



# Scouting East



*The Journal of East Belfast Scouting*

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## From the Editor



Hello everyone, and welcome to the September issue of the newssheet. I hope that you all enjoyed the summer break and are looking forward to a new Scouting year within the Groups and Units throughout the District? The recent heatwave was very welcome after a very wet and unpredictable July and August and hopefully enabled us all to start back with some outdoor activities before the dark nights close in. Some of my own Cubs were able to spend a night bivvying in Mountstewart at the start of September and the warm dry night was in stark contrast to the gales and rain on our previous visit. Included in this issue is a report on 30<sup>th</sup>'s summer camp at Bibby's Farm, Chorley – a site which we can firmly recommend to other Groups in East. Many of you will have heard on the news about the challenging conditions encountered by the UK Contingent during their trip to the World Jamboree in South Korea. It is good to know that Justin and Zoe are home safely- thanks to the Leadership Team for taking good care of them to ensure that they still had a trip of a lifetime filled with memories-we look forward to hearing all about their adventures soon. It would be great to receive reports and photos of any other Group or Unit camps and expeditions held during the summer and also about any Sectional activities this month as Groups start back.

As the UK wide Scouting Transformation moves towards implementation in the year ahead, those close to completion of woodbadge are encouraged to avail of opportunities to complete any outstanding modules over the next few months. It may be possible to deliver some modules locally within the District this autumn if there is enough interest and some can also be completed online or via workbooks. Jill and I have been working closely with some Leaders to complete validation during the summer and I am delighted that David Hoskins and Sarah Hughes 27<sup>th</sup>, Caroline Fox and Heather Boyd 73<sup>rd</sup>, Judith Baker, Paul Baker, David Barnes, Ben McKeown and Mark Chambers 4<sup>th</sup>, have all completed woodbadge with several others now very close to completion also. Another First Response training course and Young Leader Module A course are taking place this month. Please don't hesitate to contact me or Betty if you have any suggestions for badge courses that could be arranged at District level for our younger Sections in the year ahead.

Best wishes, *David*



## **30<sup>th</sup> Group Summer Camp at Bibby's Farm, Chorley**

42 members of 30<sup>th</sup> Pack and Troop and Ballyhanwood Unit boarded the Liverpool ferry on Sunday morning 30<sup>th</sup> July on route to this year's summer camp at Bibby's Farm in Chorley. The eight hour crossing passed quickly with repeated visits to the cinema, shops, café and a meeting on deck for a photocall and rousing rendition of 'don't rock the boat'. There was also an opportunity to rendezvous and assign roles in secret to the older Scouts, Explorers and Leaders ahead of our week-long Traitors game. We arrived in Birkenhead and soon navigated the tunnel and central Liverpool before a pit stop at McDonalds on our way to the campsite. We were met with heavy rain, but undeterred the Scouts and Stevie and Stephen set to pitching tents, the Cubs and Scubs (the agreed term for older Cubs transferring to Scouts at camp!) commandeered the dorms in the chalet under the direction of Davy and Paul while Alison and Rachel organised the kitchen, and the Explorers settled into their plush accommodation at Forest Lodge (together with Carlos, Gareth, David and Simon who slept on mattresses on the floor upstairs in the loft like extras from the Waltons!). After supper, and a Scouts' Own with a memorable drama based on the unforgiving servant and featuring Carlos as the King (shudder!!), it was time for bed.

Despite the motorway traffic nearby and the incessant rain, we slept well and awoke the next morning to exciting news that the Traitors had made their first kill, with Explorer Ben murdered in his bed. After breakfast, having watched the catering team grapple with opening the tinned meat in jelly Dinger had helpfully brought with us on the boat for packed lunches on the first day at camp, they were sent off to Asda for the weekly shop, while everyone else headed to the Anderton Centre for the first activities of the week: a full day of tree-climbing, abseiling and rafting for the under-12s with Gareth and sailing, boulder wall and axe throwing for the over-12s (and Davy and Dinger). The weather had not picked up by the evening, so we all retreated indoors for an impromptu but very competitive music quiz organised by Stevie while we mastered the washing machine and tumble dryer. Surely Carlos is much older than he claims judging by his extensive knowledge of music of the 60s and 70s to rival even Stevie? That evening saw the appearance of the slate boards and chalk for the first banishment vote (unfortunately of two faithful and no traitors!) and a further kill that night.

The next day was spent with The Alternative Adventure Company. The seniors spent the day rock climbing and abseiling at Cadshaw's Rock, a natural

rock outcrop, while the juniors also went abseiling at Anglezark quarry with a 25 metre drop to the forest floor followed by gorge walking in the moorland streams and waterfalls. Gareth, Dinger and Patrick also took the plunge, while Davy was left supervising the instructor's rescue puppy, Mouse, who somehow managed to wriggle free from his mentor and escape and had to be enticed back with treats!!

That evening saw our hotly contested County Flag style campfire cooking competition between four teams captained by Stevie, Stephen, Paul and Gareth, with personally requested Explorer Scouts as their sous chef/assistants and freshly hand-picked Cubs and Scouts making up their teams. Judges Alison and Dinger had placed some pizza in the oven back at the chalet just as back-up. We were treated to homemade (Chambers family recipe from rural Fermanagh passed down through the generations) potato and leek soup and chicken curry with giant s'mores stuffed with medium-rare chocolate (that somehow had failed to melt); homemade burgers with generous helpings of lettuce side-salad followed by Mars bar traybake; chicken s'Meared with a blackcurrant and mustard coating and served with potatoes and Mrs Asda's finest potato and leek soup; and chargrilled (culinary term for burnt?) chicken and vegetable kebabs with pasta, followed by fruit and chocolate skewers (a Thompson family favourite with lots of fruit to ensure everyone got their five a day although we aren't sure Lorna would approve of all that chocolate!!). All washed down with a generous serving of Rennies and Alka-seltzer. Congratulations to the winners: Stephen, Cody and Team. A further banishment and murder overnight saw declining faithful numbers, and still no traitors unmasked, indeed a faithful had been secretly recruited to their ranks.

On Wednesday morning, we were up and out early for our day trip to Blackpool Pleasure Beach, arriving shortly after 10am determined to make the most of the limited time available; the last Cub was rounded up and dragged off the Avalanche ride at 6.07pm just as the Park was closing for the evening!! Easing into the challenge, most started with the River Caves log flume, The Ghost Train, and Flying Machines and the Red Arrows, but soon our thrill seekers graduated to the white-knuckle rides (again and again), with Infusion, Avalanche, the Big Dipper, Icon, Revolution and the Big One proving very popular. Even Dinger and DD ventured onto the Steeplechase but drew the line at the Ice Blast steel drop ride despite the best persuasive efforts of Stevie and the senior Scouts. Akela did agree to try Valhalla, best described as ghost train meets log flume meets roller coaster- hurtling around inside a dark cavernous mountain, plunging into oblivion, surrounded by flames of fire and blasts of ice-cold water. He emerged a soggy and quivering wreck with momentary concern expressed by the Scouts that 'we've just broke Dinger', but thankfully was soon revived by the giant communal human blow dryer and a strong coffee. We ended the day with some shopping for rock and souvenirs along the seafront, returning to discover to our horror that all three minibuses had apparently been served with parking fines (within a few minutes relief spread across our faces as it dawned on us that these had been purchased and

filled out moments earlier by Carlos following a trip with the Explorers to a joke shop!!). We rounded off the evening with pizza and indoor games.

On Thursday the older Scouts headed out for a day's hiking, with a slight improvement in the weather so that the showers were at least less heavy and frequent. The Cubs and younger Scouts spent the morning on site, tackling the Cave Bus and crate stacking, and then pyrography (a technical term for burning artistic designs into wood with a soldering iron under the supervision of Davy and trying to avoid burning themselves, anyone else, melting plastic or burning the picnic table we were working at!). After lunch, we made our way to the Bee Centre at Chorley, and after a very interesting talk on beekeeping by Carlos's Doppelgänger, Eric, we all got suited up (even Big Mac, Davy and Dinger) and headed down to the hives to help transfer some bees from a temporary transport box to a new permanent home, a process that involved smoking them out of their temporary abode and then attracting them to their new lodging!! After this we had a honey tasting session, amazed by the varieties on offer with the taste depending on which flowers the little insects had collected the nectar from, and some also infused with everything from chocolate to chilli or ginger. The Explorers and DD had hitched a ride into Chorley earlier in the day and caught the train to Manchester managing to alarm Dinger when they started sharing photos from inside a police station and holding cells on the Unit's whatsapp group- it turned out DD had taken them for a very enjoyable tour of the Greater Manchester Police Museum and Archives! This was followed by ten pin bowling and burgers before they met up with the rest of us in Wigan for a night tackling the Ninja Warrior UK course. Even Gareth 'Gosh' and Stevie 'Grecian' (2000!) couldn't resist the opportunity to channel their inner Ninja even if they were outclassed by the senior Scouts and Explorers (Oh to be a teenager again!! We don't think the Gladiators Production Team will be calling either of them anytime soon).

On Friday, we all journeyed to Rock and River for a morning activity session and amazingly some sun even broke through the clouds. We started on the climbing tower, high and low ropes and zipwire (with Harry almost taking out some unsuspecting dog walkers who had ventured into his path mid zip!). A particular favourite was the air bag, with some very entertaining landings. After this we headed onto the water for canoeing, kayaking and paddleboarding. Up until this point most of the Leaders had had a leisurely morning drinking coffees and munching traybakes as we observed proceedings from the vantage point of the comfy sofas on the veranda. Until that is, Stephen suggested to Dinger and DD, why don't we take a Canadian canoe and head out to get some photos – 'it is very stable, we won't get wet'. Of course, neither had a change of clothes with them. The targeted splashing by the Cubs and Scouts aboard the giant paddle-boards and the deliberate collision of older Scouts and Explorers who rammed our canoe from their kayaks should have been anticipated, but we knew we were really in trouble when Stevie threw off his trainers, grabbed a buoyancy aid and headed into the water, grabbing the end of our canoe and rocking it mercilessly: that was enough

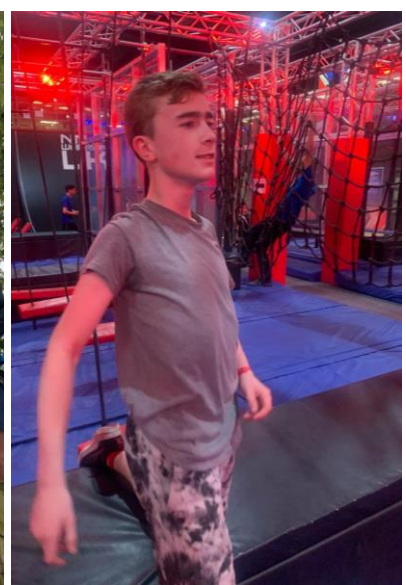
for Stephen who decided to abandon ship and make for shore, upending the canoe, causing Dinger and DD to catapult into the water, emerging like drowned rats several seconds later- all of course without a change of clothes and nothing in the lost property that fitted!

After lunch, we travelled on to Battlefield Live Pennine for an afternoon of outdoor laser combat in wasteland of a disused industrial estate. Soon we were all kitted out like extras from the A Team complete with camo paint and ready for battle. A number of skirmishes ensued, with several brave warriors mentioned in dispatches and with battle honours almost evenly divided by the end of the conflict it was time to negotiate a ceasefire and head back to camp. That evening we had a BBQ and campfire and the eagerly anticipated finale to Traitors complete with pyrotechnics- with competitors using coloured smoke to determine whether to continue with another round of voting. Only one of the 4 traitors was banished (Lewis) during the week, and the remaining Traitors (Tristan, Olly and Patrick) made light work of picking off the last remaining Faithful (Noah, Callum and Ben) one by one to claim their prize (all expenses paid lunch on the Stena ferry home).

We stayed up late packing on Friday night but it was still an early start on Saturday morning making it back to the ferry terminal with just two minutes to spare. We were dumbfounded when the captain came to speak to the leader in charge, we were convinced the Scouts were up to no good, but we should have had more faith, they had in fact been complemented on their behaviour by fellow guests and crew so much so that we were all treated to complimentary brownies by the barista!! Well done to Patrick Ross and Oliver Osborne who were awarded the Audrey Beggs Scout and Cub of the Camp Shields respectively and to the Scouts who at various times during the week were awarded the *Shamrock of Shame* to wear by Stevie. We still don't have an Explorer trophy for camp so once again Carlos fashioned a trophy this time from Blackpool Rock emblazoned with a sticker bearing his own mugshot; a shock result saw this awarded not to any of the Explorers but to Rachel who had bravely joined us all for the week as she completed her Duke of Edinburgh Gold Residential Project. Many thanks to 43<sup>rd</sup> Belfast BB, 27<sup>th</sup> and 37<sup>th</sup> Scouts for the loan of their minibuses, and to all the Leadership team for helping to make this another memorable and enjoyable camp!

*David, GSL 30<sup>th</sup>*

















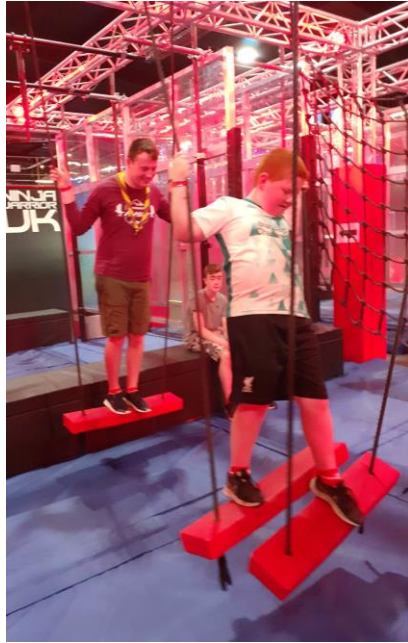














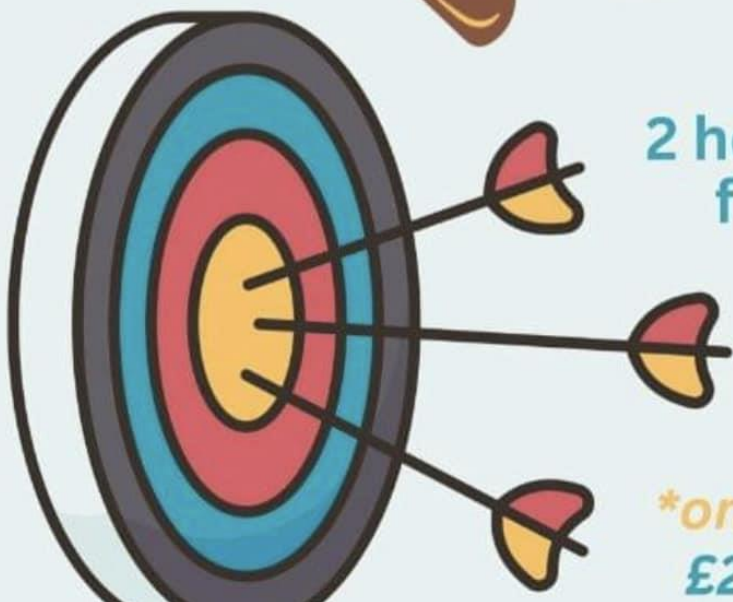
# Archery & Tomahawk Throwing Competition



Calling all  
NI Scouts !

## Lisburn Woods

Sat 21 / Sun 22  
**October**  
2023



2 hour slots starting  
from 10 - 15:30

**3 Scouts  
per team**

*\*one team per group*  
*£20 entry per team*



## Events in September

12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>

East District First Response Course  
Venue: 30<sup>th</sup> HQ Gilnahirk Presbyterian  
Contact: David (see below)

26<sup>th</sup>

East District Young Leader Module A Course  
Venue: 30<sup>th</sup> HQ Gilnahirk Presbyterian  
Contact: David (see below)



### **Rt Hon The Lord Carswell Memorial Service**

Friday 15<sup>th</sup> September at 2.30pm

St Mark's Parish Church, Dundela



**News & Views, Letters & Comments,  
Reports & Announcements to the Editor:**



David Bell

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Not later than **20<sup>th</sup> October** for the next issue please!