



All Adults Penarth and District

1st June 2018

Appointment of Area Commissioner Cardiff and Vale

Dear Friends

Today it has been announced that from the 1st July I will be the new Area Commissioner (AC) for Cardiff and Vale. I writing this letter with two overwhelming feelings; firstly a sense of loss and sadness that I am leaving a team of volunteers that over the last 8 years has really grown closer together, achieving and delivering so much. Later in this letter I will go through the vision I had for Penarth and District back in 2010 and how you all and those not still with us have helped to achieve this vision. My second feeling is that of excitement and pride that I have been given the opportunity to shape scouting for a wider group and build on and support districts like ours to achieve more.

Why Now?

A lot of you may ask why is he leaving us now? The role of District Commissioner (DC) can be held for two 5 year terms at a maximum so yes I could have done 2 more years as DC and I was planning to. I wasn't anticipating Steven Evans, our current AC, to finish just yet. I see the role of AC to shape and support scouting locally for the benefit of all our members adult and youth. Under my leadership I hope to "remove barriers" whether these are to volunteering, activities, funding, and training, to make scouting more enjoyable for all involved. Some of the items I am now looking at as DC I think will be easier for me to work on as AC; these being items like access to the water around Cardiff Bay and the refurbishment/rebuilding/new builds of some of Scout Halls to name just two. Finally on a more selfish note, I still think I have a lot to offer scouting at a management level. The role of DC has really helped me develop personally over the last 8 years giving me my own "Skills for Life" and as I have only two years left being DC the next steps is to become AC and build my own skills further.

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What happens next?

I will become AC on the 1st July and as AC I am responsible for any district without a DC so for Penarth and District there will be no change in the short term. The plan for recruiting and appointment my successor is as follows.

Mid June – Application open for new DC for Penarth and District

Mid July – Closing Date for Application

August/September – Shortlisting and Interviews

September/October – Hopefully announcement and start of the new DC

During the next few months we will still publish the calendar of events for 2018/19, run our District Family Fun Day on 22nd September, as well as complete our calendar of events for 2017/18 with Beaver Trip (10th June), All Wales Scout Camp (15th to 17th June), Cub Camp (6th to 8th July) as well as our international camp to Kandersteg, Switzerland in August.

What was the Vision and what have we achieved?

When I applied for the role of DC back in 2010 I was asked to set a vision for the district. Some of you would not have been members of scouting at the time, so just for us to look back I have uploaded the very rough video I did back in 2010 with the theme “coming together” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FXUa4NSRXf4>). As I said earlier in this letter I really believe we have achieved a greater working together culture in the district. Of course life isn't perfect and we still have work to do and mustn't stop trying.

Under this theme I had a number of statements on what the district would look like under my leadership; these being:-

Year on year increase to membership both Young People and Adults. Overall this goal has been achieved with an increase in members from 404 in 2010 to 677 in 2018. Youth membership has increased from 324 in 2010 to 522 in 2018 and adult membership has increased from 80 in 2010 to 155 in 2018. The progress hasn't been year on year as I would have liked across both adult and youth with a couple of dips in the 8 years on youth membership due to leadership numbers and managing capacity.

Good Management of Assets. The district executive was spending a lot of time talking about PADSAC. The exec now spends time looking at how to support scouting in the district; looking at ways to develop scouting in the community and removing barriers. An example of this is the purchase of the district van in 2016 and also ensuring we have adults trained to do adventurous activities.

Communication with all Adults. We have pushed hard to try and get all group involved in the activities and events that the district runs to support scouting in the groups. Each term there is a section meeting and regular communication via email to all involved in scouting to ensure everyone knows what's going on.

Active Programme from 6-25. The district activities programme has really grown from small events to this year's events average circa 90 young people per event and every group involved. These events are there to support groups in doing things they can't do on their own. For example the cub adventure day the other weekend gave cubs the opportunity to build a traditional raft and paddle it. These events work as you can bring the skills from around the district and beyond together to benefit everyone. We as a district team can run these events on our own. This for me is my biggest thank you to you all for a number of years I have led a lot of these events but without the support of so many of you I would have failed and for this I am truly grateful to you all.

Adult Support. The biggest challenge we have in scouting is having enough adults to lead and run our sections. We have done many different things over the years to encourage more adults to volunteer and support our current volunteers. Some of these have already been mentioned above and to single out two others, we have had great success in opening new groups with the support of the development officers from Scouts Cymru. We have also looked at making our appointments and getting started as simple and as easy as possible.

Full use of the Environment Around Us. You may think this was a strange item in the vision back in 2010 but we are very lucky to live in the part of the world we do. Penarth and District has lots of water around and other activities close at hand. We have made good progress in using some of them with activities like the bellboating, Boulders sleepover and recent cub adventure day at Cosmeston. As I said at the beginning of this letter one of things I hope to do as AC is further remove barriers to using places around Cardiff and Vale.

Full support for Explorers and Scout Network. Explorers in the district has grown. We now have 3 units although we are struggling to keep all three going with enough leaders and could be doing more with Young leaders. I believe the district has done a lot to support explorer scouting and scout network. There is a lot more work to be done still to keep this support in place and grow even more.

I hope you will see we have done a lot of what we set out to achieve in 2010. There is still work to do by my replacement and this will be done with my support. As I said a few times in this letter thank you to all of you for having the passion and commitment for scouting. I hope this letter gives you a picture of why I am moving roles and the timeline for the future. As always and in the future as your new AC I will be here to support you with Scouting.

Yours in Scouting

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Julian Jordan', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Julian Jordan
District Commissioner