

Beaver Colonies joint report - Woodside & Kestrel - 2022-2023

Woodside and Kestrel have had a great year, following a joint programme so all our Beavers have had the same fantastic opportunities. We have 21 Beavers in each colony, so 42 in all.

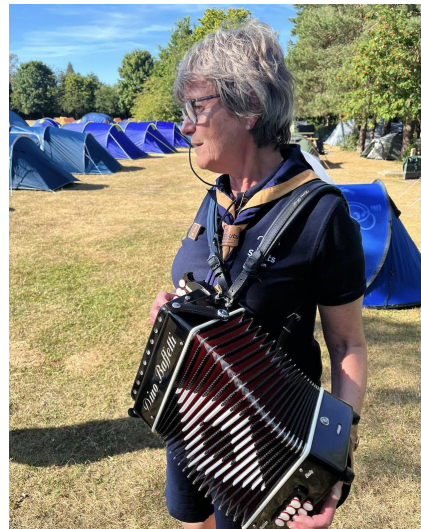
The latter end of summer term 2022 saw the brilliant Group Camp - lots of Beavers thoroughly enjoyed a 1 night outdoor camping experience, with adventurous activities and a number of additional games and crafts to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Beavers had a go at climbing, with some courageous members reaching the top of the tower to ring the bell; archery and shooting as well as stand-up paddle boarding. Everyone pushed themselves out of their comfort zone to try something new and challenging. Our Section-lead Jubilee activities included making Morris sticks and trying a bit of traditional dancing, choreographed and accompanied on melodeon by our very own Owl. Beavers also hiked into Tilford where they played parachute games and made fortune tellers with a royal theme, and later made and ate patriotic fruit kebabs. Super fun all round, with lots of achievements towards badges. Leaders all earned the No-sleep



Activity Badge!

We continued outdoor activities into the autumn while we still had the light. Beavers made their own natural sculptures and pictures using things they found up on the bank. The whole colonies came together to recreate large scale fleurs de lis using games equipment on the grass. The summer months are always good for brushing up on cycling skills too, learning the basics of bike maintenance and safety.

We always like to start each term with some team games to welcome our new members and get buddies working together. In the autumn we completed Jubilee challenges - 70 skips, 70 ball bounces, stacking 70 cups in a tower, 70 jumps, scoring a total of 70 with dice etc. An easy way of having a lot of fun and laughter. Sadly, we mourned the loss of the Queen in September - Beavers held 1 minute's silence when we heard the news and one of the



Lodge Leaders wrote and read a prayer for the Queen to complete his Faith badge.

Beavers worked together in lodges to learn how to erect and strike tents. They also practised setting out and repacking their sleeping equipment for camp. These skills came in handy on 3 nights away this year - Between the bookshelves sleepover at the library, Novices sleepover at the Den and our summer adventure camp as guests of Chawton House in their walled garden.

We tackled the Communicator badge with Beavers learning a parent's phone number and making a phone card for future reference. They had a go at some codes - Pig Pen, Morse, Phonetics - and cracked a message by each member making a phone call home to get some information, which they pieced together.

The autumn term was a time to celebrate Apple Day,



Hallowe'en, Guy Fawkes and Remembrance.

For Apple Day we held a joint colonies meeting with a number of stations to taste apples and juice, try apple bobbing, cheese rolling and write an apple acrostic poem. This was a great



opportunity to invest our new members together - I think we had 11 new Beavers saying their promise! With darker evenings upon us, we held an adventurous walk in the dark up in Ackender Woods where Beavers hunted for Hallowe'en lanyards by torchlight - ghosts, pumpkins, bats and skeletons - as well as glow in the dark creatures for a bonus!

Remembrance was marked with sewing poppy badges to wear on parade; painting poppy pebbles which were laid at the Cairn by a Beaver representing both colonies; practising ironing scarves ready to look smart on parade; and making great mini aeroplanes with pegs and lolly sticks.

At Christmas, Beavers created tableau scenes in groups using a variety of Christmas props. We took photos which they made into family Christmas cards the following week. Beavers used their knot skills to join ropes in order to retrieve Christmas treasure boxes containing gingerbread men, chocolates and Christmas blanket badges for everyone.

In the New Year, we turned our attention to Emergency Aid and Space. Beavers learned when and how to call the emergency services, how to reassure a casualty and treat minor cuts and grazes. Most of them also completed a First Aid quiz. We've been practising in pairs to ensure that everyone knows how to put someone in the recovery position. Our Young Leader, Rook, planned the activities for the Space badge - playing a planet game with awesome facts, making 2D planets and positioning them in order to create a scale model of the solar system on The Den floor, making constellations and demonstrating the patterns through a light box.

Beavers have explored Global Issues through watching WaterAid videos filmed in developing countries, building their own water filters (discussing best methods in lodges) and completing recycling diaries. They also made a zoo of endangered animals with their cuddly toy collections, and found out about Fair Trade on a themed hike from Four Marks to Alton. We will round off our Global Issues activities with a visit to Waitrose towards the end of term to see how they recycle packaging and discover what Fair Trade products are stocked on the shelves.

For the Safety badge, Beavers opened their eyes to all sorts of dangers and risks around the home, looking at a variety of household objects and found out how to minimise risk and use items safely. They nailed the Green Cross Code across Chawton Park Road, and have practised strategies to stay safe with strangers in the community using the 3 step method - No, Run, Tell. We have a new community link with Borovere Care Home - residents have enjoyed two visits from our Beavers where they played games together, helped with gardening and chatted lots! Beavers have put forward more ideas about how they can support elderly people in care homes.

We have been very lucky to have a number of visitors over the past year - leaders from the local Luminosa Youth Choir gave us a fantastic singing workshop, Alton Morris taught the colonies traditional dancing, and also a



guest from the Space exploration industry helped Beavers complete the remaining elements for the Space badge. We are grateful to the parents who came to talk about their countries and cultures for the International activity badge. Beavers tried food, played games and learned phrases and cultural information about Australia, Venezuela, Germany, Poland and Finland. They also found out about their Beaver peers in other parts of the world.

Our Leaders have arranged additional events which

Beavers have thoroughly enjoyed - these included the Butser Hill hike with kite flying, Library sleepover complete with a multitude of book related activities and challenges, the Fair Trade hike, a whole day of Joint Games with 8th Alton, Novices sleepover put on especially for our first timers, Jamboree on The Trail (JOTT) and our top hit - the Chawton summer camp last month. District also provided a large scale event on a Roman theme, with about 70 Beavers in attendance. Leaders from each Group ran a station so that Beavers could make swords, shields, headdresses, banners and mosaics, as well as trying Roman games - rota, archery and target practice. The event was rounded off with a castle making challenge and battle commenced!

Popular recent activities have been the duck race on the River Wey at Flood Meadows, hoop games and the camp fire picnic complete with bear hunt. We've been so lucky with the weather for all these meetings. The celebration of summer continues with strawberries and ice cream making and the summer solstice when Beavers will be building Stonehenge.

Throughout the year, our older Beavers have been taking turns to lead a game with their colony to complete their Skills Challenge. This has helped them grow in confidence with leadership skills and expand our games repertoire as some of these have been very popular ideas. Several Beavers have almost finished their Chief Scouts Bronze award - so we anticipate some awards this evening.

Our thanks go to our terrific Leaders - Merlin, Badger, and Eagle in Woodside; Owl and Rabbit in Kestrel, together with our Young Leaders - Rook, Lynx, Kingfisher and Carl who are all a great asset to the colonies. Welcome also to James who has recently joined Kestrel as ABSL. As ever, Matt provides fantastic support behind the scenes, and we appreciate the parents who help at our meetings. This assistance really is vital for sustainability and to ensure that all our plans come to fruition. Leading really is fun, so please do contact us if you feel you could take that bold step into uniform! We all started from scratch too! It's so rewarding to see our Beavers develop their knowledge, skills and friendships.

Tawny

&

Ratty



Beavers Section Leaders - Woodside & Kestrel Colonies

