



The contents of this Newsletter were produced before the news from the Government last weekend. Thankfully we have been back enjoying face to face Scouting for a while, but, for the well-being of the nation, we will have another pause.

Keep motivated and safe, and please support activities on-line that keep the 7th Epsom 'family' going through these testing times.

After an abrupt end to the Spring Term and a Summer Term of trying to get Scouting working online where possible, it has been great to get the Sections back to real face to face Scouting this Autumn, notwithstanding some obvious restrictions.

With the exception of Windfall Beavers, all Sections are now meeting regularly, and given the initial constraint to only meet outside, it has been a real test for the Scouting Leaders to design and deliver a programme outdoors. They rose to the challenge and thankfully the weather mostly played ball!

As we move into the next half term, we are cautiously moving back to Epsom Methodist Church and other indoor venues as appropriate, and hope that Government restrictions will allow us to continue to deliver our planned programmes through the late Autumn and Winter.

I would like to thank those who stepped up to allow Cherokee Cubs to get going again, given we didn't initially have enough leaders for the section to continue. If there are any volunteers willing to become leaders and allow us to restart Windfall Beavers, please do get in touch.

We live in challenging times and I hope all of you have and will continue to stay safe. I hope that all of the Young People are enjoying the opportunity to participate as Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers and make the most of the opportunities that the Group is able to offer.

Yours in Scouting

David Shickle - GSL 7th Epsom Scout Group

Few Words From The Chairman

Thanks to those who attended the AGM on October 7th, as this is an important part of the governance of the Group. One advantage of doing it on Zoom was that it was the shortest one we have had for several years!

One of the consequences of the pandemic is that it has seriously impacted charity fundraising. We have sadly taken the decision that we cannot safely operate the Community Christmas Post activity this year and have pressed the pause button, hopefully we can operate it again next year. Jumble Sales are also off the agenda for the foreseeable future, as is the Epsom Methodist Church Charity Book Fair, our single biggest contributor last year. If anyone has any ideas for fundraising activities that could take place at present, please get in touch.

Kevin Mead—Chairman

BEAVERS

Since we have returned to face to face meetings, the Monday and Tuesday Beavers have been meeting outside, in Rosebery Park. Where the weather has been bad we have also successfully met by Zoom.

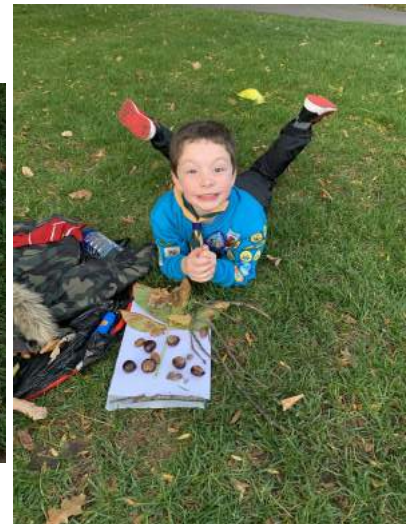
Unfortunately, due to a lack of leaders, Thursday Beavers has not been able to meet yet this term.

Although very different from our usual meetings, we have had lots of “socially distanced” fun and it has been great to be able to meet together again. We have done relay races, learnt some new games and enjoyed some old favourites, made leaf pictures and practised our communication skills.

The Beavers also made some fabulous catapults from rubber bands and lolly sticks with the ammunition being mini marshmallows. Great fun was had firing them at the leaders!

A big thank you to the Young Leaders and parent helpers and also to the Beavers for being so enthusiastic and adapting so well to the different style of meeting.

Kathy Castledine - Clearwater Beaver leader





Report for Apache, Sioux and Cherokee Cub Packs

Monday 14th September was upon us. The first face to face Cub pack meeting since lockdown in March. I don't know who was happier to return- the Cubs or the leaders!

We have been providing a blended programme of activities in Rosebery Park and using Zoom.

There's been races, kite making for some, learning about communication by using morse code and the phonetic alphabet, as well as being an air traffic controller and directing planes. More work is needed for the latter as many planes did steer off course and were not safely landed. However I blame the dark. Where's the sat nav when you need one!

Zoom meetings meant learning about healthy eating whilst for others the tone was lowered and Cubs learnt about which animals created which poo.

Ethan Miles from Apache was finally awarded his **Silver Chief Scout award**.

Despite being at home or outside, everyone has had fun. We thank the parents for supporting us and sticking to our COVID risk assessment protocol to ensure that everyone remains as free from COVID infection as possible.

Clare DiPlacito - Cub leader



SCOUTS

After such a long break it was fantastic to see the Scouts back in September. They were wildly excited to be back as well, almost as much as we were.

Under the new rules we reorganised the Scouts into 9 patrols of 5 so we could deliver the programme in 3 bubbles of 15 as 15 is the maximum group size currently allowed under The Scout Association rules.

We have spent the half-term on activities outside. They have enjoyed backwoods cooking, a hike and a games evening in Horton Park. For some reason cooking and eating sausages was more popular than the hike!

During the last few weeks they have been using the climbing wall at Epsom Methodist Church, building a pioneering project (a rope crawl), a wide game in Horton Country Park and an incident evening in Court Rec (during which they had to follow navigation instructions to peg out a shape – Can you guess what it is?)



The Scouts had great fun with the activities and really enjoyed being back with their friends.

Paul Carpenter – Scout Leader



EXPLORERS

As with all other sections, Explorer Scouting during COVID is providing its own unique set of challenges. However, never to shy away, the 7th Epsom Explorer leadership team together with the explorers themselves have metaphorically rolled up their sleeves and cracked on.... Outdoors... mainly in the rain.. but with smiles on our faces and coats on. What better way to explain what we have been up to than from the explorers themselves.

Phili Coley - Explorer Leader

The Joys of Mini Golf By Charlotte Roberts

During this half term the explorers had a fun packed evening making and playing mini golf courses.



The teams split into groups and made some fantastic golf courses out of recyclable and waste materials. From kebab sticks to crates, we really gave this team building activity our all. The leaders even gave us a run for our money by attempting to make one themselves. As darkness closed in the teams rated each other's courses for the chance to win the grand prize! All in all everyone came back from it with a smile on their face!! These past few months has been hard

for everybody, teenagers cooped up in their room for a long period of time is not a very good idea. The leaders were there for each one of us to give lots of morale support when needed.

3 Word Hike By Rowan Halls

This week was the 3 words hike. We used the 'What 3 words' app to locate different areas in Epsom. This app separates the world into areas of 3m by 3m and gives each area a unique combination of 3 words. So as a group we walked to each location in Epsom and took a socially distanced photo at each place. Scouting with COVID is quite different as we have to ensure we are socially distanced at all times, and are in smaller groups. But the leaders are doing really well to make sure the activities aren't much different to what they would be normally.



Chip Survey By Nathan Baptiste

Scouts has been very different this term but no less fun. One particular evening we spent going around the various fish and chip shops in Epsom and using masks and hand sanitiser to ensure safe acquisition of the chips. This was good fun and although it was raining on our week we had a good time having a second dinner of lots of chips! We rated them out of various tests, from quality to best value and 'Mannings' near Pound Lane came out on top, with 'A Plaice to Eat' as a close second. It was a good evening and although we had to keep to some of these safety restrictions everyone had a good time and a full belly by the end of it.

Fire Lighting By Jake Seward

As with all the weeks before it, fire lighting started with us splitting into smaller groups in our already smaller subgroup of explorers. This kept us within COVID guidelines as well as making sure we got the best experience out of all the activities.



Naturally for fire lighting, first you have to build the fire so we collected a couple of bunches of wood in our subgroups. As it was Epsom common this didn't prove to be particularly difficult and we finished collecting with plenty of time to spare. This ended up being much needed time and even with it we still had limited success with the fires themselves. This was mostly due to the dampness of the wood we had collected as it had unfortunately been raining before we got there. Our initial plan was to build two fires of different shapes although we eventually turned to just trying to make a fire in any way we could, going through all the matches in the progress. As much as it may sound like we were unsuccessful, and that may be true as far as the getting fire part is concerned, we did still all have a great evening which was well run by our rotating set of leaders.



Congratulations

Alex Connor received a **Commissioners Commendation Award** from the District commissioner, Karl Nicholas for demonstrating inspirational leadership and initiative through the delivery of online Scouting provision to younger sections.

We would all like to say a big thank you to Alex for all his online games and activities for the Scouts to be able to virtual meet and interact.



If you would like to add anything to the next newsletter or have any feedback then please to get in touch by email mjonesepsomscouts@gmail.com

Marion Jones - 7th Epsom Newsletter Editor