

## WALES EXPLORER SCOUT TEAM

The Minutes of a meeting of the Wales Explorer Scout Team held on Saturday March 25th 2006 Llandrindod Wells High School commencing at 11.00am.

<b>PRESENT:</b>	DAVID MORRIS	Wales Commissioner for Explorer Scouts
	GLYNN BARHAM	CLWYD
	PETER CADWALLADER	MONTGOMERYSHIRE
	RHYS FOWLER	CEREDIGION
	JOHN GODFREY	SNOWDONIA & ANGLESEY
	STEVE HOLMES*	CATVOG
	ROB KEMP	GWENT
	EIRWEN MAYALL*	RADNOR
	WYN OWEN	CAMARTHESHIRE
	PAT THOMAS	GLAMORGAN WEST
	ASTON WOOD*	UKHQ

\*Part of meeting

**APOLOGIES:** MAUDIE MILLER PEMBROKESHIRE

### PART ONE – RECOMMENDATIONS

The Explorer Scout Team recommends that:

1. UKHQ ensures that Area and District Commissioners are aware, at least two years before a World Jamboree, of how the process of forming Units and Contingents works.
2. Districts should not let history of Groups stand in the way if mergers would mean that Leaders could be used more efficiently to provide Scouting
3. The Welsh Scout Council should look at how best to co-ordinate media relations in Wales. A list of Young Spokespersons should be made available to Areas and more Young Spokespersons should be appointed and trained.

# PART TWO – MINUTES OF THE MEETING

The additional agenda items added by the Deputy Chief Commissioner of Wales were discussed and are minuted in Part Three.

## 1. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

All members had received minutes of the last meeting except Rhys Fowler and John Godfrey who were new appointments, and Peter Cadwallader who has somehow been deleted from the list.

- ★ **ACTION: Rhys Fowler and John Godfrey** – download minutes of previous meetings from [www.scoutbase.org.uk/wales](http://www.scoutbase.org.uk/wales) or contact WSC Office.
- ★ **ACTION: Shirley Myall** – add Rhys & John to mailing list and look into what's happened to Peter's details

It was proposed by Steve Holmes and seconded by Peter Cadwallader that the minutes be accepted as a true record.

## 2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Moz went through the recommendations of previous meeting, updating the Team of progress. The meeting was formally informed that Chris Cooke and Hari Newlands had been appointed Chair & Secretary respectively. It was discovered that 37 Explorer Scouts were to be taking part in the Explorer Belt expedition to Serbia in the summer. It was not known how many were attending the Serbian National Jamboree. JG hadn't received information on either of the Serbian trips. It was requested that information about future trips be sent out by post. No Wales Explorer Scout MSN Messenger meetings had taken place to date, but Radnor had held one of their own.

## 3. UPDATES

It had been formally announced in the plenary session that Moz would be standing down as Commissioner for Explorer Scouts (Wales) – and hence as Chair of the Wales Explorer Scout Team – at the Spring 2007 Team meeting. Moz told the meeting that he hoped a successor could be found by the Autumn 2006 meeting so that a smooth hand-over could take place.

The first edition of WES the SNAIL, the new Explorer Scout newsletter, had gone out to over 600 addresses, which was very impressive. Moz thanked everyone who'd helped to send in the addresses. It was noted that there had been some confusion whether Leaders would be able to receive copies. The meeting was told that Leaders were welcome to send their addresses in and they would be added to the mailing list. It was asked whether Team members could be made aware of which Explorer Scouts from their Districts or Areas were on the list. It was also suggested that the publication dates for WES the SNAIL be made public so that Leaders could update Moz with any new Explorer Scouts details.

- ★ **ACTION: Moz** – make names of ES on WES mailing list available to Team members
- ★ **ACTION: Moz** – publicise WES publication dates

The Team was updated as to progress made with planning for AWESOME 2007. In short, there hadn't been any as the Biblins, the proposed site, shuts down for the winter and so bookings couldn't be made. Moz would be booking the site at the earliest opportunity. The appointment of camp leader was discussed. It was agreed that this wouldn't necessarily be the Wales Commissioner, and that names should be sought. After the success of the Network input in the first camp it was suggested that a Network member take on the leadership of the camp. Explorer Scouts could be asked to nominate someone via WES the SNAIL. It was agreed that the position would be advertised and an appointment would be made at the next Team meeting.

- ★ **ACTION: Moz** – book Biblins for AWESOME
- ★ **ACTION: Vikki Booth** – include advert for AWESOME leader in WES the SNAIL
- ★ **ACTION: Moz** – advertise position for AWESOME leader in Sgowtiaid and to Network

The state of play with the World Jamboree was discussed. Numbers of attendees from each Area were given. It was agreed that communications had been poor and that this had hampered getting young people to sign up. Some thought that money was being asked for too soon. It was thought that UKHQ expected every Area Commissioner to 'know the drill' as far as forming Units was concerned but that not all did and thus a crucial management layer was lost.

It was agreed that everyone should go back to their Areas and re-promote the Jamboree to as many young people as possible.

- ★ **RECOMMENDATION:** UKHQ ensures that Area and District Commissioners are aware, at least two years before a World Jamboree, of how the process of forming Units and Contingents works.

#### **4. ARE WE MAKING EFFICIENT USE OF OUR LEADERS**

The meeting was told that an article had been written by Moz for an edition of Sgowtiaid asking District Commissioners why they generally had many more Scout Troops in their Districts than Explorer Scout Units. The article had suggested that DCs look at merging smaller Troops so that SLs could be utilised to open or strengthen Explorer Scout Units.

Several points were made by the Team in response to this:

- There are generally less 14-18 year olds in Scouting so less Units will be needed. It was asked why there are less 14-18 year olds. Is it because Units aren't offering attractive programmes and hence aren't attracting young people, or is it just because this age group are more busy, have less time and aren't interested in 'belonging' to clubs & societies? It was agreed that this was an issue, but Moz suggested that we shouldn't use this as an excuse for low numbers
- Merging Scout Troops is not always possible due to geography
- There are peaks and troughs so we shouldn't be too quick to merge Troops with low numbers, it may just be a population 'blip' and they may recover given time
- Scout Leaders wouldn't always be willing to become ESLs
- History gets in the way. "This Troop is 57 years old. You can't merge it with another!" However most young people don't even know which Group they're in, it's the Leaders that have the issue

All of this was taken into account but the general feeling was that Districts should not let history of Groups stand in the way if mergers would mean that Leaders could be used to provide Scouting more efficiently.

- ★ **RECOMMENDATION:** Districts should not let history of Groups stand in the way if mergers would mean that Leaders could be used more efficiently to provide Scouting.

#### **5. EXPLORER SCOUT SECTION LEADER TRAINING**

The Team discussed this issue as it was an area of concern identified through the DESC questionnaires sent out from HQ.

Generally it was agreed that this is a big issue. The biggest problem was that most Explorer Scout Leaders had previously been Leaders with other Sections and that they were now unsure which Modules they needed to do to move to being an ESL. RK said that they would need to be validated in 18 Modules – all those that were for Section Leaders.

It was suggested that a course – perhaps a weekend residential course – be put on at a Wales level to cover all or many of these Modules. It was thought that Leaders coming together from across Wales would benefit each other as they'd be able to get ideas off each other and generally get the benefits that are usually gained from Leader Training.

- ★ **RECOMMENDATION:** The Adult Support Team for Wales should look at putting on a weekend residential course, specially tailored for Explorer Scout Leaders, to cover all or many of the Modules required by Section Leaders

AW said that UKHQ were bringing back the DESC training courses and that one would be held at Gilwell 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> October 2006.

## **6. TEAM X**

The meeting was informed on progress with Team X so far.

It was requested that plenty of notice was given of courses & events so that these could be taken account of when programme planning.

Moz told the meeting that he was looking to book weekends at Cornel, Broneirion, and Miskin Mill. It was suggested that a venue could be found on the West coast, possibly Aberystwyth and Botany Bay in Gwent was also suggested as a possible venue.

It had been thought that existing activity weekends could be 'piggy-backed' but it was thought that it would be better to run separate weekends.

RK, SH and WO all agreed to work on providing Team X training courses.

- ★ **ACTION: RK, SH & WO** – let Moz know about suggested training weekends
- ★ **ACTION: ALL** – let Moz know of any requests for training or suggestions for venues

## **7. MEDIA TEAM & YOUNG SPOKESPERSONS**

It was discussed how we could best utilise Explorer Scouts to sell Scouting. UKHQ had run several Young Spokespersons courses and several from Wales had attended.

It was agreed that some sort of co-ordination was needed so that we could work with Wales-wide media to promote Scouting, especially in 2007.

It was asked whether the Team thought that a new Wales Team, looking after Media, should be formed. It was thought that many people who 'looked after' media relations also had other 'hats' and so were on other Team meetings. However it was agreed that something needed to be done.

AW informed the meeting that the Speakeasy course would probably be reborn soon and so this would be available to support this work. It was thought that the last Speakeasy course run in Wales was a success and another should be run.

- ★ **RECOMMENDATION:** The Welsh Scout Council should look at how best to co-ordinate media relations in Wales. A list of Young Spokespersons should be made available to Areas and more Young Spokespersons should be appointed and trained.

## **8. BLUE BOOK**

See Part Three

## **9. PLENARY WITH SCOUT NETWORK**

See Network minutes

## **10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The meeting closed at 4pm. The next meeting is to be held at Llandrindod Wells High School on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2006.

## **PART THREE – DISCUSSION POINTS**

The Team discussed the issues raised by the Deputy Chief Commissioner of Wales re the 'Blue Book'. The following points were made:

- Any meeting is useful as it aids communications
- The Explorer Scout Team for Wales represents the varying structures within Wales
- Most were for the Status Quo
- Flexibility was important – if no AAC, then any representative is fine
- Some thought that weekend long meetings were better as people got to know each other
- Others thought that this was too much of a time commitment
- Most thought that one meeting a year was not enough, two were needed
- Needs to be guidance – what's it for, why does it exist
- Strategic planning difficult & boring, easier to plan solid events and initiatives
- Moz suggested that ACs should be invited to Team day and that maybe the last hour could be for Area Teams to get together