



Scouts

5th Testwood

**A place to belong.
Our year: 2025-26**

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Why does it matter?

Across the world, in thousands of communities in the UK, and on your doorstep, Scouts do what they do best—giving young people a place to belong and giving them the skills to thrive.

For over 60 years, our volunteer-run Scout group has been doing just that, right here in Totton. Finding the speak-up needed for school, the sticking-at-it needed for a hobby, or the first aid needed for life. Over the remainder of these pages, you should see that many times.

The sense of belonging Scouts gives has never been more important. We're proud to welcome all young people regardless of gender, race, background or religion. We stand for unity, togetherness and believe our differences make us stronger.

That's not easy right now. Young people have told us they need help to give them the skills and courage to navigate an unpredictable future, a world with less stable geopolitics and rapid changes fuelled by tech like AI.

Young people need the Scouts more than ever. We'll achieve it, if we work together - young people, parents and carers, and volunteers - learning and improving as we go.

For all you do now, and for everything that you can do to help and support us tomorrow, thank you.

Rowan Drey report



This past year has been a landmark for the Rowan Squirrels as we proudly celebrated five years of Squirrels in our community. This milestone is a true testament to the dedication of our leaders and the boundless enthusiasm of our youngest members. Beyond the celebrations, we are thrilled to see our drey growing; our numbers have increased to 17 young people, and we've been delighted to welcome a new young leader, Twig, and a new adult leader, Sparrow, to the team.

Our calendar was packed with moments that fostered both creativity and community spirit. One standout was the District Fun Day at Ferny Crofts, where half of our drey dove into a day of outdoor adventure.

Back at the hut, our weekly meetings were a whirlwind of energy. From the teamwork displayed during The Together Trials to the festive creativity of our Christmas Cuddle-Up the children have consistently developed new skills. Whether they were learning about our global Scouting family or playing through themes like Parachutes and Monsters, every session was filled with laughter and growth.

While we were disappointed by the cancellation of the District Campfire, the Squirrels remained active in the wider community. Our young people showed great respect at the Totton Remembrance Parade and brought festive cheer to the Santa Run Fayre. Adventure also called during the District Squirrel Sleepover, providing a fantastic opportunity for bonding and building independence.

We are especially proud to have presented five Chief Scout's Acorn Awards this year. These represent the highest honour a Squirrel can achieve, reflecting incredible dedication to the Scouting values.

The excitement doesn't stop here. This year marks a significant "triple threat" of anniversaries for the Scouting family, and we are looking forward to joining the Beavers and Cubs to celebrate their respective milestones alongside our own.

The highlight of these celebrations will undoubtedly be our upcoming trip to Legoland. We can't wait to see the Squirrels, Beavers, and Cubs all together, marking five years of Squirrels in the best way possible - with a day of builds, rides, and shared memories.

A massive "thank you" goes to Badger for his tireless hard work over the past year. We wish him all the best as his family grows and look forward to welcoming him back into the fold when the time is right.

Finally, we want to express our deepest gratitude to the children for their energy, the parents for their unwavering support, and our volunteers who work tirelessly behind the scenes. You are the reason the Rowan Squirrels continue to thrive.







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





Since the last AGM, the Beaver Colony has enjoyed a rich and varied programme that has given our young people countless opportunities to explore, learn and grow. From exciting trips to community involvement and personal achievements, it has been full of memorable experiences and positive development.

At the beginning of the year, our leadership team faced challenges due to a shortage of adult volunteers on Tuesday evenings, which placed extra pressure on the existing structure. We are therefore extremely pleased to have welcomed **Ryan (Coyote)**, **Eva (Otter)** and **Doug (Polar Bear)** into the team. Their arrival has provided vital support to **Stephen (Brown Bat)** and has allowed us to build a strong, rounded team capable of delivering a high-quality programme each week. This renewed stability has already had a noticeable impact on the consistency and variety of activities offered to our Beavers.

One of the highlights of the year was our combined **Christmas Party and Sleepover**, where the Beavers enjoyed festive games, crafts, and the excitement of spending a night away with their friends. These events continue to help young people build confidence and independence in a safe and supportive environment.

We also took part in several District-organised activities that enabled our Beavers to engage with the wider Scouting community. At the **District Campfire**, our young people joined others from across the area in a lively and cheerful evening of songs and traditions. During the **Hoppers event at Showcase Cinema**, the group had the unique experience of having an entire cinema screen to themselves, making the outing particularly special. In addition, the **Christingle service at Testwood Baptist Church** offered a meaningful moment in the calendar, where the Beavers took part in telling the Christingle story and represented the Colony with enthusiasm and confidence.

Beyond our weekly meetings, the Beavers enjoyed a range of activities that broadened their experiences and strengthened their sense of belonging.

Our trip to **Paulton's Park** was a major highlight for many, offering a full day of excitement and adventure. The group also had the opportunity to perform at the Group Campfire and Carols, where they proudly took part in the performances, contributing to the wider Scout Group community and showcasing their growing confidence.

We are particularly proud of the number of Beavers who achieved their Chief Scout's Bronze Award. This award represents dedication, effort, and the completion of a range of challenges, and it is wonderful to see so many of our young people reaching this milestone. Their achievements reflect not only their hard work but also the commitment of the volunteer team supporting them.

As it has been the 40th anniversary for Beaver Scouts, we have also taken great pride in celebrating this special milestone together, beginning with a joint 40th birthday party that brought the Beavers together for a fun and lively celebration of our shared history.

Looking ahead, we are especially excited for our big joint trip to LEGOLAND, where the Beavers will join the Squirrels and Cubs as part of the continued 40th anniversary celebrations and their own milestone years.

Overall, it has been an excellent time for the Beaver Colony, marked by growth, renewed leadership, and a wide variety of engaging opportunities for our young people.





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





This past year has been both engaging and productive for Endeavour and Discovery Cubs. We currently have 38 Cubs across both packs, supported by two enthusiastic Young Leaders.

During the summer of 2025, we enjoyed a range of outdoor activities, including Road Safety, Fire Lighting, and Shelter Building sessions. One of the highlights was our much-anticipated **Pizza Evening at Ferny Crofts**, which was especially well-received. Cubs embraced their adventurous sides through the **Cyclist Badge** challenges and an exciting **Nerf Wars** event. The summer term concluded with a **Group Swimming Session at Lymington Lido**, creating lasting memories for everyone involved.

In August, ten Cubs joined us for **Summer Camp at Lymington Scout Hut**, taking part in activities such as Crabbing, Archery, Cycling on the Isle of Wight, and the ever-popular **Redwolf Camp Olympics**. The week was filled with fun, friendship, and plenty of unforgettable moments.

The **Winter Term** featured a wide range of hands-on activities, including Hiking, Lego Boat Building, Diwali crafts, and Firework sparkle art. The Cubs also successfully “diffused the bomb” during their Escape Room night, made Christmas cookies, and ended the term around a festive **Group Campfire**.

Several notable events also took place this year. Our Cubs attended the **Sleeping with the Sharks District Sleepover** in Plymouth - a truly unique experience where they learned about British marine life before spending the night in front of the Eddyson Tank. We entered three teams into the **District Muntjac Trophy**, achieving an impressive **1st place and joint 3rd**. The Cubs showed great teamwork and spirit representing the group. We also took part in the **Remembrance Parade** in November.

The year concluded with our annual **Totton Santa Run** fundraiser, where Cubs enthusiastically helped with stalls both in the lead-up to and on the day of the event.

The start of 2026 has continued the momentum with badge-focused meetings. Cubs earned their **Chef's Badge** and **Home Help Badge**, and ended the term with **Akela's Great Egg Race**, where parents and Cubs worked together to engineer a safe landing route for their eggs.

In March, the popular **Parent & Cub Camp** returned with a **Pirate theme**. Six pairs of Cubs and parents enjoyed a weekend of treasure hunting, sailing the Ferny Croft seas, and "catching parrots."

We also took part in the annual Mud Run at Ferny Crofts which was fun for everyone.

Throughout the year, **three Chief Scout Silver Awards** were presented - an outstanding achievement that reflects the Cubs' dedication and growth.

A heartfelt thank you goes to the entire Cub leadership team for their continued support, energy, and dedication. Their hard work has made a meaningful difference to every young person in our group.

Finally, thank you to all our Cubs for their enthusiasm and curiosity, to parents for their ongoing support, and to our volunteers who work tirelessly behind the scenes.

We look forward to another exciting year of discovery and adventure in our Scouting endeavours.





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



Garland report



SCOUTS

The Garland Troop has experienced another dynamic year of exploration and learning, with membership numbers steadily growing to 37. Although some of our older members are set to explore new adventures before the end of summer, we are pleased to welcome Ethan, our new young leader, who will undoubtedly add fresh energy to our activities.

Over the past year, the troop engaged in a variety of meetings designed to develop skills and foster teamwork. These meetings included creative challenges such as the Paper Plane Derby and Pumpkin Carving, along with practical sessions like Healthy Eating and Menu Planning. Interactive activities such as the Inter Patrol Cooking Competition, Nerf War, and Team Challenges helped encourage collaboration and camaraderie. Additionally, our festive spirit was celebrated through events like the Christmas Craft and Christmas Party.

We also had a number of enriching events that provided unique opportunities for adventure. The Wilderness Camp allowed participants to connect with nature and develop their outdoor skills, while our Christmas Carols and Campfire Songs were heartwarming highlights of the season. Notably, we entered two teams in the navigation day for the eagle trophy, which proved to be both educational and rewarding. A special mention goes to the Testwood Divas patrol, consisting of Niamh, Daisy, Megan, and Lexi, who came 10th in the county camping competition—well done, girls! Most recently, the Senior Scout Camp was a fantastic experience that

brought everyone together, making memories in the great outdoors.

A massive thank you is extended to Jack Green, our dedicated young leader, whose dependable support has been invaluable to the troop. We're grateful for the efforts of all leaders who have devoted their time and talent to ensuring that our scouts have had a fulfilling year.

Looking ahead, we are excited about the upcoming District Scout Summer Camp, where scouts will have a week-long adventure outside Oxford. With opportunities to try 15 different activities while making new friends from across the New Forest, we encourage everyone to register if they haven't already, as some spaces are still available.

As we embark on another year, a heartfelt thank you goes out to the children for their enthusiasm, which truly makes every meeting and event enjoyable. We also appreciate the support from parents and the many volunteers working diligently behind the scenes to ensure the continued success of our troop. Here's to another year filled with adventure and growth in scouting!







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



Cerberus report



EXPLORERS

Hard work is the order of the day. Why you say? Well, we are now the biggest the Unit has ever been.

We have expanded from six Explorer Scouts, to a whopping twenty one Explorer Scouts! We have had recruits from 2nd Copythorne, 3rd Ashurst & Colbury, 6th Netley Marsh and a transfer from Lyndhurst Explorers. This means that we have so many new ideas for our programme, it is difficult to fit them all in, but it is sure to be fun.

To start the expanded Unit off, meant we needed an expanded investiture, fourteen to be invested. One of usual haunts fitted the bill, a night hike and star gazing escapade to Farley Mount. As it turned out, we were outnumbered, the inside of the folly was not only packed with Explorers, but there was an invasion of hundreds of lady birds!

For this year's Explorer District International Cooking Competition, we were able to enter three teams, who were matched against four other teams from around the District. The hall was filled with the smells of stuff cooking, not all pleasant, but I must admit, all the results tasted pretty good. The judging was undertaken by the Explorer Leaders, luckily they all survived to add up the scores, with the result being that Cerberus are the Champions.

With these larger numbers there has been an increased emphasis on completing some Top Awards, so, Will Outers and Katrina Ryan have achieved their Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Awards, with quite a number in the pipeline once they have carried out their Assessed Expedition Hike.

Probably the highlight of this past Scouting year was Ferny Fest 2026, where three Leaders and fifteen Explorer Scouts had a fantastic festival weekend.

The weather was a bit mixed, with a good mix of bright sunny sunshine and wet muddy mud. The list of activities they took part in was endless, but as just a flavour, here are some of them; Lazer shotgun target shooting, archery, goat yoga, segways, live bands, inflatables, climbing tower, high ropes, Digger Land (driving mini-diggers to knock over skittles and play jenga), crazy bingo, camp fires, silent disco, and loads more.

A huge thank you to the Explorer Leadership Team of Alexis Jones, Stuart Bourne and Andy Austin for all their efforts this year.

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



Lead Volunteer's report

I confess to approaching this Annual General Meeting with bitter-sweet feelings, as it marks the conclusion of approximately five years leading the group, the last four (give or take a few months) as its full-time Group Lead Volunteer.

In the past year, the group has packed in so many different, varied, imaginative and new events, nights away and experiences for your young people that I am so thrilled you can explore them in full detail within these 36-pages.

Nationally, the Scouts have just launched their new strategy to 2035, with three key focuses for the next 3 years: To safely deliver a fun, relevant and inclusive Programme for all; To improve volunteering making sure our people feel valued, supported and motivated; and To be a growing, sustainable and effective movement.

I am happy to report that the group looks very healthy in all three of those core ambitions. The programme in all our sections is often bold and imaginative, and now we have successfully recruited in a number of our missing roles, it sets us up for a strong future. The amount of new excellent ideas tried this year is testament to that.

A huge thank you goes to every volunteer across the Group who has made this year a success. We cannot do it without them, and a huge thanks once again go to those who have stepped up and found a new joy this year. There are more roles to fill so we can really achieve our potential, so make sure you stand up and make a difference.

At this year's census, I was pleased to see the Group had grown again,

welcoming more young people into the skills and a place to belong that Scouting offers. But there is still more to do. Demand for Squirrels is at a huge high, yet some of our other younger sections have seen a slump in numbers that we should be reaching. Our hall's infrastructure badly needs investing in, all of which is costly both in time and financial resources. Great progress has been made, but there is still a mountain to climb so that your young people have the facilities they deserve.

Thankfully, events such as the Totton Santa Run, with its new end location, and the Donkey Derby were great successes. They have raised thousands of pounds for our ambitions for improvement, all while promoting Scouts in the community in an incredibly positive way. A huge thanks as always to the army of volunteers who organise and deliver these complex events.

There is much to be proud of within 5th Testwood Scouts, and I hope our young people and volunteers are similarly proud to be part of this movement. You can be too. Thank you for your support, now and into the future. So long, and thanks for all the fish.

Steven Osborn
(Outgoing) Group Lead Volunteer



As of this Annual General Meeting, Steven will be handing over the role of Group Lead Volunteer to Max Simes and Sarah Challis, who will jointly perform the role and duties of leading this Scout group. We wish them the very best of luck for the future.

Our finances: 2025

You can find further details about our finances on our group website including within the Trustee's Annual Report, the report from our Independent Examiner, and a summary of receipts and payments for the 2025 calendar year.

Income

Income for 2025 remained healthy in the face of uncertain costs associated with running the charity and its groups activities.

Early in 2025, the Trustee board identified a gap between operating costs and subs, so took the decision to increase membership fees in 2025, having not done so for a few years. Even with this action, membership fees saw a dip this year (2025: £14,681, 2024: £15,098) and activity fees were approximately £1,000 higher with the sections continuing to undertake an extensive array of activities.

Donations were slightly lower (2025: £310, 2024: £588), however income from hiring our hall to various other community groups continued to perform well (2025: £4,555, 2024: £4,148).

The group was able to claim Gift Aid on donations from 2024, which entered the groups account in 2025 and came to £3,011 across all sections.

Income from the Santa Run and Christmas Fayre was £6,140 and the Donkey Derby brought in £11,511 (both before costs) with the Donkey Derby event being shared with Eling Sea Scouts.

In total, income for 2025 was £54,242, around £4000 more than 2024.

Expenditure

Expenditure saw spend on youth programme and activities decrease (2025: £6,386, 2024: £7,137) and membership paid on to district drop to £6,386 (from £7,137 in 2024). These figures are due to the lower numbers enrolled during the 2025 period.

With the improved situation of having a regular cleaning service in place at the hall, (having seen a long period of time without one), cleaning cost increased from £288 a year to £1,184.

Utility bills stabilised (2025: £2,945, 2024: £3,033), however the group's insurance increased to £2,158 (from £1,992 in 2024). All other expenses remained stable and consistent with 2024.

Payments associated with the Totton Santa Run and Christmas Fayre were £2,051, slightly lower than 2024 as we were able to use left over stock from the 2024 event. The cost of putting on the Donkey Derby was £5,012, approx. £1,600 higher due to the expanding size of the annual event (expenses were shared with Eling Sea Scouts).

In total, expenditure was £41,815, around £6,000 lower than 2024.

The group have various maintenance and improvement projects ongoing, many of which have been carried over to this financial year. The additional income from very successful fundraising activities and the gift aid claim have provided a small buffer which will support these works in 2026/27 period.

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.



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

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www.5thtestwoodscouts.co.uk

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