GWENT AREA SCOUT COUNCIL

England & Wales · Charity number 1055372

Details

Status	Registered
Legal form	Other
Registered	1996-05-15
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	Gwent Area Scout Council Training & Activity Centre Trelleck Road Tintern Chepstow Gwent
Phone	07590200342
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Website	www.gwentscouts.org.uk

Activities

Objects: TO PROMOTE THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN ACHEIVING THEIR FULL PHYSICAL, INTELLECTUAL, SOCIAL AND SPIRITUAL POTENTIALS, AS INDIVIDUALS, AS RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS AND AS MEMBERS OF THEIR LOCAL, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITIES

Activities: The development of young people in the Gwent area within the policies, aims and rules of the Scout Association.

Classification

- **How:** Acts As An Umbrella Or Resource Body
- **What:** Education/training
- **Who:** Children/young People

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Geography

- **Area of benefit:** IN PRACTICE THE SCOUTING AREA OF GWENT
- Blaenau Gwent
- Monmouthshire
- Newport City
- Torfaen

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-12-31	£152,197	£158,263	-	-
2023-12-31	£194,898	£142,502	-	-
2022-12-31	£8,868	£13,903	-	-
2021-12-31	£16,576	£18,848	-	-
2020-12-31	£23,731	£14,080	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Edward Watts MBE DL	Chair	2015-06-25
Andrew John Scarisbrick		2021-11-04
Andrew Osman		2016-03-01
Billy Calladine		2024-04-26
Chris Davy		2016-03-01
Christine Margaret Hands		2019-06-27
Christopher Arnold Munslow		2019-06-27
Christopher Thomas Owen-Brooks		2022-08-01
David Robert Cook		2024-01-23
Elizabeth O'Malley		2023-09-06
Helen Gardner		2016-03-01
Mike Breakwell		2016-03-01

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GWENT AREA SCOUT COUNCIL

England & Wales - Charity number 1055372

Accounts

Gwent Area Scout Council

Annual General Meeting

Thursday 19th June 2025

Scouts

Gwent

Gwent Area Scout Council
Annual General Meeting

Thursday 19th June 2025

AGENDA

Welcome by Edward Watts, MBE, DL, Chairman Gwent Area Scout Council

1. To receive apologies for absence.
2. To receive and approve the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Thursday 27th June, 2024.
3. To receive and approve the Annual Review.
4. Address by Area Lead Volunteer.
5. To receive the Accounts of the Area Scout Council.
6. To appoint an Area Chair.
7. To appoint an Area Treasurer.
8. To appoint members to the Area Board of Trustees.
9. To approve any additional or community members to the Area Scout Council.
10. To appoint one representative to the Council of the Association
    To appoint one representative aged 18/25 to the Council of the Association.
11. To appoint two representatives (1 Scouter, 1 Trustee) to the Welsh Scout Council.
    To appoint one representative aged 18/25 to the Welsh Scout Council.
12. To appoint an Auditor/Independent Examiner.
13. To acknowledge the incumbents in the role of Area President and Area Vice Presidents
14. To re-adopt the Area Constitution and agree other administrative matters
15. Address by Chief Commissioner of Wales
16. Presentations
17. Presentation by Bella Watkins on her Rover Way experience

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
of the Gwent Area Scout Council
held at the Mission to Seafarers, Newport
Thursday 27th June 2024

Edward Watts, Chairman of the Gwent Area Scout Council opened the meeting by welcoming members of the Area Scout Council, He also expressed his pleasure that the Area President Robert Aitken LIt was able to be present, together with other guests; including Rhian Moore Chief Commissioner and Rob Redmond Regional Commissioner, Scouts Cymru. He mentioned that we were at the beginning of change in the new 'Transformation' project and reminisced over the different stages he had gone through with various Area Commissioners; Chris Lee, Christine Davy and Chris Owen-Brooks, stating we had seen off 'covid' and various economic disasters but Gwent Scouting has continued through.

The Chairman then asked for a moments reflection on those who had 'gone home', Don Norris, Gordon King, Derek Robinson.

35 persons were present.

1. Apologies:
18 Apologies were received.

2. To receive and approve the minutes of the 2023 Annual General Meeting.
The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 29th June 2023 were received and approved after adding at item16 para 2, the name of Kath Lewis

3. To receive and approve the Annual Review.
The report was received and approved.

4. Address by the Area Commissioner.
Elizabeth O'Malley (Silver) gave a short address indicating it was 9 months since she had come into Gwent, she had received a great welcome and had enjoyed the experience to date reflecting on her 6 months in an acting capacity. She felt she had a great Trustee Board and amazing Training Team and well functioning Districts. She indicated everything else she wished to say was in her report and hoped that at future AGM's young people could give some presentation on their activities and experiences.

5. To receive and approve the accounts of the Area Scout Council.
The accounts were received, there were no questions and they were approved. The Treasurer gave a brief updated indicating that the biggest change was that our investments had been liquidated and we were looking to re-invest in the future.
The Chief Commissioner thanked the Area for the inclusion of an International Fund.

6. To appoint an Area Chair.
The Area Commissioner indicated under the new guidelines approval is sought to confirm the decision of the Board of Trustees at their meeting on the 20th May 2024 to appoint Edward Watts as the Area Chair, this was approved.
(The appointment lasts for 3 years)

7. To appoint an Area Treasurer.
The Chairman sought confirmation of the decision of the Board of Trustees at their meeting on the 20th May 2024 to appoint Chris Owen-Brooks as the Area Treasurer, this was approved.
(The appointment lasts for 3 years)

8. To appoint Members of the Area Board of Trustees
The Chairman sought confirmation of the decision of the Board of Trustees at their meeting on the 20th May 2024 to appoint the following as members of the Board: David Cook, Helen Gardner, Christopher Munslow, Andy Scarisbrick, Christine Davy, Christine Hands, Andrew Osman, Mike Breakwell *(who would act as secretary)*.
(The appointments last for 3 years)

9. To appoint any Additional or Community Members to the Area Scout Council.
There were no nominations.

10. To appoint (a) one representative to the Council of the Association and (b) one representative aged 18/25 to the Council of the Association.
The nominations of Edward Watts (a) and Dylan Murray (b) were approved.

11. To appoint (a) two representatives to the Welsh Scout Council and (b) one representative aged 18/25 to the Welsh Scout Council.
The nominations of Chris Munslow, Bethanie Headworth (a) and Bella Watkins (b) were approved.

12. To appoint and Auditor/Independent Examiner.
The nomination of Gareth Beale was approved.

13. To acknowledge the incumbents in the role of Area President and Vice Presidents.
These were acknowledged as Brig. Robert Aitken Lord Lt. as President and Bryan Davies, John Hodgetts and Keith Daniels as Vice Presidents.

14. To re-adopt the Area Constitution.
The Chairman reported that as a result of the new 'Transformation' project that the current Area Constitution is suspended and that adopting the current Rule 5.6.1 of the Associations Policy, Organisation and Rules take immediate effect.
It was agreed that the Quorums for the Board of Trustees Meeting will be 7 and the Area Scout Council 20.

15. Address by the Chief Commissioner of Wales.
Rhian Moore commenced her address in stating that young people are at the heart of what we are doing and thanked all volunteers in achieving this aim. She was delighted that 'Silver' had continued in her role and hadn't walked away after her 6 month acting role.
She indicated in reading the annual report that you are doing amazing things. She mentioned that there has been a growth in membership and that Wales is up by 3%. She continued that 'Transformation' is taking effect and highlighted her thanks to everyone stating 'You are making a difference' she continued in her theme as to why we do what we do; and the excitement in young peoples voices when the actually achieve, concluding with; we all have memories of young people who say what we have done to help them. Our leaders are brilliant and inspiring, thank you all.

16. Presentations.
There were no presentations.

The Chair in closing the meeting, asked the Area President if he wished to make any remarks to which he replied that he was proud to be a member of an association that does so much for young people.
The Chair thanked the new Area Commissioner for what she had achieved in her short time and also the Chief Commissioner, Rhian, in her skill at getting people 'to do'.
In conclusion he thanked everyone for what they are doing and looked forward to another year.

Gwent Scout Report from Chair

Over the past year, I have been able to work very closely with our Lead Area Volunteer Elizabeth O'Malley,who has done sterling work for the area. Having said that, I must also thank you all for the time, dedication and joy you instil in your groups and districts.

I know that the young people you deal with today will have etched in their memory their time in scouting. As you are aware transformation has been an interesting journey but going forward hopefully it will level itself out. Over the past year I have attended some events but due to my volunteering commitments I have been unable to attend some, but I must highlight that I did attend Newport St George's Day parade and an award ceremony at Newport AGM.

One of the highlights was attending Founders Day at Westminster Abbey which was a proud moment to see so many young people from across Wales taking part.

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking the area trustee board for their support and guidance the Botany Bay team for their dedication in maintaining the site the District and Area Leads for their determination and my thanks to Mike Brakewell and Elizabeth for their friendship and guidance.

In closing and thanking everyone please keep doing the fantastic job you are doing because you are all part of the future of Scouting.

Edward

Scouts
Gwent

Area Lead Volunteer Report

Gwent Area AGM 19th June 2025

AGM time always gives us an opportunity to reflect on what has happened over the last year and to think about the year to come. The last year has brought many challenges as we work through transformation and moved to the new online system, we have had our fair share of teething problems but hopefully we are all now getting more used to the system and can see the light at the end of the tunnel, all adult members having to redo the new online safety by 14th July has been a challenge and we continue to ensure that we support all adults to meet this deadline.

I would like to thank all of our Area Trustee Board for their support and dedication to the Area and as always I must express particular thanks to both Edward Watts and Mike Breakwell for their constant support and guidance since taking on the role. The Area team had started to develop so alongside myself, we know have, Billy Calladine and Bella Watkins as Youth Leads, Pete Sheppard as Volunteer and Development Lead, Keith Fernandez as Programme Team Lead and Dylan Murray for Special Projects.

Gwent Area has remained stable in its membership of Youth members and a slight increase leader membership this is due to the hard work of many leaders and parents. Our youngest section continues to grow with more Dreys having opened this year with an engaging active programme seeing demand for spaces still increasing and our numbers within Explorers has also increased. We still have large waiting lists in some locations and so there is still a need for recruitment of volunteers.

Our young people have had amazing opportunities at group, District and Area level with many badges along the way. Again, we have been honoured to present some of the very top award, 4 Kings Scouts Awards and some DofE Golds, the recipients have attended Windsor and Buckingham Palace respectively to celebrate their achievements.

There have been many things to celebrate over the last 12 months – the amazing activities, trips and learning of new skills which our young people have experienced. Gwentrek 2024 was a fantastic event, and this year promises to be just as great, event team are working hard to ensure the weekend runs smoothly as always, I have also discovered a new talent of two of our DLVs in song writing reflecting on events.

During the year members of Area have attended Summit 25 to help shape the future of Scouting and a delegation of 4 young people representing all 4 Districts accompanied by Bella travelled to Oxford University to join members from across the UK to ensure Youth Voice also shapes the future.

Despite all the changes our compliance for mandatory on-going learning remains in a good position thanks to monitoring and District Lead Volunteers and Area Team. This will always remain a focus to ensure we are delivering safe scouting for all our members.

It leaves me to thank a few people this year as they leave us from their current roles, firstly thank you to Chris Owen-Brookes who has been our Area Treasurer over the last few years, Chris has decided to step down at this AGM but will remain in the Support Team at Area level, thank you for all your efforts.

Secondly, we are losing 2 of our DLVs this year, both Elaine Burrill for Torfaen and Steve Crowley for Newport have reached the end of their 10-year tenures as DLVs. Both have had massive impacts in their respective Districts, due to their leadership and visions. Both will be very missed however will remain active in Scouting in new roles. We have Thank you gifts for them but sadly neither are able to attend tonight so we will arrange for these to be presented at a suitable time.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved in Scouting within Gwent for everything that you do, whether its weekly, monthly, or just once a year. As Baden-Powell said, "My belief is that we were put into this world of wonders and beauty with a special ability to appreciate them, in some cases to have the fun of taking a hand in developing them, and also in being able to help other people instead of overreaching them and, through it all, to enjoy life - that is, to be happy." And surely this is still what Scouting is all about.

Silver

Elizabeth O'Malley

Area Lead Volunteer

REGISTRATION OF MEMBERSHIP
AREA SUMMARY

SECTION	2020	2021 COVID	2022	2023	2024	2025	+/-
Squirrel Scouts							
Blaenau Gwent				6	10	12	
Monmouthshire			18	45	72	88	+16
Newport				14	70	69	-1
Torfaen				8	4	25	+21
Beaver Scouts							
Blaenau Gwent	47	12	22	34	44	45	+1
Monmouthshire	175	87	205	243	234	211	-23
Newport	207	138	209	255	236	227	-9
Torfaen	122	74	98	111	106	127	+21
Cub Scouts							
Blaenau Gwent	67	32	33	49	62	49	-13
Monmouthshire	321	246	280	287	310	298	-12
Newport	255	208	265	321	289	298	+9
Torfaen	144	89	115	100	124	112	-12
Scouts							
Blaenau Gwent	56	25	31	27	36	35	-1
Monmouthshire	254	213	281	270	298	260	-38
Newport	210	202	233	259	284	281	-3
Torfaen	96	90	84	85	86	90	+4
Explorer Scouts							
Blaenau Gwent	12	2	2	9	11	11	same
Monmouthshire	74	61	77	94	90	117	+27
Newport	52	41	47	47	57	60	+3
Torfaen	23	15	29	26	23	31	+8
Scout Network							
Blaenau Gwent	10	1	5	1	0	4	+4
Monmouthshire	18	14	27	28	27	37	+10
Newport	30	16	14	13	2	15	+13
Torfaen	20	12	8	5	1	1	same
Adult							
Blaenau Gwent	95	70	61	52	58	68	+10
Monmouthshire	258	236	269	268	296	332	+36
Newport	260	251	254	278	271	265	-6
Torfaen	137	128	122	115	123	125	+2
TOTALS							
Area	34	38	45	27	29	24	-5
Blaenau Gwent	287	142	154	178	221	220	-1
Monmouthshire	1100	857	1157	1235	1327	1360	+33
Newport	1014	856	1022	1187	1209	1200	-9
Torfaen	542	408	456	450	467	510	+43
AREA TOTAL	**2982**	**2301**	**2834**	**3077**	**3253**	**3260**	+7

Scouts
Gwent

Volunteering Development report 2025

This is my final report as Area Training Manager, but also my first as Volunteering Development Team Leader, as roles and responsibilities were re-organised nationally at the end of 2024.

2024 was probably the hardest year for volunteers whose role is to support other volunteers, for a very long time. The inquest into the tragic loss of life of an Explorer Scout on the Great Orme some years previously was followed by the necessary, but very challenging and time consuming "Rapid Assurance" work, where we along with all other Scout bodies had to prove to Headquarters that processes and training requirements were being complied with.

In August, first aid rules were changed, with a retrospective re-validation of all external first aid certificates being required, along with an additional data management task of confirming those who had completed First Response on one-day courses.

Further to this was the push to get Compass data reviewed and updated to a state that would support the migration to the new digital systems, and the Volunteer Experience transformation.

Everyone will be acutely aware that the launch of the new digital tools did not go as we'd have wanted, with particular problems with processing disclosures impacting Gwent.

In the first half of the year, continued to run our usual calendar of 'multi module' weekends, and the Skills for Nights Away weekend, along with a small number of virtual learning workshops in evenings.

Demand for first aid training has continued, and 8 First Response courses were run for adult volunteers and Young Leaders throughout the year, as well as commissioning an externally-run Outdoor First Aid course. Now that all those volunteering in Programme roles working directly with young people are required to hold first aid, as predicted we are seeing an increase in demand, and are still working to increase the number of First Response trainers to accommodate this. ScoutsCymru now have a regular programme of the blended approach for first aid, and we have supported the short assessment part of this locally on demand where required.

In September we ran another Achieving Growth workshop for those in manager/supporter roles. A small handful of key volunteers were able to finish their Wood Badges before the deadline as a result.

As before, we continued to support local validation events where requested, and this has also led to the completion of many Wood Badges, with a number pushing to finish before the changes.

The remainder of 2025 will see new processes bedding in, the transition from "training" to "learning" continue, along with expansion of the Volunteering Development Team.

Peter Sheppard, Volunteering Development Team Leader

June 2025

Wood Badge roll of honour

Congratulations to the following on being awarded their Wood Badge during 2024*.

Chris Arthur	1st Caerleon (Newport)	Section Leader - Scouts
Claire Thornhill	28th Newport	Assistant Section Leader - Beaver Scouts
Shelley Clark	26th Newport	Section Leader - Beaver Scouts
Sophie Horseman	1st Llanyravon (Methodist)	Assistant Section Leader - Scouts
Rhys Morgan	The Abergavenny Scout Group	Assistant Section Leader - Scouts
Damian Isaac	28th Newport	Deputy Group Scout Leader
Jane Cherrington	28th Newport	Assistant Section Leader - Scouts
Jane Cherrington	28th Newport	Assistant Section Leader - Squirrel Scouts
Natalie Generalovic	The Abergavenny Scout Group	Assistant Section Leader - Beaver Scouts
Dan Stephens	1st Rogerstone	Section Leader - Beaver Scouts
Neil Bannister	1st Panteg (St Marys)	Assistant Section Leader - Scouts
Kevin Gough	25th Newport (St Mary's) Scout Group	Section Leader - Cub Scouts
Stephen Johnson	1st Caerleon (Newport)	Section Leader - Beaver Scouts
Janet Horrell	The Abergavenny Scout Group	Assistant Section Leader - Beaver Scouts
Rhys Williams	1st Magor	Assistant Section Leader - Scouts
Tanya Mills Nicholson	1st Pontnewydd	Section Leader - Beaver Scouts
Rhys Morgan	The Abergavenny Scout Group	Section Leader - Scouts
Rebecca Radford	1st Llanmartin	Assistant Section Leader - Scouts
Wendy Davies	1st Gilwern	Group Scout Leader
Ceiny Watkins	1st Griffithstown	Assistant Section Leader - Beaver Scouts
Gareth James	Goytre Scout Group	Section Leader - Cub Scouts
Michelle MacDonald	Newport	Assistant District Commissioner (Section Support) - Beaver Scouts
Elaine Moore	24th Newport	Assistant Section Leader - Beaver Scouts
Matthew Caulfield	1st Wyesham	Section Leader - Beaver Scouts
Sam Hewitt	1st Bulwark - Chepstow	Assistant Section Leader - Beaver Scouts
Sam Hewitt	1st Bulwark - Chepstow	Section Leader - Squirrel Scouts
Faye Mcintosh	1st/4th Abertillery	Assistant Section Leader - Beaver Scouts
Peter Martell	26th Newport	Section Leader - Scouts
Christine Marchant	1st Garndiffaith (St. John's)	Section Leader - Cub Scouts
Dawn Gould	Blaenavon Scout Group	Assistant Section Leader - Beaver Scouts
Amy Lougher	1st Bassaleg	Assistant Section Leader - Cub Scouts
Triona Lambert	1st Marshfield	Section Leader - Cub Scouts
Claire Raymond	1st Magor	Assistant Section Leader - Cub Scouts
Rhys Pritchard	1st Gilwern	Assistant Section Leader - Cub Scouts
Robert Dunn	28th Newport	Assistant Section Leader - Cub Scouts
Leah Cozzi	Newport	Assistant District Commissioner (Section Support) - Squirrel Scouts

Leah Cozzi	28th Newport	Assistant Section Leader - Cub Scouts
Luke Sloan	1st Caerleon	Group Scout Leader
Tiffanie Shaddick	Tredegar Park	Group Scout Leader
Matthew Dawe	1st Bassaleg	Assistant Section Leader - Cub Scouts
Sarah Sloan	1st Caerleon	Section Leader - Squirrel Scouts
Helen Fernandez	1st Bassaleg	Section Leader - Squirrel Scouts
Thomas Wakefield	1st Panteg	Assistant Section Leader - Scouts
Rhys Lewis	22nd Newport (Christchurch)	Group Scout Leader
Cat Parsons	25th Newport	Section Leader - Beaver Scouts

** Data only available for those holding an active role within Gwent when Compass closed in November 2024.*

Botany Bay Campsite – Wardens Report AGM June 2025

Bookings have been strong again this year with the site used most weekends in the spring, summer & autumn, and a couple of weekends a month during the winter. The majority of bookings are Scout & Guides groups, but we have a number of school groups using the site as a base for activities in the run up to the summer holidays, then a number of scout & guide groups using the site for summer camps during the holidays. The site remains a popular stop over for both Scout & School DofE groups. We have recently had four different special needs groups using the site, one for day visits and others for overnight stays.

We had over 80 bookings during 2024, and currently have 60 bookings in the 2025 diary so far.

Service team Actions taken

Woodland

The Tree Survey along the A466was redone in March, and we have had a number of trees professionally removed or pollarded, requiring traffic lights on the road. The Service Crew have dealt with a number of fallen or leaning trees in the woods. We have one tree leaning into the garden of our neighbours at Hazel Grove, and we are seeking quotes for professionally felling it.
Brian Mahoney visited site in March to look over our woodland, and give us his thoughts on priorities for managing it. Brian spent many years working at a high level for the Forestry Commission and NRW. His insight was very useful. We hope to put together an initial Woodland Management plan from this input, which will highlight the priority actions.

Chris Stott has put up some new bird boxes around the woodland targeting a Blue Tits, Great Tits and Pied Flycatchers.

The Service Crew are starting to attack the Balsam along the A466 again. It is encouraging to see only a few plants currently growing in the areas we focused on in the last two years, although we'll have to monitor over the summer to see what springs up. Having cleared the undergrowth over the winter months, we are now better able to get into the last area that we need to address, at the Brockwier end of the property. We do have an AONB volunteer group planning on join me on Thursday 5th June to help deal with that area.

Buildings

We've had the annual fire extinguisher check, the chimney has been swept and the log burner checked, and the annual PAT testing completed.

A carpenter friend of the service team has repaired the balcony of Zena's chalet, replacing two uprights, and redoing the timber on which the balcony sits. We are trialling an anti-slip tape on the Lodge balcony – which can get slippery in the wet. We need to see how long the tape lasts.

I am still awaiting formal feedback from the Planning pre-App I submitted on 17th Jan'25, for a more permanent structure to replace the marquee roof, but have had an initial telephone conversation with the planner, who believes that formal planning permission will be required due to being in an AONB.

We managed to borrow a mini-digger, and have cleared the space at the back of all the cabins so that we can get access for the scaffold tower, and flat ground to use ladders safely. This should make the working at height necessary to clean and repair the roof slates, and get access to the gutters significantly safer.

Water system

The main spring water settling tank has been cleared of sediment. Having been running the new UV filtration system for almost a year, we have made a tweak to the plumbing to avoid using the recirculation system, which was adding complexity. Both Building & toilet taps and the field taps are now pressurised, and have UV on demand. This has needed the repair of a number of the field taps to cope with the increased pressure. One of the water troughs had rusted through, so has been replaced by a concrete trough.

General

We compared prices with a number of similar campsites locally again in Dec'24 – we are significantly cheaper than all of them - and therefore agreed price increases to start 1st Jan'25. The last time we increased prices was 1st Jan'23. Although we said we'd review prices annually, I'm not proposing to review them again until 1st Jan'27.

As always, the Service Team have been busy repairing fences & steps, clearing leaves from gutters, paths, car park & behind cabins and edging some of the paths in the woods to overcome the damage done by deer runs. The fencing and most of the cladding around the buildings have been creosoted.

The paths around the buildings, and down to the Campfire Circle and Chapel have been strimmed, and the boggy patch of the orienteering course has been made easier to cross using rubble and by repairing the handrail.

A number of the altar fires have been repaired, the base of the hand trolley has been re-sheeted, and the Scout badge in the garden has been repaired and is being repainted.

We have two new neighbours – both in Hazel Grove and in Craigo Farm. I met with them recently, and both expressed support for what the site is aiming to do.

A number of the team have put specific detail about Botany Bay in letters sent to both Monmouthshire and South East Wales regional representatives in the Senedd to highlight the issues that the proposed Visitor levy will have on us – and to ask that not-for-profit organisations are exempt.

Priorities for future work

1. **Balsam** is a big priority for the next three months, if we want to avoid the risk of the monoculture spreading up the hill.
2. Writing an initial **Woodland Management Plan**, and considering seeking funding for key actions is another priority.
3. The **marquee roof replacement** project will also be a focus for the coming months –getting a design, seeking planning permission, understanding the building regulations and seeking funding will all be priorities.

Things we need help with

1. **Implementing a new booking and invoicing system** is now an urgent need.
2. **Attracting more people to join the Service Team**

Dave PHIPPS

22nd May 2025 Email: botanybaywarden@gmail.com

Scouts
Blaenau Gwent
Gwent

DLV Report 2025 Blaenau Gwent

Welcome to my first AGM as District lead. It's been just over a year since I took over the role from Amanda and if I said it's been the easiest year I've had that wouldn'tbe true!

This past year has seen Scouting in the UK undertake many changes from tightening up of our processes and policies to transformation and from introduction of trustees to the new membership system.

These changes have been difficult to implement all at once but I'm proud to say that we have come through relatively unscathed like any changes we are still having teething issues but the light at the end is defiantly here.

The District has welcomed the new structure and role titles with JamesPowell taking on the 14-24 Lead Role, Toni Senese taking on the 4-14 Lead Role and TraceyKnapp joining us recently as the Growth and DevelopmentLead.

I know you all will welcome and support our District Team and help them to allow us to work together as a united district providing amazing opportunities for ALL the young people regardless of group, unit or section.

Both Cwm and Brynmawr have welcomed new Group Leads and I would like to congratulate them both and wish them best of luck in their new roles.

Our groups have grown this year, and more young people are benefitting from the great scouting program however our leader numbers remain low, and this is influencing two of our groups.

I've had the pleasure of meeting many of our young people of the last 12 months and they continue to suprise me with theircan-do attitude. One of our young people Jack was fortunate to be selected by our Area Youth Leads to attend the first national youth forum held at Oxford University along with 3 others from Gwent a great day was had and amazing feedback from Jack.

This August ScoutsCymru have out on an explorer belt trip to Bavaria and again one of our explorers Kate has been chosen to attend I'm sure we will hear loads about this when she returns, and I wish her all the best and hope she has an amazing experience.

The next 12 months will be focusing on working as one District and sharing as many skills as possible to provide the best experiences we can along with leader recruitment and support for all our adults. Please look out for our District calendar 2026 to see what we have planned.

Finally,I promise!Thank you to the outgoingtrustee board for your support over the last year

Gareth Haywood

District Lead

Blaenau Gwent

Scouts
Monmouthshire

03rd June 2025

Monmouthshire District Report for Gwent Area AGM 2025

2024-2025 has been a buoyant year for Scouting within Monmouthshire and I'm pleased to be reporting another strong year, jam-packed full of even more adventure and excitement for our young people. Whilst our youth membership numbers dipped slightly, our success in recruiting more adult volunteers than ever before is continuing to support the delivery of our Skills for Life Strategy.

Across the board, we have seen more events, more community engagement, and more activities this year, surpassing all expectations. Summer 2024, for example, saw international Scouting being delivered on an epic scale with expeditions to the Kandersteg international Scout centre in Switzerland, an Explorer belt expedition to Bulgaria, as well as a historical adventure to the Belgium Battlefields.

In addition, we've had the pleasure of awarding the Kings Scout Award to two very deserving young people who have achieved the highest accolade for their hard work and dedication.

Squirrels

Squirrels continue to thrive in Monmouthshire and remain the section that is driving our highest growth in terms of both young people and adult volunteer.

This year, we've celebrated opening new Squirrels Dreys and held our first district events for the section including: a sports day, in which the Squirrels competed in a range of typical and silly sports events; and a trip to Newport Wetlands, where the participants got to try out a range of nature-inspired activities such as pond dipping and birdwatching. In addition to this, Squirrels have become an embedded part of our group structures, undertaking a wealth of residential and practical activities.

Beavers

Beavers has remained our strongest section across district with waiting list demand growing by the day.

This year, the Beavers have had opportunity to attend two district events alongside the Squirrels (a sports day and a trip to Newport Wetlands) whilst day-to-day we have seen sleepovers, basic skills evenings, a tonne of positive badge work, engagement within local communities with trips to supermarkets and council services like the library, and plenty of silly and seasonal games.

Scouts
Monmouthshire

Cubs

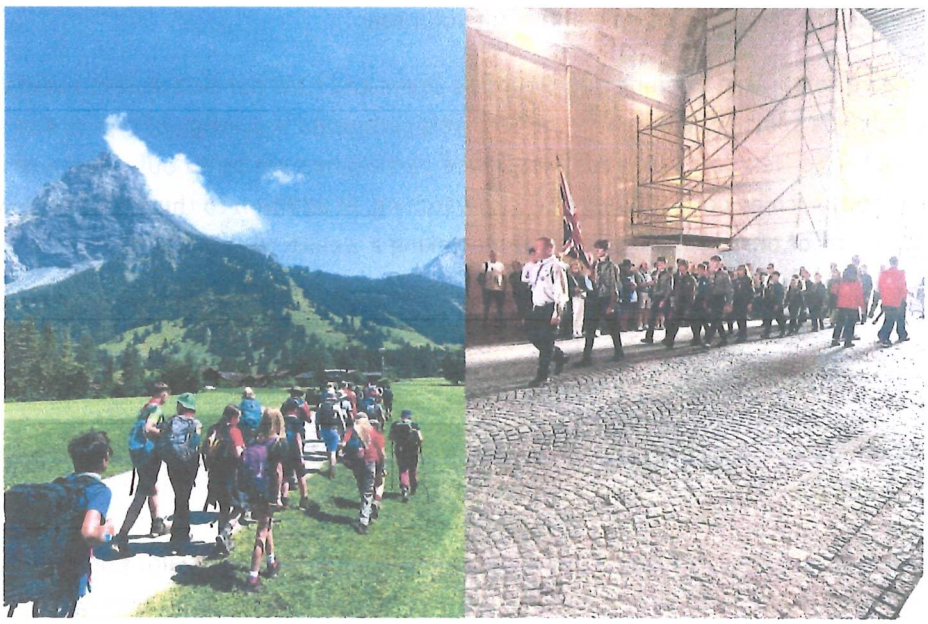
Cubs has maintained healthy numbers throughout 2024-2025, with natural growth leading to the opening of two new sections across the district!

I'm also pleased to say that we have recruited new, additional Cub leaders in over half of the cub sections. On a weekly basis, we've seen Cubs out den building, learning basic camp and survival skills, camping, fire lighting, and much, much more. Cubs are also once again looking forward to the return of the District Cub swimming gala in the autumn term, as well as Midsummer Madness to be held at Botany Bay in July.

Scouts

Lots of activity has been ongoing within the Scouts section, with the majority of groups now trying to achieve Dragon Awards and camping every month. In addition, we've seen Scouts making their mark right across Monmouthshire and beyond with groups heading as far afield as Belgium and Switzerland.

Closer to home, groups have enjoyed canoeing, kayaking, dragon boating, paintball, surfing, climbing, caving, abseiling, clay pigeon shooting and much, much more. I once again extend our gratitude to the Gwent Land Activities Team for enabling a number of the adventurous activities that we are able to offer to our young people. The Scouts have also enjoyed the return of Operation Nightmare, this year held at Botany Bay, and Gwentrek, the uptake for which was much greater this year with new groups entering teams.



Scouts
Monmouthshire

Network

Network remains steady with little activity due to a lack of leadership team. This is something we are still hoping to address shortly with recruitment underway. Despite this, Monmouthshire was able to celebrate both Benedict and Ellie receiving their King's Scout Awards , whilst Owen represented Scouting when receiving his Gold DofE Award.

Tudor Cule Campsite

Owing to significant weather damage over the winter of 2023, Tudor Cule Campsite has had to remain closed on safety grounds; we simply can't guarantee the safety of the site at the present.

An extensive programme of works is, however, ongoing to make the site safe and the site will not re-open until the risks have been properly mitigated. As part of these works, the public footpath has been secured and signage erected at all possible entrance points to the site, demarcating that entrance is not permitted without authorisation. Additionally, our storage shed has been relocated to a safer location on site and we are ever thankful to the local community who continue to rally together behind the site and support it's upkeep Unfortunately, there is still a lot of work to do but we endeavour to get the site back to being fully operation once again and once it is safe to do so.

Scouts
Monmouthshire

Explorers

Like with the Scouts, lots of activity has been ongoing within our Explorer units!

We've seen units partnering with their local Scout troops for international travels, allowing our young people to experience Kanderstag and Belgium. Whilst closer to home, units have also enjoyed more week-to-week activities including paddleboarding, climbing, scuba diving, dry slope tubing, clay pigeon shooting, and simplistic stress relieving sports, games and skills nights.

In addition, record numbers have entered into events such as Operation Nightmare and Gwentrek – with more excitedly anticipating the upcoming Awesome Explorer event and Larkin jamboree. Plenty of young people have also been earning top awards and participating in DofE. To reiterate, we couldn't do half these things without the help of local community groups who are able to offer their time and knowledge to help shape our young members.

Scouts
Monmouthshire

General

We once again had very strong attendance at the district St George's day event and have seen buoyant growth off the back of it. This year, Monmouthshire Scouts took over Chepstow Castle and were joined by the Lord Lieutenant for Gwent, Brigadier Robert Aitken CBE to celebrate the patron saint of scouting.

If anyone hasn't seen the media article released following the event – I strongly urge you to have a read. It's a very nice piece that has captured the spirit of the event really well.

https://www.monmouthshirebeacon.co.uk/news/scouts-gather-at-castle-for-st-george-celebration-789091

Scouts
Monmouthshire

Summary

Overall, 2024-2025 has been a very strong year for Monmouthshire Scouts and this momentum continues to drive into 2025-2026. The return of larger events and more ambitious endeavours has really picked up right across district, and that is gratifying to see at all levels.

In the time between writing this report, and the date of Gwent Area Scout Council's AGM, Monmouthshire will have hosted our largest event in the last five years to bring together nearly 450 young people at District Camp 2025. Being able to hold such an event only emphasises the amazing experiences that our volunteers provide young people every single day.

I would like finish by extending a thank you to every single volunteer who continues to make such a difference to the lives of young people across Monmouthshire.

Scouts
Newport

The past year in Scouting in Newport has been a year of change, as it has been for the other Districts of Gwent. We have seen the implementation of the Transformation Programme which is aimed at presenting Scouting in a more user-friendly light. As a society we are generally adverse to change, but the new format is here to stay so embrace it we must. When the digital platform was launched it was a headache for a lot of people. In readiness for this Kath and I put together a Transformation Presentation which we aimed to take to each Group in order for people to realise what the changes meant and what support was available to help them. Unfortunately not all Groups allayed themselves of the opportunity. As a result total implementation for some of them has been more difficult.

Nevertheless progress in Newport has continued to be very good, but there is still a way to go. I feel I can say with some confidence that we have made considerable progress along the road of change.

Let us not forget those that Newport said goodbye to - having "Gone Home" They gave a large part of their life to the merits of Scouting. Grateful appreciation will always be ours. Continued successes will be testament to their contributions.

All the Sections have continued to develop and evolve. We have seen a new Beaver Colony open up at 22nd Newportthat are building well with new Leadership that have been added since the opening. Tredegar Park has opened a new Scout Troop.Again this is with additional Leaders. SeveralGroups are short of Leaders which is a very common factor. However with the right positive attention and use of the help and resources that are available these matters can be overcome. The youngest and newset Section – Squirrels continues to thrive. More Groups are stating an interest in opening as soon as new additional Leadership can be secured.

Several Leaders including some GLV`s have decided to retire from Scouting. This is disappointing but no-one can question their decision because they have certainly "done their bit." But we have the GLV roles covered with new potential appointees.

One of the major successes this year for the Groups was the fact that 28th Newport secured a major grant from the National Lottery which allowed them to purchase their facility outright, with some additional small funding to allow some remedial buildinng work to take place. They have allowed the District Explorer Sectionn to locate ann equipment stores in on theirproperty. Also they expressed a wish to install a professionnal climbimg wall on their premises, but sadly there was not sufficient funding available. The District stepped in and offered to fund it from a very generous legacyof a very kind benefactor. This was on the understanding that the facility would be opened up to the whole District and the wider field of Scouting. I am very pleased to say that the construction has commenced.

Once completed the facility can also be available for external bodies providing all criteria is met.

Further change is afoot. As most are now aware my tenure as District Commissioner/Lead Volunteer officially came tto an end on the 31st March.As there was no willing successor I agreed to extend until the 30th June. However this clashed with my already planned tour which commenced on 28th May. Fortunately Kath was willing to cover in the interim. I am sure everyone will give her unsinting support as you have given me for the past ten years. I will not be going away butmy future involvement has not been finalised.

On a personal note. Thankyou Newport for all that you have given me I sincerely hope that you are able to continue to support my successor so that, together, you can further capitalise on our huge successes over the past decade. O

I wish each and everyone all the very best in everything you do.

Continue that train journey of .....

.....Adventure and Opportunity

Steve Crowley

District Lead Volunteer

Newport

Torfaen District Commissioner's Report – 2025

Scouts
Torfaen

The last year has been another fun packed year for our young people and everyone has certainly been busy around the district.

The start of the year kicked off with a St George's camp at Silvercross site and a very successful weekend was had. The majority of the district attended and a full programme of activities was held including rifles, archery, hawks, muddy assault, zorbs, bushcraft and much more.

In May the explorers took part in the Bristol Monopoly run. Scores were not the best but hampered by not being locals and knowing locations nor the bus routes. Nevertheless, they all had a great day out.

At the start of June the Cubs had their hike. Few groups took part in this event but for those that did it gave them a great experience of a longer hike in more challenging conditions and the views from the hilltops were amazing.

Over the summer many of the groups ran summer camps. District organised a social and skills camp for leaders at Victoria camp site to allow leaders to network and learn new skills. It was a small group but everyone who attended found this very useful. Definitely one to consider for future years.

The autumn was started by a splattering of groups and individuals supporting Gilwell reunion. There was also a contingent from the district attending Gwentrek which was held at the GlanUsk estate this time. This was a demanding hike and many found the hike a considerable challenge.

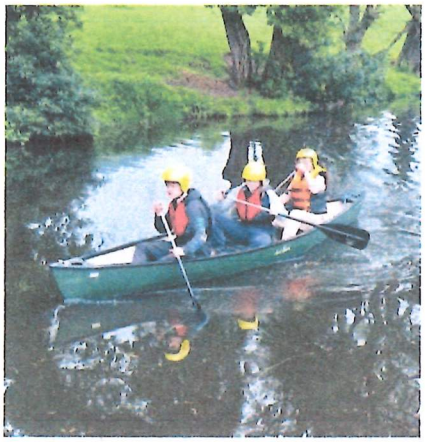
In October the Zombie Run camp was resurrected and was held again at Gilwern using the fields and woodland around the area. Not only was there a great turn out from the district but we also had quite a few teams from neighbouring districts coming on board for this. All the Scouts had a good time completing the course but I think the leaders and Explorers had a better time dressing up as zombies and similar to run the event.

In November everyone took part in the usual Remembrance parades. Cubs took part in a brand-new event – Pinewood Derby – which was essentially a homemade Scalextric. Each team had to build a car to a given specification and decorate it. They were then raced down tracks to compete for the winning place. Lots of laughs, great camaraderie, and some leaders were already planning their next year's builds! There were prizes for fastest, most economical and best decorated. Well done to Blaenavon for winning the Group trophy.

In the run up to Christmas the Beavers had their movie night, and the Scouts took part in Jambowlree and the annual District Christingle service took place at Llanyrafon which was lovely. The year ended with the usual Christmas Camp at Victoria site attended by a number of Scout troops plus the Explorers and others. Fellowship had their usual post-Christmas meal

The district held another projectiles competition at the end of February but went one better this year by running it over two days and having a camping option as well. A good variety of disciplines was included such as rifles, knockdowns, crossbows and hawks.

In March two of our young people represented the district at the UK Youth Forum. It is good to see the district being represented at UK wide events.



The year finished with a St George's camp actually in District for the first time. We were able to camp at Ty Poeth farm and enjoyed a wide range of activities over a lovely weekend. These included climbing wall, canoeing on the canal, crate stacking, bushcraft and projectiles. In addition there was the opportunity to visit the farm, do an easter egg trail and learn about farm to food with our own chicken!

The major event of this year has been transformation and this has provided many challenges for how we do our day to day Scouting. Fortunately, processes we already had in place served us well to iron

out some of the issues but there are still problems which are slowing the everyday Scouting down. I am sure in time these will be ironed out.

Our numbers are still on the up both with young people and adults. The joining list has a heavy pipeline of young people waiting to start and is keeping the older sections populated as well. We have also opened a second Cub pack at Pontnewydd and are poised to open a North Torfaen Squirrel drey based at Garndiffaith after the holidays.

We also had our first King Scout awarded, a significant achievement as it is around 15 years since the last Queen Scout awards were given. I hope that more of our young members will follow Ben's lead and aim for these top awards.

We have had a boost to funding through a larger grant this year so this has been used to make the larger events accessible for all and also buy some laptops for district and equipment for young members who may need support.

We always like to reflect on those who have gone home over the year and it was with sadness that we lost Rees Preston, Mike Assender, Mark Atkins and Josie Smith this year.

A great thanks is given to all those leaders who have been doing a great job every week and giving up many of their weekends to run activities and camps. Seeing the young people making progress and learning skills for life makes the efforts all worthwhile. Thanks also to all the support from trustee members, ASU members and other supporters.

This is my last AGM as the district lead volunteer and I have seen a lot change in the last ten years. What has not changed is the enthusiasm and excitement the young people get from taking part in all the activities and camps and I hope Torfaen continues to flourish as a district and provide life changing experiences for all our young members.

Yours in Scouting

Elaine Burrill, DLV

Scouts
Gwent

GWENT AREA SCOUT COUNCIL

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT SUMMARY FOR THE YEAR 1 JANUARY 2024 TO 31 DECEMBER 2024

	2024 £
Total monetary receipts for the period	137,532
Total payments for the period	139,818
Net receipts for the period	-2,286
Bank, cash and deposit funds carried forward	106,080

These accounts were approved by the trustees of the Gwent Area Scout Council.

Approved by the Trustees on: 2nd June 2025

Signed on their behalf by Trustees:

Edward Watts
Area Chairperson

Chris Owen-Brooks
Area Treasurer

GWENT AREA SCOUT COUNCIL

RECEIPTS FOR YEAR 1 JANUARY 2024 TO 31 DECEMBER 2024

Monetary receipts	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Scout Association Saving Fund	0	325
CAF Fixed Interest Fund	0	336
Investment (Note 3)	0	58,104
Sub total – income from investments	0	58,765

Membership subscriptions (see Note 2)	132,084	116,790
Area events (see Note 4)	5,303	6,314
Donations	0	185
Miscellaneous income (Note 5)	145	18
Sub total – other income	137,532	123,307

Total monetary receipts	**137,532**	**182,072**

GWENT AREA SCOUT COUNCIL

PAYMENTS FOR YEAR 1 JANUARY 2024 TO 31 DECEMBER 2024

	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Membership subscriptions (see Note 2)	128,415	115,645
Insurance (equipment)	261	743
AGM expenses	407	314
Volunteer expenses	2,600	755
Area events (see Note 4)	6,494	8,161
Area office broadband	654	546
Board of Trustee Meeting Venue	144	0
Equipment purchases (see Note 6)	185	1,563
International Fund Donations (see Note 7)	640	2,535
Miscellaneous Expenditure (Note 5)	18	0
Total payments	139,818	130,262

STATEMENT OF ASSETS

	31 DEC 2024 Total £	31 DEC 2023 Total £
Gwent Main Account	97,081	97,576
Gwent Training Account	5,806	6,554
Gwent Events and Activity Account	3,193	4,237
Total assets	106,080	108,367

Explanatory Notes

1 Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis using historical costs.

Gwent Area Scout Council meets the definition of a public benefit entity under the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

2 Membership subscriptions

Membership subscription breakdown:
Scouts Cymru levy of £52.50
Gwent Area levy of £1.50
was paid on 2,446 youth members.

3 Investment Liquidations

Gwent Area Scout Council hold no further investments

4 Area events

Activity & Events:

- Young Leader residential
- Young Leader training
- Gwentrek
- Land SASU activity

Training

- Skills for nights away
- First aid training
- Adult training
- Archery Training

5 Miscellaneous Income

This relates to payments received that have been paid to Gwent Area by mistake

6 Equipment purchases

Scout Active Support Unit – Land, renewal of climbing equipment.

7 International Fund

Payments were made in line with our international fund to:

- 2nd Caldicot
- 1st Shirenewton
- Roverway Adult Participant

GWENT AREA SCOUT COUNCIL

BOTANY BAY ACTIVCITY & CAMPSITE
1 JANUARY 2024 TO 31 DECEMBER 2024

Current Account

INCOME (£)

Brought Forward from 2023	30648.87	
Site Fees	13892.98	
Donations etc	710.95	
Phone	00.00	
Returned from Savings Account	50.00	
	45302.80	

EXPENDITURE (£)

Maintenance	1317.05	
Refunds	105.00	
Services	9601.85	
Phone	340.69	
Electric	2399.36	
Equipment	3661.57	
Badges	1019.94	(£18445.46)
Transfer to Savings Account.	17532.94	
Cash in Bank 31.12.24	9324.40	
	45302.80	

Notes:
Donations include:- Electric Wayleave, Water Payment, Legacy
Maintenance includes:- Fencing, painting, step replacement and general repairs.
Services include:- Site Insurance, Grass Cutting, Fire Safety, Electrical PAT Testing, Wheelie Bins, Cesspit Clearance, Tree Survey, Chimney Sweep and Rates.
Equipment includes:- Chain Saw, Power Tools, Strimmer, UV Sterilisation Unit

Investment Account

(commenced May 2024)

INCOME

Transferred from Current Account	17532.94
Interest	10.82

EXPENDITURE

Returned to Current Account	50.00
Cash in Bank 31.12.24	17493.76

Secretary/Treasurer

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the Gwent Area Scout Council (Charity no 1055372)

I report on the accounts of the Area for the period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 which comprise the Statement of Financial Accounts and related notes set out in the preceding pages.

This report is made solely to the trustees in accordance with Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011. My work has been undertaken so that I might state to the charity's trustees those matters I am required to state to them in an Independent Examiner's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's trustees for my examination work.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The Area's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. They consider that an audit is not required for this year under Section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under Section 145 of the Charities Act),
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under Section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act); and
- 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 Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Area and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and that the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent Examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, 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 130 of the Charities Act; and
   - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities 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: GARETH BEALE

Relevant professional qualification(s) or membership of professional bodies (if any): ACMA

Address: 19 USK ROAD, PONTYPOOL, TORFAEN NP4 8AE

Date: 30/05/25

GWENT AREA SCOUT COUNCIL

England & Wales - Charity number 1055372

Accounts

Gwent Area Scout Council

Annual General Meeting

Thursday 27th June 2024

Scouts

Gwent

Gwent Area Scout Council
Annual General Meeting

Thursday 27th June 2024

AGENDA

Welcome by Edward Watts, MBE, DL, Chairman Gwent Area Scout Council

1. To receive apologies for absence.

2. To receive and approve the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Thursday 29th June, 2023.

3. To receive and approve the Annual Review.

4. Address by Area Commissioner.

5. To receive the Accounts of the Area Scout Council.

6. To appoint an Area Chair.

7. To appoint an Area Treasurer.

8. To appoint members to the Area Board of Trustees.

9. To approve any additional or community members to the Area Scout Council.

10. To appoint one representative to the Council of the Association
    To appoint one representative aged 18/25 to the Council of the Association.

11. To appoint two representatives (1 Scouter, 1 Trustee) to the Welsh Scout Council.
    To appoint one representative aged 18/25 to the Welsh Scout Council.

12. To appoint an Auditor/Independent Examiner.

13. To acknowledge the incumbents in the role of Area President and Area Vice Presidents

14. To adopt the Area Constitution.

15. Address by Chief Commissioner of Wales

16. Presentations

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
of the Gwent Area Scout Council
held at the Mission to Seafarers, Newport
Thursday 29th June 2023

Edward Watts, Chairman of the Gwent Area Scout Council opened the meeting by welcoming members of the Area Scout Council, He also expressed his pleasure that the Area President Robert Aitken LIt was able to be present, together with other guests; Prof Simon Gibson, High Sheriff, Jeff Cuthbert, PCC, Rhian Moore Chief Commissioner and Rob Redmond Regional Commissioner, Scouts Cymru.

The Area President gave a brief address, commenting that it had been a momentous year and on scouting's Royal patronage. He was pleased to be associated with scouting and thanked everyone for what they are doing.

The Chairman then asked for a moments reflection on those who had gone home, Joyceanne Sargent, Tony Bracher, Peter Hallows, Brian Parker.

31 persons were present.

1. Apologies:
23 Apologies were received.

2. To receive and approve the minutes of the 2022 Annual General Meeting.
The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 23rd June 2022 were received approved.

3. To receive and approve the Annual Review.
The report was received and approved.

4. Address by the Area Commissioner.
Chris Owen-Brooks gave a short address indicating he had enjoyed his time along with Chris Davy as Acting Area Commissioner but he was standing down from the role after the AGM as it was only intended to be a temporary arrangement. He highlighted a number of items within his report.
The Chairman thanked both the Chris's keeping the ship afloat.

5. To receive and approve the accounts of the Area Scout Council.
The Chair reported the accounts had been submitted by the treasurer, who was unable to be with us and thanked her for her services.
The accounts were received and approved

6. To approve the Area Commissioner's Nomination for Chairman.
The Area Commissioner indicated his nomination for Chairman was Edward Watts, this was approved.

7. To elect (i) The Area Secretary and (ii) The Area Treasurer.
The Chairman reported that the nomination for Secretary was Mike Breakwell, He was elected unopposed. The Chairman then indicated that the role of Treasurer was currently vacant eforts were being made to fill the role.

8. To receive the result of the ballot of those members elected to the Area Scout Executive Committee.
The Secretary reported that only 4 nominations had been received therefore there was no need for a ballot, resulting in Bernard Townsend, Helen Gardner, Christopher Munslow and Andy Scarisbrick being duly elected.

9. To approve the Area Commissioner's nominations of members to the Area Scout Council.
The nominations of Martyn Walters and Bethanie Headworth were approved.

10. To approve the Area Commissioner's nominations of members to the Area Scout Executive Committee.
The nominations of Yvonne Jones, Andrew Osman, James King and Chris Davy were approved.

11. To appoint (a) one representative to the Council of the Association and (b) one representative aged 18/25 to the Council of the Association.
The nominations of Edward Watts (a) and Dylan Murray (b) were approved.

12. To appoint (a) two representatives to the Welsh Scout Council and (b) one representative aged 18/25 to the Welsh Scout Council.
The nominations of Chris Munslow, Chris Owen-Brooks (a) and Peth Watkins (b) were approved.

13. To appoint and Auditor/Independent Examiner.
The nomination of Gareth Beale was approved.

14. To re-adopt the Area Constitution.
The Chairman reported that this was a new item as a result of an amendment to the Associations Policy, Organisation and Rules which in the interest of openness, especially for new members, that the Area Constitution be reviewed every AGM. He indicated that a small amendment was required with the re-designation of Executive Committees becoming a Board of Trustees. A copy of the current constitution was available.

15. Address by the Chief Commissioner of Wales.
Rhian Moore commenced her address by posing the question 'Why do we Scout'. She commented on the work the two Chris's had done in covering the role of Area Commissioner. She noted that numbers were now well up.
The main theme of her presentation was the future and we should look forward with optimism and courage, embracing new opportunities in providing new skills for life for young people and volunteers. Changes in titles and ways of recruiting members will be challenging
The Squirrels section is developing quickly with new Dreys opening throughout Wales.

She thanked all in Gwent for their services and emphasised 'Remember, We are SCOUTS'

16. Presentations.
Chris Owen Brooks presented Long Service Awards to Elaine Burrill (20years) and Chris Davy (25years).

Peter Sheppard (ATM) then referred to the Arty Morgans Training Award; he indicated the recipient had been decided but is not present so will be presented at a later date. ( )

The Chair in closing the meeting, thanked everyone for their attendance and wished every success in the future.

Gwent Scouting

This last Scouting year has been one of change and opportunities. Change in so much as we must welcome the new Area Lead Volunteer Elizabeth O'Malley, who has taken over the role from Chris Owen-Brookes. First, and foremost I extend my thanks to Chris for the sterling work he has done when he stepped in to hold the fort. I am pleased to announce that Chris has taken up the role of Area Treasurer. Thank you, Chris.

Under the new leadership of Elizabeth (Silver), I know that the area will continue to grow and exceed expectations as it has always done in the past. During this period I have had the great pleasure of attending Monmouthshire's St Georges Day parades across the region and attending the Blaenau Gwent Annual General Meeting. Another event that I attended along with members of the team was an all-day Conference around the new transformation change which comes into place this coming year.

Covid, I think has taught us a lot. One of the things it has taught us is to think 'outside of the box'. We need to look at innovative and become inventive. Secondly, it has taught us to better understand our resilient nature. The most important factor that has come out of this is that young people wanted to get out of their bedrooms and take part in face-to-face scouting activities and be part of a life-learning association. With the increase in members, I must say a big thank you to all the Leadership team within Gwent, for the outstanding work that they all did and continue to do for our young people.

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking the Executive Board for the hard work, the time and effort they have and continue to put into Gwent Scouting. As Chair their help, support and knowledge is greatly appreciated. I must make a special mention for our Secretary Mike Breakwell, and Christine Davy who continue to be the main anchors within the Executive.

To conclude, over the past year I have been proud and honoured to be Chair and continue to see scouting at its best.

Edward Watts MBE DL

Chair Gwent Scouting

Scouts
Gwent

Area Lead Volunteer Report

Gwent Area AGM 27th June 2024

AGM time always gives us an opportunity to reflect on what has happened over the last year and to think about the year to come. Lots has happened since this time last year. For me personally, I took on Acting Area Commissioner role back in September and now 9 months later submit this my first report as Area Lead Volunteer. During this time, I have had many invites to groups all over the Area. I would like to thank every group that has extended an invite and to those that I have been able to visit. All groups have been very welcoming and allowed me to gain insight into Scouting within Gwent, from dropping into camps and sleepovers, badge presentations, investitures of new members, District activity fun days, weekly sessions, and Anniversary parties of groups.

I would also like to thank all of our Area Trustee Board and Area Team for the warm welcome and their support in the 9 months that I have been part of Gwent Team. Without their support and dedication area would not be in the good position that we are. I must express particular thanks to both Edward Watts and Mike Breakwell for their constant support and guidance since taking on the role.

Gwent Area has continued to have growth in membership, 7% increase in Youth members and 3% in leader membership this is due to the hard work of many leaders and parents. We now have more youth members with 2446 regularly involved. Our youngest section continues to grow with more Dreys having opened this year with an engaging active programme seeing demand for spaces still increasing. We still have large waiting lists in some locations and so there is still a need for recruitment of volunteers.

Our young people have had amazing opportunities at group, District and Area level with many badges along the way. I have had honour of awarding two Queens Scouts Awards since September, and we have a few nearing completion. We also have a few members involved with International trips this summer at Roverway and Explorer Belts.

There have been many things to celebrate over the last 12 months – the amazing activities, trips and learning of new skills which our young people have experienced. Gwentrek 2023 was a fantastic event, and this year promises to be just as great, event team are working hard to ensure the weekend runs smoothly as always.

Nationally transformation is the priority, at Area and District levels much work is happening to ensure new roles are agreed, teams are in place and all volunteers are prepared for the changes which are happening.

Our compliance for mandatory on-going learning remains in a good position thanks to monitoring and District Lead Volunteers and Area training team. This will always remain a focus to ensure we are delivering safe scouting for all our members.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved in Scouting within Gwent for everything that you do, whether its weekly, monthly, or just once a year. As Baden-Powell said, "the most worth-while thing is to try to put happiness into the lives of others" and I think that is what we do.

Silver

Elizabeth O'Malley

Area Lead Volunteer

REGISTRATION OF MEMBERSHIP
AREA SUMMARY

SECTION	2019	2020	2021 COVID	2022	2023	2024	+/-
Squirrel Scouts							
Blaenau Gwent					6	10	+4
Monmouthshire				18	45	72	+27
Newport					14	70	+56
Torfaen					8	4	-4
Beaver Scouts							
Blaenau Gwent	65	47	12	22	34	44	+10
Monmouthshire	226	175	87	205	243	234	-9
Newport	176	207	138	209	255	236	-19
Torfaen	119	122	74	98	111	106	-5
Cub Scouts							
Blaenau Gwent	79	67	32	33	49	62	+13
Monmouthshire	313	321	246	280	287	310	+23
Newport	206	255	208	265	321	289	-32
Torfaen	132	144	89	115	100	124	+24
Scouts							
Blaenau Gwent	59	56	25	31	27	36	+9
Monmouthshire	243	254	213	281	270	298	+28
Newport	207	210	202	233	259	284	+25
Torfaen	100	96	90	84	85	86	+1
Explorer Scouts							
Blaenau Gwent	9	12	2	2	9	11	+2
Monmouthshire	70	74	61	77	94	90	-4
Newport	50	52	41	47	47	57	+10
Torfaen	24	23	15	29	26	23	-3
Scout Network							
Blaenau Gwent	12	10	1	5	1	0	-1
Monmouthshire	19	18	14	27	28	27	-1
Newport	37	30	16	14	13	2	-11
Torfaen	17	20	12	8	5	1	-4
Adult							
Blaenau Gwent	101	95	70	61	52	58	+6
Monmouthshire	255	258	236	269	268	296	+28
Newport	245	260	251	254	278	271	-7
Torfaen	149	137	128	122	115	123	+8
TOTALS							
Area	31	34	38	45	27	29	+2
Blaenau Gwent	325	287	142	154	178	221	+43
Monmouthshire	1156	1100	857	1157	1235	1327	+92
Newport	921	1014	856	1022	1187	1209	+22
Torfaen	541	542	408	456	450	467	+17
AREA TOTAL	**2979**	**2982**	**2301**	**2834**	**3077**	**3253**	**+176**

Scouts
Gwent

Training report 2023

The reporting year was the first in a long time that it's felt somewhat "normal" and we were able to deliver a full range of learning experiences throughout the whole year again.

We continued to run our usual calendar of two 'multi module' weekends, and the Skills for Nights Away weekend, as well as supporting two Young Leader residentials. We also delivered a small number of virtual learning workshops in evenings for those modules it suits, to enable volunteers with different needs to attend.

Demand for first aid training has continued, and 6 First Response courses were run for adult volunteers and Young Leaders throughout the year. As many will be aware already, following the volunteer experience transformation, all those volunteering in Programme roles working directly with young people will be required to hold first aid, so we expect demand to increase shortly, and have worked to increase the number of First Response trainers to accommodate this.

ScoutsCymru now have a regular programme of the blended approach for first aid, and we have supported the short assessment part of this locally on demand where required.

Later in the year we ran another Achieving Growth workshop for those in manager/supporter roles. A small handful of key volunteers were able to finish their Wood Badges as a result.

As always, we continued to support local validation events where requested, and this has also led to the completion of many Wood Badges.

We also provided trainer/subject matter expert support to our neighbours in Mid Glamorgan to run hillwalking permit training at Plas Dolygaer and climbing/abseiling permit training at CRAI Activity Park.

Planning for the transformation of our volunteer experience has continued, although somewhat delayed nationally now – moving from training to learning, and a focus on "Growing Roots" and "Branching Out". While we need to be prepared for change, the message right now is "business as usual", but planning continues for a training weekend in the autumn, a full diary of First Response courses.

I will also be looking imminently to build the new Volunteering Development team for Gwent, which will have a slightly altered remit to the current Area Training Team. Information and recruitment to some key roles will be out shortly.

Peter Sheppard, Volunteering Development Team Leader
(currently Area Training Manager)

June 2024

Wood Badge roll of honour

Congratulations to the following on being awarded their Wood Badge during 2023*.

Lisa Michael	1st Pontnewydd	Section Leader - Cub Scouts
Jason Jones	1st Panteg (St Marys)	Section Leader - Beaver Scouts
Mark Bevan	1st Panteg (St Marys)	Assistant Section Leader - Beaver Scouts
Sam Howells	29th Newport	Assistant Section Leader - Scouts
Gareth Oakley	24th Newport	Group Scout Leader
Leah Cozzi	28th Newport	Assistant Section Leader - Beaver Scouts
Leah Cozzi	28th Newport	Section Leader - Squirrel Scouts
Sue Friis-Jones	1st Marshfield	Section Leader - Scouts
Sue Meyler	1st Caerleon (Newport)	Assistant Section Leader - Scouts
'Bear' Griffiths	1st Henllys	Assistant Section Leader - Scouts
Joanna Attwood	1st Marshfield	Section Leader - Beaver Scouts
Max Bennett	Monmouthshire	District Section Leader - Explorer Scouts
Max Bennett	1st Sedbury and Tidenham	Assistant Section Leader - Scouts
Lesley O'Connell	1st Gilwern	Assistant Section Leader - Squirrel Scouts
Jeremy Thomas	1st Henllys	Section Leader - Scouts
Martin Young	1st Usk (Burrium)	Assistant Section Leader - Scouts
Liz Fox-Tucker	1st Shirenewton	Section Leader - Beaver Scouts
Derek Lee	1st Sedbury and Tidenham	Assistant Section Leader - Cub Scouts
Andrew Lewis	1st Gilwern	Assistant Section Leader - Scouts
Damian Isaac	Newport	Assistant District Commissioner (Section Support) - Scouts
Ellie Fordham	Monmouthshire	District Youth Commissioner
Stephen Johnson	1st Garndiffaith (St. John's)	Section Leader - Beaver Scouts
Ellie Fordham	1st Wyesham	Assistant Section Leader - Cub Scouts
Rob Tapper	Monmouthshire	Assistant Section Leader - Explorer Scouts
Sarah Withers	Monmouthshire	District Assistant Commissioner - Inclusion
Tessa Lama	Goytre Scout Group	Group Scout Leader
Damian Isaac	28th Newport	Assistant Section Leader - Scouts
Jon Harris	Monmouthshire	Assistant Section Leader - Explorer Scouts
Tessa Lama	Monmouthshire	District Section Leader - Explorer Scouts
Natalie Marshall	1st Cwm	Assistant Section Leader - Beaver Scouts
Michael Marshall	1st Cwm	Section Leader - Beaver Scouts
Alex Hawkins	Monmouthshire	District Commissioner
Joanne Share	1st Shirenewton	Assistant Section Leader - Beaver Scouts
Joanne Share	1st Shirenewton	Assistant Section Leader - Scouts
Justine Belsten	1st Magor	Section Leader - Squirrel Scouts
Susan Monk	1st Magor	Section Leader - Squirrel Scouts
Alan Brook	1st Wentwood (Newport)	Assistant Section Leader - Scouts
Emma Henson	1st Wentwood (Newport)	Assistant Section Leader - Cub Scouts
Karen Sweet	1st Wentwood (Newport)	Assistant Section Leader - Beaver Scouts
Tracey Knapp	1st Brynmawr	Group Scout Leader
Janine Lyford	1st Magor	Assistant Section Leader - Scouts

Bella Watkins	Newport	Assistant Section Leader - Explorer Scouts
Luke Sloan	1st Caerleon (Newport)	Section Leader - Beaver Scouts
Chris Arthur	1st Caerleon (Newport)	Group Scout Leader
James King	29th Newport	Assistant Section Leader - Cub Scouts
Graham Mccarthy	1st Wyesham	Section Leader - Beaver Scouts
Richard Garner	1st Wyesham	Section Leader - Cub Scouts
Peter Martell	26th Newport	Assistant Section Leader - Scouts
Sian Phillips	The Abergavenny Scout Group	Section Leader - Squirrel Scouts
Nicola Richings	1st Magor	Assistant Section Leader - Beaver Scouts
Paul Smith	1st Rogerstone	Group Scout Leader
Steve McCarthy	1st Marshfield	Group Scout Leader
Dan Clark	26th Newport	Section Leader - Scouts
Shelley Clark	26th Newport	Assistant Section Leader - Beaver Scouts

** Data only available for those holding an active role within Gwent when this report was compiled in June 2024. A number of these are data corrections where people already holding a Wood Badge have changed section/group recently, and had their training for the new appointment marked as completed on Compass.*

Botany Bay Campsite – Warden's Report AGM June 2024

Bookings for the year have again been strong with the site used most weekends during the spring, summer &autumn, and some weekends during the winter. Last summer was also busy with a few longer stays by School groups prior to the School holidays, and also Scout& Guide groups during the school holidays. Verbal feedback is always positive – the leaders and young people enjoying the peace and tranquillity of the site, and the freedom the woods provide. I have noticed a couple of cancellations this year, mainly due to insufficient leader support.

Service Team Actions taken

Based on the "**Safety in Scout Premises**" zoom meeting held in February, I have printed out the audit paperwork – and am slowly working my way through. One of the key points raised was the **fixed wiring check**. We had one completed on 23rd April, which highlighted no urgent actions needed. One of the recommendations was around access to the main consumer unit in Stores 1 – so a section of shelving has been removed to improve the access, and the minor points are being addressed. The annual **PAT testing** was completed in December, together with the chimney sweep & log burner inspection and fire extinguisher checks.

The **water system** has been updated to provide increased pressure (about 2.5 bar) to the buildings (not field taps) and UV filtration on demand to buildings. The next step is to UV filter the holding tank by rotating the water through the filter, which will then give UV filtration to the field taps as well. Then we can assess the water quality on UV only and compare it to the current human-intervention intensive chlorination system. We also had the pump solenoid replaced professionally.

We've had a number of **Area Work days** during the year, aiming for one every three or four months. These have not been well supported recently, but a small number of people have attended, and contributed significantly to the ongoing maintenance of the site.

A number of local scout groups have assisted the Service Crew in tackling the ongoing issue of the **Himalayan Balsam** invading the lower part of the site adjacent to the A466. This will be an ongoing issue, but I am hopeful that the task will become more manageable in a couple of years.

Since January, we have suffered from further significant damage to the camping field from **wild boar**. So far, I have asked the Scout groups staying the following weekend whether they'd be happy to do an hour or so to repair the turf, and I'm pleased to say that all groups have helped out so far.

The **lodge guttering over the balcony** has been leaking at the joints despite at least three attempts to repair and seal them. The new fittings are all slightly different, and don't fit the old gutters. The guttering & down pipes have been replaced (as the new profiles don't fit the existing down-pipes!)

After the extensive replacement of slates on roof of **Zena's Chalet**, it was noticed that several structural pieces of wood on the veranda had become rotten. The Service Team spent two days cutting out and replacing the rotten timber, and making good. This is only temporary repair – and we plan a veranda re-build project during the better weather. We've also noticed some staining on the ceiling and found a **hornet nest** in the roof space – luckily without anyone getting stung! The nest was then cleared, and then the ceiling stain proofed and repainted.

We've had the **Tree Survey** repeated around the buildings, campfire and chapel areas. This highlighted one large tree that has been professionally dead-wooded, one felled by the Service Team, and one to keep an eye on. The service crew have also felled or cleared a number of trees that came down over the winter storms, and logged and split the wood for use by site users.

Natural Resources Wales (NRW) have completed work their side of our boundary to remove a dead bow on the top Black Pine on the drive, crown lift the Beech overhanging the car park, and remove further Ash (with die back) on their land adjacent to the far corner of the camping field.

The Service Crew have also cleaned the moss off the slate roofs, cleaned the gutters, spent hours blowing and clearing dead leaves from around the buildings and car parks, repaired numerous wooden fences and dry stone walls, and have made a start on repairing and repainting the badge in the garden.

The lodge loft boarding has been extended and LED lighting improved, to aid safety during essential maintenance, and the kitchen wall unit has been re-hung.

Priorities for future work

1. Attracting more people from the local area to help with the ongoing maintenance and development of the site
    a. This is really important, mindful of the length of service of the majority of the Service Team
    b. Newly retired people would be ideal – to avoid poaching busy parents and scout leaders
2. Completion of the Safety in Scout Premised Audit paperwork
3. Ongoing tree work – felling / cutting up fallen or leaning trees
4. Replacement of the marquee roof with a permanent structure
    a. I estimate that the marquee roof probably has only a couple more seasons due to tears and broken straps. I'm not convinced that it is economical to repair. The Service Team are not able to put the roof on and take it off without help. A permanent structure would require planning permission and a significant investment – but would enable the continuation of this well-used part of the site infrastructure into the future.
5. Continuing to hit the balsam to avoid further invasion
6. Widening the gap at the rear of the three cabins to enable safe working at height
    a. Access to roof level is required for slate repairs, clearing moss and emptying gutters but there is little even ground for the ladders
    b. Widening the gap around the cabins will enable use of the scaffold tower
    c. This is likely to need the use of a mini-digger

The reason why we can continue to offer such cheap prices (for example £2.50p per head per night compared to £6.50p at Woodhouse Park) is due to the weekly volunteering of the service crew. However, numbers reduced in 2022 due to age, and we are desperate for new members if we are going to keep the site running safely. If you know anyone not in full time work – then please do encourage them to join the Service Crew. We currently meet on a Tuesday between 9am to mid-afternoon. You don't need to be there every week – just come when you want to / are able. Those with maintenance / DIY skills, chainsaw experience or an ability to repair 2 stroke power tools would find themselves busy, although there is also a constant stream of tasks not requiring these skills,

such as painting, cleaning, leaf blowing etc. If you'd like to help but can't make a Tuesday – please do contact me.

Dave PHIPPS

3rd June 2024Email: botanybaywarden@gmail.com

Scouts
Blaenau Gwent

Blaenau Gwent Lead Volunteer (District Commissioner) Report

AGM Report 2023/2024

This has been the hardest AGM report to ever write as I know it is going to be my last following my decision to step away from Scouting due to work and family commitments. Trying to give 100% to any business is difficult but trying to combine a hospitality business with Scouting is now becoming impossible. It was a very difficult decision and I have shed a lot of tears, but I have to put myself, my family and my business first and I can no longer give the commitment to Scouting that I need to. After almost 33 years officially as a leader and the first 18 years of my life being involved in an amazing organisation, it's going to be strange. I am truly grateful for the friendships, experiences and memories that Scouting has given me over the years. Many of these friendships may never realise the huge impact that they have had on my life and some still continuing to do so.

Anyway, enough about me here's my report for the AGM.

This past year has seen yet another increase in membership at the close of Census 2024. Squirrels were up by 4, Beavers up by 10, Cubs up by 13, Scouts up by 9. Explorers up by 2 and Adult Volunteers up by 6. Network saw a decrease of 1 which gives us an overall figure of 221 members up by 43 from 2023 Census. It may only be a small increase, but it is a positive sign for Scouting in Blaenau Gwent. I also know that both Brynmawr & Cwm have had new volunteers and I have had a very good number of enquiries come through over the last 3 months for all groups , so this figure should be higher again. Well done everyone.

Blaina HQ was finally handed back to the Council on December 11th. Thank you to everyone who gave up their time to help clear the building.

Campsite is going strong thanks to the dedication, time and commitment from Allison, Rich, Cherry & team. It's not an easy task with your own family and work commitments as well as running your sections. You are all amazing and still absolute stars. Keep those bookings coming in and hopefully our own District will make more use of it in the future.

Training has always been the hardest to sort out in Blaenau Gwent. This year has finally seen a huge turn round with all Compliance training being completed in time resulting in us getting 100% compliance reports for quite a few months now. This is something I never thought would be possible when I took on the role of DC. I know I have been a nag, but it has paid off 😊 Thank you each and every one of you.

I will end my report as I always do with my heartfelt thanks to you all. We are still and probably always will be the smallest District in Gwent, but the dedication shown by you all as volunteers never goes unnoticed. We don't like change in the beginning, but we get there, we accept it and we work with it. It just takes us a little longer than others. (we are valleys people, and we will

never change) The next few months will be different for a while, but I know that the experiences and support you give to the young people will not faulter.

Volunteering is a choice, and you are all doing an amazing job. Your dedication to your groups and your young people is very much appreciated. You are all doing Blaenau Gwent proud. From the bottom of my heart, I thank you all and wish you all the best for your futures.

Amanda

Scouts
Monmouthshire

09th June 2024

Monmouthshire District Report for Gwent Area AGM 2024

2023-2024 has been a buoyant year for Scouting within Monmouthshire. I'm pleased to be reporting another strong year on census growth, with growth in adult volunteers picking up since the census numbers were recorded.

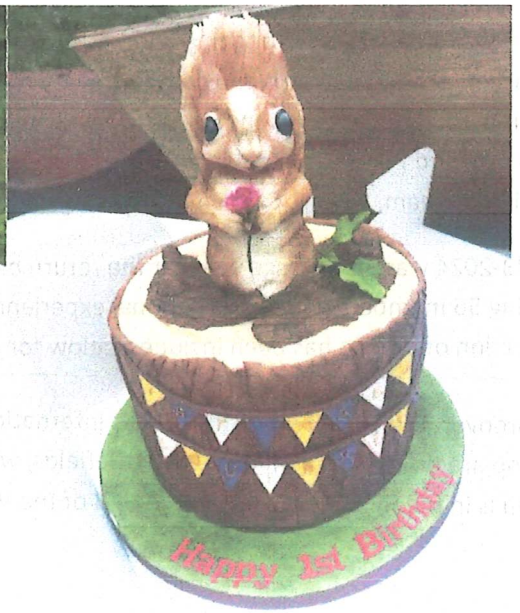
Across the board, we have seen more events, more community engagement, and activity rocketing towards pre-pandemic levels for a full recovery.

Summer 2023 also saw the return of international Scouting with 56 members having head off to the Dolomites for an action packed week of adventures. Progress is further being made on two planned international expeditions for the summer of 2024, with a possible third in the pipeline for later in the year!

Squirrels

This year has been all about Squirrels within Monmouthshire. Since this time last year, we've opened 3 new Squirrel Dreys - bringing our total to 7! and it continues to be the section that is driving growth in both young people and adult volunteers at the highest rate.

We've also had our first four Squirrels Nights-Away events, with Squirrels venturing as far as West-Midland Safari Park for an exciting weekend away. Squirrels continues to thrive, and my personal aim is to have two more Dreys open by the end of the year.



Scouts
Monmouthshire

Beavers

Beavers has remained our strongest section across district with waiting list demand growing by the day. We've seen one additional colony open this year to accommodate growing demand, but similar is needed across the district. Lots of work has also been ongoing to recruit new Beaver leaders, and this is beginning to show some success.

Monmouthshire will be hosting our first joint Squirrel and Beaver event in July, making good use of Area's Botany Bay facility.

Cubs

Cubs has maintained healthy numbers throughout 2023-2024, with natural growth requiring new sections that will be opening from September. Whilst we still have a substantial cub-waiting list, lots of work has brought these numbers down towards a more manageable condition.

I'm also pleased to say that we have recruited new, additional Cub leaders in over half of the cub sections!

Cubs are once again looking forwards to the return of the Evan Thomas Challenge in October, as well as the Davy cup later in the year.

Scouts

Lots of activity has been ongoing within the Scouts sections, with the majority of groups now trying to achieve dragon awards and camping every month. In addition to this, we've seen Scouts making their mark right across Monmouthshire and beyond with groups attending Forest-Fest (a Jamboree in Sherwood Forest), a regular stream of groups heading underground, thanks to the Gwent Land Activities Team, Sailing, Canoeing, Kayaking and much, much more!

2023-2024 was also a huge year for the return of international Scouting with Raglan Scout Group taking 56 members on an international experience of a lifetime to the Dolomites in northern Italy. A selection of photos has been included below for your perusal.

Moreover, there are two further Scout internationals in the pipeline for this summer; 2nd Caldicot troop are off the Belgium and the Battlefields, whilst Shirenewton are headed for KISC. Planning for both is in the final stages, with section B of the VA form due for signing in the next 4 weeks or so.

Scouts
Monmouthshire

Explorers

Explorers has once again had a strong year with plenty of activity across the sections. This year, we've seen groups competing in Monopoly runs in London, Manchester, and Bristol, as well as attending international Jamborees and continuing to support younger sections through the Young Leaders scheme.

In 2023-2024, Monmouthshire has awarded 14 top Awards to Explorers. This has included Young Leader belts, DofE Bronze awards, and Platinum and Diamond Awards.

Network

Network remains steady with little activity due to a lack of DSNC and leadership team. This is something we will look to address through the delayed transformation programme. Despite this, Monmouthshire was able to celebrate Laura Willingham attending Windsor castle in April as part of her King's Scout Award presentation.

Tudor Cule Campsite

Owing to significant weather damage over the winter, the decision was made to close Tudor Cule Campsite earlier in the year. This decision has been made on safety grounds as we can't presently guarantee the safety of the site.

In light of this, a programme of works has been launched to make the site safe and the site will not re-open until the risks have been properly mitigated. The public footpath has been secured and signage erected at all possible entrance points to the site, demarcating that entrance is not permitted without authorisation.

NRW visited the site on the 25th March to carry out an assessment of the damage caused to the river bank due to prior flooding, and a list of recommendations is currently under review such that the appropriate works license may be obtained.

The local community have rallied together behind the site and we've seen amazing support from the local village to help get the site back to its former glory.

There is a lot of work still to do, however we hope to have the site fully operational once again for the 2025 summer season.

Scouts
Monmouthshire

Notable Events:

We once again had very strong attendance at the district St George's day event and have seen buoyant growth off the back of it. Some photos are below for interest.

If anyone hasn't seen the media article released following the event – I strongly urge you to have a read. It's a very nice piece that has captured the spirit of the event really well.

https://www.abergavennychronicle.com/news/scouts-st-georges-day-parade-at-raglan-castle-681949?utm_term=Autofeed&utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Facebook&fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTEAAR2KZOQBZq5HlDgLCMxoFJu1tImJCVJJqDTsDHazXKAJ8ykBo1FwA85-aJc_aem_ARu0iNJT1Y3WDTiay6M02sOnstgag13Fp3mTw0GYZh2z_6LHmKEg-mbK86SDuee599ceFG0SFDe_1GUY7XOjLPwq#Echobox=1713975467

1st Sedbury and Tidenham Scout Group had the pleasure of celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2023. To celebrate, the group hosted a group wide camp at Woodhouse Park, jam packed with activities and fun for all ages.

In addition to this, Monmouthshire once again hosted the PeaceLight on its global journey at Christmas time. A huge thank-you to Andrew Lewis from Gilwern Scout group who helped the PeaceLight on its journey, collecting it from Swindon before handing the light onwards to journey to Bethlehem (In South Wales!)

In its 37th year, the Peace Light from Bethlehem campaign was originally organised by the Austrian Broadcasting Company - ORF (Linz) - and was part of a large charitable relief mission - Light into Darkness, for children in need in Austria and abroad. Since 1986 there has been a great deal of co-operation between Scouts and Guides in many countries which has allowed the light to travel throughout Europe, such that the light is passed on to 30 European Countries and for the past few years, on to North America, Mexico and Canada . Each year, a child from Upper Austria kindles a flame from the "Eternal Flame" from the Nativity Grotto in Bethlehem where Jesus was born. The light is then flown to Austria from where it is distributed at a Service of Dedication to delegations from across Europe who take it back, with a message of Peace, to their own countries for use at ecumenical services throughout the Continent. Scouts and Guides can then take the light on to other churches, hospitals, old people homes, prisons, and places of public, cultural and political importance - to anybody that appreciates the significance of the "gift". In past years the light has been presented to Pope John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI, Pope Francis, Mikhail Gorbatshow, the former King Hussain of Jordan, EU President Romano Prodi and other member of the European parliament in Strazbourg, the UN Troops in Kosovo and continues to be taken to Ground Zero, New York.

Summary

Overall, 2023-2024 has been a very strong year for Monmouthshire Scouts and this momentum continues to drive into 2024-2025. The return of larger events and more ambitious endeavours has really picked up right across district, and that is gratifying to see at all levels.

The biggest challenge facing Monmouthshire is the ever growing waiting lists and demand for more Scouting places to be available for young people. At the time of writing, there are 341 young people on waiting lists across Monmouthshire. Adult recruitment is the single biggest blocker to enabling progress in this area and therefore remains the top priority to address.

I would like finish by extending a thank you to every single volunteer who continues to make such a difference to the lives of young people across Monmouthshire.

General Notes for Gwent Area Trustees Awareness.

- District AGM pencilled in for the W/C 16th September – to be confirmed mid-July.
- Monmouthshire District Camp will be held on 13th-15th June 2025

NEWPORT
DISTRICT SCOUTS

Another year has flown by and Scouting in Newport has continued to grow year on year.

We started preparing for the, much anticipated, Transformation programme as Gwent was originally one of the pilot Areas for implementation. However, Gwent was withdrawn and Clwyd stepped in. Unfortunately due to the challenges presented by the digital transfer HQ ultimately decided to postpone the transfer programme. Having made considerable progress with the preparation we were left in limbo. Nevertheless Scouts Cymru gave us the go ahead to "crack on." Hence the core Team is complete with considerable work done on the constitution of the Teams. I must pay tribute to the Team of ADC`s for the way they have accepted the potential changes. Hence when the green light is given across the board, we will be ready in Newport. So that changes will be less daunting to personnel I have allowed everyone to employ the new role titles so that we will all be used to them when the time comes. There are a lot of new ideas being muted by the Teams.

A number of people across the District have received National recognition for the contributions they have made to Scouting over the years. Congratulations to each and everyone of them, and a very big heartfelt thank you for all your contributions

On the financial side the District as a whole has been very fortunate. The 28th Newport applied to the National Lottery for a grant to purchase their premises, expecting them to use the match funding option, but the Lottery generously came across for the total amount allowing the 28th to make the outright purchase. Later they applied to the Welsh Government to purchase neighbouring woodland. However the Government said no but allowed them a long term lease at a peppercorn rent.

We discovered with some shock that a local man had sadly passed away and left a considerable amount of money in his will to the members of Newport Scouts. We are engaged in an exercise to determine how best to use the bequest thus leaving a long term legacy to the young people in Newport Scouts. All investigations by us and HQ have drawn a complete blank as to any reasoning for the bequest since the donor had no involvement in Scouting recorded in his younger days Indeed it was a very kind and generous gift which the Trustees undertake to use to the benefit of the young people of Newport and with long term appreciation of the legacy.

We have achieved a number of Wood Badges through the year which bears testimony to the integrity of the adults involved in Scouting in Newport. With the support and guidance of the Training personnel we can continue to build on our successes.

Another positive factor is the development of the new Squirrel Section. We currently have four Dreys across the District. We will be opening another at the 22nd Newport on September 4th. The current Sections had a District funday at CRAI Campsite with a good attendance from the Dreys and a good lot of fun and enjoyment. Undoubtedly it will be the first of many.

Our SWAT Unit have had another successful year on the water at Llandegfedd. They continued to offer a full programme to the young people. In addition they were able to offer adults the opportunity to enhance their skills and obtain further qualifications in line with the RYA criteria.

It is a privilege to be part of a very pro-active District. I am very proud of what we have achieved together. My heartfelt thanks and appreciation goes to my Teams and their associates for all the time and effort they put into the development of Scouting in Newport. I don't forget our spouses and partners who support us. Without that support we couldn't do what we do.

To everyone.....**thankyou.**

As we look forward to the future, our actual Transformation is looming. It calls for change in the way we do things, our structure, and our titles. Let's embrace these changes together and look forward to a positive future, meeting and pursuing the.....

.....**challenge and opportunity**.

Steve Crowley

District Commissioner/Lead Volunteer

Scouts

Torfaen District Commissioner's Report – 2024

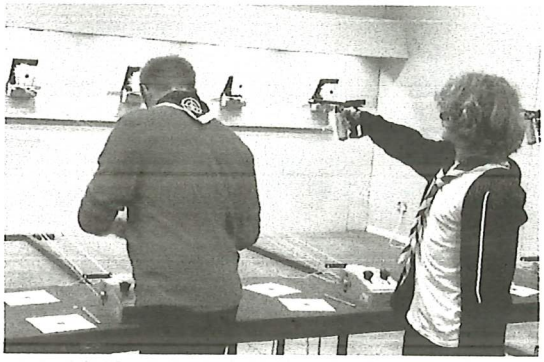
Scouts Torfaen

The last year has been another fun packed year for our young people and everyone has certainly been busy around the district.

The year kicked off with a St George's camp in Swansea, the first one for several years due to lockdown and a first time on camp for more young people than usual. Activities were split into zones with bushcraft, projectiles and games being covered. As usual there was the campfire. Unfortunately, some groups decided to leave early on the Sunday due to a bout of heavy rain overnight however we have established a great alternative venue for future events.

In May there was a Squirrel and Beaver hike which saw some of our younger members getting their first opportunity to get stuck in to Scouting activities. The following month was the turn of the Cubs as they headed north for the All Wales Cub Fun Day in Builth Wells which gave them a great opportunity to take part in a large scale event and appreciate wider Scouting across Wales. There were lots of activities to try and new friends to meet. The following weekend the Beavers had their district camp at CRAI. For many this was a first night away from home but they all had a great time and tasted selection of outdoor activities. In July the Cubs had their district camp, also at CRAI and it was good to see them progressing with their camp skills despite the weather not being what we had hoped for.

Over the summer many of the groups ran summer camps and three members of the district travelled to South Korea to attend the World Scout Jamboree at SaeManGeum. As was widely reported in the news this did not go exactly to plan due to the heatwave, flooding, tropical storm and inadequate planning to name a few. Hence only a few days was spent on the jamboree site and a lot of time exploring the capitol of Seoul.



The autumn was started by a splattering of groups and individuals supporting Gilwell reunion and Gwentrek. In October a group of Scouts and Explorers took part in the National Scout Rifles Competition at Bisley in a joint endeavour with Mid Glamorgan and had a very exciting weekend. The opportunity to try some more powerful guns than usual was a particular attraction of this event. Here's to next year and a bigger team.

In November everyone took part in the usual Remembrance parades and later in the month the Beavers had their movie night, this time in a small cinema which gave more appeal to the session.

In December we met in Crane St Church in Pontypool for the annual Christingle service which was lovely. The year ended with a Christmas Camp at Victoria site attended by a number of Scout troops plus the Explorers and others.

In January a team from District were invited to the Transformation conference in Cardiff. There was a lot of information about transformation but still no firm dates and nothing more has been received since then so it is still difficult to gauge how soon the new systems will be in place.

The district held is first projectiles competition in February to replace the Rifles competition and this was a great success with a large number of groups supporting this from across Torfaen and beyond. As well as rifles there were knockdowns, crossbows and hawks. The overall winning team was from Griffithstown so well done to them.

Throughout late February and March a small but dedicated team of leaders ran several taster sessions for four weeks in Coed Eva and Blenheim Schools. Well done to Gwyn and Billy for spearheading this initiative and we have certainly got some community impact and raised our profile in Cwmbran.

The year finished with a bang for the Beavers who had a great day out at the end of March. They visited Big Pit and then spent the afternoon having a picnic and hike around Garn lakes as well as an Easter Egg hunt. A very fun packed day indeed!

We have also managed to get more people through their Wood badge and are continuing to chase mandatory training modules. We now have everyone up to date on mandatory training and are keeping a close eye on upcoming renewals so we do not fall out of compliance.

Finally, our numbers are on the up both with young people and adults. We have moved out waiting lists to a central system which we can monitor at district level meaning if a group does not have spaces we can keep checking other groups and let people know sooner when a place is available. We have also opened a second Squirrel dray at Pontnewydd so this is helping with places for our youngest members.

We always like to reflect on those who have gone home over the year and it was with sadness that we lost Derek Robinson, Rob Powell and Diana Lewis this year.

A great thanks is given to all those leaders who have been doing a great job every week and giving up many of their weekends to run activities and camps. Seeing the young people making progress and learning skills for life makes the efforts all worthwhile. Thanks also to all the support from executive members, ASU members and other supporters.

Things are finally moving in the right direction, so the future is bright.

Yours in Scouting

Elaine Burrill, DC

Scouts
Gwent

GWENT AREA SCOUT COUNCIL

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT SUMMARY FOR THE YEAR 1 JANUARY 2023 TO 31 DECEMBER 2023

	2023 £
Total monetary receipts for the period	182,072
Total payments for the period	130,262
Net receipts for the period	52,817
Bank, cash and deposit funds carried forward	108,367

These accounts were approved by the trustees of the Gwent Area Scout Council.

Approved by the Trustees on:

Signed on their behalf by Trustees:

Edward Watts

Edward Watts
Area Chairperson

Chris Owen-Brooks

Chris Owen-Brooks
Area Treasurer

GWENT AREA SCOUT COUNCIL

RECEIPTS FOR YEAR 1 JANUARY 2023 TO 31 DECEMBER 2023

Monetary receipts	2023 Total £
Scout Association Saving Fund	325
CAF Fixed Interest Fund	336
Investment Liquidation (Note 3)	58,104
Sub total – income from investments	58,765
Membership subscriptions (see Note 2)	116,790
Area events (see Note 4)	6,314
Donations	185
Miscellaneous income (Note 5)	18
Sub total – other income	123,307
Total monetary receipts	182,072

GWENT AREA SCOUT COUNCIL

PAYMENTS FOR YEAR 1 JANUARY 2023 TO 31 DECEMBER 2023

	2023 Total £
Membership subscriptions (see Note 2)	115,645
Insurance (equipment)	743
AGM expenses	314
Volunteer expenses	755
Area events (see Note 4)	8,161
Area office broadband	546
Equipment purchases (see Note 6)	1,563
International Fund Donations (see Note 7)	2,535
Total payments	130,262

STATEMENT OF ASSETS

	31 DEC 2023 Total £
Gwent Main Account	97,576
Gwent Training Account	6,554
Gwent Events and Activity Account	4,237

Total assets	108,367

Gwent Area Scout Council

Botany Bay Activity & Campsite

Financial Statement 2023

INCOME (£)

Brought Forward from 2022	30063.09	
Site Fees	12651.85	
Donations etc	173.67	
Phone	00.00	
	42888.61	

EXPENDITURE (£)

Maintenance	1562.94	
Refund	90.00	
Services	9002.59	
Phone	318.62	
Electric	746.02	
Equipment	519.77	(£12239.94)
Cash in Bank 31.12.23	30648.67	
	42888.61	

Notes:
Donations include:- Electric Wayleave Water Payment
Maintenance includes:- Fencing, painting, step replacement and general repairs.
Services include:- Site Insurance, Grass Cutting, Fire Safety, Electrical PAT Testing, Wheelie Bins, Cesspit Clearance, Tree Survey, Chimney Sweep and Rates.
Equipment includes:-Leaf Blower, Strimmer Head and Cutting Discs etc

Explanatory Notes

1 Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis using historical costs.

Gwent Area Scout Council meets the definition of a public benefit entity under the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

2 Membership subscriptions

Membership subscription breakdown:
Scouts Cymru levy of £50.50
Gwent Area levy of 50p
was paid on 2,290 youth members.

3 Investment Liquidations

The following investment was liquidated because of a trustee vote to withdraw from the CAF Investment fund ISFL CAF Fixed Interest Fund B Accumulation due to its announced closure. Trustees rejected the offer to invest in alternative funds.

CAF Investment fund ISFL CAF Fixed Interest Fund B Accumulation Shares: 10,594.211
Value 30/12/2022 (Last valuation before sale): £12,389.93 (Unit price £116.950)
Value 18/07/2023 (Closing value): £12,155.61 (Unit price £114.738)

The following savings were returned by the Scouts Association as a result of the closure of "The Charity Deposit Account" saving scheme.

Gwent County Scouts Training Account - £5,552.35 (as at 21/06/2023)
Gwent County Scout Council - £40,395.79 (as at 21/06/2023)

4 Area events

Activity & Events:

- Young Leader residential
- Young Leader training
- Winter Camp
- Scubtrex
- Gwentrek
- Land SASU activity

Training

- Skills for nights away
- First aid training
- Adult training

5 Miscellaneous Income

This relates to payments received that have been paid to Gwent Area by mistake

6 Equipment purchases

First aid resuscitation dolls and anti-choking trainer.

7 International Fund

Payments were made in line with our international fund to:

- WSJ Adult Participant
- 1st Raglan Scout Group
- White Dragon Explorers
- Roverway Adult Participant

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the Gwent Area Scout Council (Charity no 1055372)

I report on the accounts of the Area for the period 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Accounts and related notes set out in the preceding pages.

This report is made solely to the trustees in accordance with Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011. My work has been undertaken so that I might state to the charity's trustees those matters I am required to state to them in an Independent Examiner's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's trustees for my examination work.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The Area's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. They consider that an audit is not required for this year under Section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under Section 145 of the Charities Act),
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under Section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act); and
- 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 Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Area and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and that the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent Examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, 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 130 of the Charities Act; and
   - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities 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: GARETH BEALE

Relevant professional qualification(s) or membership of professional bodies (if any): ACMA

Address: THE HIGHLANDS, 19 VSK ROAD, PONTYPOOL, TORFAEN NP4 8AG

Date: 27/05/24