



# 9th North Leeds Oakwood Church

Minutes of the Scout Group AGM - 2nd July 2014



**Present** Ted Fairfax (District Commissioner), Morris Smith (GSL, Acting Chair, Acting Treasurer), David Donaldson (Acting Secretary), Jonathan Betts, Jane Whittingham, Martin Woolley, Liz O'Sullivan, James Skinner, Andrew Smith

**Apologies** Janet Hind, Gordon Airy, Chris Raines, Roger Richardson, Ian Short, George Bailey.

## Approval of AGM Minutes 12<sup>th</sup> June 2013

The minutes from the last meeting were accepted after Jonathan Betts proposed and Morris Smith seconded.

## Matters arising from last minutes

Old, worn out and redundant tents and equipment stored at Ian Short's factory for several years had finally been disposed of.

Redesigned '9' Necker badges and updated name tapes (reflecting the Local Ecumenical Partnership signed in November 2013 between Roundhay Methodist Church and Roundhay St John) had been produced and blessed at a Parade Service. Though we now style ourselves '9<sup>th</sup> North Leeds Oakwood Church' the Scout Group's Sponsoring Authority remains Roundhay Methodist Church.

Replacement of Section flags had been delayed pending the advent of 'Oakwood Church'. Procurement will be progressed by first asking David Mitchell GSL at St Edmunds for his opinion of the supplier who had recently produced their Scout Group's new flags. **Action Point: Morris Smith**

## Chair / Group Scout Leader Report (Morris Smith)

With this Church community now being a Local Ecumenical partnership (LEP) this Group is now known as 9<sup>th</sup> North Leeds Oakwood Church. New badges were blessed as part of the inaugural Parade Service and this may be an appropriate time to consider replacing the Group's Flags.

Beaver and Cub Sections have been running at full numbers with waiting lists throughout the year, with Scouts somewhat dipping in numbers over recent months. I was especially pleased to hear of the positive response by Scouts to a recent weekend camp and of the success of our Cubs at District level by bringing home the 'Trading Post' cup.

So I now take opportunity of thanking all our Leaders for their commitment of so much personal time. Effort and care they freely give to the young people in their charge and I am thankful for an increasing number of 'Occasional helpers' who are filling emerging gaps. To all their credit the Group continues to provide a balanced and challenging programme to members. Thank you.

But whilst our Leaders are all young at heart and spirit, I have particular concern for the future. We need more Leaders! Indeed both Liz and Ian have given notice of their intention to stand down from beavers at the end of the Summer Term 2015.

Our priority is to fill this gap and secure the future of the Group with more upcoming Leaders in the coming year.

## **Section Reports - Beavers** (Liz O'Sullivan)

Continues to provide a busy and well attended programme

Due to a combination of exceptional circumstances there are currently 27 Beavers but this will revert to our usual practical maximum capacity of 24 young people ASAP. Demand continues to significantly exceed capacity and parents are being signposted to other Beaver Colonies in the area.

There are 2 warranted leaders and Neil Houghton has recently joined as a 'Section Assistant'. James Skinner also assists when available and we are grateful for the continuing regular support of parent helpers.

Liz and Ian are keen that their replacements are recruited ASAP so that they can spend the 2014/15 school year supporting, training and handing over to their successors.

## **Section Reports - Cubs** (Jane Whittingham)

There are currently 33 Cubs most of whom are relatively young. Four older Cubs who are girls, close friends, two of whom rely for transport on the parent of the other two who travel from Swillington, are expected to leave Cubs at the end of summer term. They probably won't move up to Scouts as the Troop's later meeting hours plus travel time make bedtimes untenable. Only two Cubs, both boys, are expected to move up to Scouts at Christmas 2014. There isn't practical capacity at Cubs to allow all 8 Beavers who will reach Cub age the end of summer term 2014 to move up so some will have to be signposted to other Cub Packs in the area.

It was acknowledged that we have neither sufficient Leaders nor room availability to revert to the situation of 5 years ago and split the Cubs into two packs, so we needs must continue to operate around our practical maximum capacity of one Pack comprising about 30 young people.

The Pack currently has 3 'Wood Badged' Leaders, 1 other Leader in training, 2 Occasional Helpers plus parents who assist at events. James Skinner also assists when available.

The current Leader capacity enables us to maintain a varied programme over a 3 year cycle leading many Cubs to obtain their Silver award before moving on to Scouts. We try to achieve a Challenge badge and an Activity badge each Term, and to offer both a winter and a summer camp. (The Pack has recently returned from another successful camp, this time at Sconce near Baildon).

The Cubs join in District Events such as Sports day, Science Badge, the Rover Challenge, and recently won the District Trading Post competition - only coming second at County level to another North Leeds Pack.

## **Section Reports - Scouts** (Jonathan Betts)

Scout numbers have recently dipped to 15, all boys. We had been about 50/50 boys and girls until a largely age related departure last year of a cohort of girls many of who had been with the Troop for several years - only one who had been a Beaver. One of these girls moved up to Explorers. We 'lost' some boys due to age. Recently it had proved difficult to inspire the Troop to attend camps.

The Troop is now relatively young and mostly made up of ex Cubs, so we were heartened that 11 of the 15 greatly enjoyed the recent Weekend camp at Hesley Wood, Sheffield (the inspiration for and to the success of which James Skinner made a significant contribution). Parents commented that at £40 for food, accommodation and a wide range of on-site activities the camp provided excellent value. We hope to build on this new momentum.

No more leaders have come forward in the last year. We get by with a Scout Leader and three experienced Assistant Leaders who between them ensure all meetings and activities are covered. None of the four are available every week and Janet has been injured and absent since January 2014 while David is retired, stepped back from regular leadership commitments several years ago and is often absent for several weeks at a time in summer and early autumn.

James Skinner has been a regular helper but is moving to Headingley. We are grateful to other Leaders and some parents who have helped us continue to offer a widely varied programme.

## **Group Finances**

The accounts for year ended 31st March 2014 were unanimously accepted after David Donaldson proposed and Jane Whittingham seconded.

**Considerations numbered 1 to 11** in the Treasurer's report were all unanimously agreed. Consequently: **Action Point: Section Treasurers** re submission of lists of members and subscriptions by end of each term; **Action Point: Section Treasurers** re yearly income and expenditure accounts; **Action Point: Morris Smith (Acting Group Treasurer)** re payment of printing costs.

**Action Point: Quartermaster** It was agreed that the first step in spending some of the £1,000 'excess reserves' must be to review the state of our equipment and arrange repairs and make good any deficiencies or shortfalls resulting from 'normal' wear, tear and losses.

**Action Point: Jonathan and Jane** were reminded to ensure that lists of those who attended their Sections' recent camps have been emailed to Morris Smith (Acting Group Treasurer) so that the Gift Aid can be claimed.

## **Election of Officers**

**GSL** Though not subject to election by Group, Ted Fairfax (District Commissioner) proposal that Morris Smith should continue in **GSL** appointment if he wished to do so was unanimously applauded. Morris agreed to continue.

It was also unanimously agreed that:

**Acting Chair** Janet Hind would be asked to continue. **Action Point: Morris Smith**

**Acting Secretary** David Donaldson agreed to fill this vacancy.

**Acting Treasurer** Morris Smith agreed to continue.

**Acting Quartermaster** If incumbents Roger and Shanthi Richardson's agree then Chris Raines' kind offer to take on the role should be accepted. **Action Point: Morris Smith**

**Parent's Representatives** Andrew Smith would take on the role for both Beavers and Scouts. Alex Goodwin would be approached to take on the role for Cubs **Action Point: Jane Whittingham**

Note: The Scout Association expects that for good governance all the roles marked 'Acting' should be undertaken by persons who are not Leaders. In recent years Parents and other adults interested in supporting Scouting with the (relatively little) time, skills and experience these roles

call for had simply not stepped forward. If anyone is willing to consider relieving Leaders by taking on one of these roles please speak with GSL Morris Smith

**Membership pack:** To be updated to include current names and contact details of Leaders and Officers **Action Point:** David Donaldson

### **Any Other Business (A.O.B)**

**Safeguarding** At a recent Oakwood Church Youth Team Meeting, Guiding attendees had expressed some reservations about the Church Calendar of meetings and photographs of young people that appear on Oakwood Church notice boards and the Church Website. It was agreed that the Scout Group and Sections were already publishing meeting information and images appropriately and that no published photographs of young people enjoying Scouting had names associated with the depicted individuals. It was also noted that since at least 2008 our Membership Pack has invited Parents to sign agreeing to the statement:

*" I accept that photographs of my child may be taken during Scouting activities. I note that anyone who is permitted to be present at and takes photographs during any Scouting activity accepts a personal responsibility to ensure that the images will not be used inappropriately"*

### **Recruitment of Leaders, Assistants, Occasional Helpers and Officers**

It was agreed that a special Group meeting with Ted Fairfax and Carol Milburn would be arranged for a weekday evening in September 2014 to discuss opportunities and means to recruit additional adults securing the future of Scouting at Oakwood Church **Action Point:** Morris Smith

### **Next Group Meetings**

- See Recruitment of Leaders, Assistants, Occasional Helpers and Officers (above)
- The next AGM will probably be in mid June 2015 - date to be arranged **Action Point:** Morris Smith

*Morris Smith (Acting Chair)*

*David Donaldson (Acting Secretary)*