

13th Wimbledon Scout Group and St Saviour's Explorer Scout Unit

Newsletter, January 2025



Remembrance Day 2024

Tenth Annual Christmas Celebration

St Saviour's was packed for the Group's 10th annual Christmas Celebration at St Saviour's. Over 130 members, leaders, parents and supporters sang carols, listened to Christmas readings, and were entertained by the different sections. The Beavers shared their Beaver Banter, the Cubs performed a touching sketch reflecting the value of friendship and inclusion in Scouting, the Scouts performed their own play about the challenges for camping, not least dealing with dinosaurs, and the Explorers showed an inspiring video of their summer trip to Kandersteg with units from across the Wimbledon & Wandle and Kingston Scout Districts.



Rev. Peter Kelley welcomes everyone



Beavers banter



Cubs deliver a special Christmas message



Scout camp invaded by a dinosaur



Explorers' Kandersteg video

Our thanks to all the Beavers, Cubs and Scouts who performed so well, the Explorers who helped to set up and clear up after the event, the leaders who organised their sections, the parents who organised the refreshments, Eunmee who played the piano for us and priest-in-charge, Peter Kelley, who lead us in the Christmas carols and prayers, and St Saviour's church who supported us throughout.

During the celebration, Skip paid tribute to Nigel Swain for his 15 years of service with the Group. Nigel started helping as a Group supporter when his son, Alex, joined the Cubs in 2009. When his son moved up to Scouts in 2011, Nigel moved up with him and took out a warrant as an Assistant Scout Leader. Later that year, he was a Founder Leader of our St Saviour's Explorer Scout Unit, which is still going strong.



Nigel receives a thank you gift for 15 years of support to the Group

He continued as a leader in the Unit but in 2023 was appointed Assistant County Commissioner for the Scout Network - this is for young adults aged 18 to 24. He stepped down as leader of the SSESU in the Summer of 2024.

Thanks for everything, Nigel. We will miss your sense of fun, particularly on our annual Scout/Explorer trips to Snowdonia.

St Saviour's Future

After seven years as Priest-in-Charge at St Saviour's, Peter Kelley was due to step down when he turned 70 in January. He was hoping to be able to extend his stay, for up to another two years, though the powers that be in the CofE were initially opposed to the idea. However, following a letter of protest from the Parochial Church Council, and supported by the Scout Group and others, permission has been granted for him to stay on for another year.

Peter has given unstinting support to the Scouts and Guides at St Saviour's, for which we are most grateful. Throughout his time there, he has drawn no salary and overseen the turnaround in the fortunes of the church, though he is clear there is so much more to be done and that he is willing to do.

This is very good news for the Scout group. However, it is likely that in a year's time there will be renewed uncertainty about the future of St Saviour's and the security of the Group, which has always met there. Scouting was first established there in March 1910. It folded during the First World War, then reemerged in 1920-21 then again in 1924-29 before being re-founded in 1945 by the Revd. Eric Eyden, vicar of St Saviour's, since when it has run continuously for nearly 80 years. Hopefully it will still be meeting there in another 80 years!



Revd. Peter Kelley at the Scout Christmas celebration

New terms for the long term

This last year has seen a lot of changes in Scouting, not least that all leaders and helpers are now called volunteers. Peter Hutton ('Skip') is no longer Group Scout Leader but Group Lead Volunteer. Anthony, Chil (Graham) and Owl (Steve) are no longer the Scout, Cub and Beaver leaders but Team Leaders for their respective sections. And all assistant leaders and section assistants are now team members of those sections.

Scouts and Explorers Head for the Mountains

The Scouts and Explorers returned to the Brecon Beacons for their Autumn Mountain trip this year. The weather was mild with superb views across the hills and towards the Severn Estuary. The evening, though, saw heavy rain and a number of tents needing to be taken home to dry out. Nonetheless, a most enjoyable weekend including for a number for Explorers for whom it was their first mountain adventure.



New Explorers invested on Pen y Fan and joined by Scouts on Fan Y Big

5 Stars for Scout Cooking

The Scouts had a major success in the County Cooking Competition with its C team gaining joint first place in a closely fought event. Their three other teams gained 3rd, 10th and 14th places out of 25 teams entering, a remarkable achievement.



13th Joint Winners in the 2024 County Cooking Competition

The troop also took part in the district quiz and swimming gala. Although its performances were not quite as impressive, great fun was had by all with lessons learnt for the future.

Cubs Take on New Challenges

The annual Crossover camp gave older cubs and those who have just become Scouts experience of fending for themselves on camp. They learnt how to put up tents, collect wood, light fires then cook a meal on them, read a map and navigate on a hike, and much more.



Cubs and new Scouts hiking around Box Hill and branching out into new skill areas

They took part in the District Swimming gala – an event re-established after a 6-year break. Although they were unable to retain the shield that they won in 2018, they certainly did not disgrace themselves and their efforts also counted towards the swimmers and personal challenge badges.

For Remembrance Day the Cubs made poppies and set up a display in the church that attendees at St Saviour's were invited to add to on the day.

The Cubs also went paintballing, courageously subjected themselves to the Halloween Scarefest experience set up by the Explorers on Cannon Hill Common, learnt about photography, built shelters, had a fireworks evening and learnt about personnel safety, understanding what happens with social media and other issues that can be unsafe for them.

They also started on the navigation badge with an evening making 3D maps of Snowdon hills under the guidance of a parent who is a cartographer. What a relief!



Poppies for Remembrance Day



Navigation badge light relief

Beavers – preparing for their futures

Last term the Beavers launched their potential careers in the aeronautics industry with a talk from Finn's dad who works in the industry. They then made paper planes for him to take back to his place of work in case they contained any genius designs so far Overlooked. They were rewarded with their air activities badges.



Preparing for careers in the security services, they dressed up as spies so they would naturally blend into the background of Raynes Park. They learned Morse code and semaphore and various spying techniques for the communicator badge.



Beavers dressed to merge into the background as spies

As the evenings got colder, wetter and darker the Beavers steeled themselves against the elements to lark around on Cannon Hill Common. Thanks to all the parents who were tough enough to share the hardship of the elements, and the hot chocolate, and act as support crew. The Beavers loved it!



Hot chocolate on the Common

Then there was the personal challenge badge. In the 13th this meant two Beavers each week preparing and delivering a short talk to the other Beavers, on any subject they liked using whatever props, slides or pictures they felt appropriate.

Being not only Beavers, but 13th Wimbledon Beavers, the great thing was they all did it and produced amazing talks on subjects ranging from sharks to dinosaurs, football stickers to volcanoes. Well done Beavers!

New Volunteers in the Beaver Team

Welcome and thank you to Michele and Emily who have completed their volunteer training and joined the colony leadership team. It is great to have you on board.

Emily and Michele being invested and welcomed as volunteers in the Beaver team



Supporting the community

For several years now the Group has supported the work of Christian Care Merton, and last year was no exception. Thanks to all those parents who sent along items for the Harvest Festival collection and for the Christmas hampers. Both were gratefully received, and Christian Care has asked me to pass on their heartfelt thanks.

Group Trustee Board

Under the new structure of Scouting each Scout Group is required to have a Trustee Board. Although it can include section leaders, the intention is that it consists of those not involved in the week-to-week running of the activities but who bring particular skills relating to the governance and long-term security of the Group. If you think you would qualify, or can recommend anyone whom you believe would, please let us know.

The Trustee Board is responsible for ensuring the group is run safely and legally in the following areas:

- Governance: The management and governance of the group including ensuring the group complies with the law and the charity's governing document.
- Risk management: Assessing and mitigating risks
- Asset management: Ensuring buildings and equipment are in good working order.
- Policy compliance: Ensuring that the group complies with the Scout Association's Policy, Organisation and Rules (POR).
- Resource management: Ensuring that resources are managed responsibly.
- Strategic focus: Focusing on strategy, performance, and assurance.
- Volunteer support: Supporting the volunteers in delivering Scouting programs

Volunteering

It's not for money, it's not for fame
It's not for any personal gain
It's just for love of fellowman
It's just to send a helping hand
It's just to give a tithe of self
That's something you can't buy with wealth
It's not medals won with pride
It's for that feeling deep inside
It's that reward down in your heart
It's that feeling that you've been a part
Of helping others far and near
That makes you be a volunteer!

Anon



If you would like to volunteer with the Scouts, please contact Skip, or one of our section Team Leaders.

The Past Year of National Scouting

If you would like to see what has happened in Scouting across the country this year, please click on this link.

<https://vimeo.com/1035169799?share=copy>

Subs:

The usual reminder about subs. These are now £45 per term or £125 if paid for the year in advance.

Payment should be made online to the following account:

Account Name: 13th Wimbledon Scout Group

Sort Code: 30-91-35

Account Number: 03230034

Bank: Lloyds

Reference -

Please provide as a reference: 'Subs' then 'B/C/S' depending on section then surname. e.g., 'SubsBSmith' would be subs paid for a Beaver surname 'Smith'.

NB bank details for Explorer subs are different.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Skip