

Welcome to our first newsletter of 2024!

As we embark on another busy year, planning is well underway by our volunteer Leaders to ensure all our regular events take place PLUS we also have news within for a Family Fun Day, Scoutabout and don't forget our fundraising Quiz Night on 2nd March! Enjoy the read.

Yours in Scouting, **The Leadership Team**

Community Christmas Post 2023

Thank you to all of you who got involved in whatever way in the scheme this year.

We delivered 104 rounds totalling just under 4000 cards and made just over **£2000** for 7th Epsom funds. Card numbers were down slightly from the previous year but once again this has provided an excellent fundraising opportunity.

We have now run the scheme every year since 1988 (except a short gap for COVID in 2020 and 2021).

Many Thanks

Kevin, Anne, Jane, Steve and the team.



2024 Diary Dates

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| • 2nd March | Spring Quiz Night and Social SOLD OUT |
| • 28th April | Family Fun Day |
| • 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.

Help Needed—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 minibuses is critical to the Scouting activities that the Group is able to provide. We are 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 minibuses 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 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

Quiz Night Raffle

The proceeds from our Quiz Night raffle will be donated to the Explorers Charity of the Year
UNDER ONE SKY.



Their mission is that together we can end homelessness and they believe that engaging society is the key to this success. Their current projects include working in schools to raise awareness and empathy and working with teams and businesses to take part in Skywalks delivering aid and friendship directly.

By shifting opinion and building communities - Focusing more on what causes homelessness, the human cost and ways for society to make a positive impact.

By changing lives - With direct engagement between homeless friends and our community we can deliver sustainable life changes one individual at a time.

Please have a look at their website: <https://underoneskytogether.com/>



FAMILY FUN DAY, SAVE THE DATE

We are aiming to run a **Family Fun Day** at **Boiderhurst**
on **Sunday 28th April** from **9am** until **6pm**.

This will be an opportunity for our young people and their not so grown ups to experience some of the activities we get up to week to week and when we are on camp.

Please **save the date** and look out for more updates very soon!!!!



BEAVERS

The Beavers had a busy half term in the run up to Christmas. We began by helping with a litter pick after the firework display at Hook Road Arena.

In the week before Remembrance Day our activities focused on explaining why we have Remembrance services and about the work of the Armed Forces. Clearwater Beavers was lucky to have a parent coming in to tell us about his time in the army. Beavers took part in the Remembrance Day parade and service at the Methodist church.

In the following weeks we worked on our space badge, starting with a night hike on Epsom Downs where we just about managed to see the moon, some stars and some planets between layers of clouds. We followed this with a meeting inside, carrying out various activities to help us recognise constellations, learn about the solar system and find out interesting space facts.

We then made the most of being indoors to work on our creative badge, which for Clearwater beavers involved performing some of Aesop's fables, constructing and firing space rockets, using our imagination to design our own super heroes, and learning some basic origami by making a cheerful chatter box. The term ended with our usual Christmas party with lots of fun, games and snacks.



This half term we will be spending a bit more time indoors to avoid the dark and the winter weather. In January we will have a visit from Wildlife Aid Foundation in Leatherhead. They are an animal charity dedicated to the rescue, rehabilitation and release of British wildlife. We will learn about the charitable work they do, and in the following weeks will work on some educational and fundraising activities. As well as supporting this charity, these activities will contribute to the beaver challenge badges by teaching them about different types of animals and about the local community.

Kathy, Eileen, Clare and Victoria.

cubs

After a lovely summer break it was great to be back together again and to welcome our new Cubs. We had another great program to deliver across the 3 packs, all of which would deliver a wide range of badges and experiences.

After the usual welcome meeting in week 1, we made the most of the last of the long evenings and got the Cubs to achieve their Athletics, Athletics Plus and Road Safety badges. The Cubs really impressed us during the athletics which saw everyone of them achieve their personal best at standing jump and cricket ball throwing.

Week 5 saw us all back up at Boiderhurst learning to light fires and using them to cook a 3 course meal. Definitely a few budding Nigella's and Jamie's among them which is a good sign for this terms District Cooking competition!!

The following week saw the Cubs conducting experiments to understand how different parts of their bodies worked. We ended up with some excellent working "lungs" and "hearts".

After half term we explored the meaning of Remembrance Sunday ahead of our annual hike around the Centennial Woods in Langley Vale. The Cubs all made items that represented their idea of thanks and remembrance for those that have fallen to protect us. They then hung them on the remembrance tree up at Langley Vale.

Following a skills night, run and organised by our fantastic Young Leader Team we were fortunate enough to let the Cubs try their hand at archery and to take part in the first round of the District Quiz. The Cubs had a fantastic time learning all the skills needed to be a first class archer.

As a group we are lucky to have our own archery, climbing and shooting equipment and we are in need of more instructors to help run these sessions.

If you are interested in becoming an instructor in any of these activities, please let one of the leaders know. The group pay for your training and you get to learn a new skill along with your young ones.

Week 12 led to the Cubs being sent to HMP Epsom for the crime of not tidying their rooms. Using a range of skills they had to figure out how to escape by cracking codes, interviewing guards, writing secret messages and finally breaking out by avoiding the guards and their searchlights.

Our final week of term meant, of course, our Christmas Party which closed a fantastic term. Thank you again to all the Leaders who make it happen and to all of you parents that continue to support us each week.

Leigh Hogarty - Apache Cub Leader



SCOUTS

The Autumn term started in good old scouting style with a hike to Boiderhurst from Headley, where we were greeted with fires, hot drinks and toasting marshmallows to make s'mores. A brilliant start to the term. We concentrated our badge work this term on ticking off some of the tasks for the Skills Challenge Badge, which is probably one of the longest ones to achieve, with a lot of tasks. We got the scouts to think about their diet and sleep, and gave them information on smoking, drugs and alcohol, including vaping. Other tasks for the Skills badge included cooking, cleaning, ironing, and sewing.

In October we went up to London via train, for the scouts to complete a quiz trail walking along the South Bank. As much of the Autumn the weather wasn't kind to us, and it did pour with rain, but I think the scouts had fun anyway, and enjoyed the lights of London. Our trip to Epsom Hockey Club was also postponed as the weather was too bad, hoping that we will be rescheduling for the Spring term.



The final meeting of the year culminated in a Christmas Fair, where we raised money for 3 charities. Each of the scouts was asked to bring along some money, which we converted into tokens, and then they could choose which stall to spend their tokens on. The chocolate tombola was very popular (thank you to the parents for the donations). They could also partake in bagatelle, electric wire buzz, nerf guns, and many other things. Thank you to all the many parents who helped on the night. It was a fun evening. In the end, with a very generous donation from one of the parents, we managed to raise just over £300.

The scouts were told about 3 charities and they watched videos on each one and then had to vote on their favourite. It turned out that there were about the same number of votes for each one, so we have decided to split the money 3 ways. The 3 charities are: The London Air Ambulance, Under One Sky and the International Committee of the Red Cross.

The Air Ambulance appeal for a new helicopter, as you will see from certificate '7th Epsom Scouts' will be printed on the new helicopter.

Gillian Mead – Scout Leader



EXPLORERS

In the Autumn term, the Explorers had a busy and varied programme to keep them amused!

We had fun carving pumpkins, learning first aid and having a campfire at Boiderhurst.

The first evening back after half term we travelled by train to visit the Buddhist Thai temple in Wimbledon - the Buddhapadipa Temple. Its an amazing place to visit and was built in 1975 after being purchased by the Thai royal family. A very kind monk showed us around the brightly painted interior, which is depicts Buddha's life - with even Charlie Chaplin and Margaret Thatcher pictured! The artist wanted to bring images of more up-to-date references into the scene. We even did some chanting and a short meditation.

Our big ticket items this term were donutting at Guildford Ski Slope and visiting Glow 2023 at RHS Wisley.

This Spring term we are getting the Explorers to be more involved in the planning of their own programme.

We also warmly welcome back one of our previous leaders, Previn, who joins Dav, Dafydd, Rich, Aaron, Tom and me in running the Explorer unit.

Phili Coley - Explorer Leader

