

1st P&P Post

No. 22
July 2015

What a term!

The summer term is always really busy and this one has been as busy as ever! There have been camps, sports days, competitions, days out and all of the Sections have made the most of the light evenings and warm weather getting outside as much as possible. None of this happens without the hard work and enthusiasm of our Leaders and adult helpers, so this is a good opportunity to say a big Thank You to everyone involved with the Group.

In a couple of weeks, term will be finished and the Leaders will be able to put their feet up for a few weeks. Then in September it's back to Scouting big time with our Family Camp down by the river at Mapledurham Lock. We hope to see as many of you as possible coming to join us. On Saturday 19th, during the camp, we will be holding our AGM, so even if you're not coming camping we would love to see you come along for that. The AGM offers lots of opportunity to get involved with the Scout Group as part of the Group Executive Committee. This is the team of people who support the Leaders by looking after things like fundraising, equipment and communication, so that the Leaders can concentrate on providing great activities for the young people. If you think you would like to get involved please do get in touch; talk to your child's Section Leader or email chair@1stpurleyandpangbourne.co.uk

More 1st P&P Winners!

Congratulations to all the Cub Scouts who took part in the District's five-a-side football competition in June. 1st P&P's Kingfisher and Heron Cub Packs took first and second place! Well done everyone!

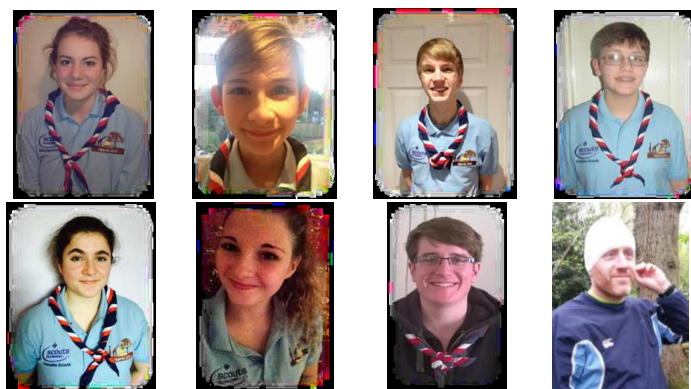


Bon Voyage!

Good luck to all the Explorer Scouts who are off to foreign parts in a couple of weeks. Hannah T is off on an amazing adventure to the World Scout Jamboree in Japan. This opportunity only comes up once every four years and participants go through a pretty tough selection and training process, so well done to Hannah and we hope you have a fantastic time.



We also have 6 Explorer Scouts heading off to Uganda to take part in Project Africa. Becky, Ella, Elliott, George, Maddie and Summer are going to be working at two rural schools, Butagaya Primary School and Iwololo Primary School, building and refurbishing classrooms.



Leaders Stuart and Adam both went to Uganda as part of Project Africa 2011 and are joining the team again this year.

We wish all the Explorer Scouts and adult Leaders the very best of luck in their adventures and ask that they come and visit all the Sections on their return to tell us what they got up to.





Water Voles Colony

The Summer Term has been a busy one for the Water Voles. We started the term working on our fitness challenges. The Beaver Scouts learnt how to find their heartbeat, then we discovered what happens to our heartbeats after lots of exercise. This was followed by an evening of balancing games and identifying fruit and vegetables. The Water Voles definitely impressed us with how many different ones they could identify.

We then focussed on campfires. We had to postpone our campfire due to bad weather so instead we got out the electric campfire and enjoyed an evening of campfire songs. The following week the weather was much better so we were able to have our real campfire and enjoyed an evening of knots and making s'mores.

We invested our new Beaver Scouts after Half Term and Ringtail was presented with her Wood badge - well done Ringtail! We also presented some Bronze Awards - well done to the Beaver Scouts who received these.



We have enjoyed a couple of evenings off-site as well with a walk from Purley to Pangbourne through Sulham woods. The Beaver Scouts were given a disposable camera and a list of things to take photos of. Great fun was had - the next week they assessed how they could have taken the photos differently to

enable them to gain their Photographers badges. We also enjoyed an evening geocaching - the lodges were given a travel bug each and they wrote where they would like them to go, we then placed them in a cache and the challenge is to see whose travel bug can travel the furthest. We look forward to hearing how far they go.

We are looking forward to going on the District Beaver Teddy Bear's picnic this week and an evening of water fun before the summer holidays.

Tic Tac (Colleen Hughes), Beaver Scout Leader

Polecats Colony

The Polecats Colony have enjoyed a great term, starting to think about some of the new challenges for Beaver Scouts that the refreshed Scouting programme is providing for us.

We had a Project Africa evening, welcoming our Young Leader Malak (Ella) and Explorer Scout Becky who told us all about their upcoming trip to Uganda. We all enjoyed playing African games and making flatbreads. We also learned about the World Scout Jamboree from our other young Leader Rusty (Hannah W) who attended the last Jamboree in Sweden in 2011.



We focussed on uniform, with Rusty showing us all how to roll our scarves properly, and thought about what we can do to keep our uniforms looking nice. As a result we had some very smart Beavers ready when Jo Hammett, Assistant District Commissioner Beaver Scouts, came to visit us. Well done to James, Anya, Frankie, Evelyn, Elizabeth and Evie who she presented with Bronze Chief Scouts Awards.

In recent weeks, we have started to work towards our stage 1 Emergency Aid badge, learning why it is always important to get help and how to go about getting it. We also went for a walk around the village. On the second part of the walk the Beavers were challenged to carry a cup of water back to the Barn. This didn't prove easy for everyone, but it got us thinking about how far some people in the world have to go to get clean water.

Sunshine (Fran Jones), Assistant Beaver Scout Leader



Kingfisher Pack

The Kingfisher Cub Pack have worked hard on their garden project and it formed a great backdrop for their investitures this

term. They have also been working towards their disability awareness badge, making sandwiches one handed, completing an assault course blindfolded and playing blind football, as well as learning how to communicate with deaf and blind people.

In support of Project Africa, the Pack held a competition to see which Six could make the longest line of copper coins. The winners measured in at a whopping 19.8 metres! They also had a fun evening building shelters in Sulham woods, and more

building fun when they constructed towers using spaghetti and marshmallows!



Heron Pack

Heron Pack had a very civilised start to the term, making pots of tea, making scones with jam and clotted cream, decorating biscuits with the St George flag and playing marbles. This was followed by a fun evening learning the sport of curling.



They have been out and about lots this term, with several visits to Sulham woods. They also visited Reading Climbing Centre where a number of new Cub Scouts were invested on the climbing wall! More recently, they have been thinking about recycling and saving energy as part of their Global Challenge. To finish off the summer they are off snow tubing and are looking forward to the traditional end of term chip walk.

Woodhouse Park Camp 2015

For their main camp this year, the Cubs spent a fun-packed four days at Woodhouse Park Scout Activity Centre, near Bristol. The weather was very pleasant and the site was excellent giving the

Cubs an opportunity to take part in a great range of activities, including crate stacking, archery and rifle shooting, as well as backwoods cooking, pioneering, wide games and two camp fires! They also tested their navigational skills (and those of the Leaders!), going on a hike round the local countryside; some Cubs walked a little further and ate slightly more cake than others!! Thanks to the camp coinciding with Bjam 2015 (Brunel District Jamboree), the Cubs were also treated to some less-traditional activities, including a disco and an amazing fireworks display. The camp ended with a fantastic day out at Noah's Ark Zoo Farm.



Gilwell Fun Day

Thanks to the District Leader Team, both Packs were thrilled to be able to travel to Gilwell Park, the headquarters of UK Scouting, to take part in one of their annual Fun Days alongside Cubs from the other Groups in the District. The Cubs had loads of fun going on the waltzers, bouncy castles and slides (lots of different ones!) and tried out the zip wire, grass sledging, caving, water balloons, go carts and abseiling. The amazing day out was only slightly dampened by a downpour towards the end!



The Scouts have been out and about camping and doing lots of other activities, including a bike night (many thanks to Kevin Williams), hikes and catapult building.

Collard Bridge Camp 2015

This year's main summer camp at Collard Bridge in Devon was our biggest one yet! Thirty seven Scouts enjoyed a week away supported by seven Leaders and a Young Leader. Guest Leaders Vince Knight and Ian Shenton joined the team for the first couple of nights which meant we could do lots of skills training with the Scouts: knife, axe and saw work, fire lighting,

woggle making and some basic compass work.



The remainder of the week was spent out and about. We enjoyed an amazing sea safari on two 400hp-powered 35 foot ribs that could do almost 60 knots; we did 25 knots which was plenty! We also went for a walk around Tarr Steps and spent a great day learning to surf. The Scouts put their navigational skills to good use on hike day, when they were dropped off in their Patrols at different locations and had to find their way back to camp; three patrols made it, but four didn't quite manage it! The final day was spent swimming followed by the Scouts shopping on a budget for food to prepare their own dinners.

Dragon Boating

In the last issue of the 1st P&P Post we showed a picture of the Scouts in training for going dragon boating. They put this to use when they went to Marlow and spent an afternoon earning their dragon boat badge. They enjoyed two sessions on the water and, of course, ended up *in* the water at the end! There were spaces for 40 young people so this event was opened up to

Explorer Scouts and older Cubs and it was great to see the Sections having fun together. Well done to Scouts Robert and Caitlin who were invested on board!



District Camp 2015

District Scout Camp this year was held at a new location on the Englefield Estate. With 34 Scouts attending, 1st P&P was the biggest Group taking part. We camped together with the Pang Valley Scout Link Group, who provide Scouting for young people with special needs.

The Scouts enjoyed a fun weekend of activities including climbing, archery, air rifle shooting, woggle and scarf making, fire lighting, boiling an egg in a paper cup, free standing tarp and hammock pitching and pizza eating! They also enjoyed a fantastic "It's a Knockout" competition on Sunday morning run by Network and Explorer Scouts. This was a great way for the Scouts to make new friends with some of the 125 Scouts from across the District who attended.



It's been another great term for our Unit with the total number of Explorers now comfortably into the 20s. We have invested two new Explorers since Easter with Mark and Tyler now formally part of the West Pang ESU.

The longer evenings and pleasant weather have given us plenty of opportunities to get outside in recent weeks, not that our Unit needs an excuse to venture outdoors.

From totem pole building in Sulham woods to catapult making outside the Barn, we've given the Explorers lots of practice on their basic Scouting skills. There have also been plenty of games with our own version of The Cube, an impromptu rounders evening and an epic Nerf gun battle.



More recently, we have had a fantastic evening of tennis run by members of Purley Tennis Club, while we've also been on a mad dash around Reading town centre for a specially created Monopoly run.

Even when the weather has not been as kind, we've kept busy. We ran a First Aid evening, thanks to a visit from Andy Hunter, introducing the Unit to some of the health issues faced by young people, as well as basic first aid knowledge.

At the time of writing, we are preparing to head to Gilwell 24 with 15 members of the Unit, as well as planning to finish the term in style with our traditional

Cosmo's celebration. There might even be another investiture before the term is up, which would be a fitting way for the Unit to head into the summer.

Chris Hughes, Explorer Scout Leader