

Beaver Scouts - Flags and Parades



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0845 300 1818

Flags

Each Section of a Scout Group, District or County may have a flag if they wish. The design and wording on the flags are outlined in POR. When Colonies obtain a flag, careful consideration needs to be given to how and when it is used and how it should be treated.

The Colony flag could be used regularly in the life of the Colony, in the following ways:

- On display for special occasions and ceremonies, e.g. Investitures, going up ceremonies, annual general meetings, parents' meetings;
- As a gathering point on outdoor activities;
- Gathering of the scout group and the sponsoring authority;
- Group and District parades.

The Beaver Scout Flag can be used for all these purposes just as it is. However, some Colonies may wish to underline the significance of their flag by using a Blessing Ceremony, this may be especially appropriate if the Group is sponsored by a religious body. A Blessing Ceremony does not restrict the future use of the flag and it can be paraded at the Group's discretion. A Blessing can be understood by all and can be seen as a visible reminder of our Promise. (It should be noted that if a flag is dedicated rather than blessed, this places considerable restrictions on its future use and this ceremony is therefore not recommended.) However, there is no pressure on any Colony to use any ceremony at all.

If a Colony decides to have their flag blessed, it is important to consider where and how this simple ceremony should take place. It should be built

around the Beaver Scouts, their needs and excitement in owning a flag. Thought should be given to the ceremony taking place in familiar surroundings - in the open air, your regular meeting place or usual place of worship. The differing religious beliefs within the Colony also need to be taken into account.

The ceremony could be seen as a family celebration, so invite all the Sections of the Group and parents. Invite a religious leader who can relate to and involve the Beaver Scouts in the planning of the ceremony.

There is no set pattern or ceremony that must be followed. As circumstances vary, consultation beforehand between the religious leader and Colony Leaders is vital so that what is finally agreed is meaningful and clear for everybody involved. The ceremony should be fun and engaging for all involved.

A Blessing Ceremony

A possible format for a blessing ceremony is outlined below:

- A hymn, song or chant that is well known to the Beaver Scouts
- A story to depict the background and/or use of flags and banners throughout time
- The blessing of the flag

Religious Leader: Beaver Scouts, we have come here today to bless this flag. This flag is special to your Colony, which is part of the family of Scouts, who come from all over the world. We are bound together by a Promise in which you promise to love God and to be kind and helpful. Scouts have carried flags for many years, so it is a very special moment

The Scout Information Centre

Gilwell Park Chingford London E4 7QW Tel + 44 (0)20 8433 7100 Fax + 44 (0)20 8433 7103 email info.centre@scout.org.uk www.scoutbase.org.uk

when you carry this flag and you should feel very important. Before we bless this flag, it is right that you should make your Beaver Scout Promise again to remind you of what you have promised to do as Beaver Scouts.

Beaver Scout Leader: Leads the Beaver Scouts in their promise.

Religious Leader: Loving God, we ask you to look on these Beaver Scouts in your love and care, bless them and help them to be true to their Promise now and always.

All: amen

Religious Leader: In trust and faith we bless this flag. May it be a sign of our love of God, and the fun and friendship of our Colony.

All: amen

The Flag is handed over to the Colony.

Religious Leader: Accept this flag which has been blessed by God, remember to look after it always and to be true to your Beaver Scout Promise.

When using the term God refer to *The Promise* factsheet for variations that can be used.

Carrying the Flag

It is recommended that the appropriate-sized carrier be worn by the Beaver Scout, sloped over the right or left shoulder to allow greatest ease of movement. The loose bottom corner of the flag could be held against the pole with one or both hands, depending on the Beaver Scout's capabilities.

The Beaver Scout carrying the flag may be closely accompanied by two other Beaver Scouts to form an escort. The remainder of the Colony walks behind this group.

The flag should be a source of pride for all in the Colony and the Beaver Scouts should all take turns in carrying the flag.

Parades

Beaver Scouts may take part in parades at the discretion of the District Commissioner. Before authorizing Beaver Scouts to take part in a parade, the District Commissioner should ensure that:

- Consultation has taken place with the Beaver Scout Leader, the Group Scout Leader and the Assistant District Commissioner (Beaver Scouts) to ensure that the activity planned is suitable for members of the Beaver Scout Section;
- Adequate safety precautions cover all aspects of the activity;
- The minimum ratio of 1 adult to 6 Beaver Scouts plus the Leader in charge is observed.

The following are examples of occasions that may be suitable for Beaver Scouts to take part in:

- Parades at places of worship
- Services to celebrate religious and thanksgiving festivals
- Carnivals, Fetes and festivals
- Short walks from Scout Headquarters to activities
- St. George's Day Parades
- District Scouts Own Services

However, local circumstances should be carefully considered.

Beaver Scouts should not take part in a parade which:

- Involves excessive waiting or walking more than a short distance
- Takes place during adverse weather conditions
- Finishes after 7.00pm
- The ratio of adults to Beaver Scouts is not followed

These should also be considered when taking Beaver Scouts outdoors walking etc.

Reference

FS140200: Use of flags

FS322016: The Promise

FS322086: Flag procedure

All are available from:

<http://www.sbuk.org.uk/info.centre/catalog.php>

For information also see:

<http://www.scoutbase.org.uk/ps/fab/>