive Committee members. I would like to offer the Group's thanks to all of them, especially those who put in the hours behind the scenes.

Finance Report – by Sue Gibbs, Treasurer

The figures below are from the 2013/14 and 2012/2013 audited accounts and show that the Group's finances are healthy. We have kept within our operating plan and finished the year with a £425 surplus (prior year surplus £865). This was achieved through a budgeting and monitoring plan which proved successful. The group has also spent £6,969 (net of grants) on a planned storage project using funds donated in prior years for this specific purpose.

The inclusion of deposits and costs for the planned Cyprus trip and the receipt and payment of specific equipment grants in the 2012/2013 accounts inflated both receipts and expenses in the accounts and for the purposes of comparability these have been excluded in the current and prior year summary below. We have maintained our agreed reserves position which stands at £6,000, representing £1,000 for possible further work on the storage project and £5,000 as 1/3 of our annual running costs. A balanced budget has been collated for 2014/2015 to maintain this agreed reserve.

The group is now using the fully automated online system for paying subscriptions across the packs and will continue this going forward,

The figures on the next page, which are extracted from the audited accounts, briefly compare the past year with the previous one;

- Income, after adjusting for the Cyprus deposits and a grants for the storage project/tent purchase was down 9% this is due to suspension of the camp levy charge and a reduction in non-specific donations. Income is expected to remain at current levels for the next year.
- Overall running costs were down on the previous year. This can be accounted for by the reduction in rental costs due to sharing facilities with the local Guide group. Other costs have increased due to the subscription charges for the slightly as we had expected, but capitation (the fee paid to Scouts 'HQ') was reduced due to lower numbers in the Group and discounts taken for prompt payment. Spend on activities ended up a little below what we had budgeted for.

Financial summary

| <u>Receipts/Debits</u> | <u>2013/2014</u> | <u>2012/2013</u> | |
|------------------------|------------------|------------------|---------|
| Receipts | £13,256.13 | £14,497.10 | Down 9% |
| Payments | £12,830.41 | £13,632.39 | Down 6% |
| Net balance for year | £ 425.72 | £ 864.71 | |

| <u>Monetary assets</u> | <u>2013/2014</u> | <u>2012/2013</u> |
|------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Bank account | £ 7,072.44 | £13,639.68 |
| Cash in Hand | £ 580.08 | £ 556.57 |
| | £ 7,652.52 | £14,196.25 |

Closing bank account less £6,969.45 net storage unit costs

Income

| | | |
|----------------------------------|------------|------------|
| Gift Aid | £ 1,907.35 | £ 1,915.07 |
| Subscriptions | £ 9,248.70 | £ 9,172.76 |
| Camp contributions | £ 64.00 | £ 796.00 |
| BBQ Takings | £ 1,596.28 | £ 1,160.35 |
| Donations/Fundraising | £ 214.80 | £ 918.92 |
| Contributions towards activities | £ 225.00 | £ 534.00 |

Outgoings

| <u>Bank Account</u> | <u>2013/2014</u> | <u>2012/2013</u> |
|------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Rent | £ 3,471.00 | £ 3,958.00 |
| Capitation to district | £ 3,794.00 | £ 3,402.00 |
| Insurance | £ 134.65 | £ 132.28 |
| Consumables | £ 145.12 | £ 103.46 |
| Equipment | £ 207.77 | £ 1,074.26 |
| Activities | £ 2,785.44 | £ 2,595.28 |
| Leader training | £ 200.00 | £ 252.00 |
| Leader's Uniforms | £ 99.12 | £ 179.95 |
| Manuals/Badges | £ 1,160.00 | £ 1,227.57 |
| BBQ costs | £ 565.19 | £ 549.60 |
| Gifts | £ 23.68 | £ 80.99 |
| Other | £ 244.44 | £ 80.00 |

Auditor Comments

John Harris, who has kindly independently audited our accounts for many years reported very positively on the accounts this year, emphasising how well put together they were despite what was a complicated year given the storage project and Cyprus trip. He made a couple of minor recommendations which we are considering for the year ahead, but otherwise commended Sue for her excellent work.

Group Scout Leader's (GSL) Report – Paul Smith

Another good year, all of the sections are flourishing well and we have been able to offer places to those young people on our waiting list in all sections, with some exceptions. We have regular attendance of 97 young people on a weekly basis, this is higher than last year. We have 20 regular uniformed leaders and (parents) and help from our young leaders supplied by the Explorer Scout Section.

All of our sections have had an exciting year with varied programs centred on earning badges, learning new skills, and having fun. Our sections try to manage to camp at least twice a year, in addition to fitting in numerous visits and activities, such as archery and rifle shooting. This last year included our first international camp to Cyprus (see OSR Scout report).

We have a number of leaders change their roles within the group. However nevertheless we are always looking for new leaders and. If you could help in any way, or know of someone who might be able to, please contact myself, or any of the uniformed leaders.

None of this would be possible without the support of our executive team and of course our uniformed leaders and occasional helpers (parents). I'd like to formally record my appreciation for all their hard work.

Reports on individual sections

Scout Troops (St Michaels School) – Marcus Booth

We have had an exciting last 12 months since the 2013 AGM. The highlights of the Summer term included cycling, a trip to Blaise Castle folly, conservation work at Woodhouse Park, which got us a free go on the low ropes course and a highly informative but wet for some trip to Portishead lifeboat.

In the last two terms we have concentrated on our badge work much more. Everything from basic scout skills, such as knotting and map reading, through to first aid, the Chef's badge and some very creative MTV style videos, which we showed at the Christmas party! We have hiked across the Old Severn Bridge, had several enjoyable evenings challenging the Guides to events, and done lots of craft and drama, allowing the Scouts to express themselves creatively.

We had a Scout and Cub Camp at Woodhouse Park in September, which was very well attended and in May we camped at Cranham in Gloucester, where the weather was superb. Most unlike the weather for camps we've had in the recent past!

For the remainder of the term we are going gliding, swimming in an open air pool at Wotton Under Edge, doing the Athletes Badge and challenging the Guides around the assault course at Woodhouse.

Numbers of Scouts has remained around the 25 mark, with almost a full turn out most weeks. A number of our scouts who have been with us for 4 years now since I took over the Troop are due to leave at the end of the term. Whilst it won't seem the same without them it's been great to see them grow and mature as children and scouts and I wish them well for their time in Explorers.

My thanks go to Alison, Michele, Laura, Peter and Lewis, our young leader, for their ideas, support and enthusiasm.

Scout Troops (Old School Rooms) – Andy Phelps

Currently running on 22 scouts (5 girls and 17 boys).

4 leaders with Janet, although Lyn will be leaving next Easter. We will need another uniformed leader as Kathie and I have several other commitments and Janet has other roles within scout movement. Dave Edgecumbe has been helping with cover and is coming as a helper to Watchet for the section's level 1 power boating course in a few weeks' time.

We raised nearly £1000 for the summer camp with the Cypriot scouts and due to their transport problems held a joint science night recently with graduates from Rolls Royce. Whilst having run with water based experiments we raised £200.

Later this term we are gliding at the Cotswold gliding club. A weight restriction means that only half the troop will be heavy enough to fly (☺) but we're also having a BBQ so that everyone can join in.

Also we are completing the new Gloucestershire count Poppy badge with the local parish, St. Michael's church and the Royal British Legion.

Planning for the summer camp is going well. We have 25 scouts from the 2 troops plus 5 leaders and numerous parent helpers (all CRB checked from last year). 11 scouts from Cyprus and 4 leaders.

We have just returned from a joint scout troop and cub pack camp in Cranham, Gloucestershire. Kathie passed her 'nights away' assessment and so is now able to run future camps. The camp was great success; weather was great and loads of activities.

Cubs – Carl Shaw

We currently have 21 Cubs down from 25, 4 of which are girls, with 2 leaders, 2 adult helpers and 3 young helpers (although exam time is taking its toll here!). We have also had help from a number of parent helpers some of whom are now DBS checked and attended camp.

Over the winter months we concentrated on badge work including ICT, basic scouting skills, navigator and map badges as well as more creative badges such as the entertainer badge where the Cubs created their own shadow plays. We've also had some great visits from Sort-it for recycling and a small animal group where they handled everything from Tarantula spiders to giant woodlice.

We've just returned from a successful joint camp (attended by 11 cubs) with Scouts at Cranham where we had fun shelter building, firelighting, having water fights and competing on the adventure course.

This term we have been concentrating on outdoor activities and had a great time recently learning orienteering at the permanent course at Savages Wood. The rest of the term includes a walk around Stoke Gifford to take photographs, a joint night with Beavers at Woodhouse and work on the new Cub pioneering activity badge.

As always, we are looking for more leaders and would like to keep numbers to about 24 Cubs.

Beavers

Currently running with 28 children (3 girls and 25 boys) and a great team of 5 leaders.

Have a full programme of activities including a trip to Woodhouse last week where all the children had a chance at Go Karting, Karen Needham spent an evening with them at St Michaels Church and we are due to visit Blaise Castle for a hike, and also Patchway Fire Station. We are also doing a couple of badges including a new 'Disability Awareness Badge'.

We are holding a sleepover on the 5th/6th September at Brockmead Scout Campsite which will be a new venue for us. The leaders visited the site last weekend and were made to feel very welcome. It is a fantastic place with great facilities so we hope that lots of children will attend. The next sleepover will be in the New Year and will be a joint venture at Woodhouse with the Rainbows.

7 of our children are attending a 'funday' at Woodhouse in June. This day is open to any Beavers and Cubs and all the activities on site plus more will be available to the children.

This time last year we were running with 6 leaders before Janet took on a district role. If possible we would like to recruit an additional leader/assistant to take our team back up to 6.