

Scouts

Berkshire



Annual Review 2017–18



**We prepare
young people with
skills for life**

Introduction

We prepare young people with skills for life.

As you read through this Annual Review, I hope you will get a real feel for the wide range of activity, participation in new initiatives, and support for Scouting in the county over the past year. It has been a very exciting and extremely busy year!

It is difficult for me to pick out the highlights of the year, as there is so much fantastic activity to choose from. I have however, picked out a few that I believe have made, or will make a very real difference to Scouting across our county.

- Our County Adventure Challenge Award Days saw over 740 Beaver and Cub Scouts achieve their award, and 170 Scouts joined a County Scout Skills Day to focus on those skills they were struggling to achieve. Three amazing days of fun, friendship and achievement.
- A 44% increase in Wood Badges over the past year is an incredible increase and a tribute to the dedication of so many leaders and those who have supported them in their training.
- We continue to grow across the county with a 3% increase in our overall total members, a stunning 8% increase in adults, and increases in Cubs, Scouts and Explorer Scouts. Our plans for the coming year are even more ambitious with District Commissioners identifying many more new sections and Groups that need to be opened. With 1,900 young people on waiting lists across the county there are plenty of exciting opportunities!
- 13 Queen's Scouts achieved this year across seven Districts.
- Nearly 100 members of the county and all District teams gathered together for a day of information, discussion and development in April this year. A lot of hard work, a lot of great ideas, and some real enthusiasm in looking at ways to better support our leaders.
- On the international front we have Roverway this year, the Jamboree and Uganda next year and WINGS in 2020. This gives us the most fantastic opportunity to imbed international programmes in all sections across the county. With over 200 young people applying for our 72 places on the Jamboree and a record of 114 young people off to Uganda next year, the appetite for international experiences is greater than ever. An amazing opportunity for us all.
- With just about half of the Districts now having District Youth Commissioners, and I know several more about to be announced, this promises to make a real difference in supporting youth shaped Scouting locally in all sections in Districts over the next year.

Our 'behind the scenes' back up from our County Executive Committee (Trustees), our amazing staff team and our IT team, support all of this exciting activity and we could not operate without them.

So, a very exciting year for Scouting in Berkshire!

Thank you

I am personally very grateful for the enthusiastic hard work and time put in by the County Team, the District Commissioners and their Deputies, the County Executive Committee, our staff team, and all our support teams. It makes a huge difference to Scouting across Berkshire.

And finally ... I am so proud of our enthusiastic and dedicated leaders, managers and supporters in Berkshire, who give so much of their valuable time in ensuring we are giving skills for life to all the young people across our county.

A very genuine 'thank you'.

■ **Nigel Bevan** County Commissioner



Simon Pickett,
Deputy County
Commissioner



Caroline Broadbent,
1st Maidenhead





Chris Hughes,
1st Purley &
Pangbourne



Chris Hughes,
1st Purley & Pangbourne



Youth Shaped

County Youth Commissioners

It has been another exciting year for youth shaped Scouting where it is making a great impact in Berkshire!

It's been great to see so many leaders around the county who have proactively taken on youth shaped Scouting locally and to see so many young people empowered to have a real say in all levels of Scouting in the county. Looking ahead there is still plenty of work to be done but we are proud of the progress that has been made so far within Berkshire.

County Youth Forum

We have been pleased with the development of the Youth Forum this year. Through this forum we have been able to gather a wide range of young people's ideas and give them a voice when considering how Scouting is supported across Berkshire. Throughout the year the forum has also helped plan and run several activities such as Youshape boats at the Dragon Boat Regatta and a Young Leader Fest. This is all in the name of promoting the forum further and encouraging as many voices to be heard as possible. We are always looking for new ways to develop the forum so we will be revising the current set up over the next 12 months in an attempt to get even more ideas from our young people across Berkshire.

Youshape 2018

In February, the national Youshape campaign was once again delivered by Headquarters. We updated our local resource pack and found a great response in Berkshire. It was fantastic to hear of so many Groups really embracing the Youshape message and giving their young people a real say in their Scouting. It was announced that this would be the last national campaign so we would like to say a big thank you to everyone that has taken part over the last three years, we hope you enjoyed it! This does not mean Youshape is over but simply that we should be embedding it into our programme all year round rather than just for a specified month.

Young Leader Fest

In February this year we had 50 Young Leaders attend the first county Young Leader Fest. This was an opportunity for Young Leaders to complete some of their training, receive information on how Scouting can help them and also take part in loads of fun activities such as crate stacking, bouncy castles, archery, and more! As it was Youshape month we also spent the day collecting feedback from the Young Leaders on their Scouting and how this could be improved. We are really pleased with the outcome and have some great feedback and ideas to take forward.

District Youth Commissioners

There are currently five District Youth Commissioners in Berkshire helping to spread the youth shaped message at a more local level and making sure their Districts are youth shaped. The role of District Youth Commissioner is vital to the youth shaped support network to ensure we are able to promote this message across Berkshire as a whole rather than just at a county level.

We are grateful for everything the team has done already and look forward to working with them to promote this message further. Over the next 12 months we will be looking to secure more District Youth Commissioners with a long term goal of having this role filled in every District.

■ Rachel Stout & James Mulligan
County Youth Commissioners



Programme and section support

Record number of Queen's Scout Awards

Our focus on Top Awards has delivered a record number of Queen's Scouts.

Our Top Awards working group was set up in 2016 to encourage the completion of more top awards. In the last 12 months we have had a particular focus on supporting those wanting to complete their Queen's Scout Award. We are delighted that this support has helped 13 young people achieve this amazing award.

"Completing the Award made me stand out from the crowd when applying for a job and the DofE part got me my apprenticeship."

Stephen, Queen's Scout

"I've learnt new leadership skills, and created lots of fun stories to tell others!"

Kieron, Queen's Scout

Queen's Scouts

Maidenhead District

Kieran Hogan
Jonathan Matthews
Matthew Mundy

Kennet District

Conor O'Neill

Pang Valley District

Stephen Gomm
Charlotte Masters
Emily Pickett

Reading Central District

Matthew Greening
James Henderson

South Berks District

Megan Currie

SE Berks District

Liam Griffin
Daniel Parker

Taceham Hundred District

Sean Dunnett



Great programmes make great Scouting!

We believe that great programmes make great Scouting. That's why we have continued to invest heavily in our programme and section support activity. In the last 12 months we have been busy developing new and innovative ways to support our Groups and Districts to help them deliver the best Scouting for our members.

 Graham Parkins, Maidenhead 

Our approach to programme support is simple

We create environments for leaders, managers and supporters to share ideas and best practice. We do this by running a regular programme of events for leaders, managers and supporters in each youth section to meet and discuss topics of relevance to their roles. We use these forums, along with input from our Youth Commissioners, to help inform how we can supplement programmes delivered by Groups and Districts. Initiatives such as our Adventure Challenge and Skills Days (see page 6) have come directly from these forums.



 Graham Parkins, Maidenhead 



 Rachel Stout, County Youth Commissioner 

We've expanded our support for adventurous activities

We have reviewed our approach to supporting activities to ensure they are relevant and accessible.

Based on feedback, we have reviewed our activity grants scheme making it available for a wider range of purposes, including DofE training; making it easier to apply, and streamlining the application process to give applicants a quicker decision.

■ Simon Pickett Deputy County Commissioner

 Simon Pickett, Deputy County Commissioner 

Our activities during 2017–18 have included some new initiatives!

New initiative: County Adventure Challenge Award Days

We were able to support 740 Beaver and Cub Scouts to achieve their Adventure Challenge Awards!

Feedback from our leaders told us that some found the delivery of the Adventure Challenge Award to be difficult. So, we decided to help by organising two days of activities and adventure, one in September for Cub Scouts, and one in May for our Beaver Scouts. Feedback from the award days was amazing and we were proud to see so many happy young people trying so many new things and achieving their awards.

 Cathryn Knight, 1st Ufton Nevert



“Awesome Beaver Adventure Challenge Day – thank you all at Berkshire Scouts for putting this on. Everyone had a great time”

Paul, Beaver Scout Leader

“Amazing! The Beavers & leaders from our District all enjoyed a fantastic day”

Alison, Beaver Scout Leader

New initiative: County Scout Skills Day

Leaders in the Scout section wanted some help to deliver parts of the programme. So, we responded by providing a Scout Skills Day.

In March, we were able to provide 170 Scouts with a day at Youlbury Scout Activity Centre focussing on parts of their awards that they might otherwise find difficult to achieve. Between them, the 170 Scouts were able to complete around 1000 elements of the award programme, with a number of our leaders learning new skills too.



 Sarah Humphreys, 1st Woosehill

 Chris Hughes, 1st Purley & Pangbourne



International Scouting


We've had a busy year building our leader teams for some amazing international experiences.

It's been a busy year of marketing and recruiting for a number of forthcoming international activities. You can read more about these on page 11. We have been overwhelmed by the number of young people and adults applying to be part of our World Scout Jamboree units and our latest international community project to Uganda in 2019. We will be sending record numbers to both of these events. For the first time in our history, we are also sending a patrol to the Netherlands in the summer of 2018 to join with thousands of other Scouts for Roverway 2018.



Beth Thuringer,
1st Wraybury



 Chris Hughes,
1st Purley & Pangbourne

Our biggest Explode camp yet!

Back by popular demand, our county camp for Explorer Scouts saw record numbers attend!

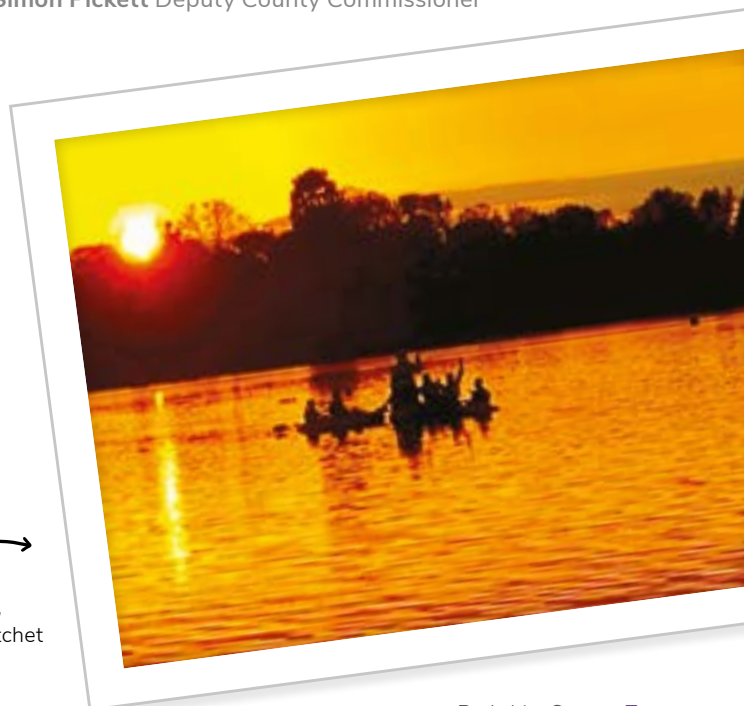
In September, Explorer Scouts from all over the county descended on the Walter Davies camp site for another weekend of fun, laughter, activities and partying. There was the usual mixture of mayhem, late nights, and teenagers being teenagers! Perfect for an Explorer Scout camp!

County Dragon Boat Regatta

Another fantastic regatta with record numbers of teams!

In July, our popular Dragon Boat Regatta attracted a record number of entries and spectators from across the county. The weather on the day was perfect and the Cub Scouts, Scouts and Explorer Scouts showed great teamwork and competitive spirit!

■ Simon Pickett Deputy County Commissioner



 →
Simon
Pearce,
1st Datchet

Growth and volunteer support

Another great year for even more young people and adults.

Growth

In January this year, Scout Groups and Units across Berkshire supported over 9,600 young people to develop skills for life – up 3% on last year. They were led and supported by 3,300 adult volunteers – up a remarkable 8% on last year.

Every year we celebrate our headline growth figures, but of course this is only possible through a simple formula: more young people want to join, adult volunteers run exciting and engaging programmes, and our volunteer managers have the drive and desire to open new opportunities to even more young people.



Anthony Fulford, 79th Reading

“Our young people were led and supported by 3,300 adult volunteers – up a remarkable 8% on last year.”

In particular this year, we want to recognise where new sections have opened: Furze Platt (Maidenhead), Langley (Slough), Crowthorne Explorers (South Berkshire), 1st Easthampstead (South Berkshire), Windsor Explorers (Windsor and Eton), 2nd Finchampstead (Wokingham), 3rd Wokingham (Wokingham). We also know that since January this year, 47th Reading (Reading Central), The Parks (South East Berkshire), and Woolton Hill (Kennet) have since opened new sections. We're also pleased that plenty more are in the pipeline – with District Commissioners continuing to work proactively to identify areas of most need.



Polly Clemance, 1st Wraysbury

Development staff support

After a period of transition, we are pleased that Kim Williams started as our Local Development Officer (LDO) in January 2018. As LDO, Kim primarily works with local volunteers to open new sections by making sure that the community are well-engaged, existing volunteers are empowered, and new volunteers have a range of support available. Kim joined us most recently from the NSPCC where she managed a team of volunteers running school assemblies across Berkshire so she is well-versed in the challenges of the voluntary world!

For a number of years we know that waiting lists are a challenge for all involved: parents can find them impenetrable, volunteers can find them overwhelming, and the staggering numbers are unfathomable. Kim has been speaking to Groups with waiting lists and using data to suggest potential solutions which can ease the pressure on Groups, and can support parents to getting their children joining swiftly.

Becky Eyle also joined us in January, as our first Volunteering Development Officer (VDO). The focus of projects for our VDO is to look at the support on offer to existing volunteers and work to systematically improve it, so that our volunteers are better supported throughout their time with us. Already this year Becky has been working with a number of Districts to:

- improve the induction of new adults,
- look at making the appointment review process more accessible and valued, and
- finding better ways to put a greater range of adults forward for Scouting awards.

These are just the first few projects on the plan, with others soon to follow. We know some Groups and Units retain adults very well and we have been learning from them, and will be sharing these more widely later in the year. We will also soon be offering a tailored induction package for new Group Scout Leaders (GSLs) – as supporting people new to this role from the beginning can often be key to supporting future success.

■ Pete Jeffreys Deputy County Commissioner

County Executive Committee (CEC)

It has been a busy, interesting, and fulfilling 12 months for the CEC. There have been a number of items requiring our attention, not least the need to be clear on our approach to GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations).

We welcomed new members to the CEC and to support them in their role ran an induction session which we hope will be a model that can be adapted for use around the county to support all new trustees.

“The participation of younger members as trustees is something we shall be working to encourage.”

I'm really pleased that our County Youth Commissioners continue to play an important part in the trustee team and one of our Youth Commissioners, James Mulligan, kindly took on the role of Deputy Chair. The participation of younger members as trustees is something we shall be working to encourage county wide as is the involvement of 'non-member' trustees who, like the young people, can bring new insights to the work of trustee teams.

Trustee Snippets

There has been continued emphasis on trustee support during the year with further editions of Trustee Snippets. Most recently these have signposted the guidance and toolkit that has been made available by Headquarters to support counties, Districts and Groups in complying with GDPR.

Some of the detailed work of the CEC during the past year has been managed by the Finance & Risk sub-committee (FRSC) and two working groups. One of these completed a review of the county event approval process, the findings of which have been adopted, and the other working group has been looking at the implications of GDPR for the CEC, county office, and county teams.

The CEC also supported a number of events and activities that will be taking place in the future. Its focus as trustees being on the high-level finance, safety, and reputational risks. In particular the CEC has supported WINGS 2020 for which it reviewed the 'JANE' agreement that will be concluded with Girlguiding Royal

Berkshire as well as Uganda 2019 which has CEC participation in the overarching Project Africa governance team.

Some of the other business of the CEC has included reviewing the level of 'reserves' held, reviewing the Special Needs fund and establishing two new funds. These are the Activity permit fund and New Section fund. The latter can provide a grant of £1,000 to support the opening of new sections.

The Appointments Advisory Committee (AAC) continues to meet regularly, reflecting the number of new appointments made to the wider county team.

The Safety Active Support Unit (ASU), managed by the County Safety Coordinator, continues to provide advice and support to Districts and also continues to monitor and review risks. The Safety ASU has been working to grow the number of safety coordinators and has recruited a number of new members for the PAT testing team.



 Sarah Humphreys, 1st Woosehill 


Karen Thurlow, our part-time County Administrator, continues to provide a range of services from the county office based at Sindlesham Court including support to the County Treasurer. In preparation for GDPR, Karen has attended a training course to help her manage the impact of the new regulations on the county office. The CEC remains grateful to Berkshire Scout Enterprises Ltd (BSEL) for providing employment services.

Finally, I would like to record my thanks to James Mulligan, Deputy County Chair; Mark Foster and Mick Stocks, former County Chair and Deputy County Chair; Mark Taylor, County Treasurer; and to all CEC members for their work and support during the past year. I would also like to recognise and thank my fellow trustees across the County for the important part they play in supporting Scouting.

■ **Ian Aitken** County Chair

■ **James Mulligan** Deputy County Chair



 Graham Parkins, Maidenhead

Adult support

Training, training, training ... yawn!

Now that isn't what you expect to hear from the County Training Manager's (CTM) report, but if we are all honest, training has been seen like this. Vince Knight, our former ACC (Adult Training) did an incredible job of growing the training team and helping to deliver our fantastic Harmonised Learning (HL1, 2 and 3) courses. However, my role over the next year is very different. I want to change the perception across Groups and Districts to make training something people see as enjoyable and useful.

"Congratulations to the 206 leaders that completed their Wood Badge."

Looking through feedback on our training, 90% of the time we get positive reports and our First Response and Safeguarding courses also deliver great reviews. So, why the bad perception? Just like 'dyb, dyb, dyb', the negative view on training has been passed down and certainly doesn't match the majority of our reviews.

So, what am I going to change? What are my plans? I want training to be delivered in the same way we deliver our programme to young people. We will focus on enjoyable courses and the completion of modules will naturally happen on the back of them. I also want to give flexibility to the learners and offer additional and varied opportunities to learn.

To support this, we need to provide more trainers who are as diverse as the leaders they are training, increase the numbers of Training Advisers, and give the learners more choice in who they work with to achieve their personal goals.

If you would like to get involved with the training team, please contact me as I would love to meet with you.

Remember, we are developing *skills for life!*



 
Graham Parkins,
Maidenhead


A year in the life of the training team

The following is a summary of some of the activities of the training team during the past year! Most importantly, congratulations to the 206 leaders that completed their Wood Badge (compared to 143 during 2016–17). The journey to support leaders in gaining their Wood Badge, and other specialist skills, were delivered through 15 different types of courses – including modules; Harmonised Learning blocks; workshops; and specialist courses. The First Response team delivered a total of 39 courses (32 full and 7 refresher). There were a total of 765 training bookings made in the year!

"I also want to give flexibility to the learners and offer additional and varied opportunities to learn."

Work has also continued in building a larger network of Training Advisers to support all our training, including the recently introduced Leadership and Management courses.

■ **Mark Foster** County Training Manager

Looking forward...

Whilst the main purpose of the Annual Review is to report on the fantastic achievements of the past year ... it's also important to look forward!

This page contains just some of the projects, events and activities, that are already well underway. For further information please use the contact email address at the end of each brief entry.

New vision and new brand

The Scout Association vision for 2018–2023 is to prepare more young people with skills for life, supported by our amazing leaders delivering an inspiring programme. The key objectives for the vision are to continue to grow; to be more inclusive; to be more youth shaped; and make a bigger impact in our communities.



www.scouts.org.uk/about-us/strategy/vision-for-2023

Group Scout Leaders' conference

During the past year, or so, there have been successful conferences/workshops for the county team with District Commissioners and county team with District teams. The next similar gathering is for the key role of Group Scout Leader and this takes place on 20 October 2018. Amongst other topics, this will be a timely gathering to explore the recently launched Vision 2018–2023 with its focus of preparing young people with skills for life (see above).

Contact: nigel.bevan@berkshirescouts.org.uk

Roverway 2018

For the first time the county will be sending a patrol to the Roverway international camp which in 2018 takes place in the Netherlands and is for both Scouts and Girlguiding. The Roverway 2018 international event will focus on personal development of participants as part of their role in society. Roverway 2018 wants to create an environment in which participants can interchange experiences, knowledge and ideas.



Contact: programme@berkshirescouts.org.uk

24th World Scout Jamboree (USA) – 2019

72 young people and 8 adult leaders (2 units) have been selected to attend the 24th World Scout Jamboree in the USA (West Virginia). The units are now well in to their training programme in preparation to make the most of this exciting international opportunity. There are also approximately 25 leaders from the county supporting the Jamboree in HQ and International Service Team (IST) roles.



Contact: programme@berkshirescouts.org.uk

Uganda 2019

The third Berkshire Scouts visit to Uganda to take part in international community projects will be the biggest to date with 114 young people and 20-plus adult leaders signed up for this experience of a lifetime. Similar to previous visits (2011 and 2015) the main projects will be supporting children and schools in poor rural areas of Uganda. It is also hoped to introduce some additional projects such as conservation, clean water, and projects with Scouts in Uganda.



Contact: programme@berkshirescouts.org.uk

WINGS 2020

The camp leader and core team are now in place and initial planning is well underway to make sure WINGS 2020 offers the excitement and opportunities associated with this successful series of international camps in Windsor Great Park. There will also be opportunities for Beaver and Cub Scouts to benefit from the WINGS programme.



www.wings2020.org.uk

St George's Day Awards

Congratulations and many thanks for the fantastic service to Scouting to those who were awarded St George's Day Awards this year.



Silver Wolf

Bob Meldrum
ACC (Activities)



Silver Acorn

Mark Foster
County Training Manager



Bar to Silver Acorn

Lorraine Bolam
(Wokingham)

Tim Haggett
(Slough)

Andrew Pearce
(Maidenhead)

David Smith
(Windsor & Eton)



Beaver Scout Adventure Day

Support Services

The programme, activities, and adult support, remain the main focus of county team support. To help with this work there are some roles which take place very much in the background to help keep things running smoothly.

The IT team consists of a range of skilled volunteers to keep our website and critical communication systems operating on a day-to-day basis. The skills within the team include project managers, business analysts, and developers. A sub-team, under the leadership of a new project manager, continue to work on the rebrand and refresh of the county website which is expected to be launched in the Autumn of 2018. The team also supports 41 websites around the county in addition to the central website. The help desk continues to provide an efficient service for our users.



The County Administrator / County Secretary

Karen Thurlow, our County Administrator, has had another busy year. The workload in this period, through existing and new tasks, has increased considerably and so Karen's

hours have been increased from 20 to 24 hours per week across four days a week (Monday to Thursday). Karen is also much more involved with day-to-day county finances which offers welcome support for our County Treasurer.

During the year, Karen also took on the new role of Office Manager to maintain the smooth operation of the county office. The county is also grateful to Karen for providing additional out-of-hours support in many ways, including the support for working groups, conferences/workshops, etc.

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