



# Scouting East



*The Journal of East Belfast Scouting*

No. 409

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## From the Editor



Hello everyone,

I hope that you are all well in this anxious and uncertain time. Our thoughts are especially with those who have lost loved ones or have become very ill themselves during the Covid-19 outbreak, those keyworkers battling on the frontline, and with the elderly and vulnerable in our local community, particularly those in care homes deprived of visits from friends and family, and others missing contact with grandchildren and socialising with friends. We are living in unprecedented times as we now enter week 8 of the lockdown due to the pandemic. Face to face Scouting across the UK and East District is in a state of suspended animation and many events have already been cancelled, and camps and international trips planned for the summer are looking increasingly unlikely to be held this year.

It has been difficult for Scouting nationally to find an appropriate way to help our communities due to the current Government restrictions around social distancing and non-essential travel, and our national leadership and insurers are wary least we put others or our own members at risk from any well-meaning but unsanctioned efforts to help. That said, I am sure each of us in our own small way are doing what we can to support friends and neighbours, particularly the elderly and vulnerable known to us. Many have also been involved in fundraising efforts. The lockdown brings a new perspective on life and fresh challenges for all, with many things we took for granted no longer possible. For our younger members, closing of schools has disrupted routine and isolated them from friends, while our teenagers and students face uncertainty around examinations and the impact on future careers. We have all had to adapt to new ways of communicating and strengthening our mental and emotional resilience as well as maintaining our physical health during such challenging days. Our own HQ team have been coming up with some great ideas and challenges to keep us busy and we have all been adapting to virtual Scouting.

There hasn't been much to report in the Newssheet, so I have combined the March and April issues. My own Pack have been powering through many of the activity

badges- it is amazing how many of these can be done at home (animal carer, gardener, home help, chef, DIY, entertainer, artist) and parents are glad of any ideas from Leaders as the lockdown continues. I have enclosed a selection of photos showing some of the badgework my own Cubs have been doing these last few weeks. Some of the Cubs have also been having campfires or sleeping out in their own back gardens. As have many children in our local community, most of our Cubs have also made NHS rainbows – not just painting these, but also from lego or stones. I sent a selection of these to some of those I know working on the frontline in Belfast's Nightingale ICU, and they were very appreciative and touched to know that the Cubs in East Belfast were thinking of them.

I suspect many other Groups and Sections are undertaking similar projects but I thought by sharing these photos it might inspire everyone out there to keep going. I hope to that our Executive and (Vice) Presidents know that we are thinking of them and will enjoy seeing some of what the Cubs in East have been up to during the lockdown. At the time of writing it isn't certain when the current restrictions will be lifted, and life will slowly begin to return to a (new) normal. In the interim, I would be really keen to produce another edition of the Newssheet in May/June with contributions from our other Groups and Sections showing all that has been going on across the District during lockdown.

At the moment, a final decision hasn't been taken whether to hold a virtual AGM before the summer or delay until the autumn. Further information will follow. Although interviews and processing of ACCESSNI applications has been suspended, many of you will have received several emails from HQ about the need to update mandatory online training. I realise this may not be a priority for many, especially key workers, those who have been unwell or are caring for sick relatives, those working or schooling children from home, but if you do have time please try to complete GDPR, safety and safeguarding training and forward your completion certificates to me and I will update your record on Compass. Similarly if any Leaders want to complete online training for other Woodbadge modules or forward documents for validation, I would be very willing to process them for you.

With the postponement of Eurojam until next year, several of those planning to attend will unfortunately now be over the age limit and can no longer attend so a few places have opened up, if anyone is interested please contact our local HQ for more information. I have also been in contact recently with Andrew McCutcheon, CSL 24<sup>th</sup> Pack. The 24<sup>th</sup> Group urgently needs some new Leaders; if you know of anyone who might be in a position to join the Leadership team at 24<sup>th</sup> when Scouting resumes please encourage them to contact Betty or me.

In the interim, take care everyone, and stay safe,

Best wishes, *David*



## Northern Ireland Cub Scout Quiz

Teams from 4<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> Packs travelled to Killyman Parish Church on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March to represent East District in the Northern Ireland final of the Cub Scout Quiz, hosted by County Tyrone. Many thanks to Ciaran our NI Commissioner and his team for organising the event and congratulations to Jack, Daniel, Patrick and Caspar from 30<sup>th</sup> who won the County Shield and NI Quiz Trophy, a beautifully carved wooden elephant. This is the first time the elephant has been in our District since 4<sup>th</sup> Pack's victory 10 years ago and as Bagherra Gareth reminded me recently it is 15 years since he captained 30<sup>th</sup>'s only other team to ever win this trophy!

*David, Deputy DC*





## News from 30<sup>th</sup> Pack

30<sup>th</sup> Cubs completed work on the Scientist badge at the end of February with a visit from Dr Etain Tansey and Dr Samantha Taylor from the Centre for Biomedical Science Education at QUB. The boys learned all about human anatomy, and were particularly fascinated by how long our intestine really is and how all that gut is folded up inside our abdomen. They also measured their own pulses before and after exercise and recorded their peak expiratory flow using flow meters. And Etain was delighted to receive a scientist badge of her own to wear on her lab coat, as colleague Chris Johnson has been bragging ever since he was presented with one by former DC Ann on a previous visit several years ago. Akela also demonstrated how to make yoghurt using live microorganisms and how flower stems take up coloured dye. We also decided that the science badge provided an important opportunity to play a game called contagion about how viruses and bacteria can easily spread from person to person, and used fluorescent dye and a UV lamp to show how effective or not our handwashing technique was.

For the first time in many years, 30<sup>th</sup> Pack currently has no Cubs with peanut allergies. We decided it was time to dust down the wires and foil trays and have another go at almond cooking – the oil in the almonds provides enough fuel to cook a mini-Ulster Fry. Paula Bryson called in for a visit that night and soon found herself in the thick of the action, skewering almonds on the wires- her hands were black by the end of the night- but she seemed to enjoy it as much as the Cubs and we are convinced we will see her back in uniform soon. And this year's winner of the Gareth Thompson Annual Set the Hall on Fire Trophy, was none other than Carlos – a worthy effort as the photos reveal!!

The following week, Julie-May Noteman of Gilnahirk Panto Fame visited to run a drama workshop. The Theme was Gilnahirk's Got Talent, complete with our own judging panel and presenters, and the usual mix of jugglers, dance routines and comedians. We didn't have an animal act as such but the highlight however was Carlos (adopting a bizarre foreign accent) and his performing Cubs who stole the show with their antics.

Since the lockdown began, we have all been keeping in contact via the Group Whatsapp chat, with parents posting photos of the Cubs completing the requirements of various badges including Home Help, Chef and DIY. We also completed the Entertainer badge with video clips of magic acts, joke telling and playing various musical instruments. The Cubs have also been making rainbows – posters, painting stones and even from coloured Lego bricks to send to the NHS. Although we had to cancel our March weekend, we have managed to reschedule this for late September and are still hoping our summer camp can go ahead as planned in North Wales in August.

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







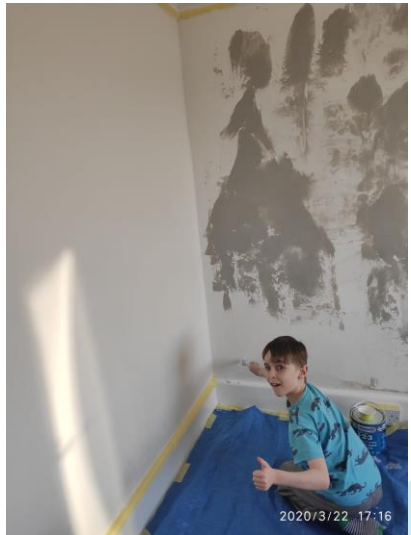
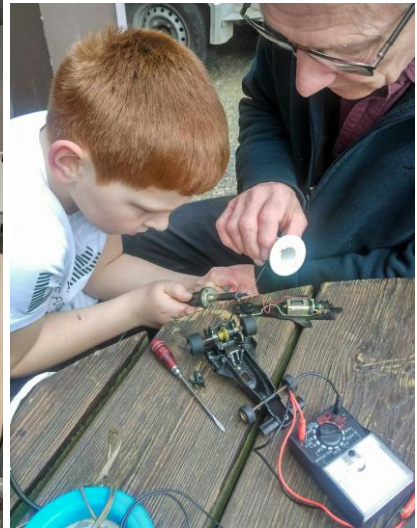
## News from the Ballyhanwood Unit

The Ballyhanwood Unit managed one more activity before the lockdown, with a trip to Eddie Irvine's for an afternoon of bubble football in early March. For some just getting into the bubbles was a challenge and left them exhausted. They were certainly hot and claustrophobic inside. Although some goals were miraculously scored with complete disregard of the rules, greater pleasure seemed to be derived from simply hurtling towards and colliding with others knocking them down and laughing uncontrollably as they tried to get back on their feet again. We rounded off the afternoon with a normal footie match minus the bubbles. Unfortunately our fundraising events – Marathon, Abseil and Bond Movie Themed Night at the Strand have all been postponed and we are waiting to hear whether or not our trip to Bosnia will be able to go ahead this summer.

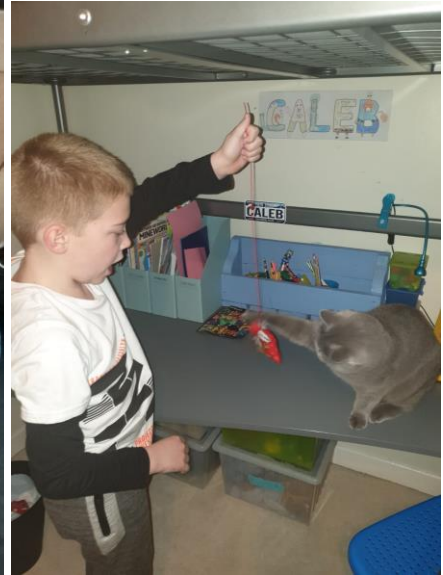
*David, ESL*



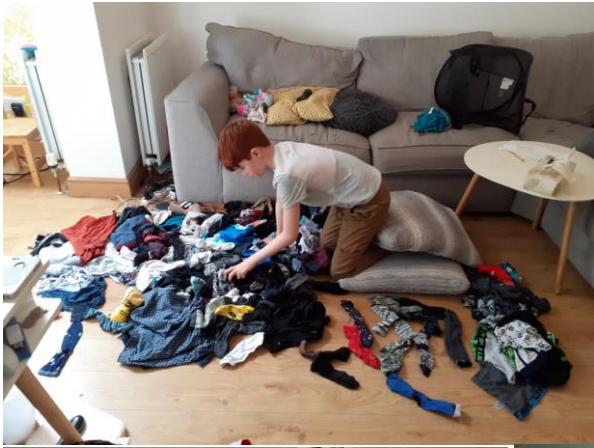






















## Forthcoming Events

All events have been cancelled until further notice



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



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Not later than **31<sup>st</sup> May** for the June issue please!