

Tales from the Scout Hut

Over the last Bank Holiday we held our annual camp at Downe Scout Campsite, near Orpington where we spent the weekend in near perfect weather (apart from a thunderstorm for a few hours on the Saturday evening and rain on the morning we packed up). All sections were camping, as the youngest group, the Beaver Scouts joined us on Sunday morning and left on Monday afternoon. Our camp was called 'A Walk on the Wild Side' as we were camped among the trees of this lovely wooded site and on one afternoon, we were joined by a herd of deer who spent nearly a quarter of an hour grazing peacefully at the far end of our pitch.

A number of wild activities were undertaken by the young people. The Scouts kicked off with Tomahawk throwing which they took to most enthusiastically, as did the leaders! There were also visits to the aerial trek course, tunnelling, grass sledging and pedal go karts for the Cubs and Scouts. When the Beavers arrived, they enthusiastically went tunnelling and spent an afternoon making shelters. The Scouts spent a morning working on their navigation for a hike around Biggin Hill and the Cubs went on a nature walk.

Of course, with so much activity, food was an important part of the weekend and we were fed well by Rachel and Tim who came along to cook for us and keep us well fuelled. Amongst other meals, we enjoyed a barbecue, a curry and sausage and mash, while there were old favourites for pudding including fruit kebabs and S'mores, plus a new one for this camp, fruit and marshmallow cones grilled on the barbecue. There were also trips to the Camp shop for many to buy ice creams as it was quite a warm weekend!

On Saturday evening we came together with a number of other groups to hold a traditional campfire singing many old favourites like Fred the Moose and Boogaloo, and learning some new ones as well. On Sunday evening, we did it all again so that the Beavers could join in! Sunday morning saw us hold the traditional Scouts Own service under our homemade flagpole. Scouts Own is a time for reflection and to talk about the things we were enjoying during our weekend.

On the final morning we woke to rain which made camp take-down difficult, however we didn't have the horrendous torrential rain that was affecting other parts of the county and many of our parents helped out brilliantly by taking away most of the tents to dry them off for us. Our final moment came as we once again gathered around the flagpole for flag down and for everyone, young people and leaders, to talk about what they had most enjoyed from the camp.

Camp isn't possible without many people coming together to make it happen. So, thanks to all the young people for making the weekend so amazing and to their parents for entrusting them into our care; our leaders who made it happen and gave up their Bank Holiday weekend; to John for providing the transport to get all the equipment to and from camp; to Dan who helped mop up all the remainder of the kit; special massive thanks to Rachel and Tim for the catering; and to all the parents who helped with the unload at the end and for taking away and drying out tents.

It's now the final term before the summer holidays and all sections will be outside as much as possible to make the most of better weather and longer evenings. There will be hikes, cycling, challenges and much more over the coming weeks. In July the Explorer Scouts will be undertaking their sponsored bike ride at Betteshanger Country Park to raise money for The Alzheimer Society – please support them if you can.

