



242<sup>nd</sup> Edition

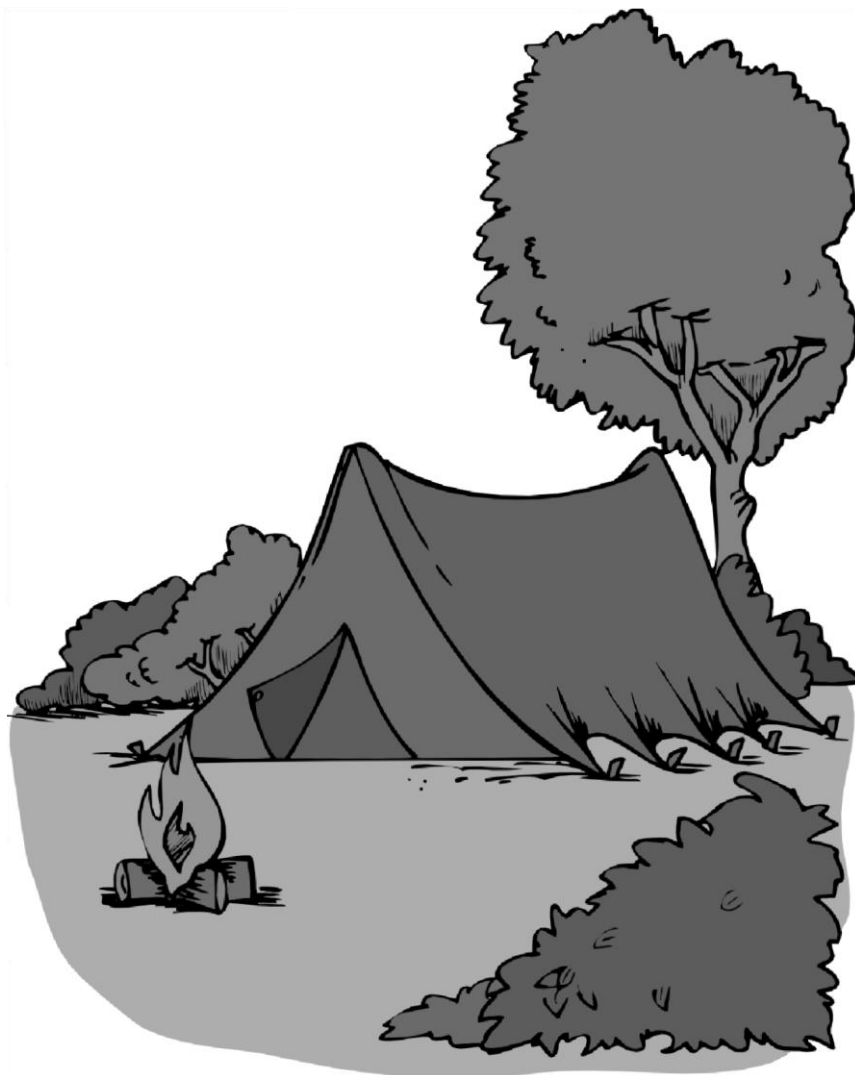
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**Scouts**

# Woodsmoke



[www.abbotslangleyscouts.org.uk](http://www.abbotslangleyscouts.org.uk)

## Chairman's Blog

Well, here we are. It's the beginning of 2022 and it is beginning to look like the beginning of the end of the worst effects of covid and all that has meant for all of us. I do truly hope that we can now look forward with some confidence to a return to normality and to re-engaging throughout our Scout Group, with the Scouting fraternity and with the wider community.

I am pleased to report that the Scouting Association have rescinded all remaining restrictions that has allowed a return to face-to-face meetings without limitations.

I wish to recognise and give appreciation on behalf of the Group's Executive members to our section leaders, assistant leaders and supporters across the Scout Group who have managed to maintain a full and varied programme for the various sections. I have been pleased to receive several messages of thanks from parents of members of the Scout Group who have recognised the hard work and dedication put in by the leaders on their sons and daughters behalf.

I wish to thank the members of the Executive for the Scout Group for providing me with their support and for the hard work they have put in helping to maintain the running of the Group, in particular, to Iain Stanley (Acting Group Scout Leader) who has combined his involvement with the running of his own Scout Group based in Aylesbury and to Pauline Styles (Group Treasurer), each of whom have spent a considerable amount of their time for the benefit of the Group. I'd like to stress the fact that everyone involved in the running of our Scout Group is a volunteer who gives freely of their time and expertise and receives no reward other than taking satisfaction from seeing the young persons' active enjoyment and personal development through their progression through the sections.

Cate Simms has tendered her resignation from the role of Secretary for the Executive Group. Cate, as well as fulfilling the usual secretarial duties, provided valuable support and guidance to the Executive members. Paul Woodman has stepped down from the role of Health & Safety Co-ordinator. Paul has been instrumental in providing guidance and putting Risk Assessments into place. Ian Watts, having produced a Business Continuity Plan, which we did not have before, has stepped back from an active role in the Group. Ian has kindly offered to reengage and provide assistance in further developing the BCP should the need arise in the future. These changes in the membership of the current Executive create additional vacancies which need to be filled. At the moment, important roles which require filling are Group Secretary, Facilities Manager, Health & Safety Coordinator and Fund-Raising Coordinator. If you are interested or know of someone who may be suitable for filling one of these roles and may want more information about what a particular role involves then please do contact either myself or any other member of the Group Executive. Without the involvement and support of additional volunteers it places undue burden upon those already in post which cannot be borne indefinitely, and which could ultimately have an adverse effect upon the operation and continuing success of the Group.

I am very grateful to both Yvonne Stanley, Hall Bookings Coordinator and to Jeremey Bishop, Group Transport Manager who each have taken to their individual roles with great gusto and enthusiasm and have each proved to be a great new asset to the Group.

Amaelia Parmenter has decided to step down from the role of Scout Leader at the end of the current term. The Group Executive are very grateful to Amaelia for agreeing to take on this role at the outset. We wish her well in her other important activities. We hope there may prove another opportunity for Amaelia to return into the fold at some not too distant date. The Group are seeking a new Scout Leader to take over from Amaelia. This is in addition to finding a new Group Scout Leader.

The official opening of the Clive Winder Climbing Wall took place at the end of November when Sally Winder, accompanied by members of her family together with Lin Lythaby, Group Honorary President, together cut the ribbon to declare the climbing wall open in the presence of approximately 100 invited guests including several notable local and Scouting dignitaries. Chris Watts, manager of the climbing wall is continuing to introduce the members of the different Sections to using the wall. The layout of the climbs is varied. They will be changed periodically to create new routes and to alter the degree of difficulty. I wish to thank Chris for agreeing to take on the role of manager and for his enthusiasm in developing this added facility for the Group. Financial support to the climbing wall continues and I, accompanied by Sally Winder and Chris Watts, received a very generous donation of £1,000 from the organisers of the Abbots Langley Tough Ten organising committee at a recent event. Details have been circulated separately about a further opportunity to help the Group succeed in obtaining a grant from Tesco through their local Community Grant Scheme. This involves voting for the climbing wall in the community grant box located within local Tesco stores. The opportunity to vote ceases at the end of March. Please contact either me or Pauline Styles should you wish to learn more about how you can make your vote count.



I am pleased to record the success of three members of the Explorer's Section hosted by our Scout Group, two of whom, Ben Chase and Rose Carter have both gone through our Scout Group, to be selected to attend the Scout World Jamboree that is to be held in South Korea in 2023. Further details will be forthcoming about events and other opportunities to assist these fortunate young people in raising the personal funding that they have to find to attend the Jamboree.

Various tasks have been identified by the Group Executive to help maintain and to improve our HQ building. This includes finding a long-term solution to the problems that have been experienced over the years with the wood floor in the hall. I wish to thank all those affected by the problems and who have suffered inconvenience due to the problems with the floor for their cooperation and patience whilst we resolve this particular matter. Volunteers are needed to help out on maintenance days to undertake essential works at HQ. These are planned to take place once the weather improves. Please contact me if you have a particular trade or skill, such as building, electrical, plumbing or painting and if you are willing to volunteer your knowledge or services to help out our Scout Group.

Attendance at the annual Christingle Service held at St Lawrence's Church had to be restricted due to the need to maintain social distancing and prevent the spread of covid. Only members of the Beaver sections took part. A total sum in excess of £170 was collected across the various sections and was donated to the Christingle charity organisation. Our thanks to Reverend Peter Waddell for taking the service.

I am pleased to record my having received a Certificate of Merit with badge and also Chief Scout's long service awards being presented to Rob Coulson and to Polly Chase by Dave Collette, District Commissioner for North Watford.

Here's looking forward to an enjoyable and fulling 2022.  
That's all for now,



Richard Gabriel receiving the Award for Merit in recognition  
of his outstanding service to Scouting

Richard Gabriel  
Scout Group Chairperson



## Remembrance Day Parade

The Remembrance Day Parade took place on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2021. The Parade was very well attended by all Sections. It was Bib Butcher's last year as the person in charge of the Parade.



## Clive Winder Climbing Wall Opening

The opening ceremony for the Clive Winder Climbing Wall took place on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> November at the 1<sup>st</sup> Abbots Langley (3<sup>rd</sup> North Watford) Scout Group headquarters. The indoor climbing wall was officially opened by Sally Winder, wife of the late Group Scout Leader, who was assisted by Lin Lythaby (President, 1<sup>st</sup> Abbots Langley Scout Group). After a welcome speech given by Richard Gabriel, Chair of the Group and the cutting of a ribbon by Sally Winder and Lin Lythaby the invited guests witnessed a demonstration of the wall by Beavers, Cubs and Scouts from the Group.

The project was inspired by the Group's late Group Scout Leader and Scout Leader, Clive Winder, who very sadly passed away in March 2020. Clive was keen to encourage young people across all sections of the Scout Group to broaden their horizons, learn new skills and build self-confidence. Use of the climbing wall by all members of the Scout Group, the young and perhaps even the not so young, will be a lasting tribute to Clive.

Clive was due to celebrate his 60th birthday in 2020 and Scouting was a huge part of his life. Whilst in the Scout Group Clive had received the Chief Scouts Commendation for Good Service to Scouting, an Award for Merit for outstanding service, the Chief Scouts 20-year Service Award for his time spent as a leader and was due to receive a Silver Acorn in recognition of his especially distinguished service. In special thanks for his volunteering work and services to Scouting, Clive and his wife Sally were invited to attend the Queen's Garden Party at Buckingham Palace in 2019. Clive was an exceptional man, well-loved within his community and had shaped the lives of many youngsters who have passed through the Scout Group.

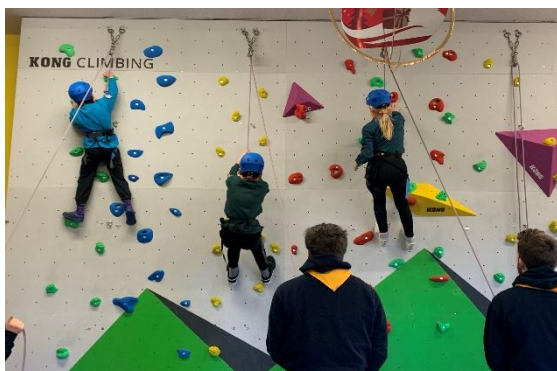
In 2019, Clive had discussed with his Assistant Scout Leader, Alison Redmond; the possibility of building an indoor climbing wall in the Group's Headquarters as they had seen one installed at a Scout camp they had visited together in Arundel. The Trustees of the Group felt that it would be a fitting tribute and commemoration to Clive, to fulfil this project on his behalf; and whilst forming a lasting memory it would also be of enormous benefit to the Scout Group and to the wider community. The wall has been dedicated to him, being named 'The Clive Winder Climbing Wall'.

Fundraising began in November 2020 with a Scout Christmas Post Service which had not been run in the community previously. This also brought in very generous donations from family of members and friends of the Scout Group, individuals and other groups in the Abbots Langley community - the Bowls Club, golfing team and the Masonic Lodge. A very popular virtual race night was held during lockdown earlier in 2021 as well as other various initiatives from members of the Group including the composing of a song dedicated to Clive. In addition, grants have been received from the County Council Locality Budget Scheme and the Abbots Langley Parish Council, the Alpkite Foundation, and the Peter Sell Annual Award from the Leslie Sell Charitable Trust. It was very much a community-based fundraising project due to the nature of Clive's wide standing within Abbots Langley village. As there are ongoing costs associated with operating and maintaining the climbing wall, fundraising will continue to provide income into a fund for this purpose.

The climbing wall was installed at the Group headquarters by King Kong Climbing Walls in August 2021. The 26m<sup>2</sup> wall is fine stone coated ply, to a height of 4.2m, including holds and 12.8m<sup>2</sup> of safety matting. It has the capacity of operating up to five rope lines with two alternate climbing routes per line. The climbing routes can be re-set from time to time to vary the climbing experience and alter the degree of climbing skills required. The wall can also be used for traversing, but this will be restricted to the bottom 2m only.



The climbing wall will predominantly be for the use of members of the 1<sup>st</sup> Abbots Langley Scout Group, but it is hoped in time to be made available for wider use, including other local Scout Groups, schools and community groups. Further details can be found on the Group's website [www.abbotslangleyscouts.org.uk](http://www.abbotslangleyscouts.org.uk) together with an opportunity to hear the dedicatory song or to donate via the Paypal Giving Fund. Interest for future bookings should be emailed to: [bookings@abbotslangleyscouts.org.uk](mailto:bookings@abbotslangleyscouts.org.uk)



Anna Ebdon  
Woodsmoke Editor

## Memories of Scouting Days Gone By

I was contacted in January by Major R J Reid MBE. Jim had been reading the Group's histories on the Group's website that I have compiled and informed me that he was a Scout in our Group (or as it was then "The 44<sup>th</sup> South West Herts") in the 1950s. He had joined the army in 1958 at the age of 16 and then had to leave the Scout group at that time. He was interested in seeing our "new" headquarters as the one he remembered looked like this below, so we invited him and his partner Marianne, along for a tour of the building on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022.

I got a few of our Scouting Elders together – Lin Lythaby (our President), Bib Butcher, Eddie Chalk, Tony Dabson, and with Richard Gabriel (Chair) and I, we showed him a cine film of the building of the HQ, old photos and memorabilia, followed by a tour of the premises with tea and sandwiches.



This is the letter he wrote after the visit which we all enjoyed immensely.

"A thousand 'Thank yous! For a 'no fuss, quick look' visit, it is hard to imagine what you would do for Royalty! We are both extremely grateful to you for organising it.

The Scout 'Hut', 'hall,' 'palace' is truly outstanding. I suppose I was expecting a larger, brick built, version of the hut I knew all those decades ago. But what I found must be one of the 'seven wonders of Scouting!' We were both amazed at the imaginative use of every cubic inch of space in the building, even to the split-level attic. That wonderful upstairs room, complete with TV, through to the enormous, well-proportioned hall complete with stage, video projector and climbing wall. It must surely be the envy of every other Troop around. OK, Scouts don't do envy, but if they did...!

The great collection of pictures brought back floods of memories of my time with the Group. I recognised but a few faces but identified with the content of all of them. You seem to hold a great collection of pictures and documents representing the story of Scouting in Abbots Langley. Something historians of the future could use to build upon the excellent history which you wrote and published on the website (that which prompted me to ask for a visit in the first place)!



You certainly seem to have something I never had in any of the Troops I ran - an amazing supporting cast of clearly dedicated adults. I trust that the cubs and Scouts fully appreciate the commitment and enthusiasm of the team which, almost by definition, beavers away largely unseen. From fund-raising to maintenance to the production of 'Woodsmoke' there is a lot of hard work and dedication. The dedication and enthusiasm was clearly evident in everyone I spoke with.

And then to top it all, a fantastic (and certainly unexpected), spread of food for lunch, taken in excellent company.

Please pass on our deepest thanks to all involved. I was a real pleasure to meet them all.

Thank you again  
Jim



Marianne, Jim, Lin and Richard standing either side of the commemorative slab laid at the opening of the HQ by Ralph Reader.



# Lake



For Autumn term, the Beavers worked towards their Teamwork Challenge badge – we had a special session with a gameshow theme including Family Fortunes and Pointless where the Beavers had to work together to present the best answers for each topic/question.

We also had a session on the brand-new badge Money Skills, the Beavers learned about saving and also how to make the best of the money they had.

There were also a few (rainy!) sessions outside, one where they had to find items around the village beginning with each letter of the alphabet - thank goodness for the umbrella in the window of the hairdressers and the (X)mas trees and decorations on display! Another session was held in Phasels Wood with photo clues for the Beavers to locate where the photo was taken and to answer questions around the site.

Thanks to a generous donation by a Beaver parent's company, we were able to have a special Christmas party with the River Beavers with a disco and a visit from a celebrity guest... Santa himself!

There were 6 Beavers who were presented with their Bronze Challenge badge. Well done Beavers – a fantastic achievement!



Koala, Panda and Grizzly  
Lake Beavers

# River



In the Autumn Term, River Beavers were busy working towards lots of difference badges. We tackled the Teamwork Challenge badge, trying out pioneering (using spaghetti and blue tack which was very tricky!) and played lots of team games. We had a really fun toy car night, where Helen set up a racetrack around the hall and we brought some toys in to play with.

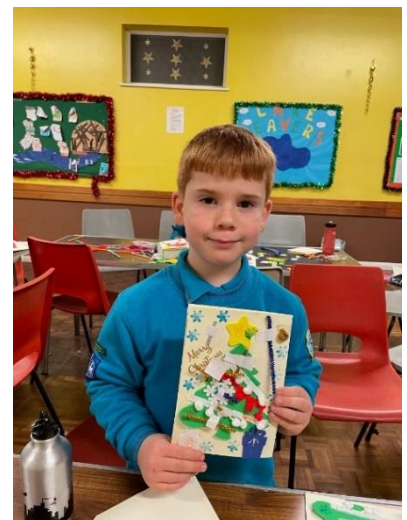
We learned about different disabilities for our disability awareness badge, and practiced ways we could help people who were unable to see. We had a visit from Dave and his ukulele as part of our musician badge, where we sang campfire songs and discussed musical instruments.

Remembrance Parade had a fantastic turn out! Thank you to everyone who made an effort to attend, and especially to William for doing such a fantastic job carrying our Beaver Flag! We then had Christingle Service at St. Lawrence's Church, where Peter explained to us the importance of the Christingle and all the meaning behind each component.

Although we had planned to visit St Laura's Care Home, to sing Christmas carols for the residents, unfortunately COVID levels were too high in December, so we made Christmas cards for them instead. We made lots of cards each to make sure every resident at the home received a card from our colony.

Our end of term Christmas Party was great fun! We wore our Christmas Jumpers and played lots of party games. Then, we had a special visit from Father Christmas!! We got to go upstairs to say hello and he gave us all an early Christmas present.

This term, we have lots of exciting activities planned. We are working towards our space and air activities badges, and we have a special visit from Chris (the Cubs Leader) who is going to teach us how to use the Clive Winder Climbing Wall!







Hollie Goodman and Helen Welch  
River Beavers



# Rainforest



This autumn term at Cubs was indescribably fun! We did the Cresta run which has always been one of my personal favourites at Cubs. I love the feel of a cool breeze hitting your face as you whizz down the tracks. We raced each other down the tracks and I won a fair few times.

However, the best thing by far was that I became a seconder, and later in the spring term I was turned into a sixer for my new lodge red six. It was one of my finest moments.

After half term we had a Halloween party. It was so much fun pretending grapes were eyeballs and playing Halloween games. Though I was a bit creeped out when I thought the spaghetti was a real spider's web!

In the spring term, we had two science nights. In the first one we made really cool slime. I really loved the second science night as we got to grow cress and we did some running races. We also played stuck in the mud (the helpers were a bit too good for us, so we were all caught quite quickly).

We made pancakes and played football on pancake night; it was really fun! We cracked the eggs and got the flour and milk and mixed it together to make a lovely pancake mix. When we poured the pancake mix into the pan it spread out and when they were done, we added the toppings on top. These activities were really fun!

Gabriel - age 10

# SCOUTS



The Scouts who entered the County Cooking Competition and came 4<sup>th</sup>.  
Well done!

# ABBOS ASU

For one reason and another it has been really quiet for the unit with the majority of our usual activities where we might have provided assistance to the Group either not taking place or having to be cancelled. A number of us did help out by arranging a wide game in Whippendell Woods for the Scouts at the beginning of November. Unfortunately, there wasn't a fireworks display to finish off the evening with a bang but we did manage to keep a great fire alight which was found welcome by the young and older people alike.



We assisted with a pop-up Jumble Sale on the front forecourt at the Scout Hall in October. This was, I think a first of its kind and proved to be quite successful. Some of us assisted at the Group's Christmas Market held at the beginning of December. We also helped to make the Christingle oranges – though it's funny how those delicious little sweets have a knack of disappearing.

On the social side, the Christmas Dinner for members and friends was held at the Boot PH in Sarratt. This was very well attended, as always and with a former member showing up after having not being seen for quite a long time. I'm told the Boxing Day Walk (held on Boxing Day) was still enjoyable by those who braved the winter weather and who participated in a socially distanced sing song at the Holly Bush PH at Potters Crouch.

With F2F meetings now allowed and the return to normal, or at least what we must now accept as being the new normal we can look ahead and plan for providing active support for forthcoming Scouting events. The AGM for the Abbos ASU was held on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February. It was decided by a majority vote that the former rigid programme of monthly social meetings would be made more flexible in favour of continuing to run the popular annual social events but with additional meets arranged on an ad hoc basis if there was sufficient interest and only if there is someone willing to plan and organise the event/s.

I have recently submitted the annual census to District and am pleased to record that we have 23 full ASU members. In addition to this, there are several occasional helpers who can be called upon and a further group of individuals who wish to remain as social members only. Although there is a healthy membership of the ASU I feel that I must comment that it seems to be nearly always the same few individuals who actually put themselves forward to help out on a regular basis. The principal purpose of the unit is to provide active support to the Scout Group, if they need it. Membership of the unit is not solely for social reasons, but I do recognise that that is equally important. I would expect full members of the ASU to volunteer to help and to take their share with others in supporting the Group. One such opportunity is by helping at the Section meetings. There is currently a shortage of uniformed leaders and maintaining a varied and active programme has proved difficult. If you can spare some time to provide adult supervision or if you have some skill or knowledge you could share with the young people, then please do come forward to help the leaders. Dave Gray will be sounding out members over the possibility of their providing help in this way.

I wish to take this opportunity to remind members of the ASU that they are required by the Scouting Association to complete certain minimum modules of training. Please check your training status and complete any training that remains outstanding. Can I also remind those who wish to remain as full members of the ASU that the annual subscription set at £10 for the forthcoming year is now due. Please contact Ruth Gabriel for advice on how to make your payment.

Finally, at the AGM I tendered my resignation from acting Manager of the Abbos ASU and stepped down from the role with immediate effect. This is in order that I may concentrate wholly upon my role as Chairman of the Scout Group. That leaves the role of ASU Manager vacant for the time being. Please contact me if you or someone you may know of who might be interested in taking up the role of ASU Manager.

I'd like to say that it has not been too arduous. There have been plenty of good times as well. I will still continue as a full-time member of the ASU and will rock up to help at all of the regular ASU assisted events.

Signing off,  
Richard  
Former ASU Manager



## Diary Dates

### April

19	Ladies Guild Meeting – 2pm	Ladies Guild
24	St. George's Day Parade – time tbc	All

### May

13	AGM	All
16	Executive Meeting	Exec Committee
17	Ladies Guild Meeting – 2pm	Ladies Guild

### June

2–5	District Camp	TBC
11	Abbots Langley Carnival	All
17–19	Scout Narrowboat Trip – TBC	Scouts
21	Ladies Guild Meeting – 2pm	Ladies Guild

### July

18	Executive Meeting	Exec Committee
19	Ladies Guild Meeting – 2pm	Ladies Guild
23-30	Scout Camp – TBC	Scouts

## Hall Happenings

Monday	6.15pm – 7.45pm	Cub Scouts – Jungle
Tuesday	5.30pm – 7.00pm	Beaver Scouts – River
	7.30pm – 9.30pm	Abbo's Explorer Scouts
	2.00pm – 4.30pm	Ladies Guild (3 <sup>rd</sup> in month)
Wednesday	6.30pm – 8.00pm	Cub Scouts – Rainforest
Thursday	7.30pm – 9.30pm	Scouts
Friday	8.00pm	Active Support (1 <sup>st</sup> in month)
Saturday	10.30am – 12.00pm	Beaver Scouts - Lake

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Woodsmoke is online to view and print at:  
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*#YouShape*



**Scouts**

**1st Abbots Langley  
(3rd North Watford)**

[www.abbotslangleyscouts.org.uk](http://www.abbotslangleyscouts.org.uk)