



Navy Command

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RN INSPECTION OF 3rd CHALKWELL BAY SEA SCOUTS – 14 MAR 12

1. This year 3rd Chalkwell Bay conducted a winter dry inspection at the Groups HQ, 'The Den' at Victoria Wharf. The HQ having been purpose built some 30 years ago is exactly what this group needs, large, warm, with a galley, changing rooms, dry storage, a workshop and a balcony overlooking the sailing area. The Group are very much looking forward to purchasing an adjacent piece of land which includes garages, this will greatly enhance their boat park and security for their large and varied boat fleet. It will be interesting to see, at the next inspection, how the Group eventually decides to use this additional space.
2. Once in the Den the assembled Cubs, Scouts, Rangers and Explorers made for an impressive sight. Colours was conducted in an efficient and well practiced manner befitting of a group of this standing. After being fallen out the Group had the tricky job of accommodating all of those attending in various parts of the building as they would normally parade on separate nights! First to be seen were the Cubs who were actively engaged in making individual knot boards ably assisted by a good number of youthful leaders and capable young leaders. Many of the Cubs were sporting lots of challenge and activity badges which is a good indicator of a full and fun programme.
3. A Beaver colony has recently been stood up with an initial intake of 12, this will shortly double as the second intake of 12 is welcomed to the Group. The Cubs have a long waiting list of boys and girls so it was easy to invite the younger ones to participate in Beavers. Not on parade this time the Beaver Colony is wished every success and given the history of 3rd Chalkwell Bay it is difficult to see any other outcome!
4. Next the Inspecting Officer was taken to see the Sea Rangers who had decamped into the nearby sailing club. The relationship between the Scouts and the Rangers is an unusual one but it works very well. They parade on different nights but conduct all of the weekend activities and some camps together with the Scouts. The Cadets and Rangers are aged between 10 - 21 and run a watch system very much akin to the Scout old patrol system whereby the older girls take the position of Bosun and Bosun's Mate to run their activities for each watch. The Crew were also being inspected over the course of the evening to see if they were ready to be considered for the Lady Cochran Award - the outcome at the time wasn't announced however, given the standard of participation, uniform and activities, it is hoped that the outcome was positive. The Inspecting Officer was genuinely impressed with the girls, they

are clearly immensely proud of their uniform and being part of the Sea Rangers and appeared to be enjoying themselves in the nautical activities they were undertaking. Girls are not precluded from joining the Scout section of 3rd Chalkwell Bay and it will probably happen in the future but whilst the Rangers have such a strong leadership team and the programme continues to be exciting and interesting this will probably happen slowly with limited numbers.

5. The Inspecting Officer was next invited to inspect the Scouts. At 60 again this Section is full with a waiting list. The Scouts were very well presented with pressed neckerchiefs and smart cap tallies, they spoke of a interesting and busy programme with the water and camping activities being a firm favourite with 51 nautical badges being recorded as awarded. The Group obviously takes full advantage of their RYA recognised teaching establishment status with an impressive 87 RYA youth sailing and 37 power awards achieved! On display were a good number of both Silver and Gold Chief Scout awards with many wearing several of the challenge awards which is always good to see.

6. The Scout Leader works hard to maintain the ethos of the Patrol System where the Patrol Leaders are encouraged to be accountable for their Patrol, including appearance, attendance and behaviour with monthly recognition for best patrol and annual presentations for overall achievement. A weekly weekend 'duty rota' is in place which includes responsibility for keeping the building tidy and visiting the dinghies on the moorings to bail rainwater. This is long established routine and whilst not onerous it helps to engender ownership of the building and equipment to the Scouts.

7. Once dismissed to their activities the Scouts busied themselves under the tuition of Young Leaders and Patrol Leaders in a series of mainly nautical activities. Again this reflected the strong use of the Patrol System and it was excellent to see the youngsters taking charge of reasonably challenging tasks with minimum adult supervision. The Scouts under instruction were well behaved, fully engaged and supportive of their Patrol Leader.

8. The District Explorers number 37 and are closely tied with the Group. They have a good focus on the Duke of Edinburgh Awards and Chief Scout Awards which helps maintain the links to the Group as they very often elect to do their service requirement through one of the Sections within the Group. It is clear they enjoy being part of a large and thriving group and given their excellent proximity to water should be encouraged to 'think outside of the box' (or perhaps think outside of walking boots!) when it comes to expedition planning.

9. It was good to see Lt Chris Daly in attendance having returned from his travels onboard HMS Cumberland. He still does his bit as an Assistant Scout Leader whilst time permits but with Naval commitments he is shortly off to the Falklands. Given the size of the Group and the number of Explorers it is requested that the Group give consideration to inviting the local AFCO (Armed Forces Career Office) to pay a visit. They will come equipped with a lively and interesting 1 hour presentation of the Royal Navy (or the Army or Air Force if requested) which all will find interesting as well as those considering a career in the Forces.

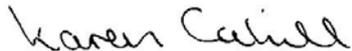
10. The Group itself is very active with a full sailing programme (again it is requested the Group think about qualifying some of its Young Leaders in Kayaking so that there is another string to the Groups bow). The Church is also a marked part of the programme with regular parades and church services. The annual camps are very popular with every third year being made open to the Cubs.

11. The Executive is well established and has a strong leadership, sub-committees are formed for such things as fund raising and major repair efforts. As always more parental support would be welcome but fund-raising is adequate and supplemented by the annual Peter Royal Trust Fund. Last year the Group celebrated its 80 years anniversary and can look forward to many more successful years in the well looked after and maintained HQ.

12. To finish the evening the Group was fallen in to conduct Evening Colours. The Senior Patrol Leader took firm and authoritative control of the smartly executed ceremony. Once

fallen out and assembled informally the Inspecting Officer addressed the Group during which she announced that they had successfully passed this inspection and presented the Certificate of Recognition to the Group Scout Leader, Carol Tissington.

13. This was a first class inspection of a well established Sea Scout Group which provides a good programme, with a suitable emphasis on water activities, to its young people. They are excellent ambassadors for the RN and during this inspection they proved that they fully earned and deserve RN Recognition – which they are clearly proud of - well done. Lt Cdr Cahill most thoroughly enjoyed this inspection and thanks her hosts for their warm welcome and hospitality throughout the evening.



K A Cahill
Lieutenant Commander Royal Navy

Distribution:

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