

St Briavels Scout House open day 2016

We all have a special place and moment that made a big impact in our lives. For us Polish Scouts in Great Britain such a special place is our Polish Scout House in St Briavels, in the heart of the Forest of Dean in the Wye Valley. Here, generations cubs and brownies grew up to become guides and scouts, then venture guides and scouts. Some continue to be leaders in Polish Scouting. In momentous moments, they made their oath to love God and their country, help others and live by the Scout Law.

Over 50 years later, current generations are following in their parents' and grandparents' footsteps. Children as young as 11 years of age know that when they make their oath, in the middle of the night, with their scouting brothers and sisters by their sides, in the middle of the forest, by a camp fire, it is a special time in a special place and when they say their oath you can hear it in the tremble in their voices that they know just how important this time is in their lives. This year, for the first time, I had the honour to preside over such a momentous occasion in the lives of 11 guides who had completed their first year in their teams and were now making their oath. I could hear their trembling voices, and mine trembled with emotion too.

This year, three Regions (Hufce) camped in the fields at the Polish Scout House – Guides from Hufiec Pomorze and Scouts from Hufiec Szczecin covering the South of England, and Scouts from Hufiec Warszawa from London. Midway through the two-week camps we held an Open Day to which we invited parents and friends of the Guides and Scouts. The programme for the day included a presentation march by the camp members, a Report to the Chief Scout of the Polish Scouting Association, an open air mass and camp fire. Refreshments were provided during the day by the Friends of Polish Scouting Amersham Circle and Swindon Circle and a tombola by the London Circle, the proceeds of which went towards the fundraising campaign to refurbish the Scout House at St Briavels. Noticeable was the absence of our youngest members, the cubs and brownies, who are having to camp elsewhere these past couple of years due to the main house undergoing major structural and safety works. Modernisation of what is, in fact, a residential house, into a scouting activity centre that complies with all current legislation is urgently required so during this time the cubs and brownies are having to hold their camp elsewhere. We hope the work can be completed quickly so they can once again join with their older brothers and sisters and all camp together, as their parents and grandparents before them. If every family contributed to this campaign, we would reach our goal much quicker. Please take a moment to visit the rest of the website and contribute whatever is possible and help us help all these children and young people reach their potential and give them a great grounding in their lives which Scouting can provide - <http://www.stanicastbriavels.uk/en/>



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Hufiec Pomorze