

Scouts

3rd Alton Sycamore Dell Squirrel Drey

I am so very proud to be writing this on behalf the leaders and children of Alton's very first Squirrel Drey! This time last year, the group had hopes that we may be able to expand our membership to include scouting's youngest section, but we knew it would largely depend on gaining practical, regular support from parents in and around Alton.

As always, our dedicated (and often unnoticed) Group Lead Volunteer Matt Collins, managed to work his magic and recruited 4 shiny new leaders to join myself (formerly Kestrel Beaver Scout Leader) and Lizzie (AKA Lizard, formerly a helper with Tiger Cub Pack) to become the leadership team for Sycamore Dell Squirrel Drey. Katie (Kite), Rachael (Puffin), Mike (Ducky) and Ali (Toucan) are all new to scouting and they have fully embraced everything that has been asked of them (including shaking their "tails" during our opening song!).



I really do think that the leaders have as much fun at our Tuesday meetings as our Squirrel scouts do! Sycamore Dell has now been up and running for 8 months and it's been an incredible (occasionally noisy) 8 months!



We opened the section in September with 12 wonderful Squirrels. We built dens, learnt about carnival, made mini paper campfires and of course played lots and lots and lots of games.



The leaders were bursting with pride when our Squirrels took part in their first Remembrance Parade alongside the other uniformed groups from Alton.



Every Squirrel meeting follows a similar structure so that our smallest members of the scouting family know what to expect each week. We always start our meeting with our opening song, and then our promise to remind us to be “kind and helpful”. We usually play a game or two to burn off some of that bouncy Squirrel energy before getting stuck into an activity (Sycamore Squirrels LOVE crafting) and winding down with a story (usually read by Puffin).

Later in the Autumn term we had our first campfire and the Squirrels completed their first hike (earning them all their very first badge!).

We had a visitor come and tell us all about giraffes and before the end of our first term we celebrated Christmas by playing games, making edible Christmas trees and dressing leaders up as snowmen. At the start of the year we waved goodbye to two of our Squirrels as they “climbed” up to join Beavers, but said hello to two more keen Squirrels. We also welcomed Chris (Pigeon) to the leadership team.





We had a visit from “community hero” Police Officer Bagley and we went off to visit Alton library to celebrate National Story Telling Week. Squirrels tested their senses and learnt about space as well as making a lovely gift for Mother’s Day. Such a busy term!



The summer term saw us welcome 4 new Squirrels taking our drey up to a super 16! This term so far, we’ve grown our own gardens, played “egg-citing” Easter games, been litter picking in Anstey Park and built bug hotels for our creepy crawly friends. Our squirrels (and lots of parents) joined the older sections for “Trailjam 2025” and completed another hike.



We are looking forward to more adventures next year, including our first sleepover and group camp!

Emma (Ratty)

