



The Water Rat

The Newsletter of Leander Sea Scouts

December 2021

editor – Nigel Duffin – info@leanderseascouts.org.uk

Scout meetings 'relatively normal'!

With the starting of the new school term in September, it was time to resume Scout meetings in what we hoped would be a relatively back to normal manner.

During the Summer break we had continued to run kayaking sessions at the weekends to try and make the best of the good weather and keep the cobwebs at bay.

Tuesday meetings resumed on the first week of term, when we were able to get out on the water for one last evening, before the lack of light makes it impractical. 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 transmitting the message using our UHF Radios. Most of the messages got through but I'm pretty sure someone was talking to an Uber driver at one point.



A brushing up of knot-tying and then a compass course in the dark at Canbury Gardens were the content of the next two meetings. The following week we showed the Scouts how to do square lashings and then I gave them some poles and rope and told them to make a ladder. They then had to climb up the outside of the building to the balcony using the ladder they had made, which certainly tested the quality of their work!

A mini night hike in Richmond park and then a night of fire-lighting to coincide with Bonfire night were the next two meetings' activities, followed by an Escape Room evening kindly run by Tim and Chris, the Cub Leaders.



Now came my biggest planning headache, where I split the Troop up and one half goes to White-Spider climbing in Tolworth and the other half take part in a cooking evening at the HQ. Two weeks later the groups are reversed. Thankfully, everyone managed to get to and from their allotted venues, at the time and dates they were supposed to, Phew!



Our penultimate meeting of the term was a Kahoot quiz night, kindly planned and run by Conor, one of our Explorers; and then our final meeting was a bit of Christmas fun, ten pin bowling at the Rotunda.

I hope you all have a good Christmas break and Santa brings everything you asked for. See you next term.

Russ

Leander (Kingston) Sea Scout Group

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



Beavers have many new joiners



Beavers have been busy this term making the most of being outdoors in September with a hike in Richmond Park and a Day Camp at Walton Firs. They tried bouldering, bows and arrows, a nature walk, adventure assault course and toasting marshmallows of course.



At HQ we have done some fire lighting and cooked chocolate bananas in foil – with more marshmallows! For the Camp Craft badge, Beavers designed camp blankets and some brought theirs along and were able to sew their Walton Firs badge on, the first of many.



For the Outdoors badge, we have practised knots, done leaf-rubbing, learned some first aid



and practised rolling our Leander scarf. A Christmas craft evening and a party finish off the term.

We have had many new joiners recently as senior Beavers have made their way to Cubs, lots of support from parents eager to help out alongside our wonderful Duke of Edinburgh volunteers / Young Leaders Max, Joseph, Charlie, Sam and Louis. I would like to thank Bramwell (Rhys), Pangoro (Will) and Baloo (Helen) in Assistant roles for their expertise and support that makes Beavers so much fun.

Wishing you all a wonderful Christmas break.

*Yogi, Cathy Johnson,
Beaver Scout Leader*

River Cruise

Save the date: Friday 17th June 2022

Here's something to look forward to next year – our postponed Leander Summer River Cruise will take place on the evening of Friday 17th June. Tickets will be on sale soon (volunteer required who wants to learn how to use EventBrite!)

GSL's notes

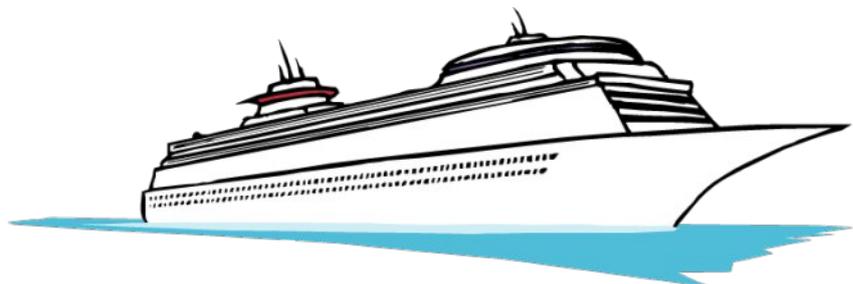
The last few months have fortunately seen all the sections busy with activities. Obviously we continue to be careful with required health precautions, making sure we monitor personal hygiene, that there is plenty of fresh air circulating in the HQ and carrying out activities outside.

The HQ is in the middle of a very substantial upgrade as part of our requirement to comply with enhanced fire safety and health and safety requirements. The new heat transfer heating system is now up and running; it is wonderfully quiet compared with the old noticeably noisy system. New secure doors have been fitted to the bridge (balcony) as the old ones were rooting away and the roller shutter for the entrance/exit on the boat deck has been replaced with a motorised key control security shutter.

We recently had a very comprehensive fire safety inspection, resulting in further works that have to be considered; new fire doors and upgraded emergency lighting are our next requirements. Yes, these will need funding, that will be major initiative in the New Year.

We have to make sure that all our users, including the hirers, who provide a valuable portion of income, are safe and secure in a building that is properly fit for purpose. Once completed we can then concentrate on the next projects that will help deliver the quality Scouting we pride ourselves on.

Robin (GSL)



HQ updates from the Chair

We've made a few changes to our HQ recently. We've replaced the boiler and we're just getting used to the new heating system – it is more efficient than the last one and has the certification we needed.

We've replaced both external doors on the balcony as they were rotten at the base.

We've also been busy implementing improvements in the way we manage fire safety. We commissioned an independent fire safety specialist to carry out an inspection and we will be working through these recommendations in the forthcoming weeks and months. We've been updating signage

and escape routes. We've provided new fire safety briefings for the hirers and we're planning further training for Section Leaders.

All this will take time, and I'd like to particularly thank Robin and Ruth for the time and energy they are putting into this. It will also need money, so we repeat our ask that for someone to lead our fundraising efforts – we would welcome a volunteer or two who can work as a team to lead this.

The Leander Guild are great! As well as helping with the running and upkeep of the Group, these former Leander Sea Scouts have this year contributed over £300

to Leander's funds. Given the expenditure on the heating system, new security doors and maintenance of the boats these contributions are very much appreciated. On behalf of all of us at Leander please accept our heartfelt thanks.

A final 'shout out' to Dick who continues to open up for contractors, sort out roofers at short notice, get quotes for the work and a host of other duties too. His tireless and important work often goes unnoticed so I wanted to take this opportunity to pass on our heartfelt thanks.

*Andrew
(Chair, Leander Sea Scouts)*

We're hiring !

The Leander team have plenty of fantastic opportunities for volunteering. If any of the roles below sound like fun, please get

in touch with Cathy, Tim, Russ, Alex, Robin or Andrew we will talk you through the detailed job spec and generous package of

benefits (!) . If you want to apply with a friend or another parent, jobshare arrangements are welcomed.

Role	What needs doing	What's good about this role
Fundraising	We'd really like to upgrade the galley (kitchen), and we always need money for boats and building repairs	You get to connect with all the Leaders and Helpers and really enable new things to happen.
Parent Representatives on the Executive Committee	We want to make sure that parent views are properly represented. It means joining about up to 6 Exec meetings across the year.	We've just had one wonderful volunteer and another one or two would really help.
Building maintenance, and fire safety	We need a parent or two who would join our sub group, ideally with a bit of experience of maintaining a building, commissioning suppliers, managing projects, etc	We've got a lot to do, and need help with the volume of legislation and new requirements. We just really need your time and help.
May 5th Election Lead	Kingston Council plan to use our HQ for the 2022 elections – we need someone to coordinate this one day event.	It is REALLY interesting to see how an election happens and the things which need to be in place. You also get to meet the Presiding Officer and all the helpers too !
Section leaders/helpers	We are always on the lookout for people to help with Section activities (Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers)	We think helping young people engage in fun and challenging activities is just the best. We think helping young people engage in fun and challenging activities is just the best.