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Dear Cubs / Scouts / Explorers and Parents / Carers,

Is it really time to start again? Oh yes it is! It's the 70th edition of the world-beating Harpenden & Wheathampstead District Scout Gang Show!

Next year's Show takes place from Tuesday 8th to Saturday 12th January 2019.

The Creative Team has already met for the first time to pool ideas (including several from last year's cast – thank you!) and start putting the show together – we always welcome more ideas, so simply drop us a Facebook message, a Twitter DM, an Instagram message or email producer@harpenden.gs with your thoughts.

Those who have previously been in the Show know what a great feeling you get on stage with over 2,200 people applauding your efforts and cheering you on during Show Week. You also know what work is needed during rehearsal to make sure the Show goes with a swing. It's hard work, but it's also enormous fun. There is no buzz quite like a Gang Show buzz!

As mentioned in the following information, sadly there is not enough room for everyone who applies – nobody's place is guaranteed, not even those who have been in the show before (last year we had a waiting list of 73 people!!) – but in order to be in with a chance this year, and to ensure a better chance next time, you must get your name down. There is also, of course, the possibility to work backstage or front-of-house if (a) you don't end up on-stage or (b) if you'd rather not be in the spotlight in the first place – just let us know.

Before you apply, please **read the next two pages very carefully indeed!**

We look forward to hearing from you very soon. This year's extra-special 70th edition will be a fantastic celebration of everything special about Gang Show and Scouting in Harpenden, Wheathampstead and Kimpton.

Yours in Scouting and 'Gang Show'-ing,

Ewan, Cathy, Jemma, Jeremy, Becca, Claire, Fiona, Jane,
Kat, Mark, Nuria, Rikki, Robin, Steph, Ross & Wendy

The Creative Team

70th Gang Show - rehearsals & applications

While the official rehearsal schedule is yet to be fixed, rehearsals are scheduled on Tuesdays from the start of September, switching to Sundays for Senior Gang in October. Key dates in the schedule will be as follows:

Sun 1 Jul - Preview Day for Senior/Junior Gangs ; Tue 4 Sep Rehearsals start for Senior/Junior Gangs; Tue 11 Sep - Rehearsals start for Mini Gang; Sun 7 Oct - Senior Gang switches (in the main) to Sunday afternoons; Sun 28 Oct & Tue 30 Oct - no rehearsals (half-term); Sun 25 Nov – Harpenden Lights Up (Senior Gang only); Tue 25th Dec & 1st Jan - No rehearsals (Christmas & New Year); **Wed 2 Jan & Thu 3 Jan - rehearsals in Public Halls; Sat 5 Jan - Technical Rehearsal; Sun 6 Jan - Dress Rehearsal; Tue 8th to Sat 12th Jan Performances 7:15-9:45pm, + Saturday Matinee**

All the dates will be confirmed in the official schedule to be issued once the cast has been selected. Junior Gang may be needed on some Sundays, and some Seniors on Tuesdays.

All applications are made online. Go to **www.harpenden.gs**, click on **Application – be in the cast**. As a typo could mean we are unable to contact you, please **very carefully** fill in the compulsory boxes (and as many of the other boxes as possible too) and hit 'send' before 12 noon on Sunday, 29th April 2018. **No late applications will be considered**, unless numbers are below the maximum (which hasn't happened in the last 13 shows!)

We accommodate as many people as possible, but nobody's place is guaranteed. We don't audition, but deal with applications via admissions criteria, explained on the next page.

Please note that we would prefer children not to be pushed into joining the Gang – we want and need people who will enjoy the experience, not simply whose parents want them to take part. – occasionally it is clear at rehearsal that certain cast members would rather be anywhere else. Also, while it is a great boon to have older, more experienced cast members on stage, if 2019 is a big exam year for you, please consider your application very carefully, due to the commitment required to be in Gang Show. Thank you for your understanding on both counts.

Every effort **must** be made to attend **all** rehearsals. You can miss up to two (or three if 2 are due to Scouting activities). These absences **cannot be consecutive**, and you must inform us as far in advance as possible. (For example, family birthday celebrations should not come as a surprise, as they happen annually, quite often on the same date!) Any more absences and your place in the Show may be forfeited. (Of course, any extenuating circumstances will be taken into consideration).

There are certain compulsory dates (see above, **marked in bold**). If you can't do these dates, then we're afraid you can't be in the Gang!

Behaviour at rehearsals **must** be acceptable to the Creative Team **at all times**. Offenders will be given a first warning and parents will be contacted. There will be a second (final) warning if deemed necessary, but on a third transgression the offender will be required to leave the Gang.

If, at any stage, you feel that Gang Show is not for you, then please talk to a member of the Creative Team. We can either sort out any problem, or allow you to relinquish your place to an eager person on the waiting list.

Every participant and parent will need to sign a 'promise of commitment', showing that they understand the rules necessary for the show to be a success. Following strongly worded feedback from several cast members, crew and parents, while we still want a the usual great mix of hard work and laughter, the Creative Team is going to be a lot stricter than previously.

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA for Gang Show 2019

- Equal priority is given to past performers and last show's waiting list before 'first-timers'.
- It is quite possible that some, including those who were performers in, or on the waiting list for, previous shows will not get in the 2019 Gang. You must apply, however, if you wish to be (a) placed on the waiting list for this Show and (b) considered as a priority for the next Show.
- You must be an invested, paid-up, regularly attending, active and well-behaved member of an ESU / Troop / Pack in the District and recommended to the Creative Team by your ESL / SL / CSL as being all of those things.

Senior Gang (52 total – 26 boys and 26 girls)

- In school years 10 to 13 as of September 2018 (i.e. born between 1/9/00 & 31/8/04)
 - We start with Y13. If > 26 boys / 26 girls, we draw lots; if < 26, we add Y12.
 - If total > 26, we draw lots from Y12; if < 26, we add in Y11.
 - If total > 26, we draw lots from Y11; if < 26, we add in Y10.
 - If total > 26, we draw lots from Y10; if < 26, we add in 'first timers'.
 - We start with Y13 as above and work down.
 - If still below 26, then we add the oldest of the Junior Gang.
- All those not selected will be on the waiting list in the same age group order as above. If anyone drops out or has to be removed from the Gang for any reason, then a name or names will be drawn from a hat as a substitute.

Junior Gang (64 total)

- In school years 7 to 9 as of September 2018 (i.e. born between 1/9/04 & 31/8/07)
 - We start with Y9. If > 64, we draw lots; if < 64, we add Y8.
 - If total > 64, we draw lots from Y8; if < 64, we add in Y7.
 - If total > 64, we draw lots from Y7; if < 64, we add in 'first timers'.
 - We start with Y9 as above and work down.
 - If still below 64, then we add the oldest of the Mini Gang.
- All those not selected will be on the waiting list in the same age group order as above. If anyone drops out or has to be removed from the Gang for any reason, then a name or names will be drawn from a hat as a substitute.

Mini Gang (36 total)

- In school years 5 and 6 as of September 2018 (i.e. born between 1/9/07 & 31/8/09)
 - We start with Y6. If > 36, we draw lots; if < 36, we add in Y5.
 - If the total > 36, we draw lots from Y5 up to the maximum of 36.
- All those who are not selected will get placed on the waiting list. If anyone drops out or has to be removed from the Gang for any reason, then a name or names will be drawn from a hat as a substitute.