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8th Annual General Meeting

Oxford Road Scout Group

Saturday 11th June 2016

**AGENDA**

1. Welcome
2. Approval of the minutes for the AGM held on 13th June 2015
3. Chairman’s Report
4. Group Scout Leader’s (GSLs) Report
5. Section updates and Adoption of Reports
6. Treasurer’s Report and Adoption of Accounts
7. Approval of GSLs nomination of Chairman
8. Election of Group Officers:
   1. Secretary
   2. Treasurer
   3. Scrutineer
9. Approval of GSLs nomination of President
10. Election of members to the Group Executive
11. Approval of GSLs nominations to the Group Executive
12. Date of the next Annual General Meeting – 10th June 2017
13. Date of the next Group Executive Committee
14. District comments and presentations
15. Closing remarks and Barbecue

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**103rd Reading (Oxford Road) Scout Group**  

**Minutes of Annual General Meeting June 13th 2015**

1. **Welcome, introductions and apologies**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Martine Albrighton-Mills (BL) | Hazel Addington (helper) |
| Phil Addington (GSL) | Samantha Brooks (F) |
| Magadalena Belina (P) | Ryszard Belina (P) |
| Glenn Burden (P) | Ting Chung (P) |
| Nick Church (VC) | Teresa Collias (NAG) |
| Stephanie Clark (P) | Nicki Ellis (P) |
| Nikki Ellis (P) | Clare Espley (P) |
| Matt Espley (P) | Nicola Fishwick (P) |
| Roger Fleming (C) | Gareth Ford (P) |
| Sarah Hacker (P/Local Councillor) | Sarah Heneghan (P) |
| Lauren Jackson (ABL) | Chris Jones (ASCL) |
| Ludcan Kalinonski (P) | Tiffany Kelly (helper) |
| Sam Kelly (BL) | Mark Kinton (F) |
| Ellie King (P) | Michaela Kodadoua (P) |
| Gary Knight (P) | Catarina Martins (P) |
| Charlie Lines (P) | John McNicholas (CL) |
| Nailene Martins (F) | Sally Anne O’Regan (P) |
| Rita Mitchell (ACL) | Hannah Pappenberger (P) |
| Florian Pappenberger(P/EC) | Sandra Rodrigues (P) |
| Douglas Rae (DC) | Craig Smith (P) |
| Emma Raven (P) | Ann Snowdon (S) |
| Liam Sandford (ABL) | Luke Trimby (BL) |
| Rebecca Smith (P) | Debbie Watson (ACL) |
| Bob Spokes (SL) | Sarah, Taylor & Lacey (P/F) |
| Katie Wallis (ASL) | Keith Willitt (DS) |

51people attended the AGM including Executive officers, parents, councillors and guests. Other friends and families also attended the Annual Review to enjoy the outdoor activities.

Apologies were received from Ian May, Paul Bandy, Chris Maskell, Barry Johnson, Barrie Newby, Jay Shah and Father Nicholas Cheeseman.

The AGM was opened with songs from both Beaver Colonies.

1. **Approval of the minutes for the AGM held on 14th June 2014**

The Minutes of last year’s meeting were accepted unanimously.

**Proposed: Luke Trimby** **Seconded: Keith Willitt**

1. **Chair’s Report**

Roger presented his report. He has been pleased to see the Group grow and thanked all the volunteers and parents. He highlighted the continuing plans to replace the hut.

1. **Group Scout Leader’s (GSLs) Report**

Phil presented highlights from his report. He pointed out that more leaders have been recruited but all sections would benefit from any parents who have a particular skill or talent to share with the children and young people. 113 badges have been awarded this year and the children and young people have had many opportunities to increase their awareness of the larger national and international Scouting family.

The Family Camp went well at the beginning of the year and there will be another one in 2016. In 2015 there will be a special activity day.

He offered special thanks to all the volunteers who have supported Football Teas and asked for more parents to come forward to help on the occasional Saturday.

1. **Section updates and Adoption of Reports**

The reports were all published and accepted unanimously.

**Proposed: John McNicholas Seconded:** **Luke Trimby**

1. **Treasurer’s Report and Adoption of Accounts**

Roger presented the annual accounts in Barrie’s absence. He encouraged a volunteer to come forward to take up the post of Treasurer to enable Barrie to step down.

The accounts were adopted unanimously.

**Proposed: Keith Willitt**  **Seconded:** **Chris Jones**

1. **Appointment of Scrutineer**

Thanks were given to Sue Alexander for examining this year’s accounts.

The scrutineer for 2015-16 will be Sue Alexander.

**Proposed: Ann Snowdon Seconded: Martine Albrighton-Mills**

1. **Approval of GSLs nomination of Chair**

Phil thanked Roger for his year as Chairman particularly as he also Chairman of another Group. The nomination that Roger continues as Chairman for another year was unanimously approved.

1. **Election of Group Officers**

* Ann Snowdon will continue as Secretary
* Barrie Newby will continue as Treasurer until a replacement can be found

1. **Election of members to the Group Executive**

Nicki Ellis is standing down as parent representative.

Magda Belina, Nikki Ellis and Cheryl Kinton are elected to the Executive Committee.

**Proposed: Martine Albrighton-Mills** **Seconded: Phil Addington**

1. **Approval of GSLs nominations to the Group Executive**

Luke Trimby, John McNicholas, Bob Spokes and Martine Albrighton-Mills are nominated as Leaders. Sam Kelly for fund-raising and Nick Church as Vice Chairman were named as nominated members of the Executive Committee.

Dave Weaver will continue as Quartermaster and serve as an ex-officio member of the Executive, attending when required.

This was approved unanimously.

1. **Date of the next Annual General Meeting** – Saturday June 11th 2016
2. **Date of the next Group Executive Committee** – Tuesday July 7th
3. **District comments and presentations**

Douglas Rae spoke on behalf of the District. He thanked the work of Executive members. He highlighted the role of Phil Addington who has been awarded the Silver Acorn – one of the highest awards in Scouting – for his outstanding contribution to Scouting for over 20 years.

1. **Closing remarks and Barbecue**

An unclaimed prize of a trip to Beale Park was offered for £1 a ticket and everyone was encouraged to buy tickets for our Race Night taking place on June 20th.

Awards, certificates and badges were awarded to leaders and children before the barbeque started serving.

**Chairman’s Report AGM 2016**

This has been another year of sustained growth and expansion here at the Oxford Road Scout Group (103rd Reading).

The Group has opened a second Beaver Colony, the Scout Section has become firmly established and a new Young Leaders section is up and running which means that we now have a full range of sections at our Group.

We also have increased the number of uniformed leaders and are one of the most active and high profile Groups in the District.

We are making progress with our plans to redevelop our HQ site, next year we hope to announce details of our plans for the future here at the 103rd.

I should also like to thank the parents and friends of the103rd who have worked extremely hard in supporting your Group Executive to help to deliver these fantastic opportunities to our young people.

A very big thank you is also due to all our uniformed leaders who work tirelessly to provide first class scouting to our young people, week in and week out. Without these dedicated leaders, who give so generously of their time, scouting at the 103rd would just not happen.

As some of you may know our Group secretary, Ann Snowdon was recently involved in a serious motor accident.

I hope you will join me in wishing Ann, a full and speedy recovery.

Thank you.

Roger Fleming

Chairman

**Group Scout Leader’s Report AGM 2016**

First, can I add my welcome to you all to this our 8th AGM and it is my pleasure to inform you about another busy and fruitful year for the group – new youngsters, sections, leaders, activities, badges.

Before I start we are missing our secretary, Ann Snowdon, who sends her apologies as she has been in a recent bad car accident and, while on the mend thankfully, is still not mobile which a leg full of pins amongst other injuries. Please join me in sending her our very best and hopes that she will get well soon.

When I reflect on the numbers within the group there is some real excitement. We have seen a fantastic planned surge in the next stage of the group’s development. On the back of setting up our second Beaver colony on a Monday, Martine spent time going round the schools again, to help increase the numbers ready for starting the new Tuesday Cub Pack, called Centurion. Wednesday night Cubs are now known as Battle Pack. We have three new leaders for Tuesday night - Helen Spokes, Nicole Dorrington and Clare Epsley. We welcome them and wish them well. My thanks go to Kiwi (Keith Willitt) from Active Support, Martine and Bob for helping to get the new Cub pack heading in the right direction.

In addition, we have recently invested our new-partnered Explorer Scout Unit managed by Joao Crespo (John) and Bob Spokes. This is a new venture for our older Scouts who will be able to more actively manage their own programme, with adult guidance. This will also add to the leader team through the development of young leaders – we already have one (Deaglan Henegan, who is doing an excellent job) and we have at least two more on the way.

When you look at the census numbers for 2016 they make pleasant reading for the Group. The Group stood at 75 youth members and total group size of 92 - that is against last year of 42 and 55 - which is excellent news. This will hopefully be up another 20-25 for the 2017 census (we currently now have 96 youngsters) having grown sections, the number of girls, additional leaders and a waiting list of 10 young children waiting to start Beavers!

Talking of leaders, we have a great set of people in all sections. We now have two Beaver colonies, 2 Cub packs, a Scout Troop and a partnered Explorer Scout Unit. We now have Scouting every night of the week and we can cater for youngsters from 6 to 18 years of age with a programme that suits their age, ability and interests.

You will be pleased to know that all the leaders continue to undergo formal training with the County Training team to ensure they have the skills and experience to run their sections in an interesting and challenging way. We have many of our new leaders validated on their initial training who have then gone on to attend the weekend skills events. Both Sam and Martine have completed their training that gives them both the Scout wood badge. Congratulations to them both on the hard work to gain these awards.

We have arranged a couple of courses here for the whole leader team – first response training and working with youngsters with particular needs.

We have been increasing our communication about the group both inside and outside. Many of you will be a follower on our Facebook page, used to update on forthcoming activities by leaders and publicise results etc. This is just open to members of the Facebook Group so please LIKE our page and join. We also have the new website, which has recently been updated with the expertise of Florian Pappenberger, for which we send our thanks. This provides historical, general information open to everyone.

Turning to the activities of the Group. As you will have seen from the section reports, we have undertaken a variety of activities both indoors and outdoors. This has resulted in us awarding round **972** Activity and Challenge badges to well deserving youngsters across all three sections. Your children have worked hard and met the standard demanded by the Scout Association – many who have earned the highest award in their section before moving up: the Beaver Chief Scout Bronze and the Cub Chief Scout’s Silver Award.

You will have seen from the section reports the variety of activities we have been doing through the year.

Beavers

* **Big Cat Colony**– our initial colony run by Luke Trimby has a strong leader team and 16 beavers – we have had a number move up to Cubs having received the highest award in Beavers, the Chief Scouts Bronze award which is excellent. In total, the colony has gained 140 badges covering a whole range of skills and activities from challenge badges relating to Teamwork, My Skills and Outdoor to activity and staged badges covering Cyclist, Emergency Aid 1 & 2, Space, Explore, Camp Craft, Hobbies, Sports, Collectors, Music, Camping and Hiking. They have also been out in the community taking part in Tesco’s Farm to Fork and raising £140 for Children in Need plus attending camps and sleepovers at the hut. A very full year with a lot more planned to come.
* **Weather Colony** – This new colony has now been running for a year ably managed by Martine and her team looking after 25 beavers. They also have had a very fun packed year. This year we have had four Beavers swim up to Cubs, 2 of them achieving their Chief Scout Bronze Award. As a section, they have held two sleepovers and have earned an impressive 300 badges, including Challenge, Staged and Activity badges. Other badges include Communicator, Safety activity badge, My Skills Challenge and Emergency Aid Level. They are currently working on 30 activities for 30 years of Beaver Scouts and to celebrate they are going to Legoland. They are currently working on raising money for their chosen charities, BIB's and The Rainbow Trust, where their current total is a fantastic £250.

Cubs

* **Battle Pack** - remains at 20 members and, with guidance from John, Rita, Chris and Debbie, have completed seven different activity badges from Athletics to Home Help to Martial Arts. Most have increased their nights and hike away badges, particularly with their participation at the joint camp at Youlbury with the 1st Reading Group. They have also taken part in the District Swimming Gala and for the second year running won the District cooking competition! Other areas under way cover nature, first aid and entertaining as well as other scouting skills.
* **Centurion Pack** - 9 Cubs have just been invested – they have been spending the last few weeks understanding the new world of Cubs. They have been choosing their activity badges and have started on their first Challenge badge.

Scouts

* The Troop has grown to 19 members which is very good news – with four Scouts leaving to form part of the new Explorer Unit. The event highlight of the year saw the Troop going to the Haarlem Jamborette in Holland and, in spite of the weather, they all had a fantastic time. During the year over a 100 badges have been awarded and we are looking forward to hopefully awarding two of the highest badges in the Scout section - the Chief Scouts Gold Award. Katie organised the Communicator and Electronics badges, Bob organised the Christmas lunch for parents with seven Scouts taking part. Hilary organised the Three Towers Hike training - five training hikes - and the Troop entering three Teams for the 25km hike. Four Scouts and numerous parents, friends and leaders helped at the finish area of the Reading Half Marathon. Six Scouts helped at the Boot Sale at Tesco and four Scouts and four Leaders helped set up the MS Spring Fair and run the BBQ.

Explorers

* I am proud to confirm that we have now opened our new-partnered Explorer Scout Unit called Racoons (a name chosen by the group) and have five invested young people. Over the last 8 weeks, we have done a range of fun activities such as Geocaching (at Prospect Park), Matchstick Pioneering, Designing a unit badge, “Ready, Steady, Cook”, Spaghetti Pioneering, and meeting up for a joint activity with Rockhoppers ESU for some backwoods’ cooking. I am pleased to tell you we have identified another volunteer to run the new unit and his name is Joao Crespo (or John as he is known) he will be ably assisted by Bob as he gets up to speed. Raccoon ESU have also planned their unit programme until the end of July, which has a great balance of activities being led by volunteers and Explorer Scouts alike.

***If you have not done so already, take some time to look around the walls to get a flavour of what we have been up to in the last 12 months. All great stuff!***

We also try to do activities as a group such as attending the civil Remembrance Parade, helping to give out at the Reading Half Marathon finishers goodie bags - all 14000 of them. This year our own St Georges Day Parade at St Marks was well attended with many of our youngsters taking part in the service and learning more about the life of the patron saint of Scouting. We even had our own St George and dragon to be slain. At this service, we all remake our promise and we had our newest flag blessed.

I must say that the Group has come along at a faster pace again this year due to the growing skills and experience of our excellent leaders and assistants plus the support given by our dedicated Group Executive Committee.

You will be aware we have been having discussion with the Council about the size of the hall and the need to increase it. We have submitted some outline plans to gain some pre application advice from the planning department – they have given us their thoughts but no real objections. We are now moving to full plans and planning permission. At the same time we continue to fund raise and our building fund stands at just over £26,000 with offers of funding from the District’s Warren Fund to the tune of £10-15K. We have applications out for larger sums aided by the fact that RBC is willing to increase our lease to a 25-35 year level. We are very grateful to Ben Stanesby, his team and the local councillors for their support.

Turning to fund raising, I need to thank Sam and Martine for their efforts in regard to running general fund raising events eg the Fun Day and the Christmas Fair. More will follow! I would also like to thank the team who help with the football teas rota – this year we raised just over £2,850 (£400 up on last year). I would really like to have a few more people who could spare a few hours one or two Saturday mornings during the season. We are also working with the support of Tesco to raise £1000 for a new mess tent. We have also been awarded a grant of £1000 by the Scout Association for the new sections we have set up.

While on the subject of money – I would like to give a very special mention and grateful thanks to Barrie Newby who has acted as our Treasurer since the Group started. In addition to this role, Barrie has helped to guide the Group and our Executive Committee with the years of experience that he has. As he hands the baton across later in the meeting we are certainly not going to lose Barrie. Fortunately, thanks to his District role, he will be taking on a new position with us that will enable him to continue to give us some of his wisdom. Thanks again Barrie for your continued support.

We would also like to have another maintenance weekend in the autumn where we can do some running repairs, painting, cleaning, and grounds maintenance etc. – work that we just need some willing hands to come along for the day! We did plan one in the spring to focus on the grass and grounds but we only had a few people and not enough to do what was planned. Please help the Group out by giving your help at the next working weekend.

A forthcoming attraction for next weekend is our second family camp for all sections and their families at the Scout Camp site in Windsor Great Park. A weekend of camp activities, craft, pioneering, archery, walking with GPS (Geocaching), campfire and 2 nights under canvas. Hopefully it will be a great weekend for all concerned!

As our group continues to develop and flourish, our young people get more opportunity to discover their potential, benefit from a positive and supportive environment and our leaders take great pride in the achievements of all the children in their section. We value your continued support and look forward to a full, exciting, adventurous, challenging and, of course, fun Scouting year.

In closing, I would like to give a final vote of thanks to all the Leaders and Administrators in the group for all their hard work and dedication. I sincerely thank all those involved in the group for giving their time and energy to get where we are today and I look forward to the next 12 months with interest to see where the group will develop.

Thank you.

Phil Addington

Group Scout Leader

# Beaver Scout Section - AGM 2016

**Big Cat Colony**

* 4 Warranted Leaders
* Luke Trimby – Beaver Scout Leader
* Assistant Beaver Scout Leaders - Sam Kelly , Liam Sandford and Shane Jackson
* 1 Occasional helper - Lauren Kelly
* 16 Beavers at this time
* 16 Beaver Scouts (invested)
* 0 Beaver Scouts (unvested)
* 10 on Waiting List that will be of Age for New Term (September 2016)

We have had a productive and very successful year and the section has started to grow in the last 12 months. Our current numbers stand at 16 Beavers which is the best we have had so far this year due to the group having two Beaver Colonies now.

The Leaders have been working hard with their training. Sam Kelly has completed all her training and is waiting for her Wood Badge to come when it will be presented to her.

In addition, Liam Sandford and Shane Jackson are continuing to complete their training towards their Wood badge.

Most of our Beavers that have moved up to Cubs in the last year, have achieved their Chief Bronze, the highest award a Beaver can gain. To earn this they have to complete six challenge badges and four activity Badges too.

We have given out approximately 140 Badges in addition to the District Badge, County Badge and Name tap Badges.

The Beavers worked together and made their own code of conduct, which they have all signed.

We had 11 beavers entered in the Beavers District Badge Competition for the Beavers 30th Birthday Celebrations. We also took part in the District Handicraft Competition.

We attended the Harvest Festival service, Father Nicholas’ leaving service and the St George’s Parade, which were held at St Mark’s church.

We have also attended the Remembrance Parade that was in the town centre again this year.

This year so far, we have covered these Badges:

**Challenge Badges**

* Team work, My skills and outdoor Badges

**Activity Badges**

* Cyclist, Emergency Aid 1 & 2, Space, Explore, Camp Craft, Hobbies, sports, collector’s, music, and experiment Badges.

**Staged Activity Badges**

* Nights Away 1 & 2; also some Beavers have earned their Nights Away 5
* Hikes Away 1
* We have done two 48hrs Sleepovers
* 3 Hikes

Badges we are working towards:

* Air activities – we will arrange a trip to go to Woodley Air Museum.
* More work towards Personal Challenge
* Health & fitness

Taking part in Tesco’s Farm to Fork was a great experience for us all – again getting the chance to learn about and try new foods. Beavers earned a badge by taking part.

During the sessions, we have raised awareness of anti-bullying, during anti-bullying week in November.

Our new Beavers have been introduced to Sir Baden-Powell and learned what the world badge emblem means.

We looked at different cultures such as Chinese New Year with some Beavers enjoying their first taste of Chinese noodles.

By doing chores at home, the Beavers raised a total of £140 for children in need.

Ending each term as we do – with parties – summer, Halloween and Christmas, with bring a friend; this is a great way to introduce youngsters to the family of scouting.

We are looking forward to another successful term in Beavers, attending the Family Camp and our summer camp that again will be 2 nights.

Thank you

Luke Trimby

Beaver Scout Leader (Lion)

**Weather Colony**

3 Warranted Leaders  
BSL: Martine Albrighton-Mills  
ABSL: Cheryl Kinton and Emma Sutton  
YL: Deaglan Henegan  
  
We have had a very productive and successful year in the Weather Colony, we have grown from a respectable 12 young people to a healthy 25, all of whom are currently invested. I am fortunate enough to have a supportive team working alongside me, my gratitude and appreciation goes to them for all their hard work and dedication.

The Colony is now one year old and we celebrated this with a birthday party.  
  
This year we have had 4 Beavers swim up to Cubs, 2 of them achieving their Chief Scout Bronze Award. We have another 11 due to swim up over the coming 12 months.

As a section we have held two sleepovers and have earned an impressive 300 badges, including challenge, staged and activity badges, we have also had some young people complete Activity +. Other badges include Communicator, Safety activity badge, My Skills Challenge and Emergency Aid Level.

The badges have been presented at our presentation evenings, one of which was attended by the Mayor.

Our last sleepover was held at the Activity Centre at the 89th Reading HQ in Emmer Green where we had beavers on the small peg-climbing wall, the zip wire and the confidence course. This was an excellent weekend enjoyed by all!

We have taken part in Remembrance Parade, St. George's Parade along with our dragon, and the Harvest Festival Service.   
We have made an effort to join in with District events: we entered both the Handicraft and Badge Competition and will be attending the Sausage Sizzle later this year.

We are currently working on 30 activities for 30 years of Beaver Scouts and to celebrate this we are taking our Beavers to Legoland. We are currently working on raising money for BIB's and The Rainbow Trust and our current total is a fantastic £250 achievement.

I look forward to another fun packed and successful year.

Thank you

Martine Albrighton-Mills  
Beaver Scout Leader

**Cub Section Report AGM 2016**

**Battle Pack**

The pack has enjoyed a consistent membership of around the 20 mark and has remained active and involved in working towards the various activity badges and awards.

The cubs, without exception, have been a joy to work with and have been enthusiastically involved in the Cub Scout programme and keen to help on cub evenings.

The Leaders, Chris and Rita, are making good progress through their respective training under the watchful eye of our treasurer Barrie.

Our cubs have been awarded badges including those in the following sections

Martial Arts

Book Reader

Athletics

Air activities

Nights away

Hikes away

Animal Carer

Astronomer

Home Help

Most of our cubs attended Youlbury Scouting Activity Centre in Oxford and enjoyed involvement vigorous activities including climbing up a tower of crates, shelter building, a giant swing and a night hike. They also took part in the District swimming gala and despite stiff opposition, swam well and enjoyed the event.

Our cubs also recently took part in the District Cooking Competition to compete to retain the District Trophy and were successful!

We are planning to take the cubs on a nature walk along the Thames next month for the badge.

A member of the casualty union will be demonstrating what nasty “wounds” he can create using Plaster of Paris and bandages – should be fun!

The entertainments badge is being worked on through a performance by the children planned to demonstrate their talents.

My thanks go out to Chris, Rita and Debbie for all of their support and hard work throughout the past year. They have all worked hard to deliver a lively and exciting program for the Pack.

Thanks also to Kiwi for standing in from time to time during my absence.

– thanks guys!

We now look forward to another year of providing a lively and enjoyable program for our youngsters.

Thank you

John McNicholas (Akela)

**Scout Section Report AGM 2016**

The last year has been very eventful for the Scouts in a number of ways – the Troop has grown to 19 members – with 4 Scouts leaving to form part of the new Explorer Unit. This is great news and a direct result of all the hard work the Leaders have been putting in.

Last year’s Summer Camp was one of the highlights of the year which saw the Troop going to the Haarlem Jamborette in Holland – eight Scouts and five leaders (Bob and Hilary for full camp and Phil, Jeff and Katie for part of the camp). All the Scouts and Leaders had a brilliant time and came back with some great memories.

At the start of the winter term, the Troop started to expand with four Cubs moving up and three other youngster joining.

Katie organised the Communicator and Electronics badges, Bob organised the Christmas lunch for parents with seven Scouts taking part.

In the Spring Term Hilary organised the Three Towers Hike training, 5 training hikes and the Troop entering 3 Teams for the 25km hike (total 10 Scouts) with 2 Scouts completing half the hike and the other 8 completing the full hike – well done to all of them.

Katie organised the Artists and Entertainers badge (the play is still to be performed).

Four Scouts and numerous parents, friends and leaders helped at the finish area of the Reading Half Marathon.

Six Scouts helped at the Boot sale at Tesco and 4 Scouts and 4 Leaders helped set up the MS Spring Fayre and run the barbeque.

As the summer term began, three more Cubs moved up and will be invested soon.

A full programme brings the rewards for the Scouts with more than 100 badges being earned. I hope to award two Chief Scout Gold awards, which is the highest badge in the Scout section.

At present a Summer Camp is planned for the first week of the school holidays – sadly, due the lack of interest this is likely to be cancelled unless more families decide to attend.

I would like to thank all my leader team for their hard work and dedication in helping to build up the Scout section and run and interesting and challenging programme.

Thank you

Bob Spokes

Scout Leader

**Raccoon Explorer Scout Report AGM 2016**

I am delighted to report this year that we have successfully established an Explorer Scout Unit (for 14 – 18 yrs.), based and hosted at 103rd Oxford Road. We launched the unit (officially) on Wednesday 16th March 2016, where we started with 5 young and enthusiastic Scouts from the group.

During that first meeting, we decided on a name for what was known as “Reading West ESU”, a new unit neckerchief, and an initial activity programme put together by Bob and myself to ease our Explorer Scouts into understanding the difference between younger sections and Explorers.

Through the last 8 weeks, we have done a range of fun activities such as Geocaching (at Prospect Park), Matchstick Pioneering, Designing a unit badge, “Ready, Steady, Cook”, Spaghetti Pioneering, and meeting up for a joint activity with Rockhoppers ESU for some backwoods’ cooking.

Raccoon ESU have also planned their unit programme until the end of July, which has a great balance of activities being led by volunteers and Explorer Scouts alike. On Wednesday 11th May 2016, we invested our first members into the unit and we had Barrie Newby as District President for Reading Central and Phil Addington, Group Scout Leader, to present neckerchiefs and badges to those invested.

From a leadership team perspective, Bob Spokes has joined us as Assistant Explorer Scout Leader right from the start and I would like to publically welcome him (back) to the District Explorer Scout Leadership team and thank Bob for his fantastic support in helping me establish the Explorer Scout Unit. As most of you will know, I have been Raccoon ESU’s interim Explorer Scout Leader, with the view to identifying someone to taking this very pivotal role in ensuring the unit develops and grows.

I am pleased to tell you we have identified a volunteer and his name is Joao Crespo (or John as he is known to the unit). Joao will be working with me directly to ensure we continue to support the unit and ensure that Joao is well equipped to fulfil the role. I look forward to working with him on what I am sure will be an ever expanding Explorer Scout Unit.

As District Explorer Scout Commissioner, I am very pleased with how the Explorer Scouts have settled into their new unit and I am proud of each of the members transitioning from being Scouts to becoming Explorer Scouts.

I look forward to watching the unit grow in strength and enthusiasm toward providing fantastic scouting for 14 – 18 year olds within Reading West.

Thank you

Kris McCabe

District Explorer Scout Commissioner

**Treasurer’s Report to the Annual General Meeting for the year 2015-16**

**Trustees Annual Report**

**for the year ended 31st March 2016**

**Preview:**

I have now been your Treasurer now for five years – doesn’t time fly! As I have already mentioned to the Group Executive Committee I would like us to find a replacement for me due to health reasons. The Accounts are set out on the following pages.

**Reserves Policy:**

At the end of this year income reserves amounted to **£7,483 (2015 - £12,405).** The reduction is not a call for concern as some money has been transferred to our Deposit account. The Group’s policy on reserves is to hold sufficient resources to continue the charitable activities of the Group should income and fundraising activities fall short and to enable the Group to have sufficient readily available funds to meet its liabilities. The Group Executive Committee considers that the Group should hold a sum equivalent to at least one term’s expenditure on running costs, including National, County and District levies. The minimum amount is approximately £2,411 based on the actual amounts for the year ended 31 March 2016.

**Investment Policy**:

The Group decided that we need to rebuild our present headquarters and to this end we opened a Building Fund (Deposit Account) with HSBC. This was transferred to Virgin Money during the year as they offer a better rate of interest. All other funds are held in cash or a bank account using a mainstream bank. The bank balances are regularly monitored.

**Finance** As you will see from the attached accounts, we achieved a surplus of £7,355 for the year. This is due to two factors; our fund raising (see below) and the grants received. However, £7,000 of this was received from the Battle Primary Academy so we may need to review our Subscription payments for next year (2016-17). I am grateful to the leaders’ support with this. Because our income and expenditure is over £10,000, an Independent Examiner has checked the accounts. I am very grateful to Mrs Susan Alexander who is now undertaking this task for the second year.

**Fund Raising** Our biggest earner for this is for what we call ‘Football Teas’, where for six months of the year we provide refreshments for the Berkshire County Girls Football League and also provide the much needed toilet facilities! I am very grateful to the dedicated band of both leaders and parents who help with this. It is very rewarding but we could do with more help on these occasions. Even if you can only do it occasionally, it would help relieve our small band of helpers. I would also like to thank two women for their exceptional organisational skills in the fund raising area, and that is Sam and Martine. Without them and their helpers and of course their enthusiasm our accounts would not look as healthy as they do. I am particularly thinking about the Fun Day and Christmas Bazaar. You will note that our fund raising income has shown a marked increase over the previous year.

**Gift Aid** As in previous years, we have made a claim to HMRC. If you pay tax and have not completed a Gift Aid Declaration Form please ask me for one. For those of you not conversant with the GA Scheme perhaps the following may help: if you are a taxpayer, we can claim back the tax of any donation or payment of subscriptions made by a parent or leader. At the moment, this stands at 25%; so if you pay £100 in subscriptions we can claim back £25 being the tax you have already paid. This is completely confidential in that we do not need to know any of your personal information. If in doubt, please see me! There are Gift Aid forms available in the HQ. Our income from this also showed a marked increase over the previous year.

**Scout Shop** Please let me have any unwanted receipts from the Scout Shop in Northumberland Avenue as we can claim a discount. This year we received £68.

**Maintenance** We are very lucky in that Dave Weaver has undertaken the task of maintaining the buildings and grounds for us on a regular basis.

**Plans** As previously mentioned we intend to rebuild our present HQ. Are we are a small Group, this is a mammoth task. We have already met with the architect and plans will soon be available.

**Activities** Our leaders provide a full range of activities for our young people, which are detailed in their reports.

**Charity Commissioners** We are now registered with the CC, our number being 1152394.

Barrie J Newby

Group Treasurer