



Scouts

5th Testwood



**Getting stuck in.
Our Annual
Review, 2023-24**

Welcome

For 60 years our group has been giving young people #SkillsForLife in Totton. Be that the speak-up needed for school, the sticking at it needed for a hobby or the first aid needed for life. This only happens thanks to many adult volunteers covering all our activities.

3. What's coming up?

AGM Agenda

4. Group Scout Leader's report.

6. Squirrel Scouts report

10. Beaver Scouts report

14. Cub Scouts report

18. Scouts report

22. Explorer Scouts report

26. Our finances in summary

for the 2023 calendar year

30. What happened last time?

Minutes of the AGM for the 2022-23 year

Agenda

23rd April 2024, 6.30pm

Garland Lodge, Blackwater Drive, Totton, SO40 2QJ

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Apologies for absence
3. Governance topics
 - Approval of the minutes from the previous AGM.
 - Adoption of constitution (Scouts Model Constitution)
 - Note of Group's financial year
 - Approve membership of the Group Scout Council (AGM)
 - Approve membership of Group Trustee Board
 - Agree quorum for Group Scout Council (AGM)
4. Making Appointments
 - Approval of recommendation for Group Chair
 - Election of Group Secretary
 - Election of Group Treasurer
 - Election of members to Trustee board
 - Appointment of independent examiner
5. Review of the previous year
 - Group Scout Leader's review of 5th Testwood Scouts
 - Receive and consider the Trustees Annual Report and Statement of Accounts
 - Presentation of awards
6. Close of meeting

Group Scout Leader's report

2023 has been quite a year for many different reasons. First it felt like the first, proper year when the long shadow of Covid hasn't been cast over the group for while 2022 was without restrictions, the year felt like our attempt to make up for lost time. This year felt like a year of normal getting stuck-in, finding our way, skills for life. This is plain to see in all the section reports you can find within this booklet.

We now have a full year of adventurous activities, outside events and inter-Group bonding from all five sections present at 5th Testwood and excellent nights away for all young people aged 6 years up. It has been another good year with 20 pages of reports and pictures later in this booklet. It was good when, in November, we had adults and young people from all sections attending the Remembrance Day Service in Totton, although the planned St. George's Day service in Burley was called off due to the aftermath of a wet winter.



November also saw host to an all sections Maintenance Day, taking on a number of tasks around our hall and bringing many young people and parents together. The group grew in numbers in the past year, despite notably the Beavers having fewer numbers this year.

The Totton Santa Run and Christmas Fayre fought against cost-of-living concerns, and worries due to late applicants, to be a comfortably profitable event this year and solidifies our template for the event.

The Donkey Derby in May was a massive success, thanks to the hard work of the organising team along with the volunteers from both the group and Eling who helped make the day happen. It has given the us a much needed boost to finances when costs are ever increasing, without the need to draw further from our parents' pockets. This helps not only develop our HQ, but keep Scout activities affordable so those who need us most can benefit from the skills that Scouts teaches. In also providing such as well regarded and well run community event solidified the group at the heart of the Totton community in a way difficult to do previously.

Volunteers make our group tick. From helping at our big events to working with our young people each week, fixing the hall or as a trustee—all are volunteers, all make a difference and we desperately need more of them.

If you can help even once a month at our sections, then it makes all the difference. If you can help occasionally behind the scenes then it makes all the difference. If you can be a trustee, then in makes all the difference. If you can help at the Totton Santa Run and Donkey Derby, then it makes all the difference.

Steven Osborn
Group Scout Leader



Here at Squirrels, we are celebrating our first full year of the section. We have grown from having 7 squirrels to now having 15 members of the Drey, not including the 4 who have already transitioned into Beavers.

Throughout this year we have completed most of the activity badges with our Squirrels, which has involved: building, planting, making, hunting (bugs), climbing, drawing, painting, caving, singing, dancing, sticking, loosing (archery), litter picking, experimenting, partying, remembering, celebrating, hibernating, crafting, roasting (marshmallows), navigating, Assembling (superhero badge), walking, rescuing (emergency aid), getting emotional and learning about Easter.

One of the highlights was attending the Squirrel fun day at Ferny Crofts, where our youngest section were able to get a first look at our local activity site and try out some new activities. They particularly enjoyed the climbing wall, the caving bus and archery.

We also had our first Remembrance Parade including the Squirrels, which saw them leading our group (behind Elk - and not running into him, - much) and looking very respectable. They also managed to stand quietly for the service fairly well and made us proud.

As mentioned above, we have had four beloved members of the group turn 6 years of age and we have had to allow them to move onto Beavers, but it's ok because Fox gets to see them there! And what great Beavers they are - having attended Squirrels first!

Our most achieved Squirrel is someone very close to us and has been to a massive 39 out of 39 sessions, as well as one Fun Day, one Donkey Derby, one Remembrance Parade, handing out Santa run leaflets, one Totton Santa run, four hikes and one Beaver sleepover.

This has all enabled her to be the first member of 5th Testwood to achieve the Chief Scout's Acorn Award - the highest award a Squirrel can achieve! Well done Maisey!! We look forward to more of the Squirrel Drey achieving this award next year.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Scott and Melissa Barton, who helped out as Squirrel Leaders throughout the year until their small people moved to Beavers - your help and support was much appreciated. We would also like to welcome Lindsay Rogers to the Squirrel Leadership team as 'Swan' and is proving to be a great addition to the team.

We have planned more fun for the next term of Squirrels, including attending the Saturday of District camp, learning how to pitch tents, another hike, more litter picking, more crafting and hopefully we'll make some big splashes in Lymington.

We are getting a lot of interest from people wanting to join the Squirrel section, so we are looking for people to volunteer and become regular leaders of the section. If you are interested, or know anyone who would be good in the role, please get in touch.

Vicky. Joe, Lindsay and Sarah
Squirrel Leader Team

Squirrel Scouts are our youngest section for 4 and 5 year old girls and boys. They meet on Monday evenings.

squirrels@5thtestwoodscouts.co.uk



Blackwater & River Test reports



We have had another fun filled year of activities with the Beavers. We have covered a range of topics to earn lots of badges. Some of the normal sessions were carried out along with a few new ones; we celebrated International Women's Day alongside Mother's Day with our special female figures and held an emergency night where some wonderful volunteers join us from the police, fire and paramedic services.

There have been lots of events outside of the normal evening session times. We visited Marwell Zoo for the 'Scouting at the Zoo' event and the annual Paulton's Park take over was a roaring success.

We joined our wider district for the annual campfire at Copythorne and District Beaver Sleepover at Calshot Activity Centre. The Beavers took part in ringos, bouldering, orienteering and bottle rockets before settling down for the night in the Hangar. We have also hosted our own sleepover opportunity which we linked with our Christmas Party. Beavers who weren't quite ready for a sleepover were able to attend for the party and they all got a special visit from Santa!

Our leaders continue to work hard and share the tasks needed to keep the section running well and enjoyable for our young people. Our team is made up of Faye (Narwhal), Justin (Raven), Clare (Name to be assigned), Vicky (Fox) and Scott (Kodiak Bear). We are also glad that Jess (Pika) will be returning to our leadership team this term.

Due to leader commitments and the growing needs of our sections, we reached out to parents and other volunteers to join our leadership team. We have been joined by a number of parent occasional helpers which has helped us run safely.

I am lucky to have like minded leaders willing to volunteer their time to run this group to help young people experience new and exciting activities.

We have been able to award the top Chief Scout's Bronze award to a number of our Beavers as they have moved up to Cubs. We continue to look to grow our sections and current have 16 Beavers on a Tuesday and 15 Beavers on a Wednesday.

We are looking forward to the next year of experiences to come.

Faye Osmond
Beaver Scout Leader



Beaver Scouts are our section for 6 and 7 year old girls and boys. They meet on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings.

beavers@5thtestwoodscouts.co.uk

Discovery & Endeavour report



As ever, the Cubs have been taking part in a full-on program of activities on both Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, from cooking to crafts and some more adventurous activities too.

Last year, we ran a successful Summer Camp to Butchers Coppice where the Cubs took part in an action-packed week under canvas. Activities included crate stacking, archery, paddleboarding, kayaking as well as tackling the cave bus and assault course. We broke up the week with visits to Corfe Castle, via Swanage Railway where the Cubs enjoyed travelling by Steam, and we also tried to swap them out for their counterparts on our visit to Monkey World, but the monkeys were having none of it. Sadly, this year due to the lack of uptake there will be no summer camp.

The winter term saw the Cubs take part in lots of activities including a Rivers-to-Lakes Walk, a visit from Harry's ambulance so they could brush up on some First Aid, and a wellness evening about their mental Health. They took part in a Bake-Off challenge, we celebrated Diwali (and annoyed the neighbours with our loud campfire songs) and finished off the term with lantern making for Totton Lantern Parade, making their own Advent Calendars and a visit to The Mayflower to watch *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*.

Finally, we kicked off our Spring Term with an earlier edition of our Parent and Cub Camp in January. We took 11 couples of budding cowboys and cowgirls to train at the ranch in the art of rifle shooting and stacking moonshine. They had a go at the totem run, lasso throwing, cow herding and even busted some moves while line dancing. Coyotes took bragging rights from the weekend, and are 2023 winners of the Parent & Cub Trophy.

The rest of the term was filled with cooking, clearing Ferny Crofts of their zombie problem, making our own dragon for Chinese New Year and the Cubs making weather slates for their gardens.

We finished off with our annual Beans on Toast Challenge, where the Cubs had to cook Redwolf beans on toast, it was safe to say at least some offerings were warmer than in previous years. Some of the Cubs also took part in Ferny Crofts Mud Run, which we can safely say was a success.

We finished off our Spring term with our Eling Easter Hunt. Cubs and their families braved the rain to solve the clues, complete the bases and find the chocolate. Thank you to everyone that came out on that night.

The summer term sees us starting to get back outside. We have District Camp coming up, helping at Donkey Derby and taking part in some adventurous activities or trying something new.

Thank you to all that have helped over the last year.

Sarah Challis
Cub Scout Leader



Cub Scouts are our section for 8 to 10 ½ year old boys and girls. They meet on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings.

cubs@5thtestwoodscouts.co.uk





Well normally I would start this report with what a bumper year but its actually only 9 months. After last year's AGM a handful of scouts and leaders departed for the Scouts Annual Summer Camp and I use the term summer lightly as if memory serves me it rained for the best part of the week. But this did not stop the scouts and leaders from having an amazing time. they took part in stand up paddle boarding and kayaking, a very long walk which ended in a dip in a lido at the base of Arundel Castle. Along with some traditional scouting skills.

The scout section still sits at a massive 33 young people with I'm sure more coming up from cubs very soon.

After the summer break we jumped straight back into an action packed Programme with us Kicking off the term entering into the district Stags head trophy, a Day time incident hike, entering two teams who both did very well in a very challenging event with very little practice.

On to our Thursday nights we had a very special visitor, Harry the ambulance technician (and scout leader) and his paramedic friend who not only allowed the scouts to tour their ambulance but showed them some advanced first aid. They also allowed Haydn to be invested as a leader inside the ambulance with the blue flashy lights on. We were lucky to have had some Warhammer model Kits sent to us that allowed the Young people to try model making and learn a Game they may have never tried. We also took part in parliament week introducing the scouts not only to debate but allowing them a vote on something that will affect them later in the year (this upcoming term)

After the Christmas break we once again jumped at the chance to take part in entering another trophy, this time the Eagle Trophy, this is the Night time version of the stags head but this wasn't enough for our scouts we paired this epic event with a two night camp in what can only be described as one of the wettest events I have ever attended. All the scouts that came did their very best in some of the most challenging weather I can remember.

Our Thursday nights this past term focused on map skill, navigating social media and a few scouting skills. We are looking forward to the upcoming Summer term (if the sun ever comes out) the events planned for this term include attending a few more district events including may camp, the district expedition challenge camp and the raft race. We also have a jam packed programme for our scouts on a Thursday night with them learning more scouting skills and having fun on the way. We will end the term at lido with the rest of the group before departing on this years Summer camp to Frome.

Thanks for reading,
The Scout Leaders.

Scouts are our section for 10 ½ to 14 year old boys and girls.
They meet on Thursday evenings.
scouts@5thtestwoodscouts.co.uk





The Unit started back after the Christmas break full of vigour, but knowing that time was running out for a lot of its Members.

What do you mean time was running out? Well, a number are rapidly approaching their 18th Birthday, meaning it will be time to leave and start the next phase of their Scouting journey, to become Scout Network members and / or Leaders.

The year started off with all the usual favourites, open fire cooking, a cowboy meal, now who doesn't enjoy a cowboy meal, had a film night (Hancock), which was surprisingly good, hiked in the dark, monopoly ran in Southampton, painted some stuff at the Hut, had a go on the Paulton's Driving Range, no holes in one, but it was only our first go, just sat by the fire and more.

So, with some of the Explorers reaching the grand old age of 18, we had some special evenings, run by them, picking out the best of what they had done over their years in Explorers. We have said goodbye to Haydn, Josh, Rose, Ben, Daniel and Ewan, all now being too old. Some are now Leaders with the Group, and others are at University, we wish them all well in their future endeavours. These six Explorers had been through all the Sections in the Group and have therefore had the absolute best of what Scouting had to offer.

So, ten pin bowling, fires, a hike, pioneering, yes you read it correctly, pioneering, a visit to Testwood Lakes for a wildlife talk and a bit of cooking constituted their picks of the best.

Our final meeting of the Summer Term was a walk to Farley Mount, bringing back memories for those leaving us, for this is where they were invested, on the last night before lockdown 2020, all those years ago. We invested three of our new Explorers, maintaining the tradition, Ben, Connor and Charlie, and whilst Mike is going for a rest,

we also invested him as an Explorer Leader.

The Autumn term started well, with backwoods cooking (gammon steaks and hash brown, from scratch) and an evening hike around the footpaths of Copythorne. The hike will be remembered for the battling through a kilometre of brambles, as the footpath had not been maintained. A note has been sent to the parish clerk, father of one of our previous Explorers.

Christmas saw our usual cross-District Unit events, with International Cooking, Film Night and Christmas Quiz. We finished the year with eight Explorers.

A huge thank you to the Explorer Leadership Team of Alexis Jones, Mike Jones and Stuart Bourne. Mike has now reverted to his first love, Scouts (sorry Donna), thank your efforts over the past few years, it is down to you that we now have some knowledge of OSM

Kerie Wallace
Explorer Scout Leader.



Explorers are for everyone aged 14 to 18 years old. Cerberus Explorers meet at our HQ on Monday evenings.

cyclingscout@gmail.com

Our finances: 2022

Income

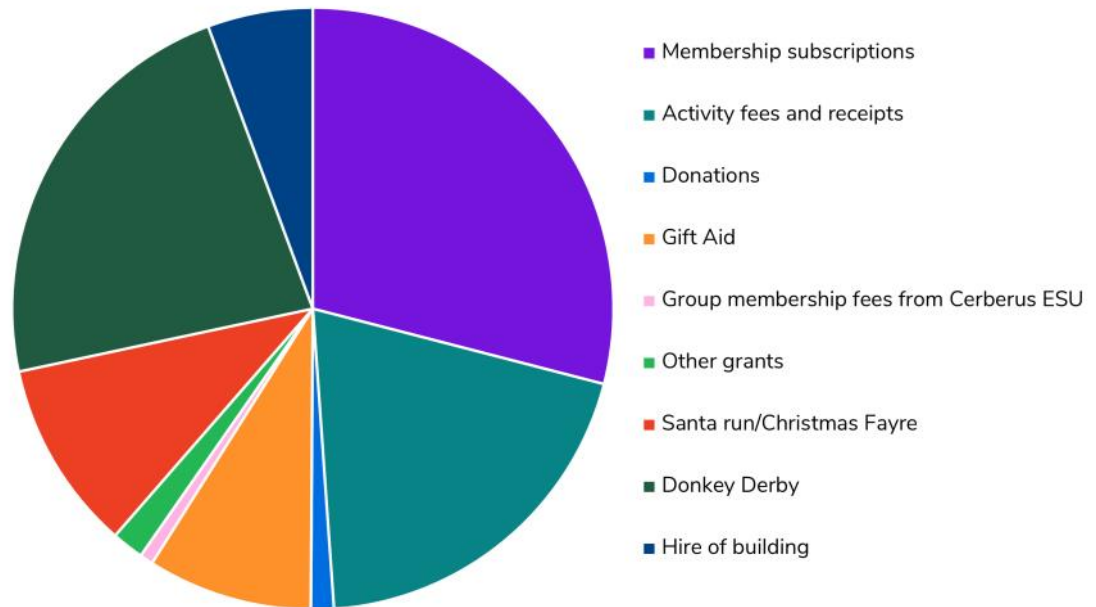
While membership within the group increased by the end of the year, this was primarily through the launch of the new Squirrel Scout section, who did not pay membership fees for much of the 2023 year. Therefore, membership fees remained similar with a £500 decrease compared to the previous year. 2022 was a very busy year for activities, so income from activity fees decreased by £700 in line with expectations.

There was a notable increase in donations this year (2023: £641, 2022: £70) and the group was able to claim Gift Aid on donations after a backlog following the pandemic and a change of Treasurer – this brought in £4,641 for the group from the government. There was also £900 in grants received this year linked to the setting up of the new Squirrels Drey from a combination of Scouting within the New Forest, Hampshire and nationally.

Income from the Santa Run and Christmas Fayre was £5,348; it was noted last year that the 2022 figure of £6,485 was higher as some raffle income from the 2021 event was not banked until 2022. Income from other sources such as donations and streams such as through Easy Fundraising or donations of clothing increased slightly this year as new parents learned about these fundraising streams.

The largest new stream of income, by far, was the Donkey Derby which in 2023 was run by the 5th Testwood Group. The event brought in income of £11,868 before expenses. Income from hire of our hall remained steady at just short of £3,000.

In total, income for 2023 was £52,750, a significant increase of over £13,700 on 2022.



Expenditure

Charitable expenditure compared to last year saw a further increase of around £5,000 with notable price increases on the different unavoidable costs associated with our running. Despite a modest increase in membership numbers, the membership fees that are paid on to District, County and National increased for us by £1,200. Spending on youth programme and activities was largely unaffected, with a small drop in spending of around £500.

Expenses on repairs, renewals, stationary, uniform and badges and cleaning fell compared to the year before, with uniform and badges being a notable drop as sections topped up their badge stocks the year previously and with a surplus of national events. 2023 saw the Coronation, with a commemorative badge purchased for each member of the group, but this required fewer badges than the year before when there were three events where all members received badges (The Queen's Platinum Jubilee, In Remembrance of the Queen and Remembrance Sunday).

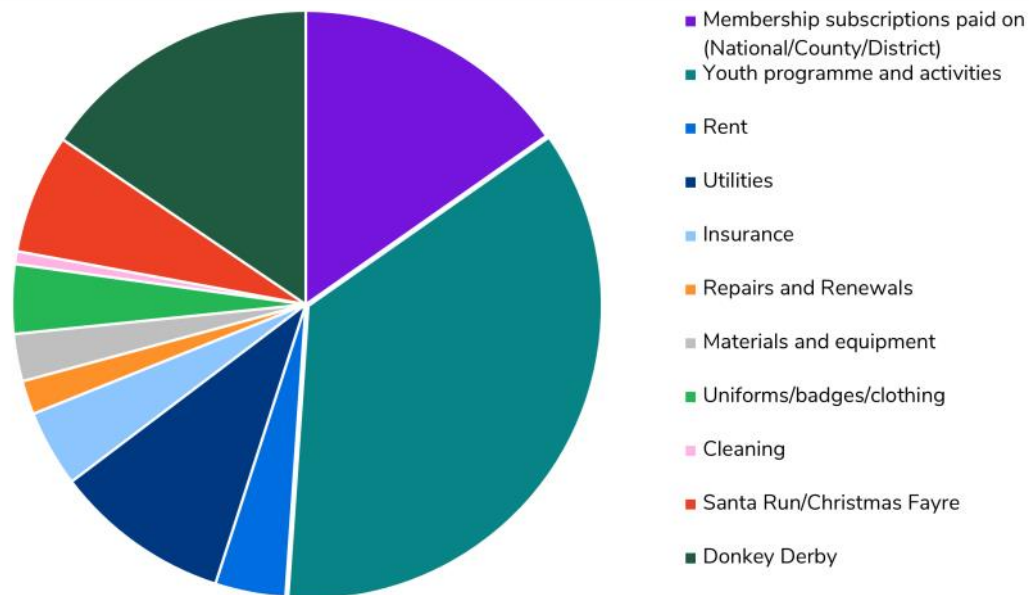
As expected, rises in the costs of insurance, materials and equipment was experienced. After lengthy negotiations with the council about our lease, this was resolved at the beginning of 2023 which saw the new higher payment and back payments being made, in total a cost of £1,620. Additionally, higher costs of energy, and errors in reporting that were rectified in 2023, saw cost of utility bills increase sharply by £3,000 during the year. While much of this was covering payments for energy used, we expect energy bills to continue to be substantial in future years.

Payments associated with the Totton Santa Run and Christmas Fayre were around £3,000 lower than 2022 as we benefitted from having topped up needed supplies the previous year. The cost of putting on the Donkey Derby was £6,482. **In total, expenditure was £43,020**, around £7,000 higher than 2022.

In 2023, the Board of Trustees agreed to look again at the £1,328 restricted funds held within the account. This was always set aside for equipment for activities, initially a climbing wall. As feasibility determined it would be impractical to install a wall at the hall, the aim of the funds was redirected, and agreed by Group Council, into supplying upgraded AV equipment in the hall which would benefit all users. These plans are due to come to fruition in 2024.

Overall, the group contributed around £3,000 to the reserves of the group which will help buffer the group from the cost-of-living crisis and associated price rises affecting all areas of the group and the upfront costs required to host the Annual Totton and Eling Donkey Derby.

A more detailed version of the group accounts is available from the Group on request, on our website and on the Charity Commission website.



The Trustees would like to thank our Group Treasurer for their efforts in preparing these accounts. We would also like to thank Sian Winter, who has acted as our independent examiner. Her report is attached to the accounts on our website.

What happened last time?

Minutes of Annual General Meeting, 6th July 2023

Started 6.30pm at Garland Lodge, Blackwater Drive, Totton, SO40 2QJ. Attended by around 30 members of Scout Council including:

- Steven Osborn (SO)
- Joe Simes (JS)
- Hayley Simes (HS)
- Mel Green (MG)
- Craig Challis (CC)
- Sarah Challis (SC)
- Jess Barraclough (JB)
- Katrina Seddon (KS)
- Heather Ball (HB)
- Steven Ball (SB)
- Andy Hunt (AH)
- James Cook (JC)
- Delrae Treen-Coper (DTC)

1. Welcome

Steven Osborn welcomed everyone.

2. Apologies

Received from Kerie Wallace, Max Simes and Fran Joyce.

3. Approval of Minutes.

No amendments received, therefore all agreed that the minutes were a true and accurate representation of the last AGM.

4. Receiving of Trustees annual report and accounts for 2022.

Trustee reports and accounts are available on the Group website to review. SO presented the reports, accounts and minutes. Nominated by James Cook, seconded by Joe Simes.

5. Approval of Group Chairperson

SO presented Hayley Simes as his choice for Chairperson. Nominated by Heather Ball, seconded by Delrae Treen-Cooper.

6. Election of Group Secretary

Mel Green stood for the role, Craig Challis nominated, seconded by Joe Simes. Mel Green elected.

7. Election of group treasurer.

Steven Ball stood for the role. Nominated by Joe Simes, seconded by Craig Challis. Steven Ball elected.

8. Election of members to trustee board (parent reps).

Heather Ball and Jacqueline Fry was elected as Cub Scout parent representative. Grace Angove and Liz Deacon was elected as Scout parent representative.

9. Confirmation of other members of Group Trustee Board.

- Joe Simes-ex-officio, Scout leader
- Craig Challis—ex-officio, Cub Scout Leader
- Sarah Challis—ex-officio, Cub Scout Leader
- Faye Osmond—ex-officio, Beaver Scout Leader
- Kerie Wallace—ex-officio, Explorer Scout Leader as dictated by Partnership agreement

10. Appointment of independent examiner, readoption of constitution and agree quorum for meetings.

Sian Winter, our District treasurer, has been nominated as independent examiner of Group's accounts.

SO confirmed the Group's re-adoption of the Scout Association's model constitution for Groups as laid out in *Policy Organisation and Rules* available at scouts.org.uk/por in Chapter 3.

SO proposed two thirds of the trustee board must be present, along with either the Chairperson or Group Scout Leader, as quorum for Trustee meetings. Two sub committees will also form -Santa Run and Donkey Derby.

All proposed Faye Osmond, seconded by Grace Angove.

11. Presentations

Our Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts received any badges outstanding and those achieving their Chief Scout awards.

Meeting closed at 7pm.



We are a charity, registered in England and Wales, No. 302291.

Garland Lodge, Blackwater Drive, Calmore, Totton, SO40 2QJ

www.5thtestwoodscouts.co.uk

Facebook: /5thTestwoodScouts Instagram: @5thtestwoodscouts