



# The Water Rat

The Newsletter of Leander Sea Scouts

May 2016

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## Scouts on the water

Since returning after the Easter break, the Scouts are out on the water doing what they do best.



With over a third of the present Troop unfamiliar with being out on the water, several meetings before the break were dedicated to covering the Rules of the Road for river users and boating orders and drills.



The District St George's parade was held at the end of April and was attended by over half of the Troop, who all endured the very cold winds and waiting around without comment. Thankfully it didn't rain this year as it usually does. Well done to all who attended.

Now that we're out on the water on Tuesdays, Coypu and gig rowing sessions are the order of the day alongside kayaking sessions being run by Johnny and Andrew. Due to the general inexperience of the Troop, it's necessary to balance the crews so that the older hands help teach the newer ones as well as learn some new skills themselves. We've got the National Regatta coming up on the horizon, so it's a tough ask to get

the newbies up to speed but it's my aim to have fully capable crews in both age groups ready for the Regatta.

Following quickly on from the regatta is our Summer Camp at Phasels camp near Hemel Hempstead.

Jim, Chris and I have already done a camp visit and planned the hike, so the Scouts can expect a nice little walk in the countryside whilst we're there.

There's a lot to plan for and look forward to before we break for the Summer and hopefully a lot of fun to be had along the way as well.

*Russ*

## Parking

As you will no doubt be aware, Lower Ham Rd and Albany Mews are now part of the Canbury Controlled Parking Zone, with TWO sets of double yellow lines outside the HQ on Lower Ham Road and resident parking restrictions in Albany Mews. The parking wardens are now regularly monitoring both areas and after a rather inconclusive discussion with a warden on a recent Saturday morning, I contacted Kingston Council parking department. The good news is that there are NO restrictions parking on the ramp. Albany Mews has restrictions from 11.00 am to 2.00pm, Monday to Saturday.

## Buoyancy aids



The Gosling Foundation has made us a grant of £1000 for new buoyancy aids, to cope with increased numbers in the Troop and Explorer Unit. They have not yet arrived! but in preparation, we have bought new rails for buoyancy aid storage. These will avoid the crush in the locker where they were previously stowed. It may be possible to replace some of the older ones you can see, which are getting worn.

We have also had a grant of nearly £700 from the Royal Borough for replacement of the floor/gym mats used a lot by all sections during the Autumn and Winter. The covers have started to come unstitched after many years of vigorous activities!

Ruth Bennett leads a small team which looks at grant applications and fund-raising opportunities. She would be delighted if you wanted to join them.

One of our steady sources of income is the easyfundraising scheme. With 26 supporters, we have raised over £700. Could you join to make that even more??

[www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk)

Leander (Kingston) Sea Scout Group

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[www.leanderseascouts.org.uk](http://www.leanderseascouts.org.uk) — Registered Charity Number 29002



## Beavers aim high

In April, the Beavers had a great trip to Holly Lodge Centre in Richmond Park to learn about local birds and tick off some of our 'Outdoor Challenge' award. We had great volunteers looking after us and were the first youth group to visit for some time, but I think we made a good impression! We watched some birds, tried making a nest and a feeder and did a bit of exploring, being careful to tiptoe past the stables as it was the horses' bed time.



We have tackled some simple first aid and knots and voted to have an indoor races evening for our 'Beavers Choice' evening. Sadly the water skiing idea the Beavers put forward as a

contender at the log chew was not possible! They certainly believe that you should always aim high. Thanks to the valiant parents and Explorers who have helped teach some of these skills to excited kids on a Friday evening.

We have a family picnic, a walk to Ham House, Silly Sports in Richmond Park, fire lighting and a 'time on the water' evening planned, so we hope to make the best of the summer term.

Many kind parents have volunteered for DBS checking and are supporting our activities out and about where there is a higher ratio of adults to children required. It is a great pleasure to be part of this wonderful community.

*Cathy  
Beaver Scout Leader*



## GSL's Roundup

Recently the fund raising committee spent a considerable amount of time researching and applying for grants, this has been a resounding success, enabling us to order new buoyancy aids and to replace the rather battered gym mats. The boys' and girls' changing rooms have also benefited from their first coat of white paint – thanks to the efforts of a hard working parents' painting team.

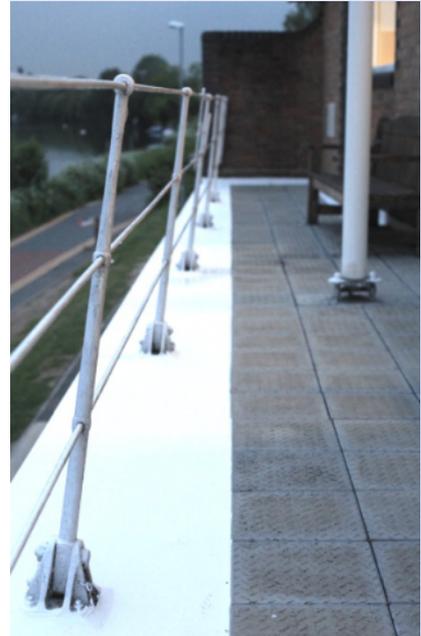
Hopefully, in the near future, we can get both sets of stairs looking good: the Headquarters deserves to look its best for all those who use it.

*Coxswain*



## HQ — TLC

The HQ, like the Forth Bridge, needs continual TLC.



The white paint on the balcony is gleaming, even in the twilight; the 'wet' changing rooms have had one coat of emulsion by a team of parents, but need another and then a top coat; the weeds and general vegetation in the back yard have needed no encouragement to proliferate, but have been kept in check.



We do expect our parents to support the Group, so that it can continue to offer the quality and range of activities that it does – subscriptions would not sustain them. During the Summer, we are particularly looking for help with painting, outside maintenance, boat maintenance, outdoor instruction.

Bridget Jackson is our coordinator for maintenance activities and would love to hear from you! Remember that all our leaders are giving their time voluntarily to organise the training and fun programme.