

Birmingham County
Scouts newsletter



goSCOUT

Issue one
December 2011



goINSIDE

New County Website...

At last we are able to unveil our new and improved County website! Check out the new features and layout at

www.birminghamscouts.org.uk

We always appreciate any input or suggestions so please check the site out and email any feedback to web.admin@birminghamscouts.org.uk.

KEEP UP

You can also keep up-to-date with the latest adventures of our County Commissioner in his blog which

will be updated regularly on the site.

LOG ON

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter...

We hope to be able to decrease the emails going out by using the county facebook page to promote all news and information on upcoming events and awards.

We also have a new Twitter site: an easy way to stay in touch with us!

Follow [@birminghamscout](https://twitter.com/birminghamscout).

SHARE YOUR NEWS

Have you run an event, celebrated an achievement or had an exciting experience? We want to know about it! Please let us know your good news stories so that we can share them with the county community. Send your stories and photographs to amanda.cardall@birminghamscouts.org.uk and we can then publish these on our website, facebook page and newsletter. Please ensure you have permissions to use any images that show young people.

WELCOME

TO THE FIRST ISSUE OF goSCOUT

A Christmas message

Every year, it seems that the onset of Christmas gets earlier and earlier, with the commercial activities becoming harder to ignore. Part of being a Scout is thinking of others and doing a good turn for someone else. I'm sure that many of you throughout Birmingham County will be involved in something that will help others less fortunate than ourselves.

Christmas is also a time to spend with others, especially our families. Please take the opportunity, to share the time with those who often support us quietly in the background throughout the year.

2011 has been a busy yet trying year for the County with many changes taking place. We have seen valued members of the team move on and also our Jamboree Contingent fly off and return from Sweden. 2012 promises to be no less an active time for Scouting. We have BrumJam to prepare for and many other activities across all of the sections. Enjoy the Christmas break and the New Year celebrations.

Rick

Rick Keeber - County Commissioner



goREVIEW

2011 has been a particularly active year across the county with many great activities being held for our young people at group, district and county level...



We have introduced new county activities:

- Can We Do? A practical skills weekend for leaders
- BrumChallenge; our new county cub camp
- iceScout- check out the review of this event in the March edition of goSCOUT!



Our two contingents had the time of their lives when they travelled to the World Jamboree in Sweden during the summer!!



Our young people and leaders have enjoyed a number of group/district international trips during the year! Excellent experiences for all involved.



We have welcomed many new people to the County Team. Check out the website to see who's who!



We launched our new website in September with lots of useful content and resources.



Blackwell Adventure have had a great year and seen turnover increase. Further improvements this year have included the new tree trekking course aimed at our younger sections.



County Shop has now come under the care of Blackwell Trading, supported by a team of volunteers and is providing a great service from both Blackwell and the County



The County financial situation has presented huge challenges and has necessitated a number of difficult decisions having to be made. However, we can now see light at the end of the tunnel and are confident that we will be cost neutral next year. As a result of this, we have successfully moved to a volunteer staffed County Office.

go EXPERIENCE

Lead Your Own Expeditions

The weekend of 18th to 20th November saw the annual County Hill walking weekend at Cornel Scout Centre in Snowdonia. Twenty- four leaders from Birmingham County attended the weekend in order to undergo either their hillwalking permit assessments or micro-navigation training. All left having successfully and significantly honed their navigational skills and leadership abilities.

The weather was fortunately fantastic and conditions ideal for the two days walking. Leaders were also able to develop their knowledge of practical outdoor first aid training in a short course to close the weekend. Eight leaders successfully completed their assessments and will now be able to use their skills and knowledge to lead groups of youngsters on short expeditions.



For all of those interested in improving their own skills in such areas, keep your eyes open for next year's event.



For 35 years, Birmingham Bivouac training events have been enabling thousands of Scouts to hone and develop their survival skills. The event takes place in 1,500 acres of private woodland near Gloucester; an ideal expanse of space for putting new learned skills into action and for an adventurous experience within a safe environment.

From fire lighting and shelter building to responding to real life emergencies, Birmingham Bivouac provides the ideal training for polishing up your Scouting survival skills...

**Interested in developing you own survival skills?
Our next event is scheduled for the 21st to 23rd September 2012.**

Do not miss your opportunity to get involved in the training and assessment event and to achieve your Survival Skills Badge to the highest standard, whilst also developing some traditional Scouting skills.

Applications will be available from 1st February 2012. We are certain to have a popular response so be sure to apply early to reserve your space!



From the initial Bivouac Training Award to young leader and staff training, the event provides an ideal opportunity for Scouts and Explorers to learn and develop a broad spectrum of survival techniques and to achieve awards and badges along the way.

BIRMINGHAM Bivouac

goMIX Faiths for Fun

The fourth Faith's for Fun event took place on 23rd October 2011 and gave an excellent opportunity for over 100 people of different faiths and ethnicities to come together to share and celebrate their beliefs. A staggering seven faith bases were represented at the occasion: Baha'i, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh, an extremely impressive turnout.

Great thanks go to all involved, particularly to the Lord Mayor who officially opened the event and Rick Keeber who presented certificates to award young people for attending this educational occasion. Our appreciation also goes to all the leaders and helpers that made the event such a huge success and to Hamstead Hall School who allowed us to use their facilities free of charge.



The 22nd World Scout Jamboree was held in Sweden this summer and was an unforgettable experience for everybody involved. The two-week event provided an invaluable encounter for Scouts from different countries, backgrounds, beliefs and contingencies to come together to learn, experience and build strong, lasting friendships.



Join-in-JAMBOREE

Missed Out?

Don't worry! The resources are available online at <http://scouts.org.uk/joininjamboree> so you can incorporate the flavour of the Jamboree into your weekly activity programmes. Giving young scouts the opportunity to mix with those from around the globe is a priceless chance for them to develop their understanding and awareness of different cultures and traditions whilst gaining a huge variety of experiences and skills to take with them through life! Read all about this summer's upcoming BrumJam to learn about how your next chance to allow your young people such valuable experience...

goJAM

Do you have a passion for adventure? Do you seek the thrill of new experiences? Do you harbour a desire to mix with other like-minded people from all around the globe?

If so, do not miss out on this jam-packed week of activities, fun and adventure for Scouts and Guides from all around the world! You may find yourself swinging through the trees, windsurfing and braving some of the world's scariest roller coasters, all whilst getting a taster of different cultures and making a host of new friends.

Bringing together Scouts from all over the world to participate in a wide array of challenges and thrilling activities, this is an experience that should be on everyone's priority list for the Summer of 2012.

For more information go to www.brumjam.org or email info@brumjam.org

An Olympic International
Adventure for Scouts, Explorers
& Guides

Don't miss out

BrumJam will be held from the 28th July to 4th August 2012 and will be based at Blackwell Court, with its enviable facilities and great expanse of land in the heart of the Midlands' countryside.

If you have a keen sense of adventure, a hunger for enjoyment and an appreciation for sharing this with other like-minded people then this is the place for you.

Along with the energetic programme being arranged, you will get the opportunity to learn about Scouts from other countries and to make lifelong friends and international links. In the near future, you may find yourself visiting new friends in Australia, Africa, America and reliving your enjoyment of BrumJam time and time again.

Costs for participants are £160 which includes a six-day programme and transport to and from the off-site activities. The fee does not include food or the cost of getting to and from Blackwell.



goACHIEVE



There are so many character building and life-changing awards available for our young people and 2011 has been a year of immense achievement throughout the County! We've seen 476 young people presented with their Chief Scouts Awards, as well as increasing numbers of people achieving Explorer Belt, Scout of the World, Queens Scout and Duke of Edinburgh Gold awards.

Jonathan Newsome, ASL with the 237th Birmingham receives his Queens Scout Award and Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award from County Commissioner Rick Keeber



key Contacts Responsible for administering awards

VIV JONES

Viv, a GSL with the 87th Birmingham Group will be doing all the administration for the Chief Scout Awards. Please contact Viv direct for any certificates and for details of the award presentations
viv.jones@birminghamscouts.org.uk.

Kevin Fitzpatrick

Kevin Fitzpatrick will now be looking after the administration of the Queen Scout Awards.
kevin.fitzpatrick@birminghamscouts.org.uk

Roy Smith

Roy Smith is looking after the administration of the Duke of Edinburgh Awards. More information on the DofE scheme can be found on the website.

roy.smith@birminghamscouts.org.uk



SCOUTS of the World Award

GET INVOLVED

The SOWA is available to Network members in the UK and the intention is to roll out responsibility for organising the Award to Counties next year. We hope that Birmingham will be one of the first counties to do this. It is such a worthwhile award that helps build community spirit and character whilst providing the opportunity to change lives and make a real difference!

Encourage your groups to take part and achieve an amazing award and a life-changing experience!

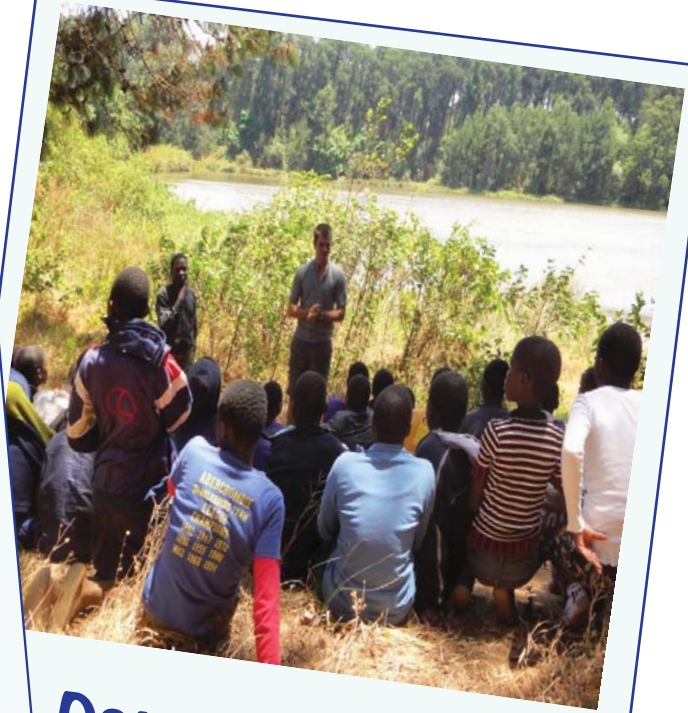
For more information, contact pjrookes@gmail.com or visit the national scouting website for further details.

The Scouts of the World Award is a special achievement showing that a young person is aware of world issues (Scouts of the World Discovery) and has acquired, through a voluntary service, the necessary experience and skills to become a citizen of the world...

Danny Hemmings and Kalpanee Wijendra have become the 4th and 5th people in the UK to achieve this remarkable reward! Their experiences not only enabled them to receive their award but also afforded them both invaluable, unforgettable experiences!



Malawi 2010



Danny Hemmings

Landing at Lilongwe's Kamuzu International Airport last September, I found a flourish of excitement hit me, met hand in hand with a jolting fear of the unknown. The bright orange surface of the ground struck my eyes as fiercely as the blazing sun parading high above in a spotless sky.

I was tired from the flight and anxious about what lay ahead. I remember shivering as a dusted 4x4 exhaustedly came to a halt just inches from the curb.

In the months that were to come, I would experience new, jaw-dropping, awe-inspiring events, mixed in with utterly heart-breaking and physically uncomfortable situations. Transforming desolate school classrooms to comfortable learning environments, altering people's behaviour towards their environment, seeing them grow, achieve and enjoy, all with the devastating effects of poverty, disease and corruption.

I recall an evening where I was called on for a favour from the village chief. Arriving at the scene, I was met by the wails of tears, which could only mean one thing in a nation plagued by aids, malaria, and famish. The 45 minutes that followed were the longest of my life. I was frozen to the driver's seat of the aging pick up truck in an almost robotic state, not wanting to admit what was behind me; the lifeless body of a child in its mothers arms. Only the sounds of a distraught family reminded me. I would never take life for granted again.

The next day I would be back at work in the village, teaching, coaching and supporting. The broadest, most innocent smiles of children who enjoyed the purity of life would be branded into my memory. Their physical and mental strength would leave me dumbfounded; even more impressive was to be their ability to create fun. Young people with nothing but a bamboo mat to sleep on, crafting complex devices from wood. Others make durable and working footballs from rubber trees, plastic bags and old tyres.

As I sat in the back of that tattered vehicle on my first day in this beautiful country, watching the first of many breathtaking sunsets through drooping eyes, I was unaware of the impact that the next six months would make. The Scouts of the World Award made all of it possible.



My Scouts of the World experience took me to Nepal, a beautiful country with so much more to offer than I had ever imagined. Here I worked in a healthcare outpost and taught English in the local school in rural Lele. I cherish these experiences and feel so fortunate to have met and worked with some wonderful people to make a difference; however small it may have been.

I was privileged enough to live with a local family in the village to gain the full rural experience of Nepal. The wholly relaxed take on life and their generous hearts astonished me and, of course, waking up in the most beautiful surrounding the world had to offer was something that you could forever get used to.

Daily life for the Nepalese people is tough due to ongoing financial and political difficulties. Despite this everyone seems to have a smile on their face that attempts to hide the hardship behind their eyes. What struck me most was how hard some of these people worked simply to get through life, yet not once did they complain! There was much to learn from these good people, especially seeing as we live in a modern world where everything is at arm's length, yet we are never satisfied.

My time in Nepal has made me look at the world from a broader prospect than the pinhole view that I was previously used to: a life changing experience!

On Saturday 12th November the County held its annual service of remembrance at the Scout memorial in Cannon Hill Park.



REMEMBRANCE DAY

There were over 450 parents, leaders, Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Explorers and Network from all around the County at the event. The County also welcomed the UK Chief Commissioner Wayne Bulpitt to the event who laid the first wreath.

Despite being very muddy underfoot the weather stayed kind and the service lasted 45 minutes. At the end of the service wreaths were also laid by Rick Keeber, County Commissioner and the six District Commissioners from across the County laid crosses. Members of the audience were invited to lay crosses/wreaths at the memorial.

The County would like to thank everybody that attended the event for such super support.

At the end of the service Wayne was also presented with the first embroidered badge for our International camp BrumJam 2012.



£115,000 Raised to Save Homeless Scout Group!

Passion shown by homeless Scouts, provides new lease of life for Group...



Sunday 16th October 2011 marked a proud day in the 64th Birmingham Scout Group's history, as they were able to officially open the once crepitate doors of their newly refurbished headquarters following years of fundraising efforts, dedication and building work. Thanks to this perseverance and great success in raising £115,000 worth of funds over the past two years, Clem Dench Scouting Centre has been transformed from a dilapidated structure with collapsed ceiling tiles and a leaking roof into a bright and spacious area with ample storage space and invaluable disabled access. Such achievements call for real celebration and what a remarkable occasion the Scout Group organised!

The Event

The event comprised of attendance and meaningful speeches from Wayne Bulpitt (UK Chief Commissioner) and the Deputy Lord Lieutenant, an exciting and creative badge making competition for the children and a dramatic depiction of the history of the Group that showcased the immense talents of the Group's young people as well as providing entertainment and humour for the entire audience. During the day, visitors were also invited

to browse an array of stands prepared by the young people to display their various achievements over recent years. Such achievements include the Duke of Edinburgh Awards, Explorer Belt and Scouts of the World; all of which provide a diverse range of experiences, personal development opportunities and many other invaluable benefits. An award ceremony towards the close of the event saw four of the young people receive their Queen Scout Awards, scouting's most prestigious youth award and a source of great pride and respect.

New Home

As you enter the newly revamped home of the Scout Group, you are instantaneously struck with a pleasant warmth and kind-hearted welcome from the compassionate unit that inhabit the quarters. The once decrepit, Clem Dench, now provides an abode for 100 children and young people between the ages of 6-25, from a variety of backgrounds and cultures; of a diversity of beliefs and ethnicities; all at different stages of their life's journey. All of these children share one thing in common: they are part of the supportive, loving family that is the 64th Birmingham Scout Group. The heart of the Group is clearly

portrayed through their determination to overcome a series of obstacles in recent years. A succession of unfortunate decisions have left the Group homeless on two occasions in the past ten years and it is only thanks to the devotion and hard graft of certain leaders and members that they have avoided defeat and grown to be the flourishing faction that they are today.

Opportunity

Clem Dench now provides ideal facilities for a large variety of group activities and the 64th Birmingham Scout Group has found rejuvenation and a new lease of life within these quarters. The building now has a character of its own and the personal touches, applied by group members and leaders, are visible within the design and running of the headquarters. Hard work is still necessary and new innovative ideas are being constantly developed and discussed. The Group is now excelling and, as new volunteers join, group numbers and diversity continue to grow and the headquarters' doors are being opened to more community groups, the future of the 64th Birmingham Scout Group becomes an increasingly exciting prospect and one that many are eager to be an active part of

BrumVenture



The third BrumVenture was held at Pikes Pool in October with a capacity 120 Scouts taking part in one of 10 badge courses over the weekend:



Camp Cook
Canoeist
Communicator
D.I.Y.
Forester
Master-At-Arms
Navigator
Pioneer
Photographer
Mechanic



Over 50 leaders helped at the event by running the badges or on service team.

Three scouts and 15 leaders were awarded their Gold BrumVenture badge for attending the previous two events and achieving a wide range of skills.

Applications for next years event will be open from the 1st April 2012. Watch this space for news of the badges that will be available in 2012.

Diamond Jubilee Beacon

Birmingham Scouts will be joining in with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations by including the Pikes Pool beacon as one of the 2,012 beacons that are being lit across the country on the evening of 4th June 2012.

We are looking for ideas of how we can celebrate the occasion at Pikes Pool on the day leading up to the beacon lighting ceremony - if you have any suggestions please drop us an email to headquarters@birminghamscouts.org.uk. For more information about the Diamond Jubilee Beacons, please visit the official website:

http://www.diamondjubileebeacons.co.uk/Diamond_Jubilee_Beacons/ABOUT.html

With over 120 scouts and explorers taking part in the County IceSCOUT, it's sure to have been a super weekend. Keep an eye out for the news of the event in our March edition of goSCOUT!



goTRAIN

The main training courses (modules 5-15 and 16-19 + 38) have been a huge success for 2011 and we have also attracted several participants from adjoining counties. Courses for 2012 are already well subscribed..

Safeguarding sessions are now covered in our domain. It is now mandatory that new appointments have current certificate in first aid.

We have therefore arranged to hold safeguarding training evenings at Hatchett St. on the following dates:

Monday 20th February 2012: 7.00pm

Tuesday 15th May 2012: 7.00pm

Wednesday 11th July 2012: 7.00pm

Thursday 18th October 2012: 7.00pm

It is intended, in the near future, to hold safeguarding renewal courses within the Districts.

Gilwell have started to train people to carry out these duties. There will regular updates on this progress.

Tame Valley District Scout Association
and
Perry Barr Guide Division
present the

2012 HANDSWORTH GANG SHOW



Now in its 59th year
again at



The Crescent Theatre
Sheepcote Street, Brindleyplace
Birmingham B16 8AE

Monday 13 February to Saturday 18 February 2012

Nightly at 7.15pm plus Saturday Matinee at 2.30pm
Book early to avoid disappointment.

Tickets are available from the Crescent Theatre
or **Gang Show Box Office** Telephone: **01543 480668**

Email: frank.weetman@virgin.net
www.handsworthgangshow.org.uk

goPLAN

Global Awards and Programme Ideas

There are over 3,400 programme ideas available to support your section achieve global awards at <https://members.scouts.org.uk/pol>

Friendship Passport

The Scout Association in partnership with Save the Children
Why not take your group on a trip through India through exciting games and activities, all from the comfort of your meeting place? Introduce your section to the realities facing children growing up within the impoverished regions of the country and help them to build an understanding of the cultural differences from typical Western upbringings. Visit www.savethechildren.org.uk/scouts

for more information on this exciting partnership and the activities and resources available.

Facing Disaster

Shelterbox help victims of natural disasters and conflicts by providing them with essential equipment needed in the aftermath of such emergencies. Download resources from <http://youngshelterbox.org> to educate your groups on the issues faced by people forced to struggle through such situations, increase awareness and understand the importance of aid response. With games and resources suitable for all age groups, this is a valuable and worthwhile partnership, bound to get everyone thinking!

Working For the Environment

Serco work to improve public services in the UK and many other countries, aiming to improve the environments we live in. They aim to make positive differences in people's lives through improved healthcare provisions, prisoner rehabilitation and educating young people to increase awareness and approaches to a wide variety of issues. Visit www.scouts.org.uk/serco for more information, resources and details on the Environment Partnership Award.

Energy Efficiency

Teach your cub scouts the importance of energy efficiency and make them aware of the current issues facing the world. Visit www.scouts.org.uk/sponsors/35/worcester-bosch-cub-scout-global-challenge-badge for details on the Global Challenge Badge.
For further programme ideas on saving energy and water and on recycling, download resources from www.scouts.org.uk/omsco.

Conservation

There are a variety resources available covering conservation and activities in woodlands:
www.visitwoods.org.uk
www.un.org/forests
www.rainforestsos.org
www.nationaltrust.org.uk/main/w-chl.htm

For more information on available awards contact Peter and Jean Rookes on 0121 477 2282 or via email at pjrookes@gmail.com.

Please send contributions and feedback on your new County newsletter to amanda.cardall@birminghamscouts.org.uk

The next issue will be at the end of March 2012 - all content will be needed by the 1st March 2012.

www.birminghamscouts.org.uk