



As we move into autumn and the darker nights we have had a great summer of camping and outdoor activities to reflect on. These were made possible by the dedication and energy of our volunteer Leaders, Assistant Leaders and numerous helpers, without whom we could not operate. It still remains one of our biggest challenges to encourage enough adult help to deliver on our commitment to all of our 200+ young people every week. If we had more help we could include more of the 40 or more young people who currently sit on our waiting list and miss out on the fun and life skills that our activities offer. It is also true that with more help we can reduce the load on each and every one of our volunteers.

Please do read the articles included here on the values and motivations that our Scouting Leaders bring and hopefully they will inspire you to consider how you can assist us in making the work of 7th Epsom even more significant to our community. On that note, you will see below our planning for Christmas Post is well underway. It remains our only major fundraising event in the calendar and, again requires the support of many of us to make it successful. We know that it is really appreciated by many people in the community who otherwise have to consider the cost of using Royal Mail to reach out to their friends and neighbours during the festive season.

Yours in Scouting, **The Leadership Team**

Community Christmas Post

It may seem a bit early to be thinking of Christmas Cards, but the team that organises our Community Christmas Post is full steam ahead planning for this year.

Boxes will go out at the end of November, and we need to identify

- sorters (Monday 11 December to Friday 15 December), and
- post persons to collect post 15-17 December for delivery during the following week

Steve Barden is organising post persons, and all parents will receive an email shortly requesting help. Please respond as we needed to do a lot of chasing last year!

Kevin Mead is organising sorters and would be delighted to hear from anyone who is able to provide a few hours help during the day during sorting week.

This is an important event in our Fundraising calendar which last year raised nearly £2000 for 7th Epsom Funds ; please do what you can to support it as well as using the post for any cards you send in the local area.

2024 Diary Dates

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|-----------------------|--|
| • 2nd March (TBC) | Spring Quiz and Social |
| • 24th - 27th May | Group Spring Bank Camp - Bentley Copse, Surrey |
| • 28th - 30th June | Scoutabout 2024 - Ardingly, Sussex |
| • 20th -27th July | Scouts & Explorers Summer Camp - Wareham, Dorset |
| • 6th - 8th September | Water Weekend |

All these camps will require parental help in some form, so please put in your diaries now.

Do Leaders have fun? Yes, we do!

Would you like to be a Leader?

It REALLY is good fun; it doesn't have to be every week.

You would be part of a great team.

Please speak to one of us if you'd like to find out more.



Why do we do it ??



”

Scouting allows young people to have an element of independence, opportunities to take risks and do lots of outside activities.

”

Seeing a Scout achieve something they didn't think they could do, those are great moments.

”

I went all the way through Scouts myself, really enjoyed it!

”

Seeing Scouts develop into amazing young adults.

”

I enjoy teaching Scouts new skills.



”

Seeing the huge range of activities that our Scouts are able to participate in at Scoutabout, that just sums up the opportunities that Scouting provides.

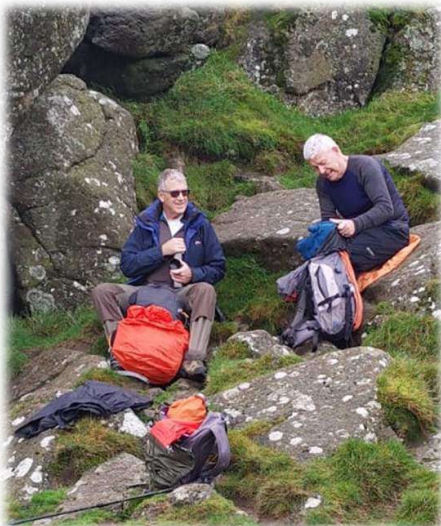


And we all DO have lots of fun!

” Scouting gives young people experiences in life that other activities & clubs do not.



” I like working with young people, helping them develop through everything Scouting has to offer.



” I started helping at Scouts because my children got so much out of it and wanted to give something back.



” The Comradery of Leaders, and its great fun seeing the young people enjoy all the various activities.

Simply – We love it!

From Novice to Nurturers: Three Dads Share Their Journey as Cub Leaders

Leigh, Paul and Rich are three Dads who became Cub Leaders five years ago when their children were due to become Cubs themselves. They lead Apache pack on Monday nights and talk about their journey in becoming leaders.

The three of us got together because we wanted our children to enjoy the benefits of Scouting and not miss out. None of us had prior formal experience of working with children, so agreeing to become a Cub Leader was a little daunting initially. Being a parent really was a useful foundation and life provides differing skills and experiences so that each of us bring something different to the role. Whether it's camping or cooking skills, organisational skills or sorting out a grazed knee - we already had the experience to become Cub leaders.



Setting ourselves up like a 'job share', to share the running of the pack between us, we found has worked very well. There are often times when one of us is especially busy with home or work life and we can easily handle that. The Scout Association provided training in a way that was accessible to anyone and which we found to be very beneficial, plus we had support from other leaders to help us find our feet. Different aspects of Scouting appeal to each of us, and we use our strengths to share the work between us. That way we can focus on the things we are good at or enjoy the most.

Probably the best part for us is the sense of satisfaction gained from seeing Cubs develop from doing things they've never done, and sometimes believe that they can't do. At a recent camp we loved seeing Cubs conquer their fears to explore dark caves, learning to work in teams to solve puzzles, and enjoying new games. Their buzz from the anticipation after finding out they are about to do a favourite activity never gets old. Plus we get to have fun ourselves - Rich especially enjoys helping Cubs learn firelighting (a big favourite with everyone!) and fire safety skills, Paul loves seeing Cubs grow in confidence whilst having fun, and Leigh particularly enjoys camps and seeing the Cubs experience new things.

Was it hard to become a leader? It turned out to be easier than we had imagined. A lot of the things we do in life and the experiences we have are useful in working with Cubs. Plus, we have a great team of people across Cubs and we can always call on help from other sections and 7th Epsom management if we get stuck with something. Interested in helping out with 7th Epsom? There's always something to do to fit your interests or skills. Helping out doesn't necessarily mean regular commitment and becoming a uniformed leader. There's plenty for occasional helpers to be involved with and enjoy too.

Common questions

Q: Do I need to be DBS checked to help out?

A: No, though having a DBS check widens the activities that you can be involved in.

Q: Do I have to commit to a certain number of hours?

A: No, you can give whatever you feel comfortable with.

Q: Can I give it a go to see if I enjoy it?

A: Absolutely. If you want to trial helping out as a taster you would be very welcome.

Q: Could I help in other ways?

A: As well as other age groups within 7th Epsom there are always a range of supporting activities available

80-Years of Service Awards made at our Annual Review and AGM!!

At our recent AGM we were treated to the presentation of a number of Service and Wood Badge Awards to some of our volunteer Leaders and Executive Committee members by Elaine Mustow, Assistant District Commissioner (Cubs).



Congratulations to all of you – your dedication to helping our young people is amazing!!

From left: Simon Williams (Treasurer) 30 Years Service; Tom Morgan (Scout Leader); Eileen Perren (Beaver Leader) 10 Years Service; Kevin Betts (Scout Leader) 10 Years Service; Phili Coley (Explorer Leader); Rich Tombs (Explorer Leader); Kevin Mead (Chairman); Clare DiPlacito (Beaver Leader); Steve Barden (Secretary)

BEAVERS

This term the Beavers are enjoying spending time outside making the most of the weather before winter sets in, while working towards a number of badges. We have to adapt our plans with the changing weather but the beavers are managing well and stay cheerful no matter the weather.

We started off the term welcoming new beavers with 'getting to know you' games and introductions to Scouting. We then explored Epsom Downs and the autumn countryside with a scavenger hunt, searching for different woodland trees, fruits and nuts. We had hoped for some blackberries but the lovely weather at the beginning of September meant that we had been beaten to the bushes, so we enjoyed our fairy cakes and squirty cream without them!

The following week we were working on our cyclist badge in Rosebery Park, finding out how to inflate a tyre, how to put on a cycle helmet so that it fits well and the importance of protective equipment to keep us safe when we're out and about on a bike or scooter. We then finished off with an energetic ride around the park. Some of us had to relocate to the hall during the meeting after it started thundering - but we managed to adapt with support from our parent helpers.



Not put off by the weather, we moved on to exploring and learning about the history of Epsom in a town trail, working on our Explore badge. We started off thinking that the Ashley Centre might be oldest building in town, but learnt that it was only opened in 1984, while the Assembly Rooms building was built in the seventeenth century and so is more than 300 years old! We explored the rest of the Market Place, looking at the statues, clock tower, flag pole and water trough. We found out that King Charles II and his court had stayed in Epsom when he was visiting Nell Gwynn at Bramshott House (now Cafe Nero). Also that Epsom is twinned with the town of Chantilly in Northern France. In our last meeting before half term we have been problem solving, with the beavers designing and building obstacle courses, then voting for the course they enjoyed the most.

After half term we will be spending a bit more time inside as the nights draw in and it gets colder. In the week before Remembrance Day we are preparing for the commemorations on the Sunday and will be discussing possible community projects we can get involved in during the spring term. We are then starting work on our space badge with a night hike where we hope to see some stars (fingers crossed). In our follow up session we will be learning to recognise a constellation, naming the planets and finding out about a current space mission. We will also be making the most of our time inside to work on our Creative Badge which involves doing a performance, trying a craft, constructing something and using our imagination. Term ends with our usual Christmas party with lots of fun, games - and food!

Many thanks to all our parent helpers who join in so enthusiastically, especially helping us to stay safe when we are outside the hall, and to our young leaders who are brilliant in helping our meetings run smoothly.

Kathy, Eileen, Clare and Victoria.

Summer Camp

Well, it rained. A lot. But that didn't deter the Scouts enjoying a packed week near Portsmouth. They kayaked, swam and learnt how to play boules. They hiked to Hamble, took a boat across the river and hiked back to camp. They are all now expert crabbers (although less good at holding on to the bucket, sorry Joe!)

The cooking competition was legendary - the food great, the enthusiasm beyond brilliant and the rain that night torrential....

A trip to the Royal Armoury at Fort Nelson was thought-provoking for us all - we learnt a lot about the Falklands war and the Scouts scrambled around an assault course too. The Spinnaker tower was a 'high' light, great views, a zooming lift and lots of steps.

There was also time for a publicity photo call doing the Time Warp dance with the local cast of the Rocky Horror Picture show. And yes Jane and Cathy, we have the video as evidence.

The Scouts were all terrific, many of them did things they'd never done before and some overcame personal challenges to take part in activities.



Scouts always come back from summer camp physically taller than when they leave Epsom at the start of the week. They also grow in confidence and ability and it is a joy to watch this happen. Be proud of them, we are.

Clare and the summer camp leaders.

Water Weekend September 2023

Our annual Water Weekend took place from the 22-24 September. 50 Scouts and Explorers camped for the weekend in the Bell Tent village at Thames Young Mariners (TYM) near Richmond. On Saturday we were joined by 20 cubs. Attendance numbers as always were limited by the number of boats and qualified instructors available to us.

The weather was kind to us and the attendees enjoyed a mix of kayaking, open canoeing, stand-up paddleboarding, sailing and raft making – with the Cubs canoeing, kayaking and undertaking a land-based challenge course. This was all made possible by a large team of adults providing catering, transport, canoe instruction, campsite organisation, etc.

The Scouts and Explorers enjoyed a wholesome meal on Saturday evening, followed by the usual film show in the hall at TYM. After a very busy day the camp was all quiet at lights out – a marked contrast to the excited chatter late into the night on Friday!

By mid-afternoon on Sunday the activities were all over and the contingent were loaded into minibuses and cars for the journey back to Epsom. It was agreed that a good time had been had by all. Plans are already being made for September 2024.



The Catering Team, ably led by Jane, provided us with constant food and drinks throughout the weekend.



EXPLORERS

This term, the Explorers have chosen a charity to fundraise for this coming year: **Under One Sky**. The charity engages with and helps people who are homeless, in and around Waterloo Station. The Explorers are organising various fundraising events during the year, the first being a bake sale, to be held after the Remembrance service in November at EMC.

Later on this term, we will be ice-skating, practicing first aid and going to see the Christmas lights at Wisley.

And a bit about Water Weekend from Nathan:

This year's water weekend once again proved to be a highlight on the Scouting calendar, with warm weather helping us to be on the water as much as possible. Stand up paddleboarding was a group favourite, with enjoyable canoeing and kayaking sessions resulting in many Explorers having a dip in the Thames!

Jane's fabulous cafe, as always, delivered delightful meals that kept us warm and energised for all activities - yes, the traditional water weekend soup included! Raft building was more successful than usual, with only one craft capsizing to the dismay of spectators!

Overall a blast of a weekend, with smiles all around, a testament to the fantastic work of the Leaders and instructors throughout, we wouldn't be able to do it without them!

