



GSL's Update



It was certainly a summer Term to remember, it all started with St George's Day Parade in Esher. It was great for everyone to meet in Esher and to bring the traffic to a standstill and people out of their houses to see the spectacle of so many Scouts.

As one parent who came into the church told me afterwards, I did not fully realise the significance of the event and the importance of it to Scouting. They were very impressed at how seriously the young people were in re-affirming their promises.

I explained further that our founder, Lord Baden-Powell, designated St. George as the patron saint of Scouting as he set a good example of faith, courage and perseverance. Scouts from around the world will renew their promises on this day and remind themselves of what it means to be a scout, a member of the largest youth movement in the world.

A lot of the other activities will be covered elsewhere in the Newsletter, but some other highlights,

We recognised the completion of the training of three of our leaders with the Award of the Wood Badge another Baden Powell Tradition; congratulations to Alistair Smith, Emma Smith and Paul Smith



Long Service Awards to:

Rex Batey - Chief Scout's 5 years service
Sam Bruce - Chief Scout's 10 years Service
David Gilbert - Chief Scout's 10 years
Mark Holmes - Chief Scout's 5 years
Caroline/Ching Li - Chief Scout's 10 years
Robert Lonnon - Chief Scout's 20 years
Paul Smith - Chief Scout's 15 years -
Rosy Treasure - Chief Scout's 25 years
David Vorbrich - Chief Scout's 15 years
Christian Ward-Deltrich - Chief Scout's 20 years

Awards made for Special Service to the Scout Movement

John Baldwin - Silver Wolf
Debbie Bowles - Silver Acorn
Gary Ernest - Bar to the Award for Merit
Robin Wilkinson - Bar to the Award for Merit
Katie Ernest - Award for Merit
Elizabeth Bruce - Chief Scout's Commendation for Good Service
Alistair Carruthers - Chief Scout's Commendation for Good Service
Roger Hoad - Chief Scout's Commendation for Good Service
Rhid Tinkler - Chief Scout's Commendation for Good Service

Wild West Heroes Group Camp 2024



Our camp began this year with each Beaver putting on a checked necktie and sheriff's badge in preparation for a day of western themed activities.

First up was a rousing line dance to the famous country song Achy Breaky Heart. The Beavers all joined in after they had prepared their tents.

A walking tour of the camp followed, a fantastic introduction to the whole 1st Claygate group. We saw the Cub's neat rows of tents and chatted to the Scouts as they were preparing their lunches.

After the lunch the Beavers embarked on a tour of the Wild West! The field was set up with eight activity bases. Campfire banoffeee was made and devoured around the fire, bows and arrows were fired, there was a tin can alley and a game of lasso the horse. Other activities included a rope maze, totem pole style natural art and rainsticks. The Beavers also made wanted posters, staining them with tea, and put together a delicious trail mix.

Dinner followed, a feast of cowboy bangers mash and beans followed by American apple pie. We then joined the group campfire for a singalong and laughter at the Scouts' hilarious sketches!

After a hot chocolate and a short (calming!) film, the Beavers retired to their mini tents and most went straight to sleep.

The camp was rounded off on Sunday morning with a woodland walk followed by breakfast of bacon rolls and cereal. The



Beavers did their own washing up before the Going up Ceremony where we waved goodbye to those moving on to Cubs.

All in all a fantastic weekend which I know the Beavers will never forget.

Thanks to all the parents who gave up their time to help and also to the wonderful Beaver Leader team. We couldn't do it without you!

Emma Smith (Nala)



Group Activity Weekend 17th-19th May

Group Camp is a big event in the Scout Troop Calendar. It gives us a chance to learn important scouting skills including tent pitching, cooking and of course chopping wood, the Scouts' favourite activity! We also played volleyball and the scouts tackled the popular Walton Firs Adventure Course. A group of scouts built a very impressive swing bridge for the going-up ceremony and everyone was involved in the traditional camp fire sketches. Despite a poor forecast we had a fine weekend and managed to pack all our tents away dry. Altogether, a very successful and enjoyable camp.





Cubs Holiday to Youlbury Scout Adventures Oxfordshire (27-29th September)

The cub packs try to organise a weekend pack holiday in the Autumn term. This year we visited a new site – the Scout Association site at Youlbury in Oxfordshire. 34 excited, (and perhaps slightly apprehensive) cubs met at the scout centre on Friday evening and boarded a coach for the 1 hr 45 minute journey to the site, accompanied by 7 adult and 3 young leaders. Our home for the weekend was “the Bear’s Den” – a building with a large well equipped kitchen and dining room and a series of bedrooms sleeping between 4 and 6 in bunk beds.

Once everybody had arrived, found out which rooms there were in, and set out their beds, there was hot chocolate and a toasted bagel, and then it was time for bed, and a good sleep, so that everybody was ready for the next day’s activities.

On Saturday morning we all played woggleopoly. The board looked rather like a monopoly board, but the squares were all activities on site rather than the usual stations and street names. The cubs rolled the dice and then consulted a map and then raced off to find the activity they had landed on and complete it, before coming back to roll again and move onto another activity. On returning the cubs could choose to buy the “activity” they had landed on (and thus earn rent if other groups landed on the same activity) or to just roll the dice and move on. We had three groups, (Black Bear, Polar Bear and Brown Bear,) and each group did different activities depending on the roll of the dice. Activities included tangrams, spiders web, and holy tube. One group got rather wet and had to return to base for a change of clothes ! The winner was the group with the most money at the end of the game.

After a sandwich lunch on Saturday the three groups then started a rotation of three activities – archery, aerial trek and “Angry Birds”. The Aerial Trek was an adventure course in the air – so the cubs had to ascend a climbing wall before moving round various elements of the course which included a “leap of faith” and a cargo net. Some cubs did several circuits of the course and others only managed an element or two, and there were many hesitations and much support and advice giving by the cubs, adults and instructors as each cub chose the level of challenge they were comfortable with. In Archery there were a few bulls eyes, and a few complete misses and everything in between. The Angry Birds activity involved using pioneering skills and working in a team to build a catapult and then using the catapult to fire angry birds at green pigs of different sizes in order to score points.

By supper time everybody was ready for their pasta bolognaise and apple crumble and custard, and many hands went up when “seconds” were offered. After supper the cubs played bear bingo, had hot chocolate and a biscuit and watched “Brother Bear” before turning in for the night.

On Sunday, once we had completed our final activity, everybody had to pack their bags and clear their rooms, before playing some games outside. At lunchtime we wished “Happy Birthday” to two people who had their birthday on camp and then the coach arrived and it was time to return to Claygate.

Once again we were lucky with the weather and the weekend was dry, if a little muddy underfoot and chilly in the mornings. Thank you, as always, to all the leaders who supported the weekend, and also to the young leaders who came along and helped make the weekend run smoothly.





Claygate Explorers Morocco Expedition 07/24



Every 3 years the Explorers target a challenging and interesting expedition abroad; this year we went to Morocco for 12 days, that turned in to 13! Our itinerary flew us to Marrakech staying at a Riad for one day, then travelling south to the Sahara near Zagora for 4 days camping and hiking in the desert with some local Berbers.

We would then travel back north through the Atlas Mountains in the Toubkal valley for 5 days, in order to climb the highest mountain in the Atlas Mountains, Mt Toubkal at 4167m. Finally returning to Marrakech for a day to explore the city and the souks.

There were 33 Explorers and leaders who signed up and went through pre-expedition training, including fitness, first aid skills and safety training.

We all arrived in Morocco excited and prepared; we enjoyed great hospitality and a swimming pool that first night before moving to the desert. After an all-day drive we trekked 2 hours in to the desert to the permanent Berber campsite, dealing with darkness, a sandstorm and tiredness; we were met with a wonderful meal and everyone tried to get some sleep. We knew it would be hot, but hadn't expected a "heatwave" increasing average temperature by up to 10 degrees C for a number of days. We adapted our plans and went for some early morning hikes on foot or on camels, experiencing the vastness and beauty of the desert. After a couple of days, we extracted out of the desert as more people were being affected by the heat. We spent the rest of the desert phase a little further north, in a compound with a swimming pool, to cool down and recover for the mountain phase. We were still able to visit the local town, eat the great food prepared by the Berbers and enjoy star filled nights whilst sleeping outside; just in slightly more bearable temperatures.



We then moved to Toubkal valley, where temperatures in the mountain were more reasonable and everyone was in good spirits. We spent a day exploring the local area and acclimatising to the altitude before hiking up to the Nether Refuge (3100m); it was a long day's trek but it was also good to get some rigorous exercise. The following day we left early for the summit, an arduous hike in the dark and cold but the views at the top were spectacular and everyone who reached the summit felt rightly elated. We spent another night back at the refuge before hiking back to the Gite in Armed; the afternoon was spent exploring the local bazaars or playing an impromptu game of football with the locals.

The following day we travelled back to Marrakech, and that afternoon explored the city's famous souks.

We were due to fly home the following day, but unfortunately our flight was cancelled in the morning and we didn't get home until the following day, via a (short) overnight in Madrid.

Everyone was pleased to get home, and despite the challenges many have described the expedition as "the best trip they have ever done".

The leaders were particularly impressed with the Explorers' resilience, maturity as they took turns organising each day and overall positive attitude to the whole trip; they were a credit to themselves and the Scouting movement.



Busy time in the Band



The summer term was a busy and enjoyable one for the band. The term started with the band leading the St George's Day Parade in Esher – a task not made any easier by a blustery wind and lots of curbs to navigate on the route (a challenge when you're trying to stay in step, read music and ensure you don't fall over!).

Later in the term, the band were delighted to take part in the closing ceremony of Scoutabout in front of thousands of Surrey Guides and Scouts. With the Euros in full swing, the band entertained crowd with "Footballs Coming Home" (sadly not to be the case of course!), and got everyone singing along to "Sweet Caroline".

The term ended, as it always does, with the band opening the arena events at the Claygate Flower Show – well done to the whole band for a well-delivered marching display.

But there were two other stand-out events during the term. Firstly, our annual Band Awards, where we celebrated those who have made the most significant contribution to the band over the year and those who have made the most progress musically or in marching. Congratulations go to all the award winners, but particular congratulations go to Evie Dawes (Explorer) who received the Band Person of the Year Award 2024; and to Zoe Hope (Ranger) who received the Group Scout Leader's Award:

The second standout moment was the band's performance at the Group AGM, where the band was conducted by James Aylmer-Hall, a young leader and band alumni (and now musician in the Welsh Guards – congratulations James). James is one of a number of long-standing members of the band community continuing to contribute to the success of the band.

LOOKING AHEAD

The band has an equally busy few months ahead.

On 9th November we will once again be taking part in the Lord Mayor's Show in central London. It's a huge event, marching in front of tens of thousands of people (and hopefully getting an appearance on the BBC too!). The whole procession stretches over 3 miles long! The following day we will be leading the Remembrance Parade in Claygate – a central point in our band calendar. December is full of Christmas events in and around the Village. As part of this Christmas programme, the band has been asked to support the Princess Alice "Light up a Life" event.

Looking further afield, the band's annual concert will be held on 29th March 2025 and in September 2025 the Senior Band has the great privilege of playing in Ypres, Belgium, at the Menin Gate – more on that in the next newsletter.



WHY NOT JOIN THE BAND?

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, on 01372 464173 (robinwilkinson149@gmail.com).

The band is looking to attract new people from brownies, guides, rangers, cubs, scouts and explorer scouts to join.

You don't need to play an instrument already – we can lend instruments to you and help with tuition. Existing musicians are of course also very welcome. We select music to play that enables people of all musical abilities to take part. You're never too old to learn an instrument – and it is great fun too.



Scouts Summer Camp

Appletreewick, North Yorkshire

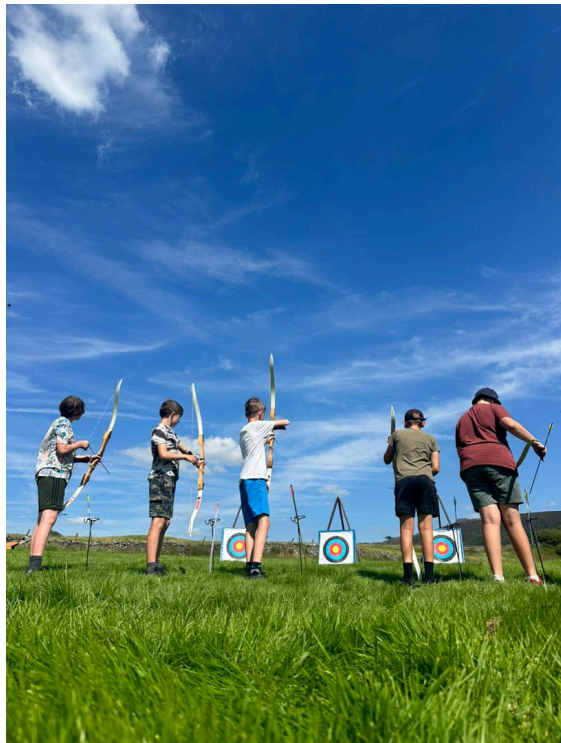
27th July-2nd Aug

This year's Troop summer camp took place at our favourite greenfield site on the banks of the River Wharf in the Yorkshire Dales. There was an early start on the Saturday and a long drive for the 2 minibuses and the lorry carrying all our equipment. The Scouts cooked all their own meals, over open fires in the evening and we had a packed programme including rafting, kayaking, climbing abseiling, hiking and swimming. Who better to tell you about them than the Scouts themselves:

One afternoon we split into our patrols to build rafts from containers and wooden staves. We built ours in 2-star shapes and tied them together with rope and attached the containers to the bottom. When we were done, we went to the river and put our rafts on the water, and we floated down the rapids trying to avoid some big rocks. Some of the rafts floated and some weren't so lucky. Our patrol got to the bottom in one piece. The water was so cold but after a minute we warmed up. It was a great afternoon, and we all laughed a lot. (Matthew Holmes)

We went to Brimham Rocks, about half an hour's drive from camp. We abseiled down a 50m cliff and had a superb time. Even though some were scared, they overcame their fear and enjoyed the experience. We had the opportunity to do different climbs up the rocks and there were amazing views. (Charlotte Atherton)

We hiked and climbed up Pen-y-ghent, the tallest of the three peaks of Yorkshire. After a long hike of 8 hours we were rewarded with both an ice-cream and a sense of achievement. During the climbs up and down we kept our morale up with mind games and a constant flow of fun conversation, making it an enjoyable experience for all involved. (Minnie Dunman)



Our kayaking session started with an easier section to get used to the waters and as we got further down the river we played some games. The best game I remember was water polo using the instructors' kayaks as goals! After the games, we got to a faster and much more difficult section. We took it in turns going down and the instructors had to help most of us round some of the corners. This was my favourite part since there were a few small drops and the current was really fast which made it even more enjoyable. (Edward Clark)

We visited the local town of Skipton. There were many activities to do, from shopping for hats to walking along the river. Once we got there, we put ourselves into groups and went off. Many people straight away went to the local market that was being held that



that day, whilst others went on a sugary spree of sweets. In the market, there were pillows, jewellery and bucket hats which many people bought and were one of the most sought-after items. Other people went to WHSmith and got drinks and mini fans, whilst a lot of boys and girls went to Poundland to get crisps and drinks. Towards the end of the trip, when we were all returning to the minibuses, one of the boys came back with a walking stick, which was the main topic of conversation for the rest of the day. (Sam Ferreira-Lay)

As well as the activities described by the Scouts, we also had a trip to the open-air lido in Ilkley and a day hike along the beautiful River Wharf. We were very lucky with the weather, which made packing up all the tents and kit a little easier. The Scouts and Leaders had an fantastic week and we hope to be back in a few years.



Surrey Scoutabout 28th - 30th June



Scoutabout is a County event run every three years on the South East of England Showground at Ardingly in East Sussex. The Scouts go around in small groups, trying out the hundreds of activities on offer including climbing, caving, driving, space hopper football and throwing balls to dunk a scout in a barrel of water (there was a long queue to be the one dunked).

There were also bands and talent contests in the evening and a closing ceremony featuring the Claygate Scout and Guide Band.

The leaders did all the cooking, giving the scouts the maximum time to enjoy this amazing event.



Paddlesports

Another busy year for paddlesport at Claygate Scouts. The team has been working hard to offer more opportunities for our young people.

The year started with a weekend trip to Dartmoor for our whitewater award trainees. This involved a late-night drive down to Dartmoor, followed by two days spent paddling sections of the river Dart. These were grade 2 and 3 sections of river, and everyone progressed with their skills and enthusiasm.

We managed to offer both a Paddle Discover and Paddle Explore course throughout the summer term. The Paddle discover course is focused on beginner paddlers and getting them onto the water to learn the basics of boat control, stability, and the core fundamentals of paddling. The Paddle Explore course is then designed to further the learning process and introduce more skills towards the intermediate paddler.

In-between these summer courses was the Scout Summer Camp. We managed to get all the scouts onto the water during the week and this included a technical rapid that was enjoyed by all! Yorkshire is an amazing part of the world and we were all very lucky to spend a week camping by the river and making use of this outdoor playground.

The explorer course has just come to an end with a weekend trip to Symonds Yat. This trip introduces paddlers to white water and brings in complex paddle strokes and furthers development towards the White-Water Award, which runs when it rains!

Our Explore course runs through the winter, with several events already planned. This includes the use of the Nene white water centre, a man-made whitewater course perfect for learning whitewater skills. The next being another trip to Dartmoor, before the year closes with a trip to North Wales in December.

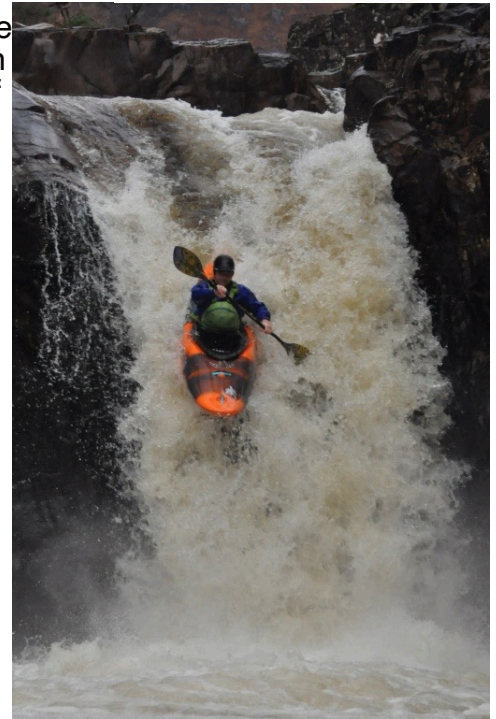
Claygate Scouts are very lucky to be able to use the Claygate Community Pool and with private hire can safely use this space to practise kayaking year-round.

Our leader team are a great group, with several who come back from university to help. We are very lucky, and they all use their spare time to paddle. Two leaders had an awesome trip in Nepal with an 8-day kayak expedition, whilst another two leaders spent time in both the French Alps and Spanish Alps across the summer.

If you would like to get involved:

If you would like any more information or are interested in getting involved (this includes young people and adults), please get in touch via 1stclaygatepaddlesport@gmail.com

Finally, a huge thank you to everyone involved in Paddlesport in Claygate Scouts. It is ever rising in popularity and the people who offer their time are very much appreciated. It is brilliant that our scouts and explorers are provided with such great opportunities, and this is shown in their enthusiasm to return and help with courses throughout their own time.



Scouts Top Awards



As well as having lots of fun and going on foreign trips (see pages 8 & 9 about the trip to Morocco), several of our Explorer Scouts have been focussing on gaining their Top Scouting Awards.

These are the Platinum Chief Scout Award, the Diamond Chief Scout Award and the Kings Scout Award. At each level this involves completing a Duke of Edinburgh Award (Bronze for Platinum, Silver for Diamond and Gold for the KSA), camping with Scouts for 6, 12 and 24 nights respectively and completing two other challenges involving International, Community and Values (ICVs) for each level. The ICVs are designed to be stretching challenges, but a number of these can be fulfilled by being a Young Leader with the group and completing the Surrey Scouts YL leadership training programme. The recent Morocco trip also helped significantly, being an International Challenge with lots of Nights Away!

Achieving any of these Top Scouting Awards is a tremendous effort – well done to all the Explorers and Leaders involved (including Sally Shortman, Jonathan Perkins, Mark Burrows, Graham Copland Cale and Hugh Gostling).

At the first Explorer Meeting of this term we were able to present the following:

Silver DofE Award to: William and Luke
Platinum Chief Scout Award to: Lydia, Jamie, George, Evie, Ruby, Charlotte, Eamonn, William, Ciara, Jess, Aahna and Sammy.
Diamond Chief Scout Awards to: Evie, Nicole and Sammy.

The following awards were also presented:

The Explorer Trophy – Luke

Nightingale Award: Lydia and Ruby

Certificates of Achievement (to those leaving Explorers on turning 18 for their enormous contribution to the Unit):
Max, Evie, Nicole, Lawrence and Eric



Explorers' Reunion



The former members of the 1st Claygate Venture Scout Unit had a reunion a while ago and you can see a before and after photograph below. Graham Copland Cale, Melanie Copland Cale, Alistair Carruthers are still involved in 1st Claygate and Gavin Carruthers is a leader in Weybridge and Oliver Gosling is a leader in Devon.

Each year they hire a bunkhouse and get together and this time they went to the Brecon Beacons and walked to the top of Pen Y Fan .



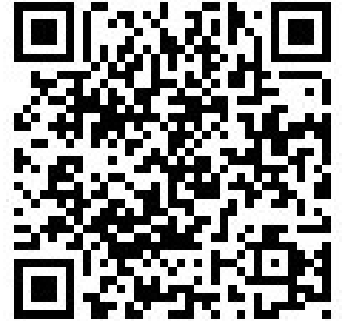
Beer Festival



The Beer Festival was held on the last two days of August and continues to cement itself as one of the highlights of the Claygate calendar. Over 1,000 tickets were sold, and amongst others 2,500 pints of beer and cider, 15 litres of gin, 400 burgers and 120kg of French Fries were consumed over the three sessions. The event was supported on the Saturday night by the band performing Fire and Rain & American Pie which played two wonderful sets. We were blessed once again with dry weather, and over 150 children joined their parents on the Saturday afternoon, enjoying the free bouncy slide while their parents enjoyed the fare on offer.

The event would not be possible without the help of dozens of volunteers serving beer, cider, gin and wine, many helpers sweating it out in the kitchen and on the crepe stand, and others manning the front desk, the cash desk, the bouncy slide and generally keeping their place tidy by collecting up glasses and litter. Special thanks to several Explorers and Network Scouts who worked beyond the call of duty in the kitchen, crepe stall and helping to serve drinks.

The event is one of our biggest fundraisers and in 2023 funds raised helped buy our new minibus. In addition, the collection at the end of each session raised well over £2,000 for the Princess Alice Trust in memory of one of the founders of the Beer Festival, Tim Coffin, who sadly passed away earlier this year. If anyone else would like to make a donation to the Princess Alice Trust please use the following QR code which takes you directly to the Princess Alice MuchLoved page in memory of Tim.



Fireworks

The Scout Centre
Oaken Lane, Claygate

On
Sunday 3rd November

Timing

Doors 5:15pm

Fireworks 6:00pm

Finish 7:30pm



Annual Awards



We recognised the young people in our sections and it is always difficult to identify the recipients as we have so many young people in the Group who put their effort in their Scouting and then get the best from their experiences and training.

| | |
|------------------------|----------------|
| Maple Beaver Colony | Lachlan |
| Oak Beaver Colony | Annabelle |
| Sycamore Beaver Colony | Amelie |
| Willow Beaver Colony | Ivy |
| Lion Cub Pack | Ava |
| Lynx Cub Pack | Alec and Leo |
| Panther Cub Pack | Ruben |
| Scout Troop | Zoe |
| Explorer Scout Unit | Luke |
| Nightingale Award | Lydia and Ruby |





Diary to Christmas

As ever the term is packed with events for everyone and an extract from the Group calendar is set out below.

| MONTH & DATE | EVENT | Beaver Scouts | Cub Scouts | Scouts | Explorer Scouts | Network Scouts | SASU | Band | Group Support |
|--|---|---------------|------------|----------|-----------------|----------------|------|------|---------------|
| October | | | | | | | | | |
| 05th-06th | District Night Hike 5th October | | | [SCOUTS] | | | | | |
| 13th | Young Leader Conference | | | | EXPLORERS | network* | | | |
| 13th | Scouts Own and Going Up Ceremony | 🔥 | 🐾 | [SCOUTS] | EXPLORERS | network* | | | |
| 19th-21st | DRAGON Scout & DofE Expeditions Ashdown Forest | | | | EXPLORERS | network* | | | |
| November | | | | | | | | | |
| 03rd | Group Fireworks | 🔥 | 🐾 | [SCOUTS] | EXPLORERS | network* | | | X |
| 09th | Lord Mayor's Show | | | | | | | | |
| 10th | Remembrance Parade | 🔥 | 🐾 | [SCOUTS] | EXPLORERS | network* | | | X |
| 13th | District Shooting Competition (Explorer) | | | | EXPLORERS | | | | |
| 13th | Explorers Painting Competition | | | | EXPLORERS | | | | |
| 20th | District Scout Cooking Competition | | | [SCOUTS] | | | | | |
| 23rd-30th | District Explorer Games Night 23rd or 30th (P) | | | | EXPLORERS | | | | |
| 30th | Claygate Lights (P) | | | | | | | | X |
| December | | | | | | | | | |
| 01st | Princess Alice Light up a Life Service | | | | | | | | |
| 08th | Carols on the Green | | | | | | | | X |
| 13th | Carols Round the Camp Fire | 🔥 | 🐾 | [SCOUTS] | EXPLORERS | network* | | | X |
| 15th | Cubs to Pantomime | | 🐾 | | | | | | |
| 20th-21st | Carolling Round the Village | | | | | | | | X |
| (P) Provisional Date; (TBA) To Be Advised. (UNDERLINED) = more location information available. | | | | | | | | | |

Upcoming events

As ever we have a number of major events up to Christmas which I would like to recommend to you

- **Christmas Trees:** Order form available from 1st November; deadline for orders 24th November; trees delivered on 7th, 14th and 21st December.
- **Group Fireworks:** 3rd November 2024. A family event at the Scout Centre with Display Fire works, hot dogs and soup.
- **Carols round the Camp Fire:** 13th December 2024. Another great family event, with carols round the campfire, followed by refreshments and traditional Christmas songs inside the Scout Centre
-