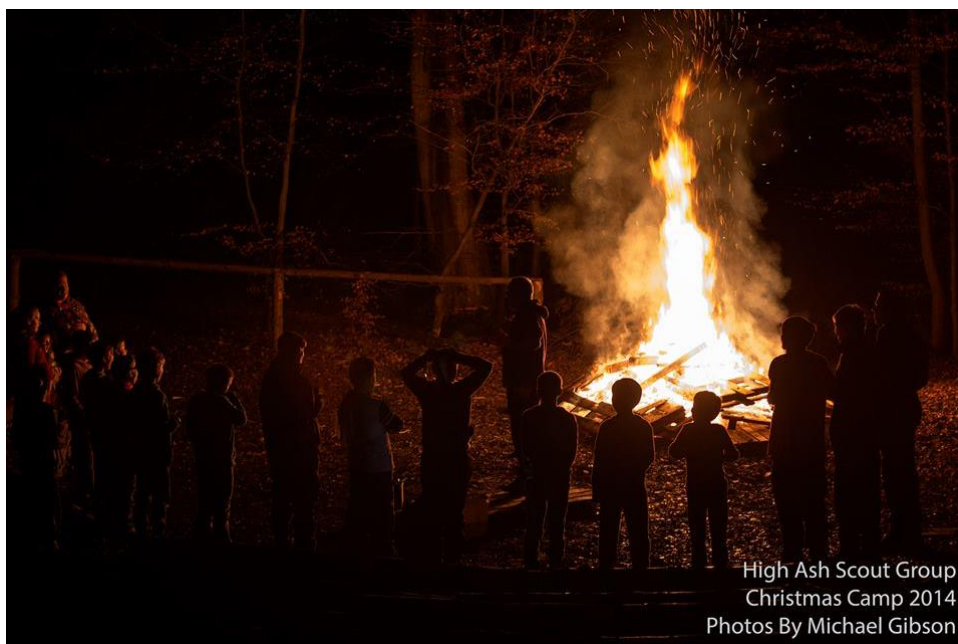


# 365 DAYS OF ADVENTURE. HERE'S WHAT HAPPENED...

Annual Report - High Ash Scout Group 2014/15

This document is the Trustees' Annual Report for the period 6 April 2014 to 31 March 2015.

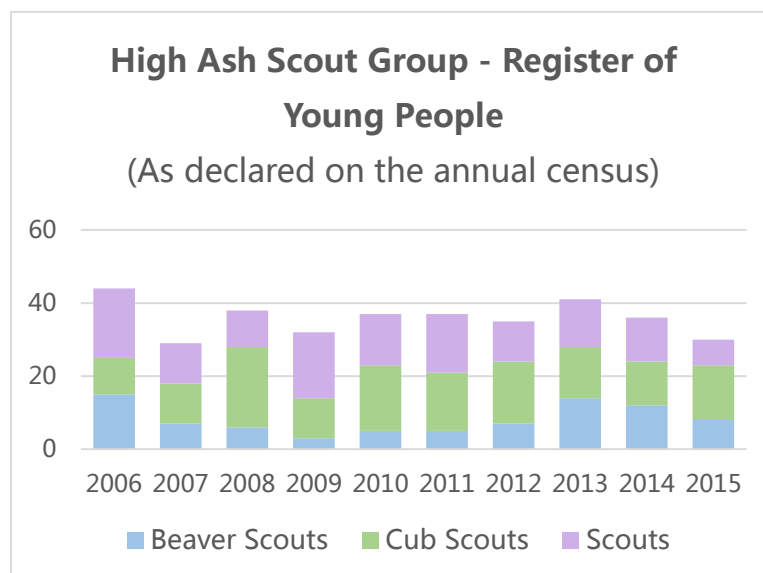
It covers what we achieved, where we're going next, and a financial summary which we are obliged to present.



# OVERVIEW

High Ash Scout Group has had another busy year supported by a small team of volunteer leaders and young leaders who dedicate a significant amount of their time to ensuring between 30-45 young people gain from the benefits of scouting as they mature into young adults.

We are a small village group and have always struggled to attract sufficient numbers of young people (we have no waiting list like many groups in Milton Keynes). This year has been a low year, with the scouts struggling with very low numbers (6). We have persevered in the knowledge that more cubs are working their way up through the system and will become scouts this Autumn. There are currently a healthy number of Cubs (15), with beavers running at 8. As can be seen from the graph below our numbers have drifted up and down over the last decade so we hope our numbers will rise again shortly.



Thank you to all leaders, young leaders and committee members for their hard work over the last year. Next year will be more of the same - however with more support we could do even better!!

**Dave Pollington. Group Scout Leader**

# SCOUTS

Following last years AGM our Scouts headed out onto the hills to take part in the last ever Malvern Challenge. After a weekend of hiking and doing competitive challenges (along with a good measure of festival style relaxation!) our team achieved an incredible 8<sup>th</sup> place out of 264 competitors (which included older Explorer Scout teams). Well done to all the participants!

In November the scouts headed to the capital to enjoy a day of site seeing and navigating around the city - including a trip on the London Eye and an opportunity to see the poppies at the Tower of London.

The scouts continued to do well in District competitions this year coming 4<sup>th</sup> out of 21 in the quiz, and achieving a similar place in a tough cooking competition.



Other activities included expedition planning, cooking skills, learning how to fish, community work, hikes and plenty of fires!

Next year we hope to benefit from having a bigger scout troop as half a dozen cubs move up (running evenings for three or four scouts has been a big challenge over the last year). There is the potential for some sailing at Emberton, and a district trip abroad ..... along with District camp and other local camps during the year.

**David Tooth, Jenny Stevens. Scout Leaders**

# CUBS

In November the cubs headed to London with a few other packs from Milton Keynes to spend the night sleeping in the Firepower museum in Woolwich. The cubs had to carry their kit from Greenwich to the museum and back again (a big achievement in itself) – as well as take part in an action packed evening involving army drill outside the barracks, taking part in pretend battles and experiencing what it was like in the Blitz. As well as all this we even managed to fit in a trip to the Royal Observatory to learn about the stars.

The cubs have done a huge variety of different activities ranging from mini raft building (along with a full trial on the canal), Map reading training and orienteering, catapult pioneering, scavenger hunts around the village, home help skills (they can now all iron their own necker!) climbing, pancake making, fire lighting (including making tinder boxes), badge making, athletics, hedge surveys, night hikes and kite building.



Next year we celebrate 100 years of cub scouting so there will be lots of themed activities and the potential for a county camp as part of the celebrations. We lost Helen this year at Easter due to work commitments (thank you to her for all her hard work), and Jean will be retiring shortly after many years of service to scouting. So we need more leaders again !

**Darren Haydon, Dave Pollington. Cub Leaders**

# BEAVERS

The beavers have been hard at work gaining their Experiment Badges ( which included making crystals, volcanos and learning some astronomy), Air Badges (learning all about helicopters and making paper aeroplanes) and their fitness badges. As well as all this they have been introduced to the fun of fires and cooking marshmallows!!

The beavers have also been out and about with evening walks, visits to fire stations, and Halloween walks. The Colony has just returned from its first ever camp with other beavers from all over the Milton Keynes District, with everyone achieving their first nights away badge!



Next year will be more of the same, with bring a friend evenings to try and encourage more members, and the possibility of a night out in a London museum later in the year. We also hope to extend the meeting times this coming year by 15 minutes so we can cram more into an evening,

**Lisa Blomfield, Dorinda Gibson. Beaver Leaders**

# THE GROUP

As has become the tradition at High Ash we often come together as a group for some camps and activities throughout the year:

- We attended the District camp at Bromham in July which was a great success with various activities and competitions over the weekend including building our own spaceship out of a wheel barrow and discarded traffic cone!
- This years Christmas camp was at Chalfont Heights and had a Japanese theme (in recognition of our two young leaders who are due to fly off this weekend to take part in the World Scout Jamboree). As well as various activities such as Japanese jousting we also had young people successfully navigating the high ropes course, using the zip wires, and crawling through the pot-holing experience. As usual the Christmas dinner was a lavish feast, and some brave scouts kept up the tradition of sleeping out under frozen canvas! Christmas Camp 2015 is already booked!!
- We ended the other two terms this year with our equally traditional Easter Bingo and annual BBQ. A big thankyou goes out to the members of the Exec Committee who continue to help organise and provide the catering at these events and help with their success.
- We have all just returned from another camping weekend – this time with an American theme! Both the cubs and scouts got the opportunity to learn axe and knife skills, as well as have a go on the rifle and archery ranges. Another fun weekend of enjoying the freedom of the woods and taking part in campfires, team activities and challenges.
- This year Dave Tooth organised a family trip to watch the Rugby at Wembley. We all had a good day out and we hope to repeat this type of event (along with our more traditional events) over the next twelve months. Let us know if you have any ideas!



# Finances

# Trustees Annual Report 2014/15

## A. Reference and Administration details

The High Ash Scout Group operates as a Scout Group in Milton Keynes District. It is an *excepted* charity, but not registered as an independent charity. We operate independently, but alongside charity 1150177 *Milton Keynes District Scout Council* (MK Scouts).

### Trustees

<b>Trustee Name</b>	<b>Office</b>
Mrs Natalie Tulip	Chairman
Mrs Carolyn Howe	Treasurer
Vacant	Secretary
Mr David Pollington	Group Scout Leader (GSL) <i>from January 2015</i>
Mr David Tooth	Scout Leader <i>from January 2015</i>
Mrs Dorinda Gibson	Beaver Leader
Mrs Linda Day	<i>(previously Secretary until April 2015)</i>
Mrs Jean Prudammes	
Mrs Karen Pollington	
Mrs Jane Hanlon	
Mrs Ali Goodyer	
Mr Dave Gibson	

## B. Structure, Governance and Management

### Governing document

The Groups governing documents are those of the Scout Association. They consist of a Royal Charter, which in turn gives authority to the Byelaws of the Association and The Policy, Organisation and Rules of The Scout Association.

### How the charity is constituted

The Group is a trust established under its rules which are common to all UK Scout Groups.

### Trustee selection methods

The Trustees are appointed in accordance with the Policy, Organisation and Rules of The Scout Association.

## Additional governance information

The Group is managed by the Group Executive Committee, the members of which are the *Charity Trustees* of the Scout Group which is an educational charity. As charity trustees they are responsible for complying with legislation applicable to charities. This includes the registration, keeping proper accounts and making returns to the Charity Commission as appropriate.

The Committee consists of three independent representatives; Chair, Treasurer and Secretary together with the Group Scout Leader, and individual section representation (through leaders or parents), and typically meets once or twice a term.

This Group Executive Committee exists to support the Group Scout Leader in meeting the responsibilities of the appointments and is responsible for:

- The raising of funds and the administration of Group finance;
- The insurance of persons, property and equipment;
- Group public occasions;
- Assisting in the recruitment of Leaders and other adult support;
- Appointing any sub committees that may be required;
- Appointing Group Administrators and Advisors other than those who are elected.

## Risk and internal control

The Group Executive Committee are responsible for identifying the major risks to which they believe the Group is exposed. These continue to be monitored and systems have been established to mitigate these risks.

## C. Objectives

The objectives of the Group are as a unit of the Scout Association. The Aim of The Scout Association is to promote the development of young people in achieving their full physical, intellectual, social and spiritual potentials, as individuals, as responsible citizens and as members of their local national and international communities. The method of achieving the Aim of the Association is by providing an enjoyable and attractive scheme of progressive training, based on the Scout Promise and Law and guided by adult leadership.

## D. Achievements and Performance

The main activities and achievements of the Group are described in the Annual Report.



## E. Financial Review

This is the second year in a row where spend has exceeded income and it has been acknowledged that this is un-sustainable and needs addressing in the current financial year.

Gift aid is a potential area we can look into as this has provided additional revenue in the past. Also we need to work on camp budgeting so that we do not run these events at a loss.

Capitation fees for next year are changing from a total headcount basis to a youth member headcount, Based on initial indications this will not effect this group as the charge will be comparable to this years

### Investment policy

The Group does not have sufficient funds to invest in longer term investments, nor is it an aim to hold such funds. The Group has therefore adopted a risk averse strategy to the investment of its funds. All funds are held in cash using only mainstream banks or building societies.

## Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity trustees:

**N Tulip** - Chairman

**D Pollington** - Group Scout Leader (*from Jan 2015*)