

Fifth Beckenham South Scout Group Annual Report

April 2022 – March 2023

Group Scout Leader



A successful year of Scouting for the whole Group, very much over shadowed by the illness of our current quartermaster and historic Scout Leader John Potter. John having been recently presented with his fifty years' service award was in the winter months taken ill and diagnosed with lymphoma. A pillar of our beloved Scout Group, John remains with us but his health deteriorates monthly. Our thoughts and prayers are constantly with him.

All sections have strived and surpassed Scout Association minimum policy operating standards despite relentless changes to policy and extra additions to risk assessment requirements and all sections have learnt to function and thrive in the adversity of a post Covid society, where youngsters have distinctly lost out on years of personal social development and pose new challenges to leadership teams.

Beavers continue to flourish with numbers and adventures, joining in with Bromley District events such as Easter Egg hunt and running their own winter and summer sleepovers and Cubs too continue to hit

the ground running with a full-scale Jubilee camp earning well deserved nights away permits for the section leaders.

In September of 2022, our Friday Scout section received a new but very experienced section leader who recruited a new team bringing an excellent cross section of skills to Scouting and ever since have gone strength to strength, introducing Friday Scouts who have never camped before to nights under canvas and Scout skills from the basics upwards.



Our partnered Explorer Unit summer camped in the Lake District and whilst the weather was uncharacteristically dry, their autumn canal trip was then somewhat hampered by low water levels in the Grand Union Canal and made for some sporting memories of walking alongside the boat to raise its water line.

As the world returned to normality, our Scout Group was able to resume once more our annual Remembrance Parade and attendance of Beckenham

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Remembrance Sunday Memorial service. Post Covid, the event was organised by St George's Church for the first time ever and had its challenges but as within Scouting itself, we were able to adapt and overcome and along with our District Commissioner, represent a handsome turnout of our young members for our local community.



In the summer break of 2022, our Group Executive Committee approved and authorised some large scale works to our Scout Hut in installing a new kitchen, overseen and project managed by our Explorer Unit Section Leader Philip Cole. The build was completed on time, to specification and more or less on budget and all sections now benefit from the new facilities.

Adam Young

Beaver Scouts (6-8yrs)



Pippin Colony was once again led by Dave Barber, Spencer Coward and Paul

Blewer, ably assisted by our Young Leaders Henry, Josh, Amelia and Scarlett.

Our numbers fluctuated throughout this time, averaging around 18 Beavers. Post lockdown seems to have seen plenty of demand for places, but several new Beavers did not stay the course. We saw that many parents had placed multiple places across a range of scout groups, then failed to let us know that they had accepted elsewhere, which was a little frustrating.

For those that we did retain, we provided a healthy and varied programme:

Summer term 2022:

- We attended our annual summer camp, this time at Frylands Wood Scout Centre. Activities included tackling the traversing wall, orienteering, a nature ramble and songs around the campfire. This was a joint camp with our sister colony, Merry, for which 15 of our Beavers attended with 14 from Merry.
- An evening trip to Frylands to create bug hotels and learned how to use natural materials
- As well as plenty of games, the Beavers worked towards their Communicator and Air Activity badges.

Autumn term 2022:

- Badge work this term included Emergency Aid and the World Challenge Award.
- Winter camp was also held at Frylands Wood with 8 from Pippin and 11 from Merry attending overnight. Activities included Disc Golf, team building, the campfire and Xmas crafts

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- The Beavers enjoyed Halloween activities at the hut, and many took part in clearing the park on Sunday morning after our annual fireworks display
- Remembrance Day parade saw 10 Beavers from Pippin take part in the parade through Beckenham.

Spring term 2023

- Chinese New Year was celebrated, and the Beavers learned about the Year of the Rabbit
- 10 signed up to take part in the District Easter Egg Hunt, but sadly this was called off on the day due to very poor weather conditions
- Pancakes were enjoyed at the start of Lent with a variety of fillings
- We concentrated on the Teamwork Challenge Award

A busy and enjoyable year that saw 5 Beavers from Pippin achieve their Chief Scout Bronze Award.

Our thanks, as always, go to our parents who have supported us throughout.

Finally, we acknowledged that one of our own had Gone Home, Alison, who sadly lost her battle against cancer. Her funeral was attended by a strong representation from the 5th, which was gratefully appreciated by her family and friends.

Dave Barber

Cubs (8-10½ yrs)

The year for cubs has been a busy one and we have continued to meet weekly and work on badges and have had four camps (to make up for all of those we missed out



during COVID). Numbers have remained steady with 24 cubs in each pack and leaders Ray, Sinead, Anna, and Liz. This year Matthew has joined the team and is a valuable new asset to team cubs, ably supported by YL's Kirsty, Jess and Luke, and Andrew joining when not away at university.

We started the term in April with a hut sleepover pizza and film evening – we all had a great time and the weather was kind to us so we were able to stay outside until it began to get dark.

The highlight of the year, as always is our Whitsun camp and in May we once again did our greenfield camp near Dorking on the Jubilee weekend. The weekend was all things royal and we had a Jubilee tea party with a visit from the Queen! (almost). During the weekend lots of activities were on offer including archery, craft making, rifle shooting, fires, an assault course and we did a hike on Sunday afternoon. Our camp fire we were blessed with a beautiful sunset.

Our weekly meetings have seen a variety of activities, including science evening, shelter building, wormery making, fires, and the end of summer term our water slide evening. We had a great day out at the docklands scout project in July trying out dinghy sailing, rowing, canoeing and

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some of the cubs went on the yacht in the amazing setting of Canary Wharf.

In October we had a weekend camp at Cudham – again another weekend of scouting skills, assault courses, zip wire and the cave bus. We had a joint campfire with a scout group but the 5th were definitely the loudest!

Autumn term saw us making structures with marshmallows and spaghetti, tin can cooking and the annual Halloween party. We joined the group Remembrance Day parade. The final event of 2022 was our Christmas camp at Frylands – it was frosty and freezing and we had our Christmas dinner barbecued outside before we had a surprise visitor to camp with a red coat, long white beard and lots of presents. During the days we tried out grass sledging, barrel building, climbing walk and an early Sunday morning frosty walk around Frylands.

January saw us making the scout emblem out of strawberry laces, pancake making, celebrating Burns night and Chinese New Year stir fry

Thank you to all our leaders and parent helpers for all the support throughout the year and we look forward to another year of scouting.

Liz Martin

Scouts (10½ - 14yrs)



Both troops continue to flourish; with Thunder (Thursdays) led by Tim Younge and Lightning (Fridays) led by Andy Dawe.

The core team of scout leaders includes Spencer, Alistair, Andrew S, Ray, Dickie, CJ, Matthew and Joan plus others on an ad hoc basis.

It is great to see our troop nights back to pre-COVID numbers, with a combined attendance of around 40 scouts per week. This year we are very pleased that 4 of our scouts achieved their Gold Scout Award, which were presented by our DC, Sheila Howard.

Andy and Tim have been arranging short nights away to build up the young people's confidence, and the scouts are starting to overcome their reluctance to attend overnight trips. We started the year with our indoor winter camp near Guildford, which 30 scouts and 10 leaders attended. We were glad it was indoors – with frost on the ground outside, but that didn't deter us from activities such as high ropes!

Our weekly meetings have had a variety of badge work as well as troop games nights, Nerf Gun Fighting, Water Slide Night, Pancakes & Chinese Cooking, Circus Skills, and Quasar to name but a few.

Days out have included Greenwich for Mudlarking, a further day out cycling with

Penge Cycle Club (this is becoming a regular fixture for us, thanks to Andrew), likewise the yearly Monopoly run (thanks to CJ). The minibus is getting lots of use for day trips out - such as Water Sports Days, and Frylands to make use of their camp fire area to light fires.

We had our summer camp in the New Forest where the scouts enjoyed many activities on site including Jacob's Ladder, Raft Building, Beach Volleyball and day trips out to the New Forest and a dip in the sea followed by fish and chips. Tank World was a bit of a hit! We were supported by a fantastic turnout of leaders, despite the weather!

We would like to thank all of the leaders and occasional helpers who have helped throughout the year to achieve all of this. Looking forward to 2024!

Tim Young

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 £70,000. 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.

www.beckenhamfireworks.com