



3rd Alton Kestrel Beaver Colony Annual Report 2024-2025

What an incredible year we've had in Kestrel Colony! Our 22 strong colony, split as always across our four lodges – Bumblebees, Beetles, Ladybirds, and Grasshoppers – has once again shown fantastic enthusiasm, teamwork and creativity. Our lodge leaders and buddies have done a wonderful job of helping new Beavers settle in and across the year we've awarded around 300 badges – including an impressive collection of Challenge Awards.

Autumn Adventures

We kicked off the Autumn 2024 term with team challenges and a warm welcome for new members.



We then learnt how to pitch tents and explored fire safety with a proper campfire, s'mores and songs! The Beavers loved the chance to practice knots and even got stuck into cooking over flames.



September also saw the start of the Communicator Badge. Beavers learnt how to make phone calls, practiced remembering important contact details and tackled some fun decoding and coding challenges. Families even played their part by receiving surprise calls!

October was packed with variety – from celebrating apples on Apple Day to a lively evening learning Morris Dancing with a local group. New Beavers were invested in front of their proud families during the same session.



We launched our “Behind the Scenes in Healthcare” badge series with guest speakers helping Beavers understand different healthcare roles. A real highlight in November was our Remembrance-themed Sleepover where Beavers enjoyed activities based on The Blitz and slept in pop-up tents in The Den.



The Beavers proudly took part in the town's Remembrance Parade the following day, showing great respect and maturity. Arthur led the way as flag bearer during the procession to the service, with Freddie taking over flag duties for the return. It was especially heartwarming to see Freddie's younger brother, Alexander – representing Squirrels – also carrying the flag, making it a true family affair of honour and pride.



We wrapped up the term with plenty of hands-on fun, including two exciting science-themed Experiment evenings and a brilliant sandwich-making competition – where Hawk bravely took on the challenge of tasting 20 unique and imaginative creations from our Beavers! We also enjoyed an imagination-filled session before diving into festive fun at our Christmas party, along with the Swimming Up ceremony for those moving on to Cubs. A huge congratulations to Ben, Zaheer, and Arthur who all earned their Chief Scout Bronze Award – a fantastic achievement and a testament to their hard work and enthusiasm.



Spring Surprises

Our Spring 2025 term began with more teamwork games and a first aid session focused on blood and bandaging, followed by a campfire evening with lots of singing practice.



Our Digital Citizen badge started in January, covering online safety, digital kindness, and hands-on skills, including the Beavers making their own short TV films!



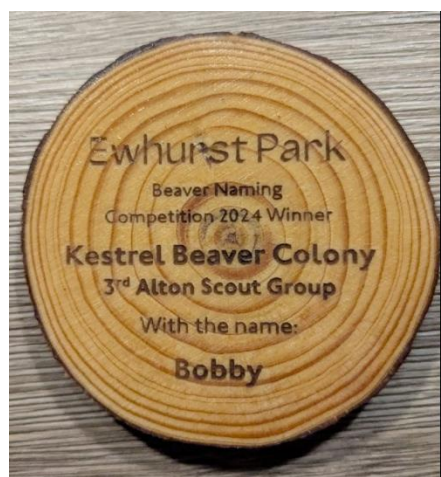
More new Beavers made their promise in front of proud families and we did a joint "Fair Trade Hike" down "Water Lane" with Woodside Beavers during February.



We explored global issues through activities for the "Scouts Against Malaria" badge. The Mosquito Drive in March helped raise funds and awareness, with lots of Beavers getting involved in creative ways.



March also included a return to Borovere Care Home – the games and singing were just as joyful as ever – and an exciting visit to Ewhurst Park, where we hoped to see Hazel, Chomp, and their kits, Bobby (named by our very own Kestrel Beavers) and Barry! Later that month, some Beavers stayed overnight at our Novices Sleepover, gaining confidence and experience for future camps.



We finished the term by making Easter cards for Borovere and holding a swimming up ceremony for Freddie who moved up to Cubs, who also earned his Chief Scout Bronze Award – a fantastic achievement and a testament to his hard work and enthusiasm.

Summer Smiles

This summer term started with new lodges, team games, and lots of energy! We focused on Safety – from road and home safety to fire safety, with a firefighter visit that captivated the colony.



Over the bank holiday weekend at the start of May, we had “The Great Beaver Sleepover” which was a huge success, bringing together over 50 Beavers from five colonies for an overnight adventure full of fun, friendship, and new experiences. From outdoor games and litter picking at Flood Meadows to crafts, team challenges, and a movie night in the historic Assembly Rooms, the event was a memorable first sleepover for many.



Our gardening afternoon at Borovere brightened up the care home and built intergenerational bonds.



A visit from a local pet shop taught us about animal care – and gave us the chance to meet some very cute furry friends!



This year our Beavers have sung, explored, planted, invented, hiked, coded, called, camped and cared – all while building confidence, friendships, and #skillsforlife.

Several Beavers completed their Chief Scouts Bronze award and even more are very close to finishing. Many thanks, as always go to the amazing Kestrel Colony leadership team – Owl, Hedgehog and Mouse and our Young Leader Rabbit who always ensure the Beavers have lots of fun whilst building #skillsforlife.

As always, we're incredibly grateful to Matt, our Lead Volunteer (Group), and Anna, our Deputy Lead Volunteer (Group), for their unwavering support behind the scenes. A heartfelt thank you also goes to all the parents who lend a hand at meetings, events, and camps – your involvement truly makes a difference. This support is essential for keeping the colony running smoothly and bringing all our exciting plans to life.

If you've ever considered getting involved yourself, we'd really love to hear from you. Whether it's helping occasionally at sessions, supporting trips, or even stepping into a uniformed role, there's a place for everyone – and every bit of help matters. Many of our current volunteers started out just by lending a hand and found it so enjoyable and rewarding they wanted to do more.

Joining the team doesn't mean giving up all your free time, and the training is genuinely simpler (and more flexible) than you might expect. Plus, uniformed volunteers get to be part of shaping the programme, leading adventures, and making an even bigger impact on our young people's experiences.

If you're curious or want to chat about how you might fit in, just let us know – we're a friendly bunch and happy to talk through any ideas!

James (Hawk) – Team Leader Kestrel Beaver Colony