

### A parents perspective:

I remember my daughter getting the call to say that she had been selected for the World Scout Jamboree. I was thrilled, proud, and maybe just a little bit daunted by what might happen next.

Thrilled - this is something that she really did want to do and so it would've been a big deal if she had not been selected.

Proud - I wanted to tell everyone about her selection, I had never been to anything like this when I was young, despite being in the Scouts, but for many they had no idea what a Jamboree was, other than a perception of a rather splendid holiday.

Daunted - I knew there would be hard work ahead and hard work for her might mean the same for me and my wife. Not least as there would be a lot of fundraising to be done, not only for her as an individual but maybe to support the unit as a whole.

And on reflection how was it?

It was hard work at times especially to get her to engage initially in the need for fundraising, the bank of mum and dad simply couldn't fund this event. But once we got there and she saw the merit in writing letters, talking to people she didn't know as a means of raising funds, packing bags, turning up at events run by a group of parents, then it seemed to go quite well.

We as parents made friends too, there are people I know today and still speak with whom I first met as we were parents together on the journey of our youngster going to Jamboree. It was and is a shared experience, so you are not going it alone. There was a sense of admiration and envy, not only for our own child, but for all those that are going on this most wonderful opportunity.

Different people will get different things out of the Jamboree. Having been on the journey I have seen some young people simply blossom and grow in a way that has been truly remarkable. Teamwork, self-confidence, respect, a sense of responsibility, all these things came to almost everyone. But I also saw some that definitely had a great time but for them it was an experience that had not changed the course of their lives immeasurably. So don't worry if you see the latter in your own child, it isn't only you and what they have experienced will have made a difference to them in some way, which will come to light one day in the future, of that you can be sure!

This is not a holiday. This is the World Scout Jamboree and it is teaching our children life skills that will make a difference. I said to my daughter as I kissed her goodbye when they were departing to the airport, 'Don't forget, you only get out of life what you put into it, so be sure to put in as much as you can as you will see the results, I promise you'. She told me when she came home that the advice stuck, there were times when she struggled, but those words rang loud and clear in her head. She loved it, we loved it, I think you will too!