

Trustee's Annual Report

For the period 1st January to 31st December 2025

Registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales, number 302291.

This document is issued to demonstrate compliance with the Charities Act 2011 in demonstrating our purpose and activities as being for the public benefit and that the trustees have demonstrated regard to the commission's guidance when exercising any powers or duties to which the guidance is relevant.

Trustees for the period

Name	Role	Dates acted (if not entire period)
Hayley Simes	Chair of Board of Trustees (ex-officio)	
Steven Osborn	Group Lead Volunteer (ex-officio)	
Mel Green	Trustee and Minute taker	
Steven Ball	Group Treasurer (ex-officio)	
Faye Osmond	Beaver Team Leader (ex-officio)	01.01.25 – 26.09.25
Sarah Challis	Cub Team Leader (ex-officio until 26.09.25) Co-opted Trustee – Fundraising expertise	01.01.25 – 26.09.25 15.11.25 -
Craig Challis	Cub Team Leader (ex-officio)	01.01.25 – 26.09.25
Joe Simes	Scout Team Leader (ex-officio)	01.01.25 – 26.09.25
Kerie Wallace	Explorer Team Lead (ex-officio until 26.09.25) Co-opted Trustee – Building expertise	
Heather Ball	Trustee	01.01.25 – 24.04.25
Grace Angove	Trustee	01.01.25 – 19.01.25
Joshua Treen-Cooper	Trustee	26.09.25 -
Scott Barton	Trustee	26.09.25 -

Structure, Governance and Management

The charity's governing documents are those of the Scout Association. The Scout Association's governing document is a royal charter which gives authority to the Bye-laws of the Association and the *Policy, Organisation and Rules* of the Scout Association. The group is a trust established under these rules which are common to all Scout groups. At the previous AGM, we reconfirmed our use of the model constitution as laid out in *Policy, Organisation and Rules* (rule 5c.1).

The trustees are appointed in accordance with the *Policy, Organisation and Rules* of the Scout Association (POR). A transition in membership and organisation of the Trustee board was completed during this 2025 reporting year.

The group is managed by an elected board of trustees, comprising a Chair, Group Lead Volunteer, Treasurer and other Trustees to represent our parents and others nominated onto the committee for their knowledge or skills. One Trustee maintains the ceremonial role of Group Secretary and takes charge of ensuring meetings are recorded correctly. The Trustee Board aims to meet every half term on average.

The Board of Trustees exists to ensure Scouting is run safely, legally and in line with our charitable purpose. They must be confident that:

- The charity is well managed, carrying out its purpose for the public benefit,
- Our activities comply with our governing document and the law,
- We are following POR and the rules of the Charity Commission
- Young people are meaningfully involved in decision making at all levels
- The group has sufficient resources to meet the planned work of the group.

The group has systems that are designed to provide reasonable assurance against material mismanagement and loss. These include requiring two signatories for all payments made by any section within the group, expenditure of a certain amount being approved by a wider group of leaders, maintaining a risk register of potential risks to the charity, and mitigating against these, and insurance policies to ensure that insurable risks are covered.

Objectives of the group

The objectives of the group are as part of the wider Scout Association. The purpose of the Scout Association is “to actively engage and support young people in their personal development, empowering them to make a positive contribution to society.”

This is achieved through the Scout Method which states that “Scouting takes place when young people, in partnership with adults, work together based on the values of Scouting and:

- enjoy what they are doing and have fun;
- take part in activities indoors and outdoors;
- learn by doing;
- share in spiritual reflection;
- take responsibility and make choices;
- undertake new and challenging activities;
- and make and live by their Promise.”

We are guided by the Values of Scouting which are:

- Integrity: We act with integrity; we are honest, trustworthy and loyal.
- Respect: We have self-respect and respect for others.
- Care: We support others and take care of the world in which we live.
- Belief: We explore our faiths, beliefs and attitudes.
- Co-operation: We make a positive difference; we co-operate with others and make friends.

In line with the Scout Association, our goals up to and including 2025 are based around achieving:

- Growth; enabling more young people and adult volunteers to benefit from scouting and the skills it gives them.
- Inclusivity; ensuring barriers to inclusion are removed and working to build tolerance.
- Community impact; making a difference in our local and global community.
- Youth-shaped; ensuring our young people get a voice in scouting, share their experiences and take on leadership roles.

Activities

The 2025 calendar year saw a varied and quality programme offered to the young people based at 5th Testwood Scouts, from the age 4 to 18 years, and covering a huge range of skills appropriate to the age ranges of the five sections.

For the first time, every young person from every age range was able to access nights away opportunities. The 4–6-year-old Squirrels joined in with a District Sleepover at Sandleheath in their first ever overnight adventure and was such a success that another is planned for 2026. Meanwhile the 6–8-year-old Beavers enjoyed sleepovers at Christmas and further afield at Lymington; and the 8–10-year-old Cubs took a magical journey to Parent and Child camp at Ferny Crofts, Wolf camp, a camp to earn the Personal Challenge and organizing the show-stopping District 'Sleepover with Sharks' at the National Aquarium, Plymouth. The Scouts maintained their active camping form through offering Wilderness camp, Cycle camp, a Summer camp near Bristol, Expedition Challenge, the Elm Tree and Emlyn camping competitions, and joining the District Expedition to the Lake Districts – a variety of experiences to suit different interests and abilities of the Scouts.

Outside of overnight adventures, the sections also took part in a number of joint activities. Squirrels joined in a Fun Day at Ferny Crofts alongside Squirrels from across Hampshire, from across the District at a picnic, and taking part in the Reindeer challenge trophy. Beavers complete their annual pilgrimage to Paulton's Park alongside district Christingles, and campfires to name two. Cubs enjoyed the Muntjac trophy of challenges – emerging victorious – and Mud Run at Ferny Crofts with Scouts taking on the Stag's and Eagle Trophies in addition to the events already mentioned.

The group's adults and young people from all sections assembled on a few occasions this year for Group events; in July at Lymington Salt Water Baths for a summer's evening of water-based fun to bond the group, showed dignity and service in November by attending the Remembrance Day Service in Totton, and many joined us that same month for a Maintenance Day, taking on a number of tasks around our hall and grounds to care for our hall for the year ahead, and rounded out the year with a Campfire at our hall to share festive spirit with our young people, parents and carers.

The two fundraising events this year were wildly successful and helped boost the finances of the group and our aspirations to make improvements to our facilities. The Donkey Derby in May, held jointly between Eling and Testwood Scout groups, raised a very healthy profit for the group from the community fun day and event, and equally making a positive contribution to the image of Scouts. Thanks to the support of our community, the Totton Santa Run was successful despite uncertainty from necessary changes to the Christmas Fayre and the cancellation of other community events that we used to promote the Santa Run at. Our thanks of course go to the organising teams and the many volunteers who helped make these events such a success.

There have been a number of recruitment needs this year, the most acute being the need for new leadership at Black Water Beaver Colony after an unexpected loss of regular leaders. Thanks to a number of leaders filling in for a time, efforts organised behind the scenes, and support from the Growth and Development team, three new regular volunteers were found at the close of the year. Additionally, other volunteers have been found for multiple sections, and recruitment campaigns are ongoing for replacement trustees and Trustee roles, and for the Group Lead Volunteer.

Achievements

As outlined by our summary of the Group's activities, the Trustees are confident that the Group meets the Charity Commission's public benefit criteria under both the advancement of education and the advancement of citizenship or community development headings.

Awards of badges and challenge awards, as well as the Top Awards for the section, remained strong and the number of nights away activities offered allowed excellent access for all our young people. Satisfaction with the group remains high and young people were able to make their thoughts known to the trustees.

Numbers of adult volunteer grew slightly within the year, with a number of new volunteers welcomed into their role to replace others who were scaling back or retiring from their roles. Our adult volunteers were fully compliant by the end of the year.

Membership numbers recovered slightly this year, with 102 young people recorded in the January 2026 census compared to 99 in January 2025. There was slight growth in all sections bar Beavers, which is amid a demographic and recruitment slump.

Following the Scout Association's Transformation changes, all volunteers were transitioned to their new roles, teams and ways of working. All volunteers were required to complete refreshed and enhanced safety learning, with many picking up new learning requirements. By the end of 2025, the group was completely compliant with these requirements, enhancing safety and safeguarding compliance for the benefit of our young people.

The success of both the Totton Santa Run and the Donkey Derby this year saw a buoying of the charities finances in the face of rising costs, unlocking major development projects of our facilities, the providing of excellent community events to our local area and the advancement of Scouting's image and brand also.

Financial overview

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 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 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 on-going, 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.

Reserves Policy

The Group's policy on reserves is to hold sufficient resources to continue the charitable activities of the group should the hall become unusable, or should income and fundraising significantly fail. The Group's Board of Trustees considers that the group should hold reserves of £12,000 based upon the rationale:

- a sum equivalent temporary hire of a hall, for 20 weeks, 10 hours a week at £40 an hour (£8,000).
- a fund for storage, insurance excess and other materials (£4,000)
- loss of hall hire income balanced by savings from utilities and maintenance.
- Sums sufficient to allow for emergency fundraising activities, external grants and support to be organised and arranged.

These reserves were last reviewed and agreed at a Board of Trustees meeting on 12th July 2024.

Investment Policy

The Group does not have sufficient funds to invest in longer term investments and therefore has adopted a risk-averse strategy to the investment of its funds. All funds are held in cash using only mainstream banks in savings accounts which can be accessed at short notice.

Future plans

Young people across the group continue to have access to a varied and exciting array of events, joint activities with others in the District and County, residential events and adventurous activities as part of the weekly programme. Sections are expected to continue this varied programme, and seeking to increase the achievement of badges and completion of the Top Awards.

2026 sees the launch of the Scouts' new nine-year strategy and three-year action plan, which the group will need to review and adapt their own development priorities to match. Volunteers will continue to be encouraged to develop their skills through skills weekends, achieving permits, and completing their wood badges where not already achieved.

While our recruitment efforts for sections have yielded results, including the rescue of the Blackwater Beaver colony, there is more to do to ensure good succession planning is in place across the group in every role. In particular, our Group Lead Volunteer, Group Chair and Group Treasurer all announced they were stepping down from their roles in 2026 with replacements not yet apparent in all cases by the end of the year and in some cases by the time of the AGM. Through engaging our community, social media campaigns and seeking external support, we are endeavouring to find the recruits we need.

The group has the benefit of two established fundraising events in the Totton Santa Run and Donkey Derby and following the success of the first joint Donkey Derby with Eling, these will provide the group with a strong financial footing for our charitable purposes and our modernisation of our facilities. There are currently three projects in current stages of planning to improve our toilets, repair our leaky roof and replace our external storage, and next year will require significant effort to bring these projects to fruition. Outside of these projects, our regular cleaner and annual maintenance days help to look after what we have as best as we can.

2026 marks the start of a new chapter at 5th Testwood Scout Group, and together the Trustees believe the charity to be on good footing to meet the challenges it will face.

The Trustees declare that they have approved the trustee's report above.

Signed on behalf of the trustees of the 5th Testwood Scout group:

Date: