



1st Barton Scout Group

2021 AGM Report

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Group Scout Leader

You don't know what you've lost til it's gone. That was certainly true of face-to-face meetings over the past year. I didn't think we'd see that day when we were desperate to get back to crowded halls full of boisterous children, but by the end of lockdown(s) that's exactly what we were. I have to pay tribute to the leadership team for their work in the past year. In a time where sections and whole groups across the country have struggled or folded, we have come back to face to face scouting in as strong a position as we were at the start of 2020. They've done sterling work to make sure that we've kept our young people engaged and keen to get back to the fun of scouting in person, often in the face of restrictions and regulations which changed with little notice.

There have been a few other factors in our survival over the past year: The village hall committee have been fantastically supportive right from the start of the pandemic. During the entire time we were forced to meet online or outdoors, they have waived our rent and therefore relieved us of one of our largest outgoings. They are singularly responsible for us being able to pass on reduced subs to you during the pandemic; The Westgarth families' continued support with the use of the field outside Melsonby has meant that we have had a safe, enclosed space to meet in when we were unable to meet indoors. This has removed the need for us to regularly change venue and has given our young people a familiar place to call home on a weekly basis. Most

groups don't have access to this kind of resource and I don't doubt that this will have had an impact on their ability to recover in the time since we were able to meet face to face again. Special thanks go out to Darren and Sam for keeping the grass in check and making the place generally lovely. They say they like playing on their tractors, but I know it's hard work; Finally, the group executive committee who have been (virtually) by my side helping with some tricky decisions we have had to make in the past year.



In sad news, we are losing two members of the group leadership team this autumn. Michelle has been our treasurer for the past 4 years and has been instrumental in moving some of our day-to-day banking online, relieving some of the burden of paper-based banking. Thank you for your support Michelle.



Also leaving us is Aunty Wiz, after more than 30 years involvement with 1st Barton. She has been treasurer, Beaver helper, provider of food and (most impressively) the wife of a former GSL; that's a tough task. There is nobody in this group who has been around longer than Wiz and I struggle to think what life will be like without her. We're going to miss you, Wiz. Thank you for everything. And I do mean EVERYTHING!



Gavin

Beavers

Since we got back to face 2 face meetings the Beaver section has gone from strength to strength with new members going nearly every month. We have made good use of the field and the Beavers completed natural art and den building. Since the start of term we have been in the hall working hard on our badges, with one evening at Aldbrough St John for Cyclist Badge and Richmond for a night hike.



We said goodbye to our older Beavers who have recently moved up to cubs! We also said goodbye to Kate, who has gone to University and after 20 years service to the group we say farewell to Aunty Wiz, and thank her for all she's done for the groups and the Beaver section.

Jon and Catherine

Cubs

There are currently 30 members in the Cub section, meaning we're running at full capacity! We're very grateful to have a strong leadership team now, aided by regular parent helpers and our fantastic Young Leader, Robbie.

Over the past year we have done various activities, from Scouting skills and backwoods cooking, to water fights and a visit from a Great North Air Ambulance representative. We continue to encourage Cubs to suggest their own ideas for our programme which has led to a Gaming night this term, along with "A very serious night" in the coming weeks-no laughing allowed!



A big thank you to all the Cubs and parents for remaining enthusiastic and supportive throughout the year as we muddled through zoom meetings and split groups. We're so pleased to have some normality back again and I'm sure you all are too!

A small number of Cubs took part in a sailing taster afternoon at Ellerton lake in September which was enjoyed by

them all and had a much lower man overboard count than expected! We are hoping to deliver a sleepover at Christmas as we know Nights away are something we have all really missed over the past year and a half.

Bex, Chris, Paul, Esther and Christine



Scouts

The Scout section remains at a healthy 30 members and we are also pleased to have an experienced cohort of 8 Young Leaders that assist the 5 adults in leadership team.

Toward the back end of 2020, we had escaped from virtual rooms with great success, proved you can master pioneering over zoom and found a way to complete our own Taskmaster Challenge in the comfort of everyone's dining room. They said it couldn't be done, but the year culminated with a virtual Christmas party including all the standard games, food and fun! Who'd have guessed that musical 'disappear from the screen when the music stops' would be so hard to judge?



We still had COVID restrictions in the New Year, so we built on our virtual scouting skills, starting with globe trotting around the world, trying to guess the most bizarre drawings and returning to some favourite online scouty games we honed in the past year. The scouts went on to escape from more intricate rooms, solve more complex mysteries and comb the globe in search of an evil genius to thwart their dastardly plans of world domination! We think that each scout should put that on their CV as MI5 would be impressed in a job interview!





As we returned to face-to-face scouting in the spring of 2021, we were pleased to hear that many parents had enjoyed the zoom sessions themselves, as we had several requests for the materials so they could have a go without a pesky child getting in the way. Praise indeed for the creativity of the leadership team running troop nights on Zoom we thought.

We were extremely grateful to have the scout field as the lighter nights arrived in the Spring. We were able to return to a COVID safe open space and get back to what we do best; lighting fires, cooking, hiking, pitching and striking tents. We introduced the scouts to Frisbee-golf, but, as always, threw in a twist of adventure - we learned that navigating through the woods with a Frisbee was harder than it looked. It was also hard to find some Frisbees that bounced at 90 degrees off a tree "that just jumped out" before continuing for a further 100 yards into the deepest darkest thicket known to man.

This term has seen us back to familiar ground in the village hall, although it's been over 18 months since we all remember what it looked like!



We have had a truly rich experience in the past year and the scouts and leaders alike have definitely grown in adapting to the changes the pandemic has placed upon us. There has been many positive experiences and skills developed, for which we will take forward into 2021/22.

Anthony, Karen, Rich, Kevin, Gavin, Rose, Robbie, Hannah, Natalie and Zak

Financial

As mentioned in the GSL report, we have been spared our usual biggest outgoing of rent, thanks to the village hall committee. Some good financial planning at the start of the pandemic (along with reduced ongoing costs due to less face to face contact) has meant that we reach the end of this year in much the same position as we started it money-wise. The current academic year sees us back in the hall, and rent payments will resume at a slightly higher rate than before. The rise in rental is reasonable in light of the improvements that have been made to the hall in the past 18 months. A review of our finances shows that for the time being we can absorb the increased rent with no change to the current monthly subs.

We're looking forward to a new year with a new treasurer in the role. I won't spoil the surprise by naming them in advance of the meeting. Thanks again to Michelle for looking after the finances for the past 4 years.

Gavin

Summary of Accounts 2020/21

Annual Activity Summary Sheet	1st Barton Scout Group		Wednesday, 13 October 2021
	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Profit/ Loss</u>
		0.00	
Subs	4394.72	0.00	4394.72
Beaver Beamish	331.83	0.00	331.83
Group Expenses	0.00	4870.50	-4870.50
Beaver Expenses	0.00	323.67	-323.67
Grant-Donation	159.00	0.00	159.00
Durham Scout and Guide shop	0.00	306.12	-306.12
Cub Expenses	296.00	146.00	150.00
Barton Institute RENT	0.00	525.00	-525.00
Scout Expenses		280.48	-280.48
Totals on THIS sheet =	£5,181.01	£6,451.77	-£1,270.76