

July
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Newsletter

5th Crawley Scout Group Update

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Group Update

Main Contacts:

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Beaver and Cubs Maidenbower

- Alan Mayes

Three Bridges Beavers

- Jane Pelham

Three Bridges Cubs

- Ian Head / Chris Harris

Scouts

- Alex Donald

Executive Committee Members

Chairman-Michael Gauntlett

Treasurer - Karolis Pulokas

Secretary - Bev Hills

Parent Representatives

- Tina Tarrant (TB Beavers)

- John Gardiner (M. Beavers)

- Aline Henderson (M. Cubs)

- Helen Maguire (TB Cubs)

- Jeff Curnick (Scouts)

Dear Parents, Scouts, Cubs and Beavers

I hope this newsletter finds you safe and well. When I last wrote we were in the midst of lockdown with face to face meetings suspended and we were experimenting with digital meetings using Zoom in some of the Sections. This expanded in to all sections doing the best they could to stay in touch every week using the internet, which has gone reasonably well with a good deal of effort from everyone involved.

Over the past months a number of our members have finished work for pre-lockdown badges and completed new ones. So well done to all. We appreciate this hasn't been possible for everyone and we are keen to make sure that other members get the chance to do the same as we go forward. A big thank you to all the parents who have accompanied their children and remained on line to help with the programmes.

In June our AGM was held over Zoom with around 30 parents and leaders participating we included recordings of leaders reports and video of some activities. The Group Report and Financial Statement was sent to all parents digitally. Welcome to our new Executive Committee members and our new Chair Michael Gauntlett.

There is light on the horizon.

Things are beginning to change in most walks of life now to some extent and this is true of Scouting too. As you will be experiencing different approaches in different areas It's probably worth explaining that Scouts, like similar organisations have been aligned with the National Youth Association and rules and guidance is being developed to meet the nature of the activities that are undertaken balanced with all the other risks faced by our members and society. Hence why schools are operating differently and some sports clubs who are now meeting as they are governed by a different national organisation.

The Scout Association has reviewed the situation and is permitting face to face meetings to occur outdoors in small groups. The group size is a maximum of 15 people. All adults are restricted to working with only one small group in a 24 hour period. Some of our leaders support more than one section meeting back to back. Prior to any face to face meetings resuming the outdoor locations for meetings need to be risk assessed and approved for use by Crawley District Scout Council. This will include making changes to accessing grounds and buildings. Provisional work has started on these aspects for our HQ in Three Bridges. We are also risk assessing some local parks (no toilet facilities) for some activities and it is hoped we will be able to use the District Campsite in Pease Pottage from time to time too. At the moment we are targeting early September to have our location Risk Assessments ready. Until we can move to indoor meetings sadly we are unable to use Maidenbower Community Centre.

We are conscious that not every member or leader, enjoy using Zoom or have the access required to do so. In the perfect world we would be posting out programmes for all to do at home as well. However this hasn't always been possible, so we are extremely grateful for everyone's patience during this tricky time.



Going forward

September isn't too far away however in reality we need to factor in several things when we look at our outdoor activities, such as the number small size of groups we can safely manage, how can we give everyone the chance to participate (Beavers, Cubs and Scouts), the amount of day light, the space in our HQ grounds (hence why we may need to look further a field for some meetings), numbers of leaders and adults and not least the weather! We will keep you informed of our progress to identify suitable outdoor meeting places nearer to Three Bridges and Maidenbower so we can maximise our outdoor events.

So for awhile yet we can see our meetings being a mix of more digital meetings and some outdoor meetings. Over the coming weeks our leaders are linking up to see how we can operate effectively and safely within the rules, planning programmes for outdoors in small groups of Beavers, Cubs and Scouts and continue an interesting and varied activities on line. These will be shared by the Section Leaders during August once they have been approved for our start back in September.

To help achieve this and overcome some of the challenges we will look at running some activities at weekends at Stanford, Pease Pottage, the local campsite for our sections. However this will become easier to do when The Scout Association increase the group size. So fingers crossed this happens in the near future. For those who are not familiar with Stanford, it is the Crawley District Campsite, as well as plenty of open space and woodlands, access to basic facilities is far easy to manage!

Next Steps

In the near future the Section Leaders will be contacting you to check that your child is still keen to be a member. This will help with planning activities especially out of doors and making sure we accommodate everyone as best we can. Please can you respond to their request as promptly as possible. We will also require you to complete a "return to face to face Scouting" questionnaire before any young person can participate in outdoor activities. **Please watch out for this communication.**

We are very grateful that during the period of suspension of physical meetings the majority of parents were able to continue to pay the monthly subscription. Many of our normal running costs remain the same regardless of not being able to meet face to face. These include rent on premises, insurances, membership fees to the Scout Association, badges, building maintenance, etc.. To restart meetings we will need to make some adjustments to the Three Bridges HQ for more outdoor use and ensure the facilities that are accessed are clean and safe too. Many thanks for continuing to support 5th Crawley during this time. We are happy to review the situation on an individual basis should this be necessary.

Helping Outdoor Scouting to Resume

Having met last week with all our leaders and helpers last week it is clear we will need additional help to provide face to face meetings to as many of our youth members as possible. Some of our leaders for a variety of reasons may not be able to return as early as September, so extra eyes and hands are required.

A couple of extra adults for each section will make an immense difference so if you can offer a couple of hours a week, we will be immensely grateful. This could be provided on a rota basis. This will be covered in the communication from your child's leader to you.

Helping at Maidenbower Beavers (Thursday evenings 17.30 - 18.30)

Helping at Maidenbower Cubs (Thursday evenings 18.30- 20.00)

Helping at the Scout Troop Three Bridges (Thursday evenings 19.00-21.00)

Helping at Three Bridges Cubs (Tuesday evenings 19.00- 20.15)

Helping at Three Bridges Beavers (Monday evenings 18.45 - 19.45)

YIS

Eddy Hills