



County Review

2023/2024

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LORD LIEUTENANT, HERTFORDSHIRE ROBERT VOSS



It remains a great honour to be the President of Hertfordshire Scouts and to be able to observe the many activities carried out by the large number of Scouts, Cubs, Beavers and Squirrels in the county.

I have really enjoyed the activities I have witnessed over the last year-whether it be joining the local Beavers and Squirrels who were more interested in my sword than in me...! Or the smiles on so many faces enjoying the range of activities in the rain and mud over the weekend at Phasels Wood. As an ex Cub and Scout myself-the memories of life under canvass came flooding back (literally...!)-Or enjoying an evening with the impressive Sea Scouts in Watford.

And how sad for those Scouts who attended the Jamboree in South Korea which had to come to an early end after witnessing all their hard work raising funds for their trip.

I am so pleased that we have such strong and vibrant youth organisations in Hertfordshire-now unified under the Hertfordshire Youth United umbrella - and none more so than our Scouts.

I wish to express my personal thanks to all the adult volunteers without whose time and dedication the movement would simply collapse.

Robert Voss CBE CStJ
His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Hertfordshire



IAN TYCER

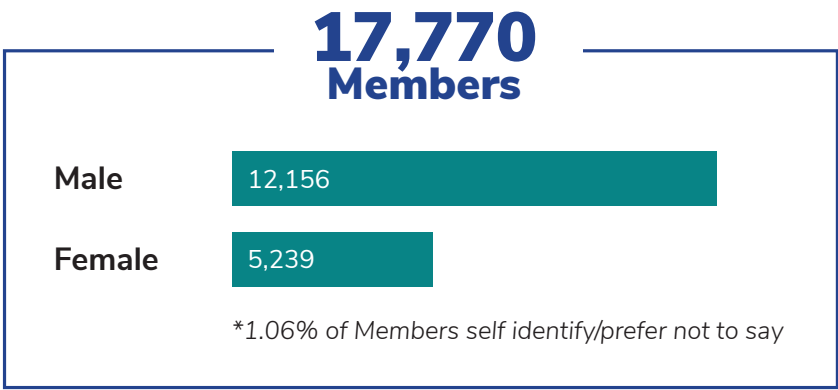


Hello!

In February 2024 I was honoured to be offered the opportunity to take over the leadership of Hertfordshire Scouts. I was fully aware that I'd struggle to follow in the footsteps of Liz Walker after her remarkably enthusiastic, successful, and motivational stewardship of the County.

What I didn't appreciate was that I'd be the thirteenth County Commissioner !! Therefore, I'm very keen to adopt the new title of County Lead Volunteer, and thus numerically be the first one instead !!

As this document/pamphlet/publication is a review of 2023 I have little to contribute other than to thank Liz for her tireless dedication and provide her with an opportunity to reflect on her numerous achievements during her tenure.



Young People

	2023	2024	Growth	Boys	Girls	Not Stated
Squirrels	158	353	+123.4%	116	41	1
Beavers	3465	3448	-0.49%	2625	793	47
Cubs	4428	4422	-0.14%	3395	984	49
Scouts	3888	3880	-0.2%	2795	1062	31
Explorers	1370	1475	+7.7%	870	467	33
Network	231	324	+40.3%	144	83	4
Total	13,540	13,902	+2.67%	9945	3430	165

Adults

Young people
are amazing.
It's our role to
help them
realise this.



4,192
inspiring
adults
teaching
#SkillsForLife

1,809 - Female 2,211 - Male 21 - Prefer not to say

YOUTH AWARDS

	Chief Scout's Award Acorn	70
	Chief Scout's Award Bronze	843
	Chief Scout's Award Silver	801
	Chief Scout's Award Gold	330
	Chief Scout's Award Platinum	69
	Chief Scout's Award Diamond	14
	King's Scout Award	7
	Young Leaders' Belt Buckle	16
	Duke of Edinburgh's Award Bronze	100
	Duke of Edinburgh's Award Silver	37
	Duke of Edinburgh's Award Gold	9

ADULT AWARDS

	Bar to Silver Acorn	2
	Silver Acorn	7
	Bar to Award for Merit	14
	Award for Merit	39
	Chief Scout's Commendation for Good Service	78
	Chief Scout's Commendation for Meritorious Conduct	1

The King's Scout Award is Scouting's highest award. It was first introduced in November 1909, when King Edward VII approved Robert Baden-Powell's request that boys who passed special tests for efficiency be ranked as "King's Scouts". The award was renamed from King's Scout to Queen's Scout by April 1952, with the succession and approval of Queen Elizabeth II. Upon the succession of King Charles III in September 2022, the award in the United Kingdom was renamed 'King's Scout'.



Although the award was originally open to just boys, in 1976 girls were admitted to the Venture Scout Section for the first time and also became eligible to gain the Queen's Scout Award. But it was not until 1993 that, with the consent of the Queen, the wording of the Royal Certificate was altered to make it gender-free both girls and boys. Members need to be aged 16 or older to start the award and complete the award before their 25th birthday. In addition, they have to have been an Explorer or Network member, or combination, for at least 18 months.

All 7 Hertfordshire members who gained their King's Scout Award during the year 2023-2024, started working for the award when it was the Queen's Scout Award. From September 2022 to December 2022, members who gained Scouting's highest award had the choice of gaining the Queen's or King's Scout Award, but from January 2023 only the King's Scout Award has been awarded.

The effects of Covid and the limitations on Scouting activities it imposed have impacted on many of those who have gained the award during the year. It has probably been the main reason why the number who have achieved the award this year is lower compared to some previous years. Before completing the Award, members need to give a presentation covering all the elements of their award to a suitable audience, with the aim of inspiring and motivating others to achieve the award. However, listening to many of the presentations, members regularly explained that they had to change their planned award activities because of Covid, often relating to the international activities required. Although the Covid limitations regularly caused disappointment to these members, what they achieved instead should not be undervalued, as an achievement, and the ingenuity and lateral thinking shown to complete the Award is a real credit to those members. Going forward, efforts are being made to inform leaders about the Award so that they are better equipped to support young people working for the Award, as well as to generally increase awareness amongst young members.

The culmination of the Award is an invitation to the Windsor Castle Scout Parade on the nearest Sunday to St George's Day. The April 2023 parade had members who not only achieved the Award in 2022, but also from earlier years, to catch up from Covid years when the parade did not take place. Going forward, members who gain the Award in 2024 can expect to be invited to the Windsor Castle parade in April 2025. In addition, this year Hertfordshire Scouts are planning a dinner to honor Award holders and hope this will revive the celebrations for what is an incredible achievement for these young people.

Michael Cranfield
Top Awards Coordinator
Hertfordshire

We want to make volunteering with Scouts easier and more fun...

...so that we can attract more volunteers and our current volunteers want to stay



The Scout Association is currently going through a period of change under the title of Transformation. The key aim is to make it easier, more enjoyable and rewarding for our adult volunteers. Encouraging the recruitment of more adults, will in turn allow more young people to join us and benefit from the Skills for Life strategy.

Considerable research was conducted to understand the way that people wish to volunteer today. As well as being unlikely to volunteer for life, a shock to many readers here, people feel unable to commit regularly. Therefore one of the key changes is to form Teams to work in. This also means that the current variation in training requirements for front line volunteers is very similar, as opposed to the differences we have at the moment.

The majority of the Transformation process is reliant on new digital tools, including a modern adult membership database, a learning system which will host online modules, which upon completion will update the member's record. This automation will negate the time consuming manual uploading and also help auto-populate documents, such as the Nights Away Notification (NAN) form where a check on an individual's currency.

Oversight of Scouting activities is being tightened up with each charity's newly titled Trustee Board focusing on Governance, in line with the Charity Commission guidelines.

The Year The Events Swang Back Into Action

FIRE & ICE

Tolmers



CUBJAM

Phasels Wood



CTT

Tolmers



ASAP

Phasels Wood



Green Beret

Phasels Wood



Reflecting on a Decade of Hertfordshire Scouts: Triumphs and Trials by Liz Walker

A lot has happened over the past decade, and reflecting on my tenure as County Commissioner for Hertfordshire Scouts has me writing with a tear in my eye and a beaming smile from the reflection of an amazing experience as I remember the wonderful achievements of our young people and adults over the years.



As Hertfordshire Scouts we have journeyed through a landscape filled with both challenges and triumphs, but I have to say we've consistently embodied the spirit of resilience and community. From navigating global disruptions to achieving remarkable milestones, everyone in Hertfordshire Scouts has proven that determination and teamwork can overcome any obstacle. My 10 years as Lead Volunteer (as it's now known) has been a privilege and I leave the post filled with admiration for everyone that has made it happen and with hope in my heart that it will continue to go from strength to strength. It would take the whole article to thank everyone personally, I'm indebted to all who have helped make the last 10 years so enjoyable and fruitful. Thank you all from the bottom of my heart.

Adventure is at the heart of Scouting, and Hertfordshire has been a hub of exciting activities. Our annual camps, international trips, and adventurous expeditions have provided countless young people with the chance to develop new skills, make lifelong friends, and create unforgettable memories. I've been lucky enough to attend some amazing camps and see this in action. Our first Beavers in Tents was a roaring success and I'm pleased to see that it's still thriving with the next ones coming up soon. The celebration of 100 years of Cubs still must be one of the highlights – arriving at the arena in a big tank does rather create a lasting impression! We've also had Scouts undertake amazing international experiences from Cubs on a day trip to France and Explorers doing amazing things on their expeditions to Eswatini. We also had Scouts from Hertfordshire attend 3 Jamborees (Japan, USA and South Korea) and a World Scout Moot in Iceland. Attending their preparations and joining them in on their journeys has been amazing.

Over the past decade, we've placed a strong emphasis on leadership development. Our Scouts have benefited skills needed to take on new challenges. It's been wonderful to be able to send out so many Congratulations Cards over the last 10 years I loved personally signing each one of them (luckily, I have a small signature!). This focus on leadership has not only benefited our Scouts but has also strengthened our entire organization and it has been amazing to see them not only achieve Bronze, Silver, Gold, Platinum and Diamond but the highlight must be the record number of Queen's Scouts and this year our first Kings Scouts (at least in my lifetime). This is the highest youth award achievable in the Scouting movement and recognises commitment to service, leadership, and personal development. I loved attending the Hertfordshire Scouts Queen's Scout Award Dinners over the years to celebrate with some truly remarkable Young People.

A further highlight was our first Scouts of the World Award and I always reflect on this when I'm in Ashridge Park as a tree was planted in celebration. On the subject of trees a highlight was planting, along with the Lord Lieutenant and Mike our fantastic County Chair, the trees in celebration of Queen Elizabeth's Platinum Jubilee.

Other highlights have included presenting trophies at Scout premises and, of course, presenting badges and awards. These will always be a highlight as it means recognition of achievements – for young people and adults alike. Presenting badges, Young Leader Belts, Queen's Scout Awards, long service awards to brilliant volunteers – and many others is special. Recognising people from across Scouting for extraordinary achievements and accolades will be remembered for years to come.

Adapting to the COVID-19 pandemic was possibly the biggest challenge of the last 10 years, bringing, as it did, face-to-face meetings and outdoor activities to a sudden halt. Our leaders swiftly adapted, moving meetings online and creating virtual camps. This period tested our creativity and adaptability, but it also strengthened our bonds and highlighted our commitment to our Scouting values. It was also a time of significant financial challenge and the Standing Committee met weekly to make sure we kept going and will be here for years to come. Whilst this was undoubtedly a challenge there were such achievements too. Highlights included joining in with young people at their weekly 'meetings; camping under my table as I joined in with Beavers in Dens, Cubs at a pirate themed camp and Explorers on their Camp at Home; joining in online hiking to the moon (around my local area) and even managed a live St Georges Day celebration beamed from my back garden. It was great to interact with so many.

We've weathered many a storm over the last 10 years. We've faced extreme weather conditions that disrupted camps and events but never dampened the spirit. The 50th Anniversary of Peak Assault delivered (it seemed) almost 50 years of rain over the weekend but we still managed to have an amazing event, celebrate 50 years and catch up with many who had been involved over the years. Hertfordshire Peak Assault will always be a highlight. I'm always amazed how Scouts and volunteers demonstrate remarkable resilience, ensuring activities continue safely and that the spirit of adventure remains undampened.

As I reflect on the past decade, it's clear that Hertfordshire Scouts has much to be proud of. Our journey together has been one of growth, learning, and resilience. We've faced challenges head-on, celebrated numerous achievements, and created lasting memories. Here's to the next decade of Scouting adventures, community service, and continued success!



UNIT 22 - THE QUACKERS

Back in July 2023 Unit 22, The Quackers, were off to Korea for the 25th World Scout Jamboree! Firstly, we hiked in Bukhansan National Park and saw the Korean War memorial in the evening. The next day we went to the DMZ along with other UK Units, taking a tour around the Dora Observatory, a North Korean tunnel, the Freedom Bridge, and of course, the official DMZ gift shop!



We spent Sunday at Lotte World theme park enjoying their huge range of rides. The following day it was down to the PLs and APLs to guide their patrols to Gyeongbokgung Palace dressed in Korean Hanbok. We split up to see Bukchon Hanok Village, Colour Mania and Gwangjang street markets. Due to flooding on the Jamboree site, we gained an extra night in Seoul so had to conjure a plan for tomorrow with Quackers

choosing to visit the Coex mall and Starfield library before heading back to the hotel to prepare for our move down to the Jamboree!

On the 2nd August we got the coach down to the site, got ourselves set up and fed before quickly joining the other 50,000 people on site at the opening ceremony. This was our first full taste of the Jamboree atmosphere and fun with hours of singing, dancing and speeches. Our first day on site was a very very hot one – we spent the morning acclimatising before heading to an onsite programme area for the afternoon. Here the Quackers could venture off, mingle with Scouts from



across the world and enjoy a range of activities on offer! The next day we visited the Contingent pavilion tents, an area where every country at the Jamboree showcases their culture and national dishes! Unfortunately, it was this evening we found out the UK would be withdrawing from the Jamboree and returning to Seoul for the remainder of our trip. Understandably this was an emotional evening for the whole Unit, who pulled together outstandingly to support each other. Once we were back in Seoul again it was time for some improvisation! The Leaders and the Quackers were in for a tiring but unforgettable time! We enjoyed some shopping and bowling,

then attended a Seoul E-Land football match on our first day which set the tone for making the most of every minute! In the coming days we visited the National Museum of Korea, relaxed at Caribbean Bay water park, visited the Dynamic Maze and Alive Museum, had the chance to visit the British Embassy or the Ddo-ong Café (google it!) and attend a K-Song night with other UK Units. We were challenged further with an incoming typhoon, but that wasn't going to dampen our spirits! On typhoon day we saw a Taekwondo musical and went to Sarang church for the UKC's culture day event. On our final unplanned day in the city, we had the WSJ closing



ceremony - a huge party with over 15 k-pop groups performing! We got ourselves into uniform and suitably face painted/glittered and headed to enjoy the party in Seoul World Cup stadium! The following day we surprised our Quackers with visits to Gugok falls and Legoland Korea on the coach ride to our new hotel! Then on our final day, the Quackers did some souvenir shopping and took a Unit picture at the Gangnam Style statue! The Leaders had some final surprises up their sleeves to make our final night memorable including a huge traditional Korean dinner together, a visit to the Bambpo Rainbow bridge and an evening river cruise through the city before catching the last train of the night back to get some sleep!

It was a trip with unprecedented levels of challenge and opportunity both for the Quackers and



the Leaders, but we had a fantastic, jam-packed and totally unforgettable trip! As Leaders we would love to say once again how proud we are of all of the Quackers for rising to the occasion, being there for each other when it really mattered, and being the best Unit we could've asked for!

UNIT 23 - THE ROCKETMEN

19 months, 25 training events and over 530 hours prepared us for the adventure of our lives, and it did not disappoint. The Rocketmen's journey to the Jamboree in South Korea was unforgettable. It would take hours to tell you all of our adventures but here is a small sample...

UNIT 23: ROCKETMEN

Day 1: Only the beginning: Have you ever seen 120 scouts on a plane? Well I just did, and it was wild. So much excitement in such a small space was incredible. But then we got to our stopover, Thailand, and... the SWEDES! 120 turned into over 300 scouts - on a single plane. I really started to feel it, the whole point of us going there - meeting others and joining that "Worldwide family of scouts".



Day 2: The Culture: Seoul was... incredibly hot! But that did not stop us. The entire unit decided to get dressed into traditional hanboks and visit the Palace. Hanboks made us really feel part of the culture and the locals couldn't help but keep taking pictures of us. We also started to notice all the little things; no litter, friendly old people offering us seats but the most jarring thing was...

Day 3: More Culture: ...the alarms. Every phone would blare out alarms every few hours with government notices including not to go out in the afternoon as it was too hot. Nevertheless, we continued exploring. Mountainous view- points, bustling night markets and even a selfie museum. But the best thing was seeing the scouts, every corner seemed to have a scout from a new country to discover.



Day 5: The cracks begin to show... We planned to spend the final night before heading to the jamboree site at the rainbow bridge. It was beautiful; synchronised music, lights and moving jets of water. The night was only marred by the news that the site wasn't ready yet and we would be delayed for 1-2 days. The news hit hard but all our training camps paid off and the whole unit helped each other process the news.

Day 7: ...and we were finally off! A spare day in an air-conditioned mall was fun, but little did we foresee the logistical nightmare of c.2,000 scouts all trying to leave a hotel at once, absolute carnage! But after 2 hours to get a lift, 6 hours on a coach and a 20min walk we finally were on site. Tents as far as the eye could see and the opening ceremony, well what can we say! 50,000 scouts, all there to celebrate scouting, it's phenomenal.



Day 8: Loving every minute: We learnt quickly; tents become saunas as soon as the sun is up. But that just forced us get out to meet more people. Our itinerary was packed; wrestling in a (fake) palaces, K-pop dancing with monks in a temple... and that was just the planned stuff. We found international campfires, made (so many) friends on the way to the toilet. The conditions were harsh but it was everything we wanted.

Day 10: Such sweet sorrow: It happened again! We were all sat down and told the sanitation, food and general site conditions were not good enough and we would be heading back to Seoul. It was devastating, we wanted to stay but understood the reasons. We were lucky to have an extra day on site where we learnt taekwondo and managed to call over 300 of our international neighbours together for a feast & closing



Day 12: Back in the big city: Glorious air-conditioning! Going from a tent city full of scouts to a concrete jungle filled with people who looked at you strangely when you try and strike up a conversation on the way to the toilet was jarring, but a scout adapts. With so much of Seoul still to discover we ventured out again taking in museums and the agonising search of restaurants able to sit all 40 of our unit.

Day 15: Typhoon Khanun: A mandatory curfew from the government, howling winds, lashing rain and we were all glad we were no longer on the jamboree site. Safely bunkered in the hotel, a model UN student pulled some strings for us and we were treated to a private concert from a Korean rapper Microdot, followed by a talent competition. Not a bad way to spend my first typhoon.



Day 16: The beginning of the end: The official end of the jamboree came out of nowhere, but it was so nice to see what we came to Korea for, a place full of scouts for us to interact with. Every country seemed to have their own quirks; the Spanish sang, the Scottish bagpipes and the Mexicans continuously shouting to trade while marching away in formation! It was exactly what I was hoping for.

Day 17: Making every second count: With days left before we needed to return home (and with a few more scouts around Seoul) we squeezed all we could out of our remaining time. We escaped to a water park for a day, spent an afternoon in a meerkat café (which turned out to have many more animals too), had an amazing night singing karaoke. By the time we were heading for the plane we almost felt like locals.



Day 20: The long ride home: Coming back was strange, we just spent three solid weeks with 40 of my (now) closest friends and I'm now being forced to leave them. I know our journey was not what we expected but I'd redo it in a heartbeat and I can say two things for certain; 1) I've grown, fundamentally changing for the better and 2) it really is all about the friends you make along the way.

UNIT 24 - ALTAIR - WSJ KOREA

After 2 years of preparation, we started our Jamboree adventure from a sunny Heathrow, via Bangkok arriving in Seoul in full summer heat and humidity, with Pocari sweat (a local hydration drink and sun screen by the bucket load), we spent 6 days in Seoul exploring all the city had to offer, visiting some amazing places such as the DMZ, North Seoul tower, lotte world theme park, the lotte aquarium, the Korean national museum, Korean National war memorial, and traditional villages.

International Scouts heading to the jamboree were spotted all across the city allowing some initial trading of badges taking place and a taste of what was to be gained at the jamboree site.

The unit trialled all the food options Seoul had to offer visiting street food vendors, Korean barbeques, a surprising seafood feast, and many icecream and cold drink stands to keep us cool.

We headed to the jamboree site on the day of the opening ceremony, setting up camp just in time to get our seats for an amazing show. Favourite moments included a drone display and a visit from Bear Grylls. The atmosphere was fantastic a real celebration of work scouting and seeing all the nationalities come together was truly amazing.

The site was challenging as was widely reported with the heat and lack of shade and we were lucky to be offered to have 2 day trips off site, we visited a nature reserve and the national Taekwondo centre where we learned some key moves from a master all set to music.

Sadly our time on site was short lived but we still managed to put our cooking skills to good use in the camp kitchen and became very creative at making shade with tarpaulins. A real highlight on site was visiting the food village where each country had a food stand and we met Scouts from all over the world and sampled their national dishes. The night was to be our last as for our safety we returned to Seoul to continue the jamboree there, the unit made the most of the last evening getting to know our neighbours and doing last minute trades before leaving site.

Our return to Seoul was not quite the jamboree we expected but we still had an amazing time. Some key aspects of the jamboree like culture day were moved to a church, the closing ceremony took place in a stadium meaning we still got to meet Scouts wherever we went.

Despite the negative press Unit 24 made the jamboree our own and have lots of happy memories and experiences that will last a lifetime.

We would like to thank everyone who supported us throughout our jamboree journey and especially the IST teams and CMT who looked after us so well in Korea



HPA was delivered in October with base camp at the National Show Caves in Wales. 30 Explorer teams, 27 Explorer Scout training teams, 3 Network and 6 Senior teams took part. The weather on the weekend was mixed which added to the challenge for many teams. The closing ceremony encouraged everyone to reflect upon their achievement that weekend and to consider the resilience they'd demonstrated in the face of challenge.

In January, our County Monopoly game returned to Battersea thanks to the generous donation of the use of a premises for the day. An improved and revised process helped teams move through base control faster and out onto the board in record time. Over 80 teams took part with approximately 500 people out on the board. The competition is being reviewed to ensure it is robust and even better for 2025 and seeking to locate 'Start' to north of the river.

We continue to focus on increasing knowledge and understanding across Leaders, Explorer Scouts and Network Members of the King Scout Award requirements. Removing barriers and illusions of barriers remains important and a critical role of the County Team to supporting achievement.

108 Explorer Scouts with 12 leaders attended the World Scout Jamboree in Korea in July. The Hertfordshire units were fortunate to be located on the Jamboree site in better organised subcamps than other UK units. The leaders and young people in these units made an impression on surrounding units by making the most of the situation they were in and getting on with celebrating a jamboree spirit during the cooler hours of the day. When the UK Contingent relocated to Seoul, our young people continued to make the most of the opportunities available to them in the city. Once back in the UK, at a unit reunion one young person summed up their experience: 'whilst it wasn't the adventure we planned and prepared for, I wouldn't change a thing because I've had an opportunity others haven't had and experienced things I wouldn't have otherwise'.

The Network section remains stronger in some Districts than others and Networks continue to be encouraged to work together to deliver joint events and activities.

We remain indebted to the creativity and time of volunteers who make every Scouting opportunity possible. The events hosted by the County Team aim to give our young people opportunities that may not be possible in each District. The programme for 2024 has been set with many more events planned across the Explorer Section.

Written by

Jo Haynes
14-25 Team Lead



In 2023 the Youth Commissioners have been busy supporting Young People throughout the County of Hertfordshire. This year Youth Commissioners in Hertfordshire have increased with more districts recruiting District Youth Commissioners, such as Watford North. Recently recruited Youth Commissioners have all achieved their training which took place at Scout Headquarters in Gilwell Park. The aim of this training was to learn more about their role and how to support Young People with an emphasis on achieving their YouShape award! From this training our DYCs have gone back out into their districts and as a result more Young People are achieving the award and learning to take the lead from all ages, even as young as our beavers. As part of the work of Youth Commissioners some of us supported the consultation in the design of the YouShape award for the youngest section, Squirrels.

Youth Commissioners gave more opportunities for Young People to engage with County, running YouShape workshops and feedback sessions at County events throughout the year. This included talking to Explorer teams at the Monopoly Run in London about their experience at the event, getting to explore what the award is with Scouts at Green Beret, in November and talking all things Scouting with Cubs at Cubjam which took place at one of our County sites, Phasels Wood. These workshops directly supported our Young People.

Away from the workshops, Young People were inspired to achieve the award by supporting their local communities. Some of these examples include The Big Help Out, a national event that took place alongside the Royal Voluntary Service and the Coronation and saw Young People representing Scouting in events such as teaching the community CPR, visiting care homes, litter picking and even speaking to local councils. An example of taking the lead that we saw outside of this, was a Scout section taking on the planning and running of a Bushcraft Day for a younger section. These are just a few examples of how the YouShape award has made a difference to Scouting in Hertfordshire.

Written by

Kayleigh Malone
County Youth Commissioner





In 2023 Hertfordshire Scouts made an amazing return to pre-pandemic levels of international travel, with 520 participants and Leaders going abroad during the year. This figure was of course pushed up by the World Scout Jamboree, which saw 108 participants, 12 Leaders and 32 IST (International Service Team) from Hertfordshire participate in the event in Korea. However, even if you take out the Jamboree figures, that is still an increase of 248 compared with 2022 when the total number that travelled abroad was 120. It should be said that the 120 who travelled abroad in 2022 was an amazing achievement for that time, as it was just after the pandemic.

It is good to see a wide range of Countries being visited by Hertfordshire Scouts, and whilst they were mostly in Europe in 2023, I am aware of Expeditions being planned for 2024 and 2025 which will take participants to America and Africa and Southern Asia.

As always, I am grateful to those Leaders who have used their annual leave and given up family time, to provide these opportunities for an international experience, for our young people in Hertfordshire.

However, International Scouting is not just about the travelling abroad, it also has a role in teaching our young people about tolerance, different cultures and religions, and finding ways in which we can all help to make the World a better place. There is no doubt that travel broadens the mind, and it helps to build the self-confidence of all those who take part in these trips and to make us all better World Citizens.

Maldives Coral Regeneration Project

During 2023 Hertfordshire Scouts continued to support the Coral Reef regeneration project in the Maldives. The project aims to conserve the Beaches and Coral Reefs in Villimale, and plans are now in their early stages for a Hertfordshire Scout Expedition to the Islands to see and support the works first hand. The project is listed on the WOSM (World Organisation of the Scout Movement) web site as one of the 5 most inspiring environmental scout projects, and Hertfordshire Scouts is credited as a supporter of the works.

Scouts Against Malaria

All sections of the 3rd St Albans Scouts have continued to fundraise for the SAM campaign, and they have been able to get ITN's (Insecticide Treated Nets) distributed in Ghana during 2023. The Hertfordshire Scouts main SAM fund has also been able to provide urgently needed funds to pay for the supply of ITN's to protect victims of flooding who are sleeping in tents in Northern Malawi. During 2024 it is hoped that we can begin funding the provision and distribution of ITN's in Burkina Faso, a project that is being worked on at present.

Roverway

Sadly, at the end of 2023 the UK Contingent to Roverway had their numbers reduced dramatically by the Norwegian organisers, and as a result Hertfordshire was forced to reduce our participation in the event by half. The half that are still going to participate, are continuing to plan and prepare for the event which will take place this summer and we look forward to seeing their report in next year's County Review.

Explorer Belt 2024

To offer an alternative to those participants who had originally been selected for Roverway and were now not going, an Explorer Belt Expedition from Finland to Sweden has been planned by the Explorers, and we look forward to hearing more about that trip in the next annual review.

My thanks go to the Leaders in all sections who help to deliver the international programme to all our members every week, without them the international message would not get to our young people and their hard work is appreciated.

Peter Makewell
ACC (International) Hertfordshire Scouts.

Hertfordshire Scouts

Visits Abroad 2023

Group	Destination	Beaver Scouts	Cub Scouts	Scouts
5 th Ware Scouts	Netherlands	0	0	22
74 TH Watford Scouts & Apollo ESU	Netherlands	0	0	20
Oak Eagle ESU	Switzerland	0	0	0
Crong ESU	Austria	0	0	0
Royston District Explorer Scouts	Ireland	0	0	0
Batchworth Sea Scouts	Malta	0	0	13
Hertfordshire County	Monaco	0	0	0
Hemel Hempstead District Scouts	Netherlands	0	0	31
5 th Potters Bar & 1 st & 2 nd Little Heath Scouts	France	0	0	13
Potters Bar & District Scouts	Switzerland	0	0	4
16 th St Albans Scouts & Oakdene ESU	Switzerland	0	0	27
UK Contingent to the World Jamboree (Herts)	Korea	0	0	0
UK Contingent Hertfordshire IST to WSJ	Korea	0	0	0
	Totals	0	0	130

Group	Explorer Scouts	Scout Network/ SASU& Others (incl Guides)	Leaders & Helpers	Total
5 th Ware Scouts	6	1	8	37
74 TH Watford Scouts & Apollo ESU	0	1	6	27
Oak Eagle ESU	10	0	7	17
Crong ESU	20	0	5	25
Royston District Explorer Scouts	20	0	5	25
Batchworth Sea Scouts	3	3	4	23
Hertfordshire County	16	0	4	20
Hemel Hempstead District Scouts	33	2	9	75
5 th Potters Bar & 1 st & 2 nd Little Heath Scouts	0	1	5	19
Potters Bar & District Scouts	20	7	22	53
16 th St Albans Scouts & Oakdene ESU	12	0	8	47
UK Contingent to the World Jamboree (Herts)	108	0	12	120
UK Contingent Hertfordshire IST to WSJ	0	0	32	32
	248	15	127	520

OAK EAGLE ESU TRIP

Kandersteg International Scout Centre, Switzerland

On Thursday 10th August we flew from Heathrow to Zurich and then took a train to Bern and another on to the village of Kandersteg. Then we hopped on the local bus to take us to the Scout Centre.

Here we were staying in the Old Chalet which is a beautiful old building on a large camp site. The atmosphere is very much of an international celebration. There are Scouts from around the world staying in the huts or camping. During our week we met people from Cyprus, Spain, Poland, Germany, Canada, America, Holland, plenty from the UK and even some from Hertfordshire.

Explorer Report:

On Friday we departed Kisc at 9am and we took the Sunnebuel cable car up the mountain and then walked to the climbing spot. It was really cool. After a couple of hours the instructors took us on a tour of the local flora and fauna and we went through two caves. It was interesting and a really fun day. I found the climbing difficult and challenging but I persevered through it and got to the top of all the climbs. The scenery was beautiful.

Rafting and High ropes. We left at 7.30am and got two trains to Interlaken. We got on our wetsuits and then took the minibus up river where we put the rafts on the water and sailed down. Only the district commissioner Rob fell off the raft. After we got back we had hot drinks and headed to the high ropes where we spent two hours in the trees on zip wires, wobbly ropes and bridges. It was brilliant fun.

On Monday we started our two day hike. We went up the Allmenalp cable car and then walked straight up hill for two and a half hours to the top of Bunderspitz mountain. Then walked around and down to the mountain hut that we were staying in for the night. It has the most fabulous views.

In the morning, after porridge on the patio we set off again. After a tiring climb we reached a beautiful peak and then a cave with running water which was cold and tasty. The descent was nice, we could see some sheep and pretty lakes. After lunch we soon reached the cable car which had a swing outside. Then we were soon back to Kisc ready for a nice hot shower.

Wednesday we travelled by train to the swimming pool at Brigerbad. The pool was really nice and fancy. There were many pools to go in including a lazy river, a big rock to jump off, an inflatable obstacle course and a massive slide. We raced around and played it. The pool was very good and much fun.

When we departed the pool we went to explore the town of Brig and we all bought gelato. When we arrived back we said goodbye to some friends from Spain and then played Uno with some Scouts from Cyprus.

This trip has been so much fun and so many memories have been made.

Written by most members of the expedition



MONACO CENTENARY JAMBOREE

By Zoë Brace (edited by Graham Paul)

Day 1: 16 Explorers & 4 Leaders visited Monaco to celebrate 100 years of scouting in the principality. Hosted by Scouts & Guides of Monaco & supported by French Young Leaders, we joined Explorers from



Monaco & Hungary. Met by the Monegasques, we walked around the harbour before going to a campsite in Casterino, a mountain village in the south east of France. The view was beautiful. We pitched tents in the forest, & met the Hungarian Scouts. In bed, it was surprising how cold it was compared to the scorching heat of the day. During activities, we spent much time shade hunting & re-applying sunscreen.

Day 2: we started with high ropes; the course was amazing, with long zip wires. The trees were so tall & the course higher than most UK ones, so great for those who love heights. Then building catapults out of logs & ropes; we climbed onto the structure to attach the top, which was scary but a test of trust.

Day 3: we hiked in the mountains, taking in breathtaking sights & learning historical facts about rocks & Bronze Age petroglyphs. We regrouped for lunch & played cards, learning a new game that was intense. It was a challenging experience, especially for those not used to long hikes, but it allowed us to bond & test ourselves. In the evening, one of the French YLs ran a disco that was so much fun; a defining moment as we looked past language barriers & cultural differences, realising we all enjoyed dancing to music.

Day 4: a creative treasure hunt based at camp, run by Monegasque Scouts & Guides, & capture the flag. CTF sparked friendly rivalry when we were split into two teams. We also played "Oxford, Cambridge", a game we had not played before; the teams sat in line, facing each other, & had to swap sides & reform without being tackled. It left us all in fits of giggles & with a sense of the games that Monegasques played.

Day 5: our last day in Casterino was amazing. We kayaked down rapids, something most of us had not experienced before. We even floated down rapids without our kayaks, which was exhilarating. In the evening, everyone participated in a talent show; there were so many great acts including Bohemian Rhapsody on a piano, poetry & an impressive balancing act. We showcased our talent by singing "Mamma Mia". We all had a lot of laughs & even got Scouts of other nationalities to join in.

Days 6 & 7: we arrived in Monaco at the Princess Antoinette Park, a municipal park & playground that was our basecamp (goats & geese stayed too!); at night, it was hot so we slept outside, which was a unique experience for those of us who had only camped in the cold UK. We visited the Oceanographic Museum (with all kinds of marine life); rowed together to manoeuvre through the sea; explored Monaco in a treasure hunt (via the famous Casino de Monte-Carlo & Prince's Palace); swam, tanned & relaxed at the beach, playing cards. At the closing ceremony, we shared our culture, sang songs from each country, & took lots of photos together in a booth. We then partied at the park to commemorate our last day, with a live band & great food. It was really good but bittersweet as this was our last time together.

Day 8: we explored Monaco, visiting the Prince of Monaco's car collection, people watching outside the casino & relaxing on the beach. Some of us also walked around the street circuit used for F1 races.

It was an amazing experience, pushing us out of our comfort zones. Connecting with people from other countries, the friendships we made are lifelong & the memories will always be in our hearts.

BATCHWORTH SEA SCOUTS

In October half term 2023, a group of 16 adventurous Scouts and their leaders embarked on a journey to the island of Malta, not just for a holiday, but for an unforgettable experience beneath the waves.



Their mission? To conquer the PADI Open Water Course, immersing themselves in the vibrant and diverse underwater world like never before. With crystal-clear waters as their playground, these Scouts delved into the depths, completing four open water dives that would leave an indelible mark on their memories. From mastering essential skills to marvelling at the wonders of marine life, every moment beneath the surface was a revelation.



Reflecting on their aquatic odyssey, the Scouts shared their awe and excitement: One scout exclaimed, "That was the best thing I've ever done!" echoing the sentiment felt by many as they emerged from their first dive, exhilarated and eager for more. Another described the sensation of being underwater as akin to flying, capturing the freedom and weightlessness experienced beneath the waves. "It was so cool swimming with bubbles all around," remarked another scout, encapsulating the joy of exploring an underwater world teeming with life and motion.



And the encounters with marine creatures left a lasting impression, with one scout exclaiming, "I saw an octopus and so many fish!" Each sighting was a testament to the richness and diversity of Malta's marine ecosystems. As they returned home, their minds brimming with memories of their underwater escapades, one thing is certain: the spirit of adventure ignited in Malta will continue to guide them on future expeditions, both above and below the surface.

ROYSTON DISTRICT EXPLORERS

TRIP TO LARCH HILL, DUBLIN 2023



We went into Dublin on 3 days of the camp, getting to explore the city in smaller groups, as well as all going to see Kilminham Gaol, where many prisoners were held before independence. We all also got to visit EPIC: The Irish Emigration Museum and participate in Gaelic games, with no major injuries.



Larch Hill being an international campsite gave us the opportunity to meet and befriend Scouts from Spain, Holland, Ireland and Denmark.



One of the most enjoyable parts of the camp was getting to know so many people, with the friendships formed existing long after the camp finished. All the Explorers would like to thank the leaders who were involved with planning the camp.

written by Milo Sanders,
Wilderness Explorers

HARLEM JAMBORETTE 2023

ARTICLE BY THOMAS B



highly recommend it to all. Everyone was really helpful and they all spoke English.

During the 14th Haarlem Jamborette, I was a member of the Stewards team. I was just one of a few international volunteers from all over the world. Going to the Haarlem Jamborette has expanded my knowledge of not just the Netherlands but all of this corner of the world. The Event was brilliant and I

A great place to expand cultural knowledge is through food, nowhere was this more apparent than 'Hell's Kitchen' staff restaurant. Great Dutch dishes throughout the day including some I have retried at home and loved



The landscape was lovely with great views everywhere especially across the waters at sunrise or sunset. There is still plenty of work but just as much free time to have fun with the people you meet.

Overall, this camp has taught me invaluable skills

that I continue to use, given me great opportunities for cultural exchange on both sides. And if all else fails I've made some good friends in what would have been a completely alien part of the world.

HARLEM JAMBORETTE 2024

BY 74th ST. LUKE'S SCOUTS, APOLLO ESU & WYVERN ESU

It was a very mixed group that travelled to the Haarlem Jamborette in 2023, from Hertfordshire. There were Scouts from the 74th St. Luke's in Watford, Explorers from the Apollo ESU, and even some Explorers and leaders from the Wyvern's ESU from Somerset.

We travelled, as before, on the Ferry from Harwich, then by train to the Campsite in Halfweg. This campsite is made from a large country park, enclosed and secured for the Haarlem Jamborette. It has open areas, trees, a lake, and when we arrived, a lot of mud. It had been raining a lot in Holland, and that night, and even though we pitched camp in the dry, it rained again – a lot. There was more mud, lots and lots of puddles, but none of that dampened the spirits of the 3,500 Scouts and Explorers from all over the globe who had come.

We sailed, we climbed, we made films, we hiked, we played games, we pioneered (is that even a word?), and we had fun and made friends. We made friends with Canadians, there were a lot of Canadians, everywhere we looked, Canadians. They had bought a very large contingent to Europe, finishing up at the Jamborette.

During the open day – there is always an open day, the Groups from Hertfordshire made pin flags and gave them away to any visitors that happened by. The explorers from Somerset gave away shots of local apple juice and pieces of Somerset Cheddar (the Wurzels may also have featured). All very popular.

Some leaders have been going to the Haarlem Jamborette since the mid 90's, some went for the first time, but everyone agreed it is an excellent way of introducing your Scouts and Explorers to an international experience. It is fun, safe, easy to get to, easy to be at, and a perfect encapsulation of what international scouting should be like.



DO MORE. FLY MORE. BE MORE

In 2023 we had what felt like a surge of activity in the provision of adventurous activities by Hertfordshire Scouts. As part of our recovery from the pandemic we chose to review everything we had previously done and understand if it was still the right event or course, whether its aims needed to change, and if the format needed to change. We also took the time to review how each event was actually delivered, with a particular focus on ensuring that safety was at the forefront.

We regrouped our staffing teams that ran our long standing Intermediate and Advanced Mountaineering Courses (IMC & AMC) at our Locearnhead Scout Station Activity Centre in central Scotland. This led to us running a staff only week for 35 keen mountaineering instructors, where training and skills were refreshed and polished and we discussed how and what our future courses at Locearnhead would look like. Leading on from that we enthusiastically went into planning a new look Hertfordshire Scouts Mountaineering Experience at Locearnhead (HSME) for 2024, which now caters for a wider range of starting skills sets from the participants.

In April we also ran a new set of Hillwalking and Climbing Adventurous Activity Permit Training and Assessment Courses in the Peak District. This immediately “sold out” showing just how strongly our leaders in Hertfordshire want to deliver those wider adventurous activities to our young people.

May saw our annual Mersea Sailing Week at East Mersea on the Essex Coast take place, which is always well attended. It is always good to see events maintain or improve their attendance from 2022, as this gives us confidence that the post pandemic surge was not just a short term thing, and young people and adults in scouting still crave the adventure!

By June, we were flying, literally. We re-launched the Hertfordshire Motor Glider days, which were immediately popular. The first day at the base in Gransden in Cambridgeshire was one of the hottest days of the year. It is comforting to see that the investment we made in the Motor Glider, and continue to do so was and is still worthwhile.

Peak Assault in October saw us return to South Wales for 2023, it also saw the return of biblical levels of rain in the week leading up to the event weekend, which really put to the test the skills of the Course Setting and Base Camp teams to get the site ready in those conditions. As is often the case with Peak Assault, the weather turns out quite well for the event itself. Again, numbers were up on the previous year, returning to pre-pandemic



levels. Peak Assault also saw the trial of some new safety management processes, which worked really well, and are now being rolled out across all major County Events. With the above events happening outside of Hertfordshire, we are seeing the cost to run these events increase significantly in the main due to steep rises in transport costs. We are conscious to ensure the events still offer good value for money, and it is a constant challenge to manage costs so that the event can still run without cutting any corners.

Day to day adventurous activities continue to evolve, with new activities appearing all the time. We are seeing more groups take part in activities such as Stand-Up Paddle Boarding (SUP), and Tomahawk Throwing. It is also interesting to note that the popularity of Archery, which has been a Scouting activity for time, is now increasing significantly with rise in permit holders across the County.

I'd like to extend my thanks to the efforts of everyone continuing to deliver adventurous activities in Hertfordshire. With the enhanced focus on safety and administration, it can take the shine off the actual delivery of the activity, however it is clear that our young people in Hertfordshire have a team that are still very keen to deliver these activities, and in a highly professional manner.

Written by

Dan Nathan
Deputy County Commissioner



THE JOURNEY IS JUST AS IMPORTANT AS THE DESTINATION

The 'Scouting Movement' is a phrase that you will have heard used frequently and implies that we never stand still; always willing to consider new ideas and initiatives, embrace change and to seek continual improvement in the way we deliver Scouting. In other words, we are constantly moving – hopefully in a forward direction. However, I can't remember a time when we have potentially faced so much change. On this occasion the changes do not directly affect our grass roots Scouting delivery but impact on our adult management structure, the way in which we are organized and our approach to the governance of our charities. Effective performance of these roles are just as important, and can impact significantly upon, those in our Groups who so enthusiastically deliver the Scouting programme to our young people. All of these changes are being rolled out under the Transformation Initiative and will impact upon almost all of our adult members.

Simply put, we are all being asked to concentrate on our specific roles and to ensure they are delivered effectively. It is, of course, so easy to get distracted and to stray into areas that are not an essential part of our task. As Chair of our Trustee Board (formally County Executive) I and our trustees have been asked to adopt some significant changes, both constitutionally and in our approach, in order to ensure that we comply with Charity Commission good practice. Change can often be uncomfortable but it has certainly made us focus on the important task of delivering sound and effective governance for our charity.

One example would be how we, as a Trustee Board, approach safety and safeguarding issues which are certainly in the public eye at the moment. We have looked very carefully at our Risk Register, approach to Risk Assessment and the safe management of our activities and estate. In particular, we have reviewed the role of our trustees and made changes to ensure that we are firmly focused and have a sound understanding of all these processes. As a result, I believe we are now better placed to encourage a safer Scouting environment.

As Scouts, we are all aware that the planning of the route to be taken is just as important as the safe arrival at our destination; and if the journey is mapped carefully we will learn much to our benefit along our travels.

I wish you all a safe and successful passage on your Scouting journey and encourage you to embrace the change.

Yours in Scouting

Mike Shurety
County Chairman

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County Review 2023/24:
Thank you to all those who contributed content and photographs
to this Year's Annual Review

Designed, edited and produced by Hertfordshire Scouts Communications Team