

As the British half-term weather continues to keep us on our toes, welcome to our spring newsletter!

We are already underway with our camping season and as always, a BIG thank you to those who are giving up their time to make each event a special one for our young people. As many of you came to our Family Day in April, you will know what some of our typical camping activities include and can read more about it below - if you missed it, you can read about what a great day it was below.

Also, there is a special announcement within for which we are asking for volunteers to help plan and publicise our Centenary year in 2027. We want to make it a particularly special one for our whole community to remember.

Meanwhile, back to enjoying the coming summer of 2024.

Yours in Scouting, **The Leadership Team**

7th Epsom - Looking Forwards

7th Epsom Centenary

2027 is the **Centenary for 7th Epsom Scouts**, an event deserving both recognition and celebration. That sounds a long time away, but planning is starting this year. We are setting up a small committee and would like to get some parents involved.

If you would just like to help or have expertise in events planning, PR or an interest in scouring our archive, we would like to hear from you. Please email meadfamylkam@icloud.com or speak to your Section Leader.

7th Epsom 5 Year Plan

We have also been working recently to update the **5 year plan for the Group** - an activity last undertaken during COVID. The plan sets out our aspirations for the forthcoming 5 year period and sets out actions needed to deliver them.

It is undergoing review at present and will be shared with all Parents/Carers via OSM when complete as well as being published on our website.

The Executive Committee

2024 Diary Dates

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| • 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.

Quiz and Social Night

St Joseph's Hall, 2nd March

After months of planning 7th Epsom were delighted to be able to hold their first quiz since 2019 and what a success it was! We were delighted that 160 volunteers, friends and supporters came together for a fun night of curry and quizardry. We filled the hall to capacity and the atmosphere was filled with anticipation.



After a few challenging rounds, it was time for everyone to enjoy the home-cooked chicken and vegetable curries - with accompaniments - which were all prepared by our Treasurer, Simon Williams and family who had worked hard to prepare a feast fit for the eager masses. They were ably assisted on the night by Explorers who proved their worth in the kitchen and in serving the hungry contestants.

Then it was back to the quizardry which was provided by our erstwhile Explorer Leader, Tony Evans who cooked up a total of nine rounds of challenging questions for the 20 teams to digest. The top and bottom places were changing right up until the last round with the top eight teams eventually separated by just eight points. A truly spectacular result!



With special thanks to Richard Wadey and YPS Events for supplying the technology that ensured everyone was able to hear above the background chatter of the audience, and to our hardworking Leaders, Aaron and Alex for running the (very busy) bar. Also to Phil Kirk and his team of diligent Explorer scorers who kept their focus throughout the night.

We were especially delighted to have raised £590 from the raffle which was for the Explorers chosen charity of [Under One Sky](#). We also raised a healthy £2,050 for 7th Epsom funds. Thank you to everyone for your brilliant support.

Given its popularity, we plan to do it all again in 2025! Some additional help in organising it would be welcome so please let us know if you can help in advance.

Phili Coley, Simon Williams and Steve Barden



FAMILY FUN DAY



On Sunday 28th April 160 Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Parents and Leaders from the group braved a very wet and muddy Boiderhurst to take part in our first ever family day.

The aim of the day was for parents to experience some of the activities that their young people get up to when away at camp, for them to try something new or maybe something that they haven't done since being a Cub or Scout but most importantly for everyone to have fun.

Working in teams the families moved around a variety of activities from archery to fire lighting, from laser mazes (ok we couldn't afford real lasers) to pioneer challenges and from catapult challenges to tackling the giant rope bridge.

A huge thank you to everyone that came along and a special thank you to the leaders and scouts that helped to run the activities on the day.



Easter Ex.2024

This year 10 Explorers and 6 leaders travelled to north Wales for 4 days of mountain walking over the Easter weekend. We stayed in a new (for us) base in a small village outside Llanberis.

Each day we split into 3 groups, walking routes the Explorers had prepared the night before. Over the 4 days they walked a total of 32 miles and climbed about 3,300 metres. That's over 2 miles high !! We were rewarded with fairly good weather over the 4 days although visibility was an issue on some of the hills.



The Explorers showed great teamwork cooking meals, planning routes and making the lunches. They learnt some useful navigational skills and put them into practice as well as learning how to plan for and enjoy walking safely in the mountains.

After 6 days away they arrived back in Epsom on Wednesday tired and perhaps looking forward to going to school and not climbing mountains!

Paul Carpenter



Surrey Young Leaders Conference

In March I went to the Young Leaders conference. I didn't know what to expect and I didn't actually know anybody there, but that didn't really matter.

We were put into groups alphabetically and there were 3 Alex's in my group (I was Alex number 2!). There were a lot of Explorers there from all over Surrey. There were quite a few who were new to Young Leaders, but many who had been doing Young Leaders for some time.

At the end of the day a few were awarded the Young Leaders belt. To get this award you have to be a Young Leader and have completed 4 missions - this is my goal.

One of these missions is to plan and carry out a game / activity. During the day I also completed my Module K , and got my First Aid certificate. The conference gave me wider understanding of what Young Leaders are and what it is all about. I found it really interesting and recommend that Young Leaders should attend the next conference, with me, in October.

Alex Foulger

Explorer Scout

BEAVERS

The Beavers had a busy spring term. The main focus of our activities in this term was learning about wildlife and about organisations working in the local community.

We had two sessions ran by Winston from the Wildlife Aid Foundation in Leatherhead. The Foundation is an animal charity that rescues, rehabilitates and releases British wildlife. Winston came to talk to us about the work the Foundation do, and explain to the beavers the things we can all do to reduce the risks to wildlife. He explained about their iDot (I Do One Thing) campaign that gives examples of simple actions we can all do every day to help protect the planet. He also told us about the work they are doing to build a new Wildlife Aid Centre in Leatherhead.

Inspired by Winston, we spent several more evenings learning about different types of British wildlife, made bug hotels, and raised money for the Foundation through a cake sale. Later in the term we visited the Millennium Green to find out about the work of the charity that runs the Green, and to see if we could spot the local wildlife there.

During the term we also managed to fit in a night hike (or for those rained off, a Scottish evening), our annual pancake making session, achieving our emergency aid stage 1 activity badges, and some Easter themed activities at the end of term. In addition, some of the Beavers took part in a district hike – the Beaver Lizard Trail on Headley Heath.

In the summer term, we will be out and about a lot more, taking advantage of the (hopefully) better weather. As well as fundraising for the charity that manages the Millennium Green, we will be perfecting our camp craft skills over several evenings. We will also try out pond dipping, den building and tracking. We will be taking a group of beavers to Spring Bank camp where they can put some of their camping skills to use. We will finish the term with a picnic and games in Rosebery Park.

Kathy, Eileen, Clare and Victoria.



cubs

After what seemed a long winter term, we were really looking forward to taking our program outdoors as the evenings grew lighter as we headed towards Easter. As always we had another a great program to deliver across the 3 packs, all of which would support a wide range of badges and experiences.

The usual welcome meeting in week 1, week 2 saw the Cubs all working towards completing their Challenge Badge, this is a key part of the Silver Chief Scout Award which we aim to get the Cubs to achieve during their time with us.

Week 3 was all about the art of photography as Alex organised for the Cubs to achieve this activity badge. The Cubs loved learning about how traditional cameras worked, how lighting changes the shot and of course they had great fun taking the photos.

Spring term wouldn't be the same if we couldn't make pancakes and week 4 gave us the opportunity. The Cubs did brilliantly, working well as a team to share and measure ingredients, cook on the stoves themselves and try new toppings. I am still not convinced that Marmite and pancakes go but there we are!!!

After half term the Cubs completed their hobby badge. This involved them giving a demonstration of their hobby to the rest of their 6 and then sharing their favourite board game. We really do have a very talented bunch, from drummers and guitarists to artists and sailors. It was great to hear them speak so passionately about things that they clearly love.

Week 7 saw the Cubs cooking a full meal in heats for the District Cooking Competition. The Cubs had to cook a vegetable paella and Swedish vegan pancakes for the parent judges and had to create a menu to put on the table which they also learnt to lay. The food that they produced was fantastic!! Unfortunately the district cooking competition was cancelled however the district quiz went ahead with 2 sixes representing 7th Epsom. The Cubs had a brilliant night with both sixes finishing in the top 5!!!!



cubs

The most requested activity from the Cubs is the chip shop challenge and week 8 saw us combine this with a penny hike, where the toss of a coin determines your direction of travel. If this happened to take you past a chip tasting opportunity then even better. There were definitely some questionable coin tosses as the Cubs made sure that they were able to get some chips inside them!

The evenings starting to become more favourable meant that in week 9 we could have our first wide game of the year up on Epsom Downs. These are always great fun and get the Cubs really working well together in teams.



Climbing in week 10 is always a great opportunity for the Cubs to conquer a few fears and experience getting up our climbing wall. A huge thank you to Tony and Kevin, 2 of the scout leaders, for running these evenings for us.



Finally a term in Cubs wouldn't be a term in Cubs without a visit to Boiderhurst to get some fires going. The weather certainly tried to put us off but these Cubs are made of tough stuff and all got fires going in the rain!!!

Leigh Hogarty - Apache Cub Leader

SCOUTS

During the Spring term we continued to work on the Skills Challenge Badge for all the Scouts. This included several problem solving tasks, and consolidation of some of the subjects we had touched upon in the Autumn term.

We also managed to include a wide game at Horton Country Park, a town trail looking for various hydrants, a first aid evening and a cooking evening to celebrate national chilli day. In addition we did some preparation work for the District Challenge Hike which was held on the 17th March. We had two teams of 4 scouts taking part in the under 13 year range. They all completed the full hike, and hopefully they all enjoyed it. Perhaps next year we can get a few more taking part.

I am pleased to report that a large number of the troop have now completed their Skills Challenge badge and these were awarded at the beginning of this term. OSM provides each scout with a breakdown of the badges with the tasks they have completed and those that need to be done. If a scout is away for a week then it will mean that a task is not ticked off. If Scouts want to complete a badge they need to look at what needs doing and we can discuss with them how to complete it.

Please ensure that these badges are sewn on to their uniforms and they wear them with pride. These badges cost nearly £1 each, so if they are going to 'lose' them we won't bother awarding them. Recently a scout indicated that they had 'lost' their badge in the bin!!

For the last evening before the Easter holidays we attended Epsom Hockey Club in Ewell. They took the Scouts through some warm up exercises, some drills and I believe everybody had a good time. Big thank you to Anne Stevens, one of our parents, who organised the event for us.

We begin the summer term with several camps on the horizon. Spring Camp, when 21 Scouts, plus all the other sections will be camping at Bentley Copse in Guildford. Then we have 30 Scouts attending Scoutabout and finally our week long summer camp when 20 Scouts are taking part. Fingers crossed for some better weather than we had last year. I will let you know more about it all in the next newsletter.

Gillian Mead – Scout Leader



EXPLORERS

The 2024 program opened with a bang with an introductory presentation for the newbies and a lot of "getting to know you " games to get everyone involved. The following week was games week and this was followed by an evening of food extravaganza as the Explorers came up with dishes for a mystery cooking evening, where they didn't know what they had to cook until they had opened the can! There was an evening with teams doing PowerPoint presentations on various topics and then the big ticket item when we all went ice-skating.

The next term the Explorers got involved in our big fund raising Quiz Evening by helping with preparations on the Friday evening and then a lot were involved in helping on the Saturday, and if you were there then you will know it was a great evening. Here's a couple of pictures of the Explorers helping at the quiz night where we raised £590 for our charity of the year, Under One Sky, through the quiz night raffle bringing our total raised so far for them to just over £800!!!



These evenings were followed by some normal scouting activity with map reading and then some imagination being used while they built their own putt putt courses. This did indeed turn out quite well for some who remembered to bring various apparatus to use in the design and build of their golf holes, and it was especially useful if they remembered to bring a golf ball!!!!

After the break the Explorers have been enjoying the slightly warmer weather with a wide game on the downs, then a walk from Boiderhurst and more recently the perennial favourite the chip survey!

Coming up the Explorers have a fun filled Spring bank camp and some of the Explorers also went on the Easter Ex which can be read about in another article, and the Family Fun day which was really good.

Phili Coley - Explorer Leader