

Scout Section Report – 2017/18

The group AGM is always an opportunity for me to sit down and reflect on the previous year in the troop and to think of the great things that my team and the Scouts have been up to. It is also a time to consider the challenges that we have faced and to reach out to you, the members and supporters of the group to help make sure that every year is better than the previous one. So here goes once more....

Despite starting the year with very low numbers, we had an excellent camp at Spring, which I mentioned in last year's report but also took a small number of Scouts away for a late Summer Weekend Camp in September at Walton Firs. This was a way to get the troop away despite not being able to muster enough to go for a full week, just because there were not enough of us. We had an excellent weekend with those that were there and had hoped that this would be a springboard for more such trips.

Since then this past year has been a challenging time for the leadership team. Numbers are slightly up since we went away in September, which is a definite positive and something that makes meetings, activities and camp better for all of the Scouts involved. The main challenge for us however has been with motivating our young people to take part in activities, particularly going to camp in 2018. Having a larger troop normally has the opposite effect, so the leadership team have been left a little confused and disappointed by the lack of camps this year, despite a significant effort on their part. We have unfortunately not been able to go ahead with either Spring or Summer Camps this year as there has not been enough support for either to make them logistically or financially viable. Summer Camp particularly is a blow as this is 100% the highlight of the Scouting year and is something I would expect most Scouts to be really enthused about going on. We did have some date clashes with one school in Bromley, however this was not enough to account for the shortfall we had.

The main positive we have had is we managed to enter a healthy sized team into the Scouts of Steel district competition. We have not managed that for a while so it was brilliant to have a team of 5 entered into that. That is certainly something I called on parents to try and encourage Scouts to take part in last year so hopefully that will continue.

We are continuing to work on getting the Scouts to take ownership of their badge work and are starting to see positive signs in their enthusiasm for the possibilities that are available to them. With any luck this will mature into a clutch of badges being earned in the coming year!

My one big take away from this year's report for all parents and supporters is to encourage and enthuse your Scouts. There are some great opportunities and experiences available if they want them, but they sometimes need a little push in the right direction to commit to something that might be slightly outside of their normal comfort zone. The team I have working with me in Tony, Jack and Ian have a wealth of knowledge, experience and enthusiasm for Scouting and really do know how to put together camps and activities that are special for everyone involved. We are also well aware of changing trends, needs and wants of our young people and sometimes we need to review what we do and how we do it so that we are appealing to what they might want. This can only happen with your help, so never be afraid to drop us a line or put your head around the corner to give what would be invaluable feedback.

I look forward to this year to see how things develop, hopefully culminating in an adventurous Summer Camp in 2019 with lots of Scouts going.