

73rd Reading (Park) Scout Group

Autumn 2015 Newsletter

Welcome to the 73rd Reading (Park) Scout Group newsletter for Autumn 2015.

If you have any comments regarding this newsletter, or items you would like included next time, please send them to Nathan Helsby (nathan_helsby@hotmail.com).

Upcoming events

Parade services

- **8 November:** All Beaver, Cub, Scout and Explorer families are invited to attend Sunday worship on 8 November at 10.30am for the Remembrance Parade Service.
- **13 December:** Gift Parade Service at 10.30am.

13 December: Senior Citizens' Christmas Party from 3.00pm-4.30pm

The 73rd Reading (Park) Scout Group has a long tradition of running a Christmas party for older members of our community. Scout & Explorers sections are organising this year's party, with support from parents and leaders. All young people should bring home a separate letter about the party, so look out for this. **Please** send your replies to our request for help and donations back to Section Leaders by 27 November 2015. We really need your support to make this event a success!

News from the Sections

Huntley Beavers (Monday) and Palmer Beavers (Wednesday)

Beavers started back after the summer with another first for us, our first ever Beavers Camp, at Youlbury Scout Activity Centre in Oxford. This was the first time we'd taken the Beavers away and camped outside in tents overnight! Even though for many it was their first time sleeping in a tent, or even their first night away from home, it was a resounding success. The weather was excellent for September, very bright and sunny, and the Beavers got stuck into lots of activities to earn their Outdoor Challenge badge.

We have been continuing work on the updated Challenge badges, focussing on the *My Skills Challenge* this term, and introducing the Beavers to the *Animal Care* and *Musicians* badges. We've invested two new Beavers into the Huntley Colony, with our oldest Beaver leaving us to start Cubs in November. The Beavers have got some exciting activities coming up, including indoor rock climbing on 16th (Huntley) and 18th November (Palmer), and making Christmas cards for the Senior Citizens' Christmas Party.



Cubs

Cubs are gearing up to celebrate 100 years of Cub Scouts in 2016, and have had an active and exciting term as ever with lots more planned in the run up to Christmas. So far we have launched homemade pressured rockets into the night sky in the park, been swimming to practise for the District Gala, and folded paper following the ancient art of origami to make boats, pelicans and flapping birds.

We have outings planned to Paddicks Patch for firelighting and to toast some marshmallows, Pets@ Home and to Bracknell for snow tubing. We will also be looking at 'A Million Hands'- <https://www.amillionhands.org.uk/> - the national community engagement initiative, getting stuck into some Christmas craft and of course preparing for the end of term Christmas Party.



Cubs at Paddicks Patch

Scouts

Scouts have had an epic set of evenings so far this term! Off the back of our summer adventure camp in August, we've been busy learning new skills, earning new badges, and celebrating the variety of weird and wonderful holidays that we see at this time of year.

We continue to be a strong and thriving section, with 30 scouts from different backgrounds, ages, and genders. In the spirit of being a section open to all, we're pleased to be welcoming a healthy number of Cubs up to Scouts in the coming months, and equally pleased to see many of our older Scouts go on to Explorers.

This term we've built guys for bonfire night, had a weekend Halloween camp that probably scared the leaders more than the young people, and worked towards a community spirit badge. We've had creative nights, sports nights and even made clay models.

It's been immense fun - and as we head into the festive season, there's even more to come!

Explorers

East Reading Explorers have had a very busy and exciting 2015. Our summer camp this year was an expedition to the Kandersteg International Scout Centre in Switzerland. We joined 50 Explorers from Berkshire, Surrey and Sussex on a 10 day trip to the home of scouting. Activities enjoyed by the Explorers in Switzerland included; white water rafting; via Ferrata; visiting the “roof of Europe” at the Jungfrau; and visiting a cheese and chocolate factory. It was a great chance to meet scouts from around the world and experience adventure outside of the UK.

Eight Explorers took part in the Surrey County Scoutshoot at Bisley National Rifle Shooting Centre earlier this September. They shot in five disciplines across the site including gallery rifles and full-bore target rifles, competing against other explorers from Surrey.

Along with our usual weekly activities such as night hikes, mini elections, snow tubing, board games, pioneering, record breaking, Viking parties, and bushcraft the Explorers still found time to volunteer at the Loddon Nature reserve in Twyford. We repaired and laid several sections of wooden footpath so the public can access flooded parts of the reserve.



Explorers on expedition to the Kandersteg International Scout Centre in Switzerland

News from the Executive

The Executive are the trustees of the Scout Group who oversee the running and financial management of the Group, ensuring that we continue to support the activities of the young people in a safe and sustainable manner. There have been some key changes in roles at the Group in recent months. Notably, Tony Phillips has taken over from Michael Wood as Group Scout Leader, and Moya Taylor has taken over from Dean Jones as Chair of the Executive. Both Tony and Moya have been involved in the Group for many years, Tony as Assistant Cub Leader and previously Group Treasurer, and Moya as a Parent Representative and Group Scout Leader.

There are currently four Parent Representatives on the Executive, one for each Section: Nathan Helsby (Beavers), Carolyn Rowell (Cubs), Emily Meunier (Scouts) and Karyn Close (Explorers). The Executive meets two to three times a term.



Message from the new Group Scout Leader (GSL), Tony Phillips

I've been involved with 73rd Reading for a little over 10 years having started to help as a Beaver parent before becoming a Cub leader 8 years ago. Many of the Cubs, Scouts and Explorers will know me as Shere Khan. I am planning to continue with Cubs providing the GSL time pressures don't get too much.

As GSL my job is to act as primary contact for the Group with the wider Scouting community, ensure we follow the guidance and rules laid down by the Scout Organisation and most importantly to support the leadership teams in the various sections. I'm looking forward to the new challenge; if you want to contact me, I am at Cubs on a Monday evening or feel free to email me: gsl@parkscouts.org.uk or give me a ring on 07733001933

I would like also to take the opportunity to thank the previous GSL Michael Wood (aka Woody) for all his efforts over some 8 years as Scout and Group Scout Leader and wish both Woody and Martha the best of luck in their new endeavours

Park Church news

All Beaver, Cub, Scout and Explorer families are welcome at Park Church services. All services are listed on the website www.parkurc.org.uk.

Christmas Fair

The Christmas Fair will be taking place on 28 November from 10.30am-3.30pm. There are different stalls with festive gifts, games, Father Christmas, lunches and refreshments available and entertainment too! Do come along and enjoy the fair.

Church camping weekend 2016

The annual church camping weekend will be taking place next year on 10-12th June 2016 at White Mark Farm, near Watlington. It is a very relaxed weekend: each family caters for themselves and on the Saturday evening we come together to cook a BBQ, followed by some songs round a campfire. Everyone is welcome. Further details are on the website or you can email the Minister, Rob: minister@parkurc.org.uk.