

Structure

The Dockland Scout Project (DSP) is constituted as a Scout District and forms part of the Greater London North Scout County

Aims

To promote the development of young people and enable them to achieve their full potential in line with the aims of the Scout Association

To provide the opportunity for young people to experience Water Activities and Water Sports training under the leadership of qualified adults.

Operationally;

All in all, 2020 has not been a good year for the Project or Scouting and the country in general. Nine months of the year have been spent under quarantine and with restrictions on all of our activities.

Before the first lockdown came into effect, we were able to run 14 formal Royal Yachting Association, British Canoeing and Scout training courses, covering Sailing, Pulling, Paddle-sports, Powerboats, VHF, Diesel Engine and First Aid, plus the Induction Weekend, though it has been so sad that the new members have not been able to use their newly gained skills on Activity Weekends or Open Days.

We were also able to run some bed & breakfast dates, including the Monopoly Run and a total of 270 bed nights, mainly from Scouts, but it did include one school who got in just before lockdown.

Use by third party organisations, subject to risk assessments, has continued, with the Marine Police, DiveCo and a film company making use of the base and waterspace.

Maintenance

From the end of May the Scout Association gave us permission to carry out "essential maintenance" on the base and equipment. This was carried out by a very small team attending on Wednesdays and Saturdays for reduced hours; they ensured all our boats and equipment were clean and able to be returned to an operational state in a short time period.

Regular tasks have included getting as many boats out of the water and winterising them, rolling trailers back and forward to stop the tyres getting flat spots, pumping boats out and emptying the covers, regularly flushing the water systems of the Lord Amory and CW, and trying to keep everything clean. Not surprisingly boats and equipment deteriorate quicker when they are just left about rather than being actively used.

At the same time, we took the opportunity to carry out some other tasks that were easier when we were shut to customers; we have fully renovated one of the Coypu dinghies, started the rebuild of the shoreside crane / hiab, constructed trolleys for the Katakonus and completed about 50% of the repairs to the deck of the ship

Training

This has proved to be a problem as we have not been able to run courses afloat or in a classroom context. We have however managed to keep our adult staff up to date using the e-learning Scout modules. The Quartermaster team have run some quiz nights with a nautical flavour to remind people what things are and what they mean.

Finance

We started the 2020 season in a healthy financial situation.

Our total income has been a little over £58,000-00. The Training Courses brought in £6,700, Bed and Breakfast £17,300. We received some grants including £10,000 from Canary Wharf Estates, £5,000 from Sport England and £500-00 from Canal & River Trust. We had some generous donations from parents and the balance was made up of activities, Lord Amory hire, CW hire, uniform and Nutty sales and a donation from the Wardroom for 2019.

On the expenditure side we have spent £55,400-00. The biggest items have been Insurance of £12,800 (reduced by £4000 as we have the boats laid up), council rates of £8033. bed and breakfast of £8,300. We had some one-off payments which will not occur next year; we bought 7 second-hand Topaz dinghies totalling £2300, we paid consultancy fees on a new pier on the river off £4,900, deck repair materials off £900 and finger guards for all the doors off £570. The balance has been spent on utilities and maintenance.

This has meant that at the end of 2020 we had a surplus of £1500-00, not bad considering the terrible restrictions and operating conditions we have had to cope with.

The Project has reasonable reserves and we will need these to see us through the first half of 2021 until we can hopefully start running activity weekends, Open Days and activities, and begin to generate much needed income.

Conclusion

Finally, we must say a big thank you to all our volunteer water instructors, maintenance staff, admin staff and helpers without them the Project would not go from strength to strength.

The Project is a trust established under its rules which are common to all Scouts. It is also a Registered Charity in its own right number 1126975.

The Project's governing documents are those of The Scout Association. They consist of a Royal Charter, which in turn gives authority to the Bye Laws of the Association and The Policy, Organisation and Rules of the Scout Association.

Trustees are appointed in accordance with the Policy, Organisation and Rules of the Scout Association.

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Richard Hart
Centre Principal / District Commissioner