

Beaver Scouts



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Scouting has always evolved and developed to include more and more people. Up until the early 1980's, however, the youngest age a young person could join the Scout Movement was eight, when he could become a Cub Scout.

Following the success of Scouting for younger children elsewhere, especially in Canada and Northern Ireland where Beaver Scouts began, it was decided in October of 1982 that it would be introduced on a trial basis across the United Kingdom. As with each step in the history of Scouting, demand was high. So in 1986, the first new Section in 40 years was officially launched.

Initially, Beavers were not full Members of the Movement. That did not happen until April 1986 when they became a recognised training Section and took the title of Beaver Scouts. In 1991, girls were admitted to the Beaver Scouts for the first time. The Beaver Scout Programme was extensively overhauled in 1995.

In the United Kingdom, Beaver Scouts wear a turquoise sweatshirt and a Group scarf (and woggle to hold it in place) with the option of wearing either navy blue activity trousers or shorts, or a skirt. They also have the option of wearing a turquoise polo shirt and a baseball cap.

Their Promise, which is appropriate for the age range, is:

'I promise to do my best,
to be kind and helpful
and to love God'.

The Motto for the Section is the same as the other Sections and is: 'Be Prepared'

Beaver Scouts meet in 'Colonies', usually once a week. Beaver Scouts have the opportunity to work in a variety of groupings sometimes called Lodges. The Colony normally comprises a maximum membership of 24. However to meet local short or long term circumstances, this number maybe increased with the agreement of the Executive Committee and the District Commissioner.

The Beaver Scout programme and activities are based on five Programme Zones. These are:

Beaver Scouts get to know other people – they have an opportunity to discover more about themselves and others. They learn about different people, and cultures, and also find out more about themselves, their family and society. They also get to find out more about the family of Scouting.

Beaver Scouts get to learn more about themselves – the focus here is on their personal development where they learn to look after themselves and discover how their body works by participating in various activities within the Colony.

Beaver Scouts explore the world around them – discovering the exciting world of science and technology, developing their awareness of both the natural and man-made world, and participating in their local community.

Beaver Scouts discover creativity and practical skills - young people have an opportunity to make things, develop their talents, skills and interests and

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express themselves and develop cooperative skills through creative play and activities.

Beaver Scouts discover beliefs and attitudes – they have opportunities to learn about different people, cultures and religions. They also have a chance to respond to the needs of others, to develop a sense of right and wrong and begin to find their place in the world and increase their understanding of their faith.

A number of badges are available for the Beaver Scouts to recognise their progress through the Colony. These are as follows:

- **The Membership Award-** this is to be awarded at a Promise ceremony after four to six weeks in the Colony. Helps the young person understand the commitment they are making when they make the Promise and become a member of the Movement.
- **Joining In Award-** recognises a young person's participation in the Balanced Programme.
- **Challenges-** Awards that challenge young people to use the skills that they have learnt through participation in the Balanced Programme. There are three awards: Outdoor, Discovery and Friendship. They are activities to be undertaken as a Colony and not individually.
- **Chief Scout's Bronze Award-** this is the top Award that a Beaver Scout can achieve.
- **The Moving On Award-** helps ease the transfer of a Beaver Scout to the Cub Scout Pack.
- **Activity Badges-** Beaver Scouts have an opportunity to achieve four Activity Badges, namely: Animal Friend; Creative; Experiment, Explorer and Faith.
- **Group Awards-** Awards which are tackled with other Sections in the Group and which promote activities within the Balanced Programme of each Section.
- **Staged Activity Badges-** four badges, which are staged across the first four Sections. A young person can gain whichever badge is appropriate to the level they have reached. The four badges

are Swimming; Information Technology; Musician and Nights Away.

The elements of their activities do, indeed, aim towards having fun and making friends and there is an exciting spicing of adventure and achievement. The project approach is also used but with every encouragement for the individual to make their own personal contribution.

The 'Scouts help others' principle of the Scout Movement's ethos is readily accepted by boys and girls of Beaver Scout age so that appropriate community service is possible right from the start.

Beaver Scout Leaders are appointed under the Policy, Organisation and Rules of the Association and are men and women between the ages of 20 and 65 who are in sympathy with the aims of Scouting. Assistant Leaders may be appointed from the age of 18. Parents and Helpers are a valuable asset to the running of a successful Beaver Scout Colony.

In April 1986, there were already over 60,000 Beaver Scouts in the United Kingdom and in the 2002 Census, there were 103,604 Beaver Scouts.