



The Water Rat

The Newsletter of Leander Sea Scouts

Winter 2022/23

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Scouts reach for the stars!

On our resumption of Scout meetings after the Summer break we were able to get out on the water for one last evening, before the nights drew in and it became impractical.

Wide games at Canbury Gardens were undertaken the following week, with the Scouts haring around all over the place, startling members of the public.

The following week we ran a signalling exercise for the Scouts where they send signals to other patrols via nautical flags, semaphore, Morse code and then by using the phonetic alphabet to transmit messages using our UHF radios. Most of the messages got through and the inevitable rude messages and innuendo were hastily curtailed by the leaders (where detected)!

To help the Scouts avoid being stuck in Bushy Park the following week we ran a basic compass navigation and map reading exercise at the HQ, to get them up to speed on six figure grid references and interpreting map symbols and pathways.

The mini-hike in Bushy Park went relatively seamlessly but was made slightly more interesting by the Stags in the Park announcing their presence rather loudly, to any female deer, due to the time of year. This did have the effect of ratcheting up the tension levels of some of the Scouts a couple of notches!

A successful Patrol bake-off night run by Chris, followed by a slightly less successful PL's treasure hunt night, led us into the half term break.

We resumed meetings after the break with a first aid night covering, first response, resuscitation, recovery position, cuts, bruises and bandages, burns and scalds, hyperthermia, allergic reactions, and shock.

My thanks go to Alison Moss and Maria Sprostranova for giving up their time to help with the first aid instruction, which, if left to just the available leaders, would be very hard to complete.

To coincide with bonfire-night we held the next meeting outside, with fire-lighting instruction and practice, plus toasting marshmallows (which didn't seem to need much practice).



To enable the Scouts to complete a cooking evening in a manageable and safe manner, we split the Scouts into two groups. One group will go climbing at White Spider in Tolworth, whilst the other group

are cooking at the HQ. We then swap the groups round, so the climbers are then cooking and vice-versa. This helps keep the number of Scouts using sharp knives and gas burners at a reasonable level for each session.

The Activity badge we've chosen to complete this term is the Astronomer badge.

The Scouts were given instruction on the solar system, planets and their distances from the Sun with a practical demonstration to illustrate this. They learnt about terrestrial and celestial spheres, planets and moon orbits, neap and spring tides and their causes.

They learnt about constellations and finding north by the stars. Unfortunately, due to the cloud cover, we'll have to do the constellation observations (star gazing) next term.

The last two meetings of the term were a bit more light-hearted, with an improv night followed by ten-pin bowling at the Rotunda in Kingston to finish the term off. I think we may have discovered some budding actors in our midst but sadly no potential professional bowlers!

Russ

Leander (Kingston) Sea Scout Group

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www.leanderseascouts.org.uk — Registered Charity Number 290029



Beavers – hands and feet

Happy New Year to you all. Beavers' Autumn term was focussed on Emergency Aid and Global Issues. We learned how to dial 999 with some role play, the importance of getting adult help, what to do if someone is bleeding and how to reassure a casualty. We also learned about the recovery position for an unconscious casualty, with much hilarity turning our Young Leader Daniel over, who is a giant compared to the Beavers!

We learned about endangered animals around the world, kept a recycling diary at home and learned how those items are processed and reused. We made a filter with a drink bottle to clean muddy water, discussed Fair Trade and ecologically friendly brands and tried some FT chocolate which is always the best bit. Funnily enough, they didn't want the bananas. Hopefully each Beaver who completes the Global Issues Badge will apply for a Blue Peter Green Badge with the help of their parents, which is great.



We managed to fit in an exciting session bell boating at Thames

Young Mariners in November which was fun and gave some parents an opportunity to join in and others to chat and catch up.

A Christmas craft evening was successful and everyone made a hand and foot print santa with reindeer picture to take home. Our Christmas Party was full of silly fun and we dressed up the youngest member of our teams



as a Christmas Tree (or present, I don't think it was clear which in the end) and ate lots of wonderful food kindly provided by the parents.

A busy and wonderful 2022 has been had at Beavers and we appreciate the return to more normal practice post Covid and the consideration of our families when someone has been poorly not to come and spread it about! Thanks to our great leadership team and Young Leaders/Duke of Edinburgh volunteers. We expect 2023 to be full of fun and achievable challenges.

Yogi (Cathy Johnson)
Beaver Scout Leader

Leander Teas



November saw the re-launch of our much loved Leander Teas back at HQ. The weather was in our favour and overwhelmingly generous donations of delicious cakes were made to the cause. It was fantastic to see the sign out, and we received such a warm and appreciative welcome from the community, with a steady stream of customers right up to sundown.



£143 raised in total towards our defibrillator, and a lot of warm hearts. We are hoping to kick off monthly teas in the Spring ... watch this space!

Looking ahead

I wanted to share a few thoughts as we end one year and start the next.

Firstly, a huge thank you to all of you who have stayed connected to and / or helped out at Leander in the last year. To give just one example, just before the end of the year, I was lucky enough to watch the Cubs making things on the boat deck and it was just great to see the smiles on their faces. I hope that Rachel, Ben, Chris, Peter and Tim and the other parents involved were as proud as I was – it is great to see what happens when learning and fun are both in the mix !

The pre-Christmas social for leaders and helpers was great fun too, and was very well attended. I came away from that session feeling really positive – at Leander, we are fortunate to have a great group of people who give so much of their time. The evening was a bunch of friends sharing laughter and stories.

We've much to look forward to in 2023. A group of us are going to get our heads together on Saturday 14th Jan to do some planning, and we'll build on some thinking we started back in November. At the heart of this is involvement – more of it, from

young people and from parents too. If your New Years' resolutions include anything to do with community, fun or young people, then do come along and join us for that session.

If you can't join us but do want to help, do consider our defibrillator campaign. Click here for details. www.aeddonate.org.uk/projects/leanderseascouts/

I look forward to seeing you at the next Leander Teas session or on the river, hopefully very soon!

Warm wishes,
Andrew