

# Census Analysis

by Darren Dowling

## Notes

This analysis is a rough overview of the general trends and patterns within Groups and Sections over the last five years. Please pay particular attention to the explanations of the technical bits below and the possible problems that may confuse certain issues.

Please note the comments are made in a "neutral" manner and are entirely my opinion, which could well be very misguided given the notes below. Everything was done in an impartial way and no attempt at "bigging some Groups up" or "putting some Groups down" was ever made or intended.

If you have any questions I will be only too pleased to help you. Please feel free to ask me if you need an explanation or clarification on anything to do with these figures and comments.

## Technical Bits

Census figures are collected by the District Team every quarter (April, July, October while the national Census returns are in January). These typically are just a simple total of how many children are in each section in each Group and other than discriminating by sex no further information is collected (e.g. age).

The Census Excel file was made to make analysing and collating the data easier. It automatically generates reports for each quarter as well as updating the long term charts and graphs.

The Quarter on Quarter and Year on Year tables show changes every quarter or year. Drops in numbers are highlighted in red. So if it says "30" in red, in April 2008 it means you have 30 less children in April 2008 than you did in April 2007.

A four point moving average was made in a rough attempt to look at overall trends. This just adds up the figures for the year around that point and averages them, so it is sort of like "an average over the past year". This can help avoid confusion when figures are fluctuating wildly from quarter to quarter.

## Possible Problems

Firstly, we still have some missing data. Most notably from 2004 but also there are a few instances of specific Groups not returning data for a specific quarter. In the main, I estimate this has very little impact on the overall trends that I have looked at and where possible I have tried to account for this missing data.

Secondly the data is of quite a low quality. That is the collection method is far from the quality that should be aspired to in Statistics and that we cannot be sure of the accuracy of the numbers themselves. They are also just raw overall numbers rather than a higher grade information that would, ideally, include factors such as age.

Moving averages only give a very rough and ready view of long term trends, which is something we should be very careful of from the very beginning. Whether the data actually suits itself to these averages is a matter of great debate.

Care should also be taken with the scales, which differ from graph to graph. What looks like a "steep drop" for one Group may only be a small percentage decrease while another Group showing almost the same shaped curve may have dropped in numbers by more than 50%.

With figures as small as they are in some Groups care should also be taken not to overanalyse percentage changes as the loss or gain of just a few individuals can have a dramatic effect on numbers. For a large Group the loss or gain of just a few can have a negligible effect.

## How Can I Help?

The most important thing that any leader can do is to return their census figures, using brutally honest figures that have not been massaged to look better, in a very prompt manner. In theory the data has to be all collected by, respectively, 15 April, 15 July and 15 October. In practice what normally happens is that Groups tell white lies about their numbers and the ADCs and DC have to chase the Groups up for their figures, sometimes many weeks after the event. If that continues to happen collecting the data will be a complete waste of time and no one will know which Groups really need help and which don't. Why wait to be chased? Do you really need to be hounded? All it needs is 30 seconds of totting up your numbers and a quick text, phone call or email to your ADC. A couple of minutes of your time every year isn't too much to ask for up to date information that can help the District to target their resources most effectively.

If you are able to help complete any of the missing points of data, or can spot a mistake, please contact me and don't let it lie.

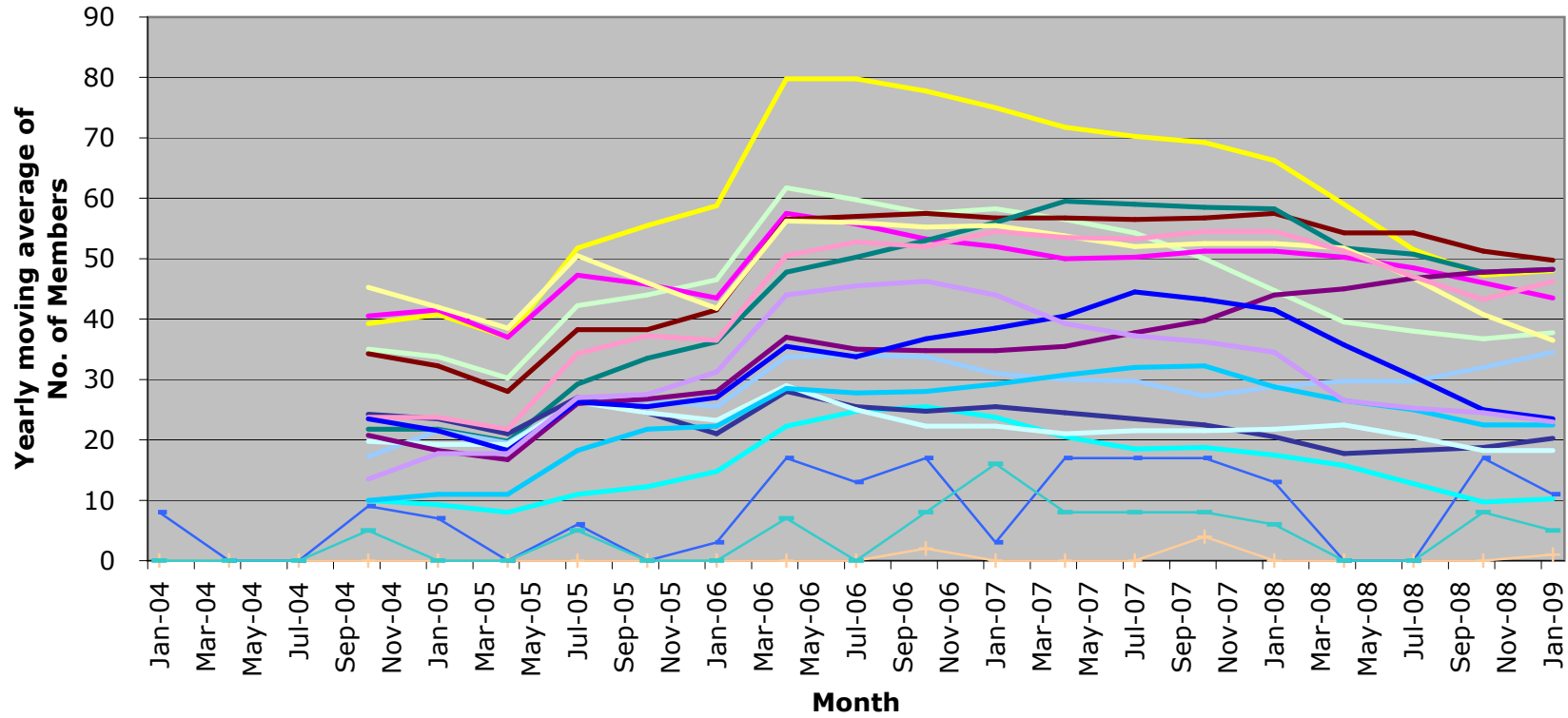
There is a very saying in statistics, that could apply equally well to training young people: **Rubbish in, Rubbish out**

But do you know how you can **really** help?

*Get out and keep doing what you all do best - delivering quality Scouting to the young people in and around Barking & Dagenham. Maintain those balanced and exciting programmes and attract more and more young people to our movement.*

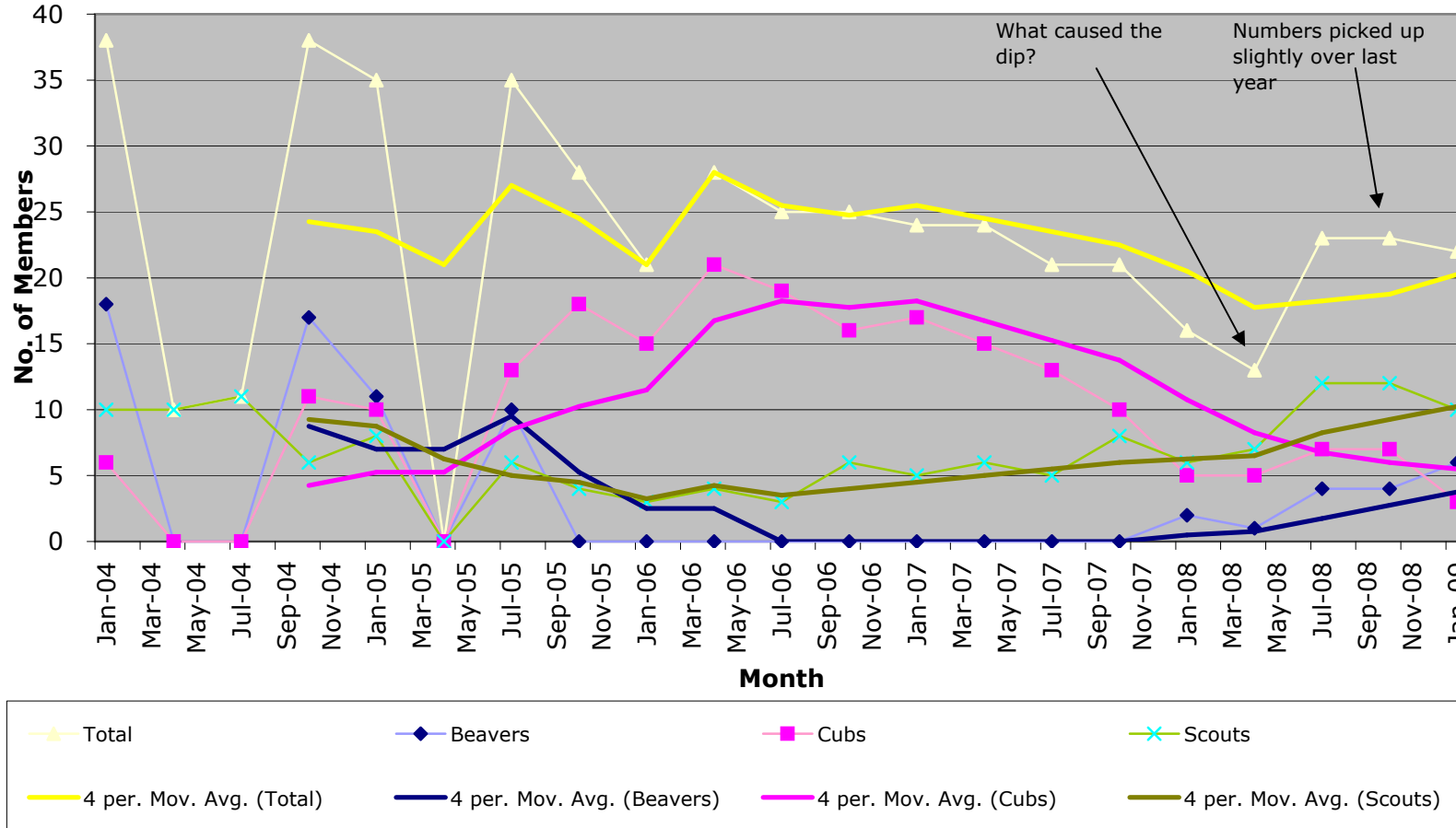
*And say Thank You to all those who help you achieve those aims. And give yourselves a big pat on the back for giving up your time and expertise to maintain the vision and values of Scouting. Continue to put the trust and faith in young people and continue to see all the good things that Baden-Powell saw in young people over a hundred years ago.*

### Groups Yearly Moving Average



1st B&D	4th B&D	6th B&D
7th B&D	8th B&D	9th B&D
10/18th B&D	11th B&D	12th B&D
15th B&D	16th B&D	17th B&D
19th B&D	21st B&D	Explorers
Network (Not Listed Elsewhere)	Scout Fellowship (Not Listed Elsewhere)	District Personnel (Commissioners etc.)
4 per. Mov. Avg. (6th B&D)	4 per. Mov. Avg. (16th B&D)	4 per. Mov. Avg. (4th B&D)
4 per. Mov. Avg. (9th B&D)	4 per. Mov. Avg. (10/18th B&D)	4 per. Mov. Avg. (17th B&D)
4 per. Mov. Avg. (7th B&D)	4 per. Mov. Avg. (19th B&D)	4 per. Mov. Avg. (1st B&D)
4 per. Mov. Avg. (15th B&D)	4 per. Mov. Avg. (8th B&D)	4 per. Mov. Avg. (21st B&D)
4 per. Mov. Avg. (11th B&D)	4 per. Mov. Avg. (12th B&D)	4 per. Mov. Avg. (Explorers)

### 1st B&D



**Beavers** - The Group was without a Colony for over a year. Numbers have not grown since the Colony reopened 2 years ago, with just a few Beavers.

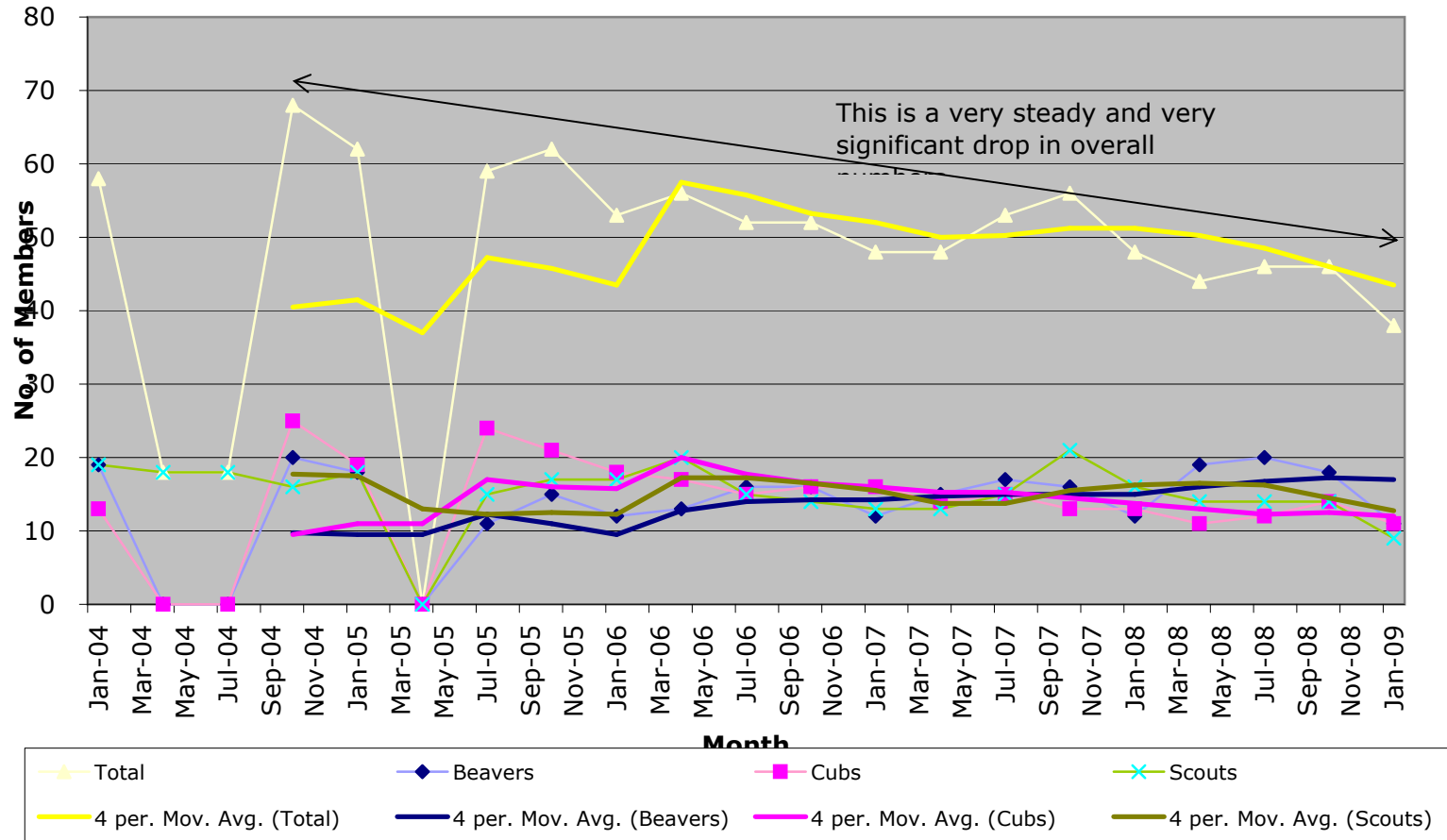
**Cubs** - The Cub Pack has seen a steady and prolonged decline, from the solid numbers in 2005/6 it has decreased to around just 5 members. This is a significant drop.

**Scouts** - The Scout Troop has seen a steady but very slow growth over the last 3 years. It now numbers around 10. However, this just returns it to pre 2004 levels.

**Group** - The Group may have begun to reverse the steady decline from 2005 - 2008, but the 'improvement' at the moment is doing little more than halting the dipping trend.

**Overall** - In the Danger Zone of less than 25 members total. 3rd smallest Group in District.

### 4th B&D



**Beavers** - The Colony has grown over the last 4 years steadily, from around 10 to around 18.

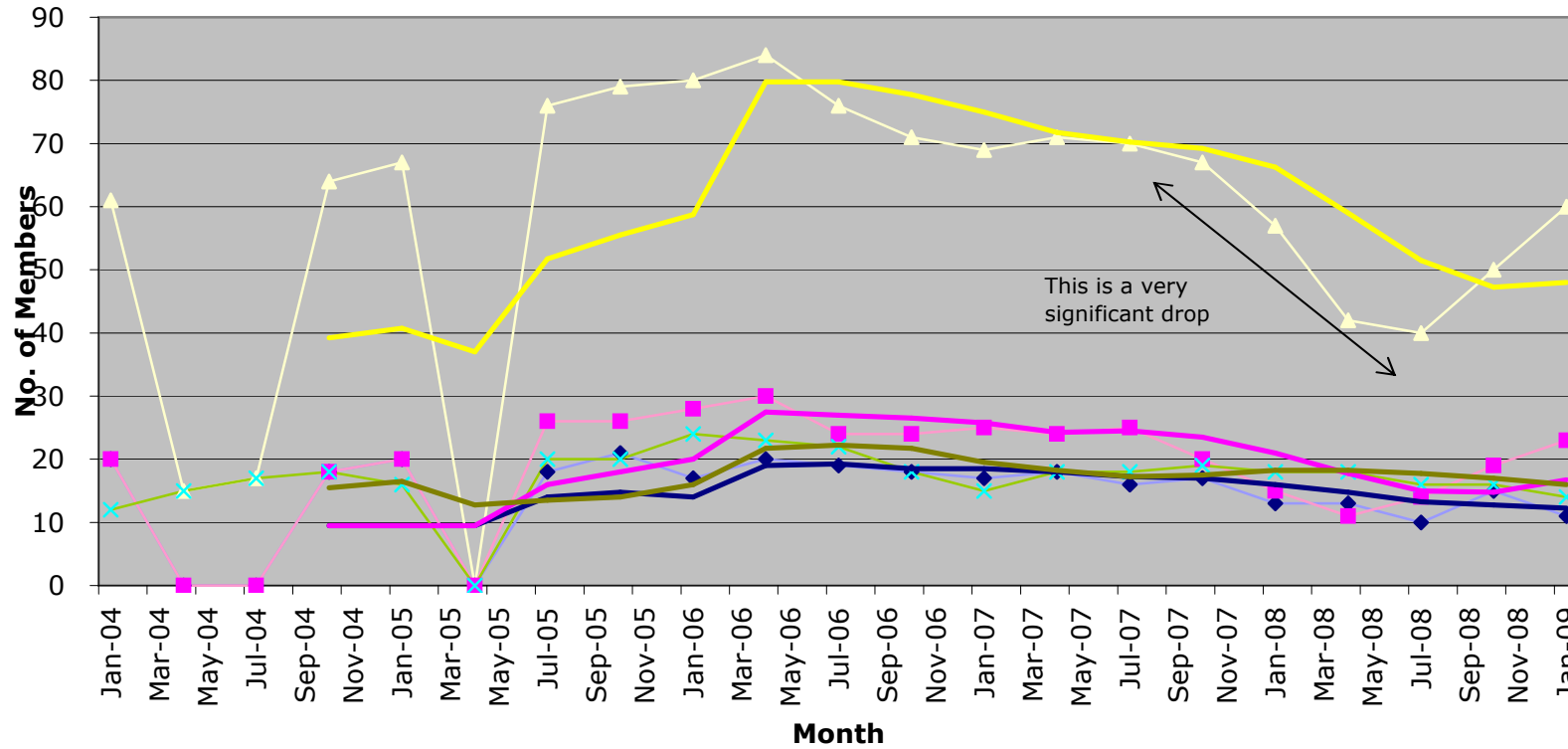
**Cubs** - The Cub Pack has seen a steady decline over the last 4 years, almost halving in number.

**Scouts** - The Scout Troop has fluctuated between 20 and 10 members for the last four years.

**Group** - The Group has shown a steady decline over many years, with only a modest "bump" around late 2007.

**Overall** - In the Normal Zone of around 45 members in total . Currently the 5th largest Group in District.

## 6th B&D

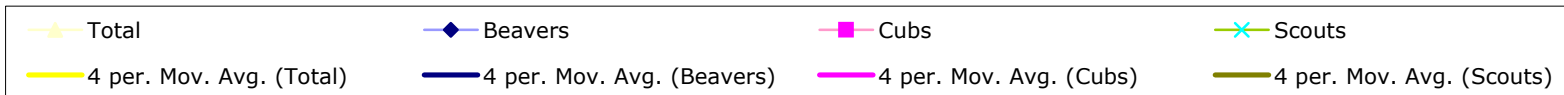


**Beavers** - The Colony has shown a slow but very steady decline over the last 3 years.

**Cubs** - The Cub Pack during mid 2007-mid 2008 the Pack showed a remarkable drop. This has been arrested over the last year and it has returned to 2006/2007 levels.

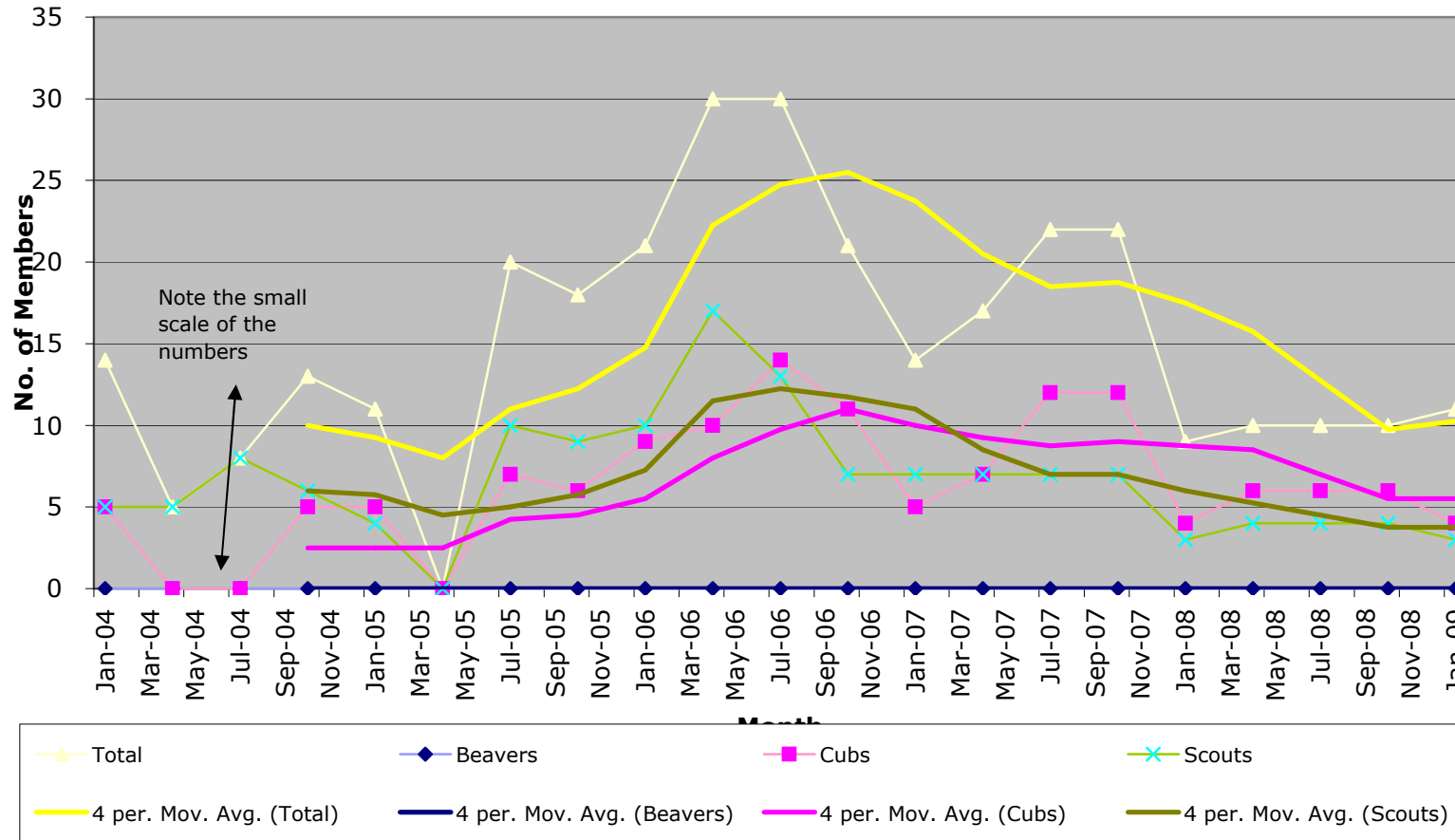
**Scouts** - The Scout Troop has been reasonably consistent, hovering either side of the 20 member mark for many years.

**Group** - The Group was by far the largest in the District for many years, but the last year and a half have seen it slip into fourth place.



**Overall** - In the Normal Zone of around 45 members in total (although recent Census figures put it back in the Healthy Zone of around 50 members) . Currently the 4th largest Group in District.

## 7th B&D



**Beavers** - The Group has not had a Beaver Colony for over 5 years and is the only Group not to have one.

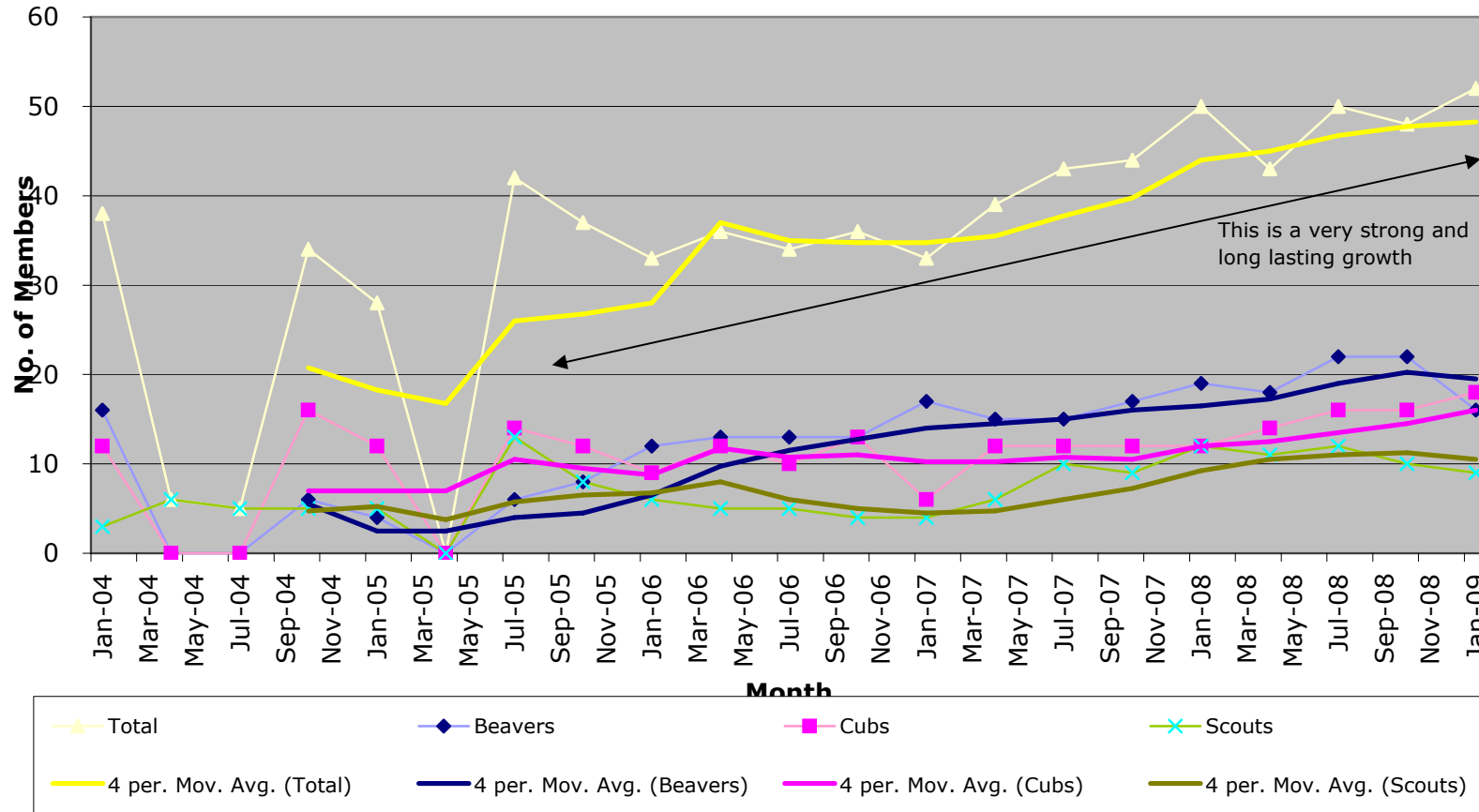
**Cubs** - The Cub Pack has never risen above 15 and in fact, apart from a just 4 census points, has been consistently below 10. The Cub Pack has spent most of its time with an unusually small size of just 5 members.

**Scouts** - The Scout Troop has shown a marked decline over the last 3 years going from just over 10 to less than 5 members.

**Group** - The Group has been in a very steep decline over the last 3 years, returning to the very low figures that were apparent pre-2005, with no change at all over the last year.

**Overall** - In the Non Viable Zone of around 10 members in total. Currently the smallest Group in District by far, it has half the numbers of the next two smallest Groups.

## 8th B&D



**Beavers** - The Colony has shown a strong and sustained growth over the last 4 years and is now at a healthy 20.

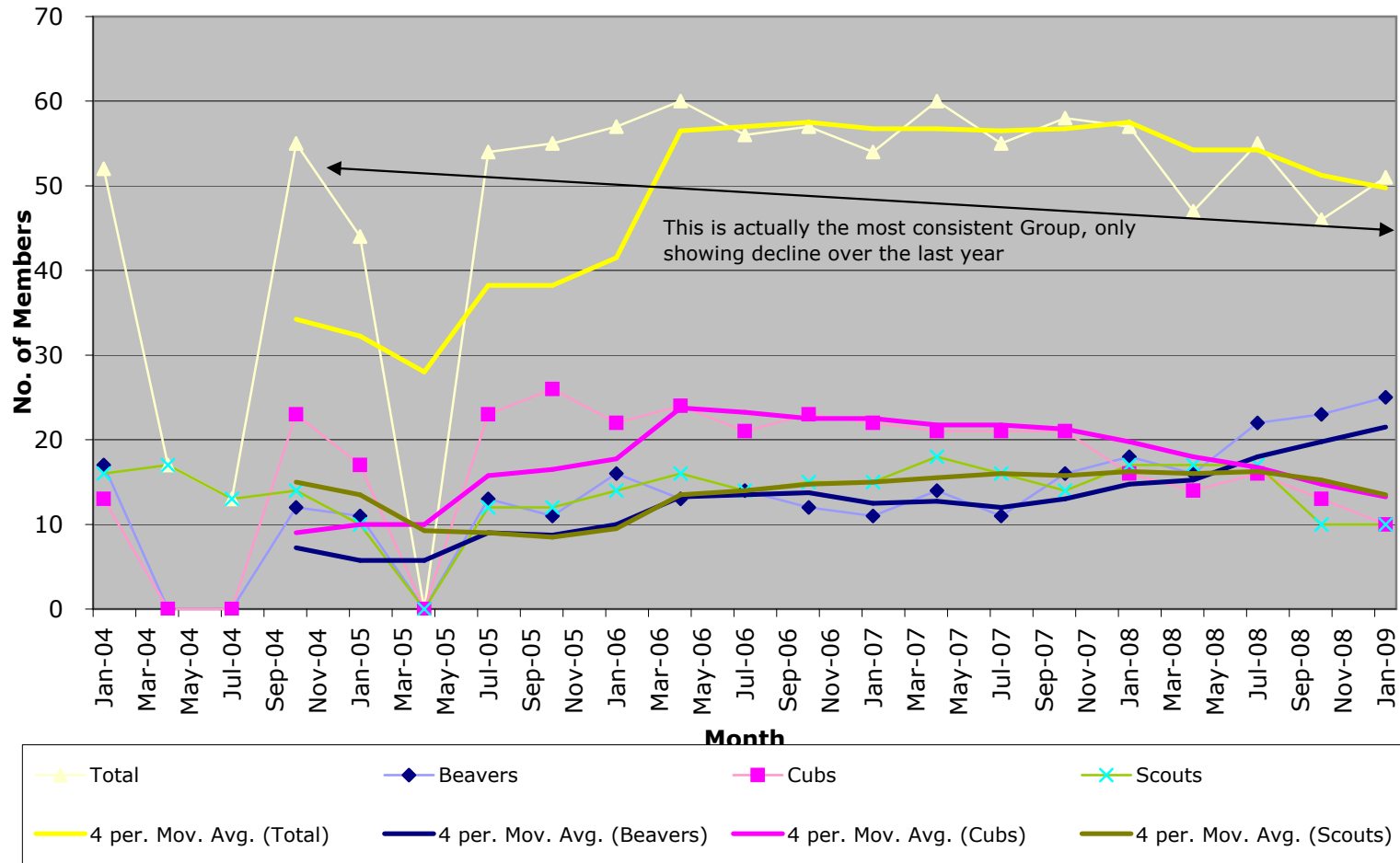
**Cubs** - The Cub Pack has grown steadily (though not as rapidly as the Colony) over a number of years.

**Scouts** - The Scout Troop has also clearly benefited from the same efforts put into the rest of the Group with a marked positive difference in numbers over the last 2 years compared to the long average.

**Group** - The Group has shown a very steady increase over a long time period, bucking the trend of many other Groups.

**Overall** - Nearly in the Healthy Zone of around 50 members. Currently the 2nd largest Group in the District.

## 9th B&D



**Beavers** - The Colony has **grown over the last 4 years** from around 7 to over 20.

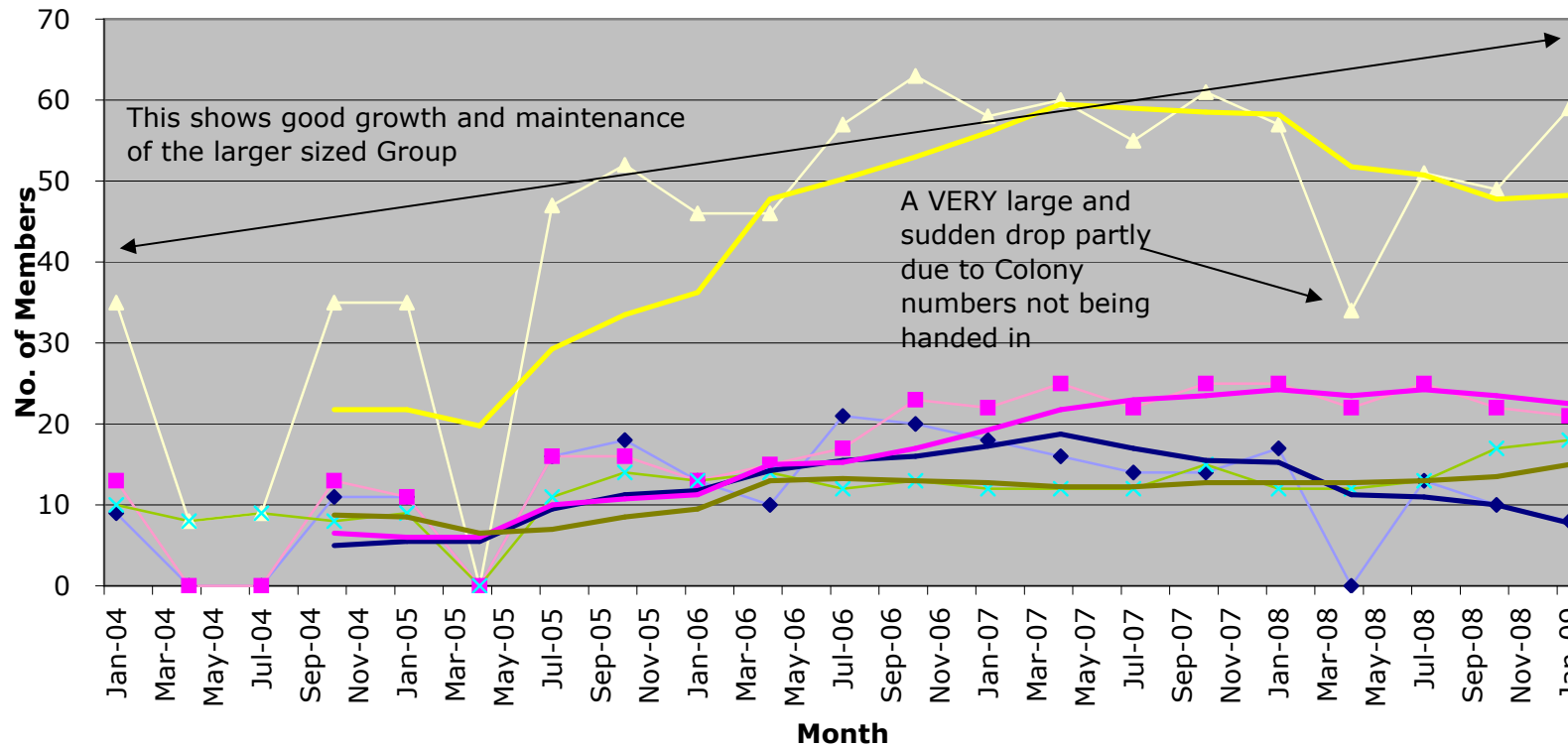
**Cubs** - The Cub Pack was stable for several years but has seen a **comparatively sharp decline over the last 2 years, almost halving in number.**

**Scouts** - The Scout Troop has **remained very stable** over the last 3 years (the drop during 2005 was reversed quickly)

**Group** - The Group has been **very consistent for a number of years** with a **noticeable decline of around 10% over the last year.**

**Overall** - In the **Healthy Zone** of over 50 members in total . Currently the **largest Group** in District.

## 10th & 18th B&D

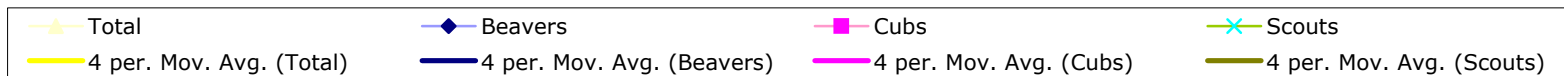


**Beavers** - The Colony has **decreased in numbers over the last 3 years** and has nearly returned to levels last seen in 2004.

**Cubs** - The Cub Pack has seen a marked improvement during 2005/2006 and has been **very consistent and maintained their numbers at over 20** for nearly 3 years.

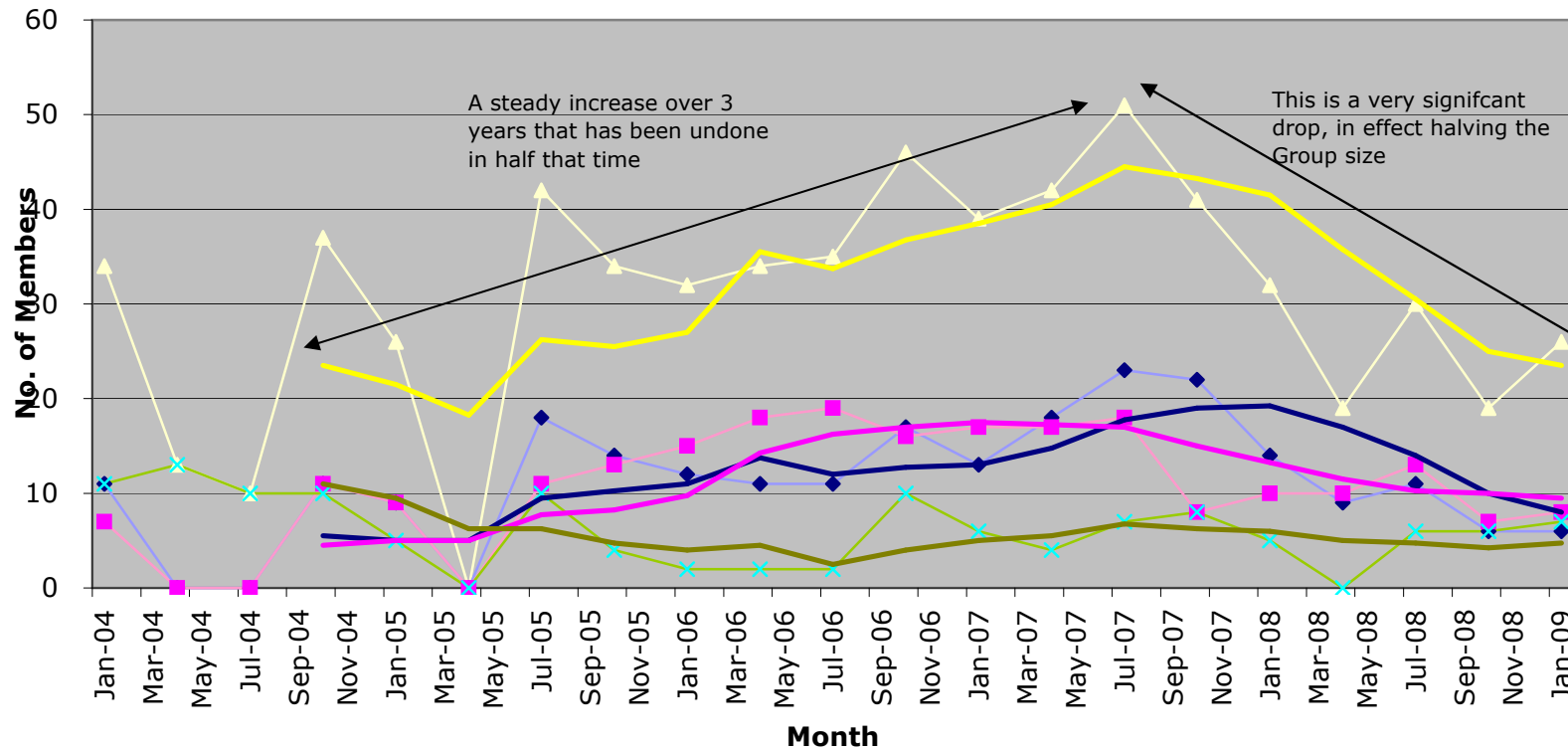
**Scouts** - The Scout Troop numbers have been **very consistent for the last 4 years** and in fact show early signs of growth over the last 6 months.

**Group** - The Group grew rapidly over 2004/2005 and has sustained their high numbers (with just a sharp drop in the first quarter of 2008).



**Overall** - In the **Healthy Zone** of over 50 members in total In fact they may even be returning to recent form whereby they have an average just below 60. Currently the **3rd largest Group** in District.

## 11th B&D



**Beavers** - The Colony has shown a dramatic decline over the last year and a half, losing almost 2/3 of the Colony.

**Cubs** - The Cub Pack saw a sudden drop in late 2007 and they have been unable to rectify that change, having a consistently lower average since then.

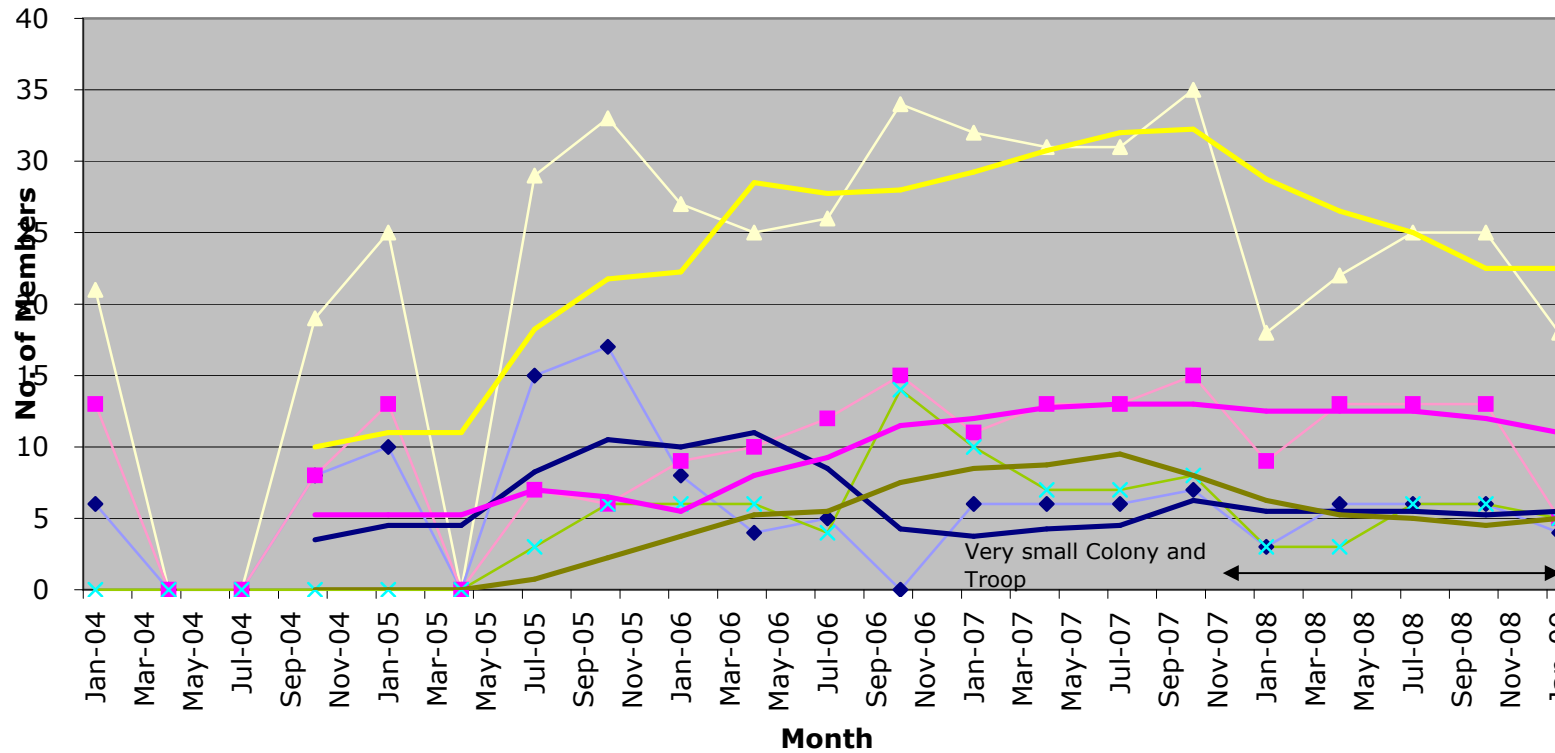
**Scouts** - The Scout Troop has been very small in numbers (around 5) for nearly 5 years.

**Group** - The Group saw a steady increase in numbers from 2004 to 2007 but their fortunes have dramatically changed since mid 2007 with numbers now half those of their high point in 2006/2007.

Note the similarity in overall numbers with the 12th B&D.

**Overall** - In the Danger Zone of less than 25 members in total. Currently the 5th smallest Group in District.

## 12th B&D



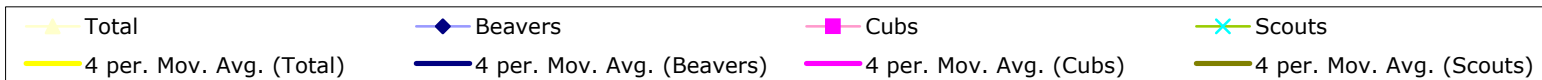
**Beavers** - The Colony has hovered around the extremely small size of 5 for nearly 3 years.

**Cubs** - The Cub Pack has remained, on average, around the 12 mark for 3 years.

**Scouts** - The Scout Troop has only broken the 10 member mark once over the last 5 years and has declined over the last 2 years to the very low size of 5.

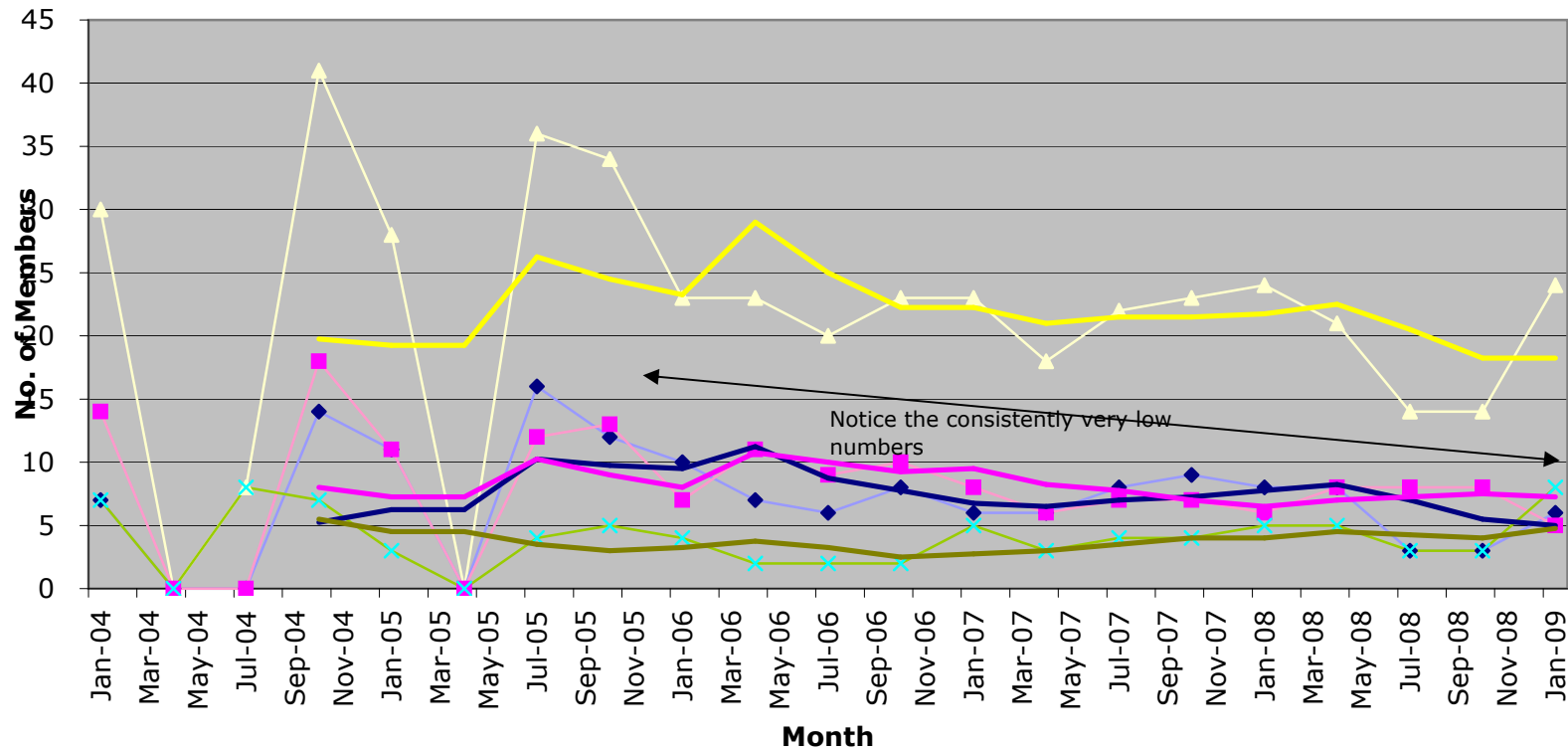
**Group** - The Group saw an increase in numbers from 2004 to 2007 but their fortunes have dramatically changed since mid 2007 with numbers now half those of their high point in 2006/2007.

Note the similarity in overall numbers with the 11th B&D.



**Overall** - In the Danger Zone of less than 25 members in total. Currently the 4th smallest Group in District.

## 15th B&D

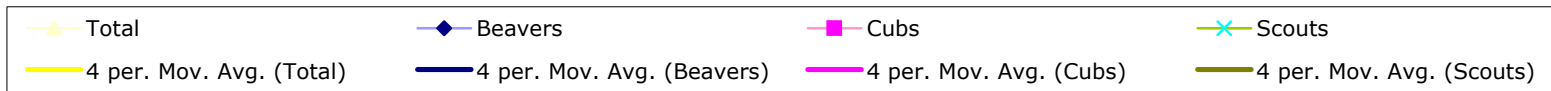


**Beavers** - The Colony has **not moved above 10 members** for nearly 4 years and the long term average has stayed reasonably steady at around 7.

**Cubs** - The Cub Pack has behaved in a very similar way to the Colony.

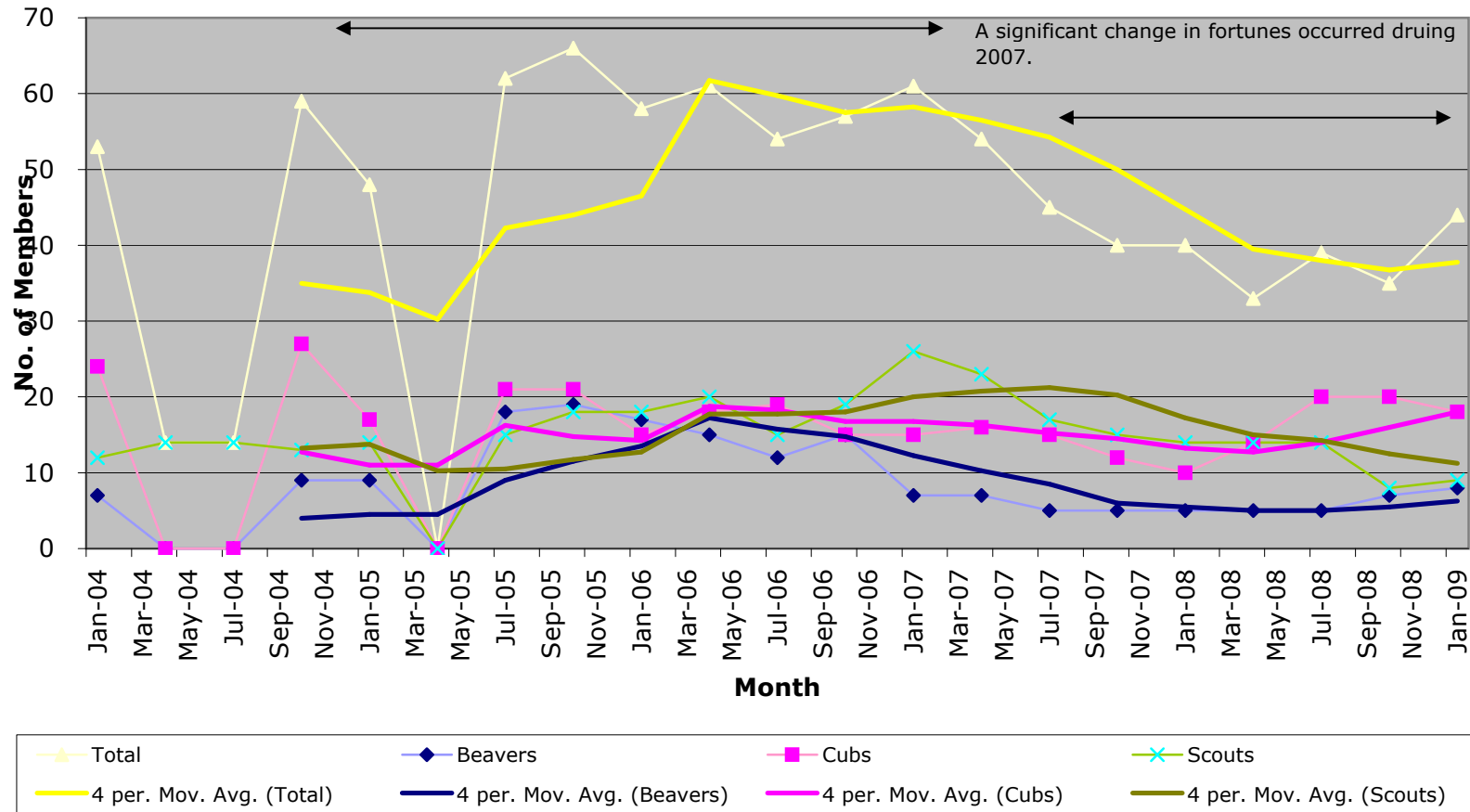
**Scouts** - The Scout Troop has **only broken the 5 member mark** once over the last 5 years and has a consistently very low average of around 2 to 4 members.

**Group** - The Group has **not managed to break above the 25 member mark** for 4 years and has shown little improvement in that time.



**Overall** - In the **Danger Zone of less than 25 members** in total Currently the **2nd smallest Group** in District.

## 16th B&D



**Beavers** - The Colony has declined from the numbers in mid 2005 to mid 2006 and dropped and held to half that value (around 5 members) for the last 2 years.

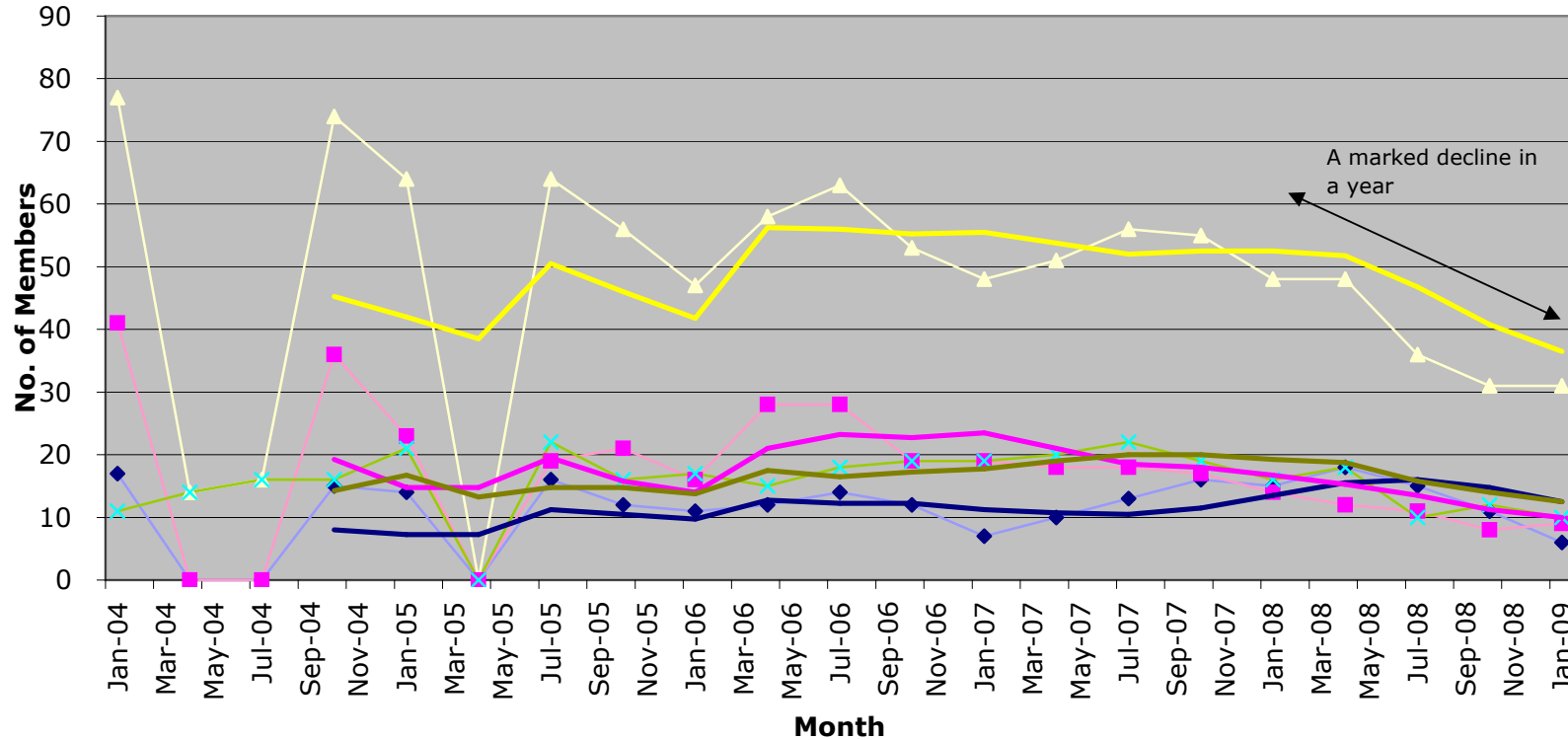
**Cubs** - The Cub Pack has remained very consistent over the last 5 years with numbers that have bounced between 10 and 20 members.

**Scouts** - The Scout Troop has seen a marked decline over the 2 years to their lowest levels in recent history, with now under 10 members.

**Group** - The Group was among the largest in the District during 2004 to 2007 but saw a marked decline over 2007 that they have failed to recover from.

**Overall** - In the Normal Zone of just under 40 members in total. Currently the 7th largest Group in District.

## 17th B&D

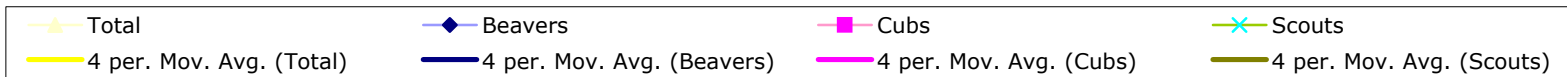


**Beavers** - The Colony has showed sustained growth over the 2007/2008 but have lost a large percentage of their numbers in the last year alone.

**Cubs** - The Cub Pack has been on the decline in a very measured way over the last 3 years, halving in numbers during that time.

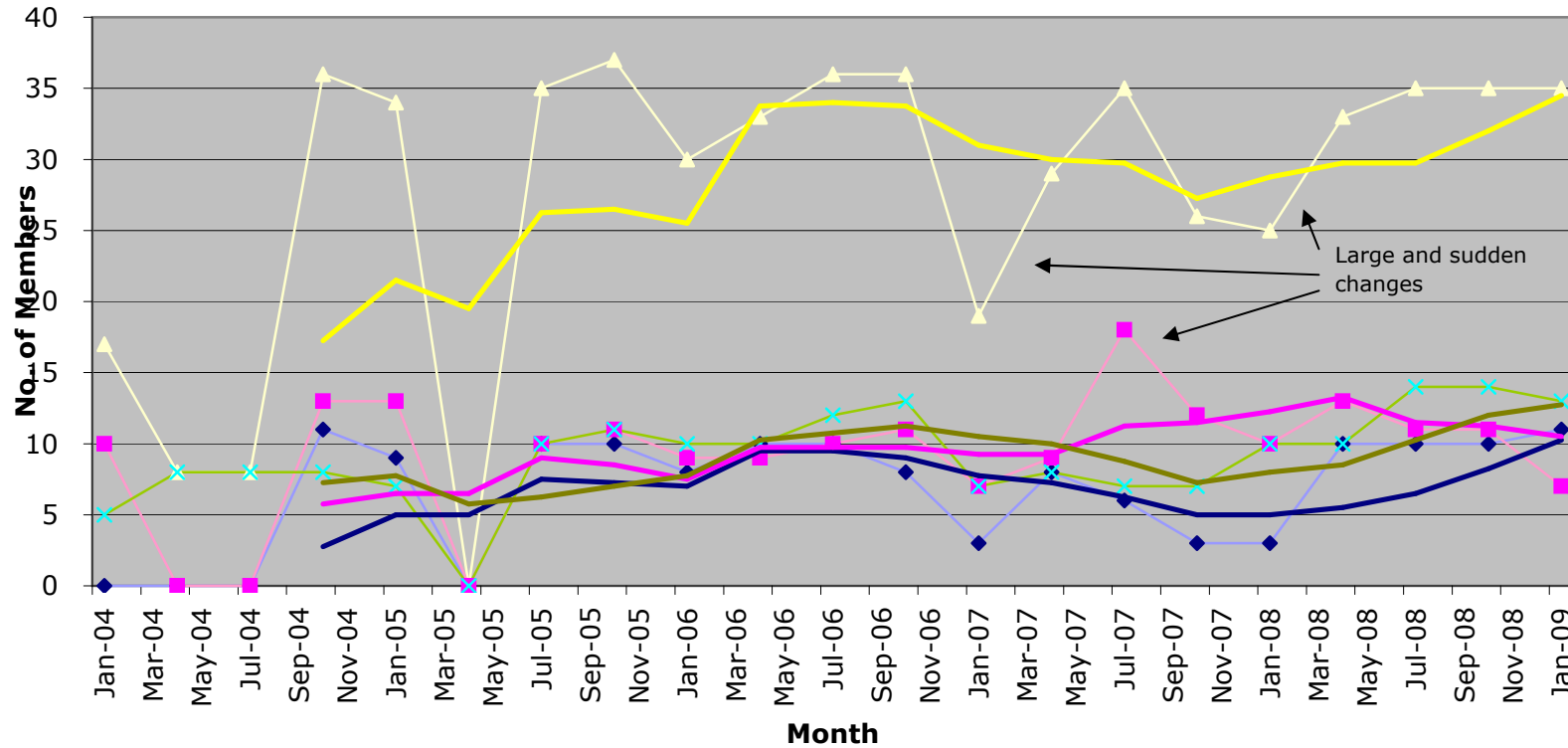
**Scouts** - The Scout Troop has shown a very similar pattern to their Colony.

**Group** - The Group was remained reasonably consistent during 2005 - 2008 but have seen a large drop in numbers over the last year.



**Overall** - In the Normal Zone of just under 40 members in total. Recently dropped to the 8th largest Group in District.

## 19th B&D



**Beavers** - The Colony has recovered from a steady decline over 2006-2008 to show consistent numbers of 10 over the last year and a half.

**Cubs** - The Cub Pack has managed to show a consistent value of just over 10 for the last few years.

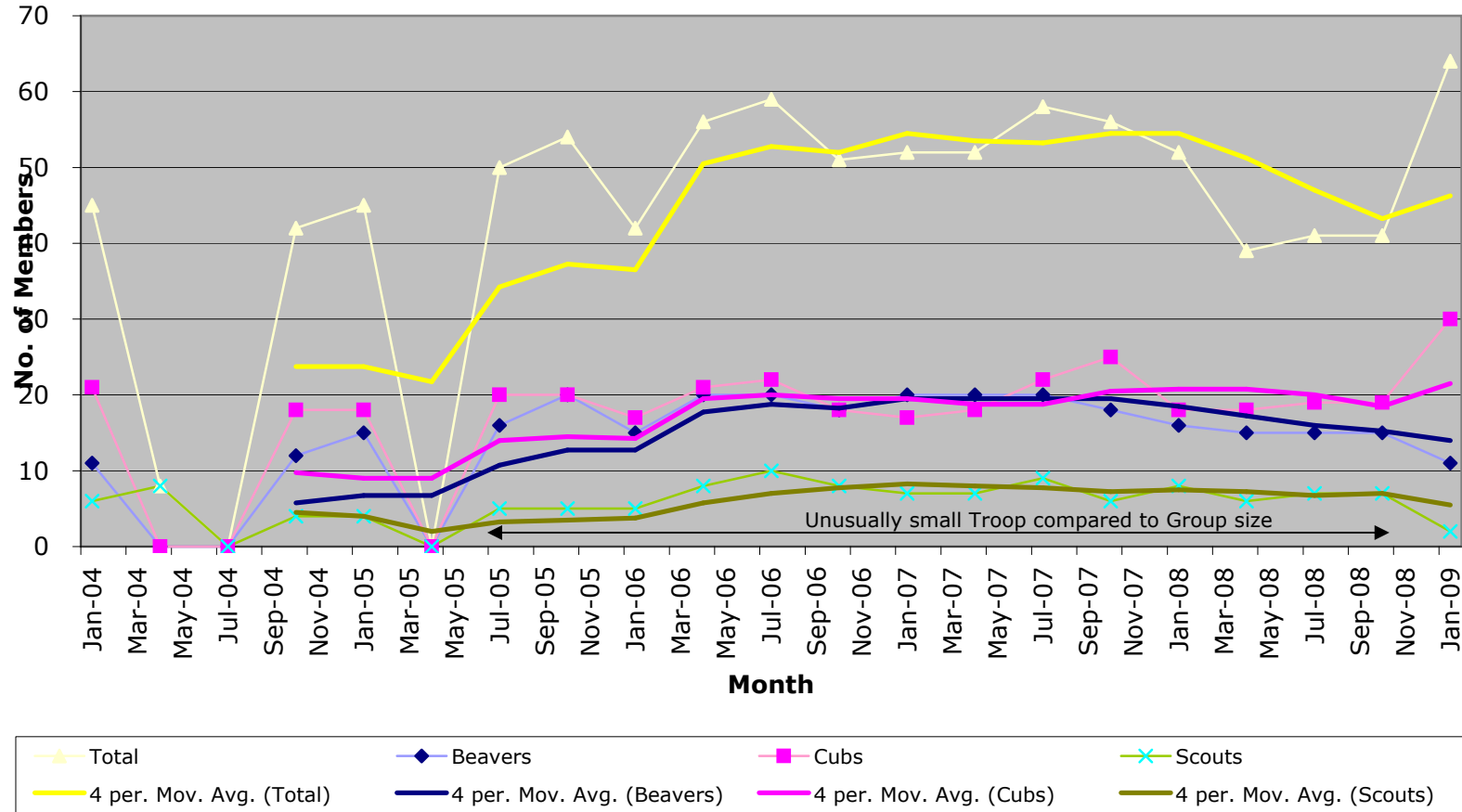
**Scouts** - The Scout Troop has behaved in a very similar fashion to the Colony.

**Group** - The Group has shown mixed fortunes over the last 5 years, with very sudden drops in early 2007 and early 2008. The long term average has remained reasonably consistent during 2005 - 2009 and the Group has recovered their numbers over the last year.



**Overall** - Have recovered recently to the Normal Zone of just under 40 members in total. Recently recovered to the 6th smallest Group in District.

## 21st B&D



**Beavers** - The Colony has seen a steady decline over the last 2 years from 20 to around 15.

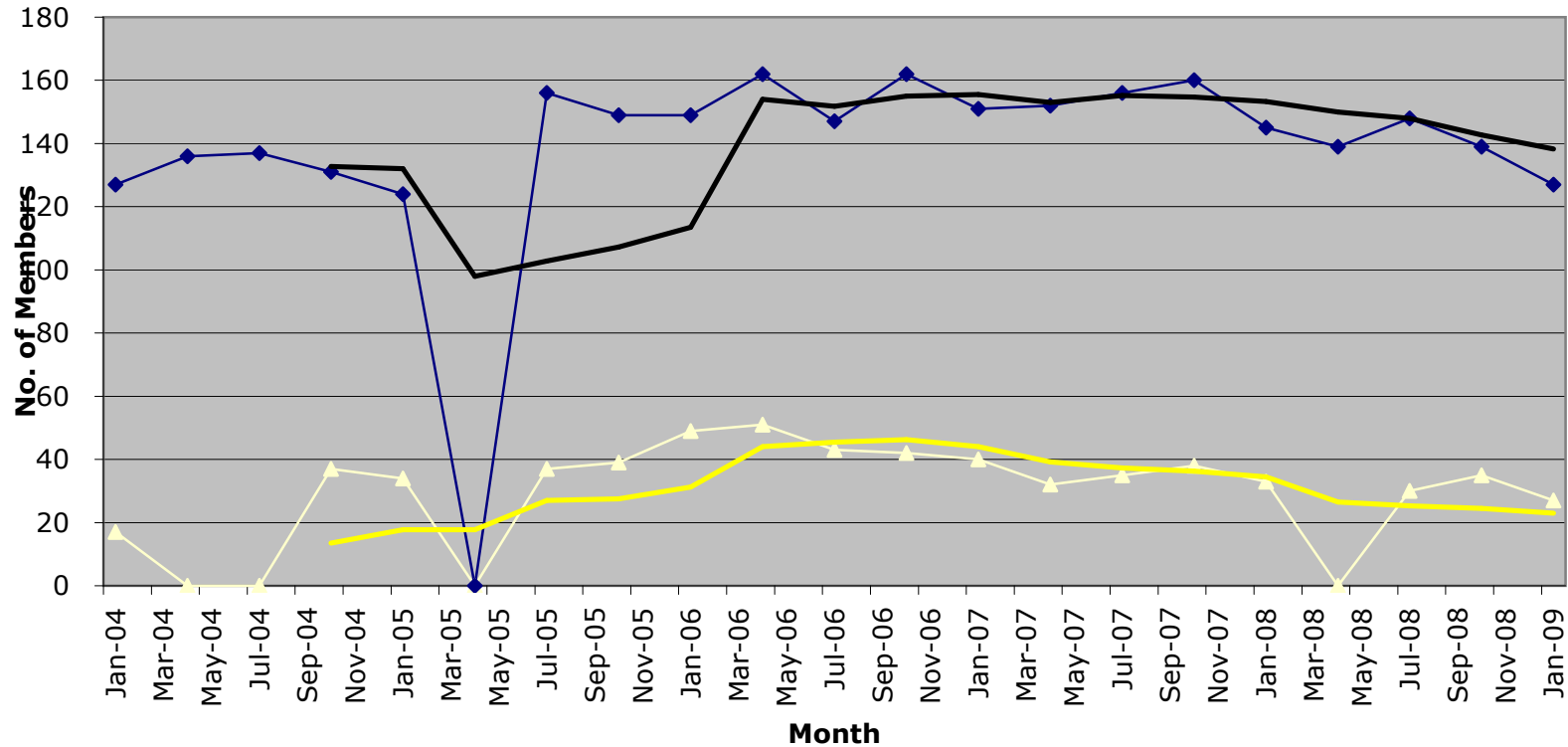
**Cubs** - The Cub Pack has managed to show a consistent value of 20 for the last 4 years, the very latest figure shows a marked jump of 50%.

**Scouts** - The Scout Troop has remained extremely consistently low at around 7 for a period of nearly 5 years. This is quite unusual for such a large Group.

**Group** - The Group has had shown consistently high membership over the 2005-2008 period but saw a sudden and sharp decline across 2008. Latest figures indicate the Group may have recovered to its long term high membership.

**Overall** - Have recovered recently to the Healthy Zone of over 60 members in total. Recently recovered to the 5th largest Group in District.

## Explorers



**Unit** - The Unit hit a high point around early 2006 of 50 members but since then they have seen a sustained decline to about half that value in the last 3 years.

It is interesting to note that while the total Scout figures remained between 160 and 140 for nearly all of 2005-2009 the number of Explorers during that time fell from a high of 45 to a low of around 25.

So while the numbers of Scouts have varied by about 19% over the last 4 years the number of Explorers has dropped by almost 50% during that time.

However, we need to be careful comparing these figures as Scout figures include 10.5 to 14 year olds but there may well be a 4 year time lag before we see any correlation in overall patterns. Without collecting more precise data on the ages of Scouts and Explorers it is very difficult to ascertain any relationship between growth and decline patterns across these sections. However, the percentage changes in the Unit cannot be accounted for by the variation in Scout figures (see the percentage variability remarks opposite).