

# 73<sup>rd</sup> Reading (Park) Scout Group

## Spring 2016 Newsletter

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Welcome to the 73<sup>rd</sup> Reading (Park) Scout Group newsletter for Spring 2016.

First of all, **thank you to all parents and young people for your contribution to our annual Christmas party** for the older members of our community. We couldn't do it without you.

Secondly, **we need a Scout parent representative on the Executive**. It is an opportunity to input into the Group's activities and represent the parent voice; the time commitment is a 1-2 hour meeting twice a term on average. Contact Ben Nunney ([ben@nunwri.com](mailto:ben@nunwri.com)), if you are interested.

If you **want to contribute to the next newsletter**, please send items to Nathan Helsby ([nathan\\_helsby@hotmail.com](mailto:nathan_helsby@hotmail.com)).

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### Upcoming events

**16 April 2016: Three Towers Hike.** Scouts and Explorers take on the challenge of the 25-40km hike across West Berkshire and South Oxfordshire.

**16 May 2016 (8.30pm, Park Church Halls). Group Executive Annual General Meeting (AGM).** All parents welcome to attend.

**2-3 July 2016: Cub and Beaver camp.** Some places are still available for the joint beaver cub camp at Youlbury. Beavers will camp on the night of 2 July, with Cubs staying for two nights.

**Planning further ahead - with church parades on 25 September 2016 (Harvest), 13 November 2016 (Remembrance), 11 December 2016 (Christmas).** Young people are invited to join their section for the parade. Parents and families also welcome.

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### News from the Sections

#### Huntley Beavers (Monday) and Palmer Beavers (Wednesday)

Towards the end of the Autumn term both colonies went indoor rock climbing at Queen Anne's School. All Beavers had a lot of fun, even those who were feeling a bit scared climbing for the first time; the leaders were really proud of their efforts. Huntley leader Dragon (Darren Wright) also obtained the first stage of his Climbing Leadership Permit.

This term we are working on another of the new Challenge Badges, the My World challenge. As part of this challenge, Beavers paid a visit to Lakeside Care Home on 3 February to meet residents and help make greetings cards. Beavers have been learning about dementia in recent weeks and the impact on individual's lives. Palmer Beavers were read a story written by a son about his dad who had dementia



and then they answered questions raised by the story.

Coming up, we're hoping to have a training session with the Reading Rockets Basketball team, and don't forget our combined Beaver & Cub Camp at the start of July!

Huntley Beavers welcome new Section Assistant, Paul Rostron, and Young Leader from Explorer Scouts, Chris Le Gresley. Palmer Beaver colony has three new Beavers starting after half term and we welcome new applications onto the waiting list.

## **Cubs**

The Cubs have started celebrating the Centenary of Cub Scouting this year. Three of the Sixers attended a formal District Sixers Dinner with the Mayoress of Reading, District Commissioner and District President; a good evening was had by all. This term we have been working towards the Home Help Badge with some sewing, ironing, cleaning and cooking with various tasks such as bed making and helping with the washing to be completed at home. We have our traditional making of Easter nests to look forward to at the end of term, popular with both Cubs and Leaders, with lots of exciting activities in the pipeline for later in the year.

## **Scouts**

The Scout Section has weathered the cold well this term with a range of activities. From martial arts and paper aeroplanes to pancakes and knot-people, our 33 young people have had a lot to keep them warm and active! We had a fantastic Winter Camp where the fires burned all weekend, all food was cooked on open fires, and the Scouts built shelters and structures that weathered the wind and rain the whole weekend. We've got lots to look forward to with the Essex Jamboree coming up in the summer, and loads of cubs moving up to join us. Welcome!



*Scout leader Ben Nunney with Scouts and Explorers enjoying the singalong at the Christmas Party*

## **Explorers**

Explorers are looking forward to an exciting spring and summer 2016. During the summer term, we have a full programme of great activities such as Kayaking, Gliding and a visit from a Search and Rescue dog unit. The Explorers also enjoy a regular evening hike, widgames and a good boardgame session!

A lot of our explorers are now signed up to the Duke of Edinburgh scheme and will be working hard to achieve this over the next year.

This year we are entering two teams into the annual Three Towers Hike – a 45km hike over the Ridgeway. The team did well to complete it last year and with more training and a map reading refresher we are hopeful we can beat last year's time of 18 hours!

Our summer expedition this year is to Roihu, a Jamboree in Finland. This is an international camp with over 16, 000 participants. We will be camping side by side with a local scout unit and will be camped in the forests of southern Finland which will allow us to enjoy a lot of great scouting activities with scouts from around the world.

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## 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.

### New Group Quartermaster

The Executive is pleased to report that Ben Williams, one of the Scout Leaders, will be taking on the important position of Quartermaster for the Group. Ben's role is to ensure that the Group's equipment and materials are maintained to a high standard and that the right kit is available for use by the sections as and when they need it. Ben will be giving more information about his role and what help and support he might need from parents in the next newsletter.

### Report from the Christmas party

On Sunday 13 December, Explorers joined the Scouts to host the annual Christmas party for older members of our local community. In true Scout style young people, leaders and adult helpers worked together **to give a warm Christmas welcome to over 30 guests**. While sandwiches were made, tables laid, gifts sorted, the mini bus and parent taxi service made their rounds. Guests were then welcomed and seated for a glimpse into the world of Scouting at 73rd Reading in 2016. A film show captured some of the activities and reasons why our young people enjoy Scouting, followed by a hearty sing-along before the Scouts and Explorers hosted a festive tea and organised an entertaining raffle.

Hosted by the Scouts & Explorers, all sections were able to contribute in some way, either by recording clips for the film, Cubs playing instruments on the day or Beavers creating festive pictures for handmade Christmas cards - a fantastic example of Scouting supporting our local community. Thank you also to all parents for your donations and contributions to the raffle. The guests had a lovely afternoon: **"The entertainment, food and company were wonderful"**, said one guest.

We are now looking forward to next Christmas; the date for the party is in our diary so you may want to put it in yours if you are a Scout or Explorer parent - Sunday 11th December 2016!

### AGM Meeting on 16 May

Parents are invited to the Group's AGM on 16 May at 8.20pm. If you want to find out a bit more about "Scouts behind the Scenes", please put the date in your diary and come along. All parents welcome.

### Parent representative vacancy



There are currently three Parent Representatives on the Executive: Nathan Helsby (Beavers), Carolyn Rowell (Explorers), and Karen Close (Cubs). There is currently a vacancy for a Scout parent representative. This is a great opportunity to input into the Group's activities and represent the parent voice; the time commitment is a 1-2 hour meeting two to three times a term. If you are interested, please contact Ben Nunney (Scout Leader) in the first instance.

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## **Park Church news**

73rd Reading Scout Group has been associated with Park Church for over 80 years. The association is of great benefit to our group in many ways. From a practical point of view the church provides us with vital facilities such as a variety of halls to hold our meetings; our own scout room with clean, dry storage for our equipment; as well as use of the excellent new kitchen.

Just as important, the relationship with the church gives our young people an opportunity to interact with, and give something back to, the wider community; an important part of the purpose of scouting. On a regular basis the scouts join the church for the four annual Church Parades, the Christmas Fair and not least the Senior Citizen's Christmas Party.



Families are welcome at all services (please see our website [www.parkurc.org.uk](http://www.parkurc.org.uk)), but we highlight the following in particular.

### **Messy Sunday**

On the first Sunday of each month from 3-5pm, we have a different type of worship: Messy Church. The afternoon begins with craft activities and games, followed by informal worship in the church and then a cooked meal together. This is a popular approach for families, but all ages are welcome!

### **Easter celebrations**

On Good Friday, we join other local Christians in a 'Walk of witness' which will start at Our Lady of Peace Church at 10.00am and visit other local churches, and at 3.00pm we have a special service of reflection at Park URC. On Easter Sunday we celebrate with an early Communion service at 8.30 am followed by breakfast at 9.00 am and our main service at 10.30am.

### **Church camping weekend 2016**

The annual church camping weekend will be taking place on 10-12<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:minister@parkurc.org.uk).