

82nd Craigalmond (Cramond) Scout Group

Annual Review and AGM

Friday 7th October, 6.00 – 7.30pm

Minutes: Helen Smith (Secretary)

Apologies: Mike Treanor, Emma Cunningham,

1) Chair's Welcome (Sarah Gordon)

Welcome to all and thank you for attending. Special welcome to Mark Hesketh and Molly Hughes.

2) Address from District Commissioner, Mark Hesketh

Thanks for the invitation to the AGM and apologies for will have to skip off before the end to another AGM, because it's that time of year. The year has seen scouting groups coming out of the period of Covid and getting back to face-to-face meetings, for which there is huge appreciation for all the groups, leaders, and parents.

All the feedback the District gets is that this year is important for re-engaging, and scouting is throwing itself into that. Thanks to Molly Hughes for speaking tonight. Looking at Cramond specifically, the group is excellent and in a really good position. Some groups in the district have been struggling and Mark is very aware that Cramond has been helpful to other groups in many ways. Support to leadership of other groups for which district is very grateful. And extensive loan of equipment, which again is much appreciated, for example the set of hiking tents bought by Cramond to use within the group and share with others which got groups out camping sooner than they might have while still observing covid restrictions.

Leadership in Cramond is very active; Mark is particularly grateful to Graham Cullen as part of the district team and Cramond is lucky to have him, and the time and effort he puts in.

Similar thanks to section leaders for the time they put in at meetings but also all the behind-the-scenes hours of preparation and the weekends given up to camps. Proud of what you do and support for young people.

Mark announced the following badges to leaders, awarding personally to those present:

Hector Black – Wood Badge

Long service:

20 years – Graham Cullen and Andrew Wood

15 years – John Adlington

10 years – Paul Rogers and Gillian Pritchard

5 years – Grant Crain, Rebecca Mill and Craig Beeley

3) Section Annual Review presentations

Cubs: (Monday and Friday) Rebecca Mill and Charlotte presented a short slide show of activities Cubs have been participating in. Some highlights from Friday Cubs were the work towards the Our World challenge badge, team building challenge night, a coastguard visit arranged by Nick (vol coastguard), lots of outdoor activities; Cramond Island walk and crab-spotting, bike ride, litter pick, walk to Longcraig, bowling xmas night, knot skills pioneer badge. For Monday Cubs there was disability awareness, pioneering, bolases and ballistas,

beach art for the artist badge, science of the lemon battery, Cramond island and rock pooling, war history and geology of the island, "Bike n chips".

Joint cub camp held a couple of weekends ago was the biggest highlight. Environment theme, backwoods cooking, archery.

Have awarded an amazing 580 badges in last 12 months. Thanks to the Cubs, Young Leaders, leaders, and helpers who have made it all possible

Scouts: Gabriel & Finlay presented a slide show about the summer camp canoe expedition on Loch Tay. Setting off around noon on 1st day, weather not best conditions rainy and windy, had to tough through and keep paddling. They were in teams of two in each boat. Some boats started out not getting on so well but over the first couple of hours got better and worked together. Tiring work but had stops for breaks and snacks. Paul in speedboat (as usual) as support and help in case anyone got into trouble. Lots of wildlife, saw ducklings while they were on the water. Camped on small island with ruins of an old castle, cool to say we camped on an island, but lucky to have trees and shelter because chucked it down all night.

All pleased to get ashore and get food, after a day's paddling. Full English breakfast used for dinner because supplies for dinner were 'forgotten'.

On the second day Paul, James, and Karen delivered emergency breakfast that Karen prepared - much to the appreciation of the group. Day 2 had the exact opposite conditions from first day: really clear and still, loch like a mirror. Happy to get home after a total of about 16 hours on the water. Sam, Finlay, and Gabriel awarded Chief Scout Gold Award at the end of the trip – an excellent achievement.

Beavers: (Monday and Friday) Adam Purvis and Jane presenting. Beavers have had an epic time coming out of lockdown, most ridiculous fun as much time outside as possible, both groups following the same programme including a police visit, rock climbing, den building. The Beavers contributed to the agenda building so there are plans for going to America and seeing Godzilla fight King Kong on Skull Island, so you can see there are big plans for rest of the year, also including camping in hall!

Explorers: Donald gave a brief update before leaving to go with the group to this weekend's Sky Camp. Having joined as a leader in 2008 when there were 4 Explorers, now have 45 Explorers and 6 leaders, with welcome support from Rebecca with the awards. DofE, have had 4 bronze, 3 silver and 3 gold. Real achievement and really impressive of the explorers to get through all the requirements under the different sections; physical activity, Learning a Skill, volunteering and of course the expedition. Explorers seem do a lot of similar stuff to the younger groups; perhaps could use the same programme Beavers are enjoying for Explorers! AGM obviously highlight of the year, but one thing trumps it – camping. Hence Explorers leaving for Sky Camp. The big summer camp this year was in Dumfries & Galloway, with a Top Gun theme; glorious weather and a brilliant time. The Leaders look forward to welcoming Beavers Cubs and Scouts in future years.

4) Presentation from Molly Hughes, President of Scouts Scotland

Molly gave a fascinating and engaging presentation covering her two expeditions to the summit of Mount Everest and her record-breaking solo expedition to the South Pole. Cubs and Beavers in the hall were keen to answer and ask questions and it looked like parents would have liked to as well.

Particularly inspiring was Molly's description of how she continually overcame her fear of heights to cross huge ice crevasses on the Khumbu glacier, and her definition of courage as working to overcome your fear.

Antarctica was biggest expedition of her whole life, skiing 1100km from Hercules Inlet to the South Pole, with her sled Boudicca, taking 58 days. Uphill all the way to the South Pole and the first 8 days were in headwinds gusting to 60 knots, -45 degrees temperature and whiteout conditions! Very emotional on the afternoon of the 8th day to have the weather clear and see blue sky and sun. Christmas Day on around day 40 she was about 2/3 of way to her target. Christmas dinner consisted of freeze-dried shepherd's pie made up with a block of butter and was a real treat. Molly skied in to the South Pole on 10th Jan to a soundtrack from AC/DC, becoming the youngest woman to ski solo to the South Pole at 29 years old. She left the Beavers and Cubs with the thought that she was sure that they could beat her record someday.

Applause and thanks to Molly from all and a gift of a Swiss army knife presented by Beaver Holly.

5) Group AGM (adults only)

i) [Minutes of the last AGM held on 1st December 2021](#)

Available to view on website. There being no matters arising the minutes were nominated and accepted.

ii) Chair's Report

Sarah Gordon's report will go on the Cramond Scouts website in next few days. She recognised the excellent position that the group is in, both in terms of the financial position, and the numbers of youngsters, leaders, parent helpers etc. in each group.

Sarah touched on the sad loss of Margery Naylor, and the huge number of scouts and leaders who attended her funeral in Cramond Kirk.

The plant sale coordinated by James Kistruck and Hannah and an army of helpers on the day. It was another fantastic result with £3,000 raised, some of which will fund Hannah's participation in the 25th World Scout Jamboree in Korea next year.

It has been brilliant that Cubs Scouts and Explorers have all been away this year, helping out with the cooking at Cub camp recently at Fordel was very enjoyable, if exhausting.

Sarah offered thanks and appreciation to Tanya Ramsay who was stepping down as Group Secretary and gratitude to Helen Smith for offering to take on the role, and to Steph James for volunteering as a parent rep. Parent participation in the committee is much needed and there is a request for more parent to get involved. Please speak to any of the committee if interested.

iii) Group Scout Leader's Report

Graham Cullen recognised that this had been another challenging year, with a restart of face-to-face activities but a blip at Christmas when activities throttled back, the youngsters have been phenomenal throughout. It is useful to hear Marks perspective as District Commissioner from his broader view across 15 groups. Some are really struggling, and we are fortunate to be doing so well. Across the groups we have 209 youngsters and almost a full complement of leaders.

The youngsters have been phenomenal, the outdoor stuff has been crucial, for all groups.

Scouting is meant to be challenging as well as instructional. The leaders do amazing work to provide the groups with challenges that are achievable and fun, building teamwork and making friends, who if you are lucky will be friends for life.

Fantastically lucky to have the support of leaders, helpers, and young leaders (17 of the Explorers) real creativity of new ways to deliver scouting in outdoor context. Youngsters

seem to love it and have handled it robustly. The Executive have been phenomenal, small group providing invaluable support to Graham as Group Scout Leader and the section Leaders. Would welcome and could always do with more parent input, so if thinking about helping, please do get in touch to find out more either as sectional leaders on Mondays and Fridays or less frequently at the quarterly Executive meetings.

Final thanks again to all the youngsters – credit to you as parents, they are so full of enthusiasm and ready to learn. Had 2 tough years but have bounced back and are back almost 100% (other groups have lost significant numbers). Indebted to everyone in Cramond for making the 82nd Craigmmond one of the best groups in Edinburgh if not SE Scotland.

iv) Treasurer's Report and Adoption of the Accounts

Ended the year with bank balance of £16k, related to fundraising and gift aid claims back to 2019. £3k from this year's plant sale. Receipts were £15,894, and outgoings were £21,000. In 2020 got 12k of gift aid and have 2 o/s claims for about £4k which is a reminder of how important the gift aid is.

The 2021/22 annual report and figures have been submitted to OSCR (charities regulator).

A question was raised from the floor regarding how much is spent each year, and whether subs could be frozen rather than raised by £5 per child, given that the bank balance was around £12k. Various items were covered during the discussion: base costs of hall fees and capitation paid to the Scout Association last year were around £13k and subs received were £11,250. The hall fees have just increased substantially, for the first time in 5 years, due to the tripling of fuel costs. Some of the bigger unexpected costs like equipment replacement and repairs to the stores are occasional rather than regular between years and need to be budgeted for. A section leader noted that the subs received don't cover the base costs and that there had been a proposal to put the subs up by £10, and that there are extra costs in purchasing materials for activities that some leaders have met personally.

Graham gave a little background of the executive's thought process over recent periods: parents had paid full fees 2019/20 and 2020/21 but lockdown had meant disrupted programmes over these periods, so to reflect this, the subs in 2021/22 were reduced to 2/3 of the previous year. With the return to a normalised programme, the Executive had agreed that 2022/23 fees would rise by £10 (to cover increases in rent and capitation) but on further reflection, reduced the increase to £5 giving the current financial difficulties faced. However, the increase of £5 per head will mean the group will run at a loss and will therefore need to draw on their reserves.

Was there a feeling amongst parents that it isn't within their budget? It didn't appear so from the floor. One contributor saw the scouts subs as good value and low cost; a £5 increase for the year was reasonable to them. A suggestion was made to consider changing the charging method to standing orders/DDs to spread the cost. Paying the year's subs for 2-3 kids in one month is hard. The fees letter does offer ways to spread payment in individual cases, but adopting SO/DDs across the whole group will complicate administration and additional complication for claiming gift aid.

There is also reference in the subs letter to the hardship fund.

Agreed this was a difficult area, and committee were grateful for the questions and suggestions.

2021/22 accounts nominated by Helen Smith and seconded by Sarah Gordon.

v) GSL's Nominations: Group Chair, Secretary & Treasurer

vi) Election of:

(1) Group Chair – Sarah Gordon

(2) Group Secretary – Helen Smith

(3) Group Treasurer – Sandra Smit

(4) Members of the Group Executive Committee – Claire McDowell, Steph James,

All nominated and voted in.

vii) Close