

Fifth Beckenham South Scout Group
Annual Report
April 2017 – March 2018

A year of transition for The Fifth, our Group Scout Leader relocated with his new family and so our leadership shuffled around to maintain continuity of Scouting for our young Scout members.

The Group attended St George's Parade in Petts Wood at invite from our District Commissioner and showed a solid public face ensuring our intention to continue and thrive as an active Scout Group.

Our fundraising continues with lots of effort from leaders and parents alike and a new parent fundraising committee is being formed ready to take the reins.

All sections enjoyed a year of adventure and Scouting with many leaders diligently completing the necessary training and permits for their new roles and all sections camped as normal. Beavers enjoyed a lovely sunny weekend at Waylands camp site and the Cubs tried something new with assisted camping at Broadstone Warren, this enabled the Cubs to have an activity camp with a smaller team of leaders as re shuffles came into play. Scouts and Explorers enjoyed a week summer camp at Tolmers activity site, braving both rain and sunshine to make memories and friendships. Weekly meetings continued seamlessly for all sections and our mandate to provide balanced programming of fun, skills, teamwork, community and global awareness and of course new adventurous activities remain at the forefront of The Fifth's ambition as we look to plan our next international trip in Canada with our new Cub leader taking the lead.

For myself as newly appointed GSL we have much to do in bedding in new section teams and administration overheads but all leaders and adult helpers are stepping up to the challenge and we are thoroughly looking forward to the year planned ahead.

Adam Young – Group Scout Leader

Merry Beavers

The Merry colony has had a brilliant year with Chip (Maddi) and her team of helpers, Kate (Raccoon), Marianne, Eleni and the Young Leaders, Charlie, James, Bailey and Joe. The colony currently hosts 20 Beavers who work well together and have formed some strong friendships.

Meetings have involved a lot of creative activities such as making gingerbread houses, imagining what the world will be like in 100 years from now, designing their own obstacle course and making a Remembrance Day poppy wall display. All of these activities encourage the Beaver scouts to work as a team with the older Beavers providing support to our new recruits. Great fun was had when exploring the world of science through hands on experiments such as making sock bubble snakes and investigating how bubbles are formed. Beavers showed their star qualities by performing and an X Factor style show, and teaching each other new skills of dance, singing and magic.

The colony is enjoying working together to complete activity badges, and everyone is also encouraged to work independently to achieve their own badges. Beavers have proudly presented items that they have made at home for the Builder Badge or Book Reader badge. The Summer Sleepover in June at Waylands Camp was for 2 nights and shared with the Pippin Colony. The theme was Hawaiian Camp and luckily the sun shone all weekend. The two colonies got along well, having great fun with outdoor games and competitions. Many beavers earned their 'nights away' badge as well as learning basic skills in bush craft and making fires.

In November the Beavers showed their respect by attending the Remembrance Day parade marking 100 years since the end of WWI, as well as attending church parades at St Edmund's Church. These events have helped Beavers to obtain their Community badges. The Beavers enthusiastically participated in bringing in items for a food bank and also the Love in a Shoebox appeal. This led to some interesting discussions about how we should try to help others who are less able than ourselves and how everyone giving a small amount can make a big difference.

Our upcoming Christmas sleepover in December will be at Downe Scout Camp. Activities will include arts and craft activities, making smores on open fires, a visit from Santa, movie night and a memorable campfire led by our amazing Young Leaders.

We congratulated Maddi this year for being one of the youngest leaders to have achieved her Wood Badge. As always we are thankful for the continued support of our Merry parents.

Pippin Beavers

Dave, Spencer and Alison were again assisted by two young leaders, Lizzie and Charlie. The colony maintained its numbers throughout this period at 24.

A busy itinerary saw the beaver scouts not only attend each week but also took part in a variety of outdoor activities.

The first outdoor event was kayaking at Pinewood scout centre in Shirley. 9 beaver scouts from Pippin colony attended and earned their "time on the water" stage 1 badge.

In early June, we combined again with Merry colony for our summer camp. This was held at Waylands Scout Centre near Biggin Hill and the beaver scouts enjoyed sleeping in tents, making fires, cooking smores over the fires and of course the camp fire.

This was the second time that the colonies had combined for a summer sleepover and, ably assisted by other group leaders, it was again a great success. A total of 14 beaver scouts from Pippin colony attended this two night event.

Later in June, 13 beaver scouts attend Frylands Scout Centre's Beach Party Funday – activities included archery, air rifles, obstacle course, bouncy castles and a hike through the woods.

After the summer break, 16 beavers from Pippin attended the District run Activity evening at Frylands on 2nd September. These activities included air rifle shooting, archery, climbing, laser quest, inflatables, and more.

In Early October, 9 beavers achieved their swimming badge stage 1 award by taking part in the District run event held at the Beckenham Spa.

This was followed up a week later with a combined hike with Merry colony through High Elms park.

The Remembrance Day parade took place on Sunday 12th November with the rest of the group – a fantastic turnout with 19 beaver scouts from Pippin taking part.

20 came to the Winter Camp in December which was held at Waylands camp site. They played games, tried their hands at Xmas crafts and sang around the camp fire, plus the night time ramble in the dark with their torches, which they thoroughly enjoyed. Plus, of course, a visit from Santa.

In the new year, 20 attended the Easter Egg hunt at Downe Scout centre, run by the district. They successfully completed lots of challenges and deserved their chocolate eggs. Once again, we were one of the largest groups there and the beavers were all extremely well behaved.

As well as these outdoor events, the beavers also worked hard towards their challenge awards with 7 achieving their Bronze Chief Scouts badges.

A busy and enjoyable year with lots of fun.

A final word goes to the parents who kindly assisted on many of the events, for which we are very grateful.

Cubs

The Cubs have had another busy year with attendance at meetings ranging from 24 to 30 cubs in each pack.

Our activities have ranged from wide games both inside and outside to backwoods cooking of chocolate orange cake in an orange, pioneering with marshmallow and spaghetti to rockets. One new activity for this year was our Burns night evening in January when our cubs had a traditional evening and sampled haggis, having been piped in by our group secretary and leaders and cubs enjoyed Scottish country dancing

We have also enjoyed activities outside of our weekly Monday meetings. Our first event was a sleepover for pizza and film night at the hut in October resulting in some weary cubs going home on Sunday morning to enjoy the rest of their half term. Our Christmas camp at Downe was cold but cubs enjoyed a variety of activities including a night hike, abseiling, wall climbing, grass sledging and crafts with many of the activities contributing to badge requirements, we enjoyed the weekend so much we have booked the same venue for 2018 Christmas camp. Remembrance Sunday saw a good turnout of cubs to the annual parade and service at the war memorial and fewer numbers at the St Georges day district parade in Petts wood. We had a good turn out of the St. Amory water day where cubs achieved their water sports activity badge.

The highlight of the year is always our Whitsun camp near Dorking. This year saw a gloriously hot weekend requiring frequent dips in the two paddling pools set up. This did not deter the cubs who enjoyed an inflatable assault course, made into an obstacle course that the leaders also enjoyed, backwoods cooking, go karts, archery and of course the traditional barbeque and camp fire.

The cubs have worked hard on their badges this year and we were very pleased to award 6 cubs with their chief scout silver award with many of the younger cubs well on their way to achieving the award.

Scouts

2017-18 marked a period of change for both Scout Troops as Chris Elmer stepped down from Thunder and as GSL of The Fifth, and Adam Young stepped up from being the leader of Lightning to replace Chris as GSL. Chris was succeeded as Scout Leader of Thunder by Tim Younge (no relation to Adam), and Adam was succeeded as Scout Leader of Lightning by Don Mullane.

Tim and Don are working hard to co-ordinate their calendars so that Scouts have the opportunity to enjoy the best in Scouting whichever of the 2 units they are in.

Tim and Don want to acknowledge the help, support and assistance provided by, amongst others, their fellow leaders on Thursday and Friday evenings: Helen Brandon, Nick Chrumka, Alex Banfield, Alison French, Chris Jones, Simon Grey and of course the ever present John Potter, plus the Young Leaders who assist. And of course to Chris Elmer and Adam Young.

The year included a Summer Camp at Tolmers in Hertfordshire, a Winter Camp at Frylands, a host of weekly activities, some old, some new; and of course, the usual wide games, silly sports, Scout Craft, Chinese Cooking, pancakes, air rifles, archery and more.

Over 50 super Scouts and a brilliant team of volunteer leaders making it happen.