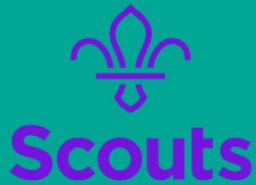


Dear members, parents and carers of the 8th,

Another year is coming to a close, and Advent is already upon us. We cannot believe how fast 2025 has gone past. And as far as the 8th West Wickham Scout Group is concerned, it really is a case of time flying when you are having fun!

We are happy to report that the 8th West Wickham, since having moved to Emmanuel, is thriving. All our sections, Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers are fully subscribed, and it is a lovely sight to see rooms being filled with young people doing »scouty« things. Even our waiting list is full, a clear sign that everyday adventures remain very much en vogue; this makes us hopeful for the future of the group as well as for the wider community. As usual we are pleased to be able to share a few photos that encapsulate just some of what the Group has been up to in 2025:





8TH WEST WICKHAM ESU

QUIZ NIGHT

**FRIDAY 9TH JANUARY AT 8PM
EMMANUEL URC WEST WICKHAM**

TOP PRIZE - £75

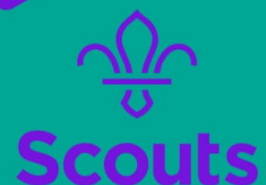
**BRING YOUR OWN
BEER, WINE AND
SOFT DRINKS**

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HOT DRINKS
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TEAMS OF 4-8**

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**FUNDRAISING
FOR SUMMER
CAMP TO WALES**



As well as providing fun experiences and teaching life skills, Scouting also gives young people opportunities. One such example is Jamie who joined our Beavers in 2010. He is now a leader with the Cubs and, after completing his Kings Scout Award (the most prestigious badge a Scout can earn), he was selected to be part of the Scout's Honour Guard at the 2025 Remembrance Parade in London where he helped to lay the country's wreaths at the Cenotaph.



Jamie (left) at the Cenotaph

But a healthy Scout group needs more than just young people interested in everyday adventures; it also requires a strong group of leaders. And, again, we are in the very fortunate situation to have a strong — actually: growing — madness¹ of leaders and volunteers and we would like to take the opportunity to thank them all for the work



Jamie being invested in 2010. That's how it starts!

they do. Whether that is in the role of waiting list administrator, DBS administrator, quartermaster, trustee or as a leader planning, risk-assessing and delivering the programme. We have had a strong team of leaders since it was founded, so our thanks have to go not only to the current crop of fabulous leaders and volunteers, but also to those who came before us.

Speaking of the past: we are celebrating our 80th birthday in 2026 as we had assumed that the 8th West Wickham Scout Group was founded in 1946 as the »46th Beckenham«. Alas, the group was actually founded towards the very end of the Second World War on 19th January 1945, just when the people of West Wickham started to plan, in earnest, for post-war life (the 46 just means that there were already 45 groups in Beckenham...). And, for the record, the name of the group was changed to 8th West Wickham when, in 1965, the Scout association dissolved its »Beckenham District« and amalgamated it with other local districts into the current »Bromley District«.

¹ It seems to be consensus that the collective noun for Scout leaders has to be »a madness« as it does require a certain, let's call it, »attitude« to give up one's time, don a uniform and deliver, week in and week out, an exciting programme to young people.

And while we should be celebrating 81 years in 2026 instead of 80, celebrate we will! We have already talked about the three-day birthday camp we are planning for the May Day bank holiday and if last years' group camp — which was the first one for a long time — is any guide, the 2026 edition should also be fabulous. We hope that many of our ~120 members can join us over those three days. There will, of course, be cake.

We are also planning an event, a bit later in the year, at which we can celebrate with parents, carers, former leaders and volunteers as well as other people connected to the 8th. We are still working out what this event will be, so please stay tuned. All of this will of course be in addition to the »normal« events: campfires, sleepovers, camps, St Georges' Day celebrations as well as canoe, kayak and stand-up paddleboard trips (and the Explorers going to Wales) — not to mention all the regular meetings at our HQ across our five sections.

With the help of some former leaders, we are also piecing together a timeline of the 8th and would welcome any information about events, names and dates that you may know of. And we need to find the time to sift through the paperwork we accumulated over the years/decades. So, if you fancy a side project, do let us know...

Let us finish by talking about our »vertical harbour«: The group owns a number of kayaks, and we are planning to erect a storage facility between our two storage containers at Frylands. There will be room for up to eight boats standing upright — hence the rather ridiculous name, It would be lovely if you could help our quartermasters to build the harbour; do get in touch please.

We wish you all a very peaceful Christmas period (if that is what you are celebrating) and hope that you have some time to be with your friends and family, as well as recharge your batteries.

Niels Rump
Group Lead Volunteer

Joanne Champkins
Chair of the Trustee Board

Original registration card of the 46th Beckenham with The »Boy Scouts Association« (as it was called then)