

Skills for Life

7th Epsom (Methodist) Scout Group

ANNUAL REPORT

2024 – 2025

Trustees' Annual Report

Public Private Benefit

The objectives of the Group are as a unit of the Scout Association. The aim of the Scout Association is to promote the development of young people in achieving their full physical, intellectual, social and spiritual potentials, as individuals, as responsible citizens and as members of their local, national and international communities. The method of achieving the aim of the Association is by providing an enjoyable and attractive scheme of progressive training, based on the Scout Promise and Laws and guided by adult leadership.

Subscriptions are charged for membership to cover immediate running costs of the Group and these do not unduly restrict membership. The Group follows the principle that no one should be excluded because of their inability to pay membership subscriptions.

Two key principles demonstrate that Scouting's aims are for the public benefit are that through the Scout method young people develop towards their full potential and that there is a clear link between the benefits for young people and the purpose of Scouting. The safety of young people is taken very seriously and the benefits that Scouting activities provide far outweigh the risks. Any private benefits from Scouting are incidental, other than to those as a beneficiary.

Chairman's Report

The year ending April 2025 saw a strong Scouting programme delivered and the Group continues to thrive, albeit without a GSL in place. I would like to thank all the Leaders for their extra efforts in the circumstances. We do however face a cliff edge with an ever-ageing Leader population.

The individual sections have continued their rich offering of activities and badges and the Group remains in good overall health. Individual section reports follow.

A full programme of camps, competitions, outings and sleepovers all took place with Spring Bank Camp, Summer Camp and Water Weekend well attended.

The Group's finances remain on a sound basis with enhanced fundraising activities. We ran Community Christmas Post as previously and also a very well supported Quiz evening early in the New Year.

Our two minibuses have been used well through the year and in spite of the associated expense provide us with programme opportunities that would otherwise not be possible.

As ever, all we achieve is only possible as a result of the volunteers who give up their time either to act as leaders/supporters of sections/activities or in support of administration, finance, etc, all of whom I thank.

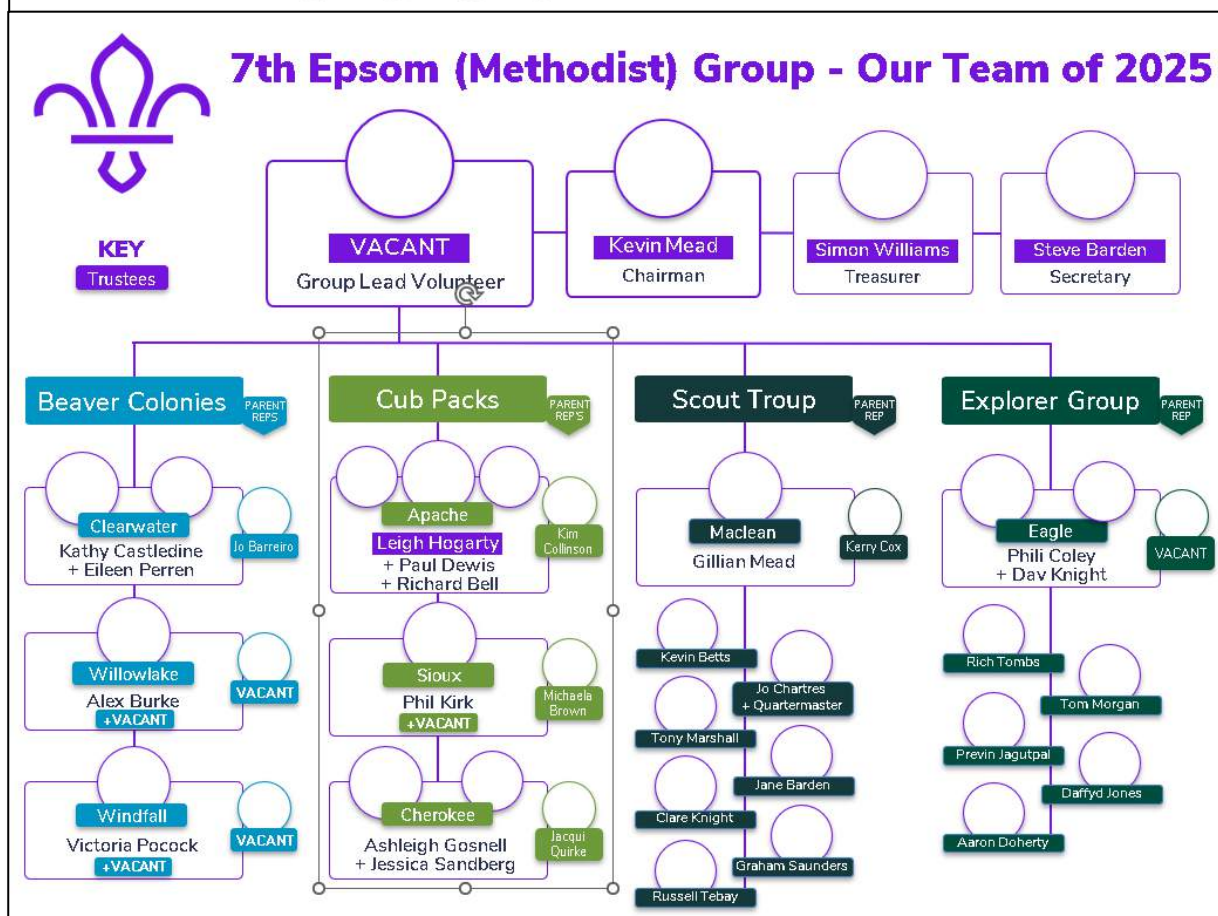
Particular thanks go to the Leaders who organised the Family Fun Day on 28th April last year – over 50 families took part and a good time was had by all despite the weather.



Many of our volunteers are well past the age where their children were in the Group and to sustain 7th Epsom we are in need of support from current parents. As always, we are trying to recruit more leaders, and we'd welcome any interest from parents willing to join the leader team. Additionally, we're looking for people who would be willing to do the various training courses to become activity leaders for activities such as archery, shooting and climbing.

If anybody would like to lend a hand in any way, please contact myself or one of the Section Leaders.

Kevin Mead
Chairman of the Group Executive



Our Key Actions for the Year

#	Description	Responsible	When	Comment
1.	Adopt our updated Group Constitution	Group Exec	2025 AGM	Can be accessed here
2.	Secure a Group Scout Leader.	DC + Group Chair	ASAP	Could be a shared role
3.	Ensure Assistant/Leader recruitment and succession planning is sound. Ask all Section Leaders to identify successor.	All section Leaders and GSL	Ongoing	ALs currently needed for: Willowlake, Windfall & Sioux
4.	Secure Parent Reps for each Section, ensure role is understood and developed in line with needs of Section.	Section Leaders	ASAP	Currently needed for: Willowlake, Windfall & Cherokee
5.	Streamline Leader mentoring, Training & Validation. a) Basic training b) Specialist training c) Skills training	Mentoring: VACANT Training: LH	Ongoing	Have nominated mentors for junior & senior Sections
6.	Recruit & Train Instructors where we have few / none to ensure continuity of a widely varied programme.	All	Ongoing	For archery, shooting, sailing, amateur radio, etc.
7.	Form Sub-Committee to plan our Centenary activities and celebrations.	Organising Sub-Committee	2024-27	Inaugural meeting held winter '24
8.	Develop and implement a plan for ongoing engagement with departing Explorers.	Exec + Expl'r leaders	Ongoing from 2025	As future supporters and leadership
9.	Ensure we run an effective ongoing training regime for addressing special needs.	Exec	ASAP	To meet evolving needs
10.	Strive to increase progressive parent engagement and to identify key skills specific parents can contribute.	SLs/Exec	Ongoing	Both activity and executive management skills needed
11.	Recruit an additional Exec Team Member to handle communications for local community & on premises	SLs/Exec	ASAP	Aimed at Improving PR

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees

I report on the accounts of the Group for the year ended 31 March 2025, which are set out on pages 8 & 9.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The Group's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. They consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993, and that an independent examination is required.

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts (under section 43 (3)(a) of the 1993 act;
- To follow the procedures laid down in the general directions given by the Charity Commissioners under section 43 (7)(b) of the 1993 act; and
- To state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Group and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also included consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given in the accounts.

Independent Examiner's Statement

In connection with my explanation, no matter has come to my attention;

1. Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - To keep accounting records in accordance with Section 41 of the 1993 act, and
 - To prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 1993 Act have not been met; or
2. To which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Name: **Andrew McDonald**_____

Signed:_____ Date:_____

Address: **31 Pound Lane, Epsom. KT19 8SB**

Major Activities and Achievements in the year

The annual review presented to all parents and interested parties prior to the AGM highlights the activities and achievements during the year. This is a comprehensive document that details numbers of young people in each section, a report from each section, abbreviated accounts and a review of the year.

At the end of the year the income reserves amounted to £593,747 (2024: £586,059). The Group's policy on reserves is to hold an amount that will enable it to replace the motor vehicles. The New HQ has been recorded as an asset within the accounts.

The trustees have identified the major risks to which they believe the Group is exposed. They have reviewed these and established systems to mitigate them.

The objectives of the Group are to promote the development of young people in achieving their full physical, intellectual, social and spiritual potentials, as individuals, as responsible citizens and as members of their local, national and international communities.

The Group is a trust established under its rules, which are common to all Groups.

Trustees are appointed in accordance with the Policy, Organisation and Rules of the Scout Association. They are well acquainted over a number of years in local Scouting.

The accounts have been drawn up on the Receipts and Payments basis, which is consistent with the previous year.

Approved by the trustees on the 10th October 2025 and signed on their behalf by:

Dr Kevin Mead – Chairman

Anthony S Williams - Treasurer

Income and Expenditure Statement for the year ended March 31st 2025

	Unrestricted Funds £	2024/25 Restricted Funds £	Total £	2023/24 £
Incoming Resources				
Annual Subscriptions	27,035	0	27,035	30,193
Income from Fundraising	8,644	0	8,644	6,643
Income from Camps & Activities	21,332	4,567	25,899	21,791
Section Income	0	0	0	55
Minibus Hire	515	0	515	755
Group Clothing	22	0	22	143
Donations	415	0	415	710
Gift Aid	4,748	0	4,748	4,659
Interest Received	1,299	0	1,299	972
Other Income	0	0	0	5
Total Income	64,009	4,567	68,576	65,927
Outgoing Resources				
Capitation Fees and Subscription Refunds	9,955	0	9,955	10,600
Costs of Fundraising	2,631	0	2,631	593
Expenditure from Camps & Activities	21,443	2,142	23,586	26,223
Section Costs	4,544	0	4,544	4,299
Minibus Costs	8,121	0	8,121	6,247
HQ Rental, Insurance and Equipment Costs	4,436	0	4,436	5,613
Group Clothing	151	0	151	0
Scout Shop	2,000	0	2,000	2,025
Bank Charges	120	0	120	120
Other Expenditure	3,005	0	3,005	183
Total Expenditure	56,406	2,142	58,548	55,903
Net Incoming/Outgoing resources before transfers	7,603	2,425	10,028	10,024

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2025

2024		2025
£		£ £
	FIXED ASSETS	
442,255	Headquarters	442,255
29,424	Minibus	26,481
471,679		468,736
	CURRENT ASSETS	
114,982	Cash at Bank	125,010
-	Debtors	-
	Creditors falling due within one year	
-		
114,982	Net Current Assets	125,010
586,661	Total Assets less Current Liabilities	593,747
471,679	Designated Reserves	468,736
	General Reserves:	
104,958	Opening Balance	114,982
10,024	Movement in Year	10,028
114,982	Net Incoming/Outgoing resources	125,010
586,661		593,747

BEAVERS Leaders' Report

Our three Beaver colonies have been busy this year. In the autumn term we said a sad goodbye to Clare who led Willowlake so ably for many years, and welcomed Alex to that role. We are also grateful for the support of our several enthusiastic young leaders.

All three colonies share the same programme. This year we have worked on a variety of activity badges, including the Camp Craft, Communicator, Creative, International and Air Activities stage 1. Work on these have also contributed to the Beaver Challenge Badges, My Adventure, My Outdoors, My Teamwork, My Skills and My World. Several Beavers have gone the extra mile and have achieved the Chief Scouts Bronze Award before moving up to Cubs, demonstrating excellent levels of enthusiasm and commitment.



Over the last year we have spent as much time as possible outside, visiting and exploring the local area. Beavers have put up tents in Rosebery Park, made fires to cook marshmallows at Boidier Hurst, tried out pond dipping at the Hogsmill, den building on Headley Heath and learning tracking skills at Horton, made nature pictures in Nonsuch Park, flown kites on Epsom



Downs, and hiked around Epsom Common in the twilight.

When the weather and the dark have kept us inside, we have worked on our team skills, playing games and finding out about scouts and about the world around us. This has included learning about local wildlife as well as different countries and cultures around the world, including food tasting. We have also tried out a range of creative activities from charades to junk modelling.



We have also joined in with activities organised by the wider scouting community. Many Beavers and their families attended the 7th Epsom Family Day in April 2024, trying out lots of new activities, and we also took part in spring bank camp in May with all the other Sections in 7th Epsom. For some Beavers, this was their very first experience in sleeping away from home. Some Beavers also took part in 'Reach for the Stars', a virtual weekend camp organised by Surrey Scouts held in February.



Most recently, we hiked round Headley Heath in March this year with other Beavers from the Epsom and Ewell District.



As always, we are very grateful to our supportive parents. We have to meet certain ratios for meetings and for going out and about, and also need a lot of support when we're meeting in the hall playing games and putting together activities. Both Willowlake (Tuesday) and Waterfall (Thursdays) are looking for Team Members to support their Beaver Leader, spread the load and share the fun!

Kathy Castledine & Eileen Perren (Clearwater);

Alex Burke (Willowlake);

Victoria Pocock (Windfall)

cubs Leaders' Report

As usual the arrival of our summer term meant that we were determined to be back in the great outdoors as much as possible. With our group camp at Bently Copse on the horizon, camp skills and pioneering were the focus as well as the art of lighting fires, backwards cooking and building shelters up at Boidier Hurst and Headley. It also gave us a great excuse to test out how waterproof the Cubs had made their shelters!!



At the end of May, we all had a brilliant time being with the rest of the 7th Epsom Group at Bentley Copse Activity Centre. It was great to see all sections integrating and supporting each

other as well as a sense of pride at hearing the Cubs drown out everyone else around the campfire, well that's how we remember it! It was also brilliant to see all the Cubs try something that they had



never had the opportunity to try before and conquer some of their fears, whether that was spending their first night away or finding their way through the dark in the caving tunnels. We also celebrated one of our leadership team achieving their nights away permit and two who were invested into movement. We also bid farewell to Les (Baloo) who retired after a long career of inspiring young people, many of whom are now Leaders in the Group and beyond.

After Spring Camp we joined the rest of the District to take part in the Cub Challenge weekend. Our Cubs represented us well, again trying many new activities for the first time and our Leaders did a brilliant job running our catapult base.



In what is becoming a favoured tradition, we once again worked in the community to litter pick around Epsom. This is always a great evening for both the Cubs and the public who get to see our young people out and about making a huge difference!

We welcomed Winston, from Surrey Wildlife Aid who we were lucky enough to come and engage us all twice in the year. Firstly, to talk about the important work the Charity does and also about the things we can all do to protect the wildlife we share our homes and gardens with. We were proud of the way the Cubs engaged in both this session and the one later in the year where they built bug hotels, hedgehog runs and other gadgets to use in their gardens.



Our autumn programme kicked off by joining other Sections at Water Weekend. A fantastic day of water activities which all of the Cubs & Leaders really enjoyed, and helped the Cubs who attended gain their time on Water Staged Badge

This term is always one of our busiest as we make the most of the light evenings, and this one was no different. Following the start of term, we put the Cubs through their paces as part of the athletics and athletics plus badges. Again, the Cubs impressed with not only their determination to give every activity their best shot but also for the way they cheered each other on!



After some navigation work and the completion of a number of the challenge badges we headed back up to Boidier Hurst for a spot of fire-lighting a cooking, always a favourite.

After half-term a team of Cubs and parents once again helped to clear litter following the firework display at Hook Road Arena. Then we focused on the activities around Remembrance Sunday which included making medals of thanks to hang on the memorial at the Centenary Woods in Langley Vale during our annual hike around the impressive and thought-provoking woodland.



The rest of term's programme focused on teamwork and skills with activities ranging from the mystery cooking challenge where Cubs were given unlabelled cans of food and asked to construct a meal, to building the highest freestanding towers.

Our Young Leaders have been a fantastic support as always and this year they ran the annual Christmas Party, including the games. The Cubs had a brilliant time.

In January we entered a team into the District Quiz for the 2nd year in a row and we were blown away when our team of four came away with 1st place and the chance to represent the District for the first time at the Surrey Scout Final where they had a fun day, just missing out on placings.

Spring term meant that we were able to get out and about again and use the fantastic open spaces around us. Following a wide game on Epsom Downs we were lucky enough to spot the halo created by a Space X rocket heading to the International Space Station, definitely a new experience for all of us!!!!!!

Over the year we presented five Silver Chief Scout awards to our Cubs.

As always, the programmes we run and the experiences that we are able to give our young people are only made possible by the Leaders and parents who continue to support the three packs.

Leigh Hogarty, Apache Akela

Paul Dewis & Richard Bell, Apache Assistant Leaders

Phil Kirk, Sioux Akela

Ashleigh Gonsall, Cherokee Akela

Jessica Sandberg, Alex Connor: Cherokee Assistant Leaders




SCOUTS Maclean Leader's Report

During the year in question, we have had about 40 Scouts attending each term. The Scout Leader Team aim to provide a varied Scouting programme during each term, focusing on core Scouting activities, as well as allowing all Scouts who attend regularly to gain challenge and activity badges.

In September over half the troop went to Explorers and a large group of Cubs joined us, so there was a massive change in the patrols. Jo Chartres, with several of the other leaders, ran a 24-hour camp at Boidier Hurst for all the PLs and APLs. The usual activities were included with a bit of a twist to make them more challenging for these older Scouts. The PLs and APLs came back with additional skills for organising themselves and their patrols.

The Scout programme could not happen without each of our Team's dedication and commitment. Jo Chartres, Jane Barden, Kevin Betts, Tony Marshall, Graham Saunders, Russell Tebay. In addition, we are also very thankful to our Leader Clare Knight, who continues to help occasionally even after moving to Hastings. We are also thankful to Paul and Greta Carpenter who have moved to Devon, but again continued to help at our camps during the year. In addition, we have a rota of parent helpers each week, and certainly on many occasions could not run our programme without them.

Last year we held several very successful camps:

Camp	Location	# of Scouts	Leader in charge
Spring Bank Camp 2024	Bentley Copse, Guildford	22	Gillian Mead
Scoutabout 2024 	Ardingly, Sussex	31	Gillian Mead
Summer camp 2024	Buddens, Wareham, Dorset	20	Clare Knight
Water Weekend 2024	Thames Young Mariners, Kingston	35	Tony Marshall
PL/APL Camp	Boidier Hurst, Box Hill	12	Jo Chartres



PL/APL Camp
Putting up a tent blindfolded

Spring Camp was a 7th Epsom Group camp with Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers. Bentley Copse was a great location with lots of activities that all members of the group

took part in. We had a great weekend all together, and had some group games and a campfire where we all joined together, but had separate programmes for the rest of the weekend. Generally, the weather was OK, but had several downpours on Sunday and Monday, which resulted in coming back with a lot of wet tentage. For anybody who has seen the Youth Hall at EMC hanging with wet tents, they will understand the additional work that drying tents entails. That is why the leaders are always so keen on getting tents down in the dry.



Scoutabout fireworks

In addition to our regular camps of the year, we had the Surrey Scoutabout event held at Ardingly showground in Sussex. The 31 scouts had freedom to go and find their own fun on the huge site, and the Leaders and parent helpers saw them occasionally when they needed food and a bed. This event takes place every three years.

Summer camp at Buddens included some highlights of travelling to Brownsea Island on the ferry, going to the tank museum, visiting the towns of Swanage and Wareham. However, the scouts will probably remember for a long time our coastal hike on the Thursday which was one of the wettest hikes I can ever remember. We had driving rain along the coast and were soaked to the skin. The showers and hot drinks were most welcome when we returned to camp. Luckily the Friday saw bright sunny weather and we were able to dry the tents and a lot of wet clothes.



'Summer' camp hike

Water Weekend is always a favourite, and a great weekend was had by about 50 scouts, explorers and cubs that were able to attend. The weekend was a great success (despite the huge thunderstorm that came in the middle of Saturday night) and all the scouts took part in canoeing, kayaking, rafting, and land- based activities. A huge amount of adult help is required for this weekend, and the transport arrangements are extremely complex to get canoes and kayaks to the site. A huge thanks goes to Tony Marshall who organises this event with military precision.

At the end of the winter term, we enjoyed an ice-skating evening at Guildford Spectrum, which for most Scouts took them out of their comfort zone, but they persevered and by the end of the evening most were gingerly skating round the rink, although we did have one casualty, which unfortunately resulted in an A&E visit and a plaster cast!

In March we took part in the District Challenge Hike. We had 5 teams taking part with 4 scouts in each, which is the largest group taking part for many years. I was concerned that several of them were quite young, but we spent a couple of weeks going over navigation skills, and then had a hike on Epsom Common two days before the event. All teams completed the course and returned safely, and I am delighted to report that our all-girl team, made up of only 3 girls as one had to drop out because of illness, won the overall event. Well done to Robyn Pratt, Rin Bradley and Eliza Gray.



Friday night Lego challenge

We are very keen to welcome some more adults to join the team as the current team is not getting any younger. Scouting has been a major part of my life, and has given me great joy, and a lot of fun and friendship. If there are any parents, friends, grandparents out there who would like to be involved please do get in touch. You don't have to commit to every week, but offering to be part of the team would make a massive difference to our planning going forwards.



Friday night climbing and bouldering

Gillian Mead, Maclean Scout Section Leader

EXPLORERS Leader's Report

Exploring under one sky!

This year we decided to turn the tables and ask the Explorers to get involved with organising their own programme, so we started the term with a planning meeting. Dividing into teams, the Explorers were tasked with choosing activities, planning the evening, working out what equipment would be required as well as the cost and who would be responsible for each part of the evening. They organised an ever-popular survey of the chip producing establishments of Epsom, backwoods cooking, a hike, kite-making and flying on the downs and a sports evening in the park, amongst other things.

We had an exceptionally successful Spring Camp, at Bentley Copse, in the half-term holiday with beautiful weather which included activities such as zip lining, crate stacking and a cave maze. The Explorers created a fantastic wind up, merry-go-round as a pioneering project and everyone there was able to play on it, and we enjoyed coming together on the Saturday afternoon to play games together across all the Sections, from Beavers to Explorers and adults alike.

On 21st June we invited the founder of the charity, Under One Sky, to come and talk to us with one of his younger volunteers about how the charity was started and what their work involves. We also proudly presented them with a cheque for £806.39 – the amount raised by the Explorers over the year.



Over the summer holidays, Dav organised us an absolutely fantastic Summer Camp down in our favourite campsite of Buddens, Dorset. There were 17 Explorers attending and we managed to see all the sites in the area, spending time on Swanage beach, cycling across the countryside, seeing Durdle Door (where some Explorers were invested) and travelling on the steam railway. Thanks so much to Dav for all the hard work organising such a fab camp and Aaron for taking time out of work to help lead the event.

The first evening back in September was taken up by Water Weekend – as usual a very popular camp amongst the Explorers with tickets selling out quicker than Glastonbury!

As Explorer programme planning had worked out pretty well last term it featured again as the first evening and they designed their programme to include evenings of: newspaper fashion show, Dragon's Den, Garage Band (which was so creative), Quiz and Chips night and Gingerbread House making. The Leaders sprinkled this in amongst pumpkin carving, a

London Christmas Lights Walk, a first-aid night and a firework hike. We also had a great turn out for November's Remembrance Church Parade.

Daniel Booker, one of our Explorers, was chosen to represent Surrey Scouts in becoming one of the Lord Lieutenant of Surrey's Cadets for the year – a great honour. He was chosen from a very strong field of candidates, and they reported him to be: 'exceptionally polite, mature and confident and an outstanding nominee to represent Surrey Youth and Scouting as a Lord Lieutenant's Cadet.' We are very proud of him and Dav and I were pleased to be invited to attend an evening of celebration for him and the other candidates at Loseley Park.

Unfortunately, this year we were unable to tie down a venue for a Christmas Dinner, but we ended the term with a Christmas party night with loads of fun and games.

Spring term is often mostly indoors although we did get outside for a hike and a wide game. We went to Guildford Spectrum to go Ice Skating, held a games night where we played different board games in small groups, a Taskmaster evening and made pancakes.

In March 7th Epsom held another successful Quiz raising funds for the group. The Explorers helped the night before by prepping all the vegetables and then on the night, serving tables, collecting score cards and selling raffle tickets. For their efforts the proceeds of the raffle were given to our selected charity, Under One Sky again, and we raised just under £500. I was so proud of their behaviour on the night.

On our last evening of this term, we trialled a new Spring Ball at the Wells Centre and it appeared to be a resounding success. Thanks to Previn for organising the venue, decorations and catering. To take the pressure off trying to cram in a Christmas dinner and all the extra organisation that causes in an already busy part of everyone's calendar, we are going to feature this new event on our programme instead.

At the end of the Autumn term, we lost quite a few of the older Explorers, leaving to focus on their exams and we have welcomed a couple of new Explorers from outside the group. This means that we are a slightly younger group than usual. Losing the maturity that the 17-year-olds bring to the group does give some behavioural challenges at times, but they do seem to be an enthusiastic bunch, which is a great sign for the year ahead.

The Explorer Team remains strong – Dav, Rich, Dafydd, Previn, Tom, Aaron and me – we all have our strengths and work together well. It is quite a task to run evenings that keep a group of nearly 30 teenagers entertained but we seem to manage it! I can't thank the team enough for their help, support and, quite frankly and more importantly, the laughs that come with it!!

Phili Coley, Explorer Leader