

Hello everybody,

Welcome to the cub scout section report for the year 2013-2014.

This time last year we had 19 cubs. This was a reduction from our normal levels of 24-27 cubs and reflected a national reduction in number of young people in our target age band. With the normal weekly absences, we were often running meetings for 16 or 17 cubs. The reduction in pack size was noticeable and impacted some of the activities we were offering the cubs. One issue was annual camp where only 11 cubs wanted to go. This would not be possible without changing £30 per cub rather than staying under our target £20 for a camp on our local farm. Instead, we invited another pack to join us but it highlighted issues with numbers.

So as a leadership team we decided to open our waiting list and to admit some young people from the list. As a result about 20% of our current pack were never beavers but fortunately we are back at 26 cubs but we have a very young pack with the majority of the young people aged 8 or slowly turning 9. This is a much better number to work with as evidenced by the 22 cubs who put their names down to come to our recent Taunton camp. We may even have two teams in the upcoming district football competition! Unfortunately, with the recovery in numbers for our age bracket and the planned move of young people from beavers to cubs over the coming months, there will be much reduced opportunities for non-beavers to enjoy cubs. In fact we may be heading for a pack size over 30!

We continue to offer a balanced program to our young cubs. Grannies and mums will confirm the badge totals are healthy with most cubs earning 2 or 3 challenge badges and 6-8 activity badges. Activity badges covered included the science badge, home safety and communications, while we also covered the global, outdoor and creative challenge badges. Some cubs, off their own initiative have completed other non-core activity badges such as music, martial arts, various sports badges to name a few.

The cubs and beavers linked twice during the year. We had our annual chip shop walk and we also introduced the beavers to geocaching on Greenham common. A first introduction to mapping and map work! This Linking is a very important activity where we hold a join beaver-cubs meeting and it allows the beavers to see the bigger cubs and more importantly the cub leaders. That way we are not total strangers when they swim up from beavers to cubs.

We also took the cubs to see the Veolia recycling centre in Padworth on the A4 where the cubs explored the whole world of recycling and reusing. I am sure you all still have the pencils and sharpeners!

Our Scout district covers Newbury, Kintbury and Hungerford and we joined in a number of district events. These included Remembrance Sunday, St George's day, the district archery completion and district quiz plus the swimming gala. The highlight of the District year was the recent Globe Trotters event at the Race Course. The facilities were amazing and from the feedback we received, the cubs enjoyed the day. Oh yes and there was another badge to go on the uniforms!

So that was our past year, the highlight of which I am concerned was the recent trip to Taunton. It was amazing to watch the cubs playing in the woods- I am sure you have all heard the stories. It was fascinating to sit on the beach in Minehead and watch the cubs throwing stones in to the sea. Kept the cubs busy for over an hour and they had a ball. It always amazes us hoe the cubs enjoy so much some of the simplest games and opportunities without any phones or electronic games.

The leadership team of Jane (Womble), Jane (Hathy) , Mark (Tabaqui) and our two young leaders Joe and Connor and I would like to thank you all as parents for your continued help and support and we are looking forward to the next year at 4th Newbury. I can already hint that a boat on the Thames will be the highlight of next year!

King Louie.