

Winter 2009

***This is
Berkshire
Scout
Enterprises
Ltd***



serving the community

**Scouting
Serving the Community**

Berkshire Scout Enterprises
was formed in 1985
by Adult Members of the Scout Association
in response to growing unemployment
amongst young people

TURBULENT TIMES

This has been a year of mixed fortunes for the Company. The Train to Gain contract from the Learning and Skills Council has been capped by the government due to the Council's financial shortages. Because we have employed staff to fulfil our contractual commitments, this action is causing considerable financial difficulties for the Company. On a positive note, we were approached by Chichester College who have a contract with the Learning and Skills Council for the provision of Response to Redundancy in the South East and we are acting as their agents in Berkshire. We have been taking stock of the Company's activities and its future. So we are pleased to welcome a new member of our council, David Bolam, at this pivotal time in the Company's history. As you will see from our item on Modernisation, we are looking for more, particularly younger, people to join us.

Serving the Community

Train to Gain

Train to Gain is a government scheme which has been extended to workers and volunteers in the voluntary sector to gain National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs). We have a contract from the Learning and Skills Council to provide training and assessment for achieving NVQs levels 2 and 3. Nathan Bray, Eric Goulding and Mick Stocks have achieved their A1 Assessor qualifications. Lynne Kay, Esme Phillips and David Walker are progressing their awards. Portfolios for our first fifteen candidates have been submitted for internal verification and we await an external verifier. We have 147 other candidates progressing out of 216 who started, including Scout and Guide Leaders as well as those with other organisations.

Regrettably, on 17th April all Train to Gain contracts were capped due to Learning and Skills Council overspending in other areas. This has reduced the number of candidates we could have recruited in 2009/2010 to 45 which causes us financial difficulties. We are negotiating with the Council over our contractual arrangements as they have now requested our candidates complete their training by March 2010 or July at the latest. We assume this is due to the closure of the Learning and Skills Council by the government and the introduction of a new skills agency.

RESPONSE TO REDUNDANCY

This is a new free service for people facing redundancy or those who have been unemployed for less than six months, to help them get back to work as quickly as possible. It can provide a complete service from initial advice and guidance to skills training to change careers or upgrade skills and knowledge. Chichester College have a contract with the Learning and Skills Council for the South East and they approached us in the summer to be their agents in Berkshire. The first course has been run and the contract is managed and facilitated on our behalf by Alan Hester.

IT4U

This project is for young people (16 to 25) who are interested in IT, particularly those who are unemployed or disadvantaged. We have a new volunteer to manage the project which is funded by the V-Charity, the government body for young volunteers and match funded by ASAP Computers. It operates from a Resource Centre in Bracknell, where the young people meet on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. The name IT4U was chosen by the young volunteers themselves and they have their own website www.v-reading.org.uk

TRAINING FOR YOUR FUTURE

This series of vocational, occupational and motivational courses based on taking the risk out of the workplace, are available to charity based organisations. They include first aid, health and safety at work, risk assessments, fire safety, manual handling, working and managing safely, minibus driving, and courses on motivation, confidence and self esteem. Courses are run by qualified tutors at our own training centres or the tutors will travel to any organisation's premises. Details of the courses can be obtained by calling (0118) 988 4077 or e-mail enquiries@bsel.org.uk

**We send everyone Season's Greetings
and best wishes for the New Year**



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SUPPORT for SCOUTING

Locally

Berkshire County Scout Council

We continue to provide office and administrative support for Harriet Riley the County Local Development Officer and for the new part-time administrator, Jackie Meakes, following the recent appointment by the County Scout Council.

First Response

With two new trainers on board we have been facilitating many First Response courses throughout the County for Groups and Districts. About 200 people have undertaken the training this year including Refresher Courses which were provided at WINGS. Requests are already coming in for 2010.

MIDAS

This course for drivers of minibuses continues to be offered both centrally at Gravelly and also locally in Groups and Districts. It was also on offer at WINGS on one day for which we had 12 participants.

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award

We continue to issue Award Books at the rate of about 15-20 a month, deal with enquiries and we are preparing for a new application system soon to be launched to the Scout Association. We are facilitating a Headquarters organised Expedition Assessors Accreditation Course at the Gravelly Training Centre.

Nationally

International Scout Fellowship / UK Adult Scout Alliance

We have continued to support with a new website and new posters and roll-ups for use with their stand at the Gilwell Reunion.

Scout Holiday Homes Trust

We are at present preparing the Winter edition of 'Holiday Action' for the Scout Holiday Homes Trust, which provides holiday caravans and chalets for families who have a member with special needs.

Three Nations Expedition

This expedition by one hundred young people to China and Mongolia was

completed safely this summer. The Company working with the International Scout Fellowship had facilitated the collection of payments.

Internationally

UGANDA

Queens Award in Newcastle

In recognition of the support the company has given over the years to the UK Uganda Network, Alan and Jen Beavis were invited by the Lord Mayor of Newcastle to the presentation of the Queens Award for Voluntary Service to Northumberland Scouts Uganda Link, by Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant for Tyne and Wear in September.

The moving ceremony was a credit to our friends in Northumberland for the way in which they have developed and supported members of the Uganda Scouts Association from their first visit in 1998 to their latest expedition in 2008.

Berkshire County Scouts Expedition in 2011

In view of the uncertain future of the YES Project in Kenya, it has been decided to switch the 2011 expedition to Uganda in association with Building Brighter Futures, which already has a number of community projects there.

Building Brighter Futures – World Award for Sam Kateu

Sam Kateu, Founder and Director of the Kavule School for the Deaf in Uganda has recently been awarded the World of Children Humanitarian Award. Building Brighter Futures nominated Sam for the Award, which includes a grant to carry out improvements at the school.

Bambang Sunshine Project

We have produced another newsletter for this charity which supports children with disabilities in the Philippines and updated their website. The area covered by the charity was not affected by the recent climatic catastrophe in the Philippines but they have donated some of their funds to the appeal.

Gravelly Training Centre

Gravelly Training Centre is our purpose built training/meeting facility and can be hired for use by organisations and companies for up to 25 people. It is self-contained with its own toilet block and well equipped kitchen for self catering, or catering can be provided. It has the latest audio-visual equipment as well as everything you need for a training course. There is ample car parking.

For booking and enquiries call (0118) 9881707 or email enquiries@gravellytrainingcentre.org.uk

SEWL

Our partnership with Scout Enterprises (Western) Ltd came to an end at the end of March 2009 after 21 years and they have left the Regional Office which they rented from us at Gravelly Court to new premises in Napier Road. This means that we now have a set of offices in Barn 6 at Gravelly Court available to rent. If members know of any organisation looking for premises please let us know. It is completely self contained, with its own kitchen, toilets, entrance and parking.

Premises for meetings

As well as the Gravelly Training Centre we also have other rooms available for meetings. These include our former offices in Northcourt Avenue at the Reading Scout and Guide Headquarters and The Val Clark Room at Gravelly Court. Details can be obtained by calling (0118) 9884077 or e-mail enquiries@bsel.org.uk

Modernisation - New Board Members/trustees Required

In view of our changing circumstances we received a small grant to bring in consultants to look at the future working of the Company. The major recommendations were 1, we should strengthen the diversity and membership of our Board. 2, we arrange a promotional event to encourage collaborative working. 3, we produce a new business plan. We propose to hold an open day early in the new year for other voluntary organisations in the surrounding area, who wish to consider collaboration or partnerships. It has long been our desire to strengthen membership of the Board and we would be pleased to hear from anyone who feels that they can help guide our future.

For the most up to date information on the activities of BSEL

Visit our website
www.bsel.org.uk

