



The Water Rat

The Newsletter of Leander Sea Scouts

May 2020

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Leander & Scouting in lockdown

The Group is virtually in suspended animation, however we are nothing but resourceful and all the Leaders are endeavouring to keep in touch online with their sections, organising activities which can be carried out at home.

Unfortunately Summer Camp, the National Sea Scout Regatta and the Great River Race look increasingly unlikely to take place, unless there are really positive developments in the Corona virus saga.

At the moment we have no idea when meetings will recommence, this is very much dependent on schools returning and how that might or might not be staggered. A long way to go yet before that is a safe reality. Scouting nationally most likely will be much later. There are issues of social distancing at the heart of Scouting yet to be resolved and the organisation will, as usual, take its time coming to a conclusion.

Scouting nationally is facing a difficult future. Income from groups, schools and youth groups has been reduced dramatically with the closure of all activity centres and camp sites. By September the current reserves are expected to be at 25% of where they should be. There have been redundancies, with probably more to come and the possibility of selling assets (activity centres and camp sites) has been considered.

There is no doubt that membership fees will increase, currently £29.00 per head. Ireland has increased their national fee by 20% and Boy Scouts of America have doubled their annual fee.

Finally though, there is some good news. Although we estimate that lost hire income is around £1,000 per month, we have been included in the Government Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Fund, resulting in £10,000 from the Royal Borough of Kingston. This will certainly make a difference in our financial management of the Group's business.

Coxswain

AGM

Following guidance from the Charity Commission, the Leander Executive Committee agreed to postpone the AGM, which was due to be held in July, until November. A date will be considered at the next Executive meeting and, if the situation for face-to-face meetings has not improved, arrangements will be put in place to hold the meeting online.

The annual accounts have been approved by the Independent Examiner and the Annual Report by the Trustees.

Our building

Looking forward to when activities can restart in the HQ, we have new hand dryers in the toilets, which we are sure you will find much more effective and comfortable. They really are 'storm force 10'! There are also new benches in the Boat Deck changing rooms and we can only hope that these can be in use before 2021.

Our current, major project is the replacement of the heating system. You may remember that we recently had an entire Winter when it was out of action awaiting spares and repairs. We want to avoid a recurrence of that situation. The unit was installed 35 years ago as part of a rebuilding programme after a major fire at the Headquarters. Maintenance has become expensive. Parts are now wearing out and, because of the age of the unit, some are unobtainable.

Various options for replacement have been explored and we have a number of quotes. The cost is likely to be around £20000.

We will be looking to apply for grants to help with this expense and are actively looking for a couple more people to join the group exploring grant applications. Please speak to one of the Section Leaders if you are able to help.

Leander (Kingston) Sea Scout Group

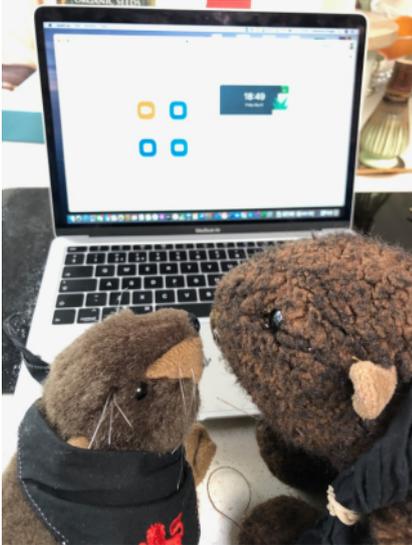
Headquarters: 92 Lower Ham Road, Kingston upon Thames, KT2 5BB

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



Virtually Beavers

I am so pleased that many of our Beavers (and their pets and families) are able to join us for online virtual sessions this term. It is a step change for all of us and it is going quite well!



We started with a scavenger hunt looking for a wide variety of things to bring back and share, including something you can see yourself in and a photo of someone you love.

We have tackled some first aid and knots (which involved lots of parents frowning at the screen while they digested the video and instructions from Yogi). We have toasted marshmallows over candles and prepared chocolate bananas to bake as a classic camp treat.



We put up a tent/shelter/den and many of us slept the night or took a nap in it. We have sung

lots of campfire songs and shared pets, stories and jokes and we are only at half term.



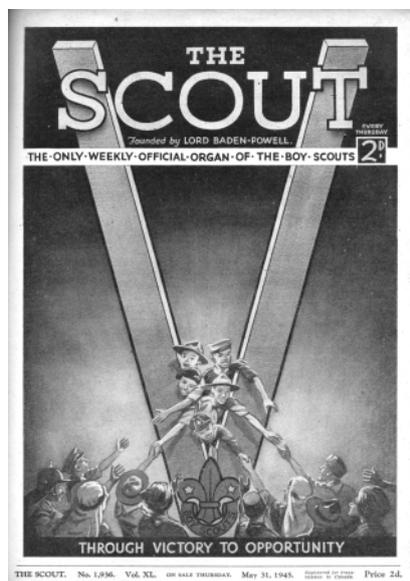
Thank you so much to everyone for joining enthusiastically and to Daniel Pullen our wonderful Young Leader, Baloo (Helen) and Iorek (Jennifer).

We are sad to miss our Day Camp at Walton Firs, but are rebooking that for another date and hope that November might allow us to run a Space Cadet sleepover, but if not we will rebook that as well and line up Cadet activities in another way.

Take care everyone and stay connected!

Cathy, BSL

75 years ago 31st May 1945



Survey



Background

Leader's Executive Committee decided to launch a short online survey to gather the opinions of parents and other stakeholders.

Process

22 responses were collected using the SurveyMonkey tool. Responses to seven short questions were collected on an anonymous basis between March and April 2020. These results have been shared and discussed with the Executive Committee and Leaders on 18th May.

The full results are available on the website; follow the 'Planning for the future' link on the front page. A follow up communication meeting with parents will be arranged once the current COVID-19 disruption has eased.

Summary of findings

All respondents expressed their satisfaction and provided examples of their positive experiences with Leander. 40% of respondents had no suggestions for improvements.

There are many ideas for the group to consider, ranging from ideas about future activities, greater community involvement, improving facilities and addressing the diversity mix of the Leader/Helper group.

Respondents also gave their views on short and long term priorities for the group. Some respondents have also volunteered their time to help with group activities.