

Woodside Colony has 22 Beavers and we have all enjoyed a whole year of face-to-face fun-packed Scouting.

It has been great for our members to get back to the usual opening and closing ceremonies, and to invest the newbies and swim up the older members in the traditional ways.

In the last part of the summer term 2021 we took part in the Hampshire Teddy Bears Picnic – all the Beavers' teddies were hidden by one of our Leaders up on the bank, and lodge by lodge they went in search.... All teddies were found except one and the Leader was getting worried as she could not locate it either. After some anxious minutes the precious teddy was discovered by its owner in his bag as it had not actually been handed to the Leader for hide and seek! Panic over!

The icing on the cake last summer was our joint colonies Pirate Day, held in place of the Group camp as at that stage we were not permitted to have large scale overnight camps. It didn't deter us and everyone had a ball making cutlasses, hats and telescopes, tie-dying bandanas, hunting for gold coins, making cork boats and sailing them, and completing a treasure relay in teams.





Woodside also completed their Scottish Thistle award by learning the Highland Fling and making an edible Nessie as a healthy snack.

Our first face to face swimming up for well over a year was held in the Public Gardens, after a super town trail complete with code cracking in teams.



In Autumn 2021 and Spring 2022, we focussed on the final elements to complete the Hampshire Beavers 35th Birthday Challenge. For International Charity Day the Beavers made a 'Cross my Palm with Silver' hand print as a fundraiser for their chosen charity - HART Wildlife. We were hoping to have a visit from the wildlife hospital, but unfortunately, their tighter restrictions meant it was not possible at that time. However, they are very grateful for the donations and hope to come to the colony later this year. International Chocolate Day, International Roald Dahl Day, Elf Day and International Puzzle Day also featured in our programme.

Money Skills is a new activity badge which Leaders agree is a great idea to introduce young people to the concept of value, decisions and savings at an early stage in their lives. The badge has a number of elements which we split over 3 meetings in order to fully cover each component. Throughout the term Beavers collected bottle tops in their lodges. At a later date we set up a Lego Brick Bank, with each lodge deciding how to spend their bottle tops to complete a construction project as a team. This required lots of team working, decision making and collaboration and the Beavers thoroughly enjoyed the activity.

The highlight of the autumn was the joint colonies Remembrance sleepover – it was brilliant to have Beavers back to staying overnight and sleeping in tents. We had a Blitz theme with the Beavers building shelters outside and making their own gas masks. Later on, the air raid siren sounded and they had to get their masks and gather in the shelters! Before bed we had a reflective time to light a candle each and listen to The Last Post. It was a moving experience for everyone.



In the Spring, we moved on to the Disability Awareness badge and tried out mouth & foot painting, as well as learning the promise, motto and Leaders' names in British Sign Language. We also had a super visit from a local resident, Pip with her guide dog, Alice.

We have had a good mix of outdoor activities over the last year – wide games and building nature fairy houses in Chawton; dusk hike with sensory challenges also in the Chawton area; camp fire, trying out traditional games like hop scotch and pancake racing; gardening; a navigation exercise and of course the Jamboree on the Trail in Bentley, which was a great success.

Beavers have tried their hands at construction – egg drop challenge and edible constructions making a bridge between 2 tables. They've also made pasta with pasta machines and flavoured their own sauce; tasted Chinese food and tried using chopsticks.



They showed their flexibility in yoga for Health & Fitness and learnt how to take their pulse, and also gained first aid skills – they are very good at the recovery position and know how to get help in the event of an accident. They demonstrated creative flair in the form of fireworks art and for Mothers' Day.

Another spring high point was the Glow in the Dark sleepover – this was a Woodside event, but with Covid still around, a few had to drop out and stay at home, so three Kestrels joined us as well. It was a very neon event with glow bowling, lots of glow sticks, glow target throwing and a glow in

the dark treasure hunt. A lot of fun was had by all and I think all the small ones were asleep on the right side of midnight which is always good news!



As the year is drawing to close, we still have lots in store – both colonies have enjoyed a great trip to the Church of the Good Shepherd in Four Marks as part of the Faith badge, and we joined forces for the Teddy Bears Picnic. We also have hosted visitors from the Fire Search and Rescue Service along with dogs, and the RNLi ahead of summer holidays. We are all looking forward to the Platinum Jubilee Group Camp in July.

Several of our Beavers have almost finished their Chief Scouts Bronze award – they’ve been working on leading games for the colony which has been good fun and brought some new ideas to the repertoire.

In the last year we have awarded over 320 badges and 4 Chief Scout Bronze Awards – congratulations to Ben White who achieved this just before moving up to Cubs in January, as well as Annabel Page, Juliet Cook and Albert Newton who all move up at the end of this term.

My thanks to our terrific Woodside Leaders – Merlin, who has become ABSL, Owl, and of course Ratty, who has stepped across to become BSL in Kestrel, and Badger who is now supporting Woodside as ABSL. Also, our Young Leaders – Jay and Rook who make a great contribution to the colony. Thank you to Eagle for helping us regularly, other parents who have volunteered, and Matt our GSL who has ably steered our Group through the pandemic and out the other side, helping us to grow our membership.

Tawny
Beavers Section Leader



