

THE QUEST

19th Hendon (3rd Mill Hill) Scout Group Newsletter

Section Spotlight



As part of their programme, each half term, the Explorers spend an evening away from the group. Their chosen activity this time was to challenge themselves in an Escape Room

One group took on a Harry Potter themed room, with the others attempting to escape from the Lost City of Atlantis.

Both teams managed to escape, and did so with similar times, around the 55 minute mark.

Everyone who attended had a great time, all of them contributing to the mission and building their interteam relationships.



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Welcome to "The Quest" – Charting Our Exciting Journey!

By Bosun

Get ready to dive into another action-packed edition of "The Quest," your essential newsletter from the 19th Hendon (3rd Mill Hill) Scout Group! As we step into March and April 2026, we're thrilled to bring you a vibrant snapshot of the incredible adventures, learning, and camaraderie that define our Scouting family. This issue, our second since a new era began, is brimming with stories that highlight the dedication of our young people, the tireless efforts of our volunteers, and the strong community spirit that binds us all.

Inside these pages, you'll embark on a thrilling journey with our Cubs as they explore the very heart of democracy with a "Visit to Parliament," witness the festive joy and boundless energy of our sections during "Christmas at 19th," and hear about the Beavers rocketing into the Space Activity Badge. You'll also learn about the invaluable support provided by our fabulous Trustees, ensuring the Group's strong foundation. Discover the inspiring legacy behind "The Quest Centre," explore the rich history of Scouting through articles on "St. George" and the captivating "Cub Scout Grand Howl," and celebrate the achievements of our DofE participants and Mike Murch and the cup presented in his name. From fundraising "Bingo Nights" to glimpses of "The Year Ahead," there's a story on every page to captivate and inspire.

"The Quest" is more than just a newsletter; it's a testament to the growth, resilience, and adventurous spirit of our Group. It's a chance to celebrate our successes, honour our traditions, and look forward to the many exciting "Upcoming Events" on our horizon. We hope you enjoy reading these stories as much as we enjoyed creating them. Thank you for being a vital part of the 19th Hendon (3rd Mill Hill) Scout Group – together, we continue to build a brighter future for all!



“Beavers Blast Off to Success: Earning Their Space Activity Badge!”

By Bosun



The 19th Hendon (3rd Mill Hill) Beaver Scouts have successfully completed an incredible journey through the cosmos, proudly earning their Space Activity Badge! Their adventure was filled with curiosity, discovery, and plenty of hands-on fun as they explored the wonders of our universe.

To earn this exciting badge, the Beavers embarked on a mission to understand our planet and the vastness beyond. They started by discovering what Earth looks like from space, learning about the distinct shapes of continents, the expanse of oceans, and the vibrant patterns of forests and cities. They also delved into what makes our planet so special, exploring how the Sun, Moon, and atmosphere work together to sustain life for humans, animals, and plants.

No space journey is complete without rockets! The Beavers learnt about the history and evolution of rockets, understanding how these powerful machines have been instrumental in launching people and objects into space. They then zoomed through our solar system, discovering the unique characteristics of each planet and comparing them to our own Earth. The provided images show the Beavers engaged in collaborative building activities, likely constructing models of rockets, space stations, or even constellations with various materials, bringing their learning to life. Other images show them focused at tables, perhaps drawing, discussing, or crafting items related to their space studies.

A huge congratulations to all the 19th Hendon (3rd Mill Hill) Beavers for their fantastic effort and for reaching for the stars in their latest adventure! Their enthusiasm and teamwork are truly out of this world!

Christmas at 19th

By Shere Khan

In December, to mark the end of a magnificent year for all of our young people and adult volunteers, we held Christmas parties which gave everyone a chance to celebrate their successes.



Firstly, we took our Squirrels, Beavers and Cub Scouts to Inflation in Colindale. They had the whole soft play area to themselves, to enjoy exploring the inflatables, getting lost in the ball pit and causing chaos. Everyone who came had a great time, and even were joined by some leaders inside.

The Scouts took a trip to FlipOut trampoline park in Hendon. They enjoyed making the most of the plethora of trampolines, ball pits and soft play areas. Everyone who came had a fantastic time, leaving absolutely exhausted after 90 minutes of fun.



Our Explorers and Leaders faced off in a battle of Laser Tag to mark their end of the year. The Explorers made their mark and came out on top, leading the scores well clear of their leaders, showing off their superior accuracy, agility and skill.

Our adult volunteers and supporters rounded out the year with a party at the Quest Centre. It was a chance for everyone who supports the group to come together and celebrate our achievements. We exchanged gifts at leaders Secret Santa, had a disco and many laughs. We're already looking forward to the next one.



Bingo Fundraiser

By Koala and Chip



Hi, we are Maisy and Imogen, together we are working towards our Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award.

As a part of this, we must complete a residential section which requires us to spend a week away, in an unfamiliar setting and undertaking a project. To complete this stage of the award, we have decided to travel to Denmark to volunteer at a Scout campsite for the week.

In January, to help raise money for us to go, we ran a Bingo Night for our family, friends and 19th Hendon members. During the event we also held a raffle with lots of different prizes, we also sold loads of food and drinks, helping us to raise even more money for our trip. It was great to see so many people supporting us and getting involved, we had a great turnout and together raised enough money. We're extremely grateful to everyone who donated prizes, bought raffle tickets, came to play bingo, or helped in any way. We're both really looking forward to our residential and wait to for this opportunity, thank you again for all the support!

Democracy in Action: A Visit to Parliament

By Winifred

Last term, 19th Hendon Cubs took part in UK Parliament Week and brought democracy to life in our pack meetings. What began as a badge activity became a memorable learning experience that the Cubs will not forget.

Back in November, as part of UK Parliament Week, the Cubs learned how Parliament works, how laws are made and how Members of Parliament represent their communities. Rather than simply reading about it, we decided to create our own Parliament. The hall was rearranged to reflect the layout of the House of Commons, and three Cubs stood as candidates for the role of Cub MP.

Each candidate prepared a short speech proposing a new law or policy. The ideas were thoughtful, creative and often very insightful. The Cubs listened carefully to one another and asked questions. They learned that in a democracy it is important not only to speak clearly, but also to listen respectfully. After the speeches, we held a secret ballot. The Cubs voted for the candidate they felt had presented the most convincing proposal. Through this process they experienced first-hand how elections work and why voting matters. They earned their UK Parliament Week badges, but more importantly they developed confidence, communication skills and a clearer understanding of their role as citizens.

Following our involvement in Parliament Week, we were delighted to receive an invitation from our local MP, David Pinto-Duschinsky, to visit the Houses of Parliament. Yesterday, that visit became a reality.

The day began with a journey on the Northern line. For many of the Cubs, travelling together across London is an adventure in itself and an opportunity to practise independence and responsibility in a safe and supported way. We travelled to Waterloo and walked across the bridge towards Westminster. The view of the London skyline, with the Palace of Westminster ahead of us, created real excitement for adults and Cubs alike.

Before our tour of Parliament, we visited Westminster Abbey. The Cubs learned that this historic building has been the site of coronations for centuries and has witnessed many important moments in British history. Standing in such an important place helped them understand that the story of government and leadership stretches back hundreds of years.



We then made our way to the Palace of Westminster for our guided tour. Walking through the same entrance seen on television brought a real sense of anticipation. The children quickly recognised parts of the building from the news and from photographs they had seen in school.

During the tour, they saw Westminster Hall and learned about its long history. They visited the House of Commons chamber and the House of Lords chamber, gaining a clearer understanding of how the two Houses work together to debate and pass laws. It was a powerful moment for them to see in person the chamber they had recreated in our meeting only months earlier.

The Cubs were particularly interested in the traditions and stories connected to Parliament. They learned about Guy Fawkes and the Gunpowder Plot, and why the cellars of the Palace are still ceremonially searched each year before the State Opening of Parliament. They also discovered where King Charles prepares before delivering the King's Speech. These details helped bring history to life and showed how tradition continues to shape modern democracy.

It was a full day, and by the end of it there were certainly some tired legs and faces. The combination of travelling, walking and concentrating on the tour required energy and focus. However, the excitement remained throughout.

Experiences like this demonstrate the true value of Scouting. We aim to give young people practical opportunities to learn about the world around them. Through activities such as UK Parliament Week and our visit to Westminster, the Cubs developed confidence in public speaking, a better understanding of how decisions are made in the UK, and a sense that their voices matter.

They also practised teamwork, responsibility and respectful behaviour in a public setting. Throughout the day, they represented 19th Hendon Scouts with maturity and enthusiasm. We were proud of their conduct and their curiosity.

We are very grateful to our local MP for inviting us and to the volunteers who organised and supervised the visit. Without their commitment, opportunities like this would not be possible.

Most importantly, we are proud of our Cubs. From campaigning in our meeting to standing inside the Houses of Parliament, they embraced every part of the experience. They learned that democracy is not something distant or abstract, but something real and relevant to their lives. At 19th Hendon Scouts, we believe in giving young people experiences that broaden their horizons and build skills for life. This visit to Parliament was exactly that. It was educational, inspiring and enjoyable, and it will remain a highlight of our year.

“Tell me about The Quest Centre – is it ours?”

BY BILL



Our story, and the story of The Quest Centre, began many decades ago, long before the familiar building you see today. Back in 1956, the 21st Hendon Scout Group proudly opened its very first dedicated Headquarters: the Mae Beecher Hall. This Scout Hut, named in remembrance of the Group’s inspiring first Akela, Mae Beecher, was officially opened on May 5th by P.B. Nevill Esq. O.B.E., the Headquarters Commissioner. For years, that hall served as the vibrant heart of our community, a place where generations of Scouts gathered for adventure and learning.



GROUP OFFICERS AND GUESTS OUTSIDE THE HEADQUARTERS (L TO R)
 MR. E.E. ROSE (VICE-PRESIDENT) MR. J.E. PUGH (G.S.M.) REV. S. MAURICE WATTS (CHAPLAIN) MR. P.B. NEVILL, ALDERMAN R.J. KNOWLES, SIR FREDERIC SELLERS, MR. STEPHEN JACK (D.C.) MESSRS. R. BELL-JONES AND G. CHILDS (VICE PRESIDENTS) MR. E.S. OSBORNE (HON. TREASURER) ALDERMAN S. SHARPE (DEPUTY MAYOR OF HENDON) MR. L.O. CHAMBERS (HON. SEC)

But as the years passed, the growing needs of the then 21st Hendon Scouts – our pioneering predecessors. Around this time, just a short distance away, an unrelated piece of local history was unfolding: the northbound 113 bus would regularly pause at Apex Corner for a fifteen-minute turn-around, heading back towards Hendon and London. Bus drivers and conductors needed facilities, so the council built a public lavatory, mainly for their convenience, where The Quest Centre proudly stands today. But eventually, the buses rerouted, no longer needing to turn at Apex Corner. The toilet block, suddenly redundant, quickly fell into disuse. Over time, it suffered vandalism and ultimately became a derelict eyesore.

By the 1980s, with their existing Scout Hut proving increasingly inadequate, these determined Scouts saw an incredible opportunity. They successfully persuaded the council to sell them the freehold of that disused lavatory site. This new land was then cleverly combined with the Scouts’ existing freehold (which included the Mae Beecher Hall site), and a visionary redevelopment plan began. A small block of 14 flats, known as Sovereign House, was designed for the site. This ambitious project, encompassing both Sovereign House and The Quest Centre, was not merely a development, but the achievement of Bill Taylor’s vision. It was his foresight which drove the complex endeavour, transforming his ambition into a reality: a financially sustainable, future-proof Scout training facility destined to serve generations. Crucially, by leveraging the proceeds from the sale of part of the land, coupled with a portion of the developer’s profit, the Scouts were able to entirely fund the creation of The Quest Centre, strategically built under, adjacent to, and behind these new flats.



OPENING OF THE QUEST CENTRE
 THE THEN CHIEF SCOUT SIR GARTH MORRISON KT CBE DL OPENING THE HALL & BILL TAYLOR RECEIVING THE KEYS THE HALL

The Quest Centre was officially opened in 1990 by the then Chief Scout, Sir Garth Morrison KT CBE DL. What a moment! Since that day, the centre has consistently hosted a thriving nursery school. This vital income from the nursery, combined with our members’ subscriptions and ground rent from the Sovereign House flats, robustly funds all the activities provided by our Scout Group for our Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, and Explorer Scouts – securing their adventures both now and long into the future. It’s worth noting that in 2024, the 19th Hendon and 21st Hendon (3rd Mill Hill) groups officially joined forces, continuing as the 19th Hendon (3rd Mill Hill) Scout Group. This strategic merger ensures the thriving future of Scouting in the Mill Hill area for generations to come.



So, is The Quest Centre ours? Absolutely. It is the enduring legacy of foresight, determination, and community spirit – a vital asset that belongs unequivocally to our Scout Group, securing our future for generations to come, all thanks to the visionary leaders that built strong foundations for scouting in Mill Hill.



"A-ke-la! We Will Do Our Best!": The Enduring Magic of the Cub Scout Grand Howl

By Bosun



Parents, have you ever been present at a Cub Scout meeting, witnessed a circle of eager youngsters drop to a crouch, and then, with a unified surge of energy, erupted in a powerful, resounding cry – the iconic Grand Howl? Perhaps you've seen the glint in your own child's eye as they participated in this unique ritual, leaving you wondering about the deeper meaning behind this spirited tradition. This isn't merely a playful cheer or a fleeting moment of youthful exuberance; it's a profound, century-old legacy, a living echo of adventure and ancient lore that binds Cub Scouts across the globe. Far more than just a ceremony, the Grand Howl serves as a vibrant, unifying link to the foundational stories of Scouting, a powerful, collective reminder of promises made, and a joyous, even primal, expression of camaraderie that transcends generations.

From the legendary Council Rock of Rudyard Kipling's *Jungle Book* to modern campsites around the world, the Grand Howl has been a vibrant, unifying tradition for Cub Scouts for over a century. It's a testament to the ingenuity of Robert Baden-Powell, who devised this ceremony to immerse young people in the imaginative world of Mowgli and his wolf pack, reminding them of the Cub Scout Promise and the spirit of collective effort.

Origins in the Wild and Kipling's *Jungle*



The roots of the Grand Howl delve deep into both natural behaviour and literary inspiration. Wolves, in the wild, use howls to assemble their pack, communicate across distances, and signal alarms – behaviours that foster unity and purpose. It was this primal, pack-oriented communication that likely resonated with Robert Baden-Powell, the founder of Scouting, when he sought a unique identity for his younger members.

In 1916, five years after the birth of the Scout movement, Baden-Powell introduced the "Wolf Cubs" for boys too young to join the Boy Scouts. Crucially, he secured the approval of his friend and neighbour, Rudyard Kipling, to weave the magical world of *The Jungle Book* into the Cub programme. The 8- to 10-year-olds would embark on adventures as "Wolf Cubs," with adult leaders adopting names like Akela, the wise "Old Wolf" who led Mowgli's pack.

Baden-Powell solidified this connection in his 1916 guide, *The Wolf Cub's Handbook*. He vividly described the scene from *The Jungle Book* where wolves greet Akela at the Council Rock, then instructed Cubs to emulate this: "When your Old Wolf, Akela... comes to your meeting you salute him by squatting round in a circle as young wolves do, and giving him the Wolf Cub Grand Howl.

The Original Ceremony: More Than Just a Shout

The initial instructions for the Grand Howl, detailed by Baden-Powell, were rich with symbolism and physical action:

- **Formation:** Cubs would swiftly form a circle, "a Wolf Cub never walks, he runs!"
- **Position:** They would squat, "two fore paws on the ground between your feet, knees out to either side."
- **The Howl:** As Akela entered, they would throw up their heads and howl, "Ah-kay-la! — We-e-e-e-ll do-o-o-o o-o-o-u-u-r BEST." The word "BEST" was to be yelled "sharp and loud and short and all together," while springing to their feet with two fingers of each hand pointed upwards like "wolf's ears."
- **The Promise:** This "best" signified commitment with "BOTH hands," doubling the effort of an "ordinary boy." The Cub motto, "Do your best," was at its core.
- **The Call and Response:** The leading Cub would then call out "Dyb-dyb-dyb-dyb" (meaning "Do Your Best"). After the fourth "dyb," Cubs would drop their left hand but keep their right hand in a two-finger salute, responding with a squeal of "We-e-e-l" and a barked "Dob-dob-dob-dob" (We'll Do Our Best). Finally, they'd drop their right hand, standing at "Alert" awaiting orders.

This intricate dance was not merely performative; it was a physical manifestation of their promise to try their hardest and obey their leader, fostering discipline, unity, and a sense of shared identity.

Evolution and Adaptation: From Wolves and Beyond

While the wolf imagery remained central to Cub Scouts, Baden-Powell also devised a Grand Howl for some other sections, demonstrating the ceremony's adaptability from its inception.

Over the decades, the Grand Howl has evolved to suit changing times and cultural contexts. In the United Kingdom, a 1966 review by the UK Scout Association, known as The Chief Scouts' Advance Party Report, recommended a reduced emphasis on The *Jungle Book* theme for Wolf Cubs, who were renamed Cub Scouts. Though the Grand Howl was retained, it was simplified to "make the significance clearer to parents and public." The iconic "dybs" were replaced with plain language:

- Pack: "Akela! We'll do our best."
- Sixer: "Cubs! Do your best."
- Cubs: "We will do our best," accompanied by the Scout salute (which had replaced the two-finger salute).

Further programme reviews in the early 2000s made the Grand Howl optional, acknowledging that many Packs now explore themes beyond *The Jungle Book*. This flexibility allows local groups to adapt the ceremony to their unique identities, whilst still retaining its core spirit of commitment and communal expression.

However, for countless groups, the tradition remains an unyielding cornerstone, its spirit as vibrant today as it was a century ago. For instance, at the heart of 19th Hendon (3rd Mill Hill), the Grand Howl isn't just observed; it's a living, breathing pulse of the pack. It is considered to belong intrinsically to every single Cub, forging an unbreakable bond that unites them as one cohesive unit. Such is its enduring power and mnemonic grip that any former Cub, regardless of how many decades have passed, can still flawlessly recite the words. Indeed, the ancient call resonates with such profound depth that many who once wore the Cub uniform, myself included, *I loved being a Cub* – find themselves, even to this very day, physically having to restrain the primal urge to join in at meetings, the familiar refrain ringing through our heads with an almost irresistible force. While every Scout Group's Cubs undoubtedly perform it with their own unique flair, rendering each rendition ever so slightly different, the Grand Howl transcends a mere routine; it is, in essence, a spirited "battle dance," a powerful, collective affirmation of their shared journey and unwavering commitment.

Beyond its role as an opening and closing ceremony, the Grand Howl has also been adopted across various Scouting sections as a powerful method of conveying thanks or appreciation, highlighting its versatility as a symbol of shared values.

The Grand Howl stands as a testament to Scouting's enduring traditions, a vivid ceremony that continues to connect generations of young people to the adventurous spirit and foundational promises laid out by Robert Baden-Powell. Echoing the howl of a wolf remains a cherished ritual, instilling a sense of belonging and a commitment to always "do your best."

An Historic Presentation Evening

By Merlin

Friday 16th January 2026 was a big day in the history of our Group, and what happened at the Quest Centre in the evening will no doubt live long in the memory of everyone who was there. It's rare enough for one person in a Scout Group to become a King's Scout, so to have four people be presented with this award in one evening is quite something – and to have them dubbed as King's Scouts by the Deputy Lieutenant is something else again!

But that was just one part of the night. Because of the way the awards system works for the 14–25 age group in modern Scouting, the awards are very similar to those in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme, so much so that most Explorer Scout Units (including our own Endeavour ESU) make sure that members are signed up for the DoE so that they can earn those awards as well. Strange though it may seem to we who are involved in Scouting, to most people on the outside – and that includes potential employers and those who deal with university applications – the DoE scheme is much better known. Last year, multiple awards at all three levels of the awards scheme for 14–25 year-olds were earned – a testament to the dedication and determination of our Explorers and (younger) Leaders. The January presentation night was all about recognising the work put in by these outstanding individuals, who really have done our Group proud.



A sign of how significant this was could be seen in the calibre of dignitaries who attended – Bill Taylor (our Group President), Kevin Munday (Barnet District 14–25 Team Leader), Chris 'Fozzie' Foster (Greater London North County 14–25 Team Leader) and Martin Russell (our Group Patron and the Deputy Lieutenant for the London Borough of Barnet). Sarah Mason, a former Cub Leader at 19th Hendon, who led many of our recipients during her time at the group was also in attendance, which was a special surprise for everyone.

Martin came in full uniform and added a touch that only a King's Representative could do – all four of the King's Scouts were dubbed as such with his sword. This particular ceremonial act is quite possibly unique to our Group.

Receiving the Chief Scout's Platinum Award and the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award were Ibrahim Ahmed, Damian Scheul and Avi Aggerwal.



The six recipients of the Chief Scout's Diamond Award and the Silver Duke of Edinburgh's Award were Aliza Hussain, Dylan Kelleher, Imogen Tomlinson, Kayah Patel, Maisy Kettle and Poppy Sahota.



Our four new King's Scouts, who also received the Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Award, were Hannah Fletcher, Joshua Fletcher, Karun Mailoo and Sophie Brennan. Not only are these our first King's Scouts (as all previous members of the 19th Hendon who earned Scouting's highest award did so during the reign of HM Queen Elizabeth II), Hannah and Sophie are the first women in the history of our Group to achieve this award.

In speeches to those present, Martin and Fozzie outlined just how hard it is to achieve such high-calibre awards, and emphasised just how exceptional it is for so many awards to be earned by one Group at one time.



But the night was not done, for we also saw two of our Leaders get awards. Robert Brennan (Provo) received the Award for Merit, which is given to leaders for outstanding service over at least a decade, while Matthew Cook (Bosun) received the Silver Acorn. To get this rare award, you have to have been an adult volunteer in Scouting for at least twenty years and your service needs to have been (to quote the Scout Association's website) "specially distinguished and appreciably better than outstanding".



Well done everyone. As was stated more than once during the presentation evening, you've all done our Group proud. What happened on 16th January 2026 was the culmination of a lot of hard work by some exceptional people. This was an event to be savoured at the time, and talked about afterwards. It will live long in the memory.

Scouting History: St. George, patron saint of Scouts

By Merlin

23rd April is St. George's Day. At around this time, Scouts get together to renew their Promise. Traditionally, this was done by way of a parade followed by a service, but these days various events are held throughout the country – although the highest-profile event is the parade of King's Scouts at Windsor Castle. Contrary to what you might think, this is not because St. George is the patron Saint of England. It's actually because he is also the patron saint of Scouts!

But who was St. George, and how did he become our patron saint?

George himself was a Roman soldier from Cappadocia (modern-day Turkey) who died in or around 303 AD. He was a Christian and is said to have been a member of the elite Praetorian Guard who was renowned for his bravery but was killed when the Emperor Diocletian started persecuting Christians – including those who served in his armies.

Over time, he came to be revered as a martyr, and stories of his brave acts grew to include the most famous story about him – the killing of a dragon that had been terrorising the people of a village he visited during his travels.

By the Medieval period, the legend of a brave Christian warrior was a popular one, and served as an inspiration for the Crusaders in the Middle East – among them two Kings of England and many English knights. They took the legend home with them, and over time St. George became the patron saint of England, and his banner (a red cross on a white background) became the English flag.

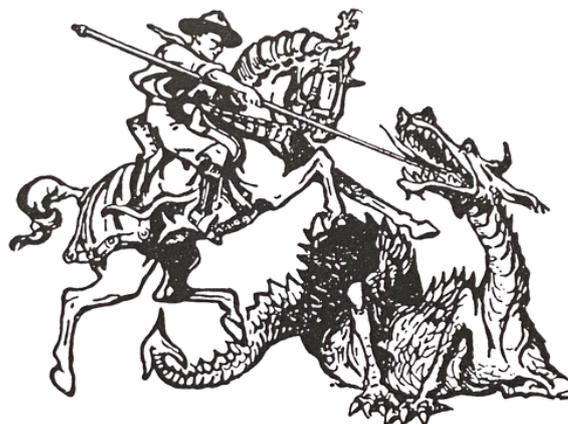
The legend of St. George has long had an international appeal. England aside, he's also the patron saint of several other countries – among them Georgia (which is named after him), Portugal and Ethiopia, as well as the cities of Beirut and Moscow. It seems appropriate that such an internationally-renowned saint should also be the patron saint of Scouting, a movement that exists throughout the world.

BADGES EARNED IN THE LAST TWO MONTHS

Squirrels – Story Time, Exciting Experiments
 Beavers – Space
 Cubs (Tiger Pack) – Team Work Challenge, Hobbies, Collector, Sports Enthusiast.
 Cubs (Wolf Pack) – Local Knowledge, Photographer
 Scouts – Hobbies, Swimming, Music

But that wasn't the reason why our Founder, Robert Baden-Powell, adopted George as the patron saint of Scouts (and yes, it was Baden-Powell who decided who should be the patron saint of Scouts). Being a soldier, B-P was particularly taken with the legend of a brave soldier who did his best, helped other people and had courage in all difficulties. He made sure to mention him in *Scouting for Boys* as someone who Scouts should seek to emulate.

B-P firmly believed that St. George embodied Scouting values such as courage, selflessness and perseverance. "Therefore", he wrote, "all Scouts should know his story". To B-P, the dragon-killing story was a metaphor for overcoming life's difficulties. One of his sketches in *Scouting for Boys* even showed a Scout on horseback, fighting a dragon!



Just like Saint George of old, the Boy Scouts of today fight against everything evil and unclean.

And, of course, it was B-P who declared that St. George's Day should be the day for Promise renewal. As he wrote in *Scouting for Boys*:

"St. George's Day is April 23rd, and on that day all Scouts remind themselves of their Promise and of the Scout Law. Not that a Scout ever forgets either, but on St. George's Day he makes a special point of thinking about them. Remember this when April 23rd comes around again."

Author's note: the quotes from *Scouting for Boys* and the sketch by Baden-Powell are taken from the copy in my possession, which is the fifth printing of the 35th edition, © The Scout Association (1999)



The Mike Murch Cup

By Bosun

The Mike Murch Cup: Honouring a Legacy of Unwavering Excellence

The Mike Murch Cup stands as the pinnacle of recognition within our Group, our most prestigious accolade for youth members. This special award is the Group Scout Leader's personal commendation, bestowed upon an individual who consistently demonstrates truly Outstanding Character, significant Achievement, and unwavering Duty throughout their scouting journey. To be awarded the Mike Murch Cup is to be recognised as the most outstanding member in every single way during a given scouting year. It is a testament to dedication, spirit, and an embodiment of scouting's highest ideals.

This deeply significant award was first presented in 2019, and we were incredibly honoured that Mike Murch himself, a cherished and inspirational figure within our scouting family and the very heart of the 19th Hendon Scout Group, was able to present the inaugural cup to Hannah Fletcher - Baloo. Sadly, Mike passed away in early 2020, making this award an even more poignant and enduring tribute to his remarkable life, his profound legacy, and the steadfast values he championed.



Mike presenting the 'Mike Murch Cup' for the first recipient

Mike Murch: A Founder, Leader, and Inspiration

Mike Murch was a founding member of the 19th Hendon Scout Group in 1947 as a scout. After his schooling at Christ's College, Finchley, (at the time, was one of the area's top Grammar Schools) Mike fulfilled his National Service with the Middlesex Regiment (whose maroon and gold colours serendipitously matched his later chosen Group flag design), before embarking on a career at Barclays Bank. However, his enduring passion was scouting.

Serving first as Assistant Scout Master ('Redwing') and later as Group Scout Master (GSM), assuming the name 'Bosun', Mike was known for his smart appearance, military-influenced high standards, and unwavering commitment. He meticulously designed the original gold and maroon Group flag, a design he was proud to see flying at the Group's 70th anniversary. His leadership ensured neat camps, ceremonial flag procedures, and strict adherence to principles, even famously inspiring discipline after a "raid" on the Quartermaster's cheese.

Beyond his dedication to standards, Mike possessed diverse interests. He was a keen naturalist, often bird-watching, and had an excellent knowledge of flora and fauna. An artist, he produced accurate bird sketches and amusing scout cartoons. He also personally transformed "The Outhouse" (a former fire station leased by the Group) into a captivating 'cave painting' of prehistoric scenes, a project that enchanted all who saw it.

After standing down as GSM in the 1960s, Mike later married Valerie, sharing over forty years together. Even in his later years, he continued to support the 19th Hendon, attending AGMs and awards nights, always wearing his Group scarf and Wood Badge woggle. He appreciated being kept informed of the Group's progress by myself and shared many of his cherished photographs and memories. His very presence at these events inspired current members and parents alike. Mike Murch passed away on 20th February 2020. His strong leadership over decades makes him an enduring role model.

(With grateful acknowledgement to Martin Russell for his contributions and memories.)

The Enduring Symbol: The Mike Murch Cup and Lanyard

A unique distinction accompanies this honour: once awarded, recipients receive a distinctive maroon lanyard, a powerful symbol of their exceptional achievement and a direct link to Mike's military service and his design of our Group's iconic flag. This lanyard signifies their lifelong connection to Mike's legacy and the high standards he embodied, and they are entitled to wear it indefinitely.



Mike as a Scout in the early years of the group



Mike watching as the new Group Colour is Presented in 2017



Mike as GSM in the 1950s, with the first Group Colour

We proudly celebrate the remarkable young people who have exemplified these extraordinary qualities and been bestowed with The Mike Murch Cup:

- 2019 – Hannah Fletcher (Inaugural Recipient, presented by Mike Murch himself)
- 2022 – Ramin Hashemi
- 2023 – Peter Kitromilides
- 2024 – Imogen Tomlinson and Maisy Kettle
- 2025 – Aliza Hussain

The Mike Murch Cup is more than just an award; it is a living tribute, a beacon of inspiration, celebrating the very best of our youth members and inspiring all to reach for greatness in character, achievement, and duty, just as Mike Murch himself did throughout his extraordinary life.

A Further Pillar of Support: Meet Our Esteemed Group Trustees!

By Bosun

In our last issue, you met our Patron, President, and Vice President. Now, we are pleased to introduce our dedicated team of Trustees.

Our Trustees are volunteer charity officers responsible for the governance, strategic oversight, and legal compliance of our Scout group. They ensure we operate safely, effectively, and in line with our charitable purpose, focusing on the “big picture”: finances, risk management, property, and long-term vision. Their work keeps our group strong, sustainable, and fully equipped to deliver outstanding Scouting experiences for young people.

We are fortunate to have the following individuals serving in these vital roles:

Our Visionary Chairman: Philip Wright



Philip Wright leads our Board of Trustees with a steady and committed hand. His connection to the group began, as it does for many, through his Son, Gunner, whose positive Scouting experiences inspired him to give back. Philip’s first hand understanding of Scouting’s impact shapes his strategic vision and ensures the group remains vibrant, well-governed, and focused on delivering life-enhancing opportunities for every young person. He is also a proud holder of the Award for Merit, earned for his outstanding, conscientious, and dedicated leadership as Chairman and his imaginative strategic oversight of the group over a sustained period of adult service.

Our Steadfast Treasurer: Geoff Cook



Our long-standing Treasurer, Geoff Cook, has expertly overseen our finances for more than 20 years. His involvement began with a little encouragement from his son—me, Bosun—and since then his commitment has been unwavering. Geoff is also a proud recipient of the Award for Merit, recognising his outstanding, dedicated service and exceptional care of our group’s financial health. His prudent stewardship has safeguarded our long-term stability, enabling us to plan confidently for the future and continue investing in the programmes that matter most to our young people.

Our Dedicated Secretary: Susan Hannigan

As Secretary, Susan Hannigan brings a remarkable multi-generational Scouting legacy to her role. Her children, Shere Khan and Baloo, are active members of the group, and her family's history stretches back even further—her brothers were Scouts here, and her mother served as an Assistant Cub Leader. Susan is also a proud holder of the Commendation Award, which recognises good service to Scouting. Her deep roots with 19th Hendon give her unparalleled insight into our traditions, values, and operational needs, enriching her governance work with passion and purpose.

Our Dynamic Trustee: Olivier Spencer

Olivier Spencer brings both youth experience and adult leadership to the trustee board. He began his Scouting adventure as a Cub and later returned as an Assistant Cub Scout Leader with the Group. This dual perspective—participant and leader—gives him practical insight into programme design, youth development, and maintaining relevant, engaging Scouting experiences for today's young people.

Our Experienced Trustee: Marc Findon

Marc Findon offers a unique breadth of experience, having progressed through every section—Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, and Ventures—at the 21st Hendon Scout Group. His full Scouting journey gives him exceptional understanding of the needs and aspirations of young people at every stage. Marc is also a proud holder of the Queen's Scout Award, exemplifying the values and achievements Scouting can inspire. His experience is invaluable to the trustee board.

In addition, Bosun and Provo, both influential leaders, also hold positions on the esteemed trustee board.

Do you have skills and enthusiasm to share? If you'd like to explore how you could support 19th Hendon Scouts by joining our Trustee board, please don't hesitate to get in touch. Email contact@19thhendonscouts.co.uk, and a member of our team will happily discuss this exciting opportunity with you.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Aim High in 2026: Cubs RAF Trip!

A trip to RAF Museum is on the cards for 2026! As part of their Air Activities Badge, the cubs will be visiting RAF Hendon. We will spend the day exploring the museum learning all about the history of aircrafts and making planes. It is the perfect way to immerse yourself in the world of the aircraft, and the best way to earn the badge.

SAVE THE DATE! Let's Get Fancy!

Calling all Scout Group Adult Members, Parents & Supporters!
Mark your calendars **NOW** for our annual, unforgettable **Dinner & Dance!**

When: 17th October What to Expect: A dazzling night of celebration, connection, and pure fun! Dress Code: Time to shine! Think Black Tie & Evening Dresses. Feasting: Indulge in a scrumptious 3-course meal! It's your chance to celebrate our incredible community, catch up with friends, and support the Group in spectacular style. You won't want to miss this!

More details (and booking info!) coming your way soon. For now, just

SAVE THE DATE!

THE SCOUTING HIGHLIGHT OF 2026! Summer Camp at Gilwell Park!

This is IT! Join Cubs, Scouts, and Explorers for an unforgettable week of adventure at Gilwell Park from 1st to 8th August 2026. Think campfires, outdoor activities, new mates, and memories that'll last a lifetime! PLACES ARE LIMITED AND FILLING UP FAST! BOOK YOUR SPOT NOW to avoid disappointment. This is the event you won't want to miss!

COME TOGETHER! Activity Day and AGM 2026

The chance to celebrate the success and achievements of the group over the past year. The whole of 19th Hendon family come together for a day of games, challenges and celebration, before our handing our spectacular trophies to some of our standout members.

The only chance we get to bring all of our members together in the same place at the same time, it is a true highlight of the year. Games, challenges, section competitions. It's the best opportunity for everyone to celebrate with each other.

Saturday 20th June, Mill Hill Rugby Club. Save the Date and we look forward to celebrating with you!