

Malvern District Explorer Scouts 2020 Annual Report

A year that started off really well with a good attendance from all the District Units camping together at Shirejam down on the Three Counties Showground. We were also the District with the most Explorer Scouts and Leaders attending Camp Cockerel in November again which is now becoming a highlight in all the District Units' schedules and becoming a great annual District get-together. This year it was good to bring back the Cockerel Trophy to Malvern District again won this year by a team from Tigger ESU. We were hoping to have another two District Unit events but sadly in March most of the Explorer Scouts activities came to a sudden halt and is still not up and running properly again.



Beacon ESU

The Unit ran a good, varied programme throughout the year until the lockdown due to Covid. This included some scuba diving, helping rebuild Kinver Scout camps archery range and after many weeks training an excellent canoe expedition.

They also undertook training for two expeditions which were due to take place at Easter by kayak and Whitsun on foot. Unfortunately, neither took place due to the current situation.

The Unit also joined the other District Units on county events



Leigh ESU

For Summer camp the Unit took a party of 17 (which included 2 x Explorers from Western) to the Spanish Pyrenees.

The campsite was amazing with the mountains forming a spectacular backdrop. A varied programme was organised including high ropes, canyoning, mountain biking, a 2-day expedition into the Pyrenees staying overnight in a mountain refuge, hydro-boarding, via ferrata, white water rafting. There was also a visit to a music festival, a restaurant for a local traditional meal and a visit to Jaca the local town. At the campsite there was access to a small river and a local swimming pool. and small river. We cooked fresh food with everyone involved through the week. During the evenings guitars got out and there was also an entertainment night where everyone did a sketch.

There was also a varied programme including an expedition in October to the Forest of Dean, a backwoods weekend and the start of an environmental project to create a backwoods area in Cradley with tree and hedge planting. Which was unfortunately cut short by the pandemic.

Other activity nights included laser quest, trampolining, the escape room and some joint activities with other Units.

At Christmas there was fundraising by Carol singing and raised £200 for Guide Dogs for the Blind.



Phoenix ESU

Members of the Unit went to the International Jambourette in Holland in August 2019 taking part in many activities and meeting Scouts from other parts of the world. In September there was a unit trip to a Scout bunkhouse in Chirk including a hike up the Carding Mill valley. In October the Unit took part in the Trek challenge, winning the under 16 section and placing 3rd and 4th in the 16+ section. Also, Explorers walked sections of the Cotswold way for Platinum award / Bronze DofE expeditions.

We have awarded 3 Queens Scout awards 2 Platinum awards, 1 Diamond award, 3 DOE golds and 2 DOE Silvers. Many congratulations to those original Explorer Scout founders of the Unit who have now left with Scouting's top award.

The Unit also joined the other District Units on county events

TIGGER ESU

A varied programme was planned for throughout the year along with activity nights going the Escape Rooms, climbing as well as weekend activities including cycling and overnight hikes. Summer Camp was down in Dorset during which the Unit visited Monkey World and the Bovington Tank Museum as well as exploring Lulworth Cove and enjoying a session of Coasteering. The Unit was to have spent a few days planting tree at Warren Oak but due to the lock down this was undertaken by the Leaders. The Unit also joined in with the other District Units at County events - one of which was Camp Cockerel where they came away with the Competition Trophy.

Gators Young Leaders Unit

The District Young Leaders play an important role in supporting the Adult Leaders across the 3 lower sections and is still full of young enthusiastic Explorers – well done to them all. But here we do have a challenge which we need to sort and find a replacement for Martin Bradley who has stepped down. A huge thank you for all his hard work during the last few years getting the unit up and running.

Western ESU Ledbury

As well as regular indoor meetings and outings, the Unit spent 4 evenings tree felling and clearing work for the local angling club last summer and helped with tree planting with the Group and willow cutting at Warren Oak.

The Unit also had several joint meetings with Leigh ESU planning the joint summer camp to Brittany, now postponed to 2021 as well as an incident hike on the hills.

Another large project the Unit took on was the construction of the District's Chinese gateway for the Shirejam camp in July. The Unit also joined the rest of the district at Camp Cockerel.





I am hoping that before too long we can get back to Scouting in the way that we know it. In my 50 years plus of Scouting I have never experienced anything like this, and I know that along with myself, the rest of the Explorer Leadership Team are feeling extremely frustrated that we cannot run our usual programmes, activities and most of all - camps. I know that the situation has had a serious effect on the Leadership Team and that once out of this situation we will need to actively look for more and new people to join our Leadership Team.

Looking forward to a brighter and Covid free future soon and a resumption of Scouting as we know it.

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Adrian F Ward
District Explorer Scout Commissioner

