

Welcome to our SUMMER 2024 newsletter!



Earlier this week I did a voluntary shift at our centre, seeing groups in and out. It was a busy night, over 80 Beavers, Cubs and Guides all coming up to have fun in our wonderful space. I had a big smile on my face hearing the screams of joy from the Beavers as they whizzed past on their grass sledges. The rain managed to keep away (mostly) and I was struck by all our marvellous trees in full leaf. At the end of the evening, the centre was quiet again and I was reminded just how lucky we are to have such an amazing space for our young people to have fun.

May, June and July are always busy months here. We have welcomed Girlguiding Sheffield's Brownie Trophy and Brownie Adventures camp (over 200 young people on site - fantastic!) and the West Division camp, West Fest.

Alongside this, it's been a pleasure to welcome a number of primary schools bringing their young people on what may be their very first residential away from home and their parents. Everyone has had a great time crawling round the cave pod, zooming down the slopes on sledges and keeping warm by the campfire.

We've welcomed our new Manager, Rob Ellis to our team. Rob has moved in to Tyzack Cottage with his partner Jadine. He brings a wealth of experience from previous roles at Glenbrook and as an activity instructor. He's getting to know how the centre works (yes, he did start at our busiest time of year with the opening of a newly refurbished building thrown in for good measure!) so please bear with him as he gets to know us and we get to know him. He's is already proving to be just great!

Whiteley Woods is a real team effort; our staff team, trustees and management committee members, and amazing volunteer helpers. Thank you to everyone who continues to make Whiteley Woods what it is. Thank you for bringing your groups and loving this place as much as we do.

Enjoy the rest of your summer adventures!

Helen

Joint Chair of Trustees

Goodwin Cottage Now Open!

Our new accommodation, Goodwin Cottage, is now finished and open for visitors! You can find information about **prices and availability** on our [website](#).

The cottage sleeps 12 in 4 en-suite rooms and has an activity room and kitchen downstairs. These before & after pics show what a massive transformation it's been through. We're really pleased with the results and it'll be great to see small groups enjoying the comfort and cosiness of the cottage all year round (did we mention it has underfloor heating!)



To see more of the inside why not take a [quick virtual tour](#)?!

Young people from **39th Wisewood and 186th Burngreave** were our first guests and did a fantastic job showing people around at our Open Day in May. They even made it onto the [BBC Radio Sheffield breakfast show](#)! Presenter Ellie Colton stayed at the centre when she was younger and confessed to them the reason why she kept getting in bother at Brownies (you can [listen back here](#)).



Hello from (new) Rob

Hi, I'm Rob, the **new manager** at Whiteley Woods OAC (the name was a requirement of the job!) I started midway through April, so feel like I am just about starting to get the hang of the role. Thank you very much to everyone who has welcomed me and my partner Jadine to the centre so far, we feel very privileged to be living and working here.

I grew up just down the road from the OAC, my sister used to visit when she was in Girlguiding and I have memories of coming to pick her up from her camps. Living so close to the Peaks meant much of my free time was spent exploring the outdoors, as well as regular trips to climbing centres.

I started out working in the outdoor industry soon after leaving school, beginning as an apprentice instructor. I spent 2 years working at a very large centre in Kent, before moving back to Sheffield, where I worked in a local school as a 1:1 SEN teaching assistant, combining outdoor learning with traditional education. I then decided that I would like to take this further and began studying Outdoor Leadership and Management at the University of Derby. This gave me lots of amazing opportunities, developing skills in a range of outdoor activities, such as rock climbing, paddle sports and caving, as well as developing understanding of how to run outdoor programmes.

Part of our studies focused on the natural environment, ecology and conservation. I really enjoyed these modules and decided to go further in this field, resulting in me studying a masters in Conservation Biology.

During and after my studies, I worked at Glenbrook, the Girlguiding outdoor activity centre in the Hope Valley. Working there introduced me to the core principals and ethos of Girlguiding, an organisation I have developed a large amount of respect for.

I have thoroughly enjoyed the first few months (even though they have been super busy!) I look forward to what the future brings, and to seeing you all whenever you next visit.



New Commissioner joins our team

We were delighted to host the Girlguiding Sheffield County Commissioner handover event recently. A big thank you from all at Whiteley Woods to the outgoing commissioner Wendy Howard who also ends her time as a WWOAC trustee. Wendy has been a tremendous support to the Centre over the last 5 years, not only as a trustee but also bringing her brownies to camps and events here, which we know will continue! We welcome Jemma Taylor as Wendy's replacement and look forward to working with her and her team.

We now have a defibrillator on site!

We are very grateful to the Sheffield City Council South West Local Area Committee (LAC) who have funded our **defibrillator**. Their donation has also allowed us to update all our First Aid kits. The defibrillator has been registered with the Ambulance Service and is available to be used not only by those on site, but by members of the general public, putting us literally at the heart of the community.



Thanks to an environmental grant, also from the Local Area Committee, we have renewed our gardening equipment and tools to support our site maintenance. We've bought new lightweight loppers and secateurs for our volunteers to use, alongside some very shiny wheelbarrows which have already been put to good use. Thank you to our volunteers who worked out what was needed, went on a shopping spree and refreshed the tool store!

More thanks!

We're also extremely grateful to the **JG Graves Charitable Trust** and **South Yorkshire Community Foundation** who gave us grants to help furnish and fit out Goodwin Cottage. We had a very long shopping list, including all sorts from bunk beds to bins, mirrors to mugs and chairs to chopping boards! We couldn't have got the cottage up and running as quickly without their generous donations and it's great we can provide such a comfortable and well-equipped space.

Fun in the sun (and rain, and wind)

It's been a really busy couple of months at Whiteley Woods OAC with hundreds of young people taking part in residential, camps and activities. Luckily (this is Sheffield after all) having a great time here is not weather dependent so why not plan your next adventure for the Autumn or Winter?! (or if you're a bit nesh, book now to make sure you get your space secured for Summer 2025). **See our [website](#) for booking information for all our campsites, buildings and activities.**

You can also **get involved as a volunteer**. We have loads of opportunities to help; outdoor jobs to keep the site looking great, running the shop, or supporting the work of the trustees. If you have any time, skills or enthusiasm to lend us then please get in touch!

Thanks for your continued support, we hope to see you soon!

The Whiteley Woods OAC Team



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