

Woodside Colony has fared well during the last year. Thankfully all our members wanted to stay on, no matter what, and none decided to stop during the pandemic. We currently have 24 Beavers on our roll.

We have invested 14 new members since the pandemic struck, with virtual investiture ceremonies for many, and older Beavers swimming up on line as they graduated to Cubs. We look forward to a face to face ceremony for those swimming up in July.

We have still managed to have fun and our Beavers enjoyed completing a whole range of great activities. Many of these experiences have been shared on Twitter too.

Last autumn we were delighted to get back to face to face activities albeit only for 6 weeks. We had to reduce our group size, so only 2 lodges met together and everyone attended fortnightly. Beavers played lots of games, completed their Birds of the World Challenge badge and the Communicator badge – with an introduction to the phonetic alphabet and learning how to make phone calls and send text messages.

Unfortunately, come November we were back in lockdown and quickly changed our plans reverting to online meetings again. Beavers continued to be engaged in our Remembrance activities – decorating stones which were collected and displayed at The Cairn, and completing a mini pioneering project to make a teepee.



We also had an International meeting focusing on international Scouting events, music from different cultures and making instruments. Our final meeting before Christmas was a virtual tour of RAF Odiham, which was very exciting and a real treat.



Continuing online after Christmas and welcoming more new members, we still had a packed programme – working on Navigator level 1 with map skills; finishing the International badge with flags and food tasting; completing the Global Issues badge over several meetings with recycling activities, endangered animals, making water filters and finding out about Fair Trade.



Beavers also built their own solar systems for the Space badge and enjoyed another virtual visit – this time to the Planetarium at Winchester. The Spring term ended with interactive activities – online experiments investigating gravity, acids and alkalis, optical illusions of colour spinners and the effect of fizzy drinks on raisins; also learning to tie knots with a guest at our meeting, and trying fire building methods with one of our Young Leaders.



Throughout the year we learnt new games which became favourites in our virtual meetings. We are so pleased that all our Beavers stayed interested in Scouting during such a difficult time. Of course, they were extremely happy to start face to face meetings again after Easter, with plenty of outdoor games, adventures and challenges which we have really missed until now. It has been funny to realise that some of the Beavers had never set foot at The Den until very recently!



Woodside have fulfilled many criteria towards their badges, including Challenge awards and County Challenge badges. In the last year we have awarded over 270 badges and 2 Chief Scout Bronze Awards – congratulations to Ryan Shepherd and Kester Smith.

My thanks to our great Woodside Leaders – Ratty and Hawk, plus Merlin and Owl who have joined us more recently as Section Assistants, and our Young Leaders – Jay and Rook. Many congratulations to Jay as the first Banderlog Explorer to achieve his Young Leaders Award and Belt – brilliant work! Our whole team brings fantastic skills and enthusiasm to the Colony. Well done to our Beavers who have shown great tenacity, resilience and adaptability in these challenging times, and their parents for supporting us and them to stay involved.

Tawny
Beavers Section Leader