



To All Leaders

15 April 2018



Dear Leaders

### **Jamboree On The Trail (“JOTT”) 20 - Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2018**

#### **An Event For All Sections, Leaders & Families**

Following the huge success of previous years' JOTT's, I am pleased to now confirm details of this year's event. I can first confirm that we are retaining the usual format of finishing at Dartford Park and providing all walkers with a snack/chocolate bar, bag of crisps and hot/cold drinks at the finish.

#### **Our Route**

The walk will again largely follow the Darent Valley Path (“DVP”) and, for those wishing to complete the whole walk, will start at Otford then head to Sevenoaks on one branch of the DVP before following the other (main) branch all the way from there to Dartford Park. The full route is some 21 miles but everybody is of course free to choose their own start point from the list attached. The route options start from as little as just over 2 miles and so are suitable for almost anyone! Please choose your section's/members' start point based on your knowledge of your own and their wishes/ability. Of course, you don't have to have all your members starting at the same point as long as you can still organise adequate supervision. On the day, we will again be doing all registrations on arrival at the finish. On registering, participants will receive their official JOTT badge and a voucher to exchange for snacks and drink. ***N.B: Please ensure ALL participants register and pay for their participation whether they want badges/ food or not, it is not an expensive event after all! We're pretty sure we are easily the largest UK JOTT event and one of the world's largest but our official numbers rely on everybody registering so please help.***

The full route is very arduous so please make sure anyone undertaking this is adequately prepared and equipped. Specifically, I would remind everyone that it is crucial that anyone attempting this section is able to map read for themselves. It is also even more important that any young people on this section are accompanied and adequately supervised throughout. You can see the full route on the Map attached to the emailed / online version of this letter or I can supply it on request. Because of the distance, those doing the full route will start at 7:30am again this year.

For the many who prefer the shorter routes, there are alternative start points to suit all and the finish for everybody will, as normal, be just inside Dartford Park as you arrive there through the tunnels under Princes Road. The Heritage & Steam Fair is on again this year and well worth a visit once you finish.

Attached to the emailed / online version of this letter is a GPX file showing the full plotted route for those with GPS enabled devices. If you don't have it and want it please drop me an email and I will send it.

Ending the routes at the Park eases problems with parking of vehicles near the finish but please do still try to arrange to be picked up if at all possible.

#### **Dartford District Scout Council**

**Assistant District Commissioner (Activities): Andy Gray** 51 Truman Drive, St. Leonard's On Sea, East Sussex, TN37 7TH

**Tel** 01424 584107 **Work** 020 8370 7260 **Mobile** 07717 828680

**email** andy@grayfamily.biz **website** www.dartfordscouts.org.uk

**Patron** HM The Queen **President** HRH The Duke of Kent **Founder** Robert Baden-Powell OM **Chief Scout** Bear Grylls

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### **Can We Get Record Numbers?**

Please promote the activity amongst your fellow leaders, section members and their families. The event as a whole is now in its 21<sup>st</sup> year and this is the 19<sup>th</sup> consecutive year that Dartford has taken part. It is a fantastic opportunity to get as many members and supporters involved as possible, from all sections, and to try and beat our previous years' superb totals for participants (around 750 or more for many years!) and miles walked (thousands!), whilst at the same time enjoying a fine walk in the lovely local countryside. It is also a great opportunity for extensive publicity. It can only happen with your help!

### **Supervision**

Section leaders (or parents if present) are responsible for ensuring that their members/youngsters are properly supervised and accompanied throughout, e.g. that adult/young person ratios are correct at all times. This is essential to everybody's safe enjoyment of the event, so please ensure you provide adequate supervision. In addition, every year some people still get lost so please make sure that, if you don't know the route well, you either have and can use a map or stick close to others who do/can.

### **Finish**

Once we arrive at the finish (scheduled for 4pm), your badge, snack/chocolate bar & crisps will await, along with a hot or cold drink, which are all included in the participation fee. Pick up/departure time from the finish should be from 4:30pm onwards for all participants, so as to enable us all to mingle, enjoy the atmosphere and recount our day's adventures. No vehicles will be allowed inside the Park to collect walkers and so arrangements should be made to meet your transport locally to the Park's various exits.

***N.B: This year there will not be the usual transport shuttles to ferry drivers back to their start point due to a lack of volunteer drivers.***

### **Souvenir Badges**

We aim to order plenty of badges in advance again this year to try and ensure that everybody gets their badge on the day and these will be given out on your arrival at the finish when you register. As mentioned earlier, please inform all members, families and other participants that they must register and pay the entry fee, whether they want a badge / snacks or not – some people each year seem to be walking and not registering and this should not be permitted!

### **Equipment**

All participants will need to be equipped as follows:

- \* Strong footwear with a decent sole (rugged trainers are acceptable)
- \* Clothing (as dictated by weather conditions – including waterproof outer layers just in case)
- \* Day sack (containing sufficient drink & food for the length of route chosen)
- \* Scouting ID (e.g. Group T-shirt, neckerchief, etc)

Please do not carry any bags that restrict arm / hand movement.

### **Fee / Registration**

The participation fee is £2.50 per person again this year, payable on the day when registering on your arrival at the finish. This fee includes the official JOTT badge plus the refreshments at the end. We are not taking any pre-registrations and all participants must register on arrival, although forms are attached herewith so that they can be completed in advance or on route before arrival at the park for convenience.

A common problem at registration is that walkers are listed on a registration form along with other people who they end up not arriving with, either because they have gone ahead of or fallen behind that party. This considerably complicates and holds up the registration process whilst the rest of the group catches up. If you think this will affect your group, it is better to use more registration forms, covering smaller walking groups that you know will stay together, so that this issue can be avoided.

Assuming enough volunteer helpers, I am again intending to have a "fast track" registration desk at the finish, which will be solely reserved for those arriving with fully completed registration forms, the correct money and all the people listed present.

#### **Marshalls / Refreshment Staff / Transport**

As with any event of this size, much help is needed to run it smoothly and the relatively few volunteers we have had the last few years are stretched very thin. Please consider if you are able to volunteer to marshal (e.g. at the railway crossing at Eynsford, with group control at the more popular start points, etc) or to help at the finish with registration or serving refreshments. No offers will be refused!

I would ask that all Groups try to nominate at least one person to assist at the park please! Volunteering does not mean you cannot enjoy the walk first. If you know your young people and fellow leaders can cope without you once you've arrived at the finish, grab a snack and a drink for yourself then come and assist/relieve our other staff.

Subject to enough volunteers coming forwards (hint!), it is intended to have 2 or more refreshment collection points operating, so as to speed up the queuing process and let everyone relax and enjoy their snack and the company of their fellow walkers quicker.

If anybody can help in any way or has any queries about the event generally, please do not hesitate to contact me by email or via my mobile.

I look forward to seeing you all at the finish, tired but still smiling after another huge day for Dartford Scouting!

Yours in Scouting

**Andy Gray**