

# District Lead Volunteer's Report 24-25

Hatfield Forest District AGM 2025

## Digital Transformation

I had the dubious pleasure of starting in this DLV role just as the new digital system was turned on, without having seen any of the training materials, and without a district transformation lead. Thankfully I build systems like this myself, though my version 1s usually work. With a bit of trial and error, and a lot of brute force, use of the new processes is mostly now understood for learning, new members, permit applications and role changes.

All training is now managed and tracked through the membership system so it's critical for members to understand and review their obligations to avoid automatic suspension.

At the same time we've been gradually rolling out some new comms and engagement tools, starting with drawing together the various group-level Whatsapp groups into a district community, attempting to foster improved cross-group and cross-functional communication.

This was followed with early adopters of our Google Workspace for Nonprofits which gives us a useful collection of enterprise tools and features, not just email and calendar, for free. There's also a new @hfdistrictscouts instagram account - the explorers one has proved reasonably successful for outreach and engagement.

Please contact [digital@hatfieldforestdistrict.org.uk](mailto:digital@hatfieldforestdistrict.org.uk) if you'd like to be involved, or if you have administrative rights on the district facebook page.

## Groups

The numbers from last year's census generally show stability for our young people but like many districts across the country we have a significant, ongoing struggle for leaders at district and group level. This, coupled with in some cases low numbers of young people, has led to closing a handful of unsustainable sections and unfortunately, 1st Hallingburys group.

## District Events

The district calendar for the last few years has been rather bare and it is my strong desire to reinvigorate a district programme team and gradually rebuild the richness of the district event calendar. This can't happen overnight, but would benefit massively from your input. Please contact [programme@hatfieldforestdistrict.org.uk](mailto:programme@hatfieldforestdistrict.org.uk) or join the District Events Whatsapp if you have ideas, want to see an old activity back, or would like to be involved in any way.

## Crank Up

The annual Saffron Walden Crank Up steam fair in April is one of the district's biggest fundraisers, entirely supporting the running of the district minibus and regularly contributing towards the costs for international expeditions and jamborees, and many other aspects of the running of the district.

After many years of catering at the event, the SAS Support Team is standing down, which means the district must drum up enough support to pick up running the event, or face increasing funding pressure.

I would firstly like to pass my sincerest thanks to all the members of the support team and helpers who have contributed their significant time and effort in the past, and secondly urge all members to communicate, particularly with their section parents, the importance and necessity of giving time and energy to this event for the sustainability of district services.

## Upcoming Events

I would like to draw your attention to a selection of upcoming events over the next year and beyond, all listed on the district website <https://hatfieldforestdistrictscouts.org.uk/>

26-28 Sep 2025	Explorers/Network/Leaders	County Marathon, South Downs
5 Oct 2025		District Activity Day, Skreens Park
10-12 Oct 2025	Leaders	Skills Weekend, Thriftwood
17-19 Oct 2025		JOTA/JOTI
27-29 May 2026	Cubs	De Efteling Expedition
1-15 Aug 2026	Scouts/Explorers/Network	Mountain Team Dolomites Expedition
25-30 Oct 2026	Cubs	Rieneck Castle Expedition
	2027 Scouts/Explorers	World Jamboree, Poland
	2027 Scouts/Explorers/Network	Essex Expeditions, Various
TBC	Network	SoWA Discovery (regional)

## County Events

As a district, we've had some attendance at County-run events in the past year, but it would be very nice to have more. In the recent past we've attended the Archery Team's David Clare memorial shoot but that was unfortunately cancelled this year. Also we didn't enter any teams in last year's County Marathon, or attend any of the Mountain Team's excellent adventurous activity weekends.

This past year has seen groups attending Beavers in Tents, Mega Camp for Cubs, and County Backpack for Scouts. All enormously positively received. These are great opportunities to join together with other sections from district and county, to develop friendships, share the work, overcome challenges of organisation and to pick up new ideas and skills.

## Expeditions & International

### EIJ, Summer 2024

A group from Hatfield Forest (Stansted) attended blisteringly hot EIJ last summer, as well as a handful of explorers, some as participants and others helping with IST. Some leaders from the district also attended in various IST roles, and on the popular Ham Radio activity in the tech sector.



### Bulgaria Explorer Belt, Summer 2024 - with Slough District

A team of fifteen Explorers and Network joined Slough District for ten-day, self-organised Explorer Belt expeditions across Bulgaria this summer. Notably, the members of our own Centurion ESU represented a quarter of the whole Slough contingent.

Starting and finishing in the capital Sofia, teams planned their own routes and activities around the Explorer Belt aims and project requirements.

The Explorer Belt is a top award in scouting and represents a unique opportunity to meet people in foreign countries, overcome language and cultural barriers and discover the destination. These are understood to have been the first Explorer Belt expeditions ever in the district, and also rarely achieved across the county. They are able to contribute towards a key component of the King's Scout Award.

### Australia Jamboree, New Year 2024/25 - with Essex Contingent

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61558887075632>

Matt and Robert attended AJ2025 over New Year, travelling over considerable distance and time but having an amazing variety of unforgettable experiences which you can read about on their Facebook page.



<https://hatfieldforestdistrictscouts.org.uk/>

 [@hfdistrictscouts](https://www.instagram.com/hfdistrictscouts)

## Peru, Easter 2025 - with Kent Network



Michael, Francis and Will joined Kent Network and Will and Francis' Korea World Jamboree unit leader on an amazing trip to Peru last Easter where they hiked the Inca trail up to Machu Picchu, visited Rainbow Mountain, canoed up the Amazon, fished for Piranha, built rafts with the indigenous tribes, learnt about their food and customs and had an utterly brilliant time.

## Finally, Thanks

As ever our thanks go out to all of the leaders, supporters and helpers who have contributed countless hours, skills, energy and enthusiasm over the past year(s).

Particular mentions this year go to Simon for his steering of the district exec, to Sarah for her finance expertise and specifically nailing down the charity status for Explorers, to Jackie who is retiring as 1st Dunmow GLV and to Sally for all her years of service and support at 1st Hallingburys and in the district.

The overall engagement and excitement of the young people in the district consistently speaks volumes reflecting the time and effort we all put in. Thank you all for everything you continue to do to support scouting in Hatfield Forest District.

*Peter Lambert*

Peter Lambert

*Roger Pettett*

Roger Pettett

District Lead Volunteers, Hatfield Forest District