

# G L M W N E W S

AUGUST 2021



## Getting the fun back!

It has been great to catch up with so many of you over the last few weeks and get back to doing what we have all been missing over the last 18-months. Fun and adventure in the great outdoors has never felt so good. The smile on everybody's face when I see them is just infectious. From a campfire evening with 16<sup>th</sup> Edgware (never a quiet experience and always with the best songs echoing around the circle); through the wild

and competitive activities of an Ealing & Hanwell Cub Camporee at Walter Davies Scout Centre; Investitures and Service awards at Group barbeques all across the County; and, hours of Archery and Go-cart sessions at PACCAR it has been fantastic to see. To modify a recent catchphrase a little, “the fun is coming home 😊”...

For me personally, it was just exhilarating to be back out in the wild spaces of the Peak District with a fantastic hill walking weekend that you can read more about below. One of our newcomers, Mona Mohammed, has written up the sensations she felt as a first timer in the hills and, I hope, she will inspire many more of you to dig out the walking boots and come join us for a stroll. I look forward to being terrorised around the hills some more as we get the programme up and running again.

### **Enjoy the Summer and Give Yourself a Well-earned Break...**

While there are still summer camps to come and last meetings of the summer term to complete, it has to be said that we have all covered a lot of ground over the last year and a half. Most of it in the virtual world where we've learned a complete new set of skills. Very often, it has been accomplished while taking on a full range of new rules and requirements that now surround how we will do our Scouting in to the future. I can't be more thankful for the huge amount of hard work that all of our Leaders and Adult supporters have put in to this task. It is clear that we have all felt moments of exhaustion and some personal wear and tear.

So, this Summer, find a space for yourself, take a well-earned break. Put the tent pegs back in the stores and relax. Let's recharge the batteries so that we can really hit the ground running in September. And, if you happen to be on the mountain top that I will be on in the next couple of weeks, I look forward to sharing the fun...

Richard Williams

County Commissioner



### **GLMW Hillwalking Weekend.**

At the start of July, I signed up to do a Hillwalking weekend with my Assistant Cub Leader, Dinah Henson. When I first signed up, it wasn't what I would consider a fun activity, I genuinely hate long walks and I didn't really know anyone on the trip but my ACL wanted to get her Hillwalking permit and I wanted to support her.

So we grabbed the last two available spaces and I began to dread what I presumed would be an awful weekend.

The trip didn't start out great, we left London far too late and we packed the wrong tent but if you know me, then, honestly it's rare for things to go right. So Dinah and I just shrugged and got on with it.

We arrived at the Peak District around 19:30 and a man named Wolfgang offered to help us tackle our new tent. It was then that I realised, everyone apart from myself was over the age of forty and that little knot of dread in my stomach grew.

I have to take a second to compliment Dinah because my complaining had hit a rather high point and she really did her best not to murder me. Thank you for that.

In our group of six, we quickly got settled and sat under the marquee as it began to rain. Wolfgang turned out to be as interesting as he sounded, regaling everyone with tales of the year he spent in Hong Kong as a child when it was still under British rule.

Making up the rest of our six, were Geoff Vanderplank, Alan Shephard, and Richard Williams. I don't know what I was expecting from them but they honestly turned out to be so much fun.

At one point, during our walk on Saturday, I had confessed to rarely really reading the Scout Newsletter. Geoff asked what they could do to make me read it, and I said "perhaps a contents page," Richard and Geoff loudly proclaimed that the newsletter did in fact already have a contents page. So perhaps I should have said, I never read the newsletter, but I promised that that would change.

The best part about doing a Hillwalk with people who are twice your age is that you have youth on your side, at one point, I must admit that I was a little too confident and proclaimed that I could do a stretch that Richard had said would take thirty minutes in only ten.

Dinah then dared me to do so and I had no choice but to back myself up.

I'm proud to say that I managed to do that stretch in eight minutes, I'm annoyed that Richard Williams did it in only seven.

My favourite thing about the trip was the people who made up my team, people who I would normally never speak to. Over the two days, we talked about everything, from career advice to politics, Scouting, travelling and our lives.

At one point, Geoff said and I quote "Mona I haven't agreed with you a lot this weekend but I agree with you there."

I normally try and avoid activities like this because they just don't sound fun. Going away camping, with people I don't know to do an activity I don't like, I was so sure that I was going to hate every second of it but I'm pleasantly surprised to say that I had a great time.

***Dare I say it but I would do it again.***

I didn't know my team before this trip but I do now and if I hadn't agreed to go along, I really would have missed out, because they were all in their own way, fantastic.

They even put up with me trying to drag them down the Hill on the Sunday so that I could make it to the England game on time.

Dinah and I even plan to take our Pack to do a few activities with Wolfgang's.

I also plan to terrorise Geoff and Richard every opportunity I get because it's so much fun but not Alan because Alan is an angel and we will protect him at all costs.

If you're on the fence about doing these trips, honestly, just do them. I guarantee that you will make friends and learn something new.

***Mona Mohamed***

Thank you to all our leaders, helpers, supporters & young people around

GLMW.

We would love to hear about what you are doing as we get back together safely!

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