



241st Edition

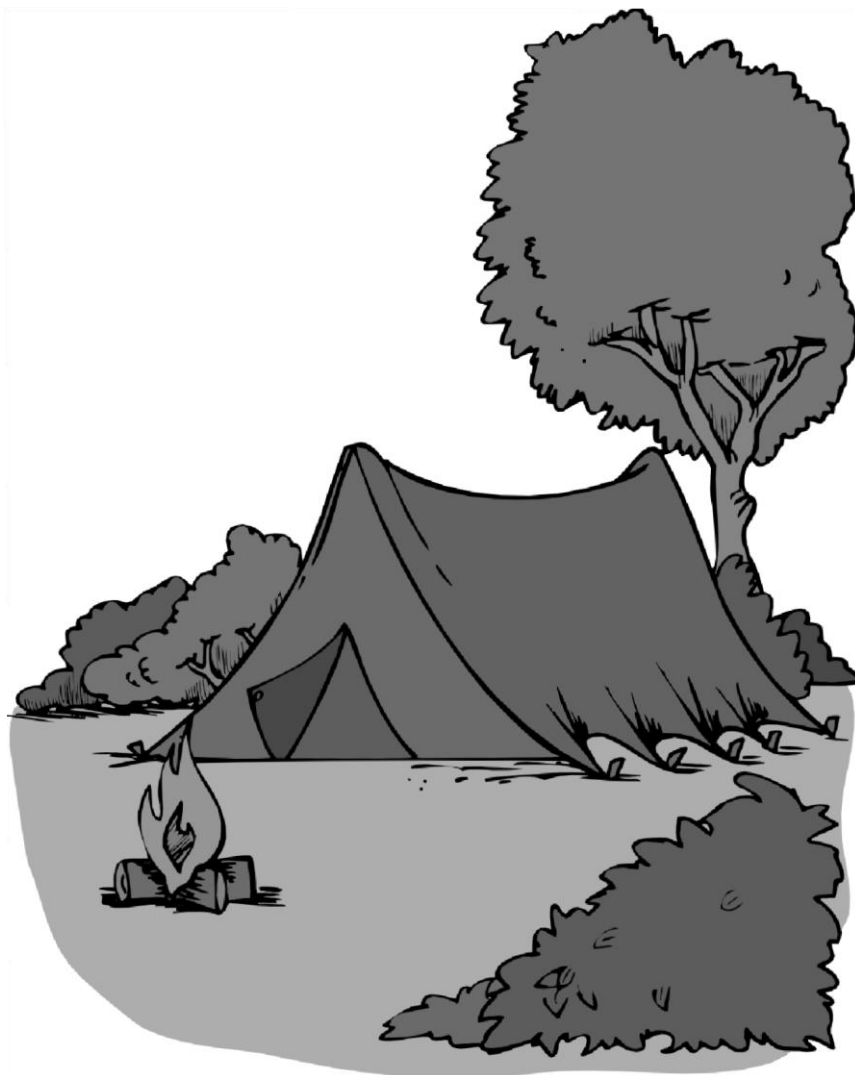
First published March 1954

October 2021



Scouts

Woodsmoke



www.abbotslanglescouts.org.uk

Chairman's Blog

First of all, let me introduce myself to you. My name is Richard Gabriel and I have taken on the role of Group Chairperson from Mike Benson, my predecessor, who stepped down from the role at the Group's AGM held in May. Mike held the role for 10 years. I wish to thank Mike for his service to the Group and to wish him and Aisling, his wife, well for the future. Mike will be stepping back from day-to-day involvement with the Group but intends to carry on helping out as a member of the Abbos Active Support Unit. I been involved with the Group for around 10 years and for the last 4 years I have been the manager of the Abbos Active Support Unit.

The structure of the Group's Executive Committee has been undergoing a reorganisation of the principal roles. This is, primarily to streamline the working of the Committee and to identify and distribute the work required more evenly in order to sustain our Group going forward. This has involved creating new principal roles and a search for additional volunteers to fill them. I am very pleased to welcome into the Group: Paul Woodman who will deal with Health and Safety, Ian Watts who will deal with Business Continuity Planning, Yvonne Stanley for Hall Bookings and Jeremy Bishop for Transport. I am very grateful to these individuals for volunteering to perform these important roles. We still have vacancies for a Web Master, a Facilities Coordinator, a Fund Raising & Events Coordinator and for individuals to become members of the Fund-Raising sub-committee and HQ maintenance team. Please refer to the Woodsmoke, the Group's online newsletter to obtain further details of what the roles entail. If you are interested or may know of someone who might be willing to help our Scout Group by taking on one of these vacant roles, then do please contact me or any other member of the Group's Executive Committee to discuss it further. I am grateful to all present members of the Group's Executive Committee and in particular, Iain Stanley, our acting GSL, until we find a full time replacement for dear Clive, for all the work that has been put in over the last 15 months in helping to develop the new structure for the Group Executive Committee.

Problems arose during the summer recess with the wood floor finish in the main hall which required the use of the hall to be curtailed. I am pleased to report that the worst areas of damage have been repaired allowing the hall to be brought back into full use again. Unfortunately, the repairs will only bring us a brief respite during which time the Executive Committee will review the options for a replacement floor finish and decide upon a final course of action.

Items of jumble continued to be left at our Scout Hall throughout the course of last year although the traditional fund-raising jumble sales had had to be suspended due to the effects of the Covid pandemic. A one-off 'pop up' jumble sale was held in September outside on the front forecourt. Our usual customers did not let us down. Around £300 was taken on the day. A further £420 was brought in by Dot East through the sale of other gifted items. I wish to thank Dot for all the support that she has given the Group over the years which through her efforts has resulted in the raising of large sums of money for the Group.

I am proud to announce the completion of the Clive Winder Climbing Wall that was installed within the main hall during the summer recess. The wall will have the capacity for running five rope lines at one time spread over varying degrees of climbing difficulty. Chris Watts, a Cub Pack leader has agreed to act as the manager for the climbing wall and to oversee the training of others to operate it. The wall is primarily for use by our Sections, but we intend to hire it out to other local groups. Please contact Chris if you are interested in getting involved with training and operating the climbing wall. The official opening of the Clive Winder Climbing Wall will take place on Sunday 28th November. Sally Winder and other members of the Winder Family will be guests of honour. It is intended that the climbing wall be brought into full use by the Sections before that date.

Some essential maintenance works are required to be carried out at the Scout Hall. These works need to be undertaken before the end of this year. I request anyone willing to help and who may possess some rudimentary DIY skills, or not, to contact me to join a working party to get this work done.

Finally, please do remember to support the Group's Christmas Market. It will be held at our Scout Hall on Saturday 20th November. Please come along and purchase some early gifts for Christmas. Perhaps you may also have some suitable 'Christmassy items' you wish to donate for sale at this event. Please contact me if this is the case.

Bye for now,
Richard

Richard Gabriel
Scout Group Chairperson

Group Scout Leader's Report

Well, what a strange few months this has been, with a lot going on in the Group which some parts Richard has already updated you on and you will find the Scouting side of things covered below. I am pleased to say that face to face scouting has now recommenced as of September and the sections are continuing to work hard to ensure the program is interesting and varied. On this note, I would like to extend not just my thanks for the extra support and tasks they have undertaken to support me as a remote/acting GSL (I am an ex-member of the Group and am a GSL in Aylesbury) but also the Executive cannot thank them enough for the perseverance and drive to see this situation through. The Group has received several words of thanks from parents over the last 12-18 months indicating their appreciation for the efforts the leaders went to for providing a full program.

As part of volunteering, as part of the leadership team, there are various aspects of training you need to complete to achieve your "Wood Badge" (however this is more a symbol of leadership than an actual badge). This training varies for the role you have taken on and also if you gain this award at the end. You will find more details on the history of the award later on but it is with great pleasure I announce that Dani Chalk completed the training over this difficult period and was presented with her "Wood Badge" and welcomed to the largest Scout group of them all "1st Gilwell Scout Group". I am working closely to ensure many of our other leaders also have the chance to complete their training and gain this award.

You might have seen reports in the news that nationally membership was down by around 25% of young people but this is not the case in this Group - all sections are growing back to full capacity or in the case of the Scouts past this and in need of splitting into two Troops. This is great news for the Group and the joining list remains very high indeed. With this continued growth, we are always looking to strengthen our leadership teams across all sections and are keen to talk to any parents who might like to know more and can offer some time to volunteer with the section. Please get in touch with me!

The sections are all planning their camps, trips and activities with a refreshed view on scouting as the restrictions mean the young people can yet again grow and develop their skills for life, and compete to retain trophies won and challenge themselves on new adventures.

As I have mentioned, I am only Acting GSL to keep the Group moving along. If anyone is interested in learning what this role involves and what you need to do in order to keep the Group moving forward then please let me know. This is a key role and we need to find a volunteer willing to take this Group forward and to guide and support the section leaders. This can be you, your neighbour, a friend, a family member, you do not necessarily need Scouting experience, just a willingness to learn and work with two amazing teams – the executive and the section leaders.

Just a short one for now; hope to hear from some willing volunteers!

Iain Stanley
Acting Group Scout Leader

Dani Chalk Awarded Wood Badge

Dani Chalk, Section Leader – Lake Beavers, was presented with her Wood Badge by Dave Collette, District Commissioner on 19th June.



The Wood Badge

In 1919, Baden-Powell introduced a standardised system for leader training at Gilwell Park, near London. Those who completed the course were awarded a 'Wood Badge'. This wasn't a cloth badge, but a pair of wooden beads.



The Wood Badge's design took inspiration from a necklace brought back from Africa by Scouting's Founder, Robert Baden-Powell. In 1888 Baden-Powell was serving with the British Army in Africa. During this period Baden-Powell visited an abandoned camp where Chief Dinizulu, a local chief had been based and found his necklace of wooden beads.

Baden-Powell admired Dinizulu describing him as "*full of resources, energy and pluck,*" characteristics which he would later call upon Scouts to develop.

Following the First World War there was a great need to establish a leader training programme for UK Scouting. At least 5,000 older Scouts and adult volunteers had been killed during the conflict, but youth section membership had grown by over 46,000. This created a need to train and develop new leaders, ensuring the future of the Movement.

The ideal opportunity arose when in November 1918 benefactor, William de Bois Maclaren, generously offered to buy a camping area for inner city London Scouts who lacked access to suitable grounds. Gilwell Park, on the edge of Epping Forest, was found and purchased. The site was big enough to offer camping facilities for Scouts as well as hosting a training centre for leaders.

The idea from Scout Headquarters was to create a training syllabus for leaders to ensure a standard quality and consistency for training. A date was set for a pilot course to be held at Gilwell Park from the 8 – 19 September 1919. In August 1919 Baden-Powell contacted Percy Everett, who was developing the course alongside Camp Chief Francis Gidney, seeking his opinion on how to acknowledge the achievement of leaders who had completed their training.

This issue had not been concluded by the time the course was running. On 15 September 1919 Eileen Nugent (Baden-Powell's secretary) wrote to Percy Everett saying:

"The Chief Scout has suggested to Capt. Gidney the following decoration for Scoutmasters passing the training course, in place of the cords around the hat a bead at the end of the lacing of the hat in three grades: wood, bronze and white metal. He has asked Capt. Gidney to go ahead in getting some beads made (like those of the Chief's which you have) ready for award at the end of the course."

We can only assume the beads referred to in this note are the ones from the necklace Baden-Powell had collected in South Africa over 40 years previously.

The training course was organised to give the participants a sense of what it was like to be a member of a Scout Troop. They took on the role of Scouts, they were formed into patrols and rotated the role of Patrol Leader and Second. Francis Gidney took on the role of Scoutmaster. The course syllabus included a range of practical skills such as pioneering, campcraft, games, fieldwork and pathfinding. They also attended specialist lectures on topics as varied as Industrial Welfare, the Education Act and Rover Scouting. The course ended with a visit to Headquarters on Buckingham Palace Road in London and a lunch meeting with Baden-Powell.

The pilot Wood Badge course had been a success, but it was clear that not all leaders would be able to give 10 days to attend such a course. Baden-Powell suggested training through a correspondence course could be completed over the winter months and the practical training residential carried out over the summer. He also discussed the developing design for a Wood Badge.

By November 1919 this new structure had been agreed and was announced in the Headquarters Gazette. The Wood Badge continues to be awarded to adults in Scouting who complete their training. It is awarded to Scouts around the world and all those who achieve their badge automatically become a member of the 1st Gilwell Park Scout Group, the largest in the world.

Anna Ebdon
Woodsmoke Editor

Lake



Summer 2021 was a great term for the Lake Beavers, working towards the Adventure Challenge badge. We went to Phasels Wood to go on the Cresta Run and Pedal Racers (the rain didn't stop us all having a fantastic time!) as well as nature walks/scavenger hunts in Lees Wood and Leavesden Country Park.

It was also Experiment badge week, where the Beavers learned about non-Newtonian substances, plopped some mentos into cola to create an explosive reaction and microwaved some soap (which made the kitchen and hut smell lovely for a week afterwards)!

We were lucky to be able to visit Langleybury Farm and the volunteers showed us how they look after the animals as well as letting us have some cuddles with the bunnies and a tortoise!

The term was rounded up with a special celebration at Hollywood Bowl, where the Beavers put the adults to shame with their fantastic scoring.

We also awarded 3 bronze awards to our three Beavers heading up to Cubs – wishing you all the best with your scouting journey girls!



Dani Chalk
Lake Beavers

River



Beavers spent most of the summer term outdoors, braving every type of weather! We had a fantastic time exploring the 'Treasure Trail Walk' around Leavesden County Park. We split into two teams and learnt all about the heritage and nature of the site. There was so much to explore, that each team only managed to complete one half and we met up in the middle. We then had a trip to Phasels Wood and got to play on the Cresta Run. Some of us were a bit scared by the speed of the toboggan but gained confidence and had lots of fun.

Towards the end of term, we split into teams and went on an Alphabet Hunt around the village. We looked in shop windows and found items beginning with every letter of the alphabet, from **a**pples to **z**ebra crossings!! Our last meeting of the summer term was at Lees Wood, and as we had spent so much time on zoom last year, we were so happy to be outside that even the pouring rain wasn't enough to stop our campfire! We toasted marshmallows and made chocolate bananas (and got absolutely soaking wet!).

For the autumn term, we welcomed lots more new beavers and our section is the largest size it has been for a long time. At the start of term, we visited Leavesden Country Park where the Park Ranger took us on a bat walk. We had to stay out really late until it was dark enough for the bats to come out and used special machines to pick up the echolocation sounds the bats made.

Later this term, we will be earning our Health and Fitness Badge, and our Disability Awareness Badge. We will also be working towards our musician badge by singing carols at St. Laura's Care Home.



Hollie Goodman and Helen Welch
River Beavers

Jungle

cubs

Esme age 9

Summer term at cubs was really fun because we got to be face to face with each other again. The best thing about summer term was that I got chosen to be a sixer. I am now the sixer of my own six, Red Six, I am very proud of myself and I promise to be the best red sixer yet. To be a good Sixer, I need to be responsible for my red six. I like my six very much as we have a great mix of people in the six, both boys and girls. I shall help the leaders by making sure that my six listens and behaves, I am looking forward to helping the leaders run games and activities.

During the summer term, we have done many activities at Phasels Wood and Lees Wood campsites. I have enjoyed them all, but some of my favourites are below.

Orienteering was one of my favourites where we split into two groups, red six and blue six, and yellow six and green six, at Phasels wood. Red six and blue six did the woodland walk and the other group did the field walk. On our walk we saw lots of wildlife including a fox, I enjoyed using the maps and learning how to use the coordinates and the map Height lines.

Archery was one of the first things I did with Jungle cubs and it was one of my most favourite because it was something new for me as I haven't done it before. It was very fun, skilful but very hard as I didn't get any on the target most of them went on the floor!

Low ropes was fun as it was like walking on a trapeze, there were different obstacles many made for teamwork some for strength and one for balance but all of them were very fun to do.



Zac age 9

It was really fun doing all the activities at Phasels Wood over the summer term. We had to do it in two smaller groups, but it was great to be back together. I really enjoyed the air rifle shooting. We had to break and load the rifle and then shoot it. We were in competition with each other to get the closest to the bullseye. I was not the best at shooting but I kept trying and it was really fun.

Another one of my favourite activities at Phasels Wood was the low ropes because we had to work as a team to get across the obstacle course. I liked helping my friends get across. We had to secure the rope to make sure they didn't fall. I fell once but it didn't hurt. My friends helped me get back up onto the ropes and then I carried on to complete the course.

We also did cycling at Leavesden Country Park. First we went on a cycle around both parks. Then we learnt how to change a tyre. It was really fun going round on our bikes together and seeing the local landmarks.



Charlotte age 10

This term at Cubs has been great. It started off with me being promoted from seconder to sixer, which I was happy about! We started off at the beginning of term playing some team games including rounders at Leavesden Country Park. Then we spent 2 evenings in the woods, firstly at Phasels Wood where we did a Scavenger Hunt. We had to follow an instruction sheet of clues and find the signs hidden around the wood. Then another evening at Whippendell Woods, where we did a hike in the dark, it was super spooky, but lots of fun. We all had torches to help see where we were going.

Last week, we all met at Lee's Wood and in our sixes, we were challenged to build a bonfire. We started by searching for dry wood, unfortunately it had been raining all day, so it was a little tricky! We found a good range of sizes from sticks to logs. After we had collected our wood, we headed back to start assembling our bonfires. We started off by doing a 'test fire' to see what lighting methods worked. The first test was to stuff some cotton balls inside some toilet roll tubes, that one worked brilliantly! The second was to put rolled newspaper inside toilet roll tubes, but that did not work very well. So, after we had tested these methods, we decided to use the cotton wool balls to help start our fire. Our group built a huge fire, it was amazing! After we made them, we got to make s'mores, they were really delicious. Once we had finished and it was time to go home, the adults threw buckets of water on all the fires to make sure they were all safely put out. I really enjoyed this evening out!



Nicholas age 9

I am excited to have been made the Sixer of the Greens and welcoming new Cubs into the pack. It feels brilliant to be back as one whole pack again as Covid meant we were split into two all of last year and some of it was even online. I really enjoyed the term so far especially doing orienteering in the woods and I learnt how to use a compass.

I'm really looking forward to the pedal races because this is new to me and our Cub pack. We have seen them lots of times at Phasels Wood but have not had a chance to use them yet. I am also looking forward to the Christmas movie night because all kids like movies I think and hardly anyone has been to the cinema this year because of COVID.



Lawson age 9

My favourite things from last term were doing rifle shooting and archery at Phasels Wood. It was a lot of fun since I got to use a rifle with my friends to see if I could get a bullseye! I found it quite hard to begin with, but I eventually got it! The archery was a little bit challenging too. It was something I had never done before, it definitely improved my aiming skills, and so now I can hit my target easier.

We also did hiking last term, I really enjoyed this because I learned how to use a compass and improve my map reading skills. The tent pitching was a lot of fun too. This is a picture of me and my school friend Matilda after we just pitched our tent, it was challenging but we got there in the end. I really enjoyed these adventures with my friends and my six and can't wait for more.



and finally....

We welcomed Young Leaders Amelia Turnock and Sebastian James who will be volunteering at Jungle Cubs as part of their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award. They've settled in really well and the Cubs are enjoying getting to know them.

ABBOS ASU

I'm afraid that there is very little to report, what with the restrictions affecting social interaction arising from the effects of the pandemic. All the usual summer activities where we would have provided help got cancelled. In particular, our world famous (well, you know what I mean) hot dog stall at the Abbots Langley Carnival.

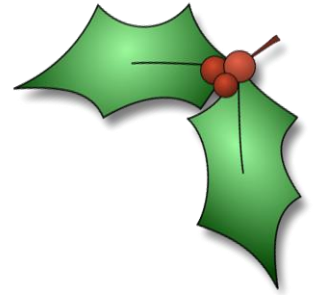
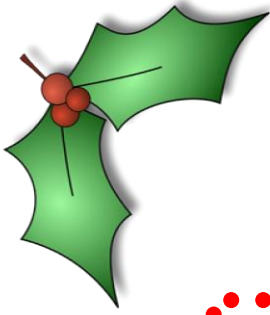
On the social side, we did manage to get out and about on one evening in July with a walk in the countryside around Potten End led by Nicola Trotman in remembrance of Butch, her late father. Butch's Walk, as it is known, is always a well-attended event. Thank you, Nicola.

We're just itching to get going again and to help out at the Group's Sections' activities and also the fund-raising opportunities. Please contact me if you are interested in joining our merry little band of helpers, even on a one off event trial basis.

Owing to my stepping up to become Group Chairperson it means that the Abbos are in need of a new manager to take my place. Are you or do you know someone who might be interested in taking on the role? If so, then do please contact me for more details. Rest assured; you can rely on a small group of coordinators who will help share the tasks.

We are currently investigating the possibility of organising a meal at Christmas for all members of Abbos, and past members of the Scout Group to meet up over a leg of turkey, Christmas pudding or whatever else takes your fancy. Obtaining a large group booking is however, proving a little difficult at present. I'm sure that it can't be the current non availability of fuel or even the shortage of lorry drivers that is the cause of this. Anyway, I'm sure Bo-Jo has it all in hand and we need not worry. It will all eventually sort itself out and we will be able to secure a Christmas meal booking. Further details to be advised in due course.

Richard Gabriel
Abbos Manager



CAN YOU HELP?

We're looking for raffle prizes for the Christmas Market taking place on 20th November and would love donations of any of the following:

- New cosmetics
- New toiletries
- Good condition toys
 - Alcohol
- Boxes of biscuits
 - Chocolates

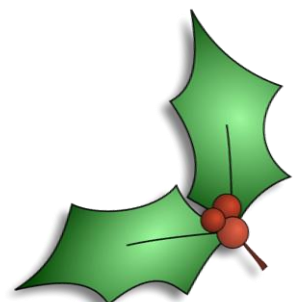
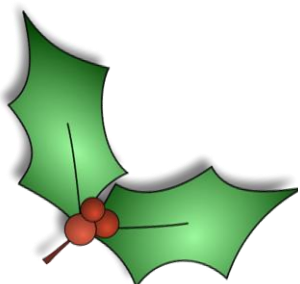
If you have anything to donate please contact Richard or Lin.

Richard: chair@abbotslangleyscouts.org.uk

Lin: 01923 675201

Alternatively, donations of the above items can be left inside the Scout HQ labelled for the attention of Lin Lythaby.

Many thanks for your support!



Diary Dates

October

19 Ladies Guild Meeting – 2pm Ladies Guild

November

14 Remembrance Day Parade – 10.30am All
15 Executive Meeting Exec Committee
16 Ladies Guild Meeting – 2pm Ladies Guild
20 Christmas Market – 10am-12pm All

December

5 Christingle candle making – 3pm All
6 Christingle – time tbc All

January

17 Executive Meeting Exec Committee
18 Ladies Guild Meeting – 2pm Ladies Guild

February

15 Ladies Guild Meeting – 2pm Ladies Guild

March

15 Ladies Guild Meeting – 2pm Ladies Guild
21 Executive Meeting Exec Committee

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 rd in month)
Wednesday	6.30pm – 8.00pm	Cub Scouts – Rainforest
Thursday	7.30pm – 9.30pm	Scouts
Friday	8.00pm	Active Support (1 st in month)
Saturday	10.30am – 12.00pm	Beaver Scouts - Lake

Anna Ebdon
Woodsmoke Editor

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Deadline for next issue – 6th February 2022

Woodsmoke is online to view and print at:
www.abbotslangleyscouts.org.uk

#YouShape



Scouts

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

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