



Mar 4-5	Explorers: Red Flare	
4	District Store open	Morden Hall DHQ 10am
8	Cub Scout Leaders' Meeting	Morden Hall DHQ 8pm
11-12	Scouts: Night Exercise	
15	Beaver Leaders' Meeting	Morden Hall DHQ 8pm
17-19	Explorers: Practice Expeditions	North & South Downs
18	Store open	Morden Hall DHQ 10am
19	Cubs: Handicraft competition	
19	Beavers: Bike Ride	Morden Hall/Ravensbury Park
22	Scout Active Support Meeting	Morden Hall DHQ
31	Photographic competition closing date	
Apr 1-3	Explorers: Practice Expeditions	North & South Downs
1	District Store open	Morden Hall DHQ 10am
6	No store – Easter holidays	
17	Celebrations at Wimbledon Windmill	
20	Store re-opens	Morden Hall DHQ 7.45pm
23	St George's Day Parade & Service	Wimbledon
28-30	Scouts: Skills weekend	Thriftwood
28–1 May	Explorers: Mountain weekend	Wales

District Commissioner

One of the key measures of how successful we are in delivering Scouting is the numbers of members we have. The annual census figures are now in and show that overall our membership is up since last year. Thank you to everyone for their efforts in getting the returns in but the biggest thank you goes to Muriel Treagust for putting it all together.

Most Groups have shown a steady increase but particular credit goes to the 23rd Mitcham whose numbers rose by 20% and the 2nd Morden with a 19% increase. There are some sections where we can see numbers going down and clearly, we need to look at the reasons why this has happened so we can do something about it.

One of our biggest decreases was in the Network section. This year, according to the census, we have only 4 network members but many more are listed on compass! Since statistics show that over 40% of our new leaders will have been scouts it is important that we retain our older youth members. Now that the exec has approved the development budget our new Network Commissioner and District Youth Commissioners can begin their work to help us all keep this age group engaged with scouting.

County have now provided us with early information about the next world Scout Jamboree in the US and any leaders who would like to attend are encouraged to apply, we will also be arranging visits to troops and units to make all eligible youth members aware of this great opportunity.

Finally, may I wish our teams entering the County Night Exercise (Scouts) and Red Flare (Explorers) all the best in their efforts.

Deborah

Chairman's Chatter – Andy Edmonds

It is pleasing to report that the Executive has finally been able to agree the Budget for 2017 and allocations to be made available via the District Development Plan. All the DC's proposed spending areas have been supported bar one, which has been held back until next year. There have also been some reductions in allocations so as to ensure that we are not utilising Reserves that will be required for future capital outlay and upkeep on today's discretionary expenditure.

Income this year will be reduced due to major damp problems at the KBH flat. Reports have been commissioned and plans are progressing to put things right. The route of these issues remains that the original concrete Finlock gutters are no longer fit for purpose and we have a sheet metal roof over the top of the original grey asbestos roof. The costs of removing both roofs, cutting off the gutters and making good are likely to be excessive. The Executive is of the view that it makes better sense to review the whole situation at KBH in 2024; in anticipation of the Bridge Club's 20-year Lease coming to an end in March 2026. In the meantime, we have sufficient Reserves to continue to make good and also to allow for completion of the renovations next year at Morden Hall DHQ.

The DC suggested we consider charging for use of DHQ, but this was rejected, as the Executive is of the opinion that this would disproportionately affect smaller Groups. Less than 10% of our annual income is allocated for rent, bills and upkeep of Morden Hall DHQ, whereas 75% of income is made available for development through the District Plan.

I should advise Groups that, in light of the new priorities agreed under the DDP, we will no longer be supporting Membership Fees for Group Growth. Commitments for 2017 Census will be honoured, but Groups will be responsible for paying full National, County and any District Levy from 2018 Census and beyond.

I am sad to report that Richard Marus has indicated that he is not willing to continue as Treasurer after the AGM in June. Richard has provided a couple of years continuity in a role that has seen six changes in eight years! Quite where we go from here I do not know. We are making an attempt to get a better idea of the issues. A similar exercise five years ago, didn't achieve

any material changes and as I have said before, without a Treasurer there can be no District!

Those who have read Links or my Annual Reports will be aware of the Journey we have been on over the seven years I have been District Chairman. A role I have served longer than any other Chairman since the District was formed and seen out one DC, one County Commissioner, two County Chairmen, two Prime Ministers and six Treasurers! I have talked about progressing from the "Forming" stage, through the "Norming" stage and looking forward to the "Storming" stage. As I have not been asked to play any part in planning, there can be no "Storming" for me. I have therefore informed the DC that I am unwilling to serve beyond the forthcoming AGM. I whole heartedly thank those that have helped create our current success and build the new "Norm". I have enjoyed working with everyone. We all work quietly behind the scenes and I for one feel that our contribution is grossly undervalued!

Andy

St George's Day Parade and Service

Our St George's Day Parade and Service approaches and will take place this year on the day itself, Sunday 23 April.

Parade will again be through Wimbledon Village with the service at the Church of the Sacred Heart in Edge Hill. Assembly will be at 13:30 with dismissal at 15:30.

This is Deborah's first Parade as DC and we are expecting our County Commissioner to join us. Planning now being finalised with the LB Merton - who are again providing the Traffic Management Order at no cost - and the Metropolitan Police supporting the Parade.

Final details will be circulated in mid-to-late March, but please remember our annual obligation to renew Promises, not forgetting that the winners of the amazing prizes on offer for the District Photographic Competition will be revealed.

Wimbledon Windmill

The Windmill is 200 years old this year and we have been asked to join in with the celebrations on Easter Monday, 17 April.

Baden-Powell wrote parts of Scouting for Boys whilst staying in the cottage and the Windmill team would like to continue the connection with the Movement. Dave Bixby is co-ordinating this and is looking for volunteers to help pitch a few tents and maybe build a Monkey Bridge. It would be great if we could put on something that the public could take part in – crafts for youngsters for example – but it depends on who is available and willing to help.

Please contact Dave on adcscouts@wimbledonandwandlescouts.org as soon as possible.

Safety Training -Alison Edwards

As part of the ongoing learning requirements of the Scout Association it is necessary to do safety training once every five years. This is in addition to the safeguarding training that many of you are either doing for the first time or renewing.

During the first part of 2017 there will be two training sessions

28 March at 19th Wimbledon HQ

2 May at Morden Hall DHQ

As this is written I am still awaiting final confirmation of these dates but they will be published as soon as possible.

Both sessions will start at 8pm and last approximately 90 minutes.

If you think 'I wonder if I need to do that?'. Then the answer is almost certainly YES! So, book early to see three of the most talented trainers in the district tell you all you need to know!

County Training Courses

Date	No	Module name	Time	Venue
4 Mar	15	Promoting Positive Behaviour	10.00-12.00	LoMo
4 Mar	13	Growing the Section	13.00-16.30	LoMo
11 Mar	16	Introduction to Residential Experiences	09.45-13.00	1 st Hook
11 Mar	38a	Skills for Residential Experiences	13.45-16.30	1 st Hook
23 Mar	19	International	20.00-22.00	Cheam
1-2 Apr	38b	Skills for Residential experiences	weekend	W. Firs
20 May	12	Delivering and Planning a Programme	09.45-16.30	Richmond
30 Sept	12	Delivering and Planning a Programme	09.45-16.30	1 st Hook
8 Oct	16	Introduction to Residential Experiences	09.45-13.00	LoMo
8 Oct	38a	Skills for Residential Experiences	13.45-16.30	LoMo
21-22 Oct	38b	Skills for Residential Experiences	weekend	Croydon
4 Nov	19	International	10.00-12.30	LoMo
4 Nov	17	Running Safe Activities	13.00-16.30	LoMo
19 Nov	12	Delivering and Planning a Programme	09.45-16.30	Coulsdon
3 Dec	15	Promoting Positive Behaviour	10.00-13.00	5 Sutton
3 Dec	13	Growing the Section	13.45-16.30	5 Sutton

For more information regarding venues and to book, please visit the GLSW website

http://www.glsWSCouts.org.uk/spage-adult_training-training_diary.html

Appointments - Muriel Treagust

The next meeting of Appointment interviews is 28th February and due to the number of applications submitted over the past couple of months we have included extra dates - 14th March, 4th April, 18th April.

Please remember - new appointments logged on Compass must have the DBS check submitted before a 30 day deadline expires.

Jack Petchey Awards – Lesley Bixby

There was a very poor response to the request for Jack Petchey nominations this term. I am still hoping to be able to fill our allocation but need some more nominations. £250 can buy you some equipment or subsidise an activity for your whole Troop or Unit as well as giving the Scout or Explorer who receives the award a real boost.

Details of the Leader awards have been sent to GSLs and ESLs – we can nominate 3 Leaders but they must work with the 11+ age groups so not Beaver or Cub Leaders I'm afraid, and they receive a substantial grant to spend on their section.

Leader Awards for Good Service

It was great to report so many awards last month and there is already a list of worthy people who we will be applying for awards for this year.

However, there are probably some adults in your Group who may not come to our attention – Chairmen, Secretaries and Treasurers who have been in post for a minimum of five years, for example. Do you have someone who always goes the extra mile whether it is fund raising, keeping the HQ clean, acting as Group quartermaster? If so, please let Lesley Bixby (thebixbys@talktalk.net) know who they are and why you think they should get an award – we don't have to write citation for the Chief Scout's Commendation for Good Service but we do have to be satisfied that they are doing something special and not just "turning up".

Sixers' stripes

Sixers' and Seconders' stripes are changing colour to red and they are introducing a special woggle and stripes for equivalent leaders in the Beavers. The PL and APL stripes are not changing.

Scout headquarters are issuing a poster for Beavers and a support guide for Sixers and Patrol Leaders. These are free and they will be sent out to Badge Secretaries at the beginning of March.

Don't forget badges are going up by an average of 5p each at the beginning of May – get your orders in now! Email thebixbys@talktalk.net.

Jamboree

The next World Jamboree will take place between **22 July and 2 August 2019** in West Virginia, USA. The County is planning to bid for 2 Units which will mean 8 Leaders and 72 participants.

The Unit Leaders will be selected first and if you are interested you need to put together a 400 word statement outlining why you would like to be considered and send it to acci@glswscouts.org.uk with your name, membership number, email address and contact number. Once the numbers have been confirmed, full application forms will be sent out which should be submitted by **5 May 2017**.

Unit Leaders' selection will take place **3-4 June 2017**.

The cost of the Jamboree for Unit Leaders is substantially subsidised by County.

Details have already been circulated as widely as possible to leaders at Beaver, Cub and Scout events at the end of February and to GSLs and ESLs at their recent meetings. Role descriptions are available from the ADCs, DC or on the County website.

The selection of the young people for the Jamboree will take place at the end of September and details will be circulated when available.

Photographic Competition – The Spirit of Scouting



As announced last month, the closing date has been extended to 31st March and a gallery of the pictures submitted so far can be found at

<http://www.wimbletonandwandlescouts.org/photocompentries.htm>

There are some super prizes on offer so please encourage your members to enter by sending their pictures to

photos@wimbletonandwandlescouts.org

Section reports

Beavers – John Tweedley



By the time you read this, we would have held our District Beaver International Badge Day. 74 very well behaved Beavers attended the activity together with the DC. I would like to thank all Leaders, young Leaders and adults who helped to run the bases and also the SAS who cooked the food for the Beavers and kept everyone supplied with very welcome drinks.

Our next event is the Beaver Bike & Scooter ride which is on Sunday 19th March, you all should have all received the letters for leaders and Beavers. This year we shall be holding it again in Ravensbury Park opposite D.H.Q. Help will be needed running this event again, as in marshals situated along the cycle route and help within the D.H.Q. grounds. This event is open to your parents as well as we need escorts to ride around with the Beavers. Again, we will donate any monies raised to go to the Mayors chosen charity, and as the last few years Beavers will be able to gain their Cyclist Badge on the day.

Our next District Leaders Meeting is on the 15th March at 8.00pm please try to come along or send someone from your colony to represent you if you are unable to attend yourself.

I am going to organize taking the District Beavers to the Cub & Beaver Fun Day at Gilwell Park on the 10th June. I did mention this in last month's links. Because I have to give names of Beavers along with numbers I will be sending out the letters for you to distribute to your beavers. Because I must pay when I book the tickets so I will need payments up front. If you find out that any of your Beavers cannot make the event after paying let me know as I might be able to offer their ticket to someone who has missed the dead line and your parent might be able to get their payment refunded.

I have started to make visits to colonies again so do not be surprised if I turn up on your colony evening. Can colonies please send me their programmes if you have not already done so? Many thanks.

Cubs – Michèle McNamara



Chess competition: this was held on Sunday 26th and we had a total of 10 teams entering. Congratulations to a team from the 22nd Wimbledon for winning this event and thanks to Mark Steed for organising it and the 19th Wimbledon for letting us use their HQ.

Adventure Day: This is due to take place on May 7th at Frylands Wood, I have had a few offers of help for the day but only a very few, we need more leaders to volunteer to run bases and also offers of help as tutors on the day. I would appreciate it if you could bring estimated numbers of cubs due to attend to the next CSL meeting on March 8th and also let me have any ideas for bases by that date if not sooner.

Still waiting for programmes from some packs can you please let me have these a.s.a.p.

Finally, I would draw your attention to the message in this edition of Links regarding the celebrations due to take place at the Wimbledon Windmill on Easter Monday. Can you help please?

Scouts – Dave Bixby



Wimbledon Windmill: as reported elsewhere in Links, the Wimbledon Windmill is 200 years old and they are launching their celebrations on Easter Monday 17th April.

As Baden-Powell wrote a large proportion of Scouting for Boys in Windmill cottage they are very keen to have us involved on the day. Initial ideas are a selection of tents and Scout activities through the last 110 years.

Anyone interested in taking part for all or some of the day, even if just prepared to help pitch a few tents, please get in touch.

5-a-side Football: this was another very successful event. It was very pleasing not to have any spectator problems this year but to have a happy atmosphere throughout the afternoon.

My heartfelt thanks go to Peter Hutton for organising on the day, to all the volunteers who refereed and in particular to Steve Little who ran the "best of the rest" playoff, which was won by the 14th Wimbledon. Congratulations to the 1st Lower Morden who won the main trophy and the 22nd Wimbledon who were runners up.

Thriftwood Training Camp 28th-30th April

Initial letters have been sent out to those troops that have registered for the Thriftwood training camp.

These need to be distributed to those Scouts that you're inviting to the camp with the completed forms returned to me by the 9th April at the very latest.

Kit lists and medical forms will be then sent directly to those attending. Any Leaders coming on the camp **MUST** confirm their attendance by this date so that we can sort out the arrangements.

At the time of writing we are waiting confirmation of the coach pick-up point from Merton Council.

Gentle Reminder

Please remember that the closing date given in the Red Book means that entries need to actually be with me and not posted the day before or paid on the day of the event. The only exception is the raft event which is paid per head on the day.

I've had to spend a lot of time recently chasing entry fees for events which inhibits my "proper job", which is to provide support to Troops, especially those struggling, so please abide by all closing dates.

Letter posted second class post are currently taking some 8 days to get to us.

Our next Scout Section meeting is on Tuesday 16th May. Any one with a positive attitude to Scouting in Wimbledon and Wandle is very welcome.

Explorers – Neil McLauchlan

Award Hikes: These are happening as usual again this year for CSPA, CSDA, DofE Bronze and Silver. Details have already been circulated to everyone.

EXPLORERS 

Spring Expedition: This will be taking place from Fri 28th April – Mon 1st May this year. We will be based in the middle of the Brecon Beacons. I do need to know now who wants to take part.

Gilwell 24: This is Fri 7th – Sun 9th July this year. Bookings are not open yet but the website is: <https://www.gilwell24.info/>

Scout Active Support – Linda Vaudrey



We all enjoyed a Rummikub Games evening on 21st February. Thank you to Jean and Rob for arranging.

Can all members please try to attend our Annual Meeting at Morden Hall HQ, Wednesday 22nd March, 7.30 for 8.00 p.m. start. Light refreshments will be provided and we hope to give you further information on forthcoming SASU events for the year ahead.

Reminder – St George's Day Parade, Edge Hill, Wimbledon, Sunday 23rd April. Further details available nearer the time. Help, as usual, will be required on the day.

Thank you to all members for their continued support, especially at District events, which we know is much appreciated.

“Knowledge wants to talk. Wisdom wants to listen. . . “

Haemin Sinim



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