



Help us.....

Help you.....

scouts
be prepared . . .

Help Claygate

March 2021



Scouting at home 2020 / 2021

We are all now more aware of how long and bumpy the road may be before the world returns to some kind of 'normality'. Covid-19 continues to affect most areas of our lives – including Scouting.

Due to the 3rd national lockdown, face to face Scouting was once again suspended and I am immensely proud of all of the leaders who have put together programmes which they have skilfully delivered virtually, setting challenges which can be completed at home. Much of this can be seen throughout this newsletter, and I marvel at the dedication the leaders of 1st Claygate.

I am pleased to announce that following the Government's announcement, Scouting has set out its own Roadmap as follows:

- From **29 March**, Scouting move to Amber with Groups allowed to meet outdoors in group sizes of 15 plus Leaders (5 maximum).
- From **12 April**, both outdoors and indoors meetings will be allowed in group sizes of 15 plus Leaders (5 maximum).
- From **12 April**, we will be allowed to take part in non-residential day trips and visits.

Further updates are expected as the national Roadmap roles out.

Thank you all for the part you've played to help make sure we've been able to continue Scouting in these strange times. Although there is still a lot to work out over the coming months, we can now see light at the end of the tunnel and the start of a positive future for Scouts and young people across the country.

1st Claygate Scout Group Easter Egg

From the 2nd - 18th April, a number of Easter eggs like the one on the right will be hidden.
Can you find them all??

Each egg is numbered - You need to find the missing egg!



Families can purchase a map for £2.50 from the group website.
All proceeds from the purchase of this Easter Egg hunt will go to the East Elmbridge Foodbank



Beavers Lockdown Newsletter



After the initial disappointment that our face-to-face meetings were to stop last term, the Beaver leaders sprang into action and quickly put together a programme of fun activities to do at home. Parents collected specially prepared bags with all the materials required for the term from the scout centre. Zoom meetings resumed on Tuesdays and Wednesdays and we have been overwhelmed with the turnout, frequently having over 50 attendees a night!



Highlights from November and December included parachute making, knots (with strawberry laces of course!) a fun adventure trail through Claygate and sleeping in a den at home. Our Christmas party was a great success with games, crafts and presents.

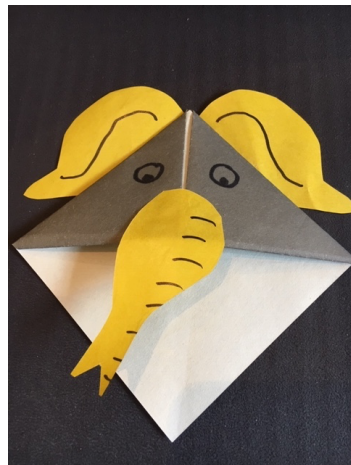
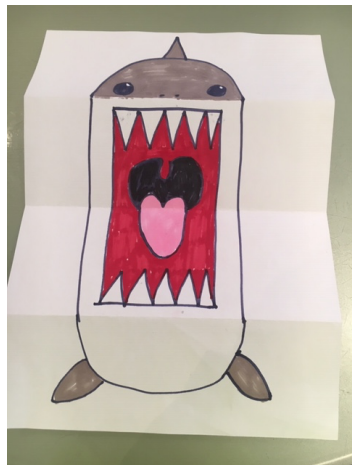
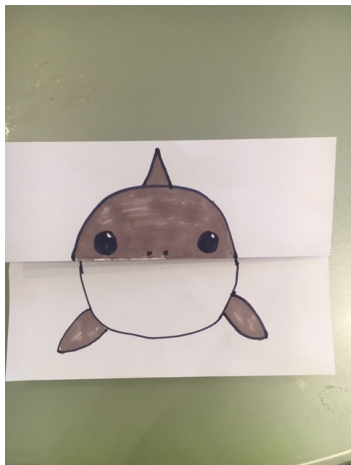
By January we had over 30 new Beavers who have yet to come to a proper meeting at the scout centre (they have so much to look forward to!). The fun continued with our World Challenge. We learnt about English traditions such as clog dancing, tried out cheese rolling (with Mini Babybels!) and danced a sailor's hornpipe. In February the Beavers became birdwatchers, made a bird feeder and celebrated the Chinese New Year. Origami and cartoon drawing has proved very popular on Zoom with some great results. Some delicious cupcakes were made with very creative icing!



More recently we have been working on our Teamwork Challenge. We had a fantastic evening where pioneering Beavers and their families competed to see who could build the highest tower from spaghetti and marshmallows.

Finally, the first ever Beaver talent show can now be viewed on the Scouts website. A huge round of applause for some amazing talent!

Many thanks once again to the fantastic support of the parents who have helped their children so much and joined in our Zoom sessions with great enthusiasm!



Cubs - Zooming into Spring



With January seeing continued virtual scouting on Zoom, it was great to see Cubs joining in enthusiastically, whether thinking about heroes in the local community or learning vital home skills like ironing, table setting or peeling a carrot or potato. Being at home meant that the Cubs were able to make delicious pancakes for Shrove Tuesday, and to do the tidying up afterwards.



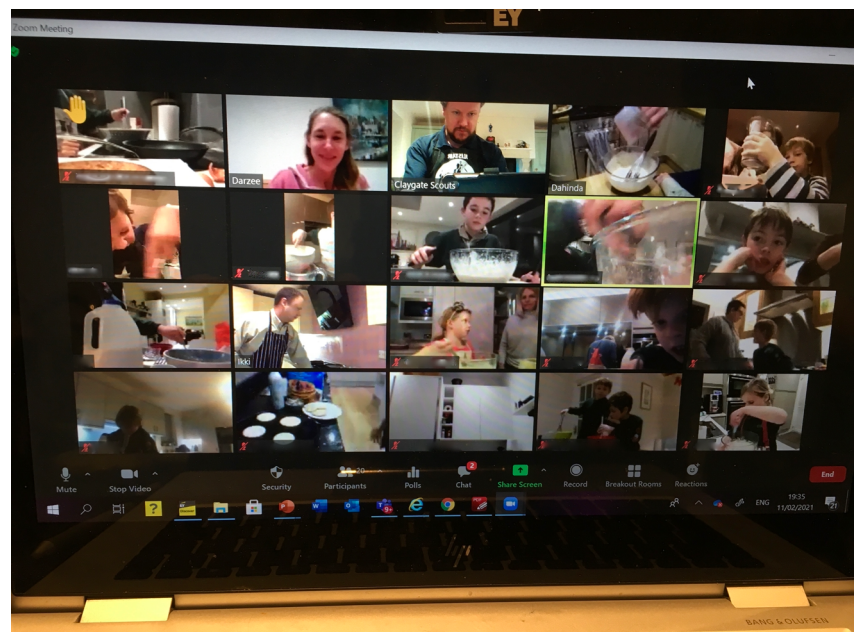
The Cubs did their bit for biodiversity by counting birds for the RSPB's Great British Birdwatch, spotting everything from Jays to Goldfinches to Blue Tits in the gardens of Claygate. As well as learning more about the birds they might see and the reasons for big declines in populations of some species, they put their crafting skills to the test, making bird kites.

Practising map reading and four and six-digit grid references was good preparation for one of the high points of the season, the Claygate treasure hunt, which got Cubs and their families out in the village during the February school holidays. Finding the clues and cracking the codes made it a real challenge, but 37 Cubs in total completed the hunt, receiving their certificate and 'well done' badge in the post.



While virtual meetings may have made the Cub experience very different, a bumper number of Cubs were invested in Spring (with distant grandparents able to attend for once), and when face-to-face scouting returns, the Cubs will miss the home scavenger hunts in which they've brought, pets, siblings and the contents of the family fridge to show their peers. The Cubs' Got Talent evenings which all three packs held showed the range of very impressive musical and magical skills among the Cubs and were richly enjoyed by all.

Well done Cubs for not letting distance stop the fun and for coping with continued disruption. Thank you also to all the Cubs' parents whose kitchens we have invaded and who have provided the necessary IT support.



Cubs - Zooming into Spring



Scout Update



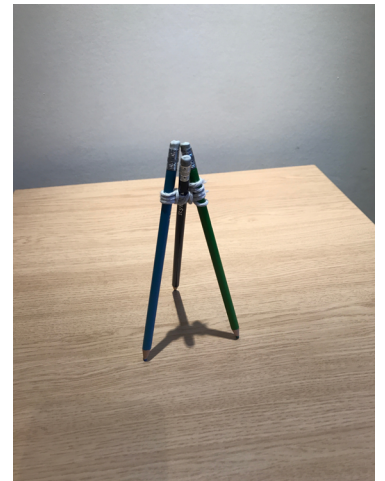
Having enjoyed meeting again face-to-face in the autumn, the Troop was forced to return to Zoom meetings again in the new year. We started off with a Troop Forum to see what the Scouts liked to do on Zoom meetings. The most popular suggestion was cooking so we have had 2 cooking sessions this term – one doing rock cakes and another mini-pizzas. Both went down well with the Scouts.



Games and quizzes were also popular. We tried Just-a-minute, Pictionary and Dingbats, mostly on a Scouting theme and also did a local knowledge quiz using a slide show of pictures taken around the village. We revised our knots and made a mini tripod at home using sticks and pencils.

The Scouts made the most of the snowy weather, getting out and about and making snowmen. We had a slide show on zoom to share our pictures.

We started to think about when we might be able to do scouting activities like camping and the Scouts spent a session planning a virtual camp. They took turns to move about tents, dining shelter and toilet tents in our virtual site. Hopefully it won't be too long before we can do the real thing.





DRAGON Scout & DofE Awards Group



If you read the last newsletter, you will know that five groups, 1st Claygate, The Dittons, 1st Molesey, 1st Oxshott & and 1st Weston Green decided to form the DRAGON Scout & DofE Awards Group with the aim of working together and offering the Duke of Edinburgh's awards along with their scouting equivalents.

Great progress has been made over the winter and we currently have over 70 members working towards their awards. In addition, we currently have 15 expeditions planned for this year and 4 of these will be by canoe/kayak. Covid-19 restrictions have meant we are constantly having to review our plans but are hopeful that they will be able to take place.

If you would like to know more, please check out our website at: www.dragondofe.org

One of the aims of our group is to raise awareness of the DofE & Scout awards and encourage more young people to take up the challenge of completing them. We are therefore on the lookout for any leaders/adults who might be interested in getting involved. You don't have to be currently involved in scouting to do so. If you would like to know more, please contact Mark at info@dragondofe.org



The Duke of Edinburgh & Scout Awards

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) is for young people between the ages of 14 and 25.

You will gain new experiences, meet new people, challenge yourself, have fun and take part in activities to gain new skills and build confidence.

There are three Award programmes:

- Bronze Award – for young people aged 14+ years
- Silver Award – for young people aged 15+ years
- Gold Award – for young people aged 16+ years

Scouts will also have the opportunity to gain the equivalent scout awards.

- Platinum Scout Award
- Diamond Scout Award
- Queens Scout Award

If you would like to know more, please check out our website at: www.dragondofe.org



Explorers Update

EXPLORERS

We began the year in lockdown which meant it was back to our weekly zoom meetings. A quiz, an escape room challenge and a talk on mental health and wellbeing have all featured. Whilst zoom meetings are a great way for everyone to catch up in lockdown it has meant that our normal activities have not taken place.

The District Winter Activity Weekend to the Peak District and the 4 Inns Walk have both been cancelled. We have also received disappointing news that our Summer Expedition to Spain will not be able to go ahead due to restrictions.

However, the good news is that face to face scouting can begin again in April and whilst we can't go to Spain we are hoping for a week in Cornwall.

In addition, we are already planning for the future with some exciting activities in store including a Summer Expedition to the West Coast of Scotland in 2022 and an overseas Expedition in 2023.

Hope to see everybody soon.

Until then keep safe.

Graham, Simon, Harris, Mark B,
Ed & Mark S
Explorer Leadership Team



Calling all musicians



Our band is looking for new people to join – whether you already play an instrument or are interested in learning one. The band runs a senior band for accomplished musicians, a junior band and a training band for those just beginning. Rehearsals take place on a Friday evening at Scout HQ. Band membership is open to all involved in the Scouting (cubs and older) and Guiding movements in Claygate.



If you are interested in joining, or just wish to find out more information, please contact Robin Wilkinson, our Band Leader: bandmaster@claygatescouts.org.



Scouting benefits our mental health and wellbeing



“Better mental health for all” is one of the six national themes of UK scouting. These themes have all been chosen by young scouts as something they feel passionate about. By focussing on these issues, we believe we can have a real community impact.

In this time of pandemic, mental health is a huge concern for lots of us as we spend so much time under lock down restrictions, away from family and friends, home schooling and working from home. But it is critical for our young people; as The Children’s Society puts it:

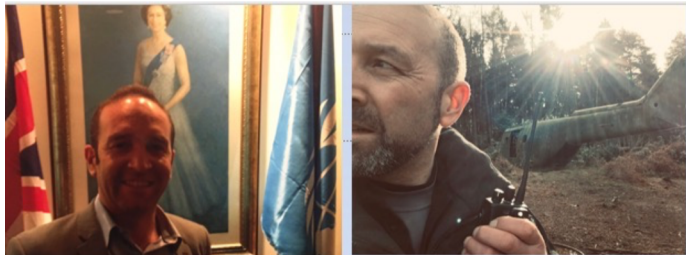
“Improving the wellbeing of the current generation of young people is one way to ensure that they grow up to become happy and confident adults.”

Within the Explorer section at 1st Claygate, there has been a particular focus on mental health and wellbeing recently. The opportunities that scouting gives for this age group provide a real practical boost to our young people’s emotional wellbeing. Here are two examples:

Firstly, the Explorers recently attended an online talk given by Josh Levene on the topic “*Managing Mental Health and Wellbeing in times of Crisis*”. 1st Claygate Explorers extended the invitation to all Explorers in the Esher District. There were over 80 participants logged-in to the call, but we know that many others listened too.

Josh Levene was a venture scout (a former version of Explorer Scouts) with 1st Claygate Scout Group, where he was a contemporary of Graham Copeland-Cale, the current Explorer Leader with 1st Claygate.

Josh has led a fascinating life with a career as a humanitarian aid worker. He has worked on every continent and for various agencies (including the UN, the British Government, Oxfam and other large international charities). He has had to cope with lots of stressful and threatening situations, such as being in war zones, the aftermath of environmental disasters, and the effects of pandemics.



Josh spoke about what it is like to work under such conditions. He was given little training before he started out and almost no guidance on mental health. The pressure and working/living environments he faced for many years led to a build-up of stress. He developed his own coping mechanisms, some of which were not altogether healthy. Using himself as an example, Josh showed how not coping, properly and early, with mental health issues inevitably led to burn out.



Having recovered, he is now an advocate for good mental health, and, in his current role, he helps to train people before they go to work in similar hostile environments. This gives them tools to help to cope with mental health issues.

Josh explained that we all have just so much resilience to stress. If we do not learn how to use good coping mechanisms, stress will build up until it becomes too much, and we reach a point of crisis. The good news is that there is lots of help available and with the right coping mechanisms, and treatment if necessary, people can

lead thriving lives again.

Explorers learnt various top tips including:

- Deep Breathing – getting oxygen into the brain will help calm us down so that we can be more rational;
- Learning what it is worth worrying about and what is not: we can take responsibility for what we can control; but we should understand that there are events we cannot control or even influence: for those events you have to “*Let it go*”;
- Accepting that we are all vulnerable;
- Being Compassionate to ourselves and to others; and



Scouting benefits our mental health and wellbeing



- Using of the acronym **H.A.L.T.** , i.e.:
 - **Hungry** – eat food, mostly plants, not too much
 - **Angry** – emotions are data; understand your physical sensations and ask: “What need is going unmet?”
 - **Lonely** – harness the power of active social engagement (but, if online, limit gaming or social media to 3 hours a day)
 - **Tired** – get enough sleep

Explorers were given some exercises to do to develop their own resilience and links to various websites for more information on mental health and wellbeing.

Josh Levene ended his talk on an optimistic note, especially for the Explorers and other young people listening:

- This pandemic will end, and our young people will have survived their first international crisis; and
- This is an opportunity for a reset and for positive change in how we all live our lives in the future. It is this generation of young people who will be able to take a lead in creating a better world.

The second aspect to highlight is the ability for our senior Scouts and our Explorers to enhance their resilience by working towards their Top Scouting Awards and the Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme. In a letter published in the Daily Telegraph on 10th February 2021, the Chief Scout Bear Grylls stated:

“Scouts are still one of the world’s most remarkable character factories: our study of scouts aged 13-17 showed they have 7 percent stronger leadership skills, are 11 percent more likely to try new things and are 14 percent more independent.”

What helps towards this development of character? The Top Scouting Awards (i.e., the Chief Scout Platinum Award, the Chief Scout Diamond Award and the Queens Scouts Award) really stretch our young people. Significantly, they also enable them to develop essential skills for life such as self-awareness, teamworking, how to communicate effectively and, for some, the ethic of volunteering.

A significant aspect of this is found in the requirements of the Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards of the DofE Scheme (these account for about 75 percent of the requirements of their respective Top Scouting Awards). The DofE scheme gives young people the chance to learn new skills and enhance existing strengths. Any young person aged 14-24 years old can do their DofE. It isn’t a competition or about being first; it’s all about setting personal challenges and pushing personal boundaries. But the DofE also takes young people out of their comfort zone and supports them in building a vital set of skills and attributes for life and work, such as confidence, resilience and communication.

The DofE recently published a report on the impact of the DofE on young people’s mental health and wellbeing. This contains a wealth of evidence of positive impact: see the chart on the left for the general highlights from this report and a “word cloud” on the next page of the common themes expressed.

The report concludes that the DofE has a positive impact on young people’s:

1. General wellbeing
2. Confidence and resilience
3. Communication, teamwork and leadership skills

At a glance

What is the impact of the DofE on...



Scouting benefits our mental health and wellbeing



As Leaders we see our young people developing these crucial life skills, as those within the DofE scheme set and then meet the challenges at each level. This is no more so than with those who choose to do their volunteering activity within 1st Claygate Scouts as Young Leaders. As one Young Leader said recently:

"I find being a Young Leader a real break from the stresses of schoolwork, particularly when working towards exams. Plus, it has given me great confidence: once you succeed in teaching a new skill or holding the attention of a group of scouts, you feel on top of the world."

Scouting really can benefit the mental health and wellbeing of our young people. We believe this will give them more scope to "bounce back from the challenges of lockdown" and make the most of the opportunities of the future.

Jonathan Perkins

DofE Leader and Cub Scout Leader

Notes:

1. If anyone is interested in the DofE Awards Scheme, please look at our website or email Jonathan Perkins and Sally Shortman at dofe@claygatescouts.org
2. For help with your mental health please contact your GP or visit the *Healthy Surrey* website which contains support for your emotional wellbeing and mental health needs with self-help resources, online help and details on where to get more help if you need it: <https://www.healthysurrey.org.uk/mental-wellbeing>

"A brighter future" a research report commissioned by the DofE from the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) dated September 2020 on the "impact of the DofE on young people's self-reported wellbeing and to explore whether specific activities in the five DofE sections [Volunteering, Physical, Skills, Expedition and Residential (Gold only)] are associated with the development of particular socio-emotional skills (often called "soft skills") and personal attributes".

Download the report using the QR code to the right



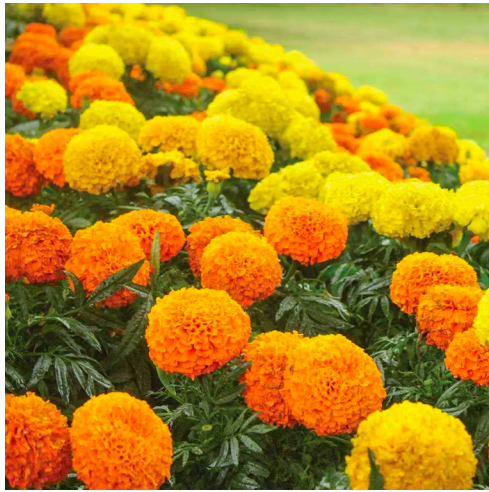
Plant Sale



BEDDING PLANT SALE 7th-8th MAY

One of our important fundraisers during the year, we will be holding our annual bedding plant sale on 7th and 8th May. The high-quality bedding plants are provided in trays or pots, and we also supply two sizes of pre-planted baskets, 12 inch and 14 inch.

Because of the uncertainty around the exact government restrictions that will still be in place in early May, all plants will need to be pre-ordered. The booking form can be accessed on our website, or by using the following link: plants.claygatescouts.org. Payment can be made online by debit or credit card or Paypal.



We will be looking for help to sort the plants when they arrive at the Scout Centre on 7th May, and also preparing orders for collection on 7th and 8th. If you are available to help on either day, please let us know by emailing plants@claygatescouts.org.

Thanks, as ever, for your support.

Group Activity Weekend

15-16 May 2021



Polyapes 
Scout Campsite

We are in the planning stage to run an event for all members dependant on the Covid constraints. It will be a half day of activities in bubbles of 15 in their sections.

The sessions will be AM and PM Saturday and AM Sunday.

To enable us to run this we will need parental support with activities and things such as car parking.

Please watch out for further details that will be coming out in the next few weeks



Queens Scout Award



The Queen's Scout Award is the top achievement for Explorer Scouts and Scout Network members and comprises of a variety of activities to complete, including an International, Community and Values section, the completion of Gold DofE and undertaking a certain number of nights away.

I finally completed the award at the end of last year. I had a lot of fun whilst doing the award and learnt lots of valuable lessons and skills along the way.

I would like to thank everyone at 1st Claygate for the support and opportunities I have been given that have enabled me to achieve this award and would like to encourage current Explorer and Network members to have a go at the award too- you will probably be surprised by the number of things you have completed already which can contribute to sections within the award!

You can find out further details about the Queen's Scout Award at <https://www.scouts.org.uk/top-awards/queens-scout-award/>.

Elloise Budd

