

36th EPPING FOREST SOUTH CUB SCOUT REPORT 2021

2021 started with a full lockdown and no face-to-face meetings or activities permitted but, as the year progressed, Covid-19 restrictions gradually relaxed and we were able to run an exciting and challenging cub programme for most of the year.

Spring term kicked off back in full lockdown and the cub programme had to resort to weekly Zoom meetings. With a number of new cubs having joined the pack over the previous few months and no regular meetings, we took the opportunity to reinforce cub traditions and values during the initial Zoom meetings to bring everyone back up to speed. The cubs also managed to cover both the global issues and personal safety activity badges via Zoom meetings during the term.

Face-to face meetings and activities were permitted from the start of summer term and, during the last weekend of the Easter break, we held a virtual Easter camp with the cubs sleeping in tents or dens at home plus a day out in the forest, building dens in the woods and playing games on the green. Weekly meetings resumed at the church, mostly outdoors when the weather permitted. During these meetings the cubs covered the outdoor and adventure challenge badges plus the athletes and navigator level one activity badges. The cubs also enjoyed a Monday evening canoeing session at Fairlop Sailing Centre in July. The postponed dad and cub camp from the previous year could still not go ahead so a cub activity day was held at Thriftwood Scout Camp instead where the cubs enjoyed a morning kayaking session on the lake, cooked their own lunch and played games in the afternoon.

We were back to almost normal Monday indoor meetings for Autumn term since the pandemic restrictions started and ran a regular programme covering the fire safety, naturalist, international and disability awareness badges, finishing the term with our traditional winter night hike. Additional weekend activities included two Sunday church parades, a gardening session to plant two hundred spring bulbs provided by Redbridge Council and an indoor weekend winter camp at Thriftwood. Twenty-three cubs attended the camp and had a fun weekend with zipline, cresta run, nightline and den building activities outdoors plus drawing activities and games indoors.

Throughout all the cub activities, in addition to working towards activity badges, the cubs have worked towards their challenge badges. Gaining all the challenge badges, plus six activity badges, leads to a cub being awarded the Chief Scouts Silver Award. This is the highest award a cub can earn and, despite the logistical difficulties this year, twelve cubs were presented the Silver award during 2021. In general, the cubs have not fallen behind with progressing towards the Chief Scout Silver award this year.

The cub pack currently has twenty-eight young people in the section with a balanced age range from eight to ten and a half. Despite the difficulties thrown up during this year, attrition within the cub section has been minimal but we are looking to boost the pack number back up to thirty-six during the next year.

The adult leadership team has remained strong throughout the year with cub scout leader Peter Hayward in charge, supported by assistant cub scout leader Philip Moir and section assistant Bart Kolosowski. Assistant cub scout leader Roy Hardy cannot help with Monday meetings but is still ready to help with cub camps. The adult leaders have been supported by young leaders Fred Johnson, James Hitching and Victor Hallam plus Joseph Bever from the start of autumn term.

Despite the restrictions, the cub pack has remained active throughout the year. I would like to say thank you to all the leaders for their support in everything we have achieved this year and to all the parents for their support helping the cubs with badgework and activities at home.

Pete Hayward (Akela)
Cub Scout Leader
36th Epping Forest South Sea Scout Group

January 2022