



Scouting under Lockdown



Firstly, I wanted to start by thanking all of the leaders for providing Scouting virtually during lockdown, it has been a tremendous effort. I particularly want to thank Mark Aulds and Debbie Bowles (Owl) for taking the lead on running the Group during this period. So much has gone on as you will see in this Newsletter. I was unable to be a part of this Scouting adventure as I needed to dedicate my time to my work in the NHS, but this was only made possible by the two of them taking over during this period.



Given the Government's guidance, **all face-to-face Scout meetings, activities and events were suspended from Tuesday, 17 March 2020.** This suspension applied to young people and adults.

The Scout Association continues to follow official guidance. The safety of everyone involved in Scouts, both young people and adults, is our number one priority. That is always at the heart of our decision making.

As lockdown measures start to ease the Scout Association is working with youth sector partners and the National Youth Agency government body to understand what a safe return to face to face Scouts may look like when the readiness level reduces from the current red level. As soon as we can provide more information on a return we will do, setting out how we will return incrementally.

There is a framework and set of guidance on how elements of face to face Scouts could take place and the safety measures we would need to take into account to support our young people and crucially support our adult volunteers. Clearly this is a challenging situation for everybody but we wanted to take this opportunity to update you on some of the things that Claygate Leaders have been doing to support our young people.

I am as proud as ever of 1st Claygate Scout Group as we all have had to adapt to the pandemic.

This newsletter shows how the leaders have adapted whilst the restriction of no face to face Scouting for young people and adults has been in place and their efforts for the young people have been absolutely fantastic.

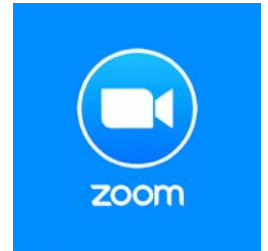
**Scouting continues, it might look different, it might feel different
BUT it is still Scouting**

Beavers Lockdown Newsletter



Weekly Zooms:

Oh my Life! What a very steep learning Curve Owl and the Team have been on. I think most people would tell you that Owl isn't the best at change or technical know how! Mark persuaded me that the way forward was this word 'Zoom'. I would need to persuade the rest of the Beaver Leaders that this was a good idea.



We put our heads together and came up with a plan! Thinking it was for 6 weeks only! 3 sessions a week, Monday, Wednesday and Thursday. All 3 Nights would be exactly the same; so that it didn't matter which one you could attend.

Here we are 15 weeks down the line, having accomplished many badges, a virtual GAW, Origami, Games and a great Team of Leaders and fantastic Beavers and Parents who have participated brilliantly.



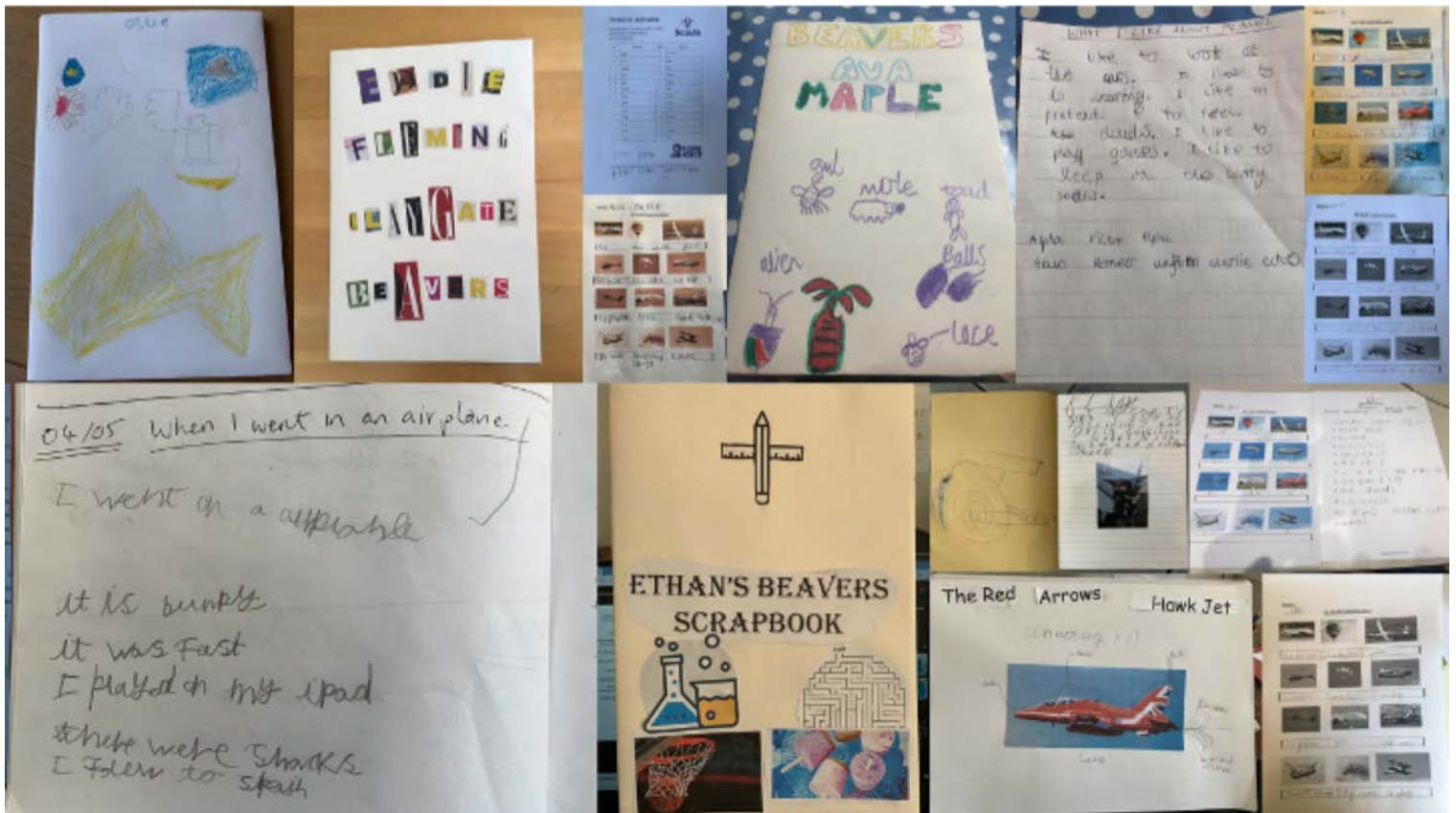
Cooks, Air Activities, Hobbies, Collectors, Healthy Eating, Book Readers, International Badges



The Beavers have worked tirelessly on and off of Zoom to accomplish badges. Below are some of the collages of pictures of their work. (Thank you Toad)



Cooks, Air Activities, Hobbies, Collectors, Healthy Eating, Book Readers, International Badges



Virtual Group Activity Weekend



Wow... what a weekend. 4 Zooms, Photographer's Badge, Nights Away all achieved and a great time. 55 Beavers took part for all or part of the weekend; We achieved so much in a 24 hour session. Those of you who know me, will know my favourite weekend is GAW. Yes, it's lot of work but so rewarding, this was no different.

Beavers and Parents embraced the weekend, we built Dens, put up tents, went on our daily exercise - with a purpose; taking 10 different photos to send to Owl's What's App! We made Origami Craft, had a Virtual Camp Fire led by John Baldwin (THANK YOU JB) a bedtime story, Games and then back for a quick catch up on the Sunday Morning. It surpassed my expectations 100 fold!

Thank you Toad, Nala, Roo, Adder, Eeyore and Pumbaa for letting Owl have her way! Some of the Hundreds of Photos below of the weekend



Virtual Group Activity Weekend



Welcome New Beavers!!

We Welcomed Amos, Beatrice, Bertie, Charlotte, Ella, Ellis, Indio, Luka, Ollie, Rory, Sebastian and Teddy into Claygate Beavers. They haven't met us yet apart from on Zoom. We had a special Membership Zoom and went through who is a Beaver, what and who is 1st Claygate! Owl and Mr Owl delivered Scarves, T-shirts, Certificates and Badges ready for the week after half term. They all said their Promise and received their Scarves and Certificates. A first for Owl but a Great start for 12 new Beavers!



We are still doing Zooms, twice a week now, as some Leaders have returned to work, let's see what the future brings. I do know, that whatever we do, we won't forget this time, I could not of done any of the last few weeks without my team, thank you TOAD, NALA, ADDER, EYORE and PUMBAA. A huge thank you goes to ROO (Nick) who has sat beside me and learnt to screenshot, play videos of Beavers, make Sound Games, Picture Games and keep Owl in check at ALL times! **THANK YOU!!**
Owl / Debbie Bowles (AGSL)



1st Claygate Virtual Cub Pack ... (The Akelas' story)



As we locked up the Scout Centre on Sunday 15th March after a successful sixer – seconder training weekend – where the cubs had actually cooked their dinner on fires and not in the pouring rain – little did we know that we would not be meeting physically again in the Scout Centre until sometime in the future still to be determined. By Monday night – as we were all thinking about our meetings for the coming week against the background of the developing coronavirus pandemic – the directive came from Scout HQ that all face to face scouting was suspended until further notice. And so we emailed our packs, cancelled our meetings, and wondered what was going to happen next.

What happened next was something we had never heard of – Zoom – no not a cleaning product, but the now ubiquitous online meeting platform that is so much a part of everybody's lockdown lives. Could we run meetings on this platform? What activities could we do? How could we do this safely? With leaders and parents juggling working from home, running home schooling and all the other additional myriad demands that lockdown has brought did we have the resource to offer meetings, and would our cubs attend?



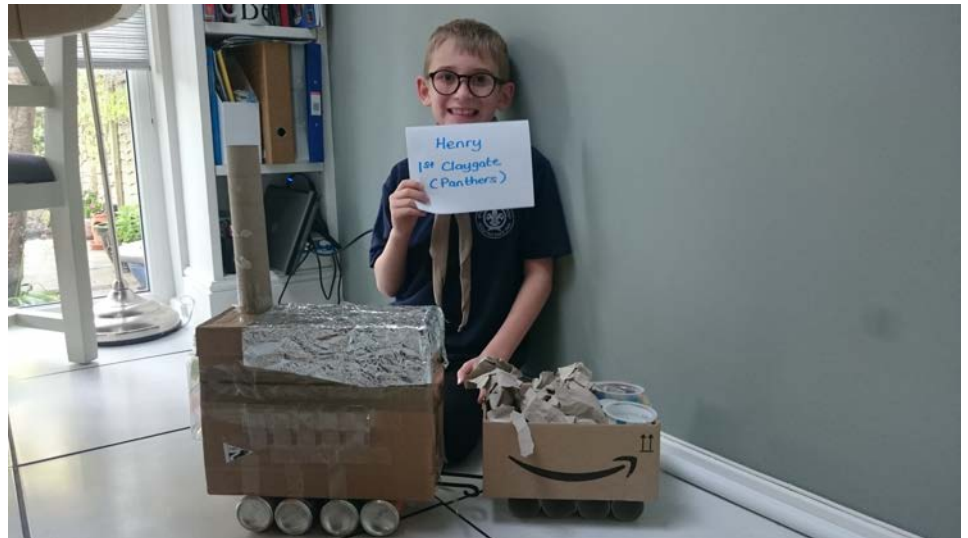
And so with some trepidation, and after a dry run, on 8th April we held our first weekly meeting by zoom, and have been offering two meetings a week ever since – so we are now up to week 11, (at the time of writing.) In any three week period cubs have a meeting scheduled on their usual pack night twice, and then have to choose between the other pack nights on the third week. Initially we directed the cubs to a particular night,(to manage numbers online,) but started to think of ourselves as the 1st Claygate Virtual Cub Pack after one online meeting where we had attendees from all four cub packs – yes four cub packs as we have included young people who had attended the taster sessions for the new cub pack that we were in the process of setting up prior to lockdown. And so cubs are now welcome to attend on whatever night suits best.

As for activities – well its been interesting ..online firelighting didn't seem to be workable.. but we have done scavenger hunts and quite a few quizzes, and our powerpoint skills have come on leaps and bounds.. we have sung some songs .. (remember Joe at The Button Factory..) played “Akela says” and “Higher or Lower”.. and a version of Battleships with Akela-Lions special online random grid square generator thingy .. we have worked our way through



1st Claygate Virtual Cub Pack ... (The Akelas' story)

the Naturalist badge, done some work on our Digital Citizen badge, covered the requirements of the Navigator badge looking at how to read grid references and remembering our compass points and hopefully all the cubs will have a go at Mang's exercise challenge .. practised tying clove hitches, worked on the new Great Indoors Badge, and all the while the cubs have had the opportunity to take part in a series of challenges set by county .. build a den, cook a VE day cake, make a transport junk model, build a lego model, cook a meal, and make a portrait out of something unusual. A few of the cubs due to move to the Troop completed their Personal Challenges, some cubs have chosen to work on a badge individually, and we have welcomed some new cubs who have moved up from beavers. We also joined the virtual District St George's Day, and renewed our promise as we do every year, and cubs were asked to go out for a walk wearing their scarf in lieu of the usual parade.



1st Claygate Virtual Cub Pack ... (The Akelas' story)

Of course we have missed our camps – but cubs have been building dens and shelters inside and outside, pitching tents in their gardens and BBQ-ing their dinners. Some cubs took part in Northumberland Scouts world record attempt at the largest Virtual Camp in April (quite cold for camping,) and others camped during our Virtual GAW weekend, and even erected tents – origami style.

Running meetings online has had its challenges – internet crashes, the muted cub who we just can't unmute, the you tube clip where the sound won't work, the time we just couldn't login to zoom to start the meeting, and we are still learning .. we know that some cubs (and parents, and leaders,) have just had enough of "online" by the end of the day .. and it is bizarre how tiring sitting at a screen can be, and how hard on the eyes – thank you Mang for that eye health talk and 20/20/20 tip. Not all cubs have joined us online and so we have emailed a newsletter every week with what we have been doing so that cubs can do some of the activities as and when they want.

And so we are approaching the end of the Summer Term – still online – (did we ever think that was possible in March?) and wondering what the Autumn will bring. We would like to thank all the parents for supporting their cubs in attending online and diving in from screen left or right to help with that tricky clove hitch or drawing the grid square, and also for their messages of thanks and support. Hopefully we will be able to meet in the real world soon.



Scouts Update



Lockdown in March has forced innovation and inspiring solutions to keep our scouts engaged and active within the group... and although the change is not scouting as we are used to it, pleasingly the solutions have been embraced and we still have a strong and active section.

Sunday 26th April saw a large online St Georges Day Zoom event taking place at 2.30pm, which was both inspiring and emotional. Additionally, the Assistant District Commissioner for Scouts invited all Esher District scouts to wear their group scarf and get out and about with their families.

Saturday 16th May brought the G.A.W. event, camping at home starting with a 2pm with a zoom call a virtual flag break and welcome briefing, plus a discussion on the running order of the weekend and details of our Wide Game – a scavenger hunt including items to find at home and outdoors, activities to complete, including photo submissions of activities. Blessed with some great weather it was time me to set camp and jump into challenges – Scouts earned points by completing the challenges or finding the objects listed.

It was great to have news feeds going out throughout the challenge on which scouts were getting things done first – really adding to the feel of a connected experience. We checked in at 4.30 with tea and cake and checking on game progress. Later Scouts cooked dinner, often by campfire for their



Scouts Update



families. Evidence of the days challenges completed and a spotless post dinner inspection was required by had until 8pm's virtual campfire. It was amazing to see also the variety of fires both digital and real with which were the backdrop to some excellent entertainment by the way of various performances and jokes by the scouts.

Throughout GAW Scouts sent in clips for a video montage, in which a somewhat dejected looking Scout Leader's scarf is returned to him with a series of cartwheeling, backflipping, rope swinging, hoop shooting, and altogether mood lifting antics. This is available in the gallery section of the website and is very much worth visiting.

The following weeks have seen a programme including Astronomy presentations, blow rockets, virtual "Battleships" games, joke and magic performances, Scout and explorer led quizzes. Personal Challenges including some inspirational achievements and fundraising for great causes, delving into understanding some Cockney Rhyming slang, coin and match logic puzzles, riddles and even a "Generation Game" showcase including that crucial cuddly toy.

1st Claygate Scouts are going strong, and as much as we are looking forward to restarting in person meetings at the appropriate time, we will continue to uphold Scouting values and a great sense of community via the web until then.



Explorers Update

EXPLORERS

With summer just round the corner face to face scouting was suspended in March and for the Explorers it has meant postponing many of our normal activities. The 4 Inns walk, (7 teams entered), Duke of Edinburgh Award Expeditions and our Summer Expedition to Spain have all been postponed.

However whilst we haven't been able to meet in person we have continued our weekly meetings via Zoom. Whilst this has been fairly straightforward for most of the Explorers for the leaders its been like trying to learn a new language. Zoom has been great and there are some aspects of it that we will may continue with when things get back to normal but everyone is now itching to get outside and get on with some real scouting especially with the good weather.

As for our Zoom meetings it has been a good opportunity to catch up with everybody, we have had a few games and quiz's including a Explorers v Network v Leaders quiz and a district quiz with over 100 taking part.

As we now head into the summer we are hoping that we will be able to get back to some sort of 'normal' in September even if it means we can only meet outdoors.

Other than that we are trying to plan as normal. We recently held a Zoom meeting for the scouts who are due to join us in September and are beginning to plan for next years Duke of Edinburgh awards expeditions and planning for our Expedition to Spain will recommence in October.

Before then Keep Safe.

Explorer Leaders

