

Welcome to the September Newsletter as we hit the end of an action packed summer of camps and activities ending in Water Weekend and as we settle into Section Meetings for the Autumn.

Our next major event is the AGM on Weds 2nd October; please join us for a review of the last year and hear about our plans for the future and join us afterwards for a drink in the Rising Sun.

This term also sees some key fundraising activities for which we need your support, in particular Community Christmas Post. Please respond to the requests to sign up to deliver a round or two as we cannot do it without active support from our parents.

Yours in Scouting
The Executive Team

2024 Diary Dates

- 2nd October at 8pm - **Annual General Meeting** for 7th Epsom (Methodist) Group Scout Council at Group Headquarters, Epsom Methodist Church.
- 9th November - Epsom Fireworks
- 10th November at 10am – Remembrance Parade Service at the Epsom Methodist Church - all to attend.
- November dates tbc - Christmas Post collecting boxes will be out

2025 Diary Dates

- 1st March - Quiz and Social Night at St Joseph's
- 6th-11th April - Easter Ex Camp
- 23rd -26th May - Spring Bank Camp
- 14th June - Beaver Bazzaz
- 19th – 26th July - Summer Camp
- 12th – 14th Sept - Water Weekend

SPRING CAMP 2024

Spring Camp this year was held at Bentley Copse just outside Guildford.

22 Scouts joined the camp along with Beavers, Cubs and Explorers. Each section ran their own programme but we came together for a joint games session as well as a very soggy campfire on the Sunday evening.

During the weekend the Scouts all cooked for themselves over open fires for breakfast and dinner and were provided with a buffet lunch. All the Scouts took part in various activities provided by Bentley Copse, which included Frisbee Golf, Aeroball (trampolining netball), adventure course, and ziplining.

On the Sunday each patrol took part in a six mile hike around the surrounding woodlands, with a few shadows and leaders providing assistance along the way.

Generally we were lucky with the weather, but Sunday and Monday saw several downpours, so unfortunately we came back with a lot of wet tents. Trying to dry these over the next few days always adds that bit of complexity and additional time for leaders, even though the youth hall at EMC was made available to us.

Thank you to everybody who helped make this camp a huge success, the leaders and the additional parent helpers. I think they would all agree that a good time was had by all.

Gillian Mead – Scout Leader



SUMMER CAMP 2024

It seems a long time now since summer camp! We had a week of (mainly) sun and lots of fun in Dorset. Our trips included a visit to the Tank Museum to dress up as soldiers and play war games.

We spent time in a few different towns like Swanage where we spent time at the beach and on the steam train. Wareham was where we went bargain hunting and a sweet fest, along with Kimmeridge and the coast for a very wet walk and very welcome hot chocolate.

A highlight was visiting Brownsea Island to renew our Scout promises and invest Megan. Brownsea Island has great significance for Scouting as it was the location of an experimental camp in 1907 that led to the formation of the Scout movement.



Alongside this we had the obligatory cooking competition, on site activities and campfire. Add in excellent food (thank you Jane), brilliant scouts and terrific adult helpers and you can see why summer camp is always one of the best camps of the year!!



ScoutAbout 2024



At the end of June, 31 Scouts from 7th Epsom joined approximately 6,000 other Scouts and Guides from Surrey to attend ScoutAbout 2024 at Ardingly Showground in Sussex. What a brilliant weekend everybody had.

All the Scouts had to do was go and have fun, and the leaders saw them occasionally when they needed food or a bed.

For parents who want to see what went on, pictures tell the real story much better than I can do with words, so I have included below the video and photo evidence provided by Surrey Scouts.

Video: <https://vimeo.com/989809997>

Photos: <https://surreyscouts.smugmug.com/Public-Galleries/2024/Scoutabout-2024>

ScoutAbout happens every 3 years, so each scout should be able to attend once. The event will be repeated in 2027.



Water Weekend 2024

Our annual Water Weekend took place at the start of September. Just under 50 Scouts and Explorers camped for the weekend in the Bell Tent village at Thames Young Mariners (TYM) near Richmond. On Saturday

On Saturday we were joined by 30 Cubs and the weather was kind to us as everyone enjoyed a mix of kayaking, open canoeing, stand-up paddleboarding and sailing. The Cubs enjoyed 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 really busy day the camp was all quiet at lights out, a marked contrast to the excited chatter late into the night on Friday! We enjoyed a huge thunderstorm in the middle of the night, but the scouts toughed it out and everyone seemed dry and cheerful in the morning.

Sunday morning was a mix of kayak and open canoes on the Thames. Even though the weather forecast was dodgy we had a lovely sunny day and seemed to miss all the rainclouds. Following a fairly lacklustre afternoon raft-making session, where most of the rafts fell apart early on, we finished packing up 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 and plans are already being made for Water Weekend September 2025.



BEAVERS

In the summer term, Beavers were busy making the most of the longer, lighter evenings with lots of activities out and about.

We continued our work with wildlife and local organisations with a nature walk and litter picking for the charity that manages the Millennium Green. Several meetings were spent working on our camp craft badge, including putting a tent up in Rosebery Park and making fires to cook marshmallows at Boiderhurst.

Other outside meetings involved pond dipping on the Hogsmill, den building at Headley Heath and learning tracking skills at Horton. All these activities contributed towards different challenge badges, including My Adventure, My Outdoors, Teamwork and My World. We also learnt about aircraft, completing stage 1 of the air activities badge.



Many beavers and their families came to the 7th Epsom Family Day which was great fun despite the rain, and involved trying out lots of different activities.

The highlight of the term was taking a group of very excited beavers to Spring Bank camp where they put some of their camping skills to use. We finished the term with a picnic and games in Rosebery Park.

Kathy, Eileen, Clare and Victoria.



cubs

Summer term promised to be a busy one, with a full and varied program including joining the rest of the group on spring camp and spending a day at the group water weekend at the end of the summer holidays.

After the usual welcome meeting in week 1, week 2 saw the Cubs return to Banstead Woods for the first hike of the summer, determined to make the most of being outdoors this term. The following week was all about survival, which after their plane crashed on a remote island (Headley) led the cubs to making shelters and building gadgets to help them survive until help arrived. It did mean they also had to withstand attacks from storms and the indigenous population!!



The second half of the term was just as busy, litter picking around the town, always a Cub favourite followed by mini raft building at the Hogsmill Nature reserve followed the conclusion of the Local Knowledge badge. The District Cub Challenge event followed with 7th Epsom represented. The Cubs and Leaders had a great time and loved trying new activities despite another very damp Saturday! We were then lucky enough to have a visit from Wildlife Aid who ran a brilliant session for the Cubs about how to protect the wildlife around us and to explain the vital work that the charity do.

Orienteering in Horton Country Park followed and a massive thanks to Jon, one of the parents who put the evening together. Archery and a games night wrapped up the term.

Sadly we said goodbye to a number of Cubs who had come to the end of their journey with us. Many of them have moved up to Scouts and we look forward to seeing them continue on their scouting journey.

Leigh Hogarty - Apache Cub Leader



SCOUTS

The beginning of the term saw us getting prepared for Spring Bank Camp, by going up to Boiderhurst to practice putting up tents and cooking over open fires. In May we had a special evening out at Charrington Bowl, where a good time was had by all, including the leaders and helpers, with some achieving some impressive scores.

Thanks to the instruction from Tony and Kevin all scouts had the opportunity to do climbing and bouldering over the term, as well as completing their Chef's activity badge.



During the second half of the term, we began working towards our Creative Challenge badge, and all patrols were able to create a model island from lots of 'junk' that was brought along. We were exceedingly impressed by their creativity. Unfortunately, can't show them all but here are a couple of examples.



Spring Camp, Scoutabout and Summer Camp took place during the term, more to follow on those. We finished off the term with a games and BBQ evening at Horton Country Park with the Explorers. A jammed full programme for the scouts and all of this takes a huge commitment from the scout leaders and parent helpers, so a big thank you to everybody who took part in either our Friday evening meetings or the various camps that have been enjoyed over the summer.

Gillian Mead – Scout Leader

EXPLORERS

The Summer term, looking at the weather we have now its definitely in the past. The term started off with getting together with the Explorers and organising the term's various events going forward, and getting all these notes down on paper! This was followed by the family day which was a great day out.

Following the program there was a nice evening at Epsom Downs with a wide game, and the weather held for the next week for a hike from Boidier Hurst to the Downs.

Mid May found the explorers on their perennial favourite chip survey! The annual Spring Bank Camp which went off very well thanks to Phil's great organisation.

Following the mid term break the first Friday was a backwoods cooking evening at Christ Church followed by a the next week out making kites with some pretty good fliers.

The following week was a sports evening at Alexandra Park with various games of rounders, cricket and frisbee football and of course football, followed with the next week of kayaking around Guildford. Our term finished off with a BBQ and games evening with the scouts at Horton Park.



At the beginning of the year the unit had chosen Under One Sky as their charity to support and on Friday 21st June we had the founder of the Charity come and visit and give a talk. The talk was very frank and honest and our guest did not mince his hard hitting words about how many and the various ways they had found rough sleepers during the pandemic. He explained how they had been left with out any basic necessities as not just the general public stayed home but also all the council workers which left a number of people with no access to water, toilets etc which would normally have been open before. The Explorers were pretty taken aback and it was good to see them wanting to look how to help the charity in the future.

Explorers Leaders