Barlaston & Tittensor Scout Group

Group Council/Executive AGM

18th February 2022

**Group Chairman’s Report**

Well, who’d have thought at this time last year that we’d still be reeling from the consequences of the Covid pandemic 12 months on. To say the group has had another challenging year under corona virus restrictions would be an understatement. Stop, start, masks on/off, virtual meetings, restricted indoor activities, and number limits. The group’s executive committee has continued to meet during the restrictions, via Zoom, and a steadily increasing amount of essential maintenance and administration was undertaken at the hut.

GSL, Gareth, and the other section leaders regularly reviewed the prospect of virtual meetings but always decided that Zoom and/or ‘distanced’ Scouting wasn’t desirable.

Continuing with appropriate Covid control measures, the improvements to, and maintenance of, our HQ have continued, although at a more restrained pace. More progress has been made with the new electrics & heaters and new guttering/downspouts are still in progress too. Sadly, the lighting installed along our driveway was subject to vandalism and needed urgent attention and unhelpful expense. As always, a big thank-you to everyone who helped with this work, you know who you are.

Your executive committee is always looking at ways to continue getting our headquarters to the best possible condition and, notwithstanding those areas previously described, improvements to the toilet/washing facilities are on our longer-term wish list. Our regular maintenance workdays will continue, on the second Saturday of every even month, over the next twelve months and a little bit of help from everyone will go a long way - please make sure you can do your bit to spread the load.

The group’s day to day finances are, at last, returning to normal and seem relatively stable, as they were pre Covid. The government’s *Business Support Grant* received from *Stafford Borough Council* in 2020 remains in our accounts and a decision on its most appropriate expenditure will be taken in 2022. The grant gave us confidence to temporarily suspend the collection of membership fees until face-to-face Scouting started again. The Executive Committee managed to make available finances to satisfy all our mandatory commitments, our national Headquarters Capitation fees as well as making modest progress with our maintenance & improvement aspirations.

I am very happy to record that Julia has agreed to continue in her role of Group Treasurer, and I would like to thank her for her efforts throughout 2021.

Sadly, Jenny stepped down as Group Secretary at the end of summer and as yet we haven’t yet secured her successor. A big thank you to Jenny for all her hard work and patience.

Please consider if this might be a role you could take on or know someone who could fit the bill.

Your Executive Committee are a friendly bunch and will welcome volunteers to assist us in any capacity, with open arms. So finally, in this paragraph at least, thank you to everyone else who has attended our executive committee meetings and helped us with the good governance of our group.

Your Exec Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, GSL and section leaders' representative continue to take responsibility for and act as the *‘Joint Committee’* for *"The Barlaston Boy Scouts and Girl Guides Trust Deed 1959",* in the absence of representatives from GirlGuiding, with named officers taking respective roles.

And lastly, as usual, I must say a big thank-you to all our section leaders, assistants, and helpers, all our parent helpers and others who have given their time and/or expertise at various functions, events, etc through this disrupted year. Also, of course, a huge thank-you to Gareth, our GSL, for the hours of thought, work, and effort he manages to invest in the group whilst also juggling his other commitments.

Once more, I hope that by this time next year, we will be looking back on 2022 as the year that we bounced back from Covid into full-on, all section Scouting and predicting a further 12 months of great Scouting at Barlaston & Tittensor.

Paul Westwood – Group Chairman

February 2022