



From the County Commissioner:

Well this is the season of census figures and approaching District and Group AGMs so I thought I'd start by sharing with you our Census figures across the County. The headline note is that **WE ARE CONTINUING TO GROW**; once again our numbers are up! There are now 6529 members of the County which is an overall 1.9% increase. We have:

1450 Beaver Scouts	100 Beaver Colonies
1887 Cub Scouts	115 Cub Packs
1378 Scouts	92 Scout Troops
488 Explorer Scouts	35 Explorer Units
68 Network	7 Network Units
1113 Leadership	7 Scout Active Support Units
145 Organisational Support	10 Districts
	102 Groups

Overall we have low numbers of young people across our communities compared to the national average growth. We have good numbers of Beaver Scouts compared to the national average with high growth rates. We have low numbers of Cub Scouts compared to the national average but with high growth rates. We have low numbers of Scouts compared to the national average with declining numbers. We have low numbers of Explorer Scouts compared to the national average but with high growth rates.

All of this information is now being carefully analysed by the County Core Team and will help us to focus our County support more effectively and I urge every Group and District to do the same to look at their strengths and weaknesses. Our target for growth this year is for at least 3% growth. But hand

in hand with our analysis of **quantity** must go much more work on measuring the **quality** of what we offer – and we will shortly be announcing some County initiatives to help to improve the quality of Scouting that is offered locally (which in turn will lead to increased numbers of members). As we approach District and Group AGMs I would like to issue a four-point challenge to every Section in every Group in every district:

1. 3% growth in numbers in every Group by Census 2012 (e.g. "Bring a Friend", reduce Waiting Lists, and improve links between Sections)
2. Significant increase in number of Chief Scout Awards that are gained in every section in the Group
3. Every Beaver has the opportunity to take part in a one-day (not necessarily overnight) event; every Cub Scout has at least one night residential experience, and every Scout and Explorer has the opportunity for at least 3 night's residential experience.
4. Twice as many outdoor weekly meetings as you had last year (don't need to be "as well as", but must be "instead of" indoor meetings)

And if everyone rises to that challenge our Census next year will show a huge rise – but most importantly, it will mean that more young people will be able to take part in Scouting's Everyday Adventure.

Andrew Corrie

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District	Total	% change
Cheadle	694	-.1
Glossop	457	-.7
Goyt	715	+2.0
Ladybrook Valley	950	+1.8
North Tameside	393	-1
Tame Valley	394	+10.1
Stockport	958	+1.1
North Manchester	737	+2.4
Manchester South	670	+2.4
Tameside South	516	-1

Award of Merit

In addition to the awards that we announced in the April Edition we are also pleased to be able to announce that the Chief Scout has awarded **Mrs Susan Ann Bowers** a CSL at 1st Newton (Rosemount) in Tameside South the Bar to the Award of Merit.



There are 25 Units currently taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award across the County. 135 participants started the scheme during the year ending 31/03/11. 44 people gained the Award at Bronze, Silver or Gold as follows.

Bronze

North Manchester and Medvale: Helaina Stone (Medvale ESU), Tori Barnes, David Robinson, Bradley Vickers and Sophie Cummings (North Manchester Explorers).

Glossop: Rebecca Helliwell, Benjamin Fry, Daniel Lane, Eleanor Sigley, Jack Robinson, Ashley Mellor and Sam Lambrick (Dinting ESU)

Ladybrook Valley: Ben Ost, Sophie Ost, Joshua Ost, Dan Underwood, Sam Kinnaird and Liam Shelmerdine (3BE ESU)

Tameside South: Matthew Webb, Nathan Allman and Ben Turner (Newton ESU)

Ladybrook Valley: Yaffa Chaudhary, Jack Walton, Dominic Keogh and David Barker (Phoenix ESU)

Silver

North Manchester and Medvale: Josh Nolan, Lea Moore, Amy Cummings, Emma-Jade Hall, Jade Moore, Matthew Davis, Simon Robinson, Victoria Fullen (North Manchester Explorers) and Jonathan Bentham (Phantom ESU)

Glossop: Meg Finn, Jennifer Campbell, Adam Bridges and Evelyn Sigley (Dinting ESU)

Tameside South: Rachel Young, Kieran Bates, Zennita Taylor and Rochelle Taylor (Newton ESU)

Gold

James Ripley (Manchester South Network)

If you want more information about DofE please contact Sheila or Bernard at dofe@gmescouts.org.uk or have a look at the website www.gmescouts-dofe.co.uk

Bravery Certificate for Cub Scout

Ken Marks, District Commissioner for North Tameside presented 250th Droylsden Cub Scout Shane Walker with a bravery certificate, and a letter from the County Commissioner Andrew Corrie congratulating him on his bravery for helping to save his Gran.

Shane's Gran had collapsed behind the door of her house blocking people from gaining access. Shane's mum broke a window at the back of the house and he climbed through the broken window and across the broken glass so that he could get to his Gran. Shane then had to push his Gran away from the door so that his mum could enter the house.

Ken Marks said "Shane had shown courage much like St George had".



Manchester Scouts at the Royal Wedding!

Scouts from Manchester South were lucky enough to be granted 15 tickets, as part of the Scout Association's allocation.

We all met in central London on Friday morning to make our way to the 'Youth Area' at Horse Guards parade. We were joined by Sam Butler & Samantha W, two professional photographers who had contacted us earlier to showcase our journey & the day - so essentially we had ourselves our own photography team - ace!



On our journey to Horse Guards we bumped into Tim Vincent (of Blue Peter fame) and did a short piece for NBC America - our first television appearance of the day!

The Manchester South Necker featured on its first celebrity of the day!

We then made our way to Horse Guards Parade to watch the day's proceedings! Unbeknown to us, Bear Grylls (Chief Scout) was in attendance - so of course we were in awe and took the opportunity to mob him and take photos!



We settled in and got the picnic rugs out and watched the cars go one way and then horse carriages (& happily married couple) return - along with taking the time to eat some food.

We were then told by the Policeman in charge that they would be letting the Youth groups lead the walk down The Mall - with 500,000 members of the public following!

We were fortunate to actually end up in the very front row of the parade, right next to Bear Grylls - AMAZING!

After leading the rather long walk down The Mall (and being reliably informed that we were being seen on ITV!) we spotted our next victim celebrity for the necker. It was Mark Austin, ITV's 'in the crowd' journalist. Katy & Fran gave a fantastic interview live on air, and a few moments later we pounced to put the necker on Mark. We didn't realise that it was being aired live on TV - so when Mark put the necker on backwards we jumped into correct it. The footage was also featured on the 6pm & 10pm news. To view the interview visit the GME website www.gmescouts.org.uk/programme/local-events/gme-scouts-attend-the-royal-wedding/

We ended up outside the gates of Buckingham Palace and in perfect view to see the kiss - or more truthfully - two kisses and the fly-by.

Overall, a fantastic day was had by all and it was a truly amazing atmosphere!



News from the Clough

Canoeing Course

We will be holding a course on the weekend of 21st and 22nd May 2011 with the aim of teaching leaders how to run a safe and enjoyable session on Roman Lakes.

On Saturday 21st May the session will be held at Glossop Pool from 7-8pm. You will need a towel and if you have a kayak then please bring it (as long as it is clean).

On Sunday 22nd May the session will be at Roman Lakes from 10am-4pm. You will need kit and a packed lunch. Again if you have a canoe or kayak then please bring it with you.

Anyone taking part must have experience of kayaking and canoeing. The cost will be £15.00 payable on the day.

Please contact Linnet Clough to book, you will need to inform us of what experience you do have.

Go Kart track

The new go-kart track is now up and running and proving very popular, why don't you come to try it out?

It costs £30 an hour for three karts so come and run your Group Championships one evening or weekend

Join in Jamboree

Don't forget to book if you want to stay for the weekend of Join-in-Jamboree. We have already lots of groups booked in. We are getting full so to be sure of your spot on the field get in touch now.



Dates for the Diary

Campsite Services Badge Weekend

We are running a Campsite Services Badge weekend on 18th-20th November 2011. The cost is £15 per person and Scouts and Explorers will learn about maintaining the site, equipment and other requirements of the Campsite Services badge and Activity Centre Service badge.

Christmas Weekend

Christmas at the Clough will be held on the weekend of 9th-11th December. We will be holding Christmas parties, a Saturday night social and the Christmas by Candlelight carol service.

Linnet Clough can be contacted on 0161 427 1688 and linnetcloughcamp@aol.com

URGENT

Help Needed

As you know Join in Jamboree take place on Saturday 25th June however they still need people to help run the activities therefore if you can help with any of the following activities then please contact Clare Jarvis on beavers@gmescouts.org.uk.

- CLIMBING
- LOW ROPES
- ARCHERY
- SHOOTING
- THE CUBE

Activities are to run between 10.00 and 16.45 with a 30 minute lunch break.

URGENT

25th Anniversary Celebrations



Saturday 12th March 2011, saw a gathering of Beavers for the 2011 Manchester South District Beaver Challenge, celebrating 25 years of beaver scouts.

9 Teams from across the District met at Ringway Primary School in Wythenshawe as part of the District's 25th Anniversary of Beaver Scouts.

This year's challenge was to make a Beaver from Junk.

Each team had a Leader or Young Leader to "advise and hold" but they were not allowed to build. The teams were briefed on the task ahead and given 10 minutes to plan their model. Then they had an hour to make their Beaver model. Judging took place throughout and marks were awarded for team work as well as the end result.

The junk - boxes, empty cartons, paper, card, string etc – was placed in a very neat and tidy pile in the centre of the hall and upon the word go, each team sent a beaver to collect junk. Oh my life!!! The neat pile lasted all of 10 seconds and ended up everywhere. The look on the caretakers face when he came back was classic. He had visions of still being there at 5pm clearing up but thanks to the huge effort all was cleared up and the hall swept and within 30 minutes there was no evidence we had been there.

At the end of the build the judges, DC Ian Cary and ADC Cubs Alan Robinson, had a chance to view the completed models and make their final decision.

The winning team was from 123rd Manchester

Helen Hampson



Curbing Homophobic Bullying

The Lesbian and Gay Foundation (LGF) are presently running a campaign to help curb homophobic bullying in schools and make these safer places for vulnerable young people.

See the website for more details: www.lgf.org.uk/take-action-make-schools-safer

In support of this campaign the LGF have developed a Safer School Pack with the necessary material to help schools challenge homophobia and get them talking about lesbian, gay, bisexual people, issues and relationships to promote understanding, and hopefully reduce the incidents of homophobic bullying in schools.

I think this may also be of benefit to Scout Troops and Explorer Units too, and so would like to encourage Scout and Explorer Scout Leaders to obtain a pack and incorporate the material into their program. However, at £20 per pack it may be financially beneficial for a number of Groups to get together and share a pack, or maybe for Districts to purchase one for use in their District. Personally I haven't seen a pack, but I'm sure if any Leaders wish to view a pack then the volunteers at the LGF would be happy to show them one.

I am in no way applying that homophobic bullying occurs in Scouting. In fact I'm proud to say from the interactions I've had with the young people in North Manchester and Medvale District (and with young people from other areas of the country, for that matter) this appears not to be a problem. However, we cannot stand on our laurels and only tackle a problem when it happens. Scouting is all about giving young people the necessary skills and information to grow and become valuable members of society, and I believe LGBT issues is one area that should be covered under social and personal development. If someone has already developed the tools to deliver a balanced approach to the subject, then I think it should be used.

Niall Ballantyne

County Diary

May

Monday 30th

Explorer Manchester
City Challenge Day

June

Tuesday 14th
Sat 25th – Sun 26th

DC Team Meeting
Join in Jamboree Day

July

Fri 1st – Sun 3rd

Scout Survival
Weekend

July

Sunday 3rd

WSJ Unit Fun Day

Sat 9th – Sun 10th

Sat 24th – Wed 10th Aug

Gilwell 24
22nd WSJ - Sweden

September

Friday 2nd – Sun 4th

Tuesday 6th

Thursday 22nd

Sunday 25th

Gilwell Reunion
DC Team Meeting
Explorer Belt Exp Launch

Scout ZAP Day

Scout Survival Skills Badge

1st to 3rd July 2011

What does the word survival mean to you? Struggling across deserts or living for weeks in a small open boat at sea? Well, that is correct, but survival can also mean knowing how to stay alive in the British hills, which may not seem so exotic but which is probably more important for most of us.



So one simple definition of survival is the ability to look after yourself with the minimum of equipment in any given situation.

It's time for our County Survival Skills Camp at Boarfold Scout Campsite.

It is open to those Scouts who have some experience of camping already and are able to cope with the conditions and weather.



Scouts are shown a variety of techniques that would prove useful in a survival situation. They build and sleep in their own shelters and cook everything in a backwoods style. The cost will be £20.00.

John Dawson - ACC (Scout Section) - Tel: 07726 170875 - E-mail:
scouts@gmescouts.org.uk

Ex Army Marquees needing a good home:

1st Bramhall Scouts have at least 1 complete ex army brown marquee approx 20x30ft with 2 poles, dollies, guys, walls and wallpoles.

There is the best part of a 3 pole marquee and several other pieces some of which we have never looked at. All of it will be disposed of at the end of May.

If you are interested in all, or any parts, and willing to sort them out yourself, please contact Ian MacArthur on ian@nuqwork.co.uk

500 Club Winners

Feb: Mrs E Booth and P. Halliwell

March: P. Horton and P. Pilbeam

Youth Fun Days

For discounted prices for Alton Towers, Thorpe Park, Legoland, Chessington World of Adventures, Sea life centres and more visit www.youthfundays.co.uk or telephone them on 0115 9523617.

National Notice Board

- **Faith on Film** - If you're an Explorer Leader and your young people have a story to tell about faith in their life, their community or the wider world then encourage them to enter the Tony Blair Foundation's global film competition Faith Shorts. This is a great opportunity to provide your Explorers with an amazing experience, which fits really well into the Values and Relationships, Global, Skills and Community Service Programme Zones. The theme is 'How my faith inspires me' and the competition categories include action, musical and family. The winning entry will get to go to London to see the film premiered. The competition closes on the 1st of July, see www.tonyblairfaithfoundation.org/pages/content/
- **Gilwell Reunion** – Booking for this year's event is now open. The camp takes place over the weekend of 2nd to 4th of September. The cost of the weekend is £29 (day tickets are also available) with discounts for up to £5 for Network members.
- **YouScout** – The views of our youth members are a powerful way of influencing the media, government and decision makers. By canvassing young people via a short poll on key issues, Scouts will be able to comment on topics that affect young people. Please ask members aged between 13 and 25 to fill in the questionnaire that can be found at: https://spreadsheets.google.com/viewform?hl=en_GB&formkey=dE9zNUExbXJabktHeFJOOWtQb1Fmd2c6MQ#gid=0
- **Tell the world about Scouting** – The Scout Association are co-ordinating seven courses around the UK, designed to give you the skills to talk about your experiences to a wide variety of audiences and teach you how to carry out campaigns. Gain the confidence to encourage young people to join, adults to volunteer, or raise the profile of Scouting in your community. These skills will be useful for the rest of your life and will look great on a CV. One of the courses is being held at Linnet Clough get a booking form from: <http://scouts.org.uk/documents/EcommsDocs/Booking%20information.pdf>
- **iPhone App** – My Badges is The Scout Association's official badge app for iPhone and iPod Touch. Ideal for volunteers, parents and young people for quick reference at meetings or camp, it holds the requirements for every badge and award in the UK 6-25 programme and handy badge position diagrams. The app is priced at £1.19 and available from iTunes. If you are an Android user the Android version is expected within 2-3 months.

Message from the editor.....Andrea Dolan

Well the month of April has flown by; there were two bank holiday weekends a big wedding (see Ben's great report) and not an April shower in sight...

The camping season is now underway and I guess that many of you will already have taken advantage of the extra time at the end of April to spend a few days out camping as a group.

I'm sure that with another bank holiday to come at the end of May more of you will be out and about making the most of the good weather (we hope). As always I am interested in what you have been up to.

Please send all of your articles for inclusion in the June edition to me on countylife@gmescouts.org.uk by the 27th of May

Andrea

