

Dear Parent

We're excited to offer you and a child a free trial period at Croxley Green Beaver Scouts, starting on 25 or 26 February!!

Our Beavers take part in a wide range of fun activities – playing games and doing craft activities to visits to churches, airfields, bowling alleys and fire stations as well as more adventurous events to prepare them for Cubs and Scouts when they are older like camps, hikes and pioneering. They learn valuable skills too, such as what to do in an emergency, teamwork, their local community and independence.

The key to Scouting's success is the partnership with adults – and that's where you come in. The Colonies will only work if at least six (and preferably more) adults volunteer and come forward to help run the programme.

How do you know if this will be for you?

Scouting is for everyone – without exception. Our volunteer leaders come from all walks of life and with all sorts of skills, and most don't have any previous experience of working with young people or Scouting but are parents just like you. In fact, enthusiasm, energy, a sense of fun and a bit of imagination are the main requirements!

We are inviting you and your child for five sessions to see whether you *both* like Beavers, and to see what contribution you can make.

What support will I get?

Lots! Scouting is the largest uniformed youth organisation in the UK, with over 5000 members in Hertfordshire alone. Croxley is fortunate in having some very experienced leaders who will only be too happy to help guide, support and assist you in the early stages and beyond.

We need to build up a leadership team of at least six adults for the two Colonies. On top of that, the Colonies often have a parent rota to help support the leaders. We sometimes have one or two Young Leaders – teenagers who volunteer to help as part of the community service for their Chief Scout's Gold Award or Duke of Edinburgh Award.

There is a Scouting programme – but it's up to the leadership team to decide how to run it. Over the course of two years it's possible for each Beaver to earn their Chief Scout's Bronze Award (the highest Beaver badge available) and there are plenty of online materials, tried and tested resources, and equipment to help. And of course, other leaders to bounce ideas off. With two leadership teams, you would be able to share programmes, resources and ideas in parallel.

There's also a leader development programme to help you, which can lead to membership of the Institute of Leadership and Management. Leaders don't need to worry about fund-raising, building maintenance or other administrative tasks either. We have an Executive Committee which co-ordinates other adults and parents to do those.

How much time would I need?

Flexibility really is the key here. If there are enough leaders, there is scope for the Colonies to run even if one leader can't make it one night. (The truth is, you end up having so much fun yourself you'll do anything to get to the meetings anyway).

The time commitment is up to you: some leaders can only volunteer every other week, or others around shift patterns and family commitments. However you would normally put in about an hour a week or a fortnight for the Colony meetings.

Whether you then plan something extra every weekend, every half-term or a few times a year will be up to you and the team. You will need to think about three or four programme planning meetings a year. All the leaders in the Scout Group meet about four times a year too – but you can choose one of your team to attend these on a rota.

Beavers in Croxley are presently divided into two Colonies which both meet from 6 pm to 7 pm – Mountain, which meets on Thursdays and Forest which meets on Fridays. The next leadership team will have the flexibility to change that if it's more convenient for them.

What will it cost?

Nothing. We'll say that again. Nothing. We provide our volunteers with free uniform and training, and alongside that comes free insurance and subscription to Scouting magazine. Not only do we give your children a discount on their subscriptions, but you also get other discounts like 20% off at various well-known outdoor and camping shops, the YHA and other organisations. You aren't usually expected to pay for most of the activities you attend either.

What if no-one volunteers?

Our Facebook page and website shows some of the everyday adventures our young people have taken part in over the last few years. The sad truth is that the next generation of Scouts in Croxley won't have that opportunity if ordinary parents like you don't consider following in the footsteps of ordinary parents like us and our Colonies will close.

We hope that you and your child will come and experience the Scouting adventure for five weeks between 25/26 February and 24/25 March and then make up your mind.

In the meantime, please feel free to email with any questions and particularly to let us know whether you're initially interested in Thursday or Friday nights. You might want to explore www.scouts.org.uk or visit the Scouts' YouTube channel and especially <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h1N3mq7uAYI>.

We look forward to meeting you and your children.

Yours in Scouting

Jeffrey Leib and Martin Joyce

Beaver Scout Leaders

Mountain and Forest Colonies