

Dear members, parents and guardians of the 8th,

the school year of 2023/2024 comes to a close and it's time to look back – as well as forward.

The 8th West Wickham Scout Group continues to grow and thrive. We now are back to 120 members; a very healthy number indeed. In fact, we expect this number to grow further as our Squirrel section is not at full strength – yet. All other sections are already bursting at their seams and if we wanted to give more young people the opportunity to enjoy scouting and the great outdoors, we would need to open new sections. This would require more adult leaders and volunteers. So, if you are interested, let me know. No previous experience is required, and you can give as much or as little time as you want to! All necessary training will be provided – and being a volunteer for the Scouts is a good addition to anyone's CV...

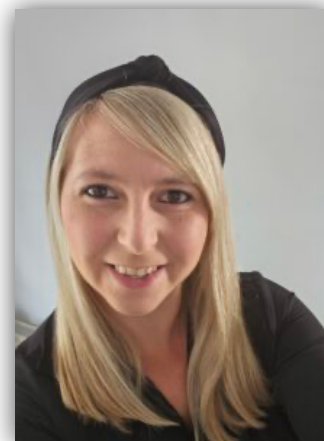
Speaking of volunteers, I am happy to welcome two new leaders and three new volunteers to the team:



Harry Stevenson and **Adam Cook** have joined the Cub and Scout teams respectively as leaders while **Crystal Kenton** (left) will help our Scout section leaders to co-ordinate a parent rota (the Scout section is really stretched for leaders and adult volunteers at the moment).



Vicky Simpson (right) will help us to keep you all up to date via our website and various social media sites. And, last but not least, **Rose Wong** (left) has taken charge of our **second-hand uniform store**.



We have quite a selection of jumpers, shirts and trousers as well as hiking boots as you can see on the next page. And if you need a new item, please find a list of items for sale at 8thwestwickham.org.uk/members/uniforms. Or, alternatively, you can always contact Rose via email uniform@8thwestwickham.org.uk.



If, on the other hand, you have an item of uniform or a pair of boots you do no longer need, please let Rose know as well. But please make sure they are “in good nick”.

In this context it may be worth mentioning that we also have a bright red **group t-shirt** with our logo embroidered on the chest. They are ideal for camps and other activities and can be purchased from 8thwestwickham.org.uk/members.

As you will have noticed, we are doing a fair amount of activities on water – and our members are loving it. **Hearing laughter followed by a big splash never gets old.** As part of this we are collecting wet suits (not for re-sale via our second-hand uniform store but so that we can give our members a wet suit to wear during a water session). If you have a wet suit you do no longer need, please drop an email to our Explorer team leader, Di, at diana.m.a.phillips@gmail.com; and if you need a wet suit for a session, please speak to the relevant leader ahead(!) of the event.



The move out of the West Wickham Methodist Church to Emmanuel is now nearly finished. We had a big moving day where we have cleaned out the “Scout Hut” on Hawes Lane. Thanks to **Adam Cook, Andi Dodson, Andy Preston, Claire Weedon, Darren Banks, Eliza Adams, Emma Adams, Heather Preston, Helen Read, Helen Wise, Ian Withycombe, Isla Marshall, John Cook, Julie Cook, Matthew Crouchman, Niels Rump, Petra Marshall, Richard Read, Rick Bennell, Rob McHugh, Sarah Banks, Teddy Dodson** and **Thomas Read** for the help on the day! Many hands indeed make light work.

I also want to thank those of us who joined us at this **summer’s parade service** and fair on 7th July at Emmanuel’s where we set up four stalls. All proceeds will go to Emmanuel’s chosen overseas charity, “The Ideas Partnership”. It was a good event – even if the weather was far from summerly and we had to be indoors.



During the service we were also able to present **Helen**, our Beaver team leader, with a very well-deserved “Chief Scout’s Commendation for Good Service”. And



last week another leader from the Beaver team, **Sophie**, was presented with a Jack Patchey award for being an “outstanding achiever”;



how true. And, earlier in the year, **Charlotte** from the Explorer team received a five-year service award.

Congratulations – but, more to the point: Thank you!

However, the thing that most of us have in mind at the moment is the **Group camp on the weekend of 12th–14th July in Broadstone Warren** where all five sections will come together. I have seen the programme that the leaders have put together, and I am certain that it will be a great success: We will have abseiling, archery, crate stacking, fencing, tomahawk throwing, zip lining and many other activities (not all for all sections, though). And we will have a birthday party – with cake. As you can expect organising such an event takes a lot of preparation and I would like to thank all our leaders and volunteers for their hard work. A special shout-out must go to Di, though, who did all the heavy lifting and who will be “leader in charge”. Let’s hope that the weather will be good to us!

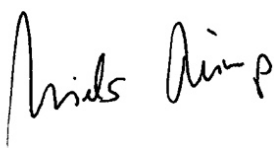
I already mentioned in the last newsletter that we are in the process of setting up a small team to document the **history of the 8th West Wickham Scout Group** from the forming in 1946 (as the “46th Beckenham”) to today. This team has met in June for the first time, and we would welcome anyone who knows something about the 8th over the years (or who enjoys puzzles and putting a timeline together) to join our very own “Time Team”. Just drop me a line if you are interested.

Before I close, I would like to put a date into all our calendars: we will be having a **Group Barbecue and AGM on Saturday, 5th October from 16:00 to 18:00** at Frylands to which I would like to invite all members and their parents/carers.

You will have a chance to have a chat with other parents or carers – from across all our sections – as well as talk with our leaders and volunteers. Besides sharing some of the events planned for the rest of 2024 and for 2025, we will be putting on some games for children of all ages. We will be in touch with details closer to the time, but it would be helpful for our planning if you could let us know whether you are coming via OSM; we will be circulating a poll soon.



Anyway, that’s it for today; enjoy the summer break and see you all in September when we re-start our regular meetings – and on 5th October for the BBQ and AGM.



Niels Rump

Group Lead Volunteer

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