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Dear Kenilworth Town Councillors,

Thank you very much again. I am writing to you, having come back from the World Scout Jamboree which you kindly supported us to attend with a grant and would like to inform you of the experiences we had in South Korea.

As I'm sure you have heard on the news, the UK Scouts were evacuated from the World Scout Jamboree after only 3 nights on site. This was due to the site being partially under water on arrival, a forecasted typhoon, concerns about sanitation, and lack of food especially for those with specific dietary needs. Due to this the UK Scouts, with the largest number of participants, took the decision to relocate to Seoul, taking the pressure off the Jamboree site for those remaining countries. We still had an amazing experience, though not the Jamboree we had expected. These challenges helped us to build resilience, adaptability and an appreciation for our leaders who went with us.



Our Jamboree journey started with us arriving at Birmingham Airport bright and early at 6am on Saturday 29 July. There was a specific Jamboree check-in desk area for our flight to Frankfurt. Our long-haul flight from Frankfurt to Seoul, South Korea was full of over 200 Scouts from the UK and Ireland who were attending the Jamboree. On arrival in Seoul, we were greeted by a Jamboree immigration desk at the Airport, we then took the metro into Seoul, a modern high-rise city, in which we were planned to spend the next 2 nights.

The Jamboree site was 200km away from Seoul. We pitched our tents on pallets in case of further flooding, arriving in time for the Jamboree opening ceremony, where we celebrated with Scouts from all over the World, with speakers including the President of South Korea and Chief Scout Bear Grylls.

During our few days at Jamboree site, we talked with and met Scouts from other countries, swapping T-shirts, trading badges and taking selfies. We visited a large indoor climbing centre and learnt how to make traditional Hanji paper. Unfortunately, after only 3 days we were told the news at 10.30pm that we would be leaving the Jamboree site.

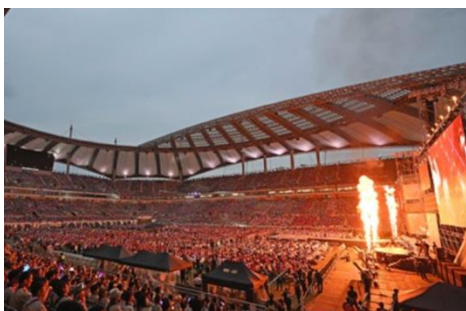


The next morning, we packed all our personal belongings and queued up for busses to take us back the 4-hour drive to Seoul. We were initially sent overnight to an hotel where we had to share 4 people to a double bed!



The rest of the Jamboree was spent in and around Seoul. The UK Embassy and the Mayor of Seoul supported the UK Scouts and developed a full programme activity for the rest of our Jamboree experience in South Korea. We visited the War Memorial of Korea, a taekwondo theatre production, the Demilitarized Zone or DMZ, the most heavily guarded border in the world. We spent a day around the capital city of Seoul wearing the traditional

Korean Dress, Hanbok, visiting the temples and palaces. Spending more time in the capital gave us more time to appreciate the Korean culture, visiting local markets, eating new foods such as whole soft crab and chicken feet, as well as becoming proficient in using chopsticks. We also experienced Typhoon alerts, alongside other Korean Text alerts and needing to stay in hotel rooms with and an emergency grab bag in case if typhoon.



Towards the end of our time in Korea, Scouts from the UK and from other countries came together in SaRang Church, Seoul, which is the world's largest underground church, as a way of meeting other Scouts and exchanging cultures. This was followed by an amazing closing ceremony which was held in the national Football Stadium in Seoul. All participants of the Jamboree were there, and it had an amazing

international feel, followed by a K-pop concert with South Korea's top music stars on stage for over 40,000 Scouts. Before leaving for home to be reunited with our families after 20 days away.

We are most grateful for your support for us to partake in this amazing experience. If you would us to come and give a short presentation to the council, we would happily arrange this.

Many Thanks again,
James Hurst

On behalf of Sophie Cousins, Andrew Digby, Heather Doy, Swannand Kashyap, Ellie Pawsey, Rohan Rajathurai, Abi Staveley, Mia Thomas-Seawell and Richard Staveley