



Skills for Life

7th Epsom (Methodist) Scout Group

ANNUAL REPORT

2022 – 2023

Trustees' Annual Report

Public Private Benefit

The objectives of the Group are as a unit of the Scout Association. The aim of the Scout Association is to promote the development of young people in achieving their full physical, intellectual, social and spiritual potentials, as individuals, as responsible citizens and as members of their local, national and international communities. The method of achieving the aim of the Association is by providing an enjoyable and attractive scheme of progressive training, based on the Scout Promise and Laws and guided by adult leadership.

Subscriptions are charged for membership to cover immediate running costs of the Group and these do not unduly restrict membership. The Group follows the principle that no one should be excluded because of their inability to pay membership subscriptions.

Two key principles demonstrate that Scouting's aims are for the public benefit are that through the Scout method young people develop towards their full potential and that there is a clear link between the benefits for young people and the purpose of Scouting. The safety of young people is taken very seriously and the benefits Scouting activities provide far outweigh the risks. Any private benefits from Scouting are incidental, other than to those as a beneficiary.

Chairman's Report

The year ending April 2023 saw a strong Scouting programme continue to be delivered, thankfully without the shackles of COVID.

Sadly, our GSL, David Shickle, resigned at the end of the year. Karl Nicholas, District Commissioner, is our de facto GSL until a replacement is in post.

The individual sections have continued their rich offering of activities and badges and the Group remains in good overall health. Individual section reports follow.

Camps, competitions, outings and sleepovers all returned with Spring Bank Camp, Summer Camp and Water Weekend able to take place once again and well attended.

The Group's finances remain on a sound basis despite limited fundraising activities: we were however able to run our Community Christmas Post which is part of Group's commitment to our local community.

Our two minibuses have been used well through the year and in spite of the associated expense provide us with programme opportunities that would otherwise not be possible.

As ever, all we achieve is only possible as a result of our fantastic volunteers who give up their time either to act as leaders/supporters of sections/activities or in support of administration, finance, etc, all of whom I thank.

Many of our volunteers are well past the age where their children were in the Group and to sustain 7th Epsom we are in need of support from current parents. As always, we are trying to recruit more leaders, and we'd welcome any interest from parents willing to join the leader team. Additionally, we're looking for people who would be willing to do the various training courses to become activity leaders for activities such as archery, shooting and climbing.

If anybody would like to lend a hand in any way, please contact myself or one of the Section Leaders.

Kevin Mead

Chairman of the Group Executive

Our Year in Numbers



Our Key Actions for the Year

Key 5-Year Plan Actions

#	Description	Action	By when	Comment
1.	Secure Parent Reps for each Section, ensure role is understood and developed in line with needs of Section.	Chair / Section Leaders	ASAP	Needed for: Clearwater, Windfall, Sioux & Explorers.
2.	Secure Transport Manger(s) to run and manage maintenance of our vehicles.	Exec	ASAP	Could be split role. Couple of hours per month.
7.	Continue adult recruitment and ensure succession planning for all Group Executive and key Supporter positions.	Exec	Ongoing	Particular need for GSL and AGSL
8.	Explore options for alternative fundraising	Exec	Ongoing	Social & Quiz planned for spring '24

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees

I report on the accounts of the Group for the year ended 31 March 2023, which are set out on pages 7 & 8.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The Group's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. They consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993, and that an independent examination is required.

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts (under section 43 (3)(a) of the 1993 act;
- To follow the procedures laid down in the general directions given by the Charity Commissioners under section 43 (7)(b) of the 1993 act; and
- To state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Group and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also included consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given in the accounts.

Independent Examiner's Statement

In connection with my explanation, no matter has come to my attention;

1. Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - To keep accounting records in accordance with Section 41 of the 1993 act, and
 - To prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 1993 Act have not been met; or
2. To which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Name: **Andrew McDonald**_____

Signed:_____ Date:_____

Address: 31 Pound Lane, Epsom. KT19 8SB _____

Major Activities and Achievements in the year

The annual review presented to all parents and interested parties prior to the AGM highlights the activities and achievements during the year. This is a comprehensive document that details numbers of young people in each section, a report from each section, abbreviated accounts and a review of the year.

At the end of the year the income reserves amounted to £549,650 (2022: £549,650). The Group's policy on reserves is to hold an amount that will enable it to replace the motor vehicles. The New HQ has been recorded as an asset within the accounts.

The trustees have identified the major risks to which they believe the Group is exposed. They have reviewed these and established systems to mitigate them.

The objectives of the Group are to promote the development of young people in achieving their full physical, intellectual, social and spiritual potentials, as individuals, as responsible citizens and as members of their local, national and international communities.

The Group is a trust established under its rules, which are common to all Groups.

Trustees are appointed in accordance with the Policy, Organisation and Rules of the Scout Association. They are well acquainted over a number of years in local Scouting.

The accounts have been drawn up on the Receipts and Payments basis, which is consistent with the previous year.

Approved by the trustees on the 27th September 2023 and signed on their behalf by:

Dr Kevin Mead – Chairman

Anthony S Williams - Treasurer

Income and Expenditure Statement for the year ended March 31st 2023

	2022/23		Total	2021/22
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds		
	£	£	£	£
Incoming Resources				
Annual Subscriptions	29,173		29,173	25,171
Income from Fundraising	6,888		6,888	3,850
Income from Camps & Activities	23,194	5,725	28,919	19,094
Section Income	750		750	0
Minibus Hire	599		599	418
Group Clothing	40		40	45
Donations	0		0	173
Gift Aid	4,739		4,739	2,903
Interest Received	425		425	7
Other Income	33		33	445
Total Income	65,840	5,725	71,565	52,106
Outgoing Resources				
Capitation Fees and Subscription Refunds	10,451		10,451	9,187
Expenditure from Camps & Activities	37,053	1,006	38,058	11,866
HQ Rental, Insurance and Equipment Costs	2,555		2,555	4,279
Section Costs	5,232		5,232	4,607
Minibus Costs	9,619		9,619	5,520
Costs of Fundraising	21		21	158
Group Clothing	518		518	0
Scout Shop	2,490		2,490	2,500
Bank Charges	144		144	192
New Stores	0		0	0
Other Expenditure	105		105	1313
Total Expenditure	68,187	1,006	69,193	39,622
Net Incoming/Outgoing resources before Depreciation	(2,347)	4,719	2,372	12,484
Net Incoming/Outgoing resources before transfers			2,372	12,484
Less: Depreciation			(966)	(1,072)
Net Incoming/Outgoing resources			1,406	11,412

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2023

2022 £		2023 £
	FIXED ASSETS	
442,255	Property	442,255
9,659	Minibus	32,693
<u>451,914</u>		<u>474,948</u>
	CURRENT ASSETS	
126,585	Cash at Bank	104,957
<u>126,585</u>	Net Current Assets	<u>104,957</u>
<u><u>578,499</u></u>	Total Assets less Current Liabilities	<u><u>579,905</u></u>
567,087	Opening Funds	578,499
11,412	Net Incoming/Outgoing resources	1,406
<u><u>578,499</u></u>		<u><u>579,905</u></u>

Leaders' Report

Clearwater, Willowlake and Windfall colonies have been very busy this year. We continue to have a waiting list due to the demand for places. The leadership is unchanged across all colonies and we are grateful to have been supported by a number of enthusiastic young leaders.

All three colonies follow the same programme. The Beavers have worked towards a variety of badges including the Camp Craft, Communicator, Explore, International and Experiment badges, as well as working on their challenge awards. As a result, over the year, a number of our Beavers have managed to achieve their Chief Scout Bronze Award, before swimming up to Cubs.

We have been out and about in the local area, including town trails round Epsom, a night hike in Epsom Common, tracking at Horton, hikes and den building on Headley Heath, and an explore around the Langley Vale Centenary Wood. Other highlights of the year have included pond dipping, monster making, pancake making, water games, science evenings, cooking s'mores over fires at Boidier Hurst and games at Court Rec. Beavers have tried out climbing and caving, and have had visits from Surrey Police and from the Epsom Food Bank, to understand the work they do in the local community.

7th Epsom Beavers have also taken part in District events including the swimming gala and jamboree on the air/internet (JOTA).

We have enthusiastically attended the 7th Epsom Spring Bank camp which was great fun and was the first experience of sleeping away from home for many of the beavers. As always, we have had fantastic support from all the Beavers' parents/carers and are very grateful for this.

We continued to seek one or more Assistant Leaders for Willowlake and Windfall colonies.

Kathy Castledine, Clearwater Beaver Leader

Eileen Perren, Clearwater Assistant Leader

Clare DiPlacito, Willowlake Beaver Leader

Victoria Pocock, Windfall Beaver Leader

cubs Leaders' Report

Summer Term arrived and we were back in the great outdoors as much as possible. With our first group camp since COVID on the horizon, camp skills and pioneering were the focus as well as the art of lighting fires, backwoods cooking and building shelters at Boidier Hurst and Headley. We all enjoyed being with the rest of the group for our Polyapes Camp. It was great to see all sections integrating and supporting each other as well as a sense of pride at hearing the Cubs drown out everyone else around the campfire, well that's how we remember it! Towards the end of term were also lucky enough to have an orienteering session run by the Mole Valley Orienteering club who organised a fantastic evening and it supported the work the Cubs had been doing around map skills. As well as all that we once again worked in the community to litter pick around Epsom. This is always a great evening for both the Cubs and the public who get to see our young people out and about making a huge difference!

Summer camp took us into the well-earned summer break, the Cubs had a brilliant time trying a whole range of new activities and this really helped build a sense of camaraderie amongst the three packs, something that we had been working on and intended to build on as we then moved into the Autumn term. This saw Phil step into the Tuesday Akela slot and we also welcomed Russell to the Tuesday leadership team. Once again, the Leaders pulled together a great program for the term which we ran across all three packs again.



Our Autumn program included working towards the fire safety badge which saw the cubs get the opportunity to visit Epsom Fire Station, the much loved chip shop challenge which introduced the Cubs to the 'what3words' app to help them navigate around the best chip serving establishments that Epsom has to offer, night hikes, learning basic first aid to achieve the emergency first aid stage 1 badge, having fun with two nights of experiments to earn the Science badge and just before the Christmas break we welcomed back our friends from Leatherhead Rifle Club who led a brilliant night of air rifle shooting which the Cubs all approached brilliantly. We also took part in the district challenge hike for the first time in a number of years. The team was made up of Cubs from all three packs and they represented us well and completed the hike in a fantastic time.



After the Christmas break, we settled quickly into our winter program and also looked forward to putting a team together for the District Swimming Gala. On the night our Cubs were outstanding with a number of individual wins and also first place in the team event!! We were so proud of them and how they really cheered each other on, even when this was the first time a number of them had met, really demonstrating the Cub Scout values!!

The spring term itself was relatively short so we made sure we packed in as much as possible, with a focus on the challenge badges. This saw our Cubs take part in problem solving activities, understanding more about the local community in which they lived and also about the impact that our everyday lives have on the rest of the planet. The term also supported us to get the Cubs cooking, with us able to sample new foods as part of our look at the Lunar New Year, Shrove Tuesday where a marmite pancake was the surprise of the evening, and getting back up to Boidier Hurst for some backwoods cooking.



Over the year we presented nine Silver Chief Scout awards to our Cubs and three of our Leadership Team were awarded their wood badges.

We continued to seek one or more Assistant Leaders for Cherokee Pack

Leigh Hogarty, Apache Akela

Paul Dewis & Richard Bell, Apache Assistant Leaders

Phil Kirk, Sioux Akela

Russell Tebay, Sioux Assistant Leader

Ashleigh Gonsall, Cherokee Akela

SCOUTS Maclean Leader's Report

During the last year we have had approximately 50 scouts on the register, with an average of 40 scouts turning up each week. It does feel as though there has been a change in the commitment to attendance, which does make it more difficult to get all scouts achieving the same badges. However, the scout leader team are doing their best to provide a varied scouting programme during each term, with as many outside activities as possible.

The scout programme could not happen without each of our leader's dedication and commitment. Paul Carpenter, Jo Chartres, Jane Barden, Kevin Betts, Tony Marshall, Graham Saunders, Clare Knight, plus all the weekly parent helpers.

During the year we took part in two district events, plus Scoutabout last summer. We had 15 scouts taking part in the District Challenge Hike in March, and then 10 scouts taking part in all the different heats in the District swimming gala in February. We didn't win any of the various events, but I was very proud of all the scouts who took part.

Last year we held four very successful camps:

Camp	Location	No. of Scouts	Leader in charge
Spring Bank Camp	Polyapes Stoke d'Abernon, Surrey	33	Paul Carpenter
Scoutabout	Ardingly, West Sussex	42	Gillian Mead
Summer camp	Bushy Wood, Eastbourne, East Sussex	20	Clare Knight
Water Weekend	Thames Young Mariners Ham, Surrey	25	Tony Marshall

These camps cannot happen without the dedication and hard work of a team of Leaders and parent helpers, who give up their time to ensure that the Scouts have fun, learn a lot, and get introduced to a great outdoors camping experience. Each camp has a Camp Leader, and the hours that go into planning a well-run and organised camp is immense, and we need to thank every one of those Leaders and continue to support them in the future.

I wrote in our various newsletters about the activities that took place across the year, so I don't intend to repeat that here as they are still [available on our website](#). Our vision in Scouts is that each young person can complete the Chief Scout Gold Award during the four years that they will be with us. This will require near enough 100% attendance as well as

extra work outside of general scout meetings, as well as attending most of the camps. Over the last three years with lockdowns and restrictions on inside meetings, this will unfortunately not be achievable by the majority of our current mid-age scouts. However, we do our best to plan this into the programme so that a scout will receive a Challenge Award each term, and one activity badge. This is becoming increasingly difficult with the number of leaders that we have and will certainly not be easy unless we get more leaders involved. We also want to ensure that we are getting the balance right between ticking badges off, and letting the scouts have fun and are outside as much as possible.

Recently, I attended a District event which laid out the core scouting skills that every youngster from Beaver to Explorer should engage in during their scouting journey. These are camping, navigation, bushcraft, hiking, health, pioneering, leadership, first-aid, values, and World. These core scouting skills will be taken into consideration when planning the programme next year, even if they don't always equate to badges.

Gillian Mead, Scout Leader

EXPLORERS **Leader's Report**

A full-on programme of fun!

Summer term and warmer evenings always means outdoor activities; litter picking, the ever-popular chip survey, first aid, knots, orienteering, semaphore and morse code. We did a duo of cycling around the borough and kayaking on the river near Godalming – which was wonderfully cool on one of the hottest days. We had planned to finish the year off with our traditional trip to Frensham Ponds but, unfortunately, a wildfire in the area meant a change of plan. We found a new location at Desborough Island, near Weybridge for a paddle and ice lollies. Fab!

Summer Camp went ahead for the last week of July at our favourite campsite, Bushy Wood, near Eastbourne. Dav planned an amazing itinerary that included sailing on the sea, climbing, shooting, slippery rounders, a beach BBQ and a quite intense hike from Brighton along the South Downs Way to the picturesque village of Firle – we bought the local shop out of ice creams! Thank you so much Dav and Aaron for choosing to spend your annual leave helping 7th Epsom.

Autumn term: 20 Explorers managed to get themselves a coveted place at Water Weekend after a mad dash for places and it looked like they had a blast. The rest of the term's activities included: favourites such as newspaper fashion show, ice skating and our very own Christmas Lights version of London Monopoly. A big group of Explorers (and parents) helped out at the annual Epsom Fireworks, and we were given a donation from the organisers that provided enough funds for a trip to Wisley to see festive light show, Glow. We headed off into the Christmas break feeling festive after our annual Explorer Christmas Dinner at the Epsom Club and our Friday night Christmas party of silly games which was topped off with some delicious cakes made by Explorer Daniel.

Spring term was helped out by the terrific programme ideas from our Explorer Jane – we held a games night, a World evening, Apprentice's Den, alongside more 'Scouty' activities such as a Town Trail, a maps evening and we debated religion with help from the Lead Minister, Catherine. Jane Barden came up from Scouts and ran a British Sign language evening for us – which taught us awareness as well as some basic signs – thanks Jane. Two brave souls entered the District Swim Gala but we couldn't rustle up any interest for the District Hike. 16 Explorers ventured to Dartmoor for the annual Easter Ex (pedition) over the Easter Weekend, where they hiked and mountain biked for four days, coming back tired but happy and full of memories.

In March, we sent two teams up to London to play in the National Scout Monopoly Run. They play a real-time version of the popular board game together with other challenges such as get your team to hug a tree or find an extra-large post-box as quickly as possible. Out of 1,386 teams, one team came top of their game and 9th in overall position whilst the other came 4th in their game and 654th – in the top half of the teams. One of the Explorers said, 'It was a fun and exciting day, one of the great events on the scouting calendar'.

Explorer numbers have remained at a steady 30, losing a few to the advanced age of 18 and gaining a few from our Scouts alongside several Guides from the local groups. The leadership team alongside me remains the same – Dav, Rich, Dafydd, Aaron and Tom. We all have our strengths, and we carry on working together to make the young people's time at Explorers that of learning skills for life as well as making friends, working as a team and having fun. I can promise you it is quite a task to run an evening that keeps a group of 30 teenagers entertained. We seem to get it right more often than not! I can't thank the team enough for their help, support and more importantly, the camaraderie and laughs that come with it!!

Phili Coley, Explorer Leader