

Leamington District Scout Council

Annual general meeting 26th January 2023

Chairman's report

At the last AGM, I expressed my desire to step down as District Chairman at this AGM, and even in a relatively benign year of scouting for us, this has come around very quickly.

When Ann Howe contacted me about this time 8 years ago asking me if I would consider becoming her District Chairman, I did think, why me, could I do that?

I then had a chat to Des McCann who was the outgoing District Chairman, who convinced me that "it was only Chairing a meeting".

Well 8 years on, and the old scout adage of only an hour a week has proved just as untrue as any other scouting role.

But that said, I have enjoyed every bit of it.

From my first Exec meeting actually here in the Octagon through to seeing the District thrive and grow in so many ways, new groups opening up and expending, fantastic events, watching young people grow and develop with new skills and confidence. Our site at Hatton has been transformed from a rather draughty and damp affair to warm and welcoming state of the art building on a well-maintained site.

Dave Collins was always close by at Exec meetings, whispering words of advise on how I should deal with things on the Exec and I did miss him when he stepped down.

Ann Howe was a great DC to work with and taught me so much about scouting, such that she gave me the confidence to be "not afraid to try" and we worked so well together, I miss her wise words, council and friendship as I am sure many of us do.

John Sharp for me knew about everything to do with Leamington and Warwick Scouting – his legacy in making sure that the District and County worked behind the scenes cannot be overstated and again was someone who helped me "get the District" and has left some big boots to fill, I only hope the future steps I take will not mess up anything he did.

Our current DC Mark, has brought a fresh approach to how our District and Executive Committee functions, steering us through some of the most challenging times any of us has ever seen, making sure all corners of the district are have been supported ensuring a calm and fair approach to whatever has been thrown at us and I look forward to continuing to support you and the Exec in the future.

I continue to be in awe of you the Scouters in what you do to energise and inspire our young people.

These days, it doesn't take much to distract a young person, but you are doing things right as we are continuing to grow, most groups are bursting at the seams with waiting lists of young people wanting to come and join scouting, and that is down to you and the exciting programs and events you all put together.

I feel immensely privileged to be associated with you and this organisation you represent, and thank so many of you for your time and patience that you have given this “non-scout” with the opportunity to contribute in my own small way.

District Executive

I need to take time to thank the members of current District Executive, who continue to commit time and effort to ensure that our District is a well-run and sound.

Our focus is still on being actively youth shaped and its great to have such a high level of active youth involvement in shaping what we do.

Hatton Service Team

Gordon Ferguson has done a tremendous job maintaining the grounds and surroundings at Hatton especially making sure it was COVID safe with some imaginative use of the site and continues to ensure that the districts main tangible asset is well maintained and in good order.

I would particularly like to mention George Harding who together with the Network team has helped to ensure the grounds at Hatton are safe particularly in terms of managing the tree stock and as a result ensuring we have the best log pile Hatton has ever had. He is working with Gordon to plan how we best manage and maintain the trees and site for the future. Thank you to all of the team.

Appointments committee

Thank you to Brian Caley and John Sharp and the appointments committee, who took on anew and flexible approach to holding AAC meetings to help to maintain and indeed expand the appointments in the district and, who along with our Training Managers, managed the ongoing challenge to ensure we have enough competent and capable leaders in the right roles in the right places.

To end I would just like to say

Thank you for letting me be a part of what you all so passionately believe in - Scouting.