**Transcript – 4th November 2020**

Hello, it's me again your friendly county commissioner. I hope you're having an amazing day today.

So today is Wednesday the fourth of November and I thought it's been a couple of months since I last did one of these videos for you and I felt that now is the right time to do one.

Thank you so much for clicking on the link and watching this. I really do hope you find this useful in some sort of way.

**Restarting Scouting**

So the first thing that I want to share with you is that following the decision taken by the government at the weekend, the NYA and the Scouts Association have looked at their guidance and the information that is available to them and they sadly have to make the decision that scouting will return to red status.

This means that from midnight on Wednesday, the fourth of November Face-to-face scouting will have to be suspended again for the short time of our current national lockdown across England.

This I know. It is really sad. This is for me gutting and I know it's heart wrenching for you.

Many of you have recently been through that risk assessment process to get approved to be able to meet face to face. I know that when we do meet face to face the young people and the adults get so much enjoyment from it and it's the best thing we can do is to get back face to face, but sadly, Coronavirus isn't going away and it is the right decision to protect ourselves and all of those young people that we work with to protect them from any potential harm that might come as a result of this dreadful virus.

Once again, sadly from the fourth of November at midnight, Face-to-face scouts and will be suspended so we'll be returning to our online programmes and our remote programming.

As ever, there's lots of resources available to help you in particular. If you go to our own scouts website GScouts.org.uk/Coronavirus we've recently added loads more programme ideas, including the ones that are available from the scouts that list is ever growing. And of course, if you want to share your ideas for what you've done in remote programs, please do.

Let's keep engaging with those young people and I am really gutted for all of you. It's really sad that so many of you have been so through so much work to have this happen to us once again, but it is just a short period of time.

Scouting has been through two world wars and so many other things and it's come through stronger time and time again. I know that with the amazing volunteers we've got out there. Every one of you watching, with those delivering face-to-face programmes, delivering online programmes delivering programs or supporting those that do, I know that we'll get through this because we're amazing and every one of you is amazing.

**This week**

So recently, I've had a real great pleasure. It really is an honour to be able to present some Chief Scouts Awards. On Sunday afternoon, I got to go along to Gloucester Cathedral, where I met with Jack from 22nd Gloucester (St. Barnabas), and I was able to present him with his bronze Chief Scouts Award.

He's only been able to do this activity while working from home. It's been fantastic to be able to do that for him and well done to the group there for enabling Jack to learn his top award.

Then on Monday evening, I got to go along to South Cerney Scout Group in Cotswold District and it's fantastic to see all the young people. I saw two separate bubbles of young people working and running really excellent programmes. They were doing fire lighting and talking to the Beavers about fire safety and cooking on those fires as well.

It's fantastic to see these great activities. The Beavers were having an absolute ball and having a great time and then I got the great honour to be able to present six more Bronze Chief Scouts Awards. A huge thank you to the team at South Cerney for inviting me along. It was really great to have that privilege to be able to do that. After that we also able to present two Commissioner Commendations to two of the adults and for the great work that they're doing. A massive thank you for all of the work that both of those groups are doing in enabling their Beavers to achieve their Chief Scouts Awards scouts recently.

I've also like many of you have been doing lots of online activity, so my world is still online. I too, don't go back to face-to-face scouting just yet. So it's been really interesting to see all the different things that you've been doing.

I know going through the risk assessment and approval process has been difficult for some of you. I know it isn't easiest thing in the world, but I really do thank you for persevering with it. I know every single person I've spoken to that has come back to doing Face-to-face scouting has really appreciated being face back face to face. It's amazing to help young people again isn't it? I know that everyone I've spoken to when they've gone back and said it was the best thing that they've even done.

I know it's been difficult but really do. Thank you for the diligent work you've been putting in to get back to face-to-face Scouting.

I also wanna say a huge thank you to all of those who are still doing remote scouting in some form whether that be through zoom meetings or through online scouting and or whether, that be via email or sharing messages via Facebook? I really want to say thank you for everything that you are doing to engage with young people. At this time, young people are going through just a hard time as anybody else at the moment. They're back to schools, but actually the rest of their lives is still very topsy-turvy and particularly in the times that are coming up. So a massive thank you to all of you for everything you're doing to keep young people engaged in Scouting. Thank you.

**Coming up**

So on Sunday, the eighth of November, I'm looking forward to be able to share with you a great opportunity to come together as a county in an act of remembrance. On Sunday, the 8th just before 11 o'clock. What we'll be doing is sharing with you via YouTube an opportunity to do everything else we would normally do in an act of remembrance. Including the 2 minute silence and everything else you'd expect to see including flags, the Last Post and the readings that you normally hear.

If you go to GScouts.org.uk/remembrance , you'll find all of the details you need to know, including the joining instructions for taking part.

Please do join with me just before 11 o'clock on Sunday if you possibly can. Also on that web page, you'll find there's lots of different resources that you can cut out, print out and display for sharing with young people in celebration for this act of remembrance, including this wreath. There's a number of resources that I want to say huge a thank you to Evelyn Guyll for sharing those with us and producing them for our county. It's really great to have something that young people can colour in, print out and stick in their windows.

if you're not able to join us on Sunday, I do hope you're able to remember on your doorstep or in other ways all those that died for us so many years ago.

**Race around the world**

So are you taking part in the race around the world? How are you gonna do your miles? If you don't know what I'm talking about? I definitely would love for you to go and find out more visit our website GScouts.org.uk/race-around-the-world or visit the Scout Association pages. This is a really important initiative for us. You may have read recently whether be the news or in the association emails that there are over 500 groups across the UK that have been really hard hit financially by the Covid situation. In Gloucestershire there are a large number of groups at risk themselves of closing down due to not having enough finances to keep going.

They've had no income coming in like many of us, but they've also had bills to meet and headquarters to keep maintained. We're asking for the public families, parents and volunteers to get involved and help us raise over £300,000 to support these 500 groups, many of which are in Gloucestershire, it would be a real shame if we can't continue to provide scouting across Gloucestershire. Again, visit the website and find out how you can do it. Are you going to sign up to join Team Beavers? Teams Cubs? Team Scouts? or team Explorers, Network +?

Plus there are four teams you can join in and all you have to do is commit to and raise funds for just doing some extra miles. I'm going to do my extra miles on a stepper actually. I'm going to try to keep myself fit using a stepper. We'd love to know your involvement in this take a look at the website.

And, of course, the added benefit is if you're raising funds, and families and volunteers put your group name in, you can receive up to 20% of the funds even if you're not one of those groups that are at risk. Please do get involved to be great as a county to support those groups that are most in need at the moment.

Once again, visit the website GScouts.org.uk/race-around-the-world or visit the Scout Association pages and find out more find out how you can support other scout groups across and the UK.

While you're visiting our website, I want you to take a look at the homepage and then in the “news and updates” section you'll find that we're regularly posting new blogs. Our Deputy County Commissioner for People Carole, has been posting blogs there now for a good couple of months and I'm really thankful for the insight that she's been able to share, many of the personal experiences that she's had. The latest one is all about having difficult conversations, so please do go and take a look at those regularly. We'll try to do a new blog for you every couple of weeks or so and a big thank you to Carole for all the work that she's been doing for that.

**And finally…**

And finally, it's just my opportunity to say huge thank you. I know this year has been really tough. I know that in many ways, scouting has been changed for so many of us in so many different ways.

We love scouting. We love working with young people and supporting them and developing skills for life. We're going to help them throughout the rest of their lives. It's an amazing thing to achieve. I know that it’s been difficult, but scouting if nothing else, has been through two world wars, It's been through all kinds of difficulties in the past, and this is just one of those difficulties that we're having to come to the moment.

I know right now, it feels like things are really tough, but remember, you are doing an amazing job. Anything you're doing whether it be directly with young people or supporting in the background. Everything you're doing is so important and it's so amazing, please try and remember that. You're amazing people and you do it for free as volunteers. Thank you for everything you do on behalf of me, my whole County team and all of the 5,000 young people that we support across our county. I look forward to speaking to you again very soon.

Thank you for watching.