

Hi Everyone,

I hope that is all is well with you and your families. The start of the year already seems like a long time ago! Covid restrictions seem to be getting easier and we're looking forward to a full year of Scouting activities in 2022. Lets hope for all sorts of reasons we have no further changes backwards!

As you will see further in the newsletter we have a couple of roles to fill to support the admin of 7th Epsom Scouts. We are also in need of a few additional leaders, especially for our Thursday sections. I'll be sending a specific email in the coming days with some details about our needs for Thursday Beavers.

Please enjoy reading the newsletter.

**David Shickle - GSL 7th Epsom Scout Group**

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## 2022 KEY DATES

- April 14 - 18 Easter Ex
- May 21 May Bazzaz
- May 27-30 Spring Bank Camp
- May 27-28 Beaver sleepover with the whole group
- May 28-30 Cubs- spring camp with whole group
- June 11 District in challenge
- Jul 1-3 Scoutabout
- Jul 23-30 Summer Camp
- July 25-29 Pack holiday
- Sept 16-18 Water Weekend

If you require more information on the activities for the dates above please ask your relevant Section Leader.

## THANK YOU

### Community Christmas Post

Thank you to the many of you who got involved in the scheme this year. We **delivered nearly 4000 cards** and **made over £1650 for 7th Epsom funds**. The numbers are down a bit on 2019 when we were last able to run the scheme, largely due to fewer cards being sent by Commercial organisations who have historically used it, but it was very much worth the effort.

# NOTICES

## New Equipment

This month the Group bought 9 new Avon backpacking tents, to replace the old damaged ones that have been very, very well used! The money was kindly raised by parents, **Nigel Halls** and **Kerry Seelhof**, whose employer ExxonMobil has a scheme that supports local charities like us.

## 7<sup>th</sup> Epsom Second-hand Uniform Exchange

A second-hand group uniform cupboard is available for all parents to acquire uniform for their child, which is based in the upstairs room of the church youth hall. We are looking to make it easier for leaders to access this by replacing the current key lock with a combination lock. Keys are currently held by Steve Barden, our Group Secretary and Gillian Mead, Scout section leader. It is recommended that all children who leave one section and join a new section try and use this exchange instead of buying new or throwing away uniform.

If parents would like to make a donation that would be appreciated, old uniforms can be left with any of the Section Leaders.

There are currently a good selection of all of the following:

- Beaver sweaters & beaver caps
- Cub sweaters
- Cub T-shirts
- 7<sup>th</sup> Epsom green t-shirts (useful for camp) – limited sizes
- Scout trousers (including adult sizes which can be used for Explorers)

If you are interested in any of the above mentioned uniform, then please contact your section Leader or Gillian Mead by email [meadfamily@btinternet.com](mailto:meadfamily@btinternet.com)

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## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED PLEASE

### Section Parent Representatives

We are seeking to get a Parent Representative in place for each of the sections in the 7th Epsom Group.

The role is not onerous but does require some commitment & allows the Representatives to engage with the leaders and have their say on how the Sections and Group should be run. We already have representatives in place for several Sections, but **have vacancies for Windfall Beavers, Apache and Cherokee Cubs, and Explorers**, so please get in touch with your Section Leader if you would like to learn more about the role and how to get involved.

### Transport Manager

The opportunities that we offer young people are only possible due to the effort, time and enthusiasm put in by a relatively small number of volunteers. This is an excellent opportunity for someone new to contribute and support the group who might feel that helping with the normal scouting activities isn't for them. Running our minibus is critical to the Scouting activities that the Group is able to provide. Due to relocation of the current role holder in 2020, we are now seeking a new role share for our Transport Manager, an activity which will take at most an hour or two each week. On behalf of the 7th Epsom (Methodist) Scout Exec, the Transport Manager manages and is responsible for the operation of the group's minibus and two trailers.

The role includes coordinating:

- Booking Management - all year, but minimal effort
- Licensing and insurance - a few interventions each year
- Managing Driver Assurance and Training - as needed, but very infrequent
- Maintenance - booking annual MoT and servicing together with any remedial maintenance required through the year

A full role specification is available on request, and if we get two volunteers, one can handle the first three items with all activities associated with maintenance handled by the other.

If you are able to help or would like to understand more detail please contact Kevin Mead, Group Chairman on 07768066830 or at [meadfamilykam@btinternet.com](mailto:meadfamilykam@btinternet.com)

# Service Awards

At the 7th Epsom Scout Group's AGM held in October 2021, Service Awards were presented to four of our Section Leaders by the Deputy District Commissioner Richard Denyer.

*Tony Marshall, Scout Leader, 25 years service  
and  
Zoe Dallen, Good Service Award*



*Dav Knight, Explorer Leader, 5 year service  
and  
Paul Carpenter, Scout Section Leader' 10 years service and Wood Badge*



# BEAVERS

Many of our meetings in the Autumn Term were outside and in addition to some firm favourites such as games in the park, a night hike on Ashted Common and a penny hike where the toss of a coin determined our route we tried some new outdoor activities. We went blackberry picking at Priest Hill and Epsom Downs and made pictures from natural materials.



We completed our Health and Fitness badge, Camp Craft badge and Faith badge. We met with some members of Epsom Methodist Church who showed us around the Church and shared with us their Eco Church activities. For Remembrance Day we learn about all about it and created our own wreath.



One big highlight of the term was being able to use the new climbing wall for the first time which the Beavers thoroughly enjoyed.

Another great highlight was to have a sleepover at Boidier Hurst campsite in October with lots of space themed activities. Our Young Leaders ran a fantastic camp fire and everyone had a great time.



To end the Autumn term we had much fun at our individual colony Christmas parties where we made melted snowmen and the beavers wrapped up others with toilet paper to make them into a snowman.



We are looking forward to Spring Term 2022 where in addition to our usual meetings we are planning an outing to Sandown Ski Slope to take the Beavers sledging and donutting.

**Kathy Castedine, Clearwater Beaver leader and Clare DiPlacito, Willowlake Beaver Leader**



# cubs

With Cubs able to continue meeting face-to-face we took advantage of some fine Autumn weather to meet outdoors as much as possible. In September, Cubs prepared for camp by learning tent building and pioneering skills.

30 Cubs then attended Boidier Hurst for a fantastic 'Alien' themed camp on a weekend blessed with wonderful weather. Thanks goes to Chris Cox for brilliant teaching skills to help the Cubs turn paper into rope. Cubs were amazed that they could lift each other up with just toilet paper! Cubs made flying saucers, hunted meteorites using a metal detector and cooked 'alien fingers' on a fire. They also excelled themselves by learning hilarious camp fire sketches and performed them superbly during the joint camp fire. Our young leaders also had great fun with inflatable aliens and leading the game 'Capture the Alien'. With a fun-packed day, the Cubs actually slept well which the leaders were astounded about but secretly extremely relieved.



Sunday brought a Scouts' Own and then a hike to Box Hill for a delicious ice cream before returning to camp and leaving for home shattered, but full of fun memories.



Thanks go to all leaders who helped to make the camp successful and who put a tremendous amount of work into it behind the scenes. We are also so privileged to have fantastic enthusiastic young leaders so thank you to Alex and Zak for giving up their weekend. Lastly, a massive thank you to Chris and Tim who were brilliant parent helpers. We wouldn't have been able to run the camp safely without you.

In October the District team arranged a night hike for numerous Surrey Cubs to Boidier Hurst for an evening of hot soup, and loud singing around a blazing camp fire. Despite the cloud cover obscuring the moon, our Cubs walked for most of the way in the darkness only using ambient light, which was quite daunting for some and a surprise for others once they realised how well their eyes could adjust to night lighting given enough time. After a long hike, arrival at the fireside came just in time for some very weary legs and all Cubs enjoyed the laid on entertainment.



Backwoods cooking was another highlight for all kids (and big kids!), with Cubs enjoying learning fire lighting skills before cooking garlic bread on the open fire and toasting marshmallows.

# cubs



In the lead up to Remembrance Day we hiked around the Langley Vale Centenary Woods, spotting deer by torchlight, and visiting the new sculpture installed at the site.

The new climbing wall was used for the first time by Cubs in November who had a great time scaling new heights and testing their traversal skills on the lower sections.



Towards the end of the term we were very pleased to welcome a new Cub Leader, Howard, to the team. Howard has joined to help lead Cherokee Pack.

With other activities include cooking flatbreads, helping fundraise for Scouts, and learning new skills, Cubs had a jam-packed term with a fun Christmas party to finish off the year.

Thank you to parents for your support with helping out during the term.

**Richard Bell and Clare DiPlacito - Cub Leaders**

# SCOUTS

The scout troop continued to meet all the way through the Autumn term, even though numbers were reduced some weeks due to scouts isolating with Covid.

The decision was made to be outside as much as we could, which caused the programme to be more flexible than usual. Thinking of fun things to do when it is dark, cold and potentially wet has not been easy. However, we believe we have offered a full programme of scouting. Activities have included:

Tasks associated with obtaining the Skills Challenge badge, (ironing, changing a plug, sewing ), Night hike on Epsom Downs, Cooking at the church, Backwoods Cooking (lighting altar fires) in the car park, Fire Safety Badge, Problem solving skills at Court Recreation Ground, Navigating, Town Trail in Ewell.

Remembrance Sunday and our usual parade gift service were cancelled for scouts, but the leaders attended the Remembrance Sunday on behalf of their groups, and the families stepped up and delivered a huge amount of gifts for the Salvation Army appeal and associated charities. So from the church a big thank you.

**Gillian Mead – Scout Leader**





# EXPLORERS

We started the Autumn 2021 term with a good old hike and chat, a good chance to catch up with what everyone had been up to over the Summer holidays. September also saw us having a Crazy Golf evening at Horton which seemed to be a great hit with everyone. I even hit a hole in one but, apparently, so the other leaders said, no-one witnessed it! We also held a pioneering evening. Those knots and lashings still need a little bit of practise, I think!



Pumpkin Night ended the half term and everyone's creativity was in evidence! The pumpkins looked fabulous in the dark with candles inside but there was quite a bit of clearing up to do afterwards!



The first evening back after half term was Fireworks night and we chose to hike up to the top of the Downs to watch the fireworks over London and to cook some sausages on trangias. Note to selves: find out what time the St Martin's and RAC fireworks are happening next year as, unfortunately, we only managed to see them through the trees on our hike up.

We had a great trip to the Guildford Spectrum on 12<sup>th</sup> November to Ice Skate and held a minute's silence before heading home as due to the surge in covid cases we were unable to attend the church for Remembrance. Explorers Kyla and Charlotte and leader Tom represented us in the Church for the parade service that Sunday.

During our Charity Night in November, we chose our Charity of the Year 2022, Positive Bones, empowering amputees & people with limb differences to live a life without limits. We will be raising some money for them during the coming 12 months. Plans are afoot!



December saw a cooking evening (I need danger money for some of the dishes I tried!) and an evening travelling to Crystal Palace for their Lightopia Christmas light display, only made possible by the money we received because of the volunteers that helped at the Fireworks at Hook Road Arena. Thanks go to: Alice Lowe & parents, Roisin Parkinson, Alex Connor, Kyla Pasantes, Ollie Weston, Tia Moore, Nathan West, Jane Palmer, James & Grace Carey and Isabel Antoniou.

The term was finished off with the welcome return of the Explorer Christmas Party at the Epsom Club. A fantastic night was had by all – it really is a highlight! Thanks everyone – and we are looking forward to more and more freedom to do as many, and as diverse, activities as possible.

**Phili Coley - Explorer Leader**