



Navy Command

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RN INSPECTION OF 1st CUDDINGTON SEA SCOUTS – 24 JAN 11

1. This land based inspection was held at the Group's HQ in Cuddington. In attendance were the Regional Commissioner for SE England, Mr M Gerrard, the Deputy County Commissioner, Mr P Currie, plus members of the County Team, the District Commissioner, Mr J Jordan, plus members of the District team, leaders from other Groups in the District and nearby Sea Scout Groups with whom they work closely and other supporters of the Group.

2. The inspection commenced with Colours conducted with full and formal ceremony following Naval Tradition. The Group, including representatives of the Cubs and Beavers made a most impressive sight when fallen in the hall. They then fell out and quickly and quietly went to their activity stances. It was good to see that the Scouts were continuing their spring programme and their stances included different age and experience groups working on the Emergency Aid stage 3, Fire Safety, Mechanics and, as part of the trial, stages 1,2 and 3 of the proposed staged Seamanship Badge. Meanwhile the Beavers were involved in preparing posters and picture frames, the Cubs were investigating different ways of communicating including use of semaphore, signal flags and morse code and the Explorers were being taught sailing theory. All activities were well led and instructed by a mix of Leaders and young leaders and clearly fully engaged the enthusiastic young people. This was a first class demonstration of the breadth and depth of the programme that the young people enjoy in this group and of the teamwork amongst the leaders.

3. Whilst the Group fell in again for inspection, a presentation was given to County and District Staff for a proposed specialist Network Section which is based on water activities. There is a core of members along with 2 leaders ready to start this and, with potential to recruit from other Sea Scout Groups and people with water based interests, this Network Section could prove to be a most positive asset to the County who, once qualified, would provide additional opportunities for water activities for all within the County. Additionally the individuals would be able continue with the training scheme and achieve their Queens Scout Award.

4. On inspection all proved to be most smartly turned out and are highly commended for their clear personal efforts with their appearance – Well Done. When spoken to all described a most full and fun programme of activities with water based and camping activities their clear favourite. The testament to the programme was given by one Scout who was rejoining after finding that the X Box was not as much fun as Scouting. Their descriptions only served to back up what was seen earlier during the activities. It was good to once again see that their close liaison with the 1st Ruxley Sea Scouts has continued and that one patrol from this small Group was present and seamlessly integrated into the inspection.

5. The Group have their own active Explorer Unit and it is good to see the enthusiasm in the Unit. Since the last inspection they have had success in gaining the Explorer awards with presentations made later this evening. This should continue to be encouraged, especially as

their full and active programme would appear to cover many aspects of the award scheme. It would be good to see them reaching their undoubted full potential and eventually gaining the Queens Scout Award. The formation of the Sea Network would help achieve this.

6. They are most active outdoors with regular camps, wide games and hikes. Summer Camp 2010 was held at Longridge and included BCU kayak course, sailing instruction and Expedition Challenge. In addition they have been on a survival/camping skills weekend and sailing weekends at Cobnor (near Chichester). In 2009 they once again visited Holland to meet with their affiliated Dutch Scout Troop and are hosting them in UK this year.

7. The Group offer the widest of water experiences to all of their people. They are strong on pulling and once again won the under 14 age category in the Great River Race. They are conducting the Scout Association trial on the new Trinity 500 class of pulling boats being used by the Sea Cadets which, if successful, should hopefully make pulling more practicable and hence widely available within Scouting. With leaders increasing their own qualification levels and close liaison with Ajax Sea Scouts they now offer and achieve more BCU and RYA awards than previously. The use of Cobnor for concentrated sailing instruction has been most beneficial.

8. Most enthusiastic about all aspects of Sea Scouting and water activities they are an outward looking Group who, in true Scouting spirit, help others go afloat and fully support the District and County. In addition to the participating in the trial of the new Seamanship badges, which they are most positive about, and leading the trial of the Trinity 500 pulling boat they are also organising a regional Sea Scout Leaders conference in Mar 2011. Whilst they do not attend the RN Recognised events they fully use all of the other opportunities within the Scheme, including use of HMS BRISTOL.

9. Their boat fleet continues to be excellently maintained and is certainly well used. In addition to the Trinity 500 pulling boat they have commissioned the gig they acquired 2 years ago and, within the last week, have been gifted a Boston Whaler. Already owning a well balanced and extensive fleet of boats they also have access to many other craft including those of Ajax Sea Scouts and the Kingston Scout Canoe Club.

10. The HQ was well presented for inspection and comments made in previous reports remain valid. The roof continues to be a problem but they now have a professional advising them on the requirements and are costing the project whilst also continuing to fund raise..

11. The strong, well established and highly experienced Leadership team continues to provide a most sound Scouting programme to all of the young people in the Group. A Group Scout Leader has been appointed but this means that the Group are without a formally appointed Scout Leader. However, highly cohesive and organised, the whole leadership works well together and no reduction in the programme should be seen. It is notable how many leaders have increased their skill in the last 18 months and with 5 Power Boat Instructors it must be one of the most highly qualified leadership teams in the Country. If there is a weak area it is in sailing instructors. This team is also notable for the way it incorporates Young Leaders supporting and developing them in a most constructive manner to the extent that they are fully integrated into the sections and a key element of programme delivery.

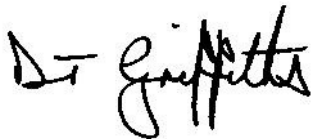
12. The Group Executive has strengthened since the last inspection with the appointment of a new Chairman and Secretary and increasing parental support. It continues to provide sterling support to the Leaders and Group as a whole. The main challenge it faces is replacement of the roof with minimum impact on the sectional programmes. Financially sound they raise funds as previously reported and whilst having no dedicated fund raising committee are investigating additional ways to raise funds especially for the roof project.

13. The evening ended with the presentation of a many awards by a variety of the dignitaries attending the inspection. These included the Award for Merit to Mrs Rosemary Brooker, 3 Chief Scouts Platinum Awards, a Chief Scout Gold Certificate, Master at Arms badges and Long Service Awards. 2 Investitures were also conducted and 2 Leaders presented with Wood Badges. The winning crew of the Great River Race were presented with their Trophy by Stuart Wolff, Director of the Great River Race. Many congratulations to all who received awards this evening. Sunset was again conducted with the customary full and

formal ceremony following which the Group were addressed by the Inspecting Officer. After a long evening and many presentations, and the impending lure of a piece of birthday cake, he quickly announced that they had most successfully passed this inspection and presented the Admiralty Recognition Badge to one Scout who was invested this evening followed by the Certificate of Recognition to Mr R Hunt, the GSL.

14. This evening the 1st Cuddington Sea Scouts once again proved to be fully worthy of RN Recognition just as they have since gaining recognition in 1941. They offer a first class Scouting programme which is fun, challenging and rewarding to all of the young people and a broad and increasingly rewarding water activities programme. Outward looking and both showing and engendering a true Scouting Spirit, they fully earn and deserve RN Recognition and their place amongst the best of the RN Recognised Sea Scout Groups. It has been a real privilege to inspect them and witness them in action – Well Done.

15. Lt Cdr Griffiths thoroughly enjoyed this inspection and thanks his hosts for their warm and friendly welcome and hospitality. He sincerely congratulates the Group on their 80 years of successful Sea Scouting and 70 years of RN Recognition and thanks them for all they do for Sea Scouting in the widest context. He wishes them all success for the future and a very happy 80th anniversary year.



D T Griffiths
Lieutenant Commander Royal Navy

Distribution:

Mr R Hunt, Group Scout Leader, 1st Cuddington Sea Scouts.
Miss J Winn, Programme and Development Advisor, Gilwell Park