



Gloucestershire County Scouts
A review of the year 2021 – 22



Gloucestershire Scouts annual review 2022

Note from the editor (The CC)

By now, many of the readers of this will know that I have taken the very difficult decision to not take on a second term as County Commissioner for Gloucestershire.

There are several factors that have led me to this decision, most important of which has been the realisation that my volunteer role as County Commissioner was having an impact on other parts of my life.

I'm a huge advocate that family comes first, work after that, your faith (if you have one) and then Scouting. Family is the most important thing and when my family were reminding me of this, it is then I had to take this decision.

But as I reflect on the past 5 years I am filled with many emotions and feelings;

I am **sad** that I will no longer get the opportunity to present awards to Young People and our brilliant volunteers.

I am **tired** as the past 12-18 months has also been very challenging in some ways, having to manage some trickier situations.

But I am also filled with **immense pride** when I look back over the past 5 years, when I look at all the things that you have all achieved.

We set out with a bold and ambitious vision as a County team to create some momentum in many areas, especially in helping as many adults as possible feel valued and supported.

I am **excited** to see what comes next and what we can do to help provide even more brilliant Scouting, filled with Skills For Life to even more Young People.

I am **hopeful** that I can remain a part of the County in some way and am thankful that the interim County Commissioner has asked me to continue in the role of County Training Manager for the time being.



I remember with a huge smile, some of the brilliant experiences I have had, whether;

- talking to Beavers about tidying their tents and the games they play including a fascinating one with magnets.
- listening to how hard Cubs have worked to achieve their Chief Scouts Awards,
- working with Scouts as they light fires and cook their tea,
- watching Explorers working together to overcome challenges at BEAST or at camp,
- talking to all Young People about what is possible
- seeing Network members going on to achieve their Queen's Scout Award
- laughing so very hard with so many other volunteers
- playing a small part in inspiring some of our volunteers on their journey towards achieving their Wood Badge.

All in all, I will remember the past 5 years very fondly and for that I want to say **Thank you** to all of you for giving me the opportunity to do what I did.

Chatting to Beavers
about their chief Scout
Award (Bronze)

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My highlights in 2021 / 22

This year has been filled with a lot of joyous moments, seeing things return following what has been a couple of tough years.

- Doing what little I can to support the Cotswold Marathon including the honour of presenting awards to finishing teams.
- Facilitating what I thought was a brilliant County St. George's Day event which included a very amusing Dragon and brave knight.
- Taking part in some fantastic District events for St. George's Day.
- Getting to see Gloucester Gang Show once again.
- Leading an amazing team to come together to develop a new Vision and Strategy for the County to achieve over the coming years.
- Continuing to lead some of the delivery of training across the County and being privileged to support the training for Managers and Supporters across the whole Southwest Region.
- Seeing the hundreds of Scouts and Explorers having an amazing time at Strategy and then hundreds of Cubs enjoying Evolution.
- Presenting Chief Scouts Awards to some amazing young people across the County from South Cerney to Churchdown to Newent.
- Having the absolute honour to present lots of Wood Badges and Adult Awards including Silver Wolf and 50 Years' service.



And then there is my most favourite thing to do, the one I don't get an opportunity to do very often, and that is to meet young people, listen to their amazing stories and fun adventures and to remind them to say thank you to you, our leaders, managers, and supporters who make it all possible.

Many, many of you will know that we cannot possibly hope to do what we do as well as we can without the support of our families. With this in mind, I want to say a massive thank you to my wife Emma, for supporting me and enabling me to be the CC!

Finally, I'd like to take this opportunity to say one last thank you to my brilliant team who have continued to guide me, to support me, to care for me and encourage me; each of them so talented and so brilliant. So, a huge thank you to Carole, Chris, Lewis, Liz, Louise, Kat and Stephen.

Mark Spiller
County Commissioner

Thank You!

Awarding the winners of Strategy 2022 (also Evolution 2022)

Presenting Wood Badges



The crowds at Strategy 2022



Facilitating St. George's day event whilst a Knight Battled with a dragon in the background

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PROGRESS TO VISION 2020

The final update

So, it's almost 5 years since we launched our Vision 2020 and you may remember that back in 2020, due to the pandemic we extended this so that we could continue our journey to become a county where Scouting is the best it possibly can be.

So this is the last update as from this September we will be moving forwards with our new Vision and Strategy, you can read more about this a little later.



Some of the key highlights on our journey to achieving our vision in the past 12 months has included:

- **Youth Shaped Scouting** – This area has taken huge strides forward with the Youth Commissioner team really getting involved in supporting the launch of the YouShape award.
- **Inspiring programmes** – We have continued to recognize volunteers who consistently deliver brilliant programmes with more Inspiring Awards being presented in the past 12 months.
- **Revamped website** – We have put more information on our website than ever before, simplified bookings for training courses and refreshed it to make it easier to find what you are looking for.
- **Training** – We have continued to make training available and accessible to as many as possible with a huge focus on First Response training. Without a doubt, the quality of training we offer is recognised by other Counties with regular attendees joining from all over the UK.
- **Adult awards** – The past 12 months has seen even more Good and Outstanding awards being applied continuing our journey to try and recognise all those volunteers who give such great service.
- **Cranham** – Has undertaken some significant work to improve facilities and the site, some of which you can see when you visit, some of which are less visible. The team there have also been critical to enabling groups to safely return to Face to Face last autumn.

So, what can you expect to read in this full-sized, bumper edition? Here are the **contents**:

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So, grab yourself a drink and...

HAPPY READING!

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YOUTH INVOLVEMENT

This has been a very exciting year for the youth commissioners – there has been a national award launched; we have supported international experiences and added more resources to the website.

YouShape Award

This time last year, we were very excited about the launch of the new YouShape Award, creating videos and information about the award in preparation. A year on, we are so impressed by the engagement we have had within the county, and it's been amazing to see what you have all been up to.



To support leaders across the county, we launch our own 'YouShape months'. Each month we focused on a different part of the badge and released blog posts and activity ideas to help your young people earn them.

All of these resources are on the Youth Shaped Scouting section of the website along with information about your Youth Commissioners and what youth shaped scouting is.



International Experiences

Over the last year, we have helped the leader selection for both the World Scout Jamboree in Korea and the Haarlem Jamborette in The Netherlands which are both happening in 2023.

We also helped with the selection weekend for the WSJ and although there were only 36 places, all the applicants' showed teamwork, perseverance and bucket loads of enthusiasm!

Since the selection, we have visited some of their prep camps and heard all about the preparation they have been doing ready for next year.

Links:

- YouShape Award | Scouts (<https://www.scouts.org.uk/volunteers/running-your-section/youth-shaped/youshape-award/scouts-youshape-award/>)
- Youth Shaped Scouting – GScouts – Gloucestershire Scouts (<https://gscouts.org.uk/youth-shaped>)



Kat Holter
County Youth Commissioner

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PROJECTS

They may not be world changing, but they are important as some of these projects continue to provide a little support or access for some leaders who most need it, with this in mind as a team we have continued to support a few projects which include:

St George's Day 'Re-enactment'.

My vision of us filming a blockbuster version of the story of St. George and the Dragon, embattling good over bad in Daniel's Grove at Cranham over the rope bridge with a fiery, fierce Dragon being brought down to earth, did not quite make it to be near the cutting room floor.



But the off cuts of what Kat, Ryan and Chris put together with a wonderful narrator and some help from a small but loyal and interactive audience (with lots of "oooh's" and "aaah's") provided the gist of the storyline with much humour.

For loan – one St. George outfit and one Red Dragon outfit!!

You can still watch it along with the 2022 Roll Of Honour at: <https://youtu.be/AxfRSvrFXns>

Thank you to those who don't mind having fun from my over ambitious ideas!

Buddies

The County Conference Oct 21 opened up once more conversations of how we as a county want to move forward.

The vision has been created over many meetings reviewing the wealth of ideas that were obtained from the county conference.

One of the project areas that keeps coming to the surface is the need to support those new into Scouting as we help them understand their role and engage them in training.

Alongside this, we have revisited the Buddies system that Kat Turner created before the pandemic beat us to attention seeking. The focus from county we consider is needed in the districts directly where those new adults join us into roles that can sometimes seem too big an ask of a volunteer.

A buddy that can give that adult support, be the "go to" for those questions that may seem silly or petty, and to whom an understanding of traditions etc. can be explained.

Work is ongoing to develop this but the help of avid and keen adults in districts are needed to be able to be the buddy to new adults in scouting that can be that person, can be the difference in us keeping an adult or not in Scouting.

Watch this space as we further work to develop this once more.

Every badge you deliver, Every smile you create, All the fun you make, We'll be wanting you!

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Platinum Jubilee Challenges and badge.

We launched these 70 challenges and the badge competition recognising that we wanted to do something that captures the skill of our many young people, provides some programme ideas and fun things to do while celebrating the 70 year reign of Queen Elizabeth II.

None of us imagined the popularity of the badge competition with **over 150 entries** from all sections.



Such was the difficulty of narrowing down the winners that we had to provide some runner up prizes which have now been awarded.



If you are out at Cranham take a look in the main building where you will see all the entries on display.

Huge thanks to all those leaders who have embraced the challenges and cascaded the badge competition to their young people. Badges are now available to order for those groups/young people who have joined in the challenges and completed 15 of them.

Thank you to Louise who has spent many hours putting this all together behind the scenes with thanks to Alex Bingle for creating the badge from the image too.



My thanks and patience to all the leadership team and my gratitude to Mark for meeting up with some of us in 2017 and agreeing to give the CC role a go. He hasn't done too badly has he??!!!!!!

Thank you all sincerely.

Liz Hodge
DCC – Projects

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PEOPLE

Another year has gone by so quickly but what a difference from the previous two years now we can all meet again face to face.

Firstly, I need to say a very big thank you to all my whole team covering inclusion, safeguarding, safety, and training. Special thanks to both Gary Law and Mark Spiller.

Gary for driving the inclusion strategy forward and recruiting a further member to the inclusion team and **Mark** for acting as our CTM following Lewis stepping down and continuously driving our training programme forward.

In the final year of our vision, we have again ensured that our leaders feel supported, engaged, and able to undertake their roles by making training accessible, supporting where required on inclusivity and making ourselves available to all adults that needed any kind of support as we moved back to face to face scouting.

Good and outstanding Service Awards

Our DC's have continued to ensure our adults are recognised by applying for HQ awards and we have seen two Silver Wolf Outstanding service awards awarded this year. Congratulations to **Tom Harding** and **David Carrington**.

Presenting David Carrington his Silver Wolf



Training

To aid with the appointments process we have held two **Module 37** workshops enabling another 12 people to be validated for sitting on the Appointments Panel in their respective districts.

Mandatory and initial training remains online, and we continue to work with those who may have difficulties engaging with this including running a face-to-face Module 1 and Module 3 course.

We continue to see our leaders complete their **Wood Badge training** and these are all coming through the system quicker now. In the past 12 months our booking system has handled over 180 bookings for various courses; online or face to face.

My sincere thanks to all the training team and Training Advisors who have been so industrious in continuing to make this happen.

Since September 2017 we have seen over 180 Wood Badges awarded which is excellent progress, but we still recognise that over 240 volunteers have been in their role for over 3 years and are still working towards their Wood Badge. We still have work to do.



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Inclusion

The **inclusion team** have had a busy year talking to leaders on programmes adaptation and interaction with parents as well as the young people requiring our additional support to ensure that both our own adults and the young people can experience Scouting in Gloucestershire to its fullest.



We rolled out the new [equality and inclusion strategy](#) across the County and it is encouraging to see the County and some Districts now having inclusion as a standing item on their District and our County Executive agendas. Looking forward we will be introducing a new Module 36 (Additional Needs) in our training portfolio and start to develop and pilot an “Understanding of LGBT+ in Scouting” course in the County.

First Response

Where do I start? My utmost thanks to the 1st Response Training team who have pulled out all stops to ensure our adults are able to undertake this mandatory training. We particularly thank **Luke Thrussell** who single handedly offered over 200 spaces on courses and to **Ruthie Stennett** who is taking on this mantle in more recent months. Thanks to Dave Bunce, Shell Vaughan, Eve Gyll, and Rishona Steward for all of your support in this area.

We still have access to the blended version offered by Hampshire Scouts for those who wish to use it but are seeing more face-to-face courses being put on that are quickly filled. Check out the First Aid pages in the GScouts website for more information.

Mental Health First Aid

(MHFA) – we were successful in obtaining a grant that allowed us to purchase MHFA tool kits for each District and the Jamboree teams (WSJ and Harleem).

Further MHFA training is planned for October 2022 and then we will move onto Mental Health Awareness training for all leaders that wish to take up the offer.



Thanks

Finally, my thanks to all you are adults in Scouting. Without your amazing leadership our young people would not have the opportunities you all give them. My teams are here to continue to help you, please use them.

Please feel free to contact me on anything people related.

Carole O'Donnell
DCC – People

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SCOUTING FOR ALL

Inclusion throughout Gloucestershire

This year has seen a positive upturn in leaders keen to learn more about how they can make their section a place for everyone young person, regardless of their needs.

Embracing positive inclusion seems to be a growing culture in Gloucestershire, and the Inclusion Team have received many requests for support. These have ranged from supporting young people with ADHD, Autism and behavioural needs to supporting commissioners and managers to improve provision within their district or group.



Here's some of the support we've offered this year:

"Working closely with leaders at an Explorer Scout Unit, enabled a young person to return to weekly meetings after suffering from extreme anxiety following the pandemic, and other personal issues." - Gloucester

"Leaders were told one of their Scouts was going for an Asperger's (Autism) Syndrome assessment and needed advice on how to support the young person. A member of the team spoke over the phone, email and visited to give as much support as possible." – Cotswold Vale

"Leaders became concerned about the behaviour of one of their young people. He's parents were going through a tricky divorce, and he was struggling. Working closely with the leaders, meant he was supported and could continue to go to Scouts." - Gloucester

"We met with a leader who is hoping to open a Scout Group within a Special Needs School." – Forest of Dean

"A teenager with Autism had joined a local Explorer Scout Unit and the leaders' wanted reassurance that what they were doing was right. They were, and it was great to see the young person accessing Scouting successfully." - Gloucester

"We also supported a District Commissioner when a parent complained about the provision their Autistic son was offered within a Scout Group. It was resolved positively." - Gloucester

Next year we plan to offer more support and guidance to all leaders in Gloucestershire.

Look out for the Inclusion Awareness Calendar coming out soon, online drop-in and training sessions, and access to more resources via the County website.

*Gary Law
ACC Inclusion*

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PROGRAMME

Since the last annual review was produced it has been wonderful to see scouting across the county really start to bounce back something we really recognise as more and more programme was being offered for young people.

I said in the last report we were looking forward to large face to face events coming back and this was kicked off in October 2021 when BEAST brought together 170 young people, followed by S&E back in June 2022 and the move of Evolution to a Cub age range event is really positive for young people across our county.

I am looking forward to 2022 ending strong with opportunities for young people to take part in big events at BEAST, BALD EAGLE JOTI/JOTA and NETWORK BALL showing that Gloucestershire Scouting has lots of programmes to offer as we continue to support and inspire young people to have amazing balanced programmes.



Squirrels - from little acorns

It is really great to see the growth of our 6th section, Squirrels, with 6 dreys in the county and more to come over the next 6 months. Please read more on page 13 about our first County Squirrel event that took place in May. I am looking forward to the 1st Birthday of Squirrels in 2023 and the fun and celebrations we can have to make the success and growth of this section.

Still to come

2023 is going to be an amazing year with our units heading off to Jamboree you can find out more about their journey so far later in the report. and Haarlem and more and more programme taking place for young people.

More programme champions

During the early part of 2022, we revisited the Inspiring programme award and it was great to be able to present 4 awards to:

- **Nick Taylor** (Tewkesbury),
- **Lauren Greening** (Cheltenham)
- **Louise Slee** (Cheltenham) and
- **Rebecca Daniels** (Cotswold Vale).

Please look out for people around the county wearing the inspiring programme necker and ask them about their programme.

I hope to be presenting more neckers before the end of 2022 however if you wish to nominate someone you feel offers an inspiring programme to young people please follow this link and let us know <https://gscouts.org.uk/programme/inspiring-programmes-award>



Please feel free to reach out to me or members of the county programme team we love to come along and be part of your section's programme and not just for the boring presentations but for the fun stuff too. Programme is a key part of what we do and the fact that young people come back week after week is down to you. So a thank you for your efforts in making the programme exciting and relevant to young people.

Chris Meadows
DCC – Programme

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SECTIONS IN SCOUTING

We are lucky to have a dedicated group of Assistant County Commissioners supporting sections and this year we get to see our first ever Squirrels report!

Squirrels

September 2021 saw the officially launch of Scouting's newest section: Squirrels. The new section is all about making an impact and enabling new skills for life at a time when it matters the most between the ages of 4 and 6, and follows the steps of our Beavers, Cubs, Scouts & Explorer sections:

In Gloucestershire, we are proud to have 6 Squirrel Dreys already opening reaching 60+ 4-6 year olds and already they have achieved so much.

Aiming for the top: Chief Scout's Acorn Award

Congratulations to the first ever Squirrels in Gloucestershire who have earned the top Chief Scout's Acorn Award! 10 Squirrels from **1st Newent** have been awarded this fantastic achievement.



Squirrels! Go Wild! County Adventure Day



On Saturday 28th May 2022, Gloucestershire Scouts held the first ever Squirrels event at Cranham Scout Centre bringing together Squirrels from all over the County.

Based on the inspiring book by Julia Donaldson, 'Stick Man', the Squirrels enjoyed a story-themed day.



A first event to make new friends and incredible memories through fun and adventure.



Dursley Squirrels get all royal for camp visit

On Saturday 21st May 2022, a handful of Squirrel Scouts from **1st Dursley** got their first taste of camp by visiting their groups Beaver camp.

During their visit, the Squirrels went totally royal by making their own crowns and shields.

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Beyond 2022

We will be continuing to support groups across the County in opening Squirrel Dreys. In September, we are excited for **1st Prestbury & 1st Wotton Under Edge** who will be welcoming Squirrels.

We also will be celebrating the Squirrel's 1st Birthday with an event planned at Cranham for all the family to come and join in October, plus another County story-themed event. In addition, a Squirrels Volunteer Network event is being planned to bring volunteers from across the County together.



Nic Coates
ACC – Squirrels
Rishona Steward
County Advisor - Squirrels



I was very lucky to have been able to visit the first Evolution for Cubs. The team of volunteers that ran the event did a superb job.

Winners of Evolution 2022



It was wonderful to be able to talk to quite a few Cubs that had taken part on the Saturday and to hear how much they had all loved it.

None of them said that they would change anything. It was also great to hear the comments from the Leaders. They also enjoyed the event but not so much the very early wake up call on Saturday morning.



I ran an afternoon where Cub Leaders were invited to give us their ideas on things that were a struggle with programme, events that they would like to see the County run, how they would like the top awards celebrated amongst some other things.

A lot was gained from the event, and I hope to get some teams together in the near future to put some of these ideas in motion.

Ruthie Stennett
ACC - Cubs

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ACTIVITIES

Activities all over!

Overall Activities have continued to be delivered across the County in support of quality programme delivery – our thanks go out to all those who have been involved in making it happen.

We are very lucky that we have a good number of volunteers who can and are willing to lead adventurous activities, but we can always grow the team more so that we can provide even more activities to young people across the County.

96 adults in Gloucestershire hold a Land based Activity Permit covering activities including Archery, Caving, Climbing, Hill-walking and snowsports.

We are also blessed to have 131 volunteers that hold a Water based Activity Permit giving access to Bell Boating, Canoeing, Dinghy Sailing, Kayaking, Narrow boating, Power boating, Pulling and Rafting.

Additionally we have 240 volunteers who hold a Nights Away Permit.

If you are interested in getting an activities permit, check out this link:

<https://www.scouts.org.uk/volunteers/running-your-section/programme-guidance/activity-permit-scheme/applicants-guide/>



The role of the MAPS

All of the assessments for these are carried out by a team of excellent assessors, overseen by our ACCs for Activities (Adam and Ron), our Manager of the Activity Permit Scheme (MAPS) (also, Ron). Some members have asked what a MAPS does, so we thought this was a good opportunity to point out the main tasks undertaken:

- identify and support potential County Assessors in taking up the role
- carry out checks as to potential County Assessors' suitability for the role
- induct new County Assessors into their role
- ensure a Training Adviser is appointed for all new County Assessors and that appropriate training is in place
- provide continued support to County Assessors within their role
- provide opportunities for assessors to shadow and work with different assessors and to meet and discuss previous assessments
- manage the availability of permit assessments within the County
- work with MAPS from other Counties to co-ordinate support and opportunities
- support those applying for activity permits in finding the opportunities required
- support DC's with their role within the activity permit scheme
- ensure Continued Professional Development (CPD) opportunities and CPD for all County Assessors
- carry out reviews of County Assessors when their appointments are up for review
- carry out an annual moderation of the County permit scheme provision by the end of each January

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Activities Assessor moderation day

On **Saturday 22nd October** at **Cranham** – there will be an Activities Assessor moderation day, supported by two National Assessors.

If you are a current Activity Assessor and want to come along, please get in touch with Ron via maps@gloucestershire-scouts.org.uk



16 hour Outdoor First Aid

If you are operating in an environment or hold a National Governing Body qualification that requires it please get in touch with Adam via acc.activities@gloucestershire-scouts.org.uk

We will start a list of those who need it and when we hit the magic number the course will run; normally based in Tewkesbury at a weekend.



Important role – vacancy

Finally, we are still looking for a Scout Activities Support Unit (SASU) Manager to run the team of County Skills Instructors.

Ideally, we would like someone who doesn't have other roles so that they can focus on establishing the SASU, however, applications are open to anyone over the age of 18 so please contact us to discuss further if you are interested.

The SASU Manager is responsible for the management, leadership, and day-to-day running of the SASU. They will work with the support of the ACC Activities, and the MAPS to support the provision of permit assessments and provide leadership support to the Skills Instructors. The Manager will ensure the SASU agreement is reviewed annually to ensure that the targets set are being accomplished. Should you wish to apply for the role, or have a discussion about it, please contact Adam at acc.activities@gscouts.org.uk

Could it be you?

We've recently moved our emails to Office 365, so the ACC Activities Team now has three different email addresses worth noting: acc.activities@gloucestershire-scouts.org.uk for Adam (ACC Activities) and acc.activities2@gloucestershire-scouts.org.uk for Ron.

In addition, Ron also undertakes the Manager of the Activity Permit Scheme (MAPS) via maps@gloucestershire-scouts.org.uk



*Adam Griffiths
Ron Shell
ACC Activities team*

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ACTIVITY – Climbing

2021-22 was a busy year for the team despite COVID restrictions, and across the year we were able to provide climbing activities for more than 400 young people. We've made lots of use of the wall at Cheltenham Ladies College this year.

By using a private wall, we were able to start up again in April 2021 when public walls seemed less appropriate.

Later in the year we got back to Far Peak (Northleach), The Warehouse (Gloucester) and Redpoint (Worcester), running sessions for Cub Packs, Scout Troops and Explorer Units.



We ran our first session at Boulders in Cheltenham towards the end of 2021. They only opened in late 2020 and whilst some of us have been using it for personal climbing this was the first time we'd taken a group. It proved to be a good facility for a different style of session, focusing on movement technique compared to the ropework side of climbing.

Running bouldering in Scouting doesn't require a permit, but the wall will expect you to be competent supervising the group, so it's worth having some experience. **Get in touch if you'd like an induction**, or for one of us to come and help run a session. We've got a set of resources for bouldering games which you're welcome to borrow.

As well as sessions for individual groups, we ran two runs of a 4-week badge course to complement the 2-day course which regularly runs at The Warehouse in half terms.

Between the two runs, 30 young people completed their Scout or Explorer Climber badge, learning how to tie in, belay, climb efficiently, abseil, and look after the equipment. We hope to run similar sessions again this year, so keep an eye out for information in the Badge Course emails sent out by Paddy Langham.

We managed to get outside too, both with young people and for instructor training, resulting in two new outdoor permits. We also went further afield as a leadership team this year, heading to the Peak District where we climbed at Windgather Rocks and The Roches, staying at the well located Gradbach Scout Campsite.

We've also added wire ladder climbing to our repertoire, giving us a climbing-related activity we're able to run in the Grove at Cranham.

It's been a busy year for nationally recognised awards. Late in 2020, five of the team did the training for the Climbing Wall Instructor award, and spent 2021 consolidating, followed up by them passing their assessments early in 2022.



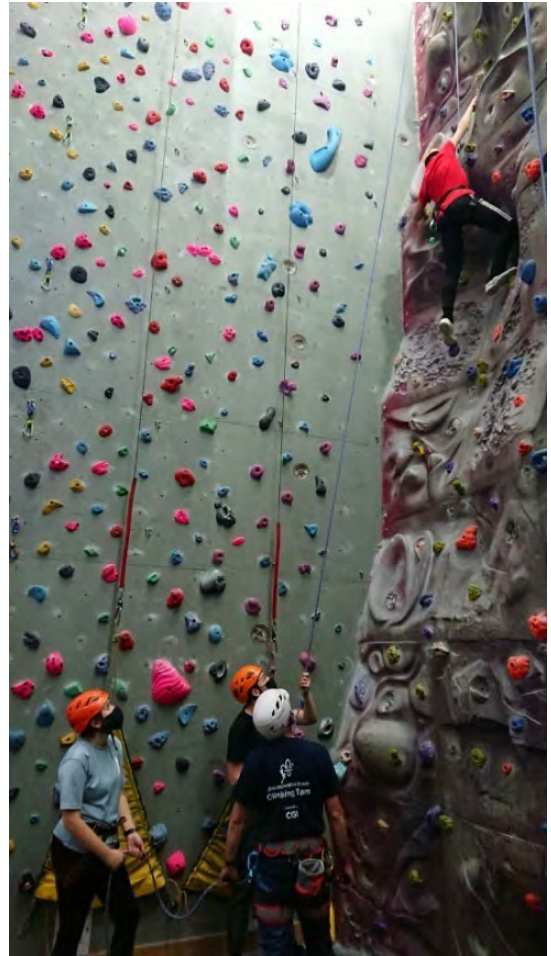
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Team members also attended BMC FUNDamentals workshops and one passed the Rock Climbing Development Instructor award, adding the teaching of lead climbing outdoors to our capabilities. We've restarted CPD/social climbing sessions for leaders this year, as well as offering a new set of permit training. Email climbing@gloucestershire-scouts.org.uk to get yourself added to the list, or see the County activities Facebook group.

The County Climbing Team aim to provide opportunities to climb both by running sessions for young people, and running training sessions and assessments for leaders to help them gain their own permits. County holds a full set of equipment which is available for use by permit holders in return for a small contribution towards the wear and tear.

We're always looking for more team members, so if you'd like to get involved then please contact us via email, climbing@gloucestershire-scouts.org.uk

Finally, a massive thanks to the team for all they've done this year. Despite the challenges of Covid, we've managed to offer climbing to groups from across the county, helping more young people to experience it in a safe and enjoyable environment.



Andy Ross
County Climbing Advisor

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ACTIVITY – Badge courses

This year's report again takes the form of a number of articles adapted from our regular newsletters. (Paddy)

Scouts Narrowboat Adventure Weekend

On Friday 11th March 2022...

I met at Shurdington Scouts building, the other scouts (who I didn't know) I would be on the weekend with them. I was the only Scout from my Troop (DPK) this didn't bother me in the slightest because everyone was friendly. We all waited for the leaders and the minibuses. Once they arrived, we were split into two groups of 8 with two leaders on each minibus.



We left Shurdington around 6pm ish by the time we had put our kit on and found a seat. We arrived in Harefield at around 7:30pm and went aboard our home for the weekend.

I was on a two-cylinder narrowboat called Pisces while the other group were on a four-cylinder narrowboat called Merlin (this information will become clear later).

We unpacked a little as there was little room. We had

spag boll for dinner.

We travelled on the narrowboat a short distance, to turn the boats around to be ready in the morning in the right direction.

My sleeping area was in the front area of the boat which as it turned out could be a little annoying as it vibrated.

The vibration was because the engine charges the house battery. But I soon got used to this.

On Saturday 12th March 2022 ...

We woke, washed, dressed, and had breakfast bacon and sausages, this was cooked by one of the leaders called Mike (very nice and tasty – thank you).

We then drove the boat up to Tesco (yes there was a mooring next to Tesco) and went shopping for food which we were going to prepare and cook for the rest of the trip.

Within our boat we were put into groups, so we took turns to either manage the locks or steer the boat or be on lookout/watch.



We were asked if we wanted to, to take and wear silly hats – apparently this amuses the fishermen along the route. Those who did wear them didn't wear them for long (I think they were a little shy).

We went through a few locks and were getting the hang of them, then we realised disaster had struck other boat within a lock next to us, unfortunately the four-cylinder narrowboat had broken down.

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The boats cylinders had over heated and took a long while to cool down, then the leaders realised it wasn't something that could be fixed easily. A decision was made, that our boat (with two cylinders) would tow the broken boat (that had four).

There was a bit of teasing going on between our two boats as to who's boat was better / faster. The broken boat was probably faster (when working)

but ours didn't break down although slower was more reliable!

In the evening to pass the time before bed after mooring up for the night we played games.

On Sunday 13th March 2022

We had cooked for us sausages and bacon by Mike, mainly because we all forgot to buy milk for the cereal, whoops!

9am we were in the Watford area of the Grand Union Canal.

It was time to turn around and head back to Harefield to meet the minibuses.

For dinner we made Tikka Masala and rice with fruit and spray cream for dessert.

This weekend's adventure had gone all too quickly!



Conclusion

Ok, so we didn't get as far as we would have likes up the Grand Union Canal due to a breakdown of the other boat, yes we did then travel slower because we were towing it, but that's what team work is about. It made all the more adventurous and I won't forget it.

We still all managed to earn our power coxswain badge and I learnt new skills and knowledge. Met up with scouts from different troops and made a new good friend.



I had a fantastic time, I would recommend you give it a go, you have nothing to lose and much to gain.

A huge thank you to all the leaders who gave their weekend up to take us all. You are all awesome

Robin

Scout - Deer Park Kemble



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Badge Weekend

Twenty-one Scouts had a great weekend at Cranham working toward their Electronics, Geocaching or Naturalist badge.

Electronics Badge

It was a pleasure to help the Scouts learn something about the fascinating hobby of Electronics. There is some theory to understand the basics but then we move to practical skills.



Besides learning how to solder, without any incidents, they all managed to build three working projects. One was built using wire cutters, screwdrivers and a hot glue gun, the second was soldered and the third used a plug-in prototype board. All the projects were taken home much to the delight of the Scouts and their parents.

*Dave Hall
County Training Team*

Mechanics Badge

Nine Scouts gathered at the Cheltenham District HQ to complete their Mechanics Badge. Firstly, they were shown several videos on how a car works: these included the engine, gear box, rear differential and brakes etc.

After lunch they got to work changing wheels, light bulbs, wiper blades and doing engine oil checks. Many thanks to Brendan Molony and his team for running a very useful course.



Naturalist Badge

The naturalist badge course went very well this year. We had 4 scouts on the course, and they were all very enthusiastic. We looked at man's impact on the environment by investigating poaching in Africa and we looked at the effect of traditional and electric fuelled cars on the environment.



The next morning, they chose their site to investigate and decided on a site by the stream in the woods. They focused on insect life and investigating tracks and traces of mammals.

They were extremely excited to find traces of water voles. We went out on the Saturday evening to see if we could find bats using our bat detector, but it was raining and we found no trace. We thought they were being sensible and staying inside while it rained.

*Catherine Coolican-Smith
1st Ruardean*

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Expedition Challenge Weekends

Easter saw 20 Scouts from 7 troops complete 2 weekends to achieve their Expedition Challenge Award. The two weekends were quite a contrast, the first being a cold -5C overnight and the second a pleasant sunny one.

Weekend 1 was based in Eastcombe Scout HQ. Having arrived and put up the county tents the group spent much of the evening playing various games so that they got to know everyone else.

Saturday was spent out on an adult lead hike where the majority of the expedition training was completed en route; it's always much easier to talk about a church with a tower being next door to the crossroads on the map when you can see them on the ground.

Although each patrol had a different route with their adult, we all mysteriously met up at the Chalford Lock for lunch. Post lunch we carried on with the expedition training which included the effects of temperature about the time it started to snow.

Expedition Food was then prepared on Trangias, a new experience for many of the course, some of whom were doing the course as their first Scout Camp.



Yellow patrol on hike during weekend 1

Weekend 2 was the main expedition. Each patrol was given a separate route starting near Colesbourne and hiking to Cranham. All the patrols demonstrated that they had learnt the expedition skills from their troops and the first weekend and completed the first day with very few 'diversions'. It was admirable the way that the patrols stuck together and supported each other, one of the expedition skills that is frequently overlooked.

In camp we repeated the Expedition Catering with much success on the custard this time. Phil, Ebony, Ian and Patricia then ran a rousing campfire before a good night's rest was had by all. Sunday was the shorter day with many of the patrols meeting at Barrow Wake to eat lunch looking out over the Gloucester Plain before completing the course at Cowley Guide Centre.

All patrols completing at very similar times - **Well done to you all.**

*Phil Hallett
Course leader*



Explorer Scout Young Leaders – Module A

Derek & Ryan instructing on Module A

Since September we have been able to run six sessions up at Cranham with a total of sixty-two Young Leaders completing Module A.

To begin with we had to follow strict covid rules, keeping numbers down, well-spaced seating and masks.

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Climber badge

On the 13 and 14 of April during the Easter holidays the County Scout Climber badge was held. On day one after initially meeting the group we lead them upstairs to a room that they would be using as a base for the two days, they then split off into smaller groups for the day with each of the three instructors take one or two groups.



They learnt how to tie into a rope, climb up and down a climbing wall safely as well as much more they all climbed at least three climbs each many much more.

On the morning of the second day everyone in the group attempted to have a go at an abseil as seen in the pictures, overall, it was a great badge course that all love and had fun on.



*David
Adder's Tongue ESU
(also gained the Climber Instructor Badge)*

Many thanks to the many leaders who ran these courses.

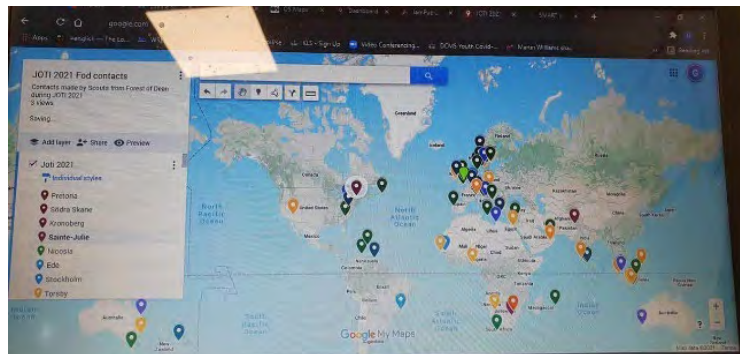
*Paddy Langham
County Badge Course Co-ordinator*

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INTERNATIONAL

With constantly changing Covid safety guidelines and travel restrictions, it is no surprise that no international visits from the County took place in 2021.

However, several groups in Gloucestershire took part in the largest Scout event in the world - JOTA/JOTI, which takes place every year, and attracts **over 2 million participants**.



Map showing where contacts were made by Forest of Dean participants in 2022

It's no longer just about crackling voices and Morse code over the radio but is now a full weekend promoting friendship and global citizenship through global campfires, talent shows, live shows, fun challenges and more through an interactive 3D campsite.

If you missed last year's the 2022 event will be held from **14th to 16th October**.

Find details on this year's County event on our [Gscouts website](#).



International experiences

As 2022 progresses, international travel has opened up again, and I'm delighted that our first **Explorer Belt expedition** since 2019 was successfully completed by **Jade Crane and Ryan Hawkins**, who walked a considerable portion of the Dutch coastline while completing a project on the historic fortifications.

By the time you read this, two other groups should have completed a Visit Abroad in 2022:

- **Forest of Dean Scouts and Explorers** camped in **Belgium**, where their itinerary included a visit to the Menin Gate; and,
- **from Cheltenham, 1st Hatherley Scouts and Explorers** are visiting **Switzerland** in August, including a visit to Kandersteg International Scouting Centre.

Scouts & Explorers from the Forest Of Dean in Brussels, Belgium



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Global Programme

In January, the presence of an International Scout delegation at COP26, including an address by Bear Grylls in his role as Chief Ambassador of World Scouting, was a reminder of our organisation's commitment to improving our planet by cooperating with other countries.



Whilst in the UK, our main focus in the last year was on delivering as active a programme as possible, Scouts in many other countries were still providing support on the ground to those affected by the pandemic and other emergencies.

Lebanese Scouts provided refuge and support to the victims of the Beirut explosion, whilst Hong Kong Scouts distributed Pandemic support kits.

Scouts in Malaysia, Madagascar, Zambia helped with essential services following various floods and typhoons.

Scouts and their Leaders in Ukraine itself showed not only Scouting values, but also extreme bravery when they were among the first to provide humanitarian aid to those displaced by the invasion, often at considerable risk to themselves.

Some of our local groups in Gloucestershire have raised funds for global causes and welcomed young refugees from Ukraine (whether they were previously Scouts or not) into their meetings.

Looking forward

Several more Visits Abroad are in the pipeline for the next year, most notable being sending a full unit of Explorers from Gloucestershire to the 25th World Scout Jamboree in Korea, and a Countywide unit of Scouts and Explorers to the Haarlem Jamborette in the Netherlands.

You can read more about the preparations for WSJ 2023 on the next page.

None of these visits could take place without the support of many leaders, not all of whom get to take part in the trips, and I am very grateful to the amazing volunteers we have in Gloucestershire who provide these opportunities for the young people.



If you aren't able to plan a visit abroad just yet, there are plenty of UK based activities that can make our young people aware of how 57 million Scouts worldwide can work together to make our world a better place (and earn some badges as well).

Contact me if you would like some support for any International or Global activities.

ACC.International@gloucestershire-scouts.org.uk

Chris Langham
ACC International

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WORLD JAMBOREE 2023



It's been a busy 12 months for the Unit 81 (Gloucestershire) Leadership Team comprising: Chris Slater, Steve Jackson, Lucy Tregoning and Pete Ronan.

After a series of WSJ 2023 Roadshows held at venues across the County in September, a selection weekend and an additional selection evening were held in October 2021 at the Penn Wood Scout Activity Centre in Stroud and Hucclecote Scout Hut in Gloucester respectively.

Once the results were compiled, 36 young people were notified that they had been successful at selection and were offered a participants place for **WSJ 2023 to South Korea**. Three YP have subsequently withdrawn from the Unit for personal reasons but have been replaced with the 3 top placed reserves.

Since selection, the Unit have met on a monthly basis, predominantly face to face but also virtually.

Two training camps were held in February and April and the Unit also supported the Strategy & Evolution camps in June, providing help in the Cafe, Activity bases, Tuck Shop, Explorers Retreat, Packed Meal production, etc.

The Unit meetings and training camps have been focused on preparing the Young People and leaders for the Jamboree experience and the recent heatwave has provided an insight into the temperatures that may be experienced.

The majority of Young People have worked hard at raising the £4,000 participants fee and many have used innovative means to fund raise, either individually or in small teams. Donations have been received from various sources including most of the Districts; Scout Groups; various Trusts; organisations such as Rotary Clubs and Lions organisations; and several private businesses.

As of 31st July, all participants were keeping up with the payment schedule, which is impressive against a backdrop of a challenging economic environment.

The next major event on the journey to South Korea next August is an international trip to Europe during the October 2022 Half Term. This will provide the participants with an experience of international travel (air and train journeys) and 5 days away from the UK in an alien environment.

With 11 months to go to the start of the WSJ 2023, Gloucestershire Unit 81 are currently well placed in their preparations for this unique opportunity.



Steve Jackson
Assistant Unit Leader

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TOP AWARDS

Queen's Scout Award

At this year's annual celebration of Queen's Scout Awards Alex Hawkins, Ruby Gardner and Alexandra Jenkins attended, in some cases significantly delayed due to the pandemic.



TOP AWARDS

DofE

Scouting in Gloucestershire is full of amazing Young People, but you knew that. Among you are the proud holders of their new(ish) Duke of Edinburgh Award, having completed them in the past year. Congratulations to you all and WELL DONE.

- Gold – **Joe** (Tewkesbury District)
- Silver – **James** (Forest of Dean District)
- Bronze for **Jessica & Toby** (North Cotswold District)

Around the County there are lots more Young People busily working towards their DofE Awards, currently **42 for Bronze, 32 Silver and 39 working on Gold.**

Many Young People have been carrying on with their Volunteering, Physical and Skill sections.

The variety and breadth of activities undertaken by Young People is amazing, giving their time to Volunteer with Riding for Disabled, OxFam, St John's Ambulance, Girlguiding, Park Run, church choirs, and food banks, as well as the many of them that are Young Leaders within our younger sections – even Squirrels!

Running, walking, cycling, ballet and fitness classes have long been favourite activities for the physical section, but it's great to see people having a go with something a bit different like bare foot water skiing, dingy sailing, Morris-dancing or even dog agility.

Expeditions are slowly getting going again as everyone is emerging from the enforced hibernation phase, a shout out to the Explorers from Random ESU. Who having spent the winter of 2019/2020 training, planning and prepping kit for their Bronze expedition, had to patiently wait until finally on a lovely St. George's weekend this April they were able to complete their expeditions 2 years later than planned.

It's great to see Scouting offering the DofE to Young People and how it has the simplicity of mapping the DofE Awards across to the Platinum, Diamond Chief and Queen's Scout Awards, enabling our Young People to achieve so much more.

Lastly, to all the volunteer adults who give so much to enable these Young People to have these opportunities to thrive and achieve these awards **THANK YOU.**

Andy Holter
County DofE Advisor

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Round the Districts

Every year we invite Districts to share with you all what has been happening locally, this year read about what has been going on in Cheltenham and Tewkesbury.

Cheltenham District

Every Section bar Scout Troops has grown and that has held its number of Youth at last year's level. Scout Troops have been hovering at the same number now for 7 years in a row, though of course not with the same Young People.

Beaver Colonies have had their second best ever year!! At 278 Young Beavers, this is just 10 lower than the previous record of four years ago.

Recruitment

We have been having a recruitment drive across all levels and with continuing success using the Platinum Jubilee Event at Sandford Park to showcase Scouting at it best

Diversity & Inclusion

This is now well established as an ongoing awareness and principle in Cheltenham involving trying to make sure that all areas of society are included in Scouting, and that they know they can be included. So, it includes ethnic and religious diversity as well as the inclusion of people from the LGBTQ+ groups. The biggest lack that I noticed was that there were very few, if any, Muslims involved in Scouting in Cheltenham.

With this in mind, I have joined Cheltenham Inter-faith group and am now in contact with a Muslim PCSO who is being extremely helpful in getting a mosque-based Scout Group up and running, as well as adding to my contacts with the Hindu Community.



Youth Shaped Scouting

This again, has had a huge boost this year and I'm sure that everyone has now had a chance to see all the new resources.

I have been particularly proud of the work members have been putting in to integrate the new YouShape award into their programmes.

Groups have begun embedding this award into their programmes and I have received numerous requests for support to ensure that it is fully embedded into their programmes.

It takes no thought to implement and supports young people enjoying their time within scouting.



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Cheltenham District (continued)

BEAVERS

We have 17 colonies that span the length and breadth of our District all delivering amazing inspiring programme for some of our youngest members. In the past year they have been:

- Cooking and healthy lifestyles
- Entertaining each other with puppets, song, and dance
- Learning to do magic and circus skills
- Visiting Cranham for outdoor skills
- Making Poppy cards for Remembrance Day
- Doing Christmas food bank collections
- On trips to amusement parks

cubs

Cub leaders to get a more in-depth flavour of what they have been up to alongside what I have been able to see as Youth Commissioner. All the packs are back meeting regularly with numbers slightly increasing. Amazing programme is being delivered by all 20 packs across the entire breadth of the District.

A few of the activities that have gone on in the last year: -

- Helping the local community with litter picking
- Indoor campfires
- Planting trees
- Talent shows
- Trips to amusement parks

SCOUTS

This year saw us emerge from Online Scouting to Outdoor Scouting, with many groups preferring to meet outside for adventurous hikes and cooking on open fires.

It was the year of the 'great outdoors' for one group who used Cranham's fields as their base for over half the year, with campfires, wide games and incident hikes.



EXPLORERS



Very many congratulations go to the team from **Devil's Chimney ESU** who won the Keith Aston Trophy for completing the 20-mile Silver Cotswold Marathon Route with a time of 6 hours and 6 minutes! That's almost fast enough to set the trail ablaze!!

Elsewhere, Explorers have been hiking camping and axe throwing, among very many other adventures.



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network

It was great to see a group of Network Members complete or progress their Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award.

They took time out to pay their respects to HRH the late Prince Philip (1921 -2021) Duke of Edinburgh who gave so much and left the World in a better place than he found it.



*Godfrey Tarling
District Commissioner*

Tewkesbury District

Good to see scouting coming back after disruption of C19. With so many teams across all sections organizing camps.

Strategy and Evolution was well attended

One Scout Troop is attending Poacher in Lincolnshire.

Winchcombe Scouts, Woodmancote Scouts and Red Wolves Explorers had a weeklong camp run by Lynsey and Derek Platt and their team. Amazing activities and pictures.

I have been able to visit some fantastic activities locally, one being the Jubilee Beacon run by Gotherington group attended by the Lord Lieutenant.

Tewkesbury District Bushcraft team invited us to an end of term BBQ evening which was amazing. Venison burgers made on site and the axe throwing team.

Going forward we are progressing with our plan of a water group and water weekend this weekend.

I applied for a grant for Buoyancy Aids and was successful, we are now looking for grants for canoes and equipment.

We have secure storage for the equipment and intend to give all Tewkesbury District YP the opportunity to get on the water.



*Chris Lodwig
District Commissioner*

Update: Water weekend looks to have been an amazing success. Some photos below:



Bell boats ahoy!

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TRANSFORMATION

Editor – this is a new report for 2022 that we will see continue for the next few years. Matt, welcome to the team.

What is coming?

This review is a little short as I have only been in post for a short period. For those that don't know I was appointed the Transformation Lead for Gloucestershire, what does this mean you ask?

You may be aware that there are some changes coming to Scouting, all with a view to making Scouting **easier and more fun for volunteers.**

The transformation team is here to help deliver the vision from volunteers and HQ so that we don't stagnate, we are a 'movement' after all.

The team will be here to help dispel any myths that might appear, help ease in some of the changes and provide all round support for individuals, groups and districts.



The current team: (L-R) Mark Spiller, Harry Gibbens, Kat Holter, Godfrey Tarling & Matt Johnson

You may ask what the changes are: The current confirmed changes can be found on the testing hub at www.scouts.org.uk/about-us/testing-hub, where they have been for about 18 months now. The team will be communicating out more details as we are provided with these.

If you look today, you'll start to see the work that is being done in four key focus areas:

1. **A warmer welcome for everyone**
2. **Simplifying how we volunteer together with new roles and structures.**
3. **More support to get everyday things done: digital transformation**
4. **A more engaging learning experience**

Some members may believe that the "digital transformation" is going to make things less accessible or not take into consideration the broad levels of confidence and knowledge that we have amongst our volunteer members, however key message we want to share at this stage is; although our digital transformation will underpin a lot of how we move forward as a movement it is going to be **digital first, NOT; digital only.**

We know that change is something that can be challenging for us all. We have been assured that there will be a range of support and resources available to volunteers via both our local transformation team as well as The Scout Association support teams to enable you all to feel that you can continue to deliver and support the high quality and inspiring programmes the way that you have always done.

We are seeking some extra hands to ensure that the changes get rolled out smoothly. Email transformation@gloucestershire-scouts.org.uk for an informal chat of what the role involves.

Matt Johnson
County Transformation Lead
(Pictured with Carl Hankinson – UK Chief Commissioner)



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OUR VISION AND STRATEGY FOR 2022 and beyond

In October 2021, at the Chantry Centre in Dursley members of District and County teams came together to look at what next for our direction in Scouting across Gloucestershire. We explored the successes we have had in our Vision 2020, look at how we are working together, learned from other areas and then set about trying to define the direction for Gloucestershire Scouts for the coming years.



Although this will be under the leadership of a new County Commissioner, DCs, District Teams and Executives shared their views to help us shape a new vision. In our minds we have kept and tried to align to the Vision of the Scout Association: **By 2025 we'll have prepared more young people with skills for life, supported by amazing leaders delivering an inspiring programme. We'll be growing, more inclusive, shaped by young people and making a bigger impact in our communities.**

Focusing on this and recognising the things we really want to drive further forwards we developed our new Vision.

Our Vision for Scouting in Gloucestershire is

By 2025, we aspire to have a community of young people and adults who are prepared for their future and be able to achieve their potential.

The language used in the Vision is very intentional because we recognise:

- Not everyone's version of "personal success in Scouting" is the same.
- Every individual has differing levels of potential.

With these two points in mind we want to try and create a culture in Scouting where every individual can access what they need to make the most of their time in Gloucestershire Scouts.

This vision is underpinned by three words that will help guide us: **Aspire, Prepare & Achieve.**

What do we mean by Aspire, Prepare & Achieve?

Aspire

- To provide relevant and inclusive programme
- To be well led and youth shaped

Prepare

- Young people - skills for life
- Volunteers - to lead and support

Achieve

- The aspirations of young people and adults
- Through access to relevant, inclusive and engaging programme opportunities

We will be sharing more information with you all soon including the kinds of things that you will see that will help us all work together to achieve.

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Our final SCORE CARD

This is the final report card for our Vision 2020 which we extended for 2022.

Firstly, it should be noted that when I took on the role of County Commissioner over at the AGM in 2017, over 40 attendees filled in a Postcard to state what they would do to help us all achieve our Vision. Thank you for all of you that have contributed in any way towards the many successes we have had over the past 5 years.

So how did we do?

Below are the key aims we had in mind and how we think we have progressed...

Youth Involvement

District Youth Commissioners in all Districts	We are working on this! X
Young people on Execs and Appointments Panels	Even more progress

Recognition of our implementation of the Adult Training Scheme	✓
<i>New: Adult mandatory training 95% complete</i>	✓

People

Vetting & Appointments complete in 5 months	Good progress
Getting started completed within 5 months	Good progress
Year on year increase in Wood Badges	✓
Adults recognised for their contribution to Scouting	More than ever before

Programme

More nights away	Work in progress
More international experiences	✓
More Top Awards	Work in progress (Covid impact)
Evidence of quality programme in every section (Quality Programme Conversations)	Good progress

We believe that when Great, Youth Shaped Programmes are delivered by a huge team of engaged volunteers, more young people will want to join us. Even though we were significantly impacted by Covid-19, we believe we are on track to report that more Young People are enjoying Scouting in Gloucestershire than ever before. What a great new story! Helping give even more young people skills for life and amazing experiences.

All of this is entirely down to YOU and the role that YOU do in Scouting. Thank you so much on behalf of every young person, whose life in some small way you have improved.



That's me signing off now, thank you for reading this and thanks for all your support.

Mark