

# 1<sup>st</sup> Portstewart Scout Group (NIC 104079) Annual Report for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023

## Scout Section

April 2022 was the start of the first full year back after Covid epidemic. Scout attendance averaged in the mid to high 20's throughout indicating a strong desire from young people to get out and embrace the outdoors again. Some of the activity badges earned were Astronomer, Communicator, Local Knowledge and Writer. Some of the challenge badges earned were Teamwork, Creative and Personal.

Summer Camp 2022 was held at Downhill Forest with 14 Scouts attending. This was a green field site where traditional scouting skills were learnt and utilised. The Scouts cycled to camp to earn the Cyclist Badge and cut down on their carbon footprint. They braved the North Atlantic to participate in some surfing at Benone.

We returned after the summer with a total Troop of 32 and average attendances in the mid 20's with 20% of total made up of female scouts. We also had an influx of Scouts from differing ethnic backgrounds with approx 20% non-Christian which lead us to tweak our programme to award activity badges for World Faiths, Chef and the World Challenge.

## Cub Scout Section

Portstewart cubs have continued to offer a varied and fun programme to our pack. Our numbers have remained encouraging with 4 sixes and with the help of 2 scout young leaders programmes have been successfully delivered. As well as weekly pack meetings in the scout hall we have had a trip to NCIC climbing wall which was very exciting as well as a night with the PSNI which was well received. As the weather warmed we linked up with ASDA community worker to do a litter pick on the beach. Great fun was had and as it was just after the NW200 well timed. Our camp in our hall went really well with great support from parents. We were lucky with the weather even though it was April and enjoyed a beach run and fun afternoon then back at the hall practised outdoor cooking and catapult creation. The evening was filled with crafting medieval implements and tabards to enact a jousting competition. Smiles all round. We even managed a camp fire outside, melting marshmallows a must.

With all 4 of our sixers attaining their silver award as they progressed to scouts, the pack continues to flourish with good progress and numbers attending.

## Beaver Section

During the year March 22-23, there was 36 evening meetings. In September 2022 we welcome 7 new beavers into the colony, and 4 beavers moved up into cubs. We also welcomed a new leader after the Section Leader retired at the end of the Summer term 2022. We retained 10 beavers on the books for the year and 3 leaders.

During the year ending March 2023, Beavers completed a number of activity badges including book reader, builder, cook, sports, communication, health & fitness, and space. They also completed hikes away 1, and some achieved swimmer stage 1 badge. There was 3 beavers working towards their Chief scout Bronze award, 5 beavers achieved their personal challenge badge, with 5 working towards it.

Weekly meetings held on Wednesday term time allowed activities to be completed towards badges as well as activities for events, such as St Patricks Day, Remembrance and Easter. There were also several meetings held away from the scout hall which included a litter pick within the local community and a visit to the beach for a nature walk and completing nature crafts.

Beavers got well involved into all aspects of scouting, learning basic scouting skills of knots, fire lighting, campfire songs, developing their leadership and teamwork skills through team activities and games and gaining skills which can be used outside scouting such as sign language, green cross code and kitchen safety.

