

February 2023

GSL's Update



I can't quite believe that we are in February already. But, already, our Beavers have attended the District Beaver Party and the Cubs have attended the District Quiz. With Lynx Pack coming out victorious.

We have had a new intake of Beavers this term and it has been great to be at their Investitures. It has also been wonderful to welcome 10 new adults this term, working across our Beaver Colonies. We look forward to undertaking scouting with them. Some of them are volunteering as part of a job share, which is a great way of facilitating flexible volunteering.

I now realise that whilst we are back up and running in terms of the Scouting programme, post the pandemic, I recognise that it is essential that we now build up the synergy between the Scout Group, all the volunteer adults and its members and their families. This is to ensure that we create the environment and relationship which enables the provision of the best scouting experience for its members. I shall set out this aspiration in the coming weeks which will hopefully make sure that all of our Summer activities have the outcomes we are planning.

Charity Fund Raising

The sections were involved in thinking of others in the run up to Christmas. The young people decided to raise monies for the following charities:

Willow Colony	Strippey Stork	£100
Cub Packs	Surrey Wildlife Trust	£750
Scout Troop	BESOM	£775



The Scout and Guide Band also raised money from playing carols around the village and some of the money raised from this will be spread across the two charities chosen by the Cub and Scout sections.

The total raised was £1625.00 and this will be paid to the nominated charities in the coming weeks.

Fireworks

We hope you enjoyed the fireworks. Demand was as great as ever with tickets selling out within a week! From a Group point of view it was a super event from both an organisation and fundraising stance. If you have any ideas how we could improve it for next year please let us know.



We would like to thank everyone who helped to make it such a success and especially **Johnsons** who provide the firework at a great price for the event

Hope to see you next year!

Beavers District Party



Esher District has 11 groups offering scouting activities. They organise two Beaver activities a year so our young people can all meet up.

The District Party that took place on 4 February is one of these activities with this year's theme set around the story of Alice in Wonderland.

The 210 Beavers started the afternoon getting in character by making masks: Mad Hatter, White Rabbit, Cheshire Cat, Alice or Queen of Hearts. Then they decorated teapot fridge magnets, played various games with hockey sticks, a parachute and balls plus a hoopla target game won by our own Willow Colony. Then last but not least, decorating ginger rabbit biscuits.

No need to ask why this was the Beavers' favourite base!

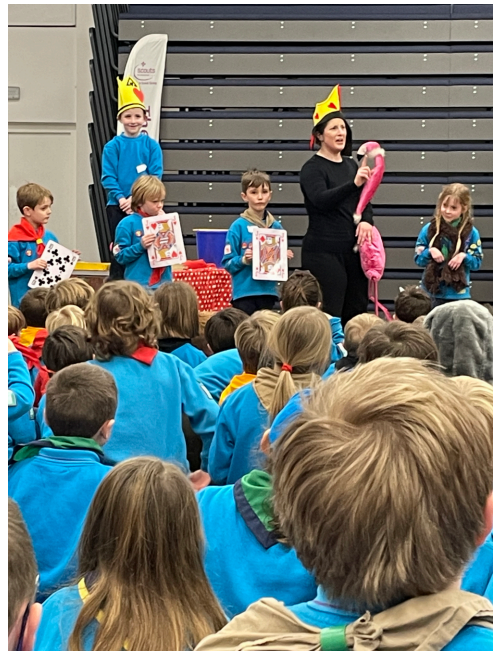
After refreshments, Cat's Grin performed Alice in Wonderland in the big hall. This was interactive and funny with several Beavers called upon for support. One of the favourite characters was The Sneezing Duchess and the rhyme:

*Ah choo! bogey on my hand,
sticks like glue,
snot on my nose and dribble on my toes.*

Great Beaver humour!

A big thank you goes out to all the volunteers that helped during this event. The Beavers had a great time and much appreciated your help.





2022 - A year in review for the Scout Troop



After two years of interrupted Scouting, 2022 was our first year back to normal. As you can see from the numbers below it was a busy year.

- Over 100 Scouts involved in the troop. With a regular roster of around 80 Scouts in the troop and with Cubs moving up to join us and older Scouts moving on to Explorers we looked after over 100 individual Scouts in the troop during the year.

- 400 nights away. Counting each Scout spending a night away from home, we clocked up over 400 sleepovers across 5 camps. Highlights included 65 Scouts at GAW in May and 30 at Summer Camp in Yorkshire for a week in July/ August.

- A lot of food shopping. A well-fed Scout troop is a happy Scout troop and with camps and cooking evenings in our regular programme we spent £1000s in grocery bills. Of particular note is the £2,224 food bill for Summer Camp. Feeding 40 Scouts and leaders for a week, in a field with no facilities is quite a challenge - imagine spending that much on food and not having a fridge to keep it in. A huge thank you to Ingrid for undertaking this mammoth task.

- 70 kayaking taster sessions. A welcome return to our paddlesports programme with Mike once again running a series of Monday night taster sessions throughout the summer term, culminating in some great paddling on the river Wharfe in Yorkshire.

- 90 archery taster sessions. At both GAW and summer camp we were able to provide opportunities for Scouts to try out archery with some fun games to practice accuracy.



- A big range of other activities, including pioneering (leading up to a river crossing in the woods), 10 pin bowling, climbing, trampolining, mountain biking, overnight hiking expeditions, cooking (on both gas burners & fires), hiking, orienteering, first aid training, wide games, quiz night, team building activities, model making, knife/axe/saw skills, fire lighting, tent pitching, pumpkin carving, writing & performing sketches, knots, shelter building, useful household skills, etc.

- 350 badges earned. The programme is designed to meet the demands of the Chief Scout's Gold Award and we were so busy with activities during the summer months that we got a bit behind in handing them out.



We've been catching up with that in the winter months though.

- Well over 2,000 emails. Perhaps not surprisingly there is quite a lot of admin in making all this happen. Not counting the constant ping of the leaders WhatsApp group, or reading through 350+ online permission forms, we deal with 1000s of emails every year.

- 127 pages of risk assessments. Safety is our paramount concern and there is a lot to think about when running a wide range of adventurous activities out in the wild ... I never did complete my risk assessment for "doing risk assessments" but repetitive strain injury would be on the list of hazards.

- 35+ adults who gave up their time to help run troop activities this year. This includes a regular leadership team of 8 and an army of additional Claygate leaders, parents, Scout Network (lovely to see our old Scouts coming back to help) and anyone else we can cajole into helping. A huge thank you to everyone.

- Zero Zoom meetings. Oh. Thank. Goodness.

Best of all we had 14 Scouts complete their Gold Award. To put that in context, that's a total of 126 challenge badges, 84 activity badges and 112 nights away. 1st Claygate had a tour de force showing at the Surrey County awards night in November and it's brilliant to see all those Scouts now applying the leadership skills they learned in the troop to volunteer as young leaders across the different sections in our group.

2023 is already well under way and I'm sure you're looking forward to reading all about them in future newsletters.



Sammy is off to South Korea for the 2023 for World Scout Jamboree!

I am one of 3,240 young people that have been selected from the UK to join 50,000 others to take part in the World Scout Jamboree.

It is a 3-week adventure with Scouts from almost every country on earth. We'll be camping in a field surrounded by our international friends, sharing our stories and our culture (especially food). The Jamboree is the largest educational youth event in the world with the focus on global development, peace, and cultural understanding.

One of the fascinating places that we will visit is the DMZ (The Demilitarized Zone) a 250km long, 4km wide of land separating South Korea from the North.

The Jamboree is a truly life shaping event and any help you can offer towards my fundraising effort for the World Scout Jamboree would be greatly appreciated, thanks!

Sammy



Treasurer's Update

Fundraising

The Group relies on the success of its fundraising to support major capital expenditure. We are well into our second decade since the new Scout Centre on Oaken Lane was opened, and replacement of equipment and routine maintenance will necessarily increase over the next few years.

It is really pleasing to report that fundraising has recovered strongly after the pandemic. Our beer festival last September sold out completely in advance and is now a firm fixture in the Claygate calendar; the fireworks were a major success with record attendance; the first Christmas Lights in 3 years were enjoyed by the Village and our bottle and confectionery tombolas, along with the sale of Cubs' goods for charity and a very busy BBQ stand; Christmas tree sales remained buoyant and much higher than we were delivering prior to the pandemic. The first Jumble Sale of 2023 saw a record number of visitors and takings. None of this would have been possible without many volunteers from amongst parents and older Explorers and Scouts, for which we remain very grateful.

The next likely capital expenditure will be to replace our van and white minibus, both of which are now 15 years old. So fundraising will remain of major importance over the next few years.

Subscriptions

Helped by record numbers of young people in the group and, we decided to deploy some of our funds from the fundraising away from capital to assist the general running costs. This has allowed us to review our subscriptions taking into account the current economic situation. Thus, the Group have been able to keep the first increase in subs for over 5 years to just £1 per term. So from April subs will rise to £51 per term.

This is not to say that we have not experienced an increase in costs, particularly in energy and refuse collection although we have been able to keep many of our other costs in check by tendering for work and carrying out many maintenance tasks ourselves. We also have the Group's Our hardship policy, which can be seen on our website, this can be helpful to families that may be in difficulty in the current economic climate.

Gary Ernest, Group Treasurer





*"Come join us for
a virtual*

Night at the Races

Saturday 18th March

1st Claygate Scout Centre, Oaken Lane

Doors open at 7pm – First race 7:30pm

Tickets £15 *includes Charcuterie Board (Veg option also available)*

*"Let's close the gap on Sammy's fundraising
(any Surplus will go to Group's funds)"*

*Pre purchase Horses in advance for BIG chances of prizes
More information on web site*



A Busy Period for the Band



The last few months have been very busy ones for the band. In November the band once again took part in the Lord Mayor's Show through Central London. This was a huge event for the band, performing in front of thousands of people through the heart of London.

Nearly 7,000 people take part in the parade itself, along with 200 horses and more than 150 floats. The procession stretches three miles and passes the Mansion House, St Paul's Cathedral and the Royal Courts of Justice before returning to Mansion House via Victoria Embankment.

The weather was really warm this year, which contributed to the huge crowds all along the route and a carnival atmosphere.

The band looked and sounded great – and we were once again seen on BBC 1!

What made this event even more special came right at the end of the day, when we were invited to play alongside the Band of the Royal Marines. Playing 'National Emblem' with one of the best military bands in the country counts as one of the highlights for the band over the last 20 years. A truly memorable experience for all.



Remembrance Parade, Claygate

The following day the band led the Remembrance Day parade in Claygate – one of the most important events of the year for the band and one where we always strive to achieve the highest standards. Sam Warner, our trumpeter playing the Last Post, once again rose to the occasion, and the whole band played (and marched) superbly well.



Christmas 2022

December is always the band's busiest time of the year, and this year was no exception. But the Christmas season began in mid-November when the band supported the Christmas Fair at the Day Centre. The band then entertained the crowds at the Christmas Lights switch-on event in the parade, and then supported Holy Trinity Church with the "Carols on the Green" service the following Sunday. We also thoroughly enjoyed the Carols Round the Campfire event at the Scout Centre – marking the formal end of the 2022 Scouting year with the customary rendition of 'Twelve Day of



Christmas' with audience participation (helped no doubt by the mulled wine and mince pies)!

And then finally, on the Friday before Christmas, we all enjoyed our traditional carols around the street of Claygate, raising over £1,000 for the Group – a great effort by the band.

