

Enterprise Troop Annual Report 2023-24

Enterprise Troop have enjoyed another great year of scouting, and grown slightly from 18 members to the current 21. The leadership team has remained stable as Mike, Becky (Bubbles) and Gordon. Here is a review of our activities throughout the year.

Summer term 2023

We finished off the summer term programme continuing to work towards the Pioneer badge with more outdoor work on knots, lashings, anchors and pulleys. The scouts put these skills to good use constructing various structures.

Many of the scouts gained their Local Knowledge activity badge by studying and becoming familiar with the local area and its amenities.



Our final meeting before the summer break saw the scouts competing to create the best burger. Some very interesting flavourings were used by some to create something a bit special!

Autumn term

The Autumn term started with a popular activity up on the embankment – campfire and sausage sizzle. This is a great way for the scouts to get back into the swing of things after the long summer break, welcoming new members, catching up with each other and having fun lighting fires and cooking something tasty!

For some time, the troop had been looking at taking up the offer from Warhammer shops of free models, paints and game packs for their popular Warhammer games. They sponsor the Modelmaker badge and provide all the materials required to enable the scouts to construct, paint and then play with a number of plastic figures.

This activity took place over several meetings and the scouts created some fantastic results with their careful construction and painting.



Between modelling sessions, the troop got outdoors and active, hiking up through the woods to Four Marks ending up at the chip shop just in time to purchase a few chips for supper.

Earlier in the year, some of the scouts helped to distribute water to runners taking part in competitive event just outside Alton. We were again asked if we could help do a similar thing, this time at Chawton House where a 10k, 5k and 2k runs were being held. Enterprise and Endeavour scouts teamed up and distributed water again to the grateful runners earning a very useful contribution to troop funds in the process. Activities like this help the scouts to get involved in their community and find it both fun and rewarding.

In October we joined up with Endeavour troop for a hike from Four Marks to our district's camp site at Bramdean. The scouts navigated their own way to the camp site in groups with Skip keeping an eye on progress throughout the day while other leaders set up the mess tent and the rest of the shared camp facilities.



Gradually each of the tired groups arrived at the camp site and pitched their own tents ready for later sleep. They then cooked their evening meal in groups all within our large mess tent. Hunger satisfied, the scouts then made their way to bed and well-deserved sleep.

The following morning they learned about the safe use of axes and saws as well as lighting fires and preparing / cooking their lunch. These activities were all aimed at achieving some elements of the Outdoor Challenge badge.

In November, and back at the Den, we turned to a craft activity with a Remembrance theme – constructing and painting candle holders decorated with poppy based patterns.

Later in November we joined the rest of 3rd Alton to take part in the annual Remembrance Day service at the Cairn in Alton. The scouts looked very smart walking through the town alongside the other uniformed organisations from our area.



At the end of the month, Paul (from Endeavour Troop) organised a trip to Red Spider at Fareham for an evening of bouldering – low level climbing without the use of ropes. This was another joint trip with Endeavour and the scouts really enjoyed themselves, with an hour bouldering and an hour on the centre's Kid's Castle & Pirate Ship.



At the beginning of December, several of the troop travelled up to London to stay on the Lord Amory – a small ship owned by the scouts that can sleep approximately 60+ people. It's moored in the old docklands and surrounded by new, expensive apartments and within a short walk of Canary Warf and the tall office blocks there. Within sight across the other side of the Thames is the O2 arena.

This was again a joint activity with Endeavour, and, as well as leaders Mike and Skip, we were joined by our Group Scout Leader, Matt.

The Lord Amory makes an excellent base for activities in London, and having travelled up on the Friday evening we then had all day Saturday to explore. On this occasion we first visited Mail Rail – part of the network of underground narrow-gauge railways used to carry mail between the mainline stations and sorting depots within London. This included a trip in one of the trains converted for passenger use.

After lunch we moved on to HMS Belfast and had a good look around this very interesting example from our naval history. After travelling back to the Lord Amory, we were greeted by the ship's host – Mark – and enjoyed a welcome hot meal.

On Sunday we packed up our things, cleaned our cabins and said farewell again to Mark – to whom 3rd Alton are now very well-known, after our many visits – and set off with our bags for our final visit of the weekend. The Brunel Museum is dedicated to the work of Isambard Kingdom Brunel and his father, Marc. This is a small museum in terms of exhibits, but also takes

groups of visitors down into the tunnel shaft that originally allowed access for the workers that dug the first pedestrian tunnel under the river Thames. It remains the world's oldest underwater tunnel.

The digging of the tunnel and all its troubles was explained to us by a very interesting and knowledgeable man, and it was most interesting to find out that the tunnel, first opened in 1843, is still in use today, now part of the TFL's Underground Train network. We had, in fact, passed through it on our way to the museum.



The final meetings of 2023 saw the scouts taking on some quite fiddly craft work again, making star decorations from thin card and decorating appropriately. The results were really rather good, and we hope that these were hanging in homes during the Christmas period.

Spring term 2024

In the spring term the scouts learned about emergency aid with a view to achieving level 3 of the staged Emergency Aid badge. This included practical work making sure scouts could put a casualty into the recovery position and using special Resusci-Annie CPR dolls that enabled the scouts to practise the correct CPR technique and rhythm. Many of the troop now have their level 3 Emergency Aid badge.

All the sections were able to take part in a Jump Rope session with coach Chris, the only certified freestyle jump rope coach in the UK. Chris is super enthusiastic, and this rubs off on those he's coaching. Everyone that took up the opportunity really enjoyed themselves.

Scouts do enjoy cooking – and we usually have an evening cooking Chinese style food around the time of the Chinese New Year. This year was no exception, and each patrol cooked a different style of dish with them all being brought together at the end of the meeting so that everyone could try each one.

March saw the running of the biggest Monopoly Run Live yet – with 8,000 scouts and guides racing around London visiting the various streets and locations on the Monopoly board. As usual, Enterprise and Endeavour split the weekend up into a longer trip for those that wanted, by travelling up to London on the Friday and staying on the Lord Amory for two nights with the Monopoly Run on the Saturday. The ‘weekenders’ then had a trip to the Natural History Museum on Sunday before making their way home.





“What would your ideal camp be?” – that’s the question we put to the scouts, and they then took that away, planned and presented their ideas “Dragon’s Den” style! This was an interesting evening and helped the scouts to show confidence speaking in front of the rest of the troop.

Bubbles organised a challenging “Task Master” evening for both troops, following the theme of the TV programme.

We finished the term with a very enjoyable night hike and sleepover at the Den. There had been a lot of rain in the lead up to the hike and the final stages turned out to be rather muddy!

Summer term

For our first meeting we took advantage of the newly cleared embankment area to light some fires and cook some sausages. All the hard work that has gone into the embankment is greatly appreciated – it is an amazing space for us to have and use, and the scouts really enjoy their times up there. There

is more work to be done, so please do answer any call for help as it makes such a difference.

This year we had a combined total of 15 scouts from the two troops signed up for the cycling trip to Normandy, France. With this year being the 80th anniversary of D-Day it was to be an even more special trip. In preparation, each scout brought their bike and equipment down to the Den for safety checks and a final briefing.

The trip itself was fantastic. Over 100 scouts and adults from a number of groups attended, and it was interesting to see so many young people taking in and appreciating the enormity of the task that the allied forces faced 80 years ago, and the sacrifices that so many made. It is very humbling to walk around the cemeteries in Normandy, with row upon row of graves. Each is immaculately kept and quite beautiful in its own way.

During the regular meetings this term we have been ticking off more requirements from the Outdoor Challenge badge. Summer term is an ideal time for this, with the better weather (really?) and longer daylight hours.

During the week of the anniversary of D-Day, both troops paid a visit to Field Marshal Montgomery's grave in Binsted where they paid their respects before setting off on a walk to Kingsley.

Our final meeting had all the scouts quite enthralled with a talk and introduction to falconry by Anita from Hampshire Hawk Walks. Anita brought along three birds to meet the troop, and all those that wished to were able to hold a bird for a time. Anita's anecdotes, knowledge and total enthusiasm for her hobby and business was very well received by the scouts. There were many thoughtful questions asked.

And so, we look forward to another year of scouting ahead of us. Looking back on the year all the scouts should be very pleased with all they've achieved. As leaders it is rewarding to see how each scout grows in confidence, knowledge and skills – skills for life!

I would like to thank all the scouts for their enthusiasm and commitment to the troop this year, and a massive thanks to Becky and Gordon for their continuing support.

Mike Severs
Section Leader
Enterprise Troop