



Clwyd Area Explorer Scout Forum

Minutes of a meeting held at 2nd Rhyl Scout HQ
on Thursday 15th May 2008

Present

David Morris, AAC (Communications), Clwyd; **Derek Hayes**, ADC (Scouts), Vale of Clwyd Denbighshire District; **Russell Williams**, CSL representing Cross County ESU, Carmel/Holywell; **Jill Lewis**, ESL (Young Leaders), Wrexham District; **Ollie**, Explorer Scout, K2 ESU Wrexham; **Adam Gardner**, ESL, K2 ESU Wrexham; **Suzie**, Explorer Scout, Llangollen Dragons ESU; **Gerry Kellett**, DESC, Llangollen District; **Hugo**, Explorer Scout, Cross County ESU, Carmel/Holywell; **Andrew**, Explorer Scout, 2nd Rhyl ESU; **Jo Gregory**, ADC Beavers, Llangollen representing Llangollen Dragons ESU; **Lyndsey Hampson**, AESL, 2nd Rhyl ESU and DESA, Vale of Clwyd Denbighshire District; **Stuart Friis-Smith**, ESL, 2nd Rhyl and DESC, Vale of Clwyd Denbighshire District; **Glynn Barham**, DESC, Flintshire District; **Gavin**, Explorer Scout, Llangollen Dragons ESU

Apologies

Gordon Richardson, DESC, Wrexham; Sheila Dawson, ESL, Bwlchgwyn ESU, Wrexham District; Anne-Marie Roberts, ASNC, Clwyd; Gordon Goodwin, Kinnerton ESU, Flintshire

Explanation of abbreviations: AAC = Assistant Area Commissioner; ADC = Assistant District Commissioner; CSL = Cub Scout Leader; ESU = Explorer Scout Unit; ESL = Explorer Scout Leader; DESC = District Explorer Scout Commissioner; DESA = District Explorer Scout Administrator; ASNC = Area Scout Network Commissioner

Last meeting

Moz went through the Action Points from the last meeting and reported progress made:

Pooling of adventurous activities – the creation of an 'Activities Directory' listing who held which adventurous activity permits had not been started due to no information being supplied. Moz reported that just prior to the meeting Gordon Richardson had emailed details of some permit holders in Wrexham District.

FURTHER ACTION POINTS:

- DESCs to send list of permit holders to Moz (communications@clwydscouts.org.uk, 07779272340)
- Moz to produce directory

Young Leader Training – Wrexham District had provided dates of their YL training courses which are available on the Clwyd website www.clwydscouts.org.uk/calendar. Flintshire have suspended their YL training courses due to Module A being run in Units and the fact that no-one had requested other Modules. They were, however, planning to restart their District meeting nights and hoped that YL training would resume. Llangollen District and Vale of Clwyd were both looking into starting YL training soon. Some present were not aware of Team X, the Wales Young Leader training Unit, and it was commented that Team X was not well advertised on the Scouts Wales website.

FURTHER ACTION POINTS:

- Dates of YL training courses to sent to Moz to put on Area Calendar - ALL
- Those who are unaware about Team X should look at <http://www.scoutswales.org.uk/explorers/yls/teamx>
- Moz to enquire if Team X can be made more high profile on the Scouts Wales website

Area, Wales and UK events – Gladstonbury had been cancelled due to lack of numbers. It was thought this was due to lots of other things going on, but Moz said that no-one had mentioned this at the last meeting, all were in favour of holding the event then. Explorer Scouts present said they had attended AWESOME and LIVE 07 enjoying both events.

Communication – An Area Explorer Scout Directory had been produced from the membership database and other knowledge. This had been circulated but no feedback was forthcoming.

FURTHER ACTION POINTS:

- Moz to be informed of any details that are incorrect or missing from the Area Explorer Scout Directory circulated with minutes - ALL

Links between Explorer Scouts and Scout Network – Anne Marie had not received details from people. It was felt that it is the job of DESAs to provide information of Explorer Scouts aged over 17 to the ASNC.

FURTHER ACTION POINTS:

- DESAs to inform ANSC of Explorer Scouts aged over 17

Report back from Wales Explorer Scout Team and Wales Explorer Scout Forum

Glynn had attended the Wales Explorer Scout Team meeting and gave a brief report of proceedings. He said the main points from the meeting were communications and Team X. Simon Fairless, the Commissioner for Explorer Scouts, Wales, wants to build up a directory of Explorer Scout Leaders so that communications can be improved. It was planned to increase the number of Team X weekends, but this year that would stay at 3. No Explorer Scouts from Clwyd had attended the Wales Explorer Scout Forum meeting.

Skills Database*

Following on from the previous meeting, there was further discussion on making more activities available to Explorer Scouts. It was suggested that if two Leaders had skills in different activities, they could do a swap, putting on activities for each other's Units.

It was suggested that as well as a database of Leaders' skills and activity permits, a list of 'bought-in' activities would be useful as well, such as climbing walls etc. These centres should be formally approached to see if they could provide discounts to Scout groups.

The subject of Explorer Scouts gaining activity permits was discussed. It was felt that older Explorer Scouts would be in a position to attend courses and help provide more activities for other Scouts. The Explorer Scouts present said they thought that some Explorer Scouts would be willing to become instructors given the correct training. One suitable form of training was the North Wales Water Activity weekend held by the Welsh Scout Council in September in Llyn Gwynant. This provided canoe safety training which enables young people to supervise canoeists. There is also training provided at Yr Hafod, but these courses fill up quickly. It was suggested that Clwyd put on a course at Yr Hafod themselves.

ACTION POINTS:

- Those who are aware of suitable 'buy-in' activities for Explorer Scouts to contact Moz – ALL
- Area Management Team to be asked to look into best way that Scouting can approach private activity centres to offer Scouts discounts – MOZ
- Book Yr Hafod for climbing or mountaineering course for older Explorer Scouts by next meeting – DESCs to do this or identify volunteer

Duke of Edinburgh's Award*

Gordon Richardson had requested for this to be brought up, asking how other Districts were doing DofE. Vale of Clwyd Denbighshire had just started. Lyndsey had previously worked for an Open Award centre so had knowledge of this. 2nd Rhyl had just purchased books for most of their Explorer Scouts. Cross County ESU were running the Award through Eric Gardner in Flintshire.

Gerry said that he received lots of information about courses etc that would be of use to participants via Rose Hislop from the Open Award centre in Wrexham. He suggested getting on the email list of your local Open Award centre to receive similar information.

It was felt that it would be a good idea to share resources to run expeditions. Units in Wrexham and Llangollen are already doing this. Moz said the Area ES Directory would help people communicate with each other to coordinate this.

It was felt that new Leaders knew little about how to go about running the Award. Moz pointed out that a special adult training Module was available, but was concerned that Training Advisors were unaware of this. He would contact Pat Royle, the Area Training Manager to see what could be done.

The Explorer Scouts were asked which part of DofE they found most difficult, and they agreed that the Skills section was the most difficult. Andrew said that if someone chose, for example, gardening, they'd be unaware of where to go to receive training and get their books signed off. It was suggested that appeals should be made to outside people who had interests and skills to put on courses for DofE participants.

ACTION POINTS:

- Training Advisors to be told about the DofE Adult Training Module that is available for ESLs – PAT ROYLE
- Appeal to outside people with skills to put on for DofE participants – MOZ to put piece in press and on website?

Nant BH weekend*

Stuart was looking at putting on a weekend for Vale of Clwyd Denbighshire Explorers at Nant BH, the outdoor activity centre, but was concerned they wouldn't have numbers to make this viable. It was suggested that he could see if numbers were OK from his District, then if not he could open it up to the Area as everyone was sure that Explorer Scouts would be interested.

Details were given as £50 for 3 days including all activities and food, sometime at the end of October/November.

ACTION POINTS:

- Stuart to contact Moz if this can be opened up to Area – STUART

Denbigh & Flint Show*

It was announced that on 21st August, Vale of Clwyd Denbighshire Scouts would be at the Denbigh & Flint Show. This is a huge event attended by lots of people and there is a great opportunity for Scouts to get good publicity. The Mobile Display Unit (MDU) was booked for the day – this is a huge articulated lorry which turns into an information and activity area with a bouldering wall on the back.

Explorer Scouts from Vale of Clwyd had been asked to man the MDU as they'd project a better image of Scouting than older Leaders. Moz had agreed to run a session on public relations for the Explorer Scouts.

Other Explorer Scouts from the Area were encouraged to attend in uniform as the more Scouts there the better.

Jill mentioned that she hoped Explorer Scouts could be present at Volunteers Day in Wrexham where the Scouts had a stand.

ACTION POINTS:

- Vale of Clwyd to arrange venue and date for Moz to provide training – GARETH SANDILANDS?
- Explorer Scouts to attend the Denbigh & Flint Show - ALL

Young Leaders*

It was felt that this had been covered in the action points from the last meeting, but Jill added that she would be willing to give advice to other Districts that were starting up Young Leaders training as she'd been running it in Wrexham for several years.

The Explorer Scouts present were asked if they were Young Leaders. They all were, but some had received no YL training.

ACTION POINTS:

- Districts starting YL training contact Jill if required

Area events*

It was agreed by everyone that we should look at putting on Gladstonbury – the Area Explorer Scout camp – in 2009. Previous events had been very popular and it was felt that there were very few bookings for the cancelled event only because of the amount of things going on in 2007. It was suggested that the 2nd weekend in July should be kept, so long as AWESOME is not held at the same time. Those present were asked to find out if their Explorer Scouts were interested and that a decision would be made at the next meeting.

Other events that were suggested were an Area theme park visit, and also a Plas-y-Brenin taster day.

Moz asked if more minor events such as night hikes, quizzes and treasure hunts should be put on for the Area. The Explorer Scouts said that they thought they should, and that a night hike would be the most popular.

ACTION POINTS:

- Find out if Explorers will come to Gladstonbury, 2nd weekend in July 2009 – ALL
- Wrexham to invite Area ES to Theme Park if they organise one – GORDON
- Vale of Clwyd to invite Area ES to Plas-y-Brenin if this is arranged – LYNDSEY
- One ESU to volunteer to put on night hike for Area – VOLUNTEER ESU PLEASE!

Funding*

Jill asked how other Districts fund their Young Leader training. Glynn said there was no funding in Flintshire, photocopying etc was done at the Leaders' expense. Some said that funding District Explorer Scouting was the responsibility of the District Executives.

It was mentioned that Adult Training is now free due to funding from the Welsh Scout Council, and it was asked whether funding could be provided for District YL training. It was pointed out that the funding required would be minimal, just photocopying, certificates etc.

ACTION POINTS:

- Contact Simon Fairless to bring up funding of YL training by WSC - Moz

Any other business

Jill asked if anyone had any feedback on the Jamboree. Suzie said that she thought the idea of Units being mixed with people from all over Wales was a bad one as she hadn't known anyone else in her Unit. She said next time Units should be arranged with people from the same areas being in the same Units.

Moz said that he had sent out letters about Sweden 2011 to all Scouts in the Area, and a Leader had approached him to say that participants should be selected to ensure that the deserving people attended. There were mixed reactions to this idea, with most saying they wouldn't like to select who was deserving or not. It was thought however that training weekends leading up to the Jamboree were required and that they should be compulsory for all those that wished to attend the Jamboree, and parents should sign to say they are aware of the expectations that we have.

Items to be reported to Wales Explorer Scout Team and Wales Explorer Scout Forum

The following items were suggested to be brought up at the Wales Explorer Scout Team and Wales Explorer Scout Forum meetings in November:

1. Funding for YL Training at District level by Welsh Scout Council – not much, couple of pounds per YL per Module
2. Those running YL Training in Districts don't know what Modules Young Leaders have completed with Team X
3. Communications is still a problem. People still don't know what's going on
4. Concern about All Wales Explorer Bash/annual AWESOME as it is felt there is already a lot going on
5. Jamboree Units should not be geographically mixed
6. Training weekends leading up to Jamborees should be compulsory for all that wish to attend

A discussion was held about who would represent Clwyd at the Wales Explorer Scout Forum. Before this was decided, it was debated whether the format of this meeting, i.e. the Explorer Scouts meeting with the Leaders, was successful. It was felt that they'd been a bit quiet, but this was understandable as it was their first meeting. The Explorers said that they would be interested in holding a separate meeting held at the same time and venue as the Leaders meeting. Moz said that this could be tried at the next meeting, but felt that with a few more Explorer Scouts attending to ensure balance, and as it would be their second meeting, the Explorer Scouts may be more vocal next time.

It was agreed that Explorer Scouts from the Area Forum should attend the Wales Forum. Andrew and Suzie volunteered to attend the next Wales Forum meeting in November.

Next meeting

It was felt that a central location for future meetings would be better than moving around the Area. All agreed that future meetings should be held at the Gladstone Centre if it is available. It was decided that the next meeting should be held immediately following the next Wales Team and Forum meetings and so the next meeting will be held at the Gladstone Centre on Tuesday 11th November.

*agenda item suggested on night