



Group Activity Weekend (GAW)

The Beaver's GAW with a Space theme took place at Walton Firs Camp site with 62 Beavers sleeping over and 16 Beavers joining us for the day. As one parents put it afterwards: "WOW, what an amazing Beaver Camp. My son went from being a little shy to start with, absolutely loved it, loved it."

WOW, what an amazing Beaver Camp

What makes it such a success with our Beavers is being outdoors amongst friends with a mix of activities which included : a game involving water blasters, a bouncy slide, a flying saucer game, making space rockets, flags, spacesuits and a space back pack which was all used in the giant relay game at the end. Great planning, as well as support from the parents to help us guide it all in right direction. Top that up with very tasty food and a fitting campfire sing song led by John to end the day and the Beavers were more than ready to go to bed.

On Sunday after breakfast there was time for a quick game before The Going up Ceremony signaling the end of the Beaver activities. Seeing the photo of one of our Beavers falling asleep on the way home holding on to his sweets made us smile.

Thank you to all who helped out to make this a success.
The Beaver Leader Team.



Group Activity Weekend



After a smooth set-up of camp on Thursday evening, Cubs arrived excited and ready for camp on Friday. Things got off to a great start as Cubs found out who was in their tent and then got out their sleeping bag and other gear ready for the evening ahead. After a tour of the campsite with Hathi, it was time for a quick chat about what we would be doing tomorrow and for a briefing from Rama and Mang about the camp competition. Then the Leaders set up the outdoor night lights and off the Cubs went to brush their teeth then settle down in their tents for a good night's rest.

Saturday morning came with a lovely camp breakfast (cooked by Jacala, Ingrid and Hathi) then it was time to 'half braille' the tents to get them aired. Rama and Mang did a tent inspection and then Cubs said 'good morning' to the day visitors who arrived. We joined the rest of the Scout Group for Flag Brake and then we got ready for our activity bases.

This year Cubs covered most of the Outdoor Challenge badge (one the badges needed to achieve the Chief Scouts Silver Award). There were 5 hour-long bases which were :

- tent pitch and strike training and keeping your tent tidy and safe
- fire lighting, camp safety and first aid (which seemed to go well together)
- pioneering (making camp gadgets with staves and rope such as a tent pole or tea towel dryer)
- shelter building amongst the bushes with tarpaulins
- a craft base on the Countryside Code

Cubs covered all these bases throughout the day with breaks for drinks and cake and also a longer break for lunch.

The weather stayed dry and sunny all day, which was excellent. After bases were finished, it was time to get the tents sorted out for the evening before getting on some warmer clothes and sitting down for a lovely dinner of chilli con carne. Of course, after you've eaten you need to wash up, so bowls of warm water and tea towels were distributed for that very purpose.

With the washing up done we could grab our camp fire blankets and torches and walk to the camp fire fun, led by Hathi. After the camp fire, we said 'goodbye' to the Cub day visitors, had a quick supper then once again Cubs went to brush their teeth and settle down in their tents for a 'better than last night' nights rest.

Sunday morning was a replay of Saturday except that breakfast was bacon sandwiches. We had a brilliant Scouts Own and Going Up, the latter in the Walton Firs gorge where Beavers coming up to Cubs had to scramble over large chunks of tree and Cubs going up to Scouts had to balance on a gate



Group Activity Weekend



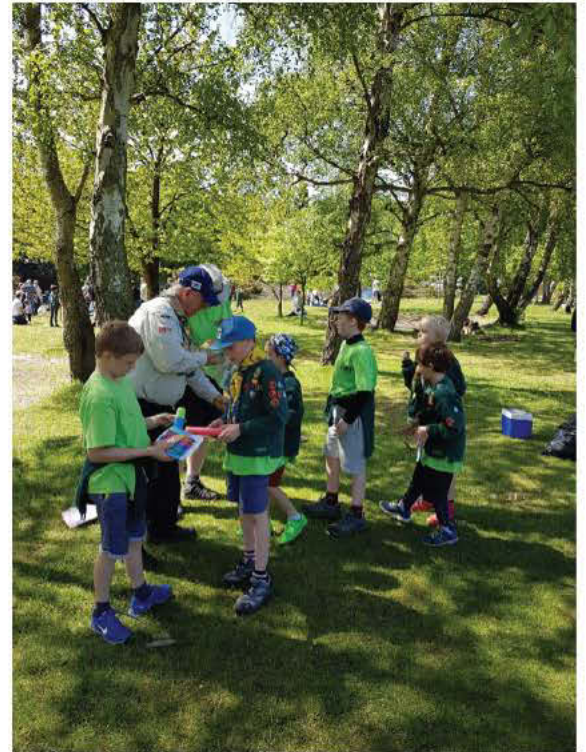
while it swung across the ravine (watch out Beavers!).

After that, Cubs went to check out the new Maze then it was time to start packing up camp. Cubs helped take down and pack tents (which were lovely and dry by now) and to dry out tent pegs by stacking them in a tower.

Once tents and poles were taken to the van, it was time for the last activity towards our Outdoor Challenge badge, to cook a meal on camp! Each tent group was allocated to a Leader who helped them get a disposable barbecue lit and then to cook beef burgers safely. Cubs also prepared a healthy salad. So lunch was a beef burger in a bun with salad. Pudding was a s'more, which is a chocolate biscuit sandwich, chocolate side facing inwards, with a cooked marshmallow in between. Cubs also had some fruit, just for good measure!

After lunch, there was just enough time to help load the remaining equipment onto the van, do a litter pick then announce the camp competition winners, before going to the closing ceremony.

And so that was the end of another great Group Activity Weekend. We hope the Cubs had a great time with lots of good memories and thank everyone who made the weekend so successful.



Group Activity Weekend



A chilly Friday evening at 6 o'clock and 46 scouts and their leaders gather at Walton Firs for annual Group Camp. Practice has paid off and the seven patrol tents and seven dining shelters are quickly put up and gas stoves lit to prepare a snack. While the scouts tuck in to Pot Noodles, the leaders enjoy slightly more appetising fish and chips.

As darkness (and the temperature) falls the scouts turn in for the night. Saturday morning proves to be even chillier but after breakfast the scouts get the opportunity to warm up by collecting and chopping vast quantities of wood, ready for their fires later that afternoon. Each patrol prepares a sketch for the campfire. After much pleading, we allow the John Lewis sketch to make a reappearance after three years, on the basis that some of the beavers and cubs won't have seen it before. Dinner is cooked on the open fires – from burgers to more ambitious fajitas and lots of sweet puddings.

John displays his usual mastery of the campfire and the sketches are well received by all (except me, who ended up with cups of water down my back). Sunday is spent taking everything down again and packing away but with time out for the scouts to test themselves over the adventure course.

The weekend ends at the scouts centre, putting kit away and a frantic scramble by the scouts as all the excess sweets are returned. An exhausting weekend for all but the scouts have learnt some useful skills as well as having some fun. And no rain!

Paul





Group Scout Leader's Round-Up



Since the last newsletter it has been a busy period for all sections in the Group. I will not mention fundraising as this is covered elsewhere in the newsletter. However, I would like to thank everyone who helped with the fund raising events it is so important that the fundraising is maintained to ensure we can develop the Scouting programme that is provided here in Claygate.

I was fortunate to be part of the leader team that took Patrol Leaders and Assistant Patrol Leaders to Derbyshire at Easter. It was a great weekend for an expedition with the weather proving particularly challenging. I then joined up with the leaders who took 40+ Cub Scouts for a great weekend of activities and learning about the history of Cub Scouts at Gilwell Park. They were two very different weekends, but both rich in experiences for the young people.

Then it was onto Group Camp and over 200+ camping nights were undertaken during the weekend with all sections of the Group represented.

As I look further into the Summer I see further activities being organised by the leaders.

The Group will again be at the Claygate Flower Show, do drop into see the display and see some of the photographs that have been taken of recent activities. We will of course need help with the fundraising part of our presence

Hugh Gostling (GSL)



To all Claygate Cub Scouts
Be Prepared ...

Sunday 25th September 2016,
2pm onwards

To Party....

Please save the date; more details to follow





Transporting Beavers

In April, 40 Beavers plus adults and leaders made a day trip to The London Transport Museum in order for the Beavers to gain their Explorer Badge.

Finding out more about the exhibits and collecting different stamps in the process.

As the photos show, it was a great day out with a stop at the playground before taking the train home again.

Funny how fellow passengers seem to give our train carriage a miss. Too many youngsters?

The Beaver Leader Team





Cub Centenary Camp

Gilwell Park

8th-10th April



By now most will have realized that 2016 is a special year for Cub Scouting. First in the busy Cub calendar of our Centenary Year we held a one off pack holiday at Gilwell Park.

Gilwell Park is made up of a number of fields, a large "White House" and numerous other buildings. Most people probably wouldn't see too much special other than an activity centre with accommodation but to Warranted Scout Leaders, leaders who have passed all their training and been presented with their "Wood Badge", they know Gilwell is no ordinary park.



Owned by the U.K. Scout Association's, Gilwell Park is where the first Wood Badge course was held in September 1919 by Lord Baden Powell. As a Wood Badge recipient you automatically receive membership in to 1st Gilwell Park Scout Group, a very international Group. Gilwell Park has become a focal point for scouts and leaders from across the world, many making special trips to the UK just to visit it and take part in its yearly reunion.



As you walk around the Park you stumble across many scouting artifacts in the form of gateways, sign posts and statues. You also find numerous religious spaces and building dedicated to the many of the world faiths.

Having booked the largest accommodation building on site, late on the evening of Friday 8th April a coach load of excited Claygate Cubs (and leaders) turned up...





Cub Centenary Camp Gilwell Park

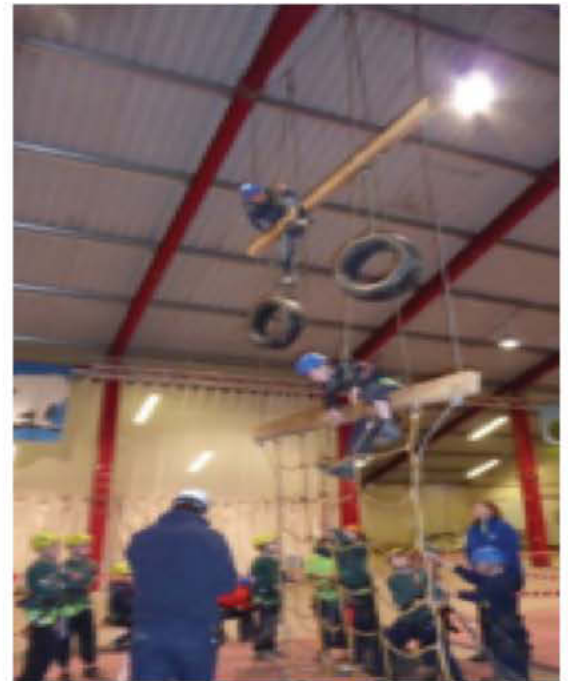


Our home for the weekend was the Branchet Lodge. It has 6 large bunkbed rooms for the Cubs and 6 small rooms for adults however this was not enough space for all leader and helpers. 3 very unfortunate leaders had the horrible experience of having to stay in the hotel accommodation of the White House and 3 luckily had a delightful night under canvas.

During the Saturday and Sunday morning all the Cubs took part in various activities, most of them led by the very friendly international team of Young Leaders. They add to the enjoyment of the activities undertaken as they talked to the cubs about their scouting experiences from their home countries.

On the Saturday Cubs got to tackle the gauntlet (a vertical obstacle course), explore Gilwell Park, have a go at rifle shooting, make a wooden Cub 100 Woogie and complete a Pioneering Challenge.

The evening was just as busy, after a roast dinner cubs got to look back at how Cubs has changed and performed a 1920 Ground Howl before we all went to the 'Gidney Cabin', a small building with a wood burner fire to have an incredibly special campfire. We were due to use one of the 2 campfire circles at Gilwell but due to the overnight rain it was very waterlogged. In the end this turned out for the best. This is one of the oldest buildings on site and was used by the Gilwell Wardens for meetings and training. We only just fitted in but our cosy Campfire will not be forgotten in a hurry. Thank you Hugh for arranging access and to Hatti (John Balwin) for leading us in song. One of the songs we sang, a new one for all the cubs, was titled "Back to Gilwell".





Cub Centenary Camp Gilwell Park

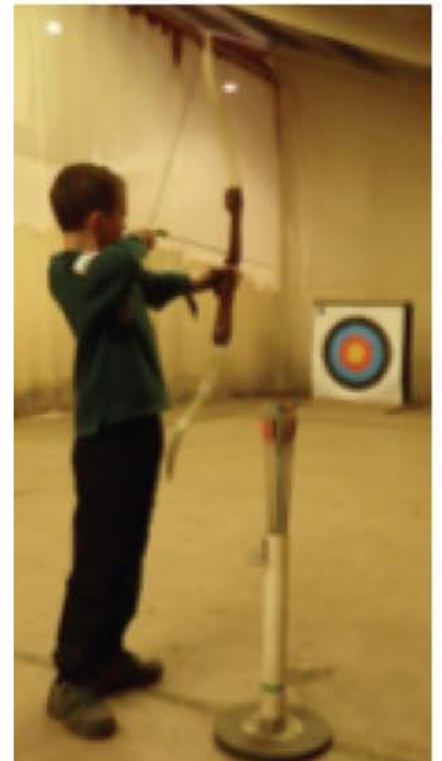


On Sunday morning the international team of young leaders ran some team games of which the likes had never been seen before. It must have been that international element. However I would like to apologise if your son/daughter came home in soaks that were perhaps once white but will never be again..... Maybe ask them about the shoe game...

After this, the cubs split back into group and each group had the opportunity of one more activity. Climbing, Archery, Low Ropes and Go carts to finish off a weekend of great experiences for all.

There are many more photographs from the weekend up on the web site.

Catherine Hackett, Akela Lion Pack.





Scouts District Day Hike - Saturday 12th March



The scout day hike is an annual event that pits the ten different groups in Esher district against each other in a competitive hike over a distance of around nine miles. The results count towards the overall top troop trophy, so everyone is keen to do well.

Teams are given a series of map co-ordinates and have to plot and navigate their own routes, whilst answering a series of questions along the way. Points are given for arriving at the designated checkpoints in the right sequence (which doesn't always happen!) and for remembering to look for answers to questions in between the more obvious stopping points.

This year, Claygate was represented in force, with three competition teams and two training teams. The training teams were grateful for the support of parents Colin Coburn and Dean Farthing for walking with them and keeping them on the right track.

The route started at Shere & Peaslake Scout HQ in Gomshall and took the teams out into the beautiful Surrey Hills. A cold and very misty morning soon brightened into a warm and sunny day, marking an unofficial end to the winter gloom.

Answering the competition questions meant keeping a keen eye open for local phone boxes (what number do you call to pay for your call), post boxes (what time is today's collection) and fire hydrant markers (what are the missing numbers). A large Greek urn also had to be located and the teams' map skills were tested by having to work out its grid reference.

All our teams made excellent progress, with the competition teams securing 1st, 2nd and 5th places in the main competition and the training teams coming in 2nd and 3rd overall.

Competition Teams:

- Claygate B : 1st (Will B, Jack C, David G and Gus T)
- Claygate C : 2nd (Daniel C, Andrew C, Tom H, Toby W)
- Claygate A : 5th (Kathryn A, Eleanor B, Nathan K, Mackenzie B)

Training Teams:

- Claygate E came 2nd overall (Quentin, Ryan and Will)
- Claygate D came 3rd overall (Archie, Harry, Jack F, Thomas L)

In addition to entering the competition, 1st Claygate also takes on the annual responsibility of organising the whole event. Huge thanks to the extended team of leaders who make this possible, whether planning the route, checking in teams, validating map plotting, manning checkpoints or driving the bus to mop up the waifs and strays.



Top Troop Trophy Update



Every year the 10 scout troops in Esher District compete for the Top Troop Trophy. Each Troop earns points towards the trophy both from entering teams and their final position in a number of District Events that take place across the year, including the Day and Night Hikes and the Scouting Skills, Archery, Camping, Cooking and Fishing Competitions. Entering a team into any of these competitions earns 3 points, with 2 points for entering a second team, and points ranging from 12 points for a 1st place to 1 point for finishing 6th. An additional single point can be earned for entering a county event, (e.g. cyclo-cross,) or the less "scouting" district competitions. The older scouts who have developed their skills via the weekly programme and training weekends usually represent the Troop in these events, and they are an opportunity for them to demonstrate their skills and work together as a team independent of adult leadership.



1st Claygate have been placed 3rd in this competition for the last 3 years, with 1st Hinchley Wood taking the trophy. Having had a young and inexperienced Troop 2 years ago, our older scouts are now beginning to demonstrate a good level of skills, and the position for 2016, after 4 events, is currently looking "interesting". A 5th place in the cross country and a 4th place in the scouting skills competition at the beginning of the year, saw us in our usual 3rd place, so no surprises there.

However following a great result in the Day Hike, with teams achieving 1st, 2nd and 5th places, and a 2nd place in the Shooting competition, 1st Claygate are now top of the table with 44 points, followed by 1st Oxshott on 37 points and 1st Hinchley Wood on 36 points. Hopefully, like Leicester at the top of the Premier League at Christmas, this form will continue!

The emphasis in the Top Troop Trophy competition is on team rather than individual performances, although individual places are given for some events, e.g. shooting. Congratulations and thanks to all the scouts who have represented the Troop so far this year; with the competitions taking place at weekends and with other commitments availability can be tricky. The Day Hike has been reported elsewhere in this newsletter, but congratulations to the Shooting team of Jasper, Nathan, Jack and Alex for their 2nd place as a team, (along with Jasper's 2nd place overall) ; the scouting skills team of Daniel, David, Tom, Gus, Toby and Josh, and the cross-country team of Laurence, (also 2nd in the District,) and Reece. We may not win the Trophy in 2016, (there is a long way to go,) but we are enjoying looking at the current placings in the competition!

Troop Leadership Team



Scout's Easter Trip



Summer camp and the Chief Scout's Gold Award. Both are important parts of the troop programme and this year we were able to revive the tradition of providing the older scouts with an Easter camp, that gives them a sneak preview of this year's summer camp site, whilst also completing their Gold Award expedition challenge.

Following an early morning departure from Claygate, the group arrived at Matlock Green Scout HQ, our base in the Peak District. A sunny Good Friday brought out the crowds, resulting in Matlock being re-christened "Gridlock" by one scout.

Friday afternoon saw the group driving on to Dovedale, where this year's summer camp will be held. The site looks very promising, with a large level field, enclosed by rivers and streams making it into a small island. Everyone is now looking forward to spending a week here at the end of July.

Friday evening was spent preparing for the expedition. Carrying all their own equipment and camping out overnight, scouts have to complete a two day hike on their own. Preparations included practising putting up tents and lighting stoves, as well as packing and adjusting (large!) rucksacks. There were also route cards to be completed, maps to mark up and emergency procedures to discuss. All in all, it was quite late in the evening by the time everyone got to bed feeling slightly nervous about the weekend to come.

Come Saturday morning, the weather had decided to play a major role in the "challenge" part of the expedition. The two teams of six faced a cold, grey and drizzly morning as they were dropped off in the middle of the Peak District national park. Both teams quickly located the Limestone Way, their primary walking route and set off into the gloom.

Upon arrival at the evening's camp site, things got really interesting, with strong wind, rain and even sleet providing the backdrop for pitching hike tents and trying to light paraffin stoves out in the open. Everyone did eventually manage to get a hot meal and a dry bed before it got dark and the leaders were able to leave the scouts on their own for the night.

Sunday saw the groups continuing along the Limestone Way and starting to get more comfortable with carrying large packs and navigating by themselves. Everyone got safely to the pick up point, but the weather had one last trick to play, delivering a large hail storm just as everyone was waiting for the minibus.

The scouts all did brilliantly and very much earned their expedition challenges. Despite some initial reservations, everyone enjoyed the experience and they certainly have some good tales to tell in the future.



*Things got really
"Interesting"*





4 Inns Walk

The 4 Inns Walk is a tough competitive event in the Peak District, over some of the roughest moorland in Britain. It is organised by The Scout Association in Derbyshire. There are 2 routes 65km for older Explorers/Leaders and a new 35km route for younger Explorers.

Friday 18th March arrived and 5 Explorers, 2 Leaders and a support team of 2 headed north to Holmbridge in the Peak District.

After a cramped night on the floor in a local church hall we headed south to the 35km start at the Snake Pass Inn. Those doing the 65km route started at Holmbridge.

A quick breakfast was followed by an inspection of all of our kit and then we were off. As we were the first teams to leave and none of the teams starting at Holmbridge had yet reached the Snake we were, for a very short period of time, leading the event!!

Most of the route is either up or down so after leaving the Snake it was up to the top of Kinder Scout and then down into Edale. This was followed by an up hill section out of Edale and then down hill into Chapel en-le-Frith. From Chapel we headed up to White Hall and then down into the Goyt Valley and then a long uphill section to the Cat & Fiddle Inn. This was followed by the last section, downhill, into Buxton and the finish.

I am pleased to report that everyone finished in just over 10 hours so congratulations to Matthew, Philip, Sam, Erin & Gemma. Thanks to Simon for leading one of the teams and a special thank you to Ed & Tiny who acted as our support team.

I must also mention Sam who, whilst most of us were hobbling around on the Sunday morning, was picked up early so he could get home to play 90 minutes of football in a cup semi-final!

Mark Southey



Band Round Up



The bands 15th Anniversary Concert took place on Friday 11th March and formed part of the Claygate Music Festival. The concert had a 'Last Night of the Proms' theme and there was lots of flag waving and singing from a very enthusiastic audience.



On the 9th April the band played at the Claygate – 'Get Involved Day'

On the 20th April the band performed at the Mayor's Civic Reception held at Danes Hill School in Oxshott. The band played a variety of pieces including a piece called 'Buglers Holiday' specially requested by the Mayor.





Jumble Sale / Plant Sale



In April, another successful jumble sale took place at the scout centre. A total of £1900 was raised thanks to the hard work of everyone involved. There is a dedicated team that co-ordinates the organisation of each jumble sale headed by Sandra Fox, with assistance from Dot and John Baldwin; however, they rely heavily on parent volunteers to ensure each one is a success. Help is needed with sorting the jumble, setting up the hall, at the sale itself and clearing away post event. Everyone who volunteers is given very clear instructions about what to do and the events always run smoothly. The majority of money is taken through sales on the day to the general public. However, some items are auctioned on eBay and unsold jumble is sold in bulk at the end. Ebay was a particular feature of April's amount raised, which made the amount higher than usual.

The annual Plant Sale was once again held on the 7th / 8th May, and coincided with the first warm weekend of the year, which seemed to help the plants positively fly out of the scout centre. With a tray of 12 plants priced at £4.70 we offer good value, and the plants come directly from the producer, being driven up from Essex on the Friday before the sale, so are in excellent condition. By Sunday morning there was very little stock left, and some customers were disappointed, and by Sunday lunchtime we had sold out – something of a record – and made almost £2,200 for Group funds. Many thanks to Gill Gostling who organised the sale, assisted by Christine Warner and Katie Ernest, to all those who helped over the weekend, and to the Troop who were responsible for delivering pre-order forms advertising the sale door-to-door in Claygate and part of Esher in March.

Both the jumble sale and the plant sale rely very heavily on parent volunteers. Even an hour of your time can make a big difference to the overall effort. Please contact your parent rep if you want to volunteer. Without the money raised by events such as these, the scouting experience for our young people would not be as good as it currently is. Thank you to the teams that support each sale and thank you also to the parents who have volunteered in the past. We look forward to continuing to raise money through these events with your help



St. George's Day Parade



Sunday 24th April 2016 saw Esher District Scouts out in strength at two sites within the District: Moseley and Oxshott. 1st Claygate joined with 1st Hinchley Wood, 1st Cobham and 1st Oxshott for a service at St Andrew's Church in Oxshott to mark the scouting patron saint St George.

The parade was led by our own excellent Band, 432 Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers marched with their leaders with 484 in church. The march left from the Royal County School up the steep hill (which is difficult if you are a small cub carrying a flag!) to the A244. We turned left and acknowledged the dignitaries outside the post office before turning left again down Steels Lane back towards the Church. Thanks must go the Surrey Police for their assistance in closing the roads, especially the busy A244, and to the residents of Oxshott for cheering us on.

As well as our Band's contribution, Claygate also contributed readers from the Cubs and Explorers. The highlight of the occasion is the point when each section in turn stands up and remakes their own scouting promise for the year ahead.

At the end of the service the Mayor of Elmbridge spoke to the congregation about volunteering, the benefits of scouting to young people and the reliance the organisation has on its volunteer leaders.

Well done to all those who participated and we look forward to marching again next year.

Mang

A video photo montage can be seen on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rqisoNOTYE0#action=share>





Summer Fete :

Saturday 2nd July (12-3pm)



The Summer Fete returns again this year and is an opportunity to have some fun with all the family within the grounds of the Scout centre. All the traditional stalls and games will be available to play and a BBQ with refreshments on sale. We look forward to seeing you all there.



Amongst other activities there will be:

Bottle prize tombola,
Football goals
Pitching a tent,
Backwoods cooking
Coconut Shy
Bouncy castle
Individual games stalls
splat the rat, etc.



Beaver, cub and scout races
1st Claygate Scout & Guide band
Food stalls – burgers, hot dogs etc.



Calling all musicians



Our band is looking for new people to join – whether you already play an instrument or are interested in learning one. The band runs a senior band for accomplished musicians, a junior band and a training band for those just beginning. Rehearsals take place on a Friday evening at Scout HQ. Band membership is open to all involved in the Scouting (cubs and older) and Guiding movements in Claygate.

If you are interested in joining, or just wish to find out more information, please contact Robin Wilkinson, our Band Leader : bandmaster@claygatescouts.org.

