

# Enterprise Troop Annual Report 2024-25

## Summer Term 2024

Hot on the tail of our 2025 AGM was the group camp at Garners Field, Farnham. For scouts this was two nights away and the opportunity to take part in shooting, kayaking archery and other scouting-skills based activities.



Most of the troop attended and had a great time, even if the weather took a turn for the worse at the end of the Sunday session. This camp took a great deal of effort to organise, but it was great to see so many of the group attending and enjoying themselves.

The troop visited Hinton Ampner estate, managed our then leader, Gordon. Gordon conducted a very interesting tour of the wider estate explaining plans and actions being taken to improve the ecology of the estate – primarily with the planting of many trees. Gordon's passion for these plans was clear to all.

Hot on the heels of the group camp, the troop were camping again together with scouts from Endeavour. We took a small contingent to Birchmere camp site sitting alongside the M25 / A3 junction. A strange place for a camp site, you might think, but despite the constant drone of traffic the scouts had a fantastic time. The scouts collected blackberries on a hike around the local area and cooked them later for dessert. A highlight was sleeping out under tarpaulins rather than in tents, something all those involved really enjoyed.



We were not the only campers on the site. It was nice to see the scouts interacting with young people from other groups – telling ‘ghost stories’ around the campfire.

## Autumn Term 2024

Our Autumn term started with a varied programme – our usual introductory ‘sausage sizzle’ to welcome newly joined members, a fun sandwich competition and a patrol-building trading-post.

Soon we were camping again, visiting Cranbury Park near Chandler’s Ford. This was the scouts’ second visit to this campsite, and we were again joined by Endeavour. A very interesting visit was made to the Hospital of St Cross and Almshouse of Noble Poverty, Winchester. Here we were guided by ‘Big bad brother John’ who kept the scouts interested with information and tales. Back on the campsite scouts learned useful rope skills towards their Pioneer’s badge.

We were fortunate to enjoy dark and clear skies during our visit to the observatory at Clanfield. We were hosted by the Hampshire Astronomical Group who gave the scouts a glimpse into space through various telescopes, both old and new. For many this was the first time they’d viewed celestial bodies first-hand and the amazement of seeing the ‘real Saturn’ was clear.

November saw a good, smart turnout from our troop at the Remembrance Parade and service at the Cairn in Alton. It was great to see so many young people from all the Alton youth groups remembering those that sacrificed so much for their freedoms.

As part of the World Challenge Badge the scouts learned about the impact of malaria on communities around the world. Some then raised funds for Scouts Against Malaria – an organisation that purchases and distributes mosquito nets through the scout network in Africa. Some serious money was raised by members of the troop through various methods – cake sales, explaining malaria to neighbours and efforts at school. The fundraising action then spread to the whole group as other leaders organised a

Mosquito Drive event for all to enjoy. In total, over £1,000 was raised and sent to help those in areas where malaria has such a devastating impact on communities.

Our final event of 2024 was a trip to the climbing wall at Guildford for some fun climbing and bouldering.

## Spring Term 2025

Sprint Term saw the return of our Pinewood Derby construction and racing. Pinewood Derby originated in the USA but is now a popular event for cubs and scouts all around the world. Scouts constructed their race car from a standard block of wood and 3D-printed wheels. Each decorated their car to be race-ready with go-faster stripes and more!



The ever-popular Monopoly Run took place in March. Around 8,000 scouts and guides from all over the country – and some from overseas – descended upon London to participate in live games of Monopoly using the streets of London as the game board. Several teams of 3<sup>rd</sup> Alton scouts took part, and one team were fortunate enough to run into Tim Peake, who is an ambassador for scouts. He was kind enough to spend a couple of minutes chatting to the scouts asking what they were doing and agreed to the all-important selfie!



In March we held a 'Day of Scouting' event at the Den. For a long time, Skip and I had been talking about holding an event where we could do some activities that cannot be fitted into a normal troop meeting. The scouts were able to build some far more serious pioneering projects and have fun in the process. They built a rope scramble, rope bridge and exercised their knots and lashings skills to the full. After cooking on open fires, they then camped overnight behind the Den. It was a great day and well attended.



## Summer Term 2025

May was a very busy month for scouting events. First, we manned a water station for the Alton Runners 10-mile race – something we've done a few times now and with much appreciation from the runners. A warm, sunny day meant water was in high demand and during peak flow the scouts struggled to keep up with demand. It was great fun and a good opportunity for the scouts to do something for their community.

Having finished the water station, the scouts put on their walking boots and joined the group-wide TrailJam 2025. This involved walking round some of the six-hills of Alton. The scouts did very well and it was a great success across the whole group.

The following weekend we were fortunate to be able to attend BEASTLY25 – a massive event organised by the scout groups in the Basingstoke district. This turned out to be an amazing event, the organisation of which was very impressive with a round 500 volunteers attending on the day to make sure things ran smoothly. Highlight of this seemed to be ‘zorb football’!

The highlight of the year came at the end of May with our Summer Camp in Guernsey. This saw 20 scouts and explorers travelling across to Guernsey for a whole week of activities. Using bikes to get about on Guernsey, the scouts took part in a varied programme of activities: coasteering, sailing, stand up paddleboarding, museum visits, historical sites and much more.

And there’s still more to come. At the beginning of July, we are venturing off to Brownsea Island for a short camp at what is recognised as the location of the birth of scouting. Robert Baden Powell took a small group of young people from various backgrounds to Brownsea Island in 1907 for his ‘experimental camp’. He wanted to see how young people could work together and test his ideas for what would become his book ‘Scouting for Boys’.

## Thank You

I’d like to say Thank You to Becky (Bubbles) for running the troop alongside me for another year, despite being very busy with her own full-time studies at university. I’d also like to thank our regular parent helper Ed, who also attended our summer camp and was a great asset, and our Young Leader, Jake. Thank you to the parents who helped at various meetings and events throughout the year.

I’d also like to thank the wider team of volunteers at 3<sup>rd</sup> Alton that make such a great team and support each other in so many ways.

Finally, thank you to all our great scouts and their enthusiastic participation in scouting with Enterprise Troop this year!

Mike Severs

3<sup>rd</sup> Alton Enterprise Troop