

WALES EXPLORER SCOUT TEAM

The Minutes of a meeting of the Wales Explorer Scout Team held on Saturday November 11th 2006
Llandrindod Wells High School commencing at 10.30am.

The meeting paused for two minutes silence at 11am to remember those that had died in the two World Wars and in subsequent wars and conflicts.

PRESENT:	DAVID MORRIS	Wales Commissioner for Explorer Scouts
	RHYS FOWLER	CEREDIGION
	STEVE HOLMES	CATVOG
	ROB KEMP	GWENT
	EIRWEN MAYALL	RADNOR
	ROB DAVIES	CARMARTHENSHIRE
	CATH JONES	GLAMORGAN WEST

APOLOGIES:	VIKKI BOOTH	PEMBROKESHIRE
	GLYNN BARHAM	CLWYD

PART ONE – RECOMMENDATIONS

The Explorer Scout Team recommends that:

1. Papers to be discussed at Team meetings should be presented before the agendas are written.
2. Rhys Fowler, DESC for Ceredigion, is Chairman of the AWESOME sub-committee
3. Network Wales takes on the running of three Team X training weekends in 2007
4. Gilwell should look into putting on large scale one-off groundbreaking events in the theme of Viking Venture, London Venture and European Venture, for Explorer Scouts
5. Nominees for the positions of Chair and Secretary of the Wales Explorer Scout Forum should be approved by the Wales Explorer Scout Team before a vote by the Forum. An 18-25 year old, who is suitable for the role, should sit in on Wales Explorer Scout Forum meetings to be a facilitator. Training should be provided for new Chairs and Secretaries.

PART TWO – MINUTES OF THE MEETING

1. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

All members had received minutes of the last meeting except Cath Jones who was a new appointment.

- ★ **ACTION: Cath Jones** – download minutes of previous meetings from www.scoutbase.org.uk/wales or contact WSC Office.

It was unanimously agreed that the minutes be accepted as a true record.

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

The meeting was updated on deliberations on the ‘blue book’, which is a guide to how the Wales Team and Forum meetings fit into the management structure of the Welsh Scout Council. There was confusion over an additional paper presented to the chair by Keith Burfoot, Deputy Chief Commissioner for Wales, on the topic minutes before the meeting started. The paper seemed to ask questions similar to those asked at our previous meeting. The Team were still of the opinion that there was value in the Team meetings, but some thought that one per year was sufficient. Some rural Areas valued the meetings more as a way of feeling ‘in touch’ and thought that two meetings should be held.

- ★ **RECOMMENDATION:** Papers to be discussed at Team meetings should be presented before the agendas are written.

Feedback from the March plenary with the Scout Network Team was considered. All agreed that Network was becoming more ‘visible’ with the exception of in Glamorgan West. It was pointed out that there was a growing Network in that Area and CJ took note of this.

All agreed that the move towards more District responsibility for Network was a very positive move, making it easier for better links with Explorer Scouting.

EM said that there was no Network in Radnorshire as many young people of that age left the Area to go to university and most never returned when they graduated. It was pointed out that this was the case in many Areas, but that most returned at Christmas, Easter and in the summer. It was thought that Network Wales activities should be concentrated on these times as this is when Network members are in rural Wales.

- ★ **ACTION: Network Wales** – address the above points

3. UPDATES

The chair updated the Team on several items:

World Jamboree – preparations were under way to send 5 Units from Wales. It was thought that the planning of this had been seriously messed up as membership of Units was from across Wales rather than Units being aligned with geographical areas. This made it very difficult for Units to meet and for planning to take place.

Visits abroad in 2006 – the Team was very happy with the extent of international expeditions this year. Many Explorer Scouts had been abroad including the Explorer Belt and Jamboree trips to Serbia. Congratulations to those that earned their Explorer Belts. DM asked whether Wales should continue with trips to Serbia. It was thought that at least one more visit should take place.

Wales Commissioner for Explorer Scouts – the Team was told that DM would continue in post into the New Year, but that a successor would hopefully be found as soon as possible in 2007. The position would be advertised soon. It was hoped that the incoming Wales Commissioner would be able to attend the spring meeting and take over fully in autumn 2007.

New Explorer Scout Badges/YL recognition - the Team was very happy with the new badges, and said that Explorer Scouts were particularly happy with the additional Nights Away badges and the Hikes Away. The Young Leader mission badges and belt buckle were welcomed, but some felt that there was some confusion on how the Missions were supposed to work.

2007 resources – DM felt that the Explorer Scout Join in Centenary pack was excellent and provided a good programme for Units for 2007. RK was disappointed and felt that after all the build up more should have been provided that one booklet.

Programmes Online – DM promoted the Programmes Online resource (www.scouts.org.uk/pol). Those members of the Team that had visited the website thought it was excellent.

4. AREA FEEDBACK

The Team split into two – half rural Areas and half urban Areas – to discuss local issues and identify problem areas and good practice. It was hoped that issues may be identified for the Team to look at in future meetings.

The results of the discussions were as follows:

- Rural Areas shared little else in common and so there was no ‘one size fits all’ solution to problems faced by rural Areas
- Team X has helped rural Areas with Young Leader training
- There was a high turnover of Leaders in rural Areas
- Leader recruitment problems continue, retention not a problem in urban Areas
- Public not aware of Explorer Scouting, many previous members who have been Venture Scouts are confused by the new Sections
- It was felt that the use of District ESLs was more easy in urban Areas and should be encouraged
- It was felt that many Young Leaders stay with the first three Sections when they reach 18 as these have been the Sections they have worked with. This meant that a low number of Network Scouts were Explorer Scout Leaders or Assistants

5. AWESOME

RF had said before the meeting that he was interested in taking on the role of chairman of the AWESOME sub-committee. After some discussion he confirmed his interest.

★ **RECOMMENDATION:** Rhys Fowler, DESC for Ceredigion, is Chairman of the AWESOME sub-committee

DM informed the Team that several people had shown an interest in joining the sub-committee. Their details would be passed on to RF. DM agreed to look after the promotion of the event.

The Team filled RF in with what had happened at the previous AWESOME as he had not been present. A discussion was held on venue. It had been agreed that this would again be The Biblins, but SH thought that there would be a lot of support from CATVOG Explorer Scouts and therefore numbers could be anything up to 400. In the light of this RF said that other venues would be considered. Chepstow, Margam Park, Tredegar Park and Glanusk Park were all mentioned as possibilities.

6. TEAM X

Each member of the team described their experience and thoughts on Team X:

Carmarthenshire – Not aware of any Explorer Scouts who’d attended weekends. Explorers were getting information but Leaders were not. Leaders need info so they can encourage Explorer Scouts to attend

CATVOG – Lots of Explorer Scouts had attended and really liked it. While Young Leader Training was not unavailable in the Area, the benefit was in meeting other Explorer Scouts from other parts of Wales and learning from each other. DM paid tribute to the CATVOG Explorer Scouts who’d supported Team X so well and said that the atmosphere on weekends wouldn’t have been the same without them

Glamorgan West – CJ was unaware of participation in Team X. DM said that several from her Area had attended and done very well.

Ceredigion – RF reiterated what RD had said about Leaders needing to know about the events in order to ‘push’ Explorer Scouts to attend

Radnorshire – Explorer Scouts had attended and they'd enjoyed it. EM pointed out that there had been a clash with one weekend and the World Jamboree training weekend and as a result several Team X members had missed out on the Broneirion weekend. The Team X weekend had been planned an organised months before the Jamboree weekend and it was asked whether diaries could be properly checked by the Jamboree leaders next time.

The future direction of Team X was discussed. It was hoped that Network Wales would have the ability to run at least three training weekends next year to ensure Team X continued until the incoming Wales Commissioner for Explorer Scouts could take control.

SH said he and his wife would be willing to run one weekend in 2007. RK suggested a training weekend for Network Scouts to enable them to run Team X Young Leader training weekends.

- ★ **RECOMMENDATION** – Network Wales takes on the running of three Team X training weekends in 2007

7. UK EXPLORER SCOUT EVENTS

DM reminded the Team of the several major UK events that Venture Scouting put on in the 1980s such as Viking Venture, European Venture and London Venture. He asked whether the Team thought that such events should be now be made available to Explorer Scouts. Such events would be major events with several thousand participants.

It was pointed out that several large scale Explorer Scout events were already available: Gilwell 24, Sun Run, Monopoly Run and Gilwell Winter Camp, but these were not one-off groundbreaking events like the Venture Scouts had access to. Team members were unsure whether Gilwell had the capacity to run such events, or whether they'd need to be LONE events (locally organised national events).

- ★ **RECOMMENDATION:** Gilwell should look into putting on large scale one-off groundbreaking events in the theme of Viking Venture, London Venture and European Venture, for Explorer Scouts

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Uniform at Team meetings – DM said that the previous Chief Commissioner had decided that the arrangement that uniform be worn at Team meetings be ended. Now that she was no longer in post, it was asked whether uniform should be again worn. While members thought that uniform had benefits in that it could be seen where people were from, it was thought that the provision of name badges would have the same end.

Stayover Explorer Scout Forum meetings – It was discussed what was the best method for stayovers to be included in Explorer Scout Forum meetings. It was recognised that Forum members were more 'productive' after spending the evening with each other as it 'broke the ice'. It was thought the best arrangement was for Explorer Scout Team and Forum members to spend Friday night before the Team meeting in Llandrindod or nearby and then travel to the High School to hold their meetings with the other Teams and Forums.

Wales Explorer Scout Forum – There was concern about arrangements for the appointment of Wales Explorer Scout Forum Chair and Secretary. While the Team understood that it was important for Explorer Scouts to have their say, and for the process to be mainly run by them, closer supervision by adults was required, and that the appointment of WESF Chair and Secretary should be more structured. It was felt that it was unfair for new Chairs and Secretaries to be 'thrown in at the deep end' and that appropriate training should be provided.

- ★ **RECOMMENDATION:** Nominees for the positions of Chair and Secretary of the Wales Explorer Scout Forum should be approved by the Wales Explorer Scout Team before a vote by the Forum. An 18-25 year old, who is suitable for the role, should sit in on Wales Explorer Scout Forum meetings to be a facilitator. Training should be provided for new Chairs and Secretaries.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The meeting closed at 3pm. The next meeting is to be held at Llandrindod Wells High School on Saturday 24th March 2007, and the autumn meeting will be on Saturday 10th November.