

Fifth Beckenham South Scout Group Annual Report

April 2021 – March 2022

Group Scout Leader

As the spring months of 2021 turned to summer, Scouting finally moved to a Covid-19 Green state of readiness, essentially returning to normal service but with Covid precautions remaining in place. Camping and nights away events were again allowed with some stringent District enforced guidelines and checklists put in place to protect both young members and adult leaders. The Explorer section jumped in with a rapidly booked and planned summer camp in Deal, all of the risk assessments, Covid precautions and checklists were put in place and approved by District then once the guidelines on minibus travel for youth groups was relaxed, the camp was triggered and the Explorers were invited with a large uptake and all in all a successful and enjoyable summer camp was had by everyone.

Younger sections exercised understandable precaution but Beavers and Cubs equally jumped through the new District hoops and pulled off a Christmas camp together, both at the same site of Frylands Wood but in different accommodation. Separate yet together for backup in terms of having sufficient permit holders and event leaders in place should Covid play an active part. Thankfully it did not and again the smiles of the Beavers and the Cubs spoke a thousand words.

A special mention to the new leadership teams in place in the afore mentioned younger sections. Rikki Cub pack team by the September term and full Green state of readiness including indoor meetings

were now well and truly established and flying solo with tremendous success, a true testament to their perseverance and energy throughout both Red and Amber states of Scouting ensuring both member retention and indeed enthusiasm to return to 'normal'.

Our Beaver section having restructured into one Colony only a year previously bounced back in September with a renewed vigour and energy as one of our Assistant Beaver Scout leaders stepped forward to reopen the second Colony as Section Leader, doubling our potential as a Scout Group to offer places to the youngsters in our surrounding area and the inherent adventures to follow. Working together both Colonies are truly flourishing and our waiting list for interested new members is once again growing at a rate of knots.

Our two Scout Troops laid on an adventure day at Frylands Wood and the Scouts seemed very happy to get outside at last and enjoy some activities in the fresh air. Some new and strengthened additions to the leadership teams brought the introduction of mountain biking into the section's repertoire of weekend activities and an excellent day out on bikes was had in the beautiful Kent countryside with more events being planned for the future.

Our Scout hut saw continued maintenance and improvement with our ever-energetic Quartermaster overseeing the sad removal of the old fir tree outside of our front door. Regrettably it had been condemned

by tree surgeons and was removed for safety reasons. The massive stump left behind was then removed and our quartermaster draws designs on re-paving the side corner where it once stood. We also now have a fortnightly waste collection and a contracted wheelie bin which helps tremendously in keeping our premises clean and tidy and safe for all of our young members to enjoy for many more years to come.

Adam Young

Beaver Scouts (6-8yrs)

Pippin Colony is led by Dave Barber, Spencer Coward and Paul Blewer.

Merry Colony is led by Helen Langston, Lee Anderson, Alison French, Dan Ilett and Teri Ann Wilson.

April 2021 finally started to see the return of face-to-face meetings, albeit outside. During this time Merry and Pippin continued to meet as one colony on Thursday's. Several meetings during the summer term were held at Frylands Scout centre, pond dipping, bug hunting and on the traversing wall. With restrictions still in place preventing overnight camps, the Beaver team ran an Outdoor and Camp craft workshop at the hut. Giving Beavers chances to put up tents, build camp fires and of course make s'mores amongst other things. The term ended with our water night and the presentation of two Chief Scout Bronze awards - quite an achievement considering the changes scouting went through during Covid lock downs.

September 2021 finally saw the reinstatement of Merry Colony. Paul Blewer joined Dave and Spencer to help run Pippin Colony. While Helen was joined by Alison French, Dan Ilett, Lee Anderson and Teri Ann Wilson in running Merry Colony.

Merry and Pippin Beavers enjoyed a full programme now back indoors, albeit with Covid safety measures still in place. We participated in a modified Remembrance Day service at Beckenham War memorial. Sadly, the end of term Winter camp had to be drastically changed to allow for rising Covid cases, with the sleepover aspect being removed. Instead, a fun day was had at Frylands doing muddy hikes, bug hunting and singing round the campfire. Importantly Santa was still able to stop by and meet all the Beavers and give them a present.

At the end of Winter term Teri Ann's circumstances changed, meaning that she could no longer assist at Beaver meetings and she left Merry Colony. We are grateful for her short time with us and helping get Merry colony back up and running again.

By Spring term both Merry and Pippin colonies were back to full capacity of 24 beavers each. For the first time we ran the new Money Skills badge, which was enjoyed by all beavers, learning about the history of currency and the importance of saving and spending wisely! The end of March saw the return of the District Easter Egg Hunt attended by 34 beavers. Lots of fun

was had, chasing the cheeky chick and meeting the Easter Bunny.

Both colonies have enjoyed the return to "normal" scouting. Many thanks to the Beavers and parents for their help and support as we have transitioned back and got both colonies back up and running to full capacity.

Helen Langston & Dave Barber

Cubs (8-10½ yrs)

This year for cubs has been very different but despite the challenges we have continued to meet weekly and work on badges and have had two virtual camps! As lockdown continued, we turned to zoom and quickly learnt the art of running cub meetings on zoom – learn how to use the mute button and disable the chat and scavenger hunts always work well! We ran the zoom meetings as one group and regularly had 25 cubs join us online. We covered many of the basics of scouts including knot making, pioneering (with marshmallows and spaghetti) learnt about the Incas and made pan pipes. At the end of the summer term, we completed our athletics badge virtually.

In May, instead of being in Dorking on camp, we ran a virtual camp and over 20 cubs and their families camped, either outside or in their homes. We had a virtual campfire with songs led by our YL's and of course hot chocolate and s'mores, cooked

ourselves eggy bread for breakfast, and did a number of challenges including a recycled boat and toilet people.

As the lockdown lifted, we started a new term in September with a day out at Frylands where 36 cubs took part in making barrel carts and an assault course. We managed to squeeze in, weather permitting, a few evenings at the hut playing games. We had a further 2 evening meetings at Frylands (the last one just before second lockdown) doing fires and more s'mores.

As we could not take part in the annual remembrance service in November, we painted remembrance pebbles and left them on the doorstep for all to see.

Through November we also took part in the race around the world, raising money for those scout groups hit hardest by Covid19. We had to learn about different cultures and customs along the way and we did our own treasure hunt around Beckenham to find where Backshall and Glover had been. The cubs raised over £1250 for this cause. Well done.

As Christmas approached, we did some Christmas crafts and for our last meeting before Christmas made Oreo truffles on zoom. The year was rounded off by Peter Duncan (former Chief Scout and 5th Beckenham South Cub) panto online and he gave a shout out to the cubs of the 5th Beckenham South!

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The New Year and we were again on Zoom starting with a scavenger hunt, learning about Tu Bish Vat. We covered Burns night and Chinese New Year on line too. For the second half of the spring term, we completed our science badge over a number of evenings finishing off with chocolate at the end of term.

We also managed to squeeze in another virtual space camp in March – making egg landing craft, being an astronaut and making our own space food and building towers spaceman style, we made constellation tubes and before bed had a bedtime story from space read by Tim Peake. The next morning, we guided aliens to the hut and made fizzing moon rocks and made a rocket to return to earth. A great camp with over 20 cubs camping in a den at home and all completing their astronomer badge.

We have seen lots of change over the last year the biggest of which is Andy and Keeley Dawe not being part of our weekly meetings. They have been the backbone of cubs for over 10 years and are greatly missed and we thank you for all you have done and taught both cubs and the now leaders over the years and we look forward to seeing you when we are camping again. We have welcomed 3 new leaders, Anna has moved from beavers to cubs and Ray and Sinead have joined the team and thank you to Adam and Debs who have supported the cubs team this year, and Andrew

and Olivia who went from YL to section assistant during the year. Thank you for all you have done over the last year to keep cubs going.

Lastly, I have to thank the cubs and the parents for their resilience support and encouragement over this difficult year.

Liz Martin

Scouts (10½ - 14yrs)

Thunder Troop is led by Tim Younge on a Thursday evening, and Andy Dawes has taken on the Lightning Troop after Don Mullane stepped back in the summer. We would like to thank Don for his many years as Lightning Scout leader.

Following a number of years with restricted scouting due to Covid, It has been great to see our normal Troop nights have attendance almost back to where it was pre-pandemic, and a long list of activities and trips over the year.

We started the year with a Winter camp in January. Over 25 scouts and 10 leaders came together for a weekend of activities in Surrey. Laser tag proved popular with both kids and adults!

There have been several outings this year for the scouts, including some new trips we've run for the first time. This includes Bedbury cycling on the gravel paths, a day at Bletchley Park, Mud larking at Deptford Creek, Monopoly Run and a cycling day with Penge Cycle club (tour de Penge). We've also been making full use of the new minibus; with a trip to the women's euros at Brentford to watch Germany vs Denmark, a water sports day

at Docklands, and multiple evenings at Frylands.

We had our delayed summer camp in the new forest at Ferny Crofts - the scouts did many activities on the site including Jacob's ladder, Raft building, Tomahawk throwing, camp fires, and Beach volley ball (a very respectable showing in the whole camp volleyball tournament, coached by Adrian). We had day trips out to the Beach, an inflatables course, and a hike to see the ponies.

We would like to thank all of the leaders and occasional helpers who have stayed with us during Covid. Additionally, the Scouts section has seen new leaders get involved both on camp and on weekday evenings, and whole Scout team is already planning the year ahead. A BRAVO for Spencer also for his help.

Tim Younge

Fireworks

We continued our organisation of the Beckenham Fireworks display and the Easter Egg Hunt in Croydon Road Recreation Ground, and were very pleased to raise a record amount for local charities – over £41,000. This would not be possible without a huge commitment from the group and our many volunteers, and the continued support of the local community, to whom we offer our grateful thanks.