

For the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024





## 1 Agenda

### **Esher District Scout Council Annual General Meeting – 2nd September 2024 – 7.30pm for 8pm start to be held at 1st Claygate Scout Centre, Oaken Lane, Claygate**

1. Introduction and welcome by David Vorbrich, Chair of the District Trustee Board
2. Apologies for absence
3. Explanation of changes to POR impacting the District
4. Governance topics
  - (a) Approve the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 14th Sept 2023
  - (b) Adopt the Esher District Constitution as agreed September 2023 with minor amends to reflect Transformation
  - (c) Note the District's financial year
  - (d) Approve appointed and community members of the District Scout Council
  - (e) Agree the number of members that may be appointed to the Trustee Board
  - (f) Agree the quorum for future meetings of the District Scout Council (excluding this AGM)
5. Review of the previous year
  - (a) The District Lead Volunteer's review of Scouting in Esher District
  - (b) Receive and consider the Annual Report of the District Trustee Board, including the annual Statement of the Accounts
6. Making appointments
  - (a) [If required] Appoint the District Chair, following recommendation from the open selection process initiated by the District Trustee Board
  - (b) [If required] Appoint the District Treasurer, following recommendation from the open selection process initiated by the District Trustee Board.
  - (c) [If required] Appoint members of the District Trustee Board, following recommendations from the open selection process initiated by the District Trustee Board
  - (d) [If required] (Re-)appoint District President and/or Vice Presidents
  - (e) Appoint the Scrutineer / Independent Examiner / Auditor
  - (f) Nominate representatives of the District Scout Council to represent the District on the County Scout Council
7. Presentations
8. Closing remarks



## 2 Minutes 2023

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Esher District Scout Council for the year ended 31st March 2023 held at 1st Claygate Scout Centre, Oaken Lane, Claygate, Esher on 14th September 2023 @ 7.45pm for 8.15pm start**

**Present** Julia Kielstra – Deputy County Commissioner, Tricia Griffin (County) and Leaders, Officers and Supporters of Esher District and Polyapes Campsite including Hugh Gostling, Mark Aulds, Andrew Burns, David Vorbrich, John Baldwin, Sue Hoad, Rosy Treasure, David Saunders, Rachel MacArthur, Anja Davidson, Chris West, Suzan Baker, Nick Fisk, Gary Ernest, Pam Escott, Tiana Humphries, Phil King, Anita Snell, Helen Amys, Tom Wilkinson, Caroline Li, Chris Daley, Hannah Clarke, Simon Clarke, Allan Carruthers, Sally Shortman, Mark Burrows, Julia Finch, Andy Davison, Chris Manning, Martin Einchcomb, Tyrone Weller, Zoe Newton, Norman Goldsmith, Jeni Bull, Neil Beardmore, George Bishop, Katie Ernest, G Renkis and Lisa Cross.

The following Explorers were also present and would be undertaking a presentation about attending the World Scout Jamboree 2023 in South Korea after the AGM – Luke Napier, Ed Cruthers, Maryla Renker, Luca Day and Samuel Worthington.

### 1) Welcome, Introduction & Prayer

Hugh introduced himself and welcomed everyone to the Esher District AGM and said it was lovely to have a good amount of people attending tonight. He then confirmed that the Scout Centre didn't contain any RAAC Concrete, but that the Scout Association would be in contact to check if anyone's building/headquarters did have any. He then thanked everybody for attending the Meeting and opened with a prayer.

### 2) Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were noted and included Joe Roberson, Carole Needham, Chris Beaney and Richard (Titch) Earthrowl.

### 3) Minutes of previous Esher District AGM held on 7th July 2022 and any Matters Arising

The previous Minutes are included within the 2023 Annual Report – but no issues or comments were made, and no matters arising were brought up – so the Minutes were marked as approved.

### 4) Changes to POR that impact the District including:

**a) Adoption/Agreement of the new Constitution** – printed copies were made available and it was noted that the Constitution had been recommended by the Board of Trustees. A couple of minor typos and misprints were raised and discussed, and it was agreed that the Constitution could be approved with those corrections made subsequently, and the final version of the constitution would be available on the District website.

**b) Confirming the date for the District's Financial Year** – this was agreed as being the 31st of March for each year.

**c) Agreeing the number of Members that may be elected to the District Trustee Board** – The current Trustees were all willing to be nominated again, and with a show of hands all Trustees were confirmed for the following year. There are 3 Ex-Officio Trustees, up to a maximum of 6 Elected Trustees. Nominated and Co-Opted Trustees will not exceed the number of Elected Trustees.

### 5) To approve the Annual Report & Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2023

**(Please also see the Accounts and Financial Review within the Annual Report)**

We hold 3 District funds:

- 1) Group Scout Leaders' Fund (GSLs' Fund)
- 2) Building Repair (Bob Aldridge) Fund
- 3) General Fund



Gary confirmed that this year's levy for the Group Scout Leaders' Fund was set at £1.50 per member – and in particular this Fund is used to support Explorers to attend the World Jamboree.

He also confirmed that the levy of £0.50 per member would be for the General Fund – and this covered items such as day to day expenditure by the District such as costs of District AGM etc. We spend a very small amount on admin as a District. Other District events and activities (for Sections – inc Beavers, Cubs etc/Duke of Edinburgh Awards) go through the General Fund and there can sometimes be issues with timings and cross over of year end funds.

The Building Fund can be used for Loans to Groups in respect of building repairs/renewals or Capital projects and can be paid back over several years but on a pre-agreed basis.

At this point, Gary said that he was happy to take any questions in respect of the Accounts. No questions were put to Gary.

Approval for the Annual Report & Accounts was proposed by Chris Daley and seconded by Anja Davidson. It was passed for approval by the Meeting with no one against it. If anyone does have any questions or comments, please contact Lisa Cross, District Secretary.

Thanks were asked to be noted to both Gary Ernest and Barry Hitchens in respect of their hard work in relation to the Accounts.

## **6) Appointment of Officers for 2023-24**

The proceedings were then passed back to Hugh to

a) Approve DC's nomination for District Chair – Hugh had put forward David Vorbrich as District Chair and as such had taken over from Harry last year. A thank you from the DC Team and on behalf of the District were passed to David for time and efforts during the last year. David said that he had grown into the role and was pleased to stay on. The approval of David Vorbrich as District Chair was passed by the Meeting by a show of hands followed by a round of applause.

David Vorbrich then continued for the other appointments as follows:

b) Elect the District Secretary - Lisa Cross was nominated as District Secretary and was currently undertaking the role. Lisa Cross was elected as District Secretary again by a show of hands and a round of applause.

c) Elect the District Treasurer - Gary Ernest was again willing to continue as District Treasurer. Gary was therefore duly elected as District Treasurer again by a show of hands and a round of applause..

d) Appoint Honorary District Examiner – although Barry Hitchens wasn't present tonight he had agreed to continue as Honorary District Examiner and received the Meetings' approval as such. Thanks were noted for Barry on behalf of his work for the District and was duly appointed.

e) Elect a Group Scouter as representative on the Surrey County Scout Council – Mark has held this role for the last couple of years and was happy to continue as Group Scouter. Mark Aulds was therefore duly elected.

f) District Commissioner nomination for members of the Esher District Trustee Board – Carole Needham had been put forward again and was happy to continue. Following a show of hands she was duly appointed.

It was pointed out at this stage that we could have other "appointed" Members here and volunteers were requested but no one put themselves forward.

g) Elect members of the Esher District Trustee Board - Peter Hanna, Stephen Valter and Chris Daley are all current Members and had agreed to stand again. Following a show of hands, all three were duly elected.

h) Elect representatives to the Polyapes Trustee Board – it was proposed that Chris Daley and Lisa Cross be elected on behalf of Esher District to continue as members of the Polyapes Management Committee. This was agreed and they were duly elected.





i) Elect members of the District Scout Council – No one put forward. It was explained that it didn't need to be a parent or a young person or involved in Scouting or having an active role. It is usually someone who just is asked to help and then becomes involved.

It was put to the Meeting that if anyone has any ideas of anyone suitable – we can add these later. Any nominations should be passed to Lisa Cross, District Secretary.

Thanks were passed to everyone who acts as an Officer on behalf of Esher District.

## 7) District Review of 2022-23

**Please also see District Commissioner Team Report within the Annual Report.**

Hugh made a point of saying it was nice to see both Julia and Tricia from County tonight. He then encouraged everyone to have a look at the Annual Report as it was a “good read” and is good at pulling together all the strands and seeing what has been going on at District level over the last 12 months. It does include details on Escapade '23 and he added his thanks again to Andrew Burns and Zoe Newton for organising the Event. He also highlighted all the Young Leader expeditions and Awards.

He advised that the current District Commissioner (DC) Team are standing down, but that as yet there is no announcement as to who will replace them. He confirmed that as a District we are the 2nd biggest within Surrey County, and that young people need Good Scouting! We want them to go through Squirrels all the way through to Explorers and as adults and future Leaders.

We need a broad network of people in Scouting and within Esher District we have it and we want to give them the best Scouting experience.

Hugh then said thank you to everyone involved within Esher District and that he was going to stop now as he wants the young people to get their chance to talk - the Explorers would get their chance at the end of the AGM!

## 8) Presentations

Hugh then made some presentations as follows:

He started by saying that quite a few Wood Badges had been presented this year, and that he didn't want to hold back and only present them at AGMs, but that people should get them asap.

**Rachel MacArthur** – was awarded her Wood Badge tonight. A big well done to Rachel.

**Norman Goldsmith “Goldy”** – Hugh presented Norman with his 60 years' service award. He has been involved with training, Patrol Leader training and also Leader training. A huge thank you and well done to Norman.

Hugh then handed over to Julia Kielstra, Deputy County Commissioner

Julia said that her experience of the DC Team – Hugh, Andrew and Mark was that if you asked a good question, you got a good answer. If you asked a “silly” question you received a “kind” answer and were treated with kindness and respect. They had done a good job with their leadership of the District and looking after everyone within it. She congratulated them on having a great Programme, strong Groups and recruitment. The District Escapade Camp was fantastic, and everyone had worked and pulled together. The Programme was passing on Scout values and skills – and she thanked every Leader within the District for this.

She said the DC Team had imagination for how the future looks and where it goes. She then led a cheer and round of applause to the current DC Team.

## 9) Thanks to those moving on from their roles

**Daniel Camp** – (District Youth Commissioner) – Daniel had undertaken this District role but had now moved to the Yorkshire Dales. He has said that he is happy to be a point of contact in the future, and although not present a round of applause was given on behalf of Daniel.

## 10) Closing Remarks and Sign Off

David then added his thank you on behalf of the District to the DC Team as well as a personal thank you from him - he had joined as District Chair during COVID and didn't know what he had signed up for – but that the Team had helped him through it all.

Suzan Baker then added her thanks to the DC Team on behalf of the GSLs across the District and said that they had all been on quite an adventure over the last 6 years! Along with help from Anja Davidson – the DC Team were then presented with a huge collection of goodies including hand sanitizer, campfire gin, campfire chairs for their onward journey, and they were advised that they were going to be missed. Thanks were also passed to the wives of the DC Team and some of the goodies were also relevant to them – see photos!

The DC Team were then all given a round of applause.

Thank you to everyone for attending the AGM and then the meeting was formally closed.





### 3 District Chair's Report

**David Vorbrich**  
District Chair

What a fantastic year for Scouting it has been across Esher District! The Covid-19 pandemic is well and truly behind us, and each Group is back into the regular swing of things after navigating restrictions over the last couple of years. We have strong membership across the District and the majority of Groups are once again managing waiting lists, showing the breadth and attractiveness of the programmes being offered.

Last year saw the introduction of The Transformation Programme introduced by The Scout Association across all sections of Scouting. Some of the main changes include the composition of Trustee Boards, the process by which we consider and appoint new volunteers, and some new titles for certain roles to emphasise the "volunteering" nature of all of our adult leaders and support roles. One of the less obvious changes is regarding the duration of some specific roles. This will become more obvious in future years, as some of our volunteers approach their limits in roles. But never fear! The clocks all reset for all roles to start in 2024.

The final, significant change coming with Transformation will be a new IT platform to replace Compass. Any migration from one IT platform to another is risk, and it is important that The Scout Association has confidence that the new system will be ready from Day 1 to support all of the activity required for Scouting. Early testing on the new system flagged some concerns, so the rollout of the new IT platform has been delayed. I'm sure that Mark will touch on this during his update, but essentially everyone needs to continue with the Transformation changes that are ready, and we will get behind the new IT platform and support its implementation when TSA says they are ready!

Last year we said thank you to our departing District Commissioner Team and welcomed our new DC Team. A transition in leadership is always a big milestone. Our previous DC Team of Hugh, Mark, and Andrew was very strong and brought a fantastic mix of experience from each. Navigating the Covid-19 restrictions was not easy, and we all celebrated how well the District (and all Groups and Sections) rose to the challenge.

Our new DC Team had some big shoes to fill!

We started with Mark, Tom, and George taking the reins to steer the District, and the





fresh injection of new talent, new ideas, and energy demonstrated the strength of our adult volunteers from across the District. This trio continued through to the end of the Scouting year, but in March we learned that George would need to step away from the DC Team. We are immensely grateful that he will continue contributing with 1st Oxshott Cubs. We are also fortunate that the duo of Mark and Tom have been able to share the DC responsibilities and carry on into the new year without missing a beat.

I know it has been a challenge and a stretch for them both!

Thank you, George, for helping with the District through last year, and for continuing your passion and support for Scouting. It is never in anyone's best interest to push beyond your limits! We all contribute what we are able, and together we are delivering an amazing experience teaching Skills for Life to the youth of Esher District!

Although it is not part of the previous year in scope for this Annual Report, I would also like to share some personal news. I have recently moved out of Claygate, where we have lived for the past twenty years, and am no longer within Esher District. I have chosen to continue serving as District Chair for a short while while the Trustee Board runs a search for a new volunteer to step forward as Chair. Part of Transformation is that all vacancies should be filled via an "open" process, and thus if anyone would like to put their name forward or make a nomination they feel would be a valuable addition to the Trustee's of Esher District, please contact Lisa or myself.

Finally, I would like to thank all of our adult volunteers! You help to run weekly sections, camps, hikes, competitions, and so many activities across our eleven Groups. There is also significant support through fundraising, administration, and District activities. And also, thank you to our volunteer Group and District Trustees who oversee the finances and risks of our charitable activities. Without your time and effort, there would be no Scouting. Thank you so much, for another year!

## 4 District Commissioner Team's Report

**Mark Burrows & Tom Wilkinson**  
District Lead Volunteers

The past year has been one of many achievements across the District. We have built on the strong consistent foundation while also one heralding some change and transition - responding to the ever-changing world we operate in. Examples of those achievements are captured in the Annual Report and show a vibrant District continuing to deliver against the 4 Ps of the Vision – Places, People, Perception and Programme.

Esher is the second largest district in the County, whose dedicated leaders so impressively deliver the Scout Association vision of preparing young people with skills for life, supported by amazing volunteers that deliver an inspiring programme.

Therefore, heartfelt thanks has to go to all the volunteers across the District who work so hard to deliver this; you individually and collectively, have made a significant difference to the young people in Esher.

On this note, it was very encouraging to see so many prestigious Scouting awards presented to Esher leaders through the year; many congratulations to all the worthy recipients.

At the district level, particular thanks goes to the Group Scout Leaders (GSLs) whose tireless leadership continues to be so important, and along them the Assistant District Commissioners (ADCs) who continue to deliver such valuable section specific programme and events. Other critical roles, whose work is so important but often unseen, are the Appointments team, the Training advisors, the Nights Away advisers and of course the Trustees who have been so ably led by David Vorbrich. Finally on a personal basis, special thanks has to go to Lisa Cross and David Saunders whose dedication, work rate and insight has been invaluable for the smooth running of the district, and ensuring the DC team can be effective.

In December 2023, the previous DC team handed over to a new team; we are greatly appreciative to Hugh, Andrew and Mark Aulds for their hard work and efforts during their tenure.





The new team, originally three but due to other commitments now a team of two – Tom Wilkinson and Mark Burrows, outlined their plans for the first half of 2024 to include:

1. A smooth transition from the old DC Team to the new DC Team; including a plan to meet all the key people within the District either individually or collectively.
2. Delivering on the goals of the Transformation Project – including what it consists of and embracing the changes but dealing with it as a way of evolution.
3. Completing the 2024 Census and supporting the new Trustee set up.
4. Re-issuing the Esher Vision and re-invigorating the goals with support from the GSLs for 2024:
  - (a) increasing the number of “Top awards” including the KSA.
  - (b) increasing the number of young people volunteering as leaders
  - (c) strengthening the sense of team across the district
  - (d) increasing the number of activity permits, and the access to activities offered to all sections
  - (e) successful implementation of the transformation project changes

The change of the DC team (now called District Lead Volunteers) is indicative of the broader transition led by The Scouts Association of some key aspects of Scouting that started in 2024. The Transformation will get further momentum in 2025 and beyond. From an Esher District perspective, any future changes will build on a strong foundation, ensuring that fundamental day to day scouting will be enhanced by an improved programme, enabling volunteers, delivering better IT and providing a more team-based approach.

While we will maintain all that is flourishing in the District, nevertheless the programme of transition in the year ahead is important to strengthen how we deliver Scouting in the District. For all our collective success there are areas where improvements are both possible and necessary.

### **Safeguarding**

In this regard **Safeguarding** of both the young people and volunteers is a number one priority; the death of an Explorer Scout on the Great Orme and the change of Safeguarding reporting approach has brought this in to sharp focus.

Firstly, the events at Great Orme were a tragedy that everyone in Scouting regrets. Scouting prides itself on providing interesting, challenging and adventurous activities. Nevertheless, in this instance more could have been done to have averted the risk. Based on TSA's published response, all Esher District leaders must themselves be proactive in ensuring safety is embedded as part of our culture. In practise this includes completing and following **risk assessments**, written or dynamic for all activities and taking immediate appropriate action if the situation arises. Leaders should escalate any concerns to their GSL, DC, or County if necessary.

Secondly, the new Safeguarding reporting has seen the DC/DLV's actively involved in a number of investigations with the TSA Safeguarding team (some minor, others more serious) all investigated fully and time consuming. The main message is that all leaders must be trained in Safety and Safeguarding, and in order to protect the young people and themselves follow the training, POR and use their common sense.

On the same theme, it is ever more important that all leaders are up to date with their **training** to ensure the programme is inspiring while also safe and varied.

### **Programme**

Core to the transformation programme, and an area where Esher can improve, we need to develop a more **“Youth-led” programme** to both maintain the vibrancy of Esher Scouting, plus keep it relevant and ensure a natural succession journey across the District. In this regard we are actively recruiting young person representation as Trustees and at the 14-24 District Team.

### **Organisation**



Finally, we need to move to a new **“team-based” Organisation** approach following the new Transformation guidelines from the TSA and County; both of whom are rolling this out from September 2024. We have developed a district Organisation draft with a plan to move to this approach across all groups in the district between 1<sup>st</sup> October and 1<sup>st</sup> December. This is in part to be ready for the new IT system which we anticipate being introduced by the end of the year. These changes will include utilising the new titles such as District Lead Volunteer instead of District Commissioner.

**In summary** the District has much to celebrate, and so many leaders to be thankful for. In the spirit of continued improvement whilst responding to the real-world environment we inhabit, we will embrace the evolutionary changes ahead to make sure we can continue to make a positive transformative impact to our young people, and leaders.

Your continued collective support in this regard is both critical and much appreciated.

Yours in Scouting,

Mark Burrows, Tom Wilkinson

## 5 Section Reports

### 5.1 Squirrels

Anja Davidson  
GSL Oxshott

When I sat to write this report last year we had just one Squirrel drey in Esher district with about 10 Squirrels.

A lot has happened since with another 3 Drey's opening. 1<sup>st</sup> Molesey opened their Drey in the summer term 2023, Followed by 1<sup>st</sup> Cobham in February 2024 and then shortly after by 2<sup>nd</sup> Molesey in May 2024. As a district we currently have 60 active Squirrels. It is projected this will go up to 80 Squirrels across the 4 Drey's come September.



Squirrels take part in very similar activities as the rest of the sections. They are extremely engaging and inquisitive as a group and ALL volunteers involved with Squirrels always walk away pleasantly surprised by their enthusiasm.



Over the last year there seems to have been a similar theme across all Drey's with all taking part in the local community in one way or another. The “Local Superhero” badge is popular with visits to and from the local police and police horses, the local vets and the local fire station. Community engagement has also been top on the list with several groups taking part in litter picking, allotments visits and “growing their own chips” courtesy of Cobham Squires Garden centre. The “Brilliant Builder” badge is also popular with squirrels building dens and getting creative with Lego.



Our Squirrels have also taking parts in other events that the rest of our sections do, Such as Remembrance Day Parade, St Georges Day. The two Molesey groups took part in Molesey Carnival. Again the squirrels were also invited to "Beaver fun day" and enjoyed the story of "The Wizard of Oz". Camping and overnights are also being introduced to Squirrels, with Oxshott Squirrels who have been camping with their parents both at Oxshott's Family Camp, but also their end of Summer term sleepover. 1<sup>st</sup> Cobham is planning their first Squirrel Sleepover for September 2024.



As Squirrels are expanding in numbers we are looking into having our first joining District Social "Squirrel Scurry" in the autumn term.

We must also say thank you to all the wonderful leaders who run the sections, aptly assisted by the wonderful Young Leaders who help weekly. This is particularly important, showing Squirrels the progression through the Groups. Parent engagement is also very high in this age group and much appreciated by the leaders due to the child:adult ratio. Hopefully this introduction will give us new adult members and volunteers.

## 5.2 Beavers

**Tiana Humphries**  
Assistant District Commissioner (Beavers)

Esher District Beaver leaders aim to deliver a balanced programme to all our Colonies, taking up the challenge provided by the County Matrix for Beavers in "developing personal independence and care for others" by covering Core Scouting when providing weekly meetings and other events.





To reflect our aim, Beavers have been participating in a wide range of activities including those outdoor, such as nature walks, shelter building, night walks, learning camp crafts, backwoods cooking, orienteering, enjoying campfires, caving, cycling and learning navigation skills. We have been considering the world around us when making bird kebabs, a bug hotel, going on litter picks, planting, taking part in the RSPB bird count and building bird feeders. Beavers have also had an opportunity to make visits into the local community, including a fire station, Imber Court Police horses, RNLI Teddington, St. Paul's church as well as the local Buddhist temple. A special mention regarding 1 st Claygate Beavers' visit to the nursing home where their VP Graham Gibbs is now a resident (he had served the District in a number of roles from 1977 to 2018). There was a huge affinity between the Beavers and the elderly during the visit and their interaction was a joy. Beavers have also learned first aid, about Chinese New Year, Burns Night, making pancakes for Shrove Tuesday, circus skills, science experiments and stop frame animation. We participate in lots of creativity, for example, making smoothies, mug cakes, shadow puppets, junk modelling as well as creating salt dough ornaments. Some of our Beavers have been very fortunate when they've been kayaking, sailing, stand-up paddle boarding, tenpin bowling, playing mini golf and sledging. Lots of Colonies around the District provided activities to celebrate the King's Coronation, helping to create memories for our Beavers. All Colonies offer camping or indoor sleepovers, providing Beavers their first nights away before moving onto the older Sections.



By offering our young people this selection of new experiences naturally allows them to gain activity badges, Challenge badges and subsequently the Chief Scout Bronze Award, which is a wonderful way of recognising their achievements. Well done to all of our Beavers, who at the beginning of their Scouting journey have already gained so many skills.



Over 200 Beavers attended Escapade in June 2023, either joining us on Saturday morning until Sunday morning if they were staying over or as day visitors on Saturday. Despite the heat, Beavers had a lot of fun with so many different activities provided by all Scout Groups, on-site Walton Firs activities as well as hired in inflatables. The activities were wide ranging and for the Beavers included aerial runway, stomp rockets, campfire popcorn, cooking sausage dampers, circus skills, maze, bouldering wall, obstacle course, space hopper football, fire lighting, adventure course, crafts and more. We also held a tug-of-war competition for all of the Beavers, which was very exciting and well supported and we congratulate 1<sup>st</sup> Hinchley





Wood for winning the competition. Escapade was a great experience for Beavers whether they were day visitors, campers under canvas or sleeping indoors.



The District Team of Beaver leaders worked well together in providing our annual Beaver Party in February 2024. About 180 Beavers attended the event, this year themed The Wizard of Oz, spending their afternoon making scarecrow puppets, character masks, decorating lion biscuits, playing games, as well as watching a superb interactive show performed by the Cat's Grin Theatre Company, always a highlight of the afternoon. The Beaver Party runs very smoothly, the Beavers have a great deal of fun proving this to be a very successful event.

Beavers also have the opportunity to take part in various Remembrance and St. George's Day parades and/or services, the District Cross Country Run as well as the County organised online Reach for the Stars and Beavers Go Wild held at Bentley Copse. Our congratulations to The Dittons Toronto Colony for winning the Beaver Team trophy at the District Cross Country Run in October 2023.

1<sup>st</sup> Molesey has opened their second Beaver Colony this year, which means Esher District now has 16 Colonies with approximately 360 Beavers.

I offer a warm welcome to all of our new leaders and an enormous 'thank you' to all those involved in the Beaver Section, you have given your time to provide the fun-filled activities mentioned above, without your help Esher District Beavers wouldn't be experiencing the sensational range of activities that they do. My sincere thanks to David Cooper as District Beaver Leader for your advice and guidance to me and for your dedication to Esher District Beavers over so many years.

### 5.3 Cubs

**Sue Hoad**  
**Assistant District Commissioner (Cubs)**

I would like to start by saying thank you to all the Cub Leaders and their teams who have given their time to ensure Cubs across Esher District have continued to enjoy scouting.

I would also like to welcome the new Cub Leaders and other team members and hope to meet you all at future events.

It was a busy June for the Cubs (and especially the Cub Leaders and helpers) with first SCRAM swiftly followed the next weekend by Escapade. Over 3000 Cubs and Brownies converged on Hook Road Arena for a day of fun activities organised by Surrey Scouts. There were large inflatables and rides bought in by the Surrey Scouts organisers and, in addition, each District put on a range of activities from Escape Rooms, cooking marshmallows to various paracord keyrings and woggles, pioneering, games and much, much more. Thank you to all the Leaders and their teams who not only gave up their Saturday to run the activities the packs in Esher District put on but also some of Friday afternoon and evening setting up. I am sure all the Cubs (and Brownies) really enjoyed the day.



The following weekend it was Escapade – the Esher District camp for everyone from Squirrels to Explorers to adults to come together to enjoy a weekend of camping and activities. Once again, I must thank all the Cub Leaders and their teams who not only ran activities but ensured the Cubs were fed and watered – this being extremely important as it was an exceptionally hot weekend!

October was the next busy month with the District Cross Country on the 1<sup>st</sup> (postponed from the Spring) and District Sausage Sizzle the following weekend. The Cross Country was organised by 1<sup>st</sup> Oxshott and took place over Oxshott Heath – congratulations to The Dittons Cubs who won the team event and to Amber and Ben from Hinchley Wood and Dittons who were the overall Cubs winners.



The District Sausage Sizzle was held the following weekend at The Dittons (thank you for hosting once again) and although it was a smaller turn out of Cubs than in the past, all the Cubs helped light fires, cook sausages over the fire (and stirred onions in a pan) and toast marshmallows. They also had train rides provided by Thames Ditton Miniature Railway (thank you Matt for liaising with them). The Cubs appeared to really enjoy themselves – thank you to the Leaders and adults who gave up their time.

The District round of the County Quiz was held at the end of January at 1<sup>st</sup> Claygate Scout Centre. Eight teams from across the District took part and, following a close competition, it was won by Lynx Pack (1<sup>st</sup> Claygate) who then went on to represent Esher District at the County Cub quiz. Thank you to Catherine Hackett for running this on behalf of District.





Although not strictly in the same report year – with thanks to the Leaders at The Dittons, Esher District Cubs ran a District Cub Day Hike at the end of April from Denbies.

Congratulations to all the Cubs who have achieved their Chief Scout Silver Award.

I would like to finish as I began by thanking all the Cub Leaders and their teams for their support and Lisa Cross who continues to support Cub events.



## 5.4 Scouts

**Pam Escott**  
Assistant District Commissioner (Scouts)

What an incredible group of Troop Leaders we have in Esher District to maintain such great numbers of Scouts and to run so many brilliant programmes.

The Scout Leaders in Esher District continue to work hard to maintain a high standard of training taking part in First Aid courses, Safety training, Safeguarding training and other training sessions to improve the skills of the Troops Leaders such as qualifications in Target



shooting, Hill Walking, Archery, Off Road Cycling and Boating etc. Each year the Leaders provided many new, varied and unusual activities for the young people in Esher District.

The Scout Troops have such a wide age range in the section turning an older Cub into a young Explorer in 4 years, giving them the skills, knowledge, experience and confidence to tackle these challenges and expeditions without their leaders, but with other Scouts in their Troop, the District, at County events and even at Jamborees.



Scout Troop activities range from the traditional camping skills and cooking on open fires to rafting, kayaking, caving, diving, surfing, survival skills, climbing, abseiling, target shooting, archery, parascending, sailing, rowing. As well as group shows, gorge scrambling, coasteering, sea fishing, hikes, scout group bands, expeditions on foot and by kayak. Also preparing and taking part in the many district and county competitions throughout the year. Some Scouts are also working on their Duke Of Edinburgh Bronze Award through their Scout Group.



This year Camps were held at Polyapes, at a Scout Group site at Fordinbridge and at Ferny Crofts in the New Forest, Cobnor near Chichester, Roadford Lake in Devon, Buddens campsite in Dorset, Copley Scout Centre in Cambridgeshire, Kandesteg in Switzerland and many other places. Esher District Scouts have travelled far and wide to have great fun, take part in some amazing activities and learn some new skills. Well done leaders for making this happen for your Scouts!

Well done to all the Scouts for their enthusiasm and their great attitude during these events and activities. The Scouts can always be relied on to take part in these events with such a wealth of skill, knowledge and with such a great sense of humour.





The following table shows the complete list of District events during this period, together with the winners and organisers to all of whom I extend my thanks for their enthusiasm, support and commitment.

	Event	Winners	Organisers
<b>2023</b>			
June	Archery	1 <sup>st</sup> Claygate	Mark Woodward & Michael Gostling 1 <sup>st</sup> Claygate
June	Target Shooting	3 <sup>rd</sup> Molesey	Barry & Paula King, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Molesey
September	Fishing	<b>Did Not Take Place</b>	Chris Manning & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Molesey team
September	Scouting Skills & 1 <sup>st</sup> Aid	<b>To Be Held September 2024</b>	Chris Manning & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Molesey team Hosted by 3 <sup>rd</sup> Molesey
September	Cross Country	The Dittons	1 <sup>st</sup> Oxshott and team with help from District leaders
October	Cooking	2 <sup>nd</sup> Molesey	1 <sup>st</sup> Molesey team Hosted by 1 <sup>st</sup> Molesey
October	Night Hike	1 <sup>st</sup> Claygate	Peter Hanna & 1 <sup>st</sup> Hinchley Wood team
<b>2024</b>			
February	Cross Country	The Dittons	1 <sup>st</sup> Oxshott & team with help from District leaders
March	Day Hike	1 <sup>st</sup> Molesey	Hugh Gostling, Mark Aulds & the 1 <sup>st</sup> Claygate & team with help from District leaders

2023



The **Esher District Target Shooting Competition** was held at our Esher District camp. We had entries from 9 teams. My thanks to Barry King and to Paula King from 3<sup>rd</sup> Molesey for running this event. Congratulations to 3<sup>rd</sup> Molesey for taking 1<sup>st</sup> place, The Dittons for taking 2<sup>nd</sup> place and to 2<sup>nd</sup> Molesey for coming 3<sup>rd</sup>.

The **Esher District Archery Competition** was held at our Esher District camp. We had entries from 8 teams. My thanks to Mark Woodward and to Michael Gostling from 1<sup>st</sup> Claygate for running this event. Congratulations to 1<sup>st</sup> Claygate for taking 1<sup>st</sup> place, 3<sup>rd</sup> Molesey for taking 2<sup>nd</sup> place and to 1<sup>st</sup> Hinchley Wood for coming 3<sup>rd</sup>.

The **Esher District Scout Fishing Competition** – unfortunately cancelled due to lack of entries.

The **Esher District Cooking Competition** is a competition for 4 Scouts where they have to make a meal from ingredients given to them. 7 teams entered. Congratulations to 2<sup>nd</sup> Molesey who won the competition and were closely followed by AJAX who were 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> Molesey took 3<sup>rd</sup> place. My thanks to Max Harvey and the leaders at 1<sup>st</sup> Molesey for putting on this event for the District.

The **Esher District Night Hike** is perhaps the highlight in the District calendar and an event which is always very well supported. This time we had an entry of 17 teams competing (7 competitive teams and 10 training teams). The hike consisted of a challenging navigational exercise over 9 miles around the Walton Heath area. The emphasis was on traditional map and compass skills. A team from 1<sup>st</sup> Claygate took 1<sup>st</sup> place, a team from The Dittons took 2<sup>nd</sup> place with a team from 1<sup>st</sup> Hinchley Wood taking 3<sup>rd</sup> place. My thanks to Peter Hanna, Adrian Ducker and the 1<sup>st</sup> Hinchley Wood team for organising and running this event and also to all the many leaders and supporters who manned the checkpoints, drove mini buses and booked in the teams etc.

**Esher District Top Troop Trophy 2023** was won by The Dittons followed by 1<sup>st</sup> Molesey in 2<sup>nd</sup> place and 2<sup>nd</sup> Molesey in 3<sup>rd</sup> place. The Top Troop Trophy competition takes into account all the results from the competitions held during the year.

2024



The **Esher District Scouting Skills and First Aid Competition** – now to be held in September 2024.

The **Esher District Day Hike** took place over 9 miles in the Chobham area and had 16 entries of which 6 were competitive teams 10 were training teams. A lot of Troops have very young scouts so put in training teams this time. A team from The Dittons took 1<sup>st</sup> place and another team from The Dittons took 2<sup>nd</sup> place with another team from The Dittons took 3<sup>rd</sup> place. My thanks to Hugh Gostling, Mark Aulds and the 1<sup>st</sup> Claygate team who organised this event. My thanks also the District Leaders for manning the checkpoints etc.

The **Esher District Cross Country** – a 3 mile course in the Oxshott Heath area. A very popular event with all sections taking part. Congratulations to The Dittons for taking 1<sup>st</sup> place, 1<sup>st</sup> Hinchley Wood for taking 2<sup>nd</sup> place and to 1<sup>st</sup> Molesey for taking 3<sup>rd</sup> place. My thanks to Anja and the 1<sup>st</sup> Oxshott team for organising this huge event for the District which couldn't happen without other leaders and parents helping to man the course etc.

### Chief Scout Gold Awards

The following Scouts gained their Chief Scouts Gold Awards during 2023/2024

Gregor	Logan	1 <sup>st</sup> Claygate
Maddox	Valter	1 <sup>st</sup> Claygate
William	Copland-Cale	1 <sup>st</sup> Claygate
Henry	Gilchrist	1 <sup>st</sup> Claygate
Leo	Batey	1 <sup>st</sup> Claygate
Robert	Keenes	The Dittons
James	Blunden	1 <sup>st</sup> Hinchley Wood
Niall	Govind	1 <sup>st</sup> Hinchley Wood
Luke	Napier	1 <sup>st</sup> Hinchley Wood
Zachary	Stephenson	1 <sup>st</sup> Hinchley Wood
George	Beal	2 <sup>nd</sup> Molesey
Alex	Horsburgh	2 <sup>nd</sup> Molesey
Robyn	Musgrave	2 <sup>nd</sup> Molesey
Erin	Sawell	2 <sup>nd</sup> Molesey
Josh	Strong	2 <sup>nd</sup> Molesey



Max	Gauntlett	1 <sup>st</sup> Oxshott
Robbie	McMillan	1 <sup>st</sup> Oxshott
Seth	Murphy	1 <sup>st</sup> Oxshott
Sophie	Shipp	1 <sup>st</sup> Oxshott
Cadan	Sobye	1 <sup>st</sup> Oxshott
Emily	Bryant	1 <sup>st</sup> Oxshott
Miles	Murphy	1 <sup>st</sup> Oxshott
Jamie	O'Donnell	1 <sup>st</sup> Oxshott
Sam	Saunders	1 <sup>st</sup> Oxshott
Matthew	Wall	1 <sup>st</sup> Oxshott

Congratulations to all the Other Scouts have also gained their Chief Scout Gold Award but have not been able to attend the County presentation ceremony.

This year saw the selection process, by County, for Esher District's places at the 25th World Scout Jamboree in South Korea in July/August 2023. The Scouts & Explorers who have been awarded places are:



David Govender	1 <sup>st</sup> Claygate
Samuel Worthington	1 <sup>st</sup> Claygate
Edward Cruthers	The Dittons
Luke Napier	1 <sup>st</sup> Hinchley Wood
Maryla Renker	1 <sup>st</sup> Hinchley Wood
Luca Day	2 <sup>nd</sup> Molesey
Wolfe Finucane-Cooke	3 <sup>rd</sup> Molesey

We are lucky having many experienced and well-trained Leaders in the District who are willing not only to provide an exciting range of activities for their own Troops but also to share and help with activities in other Troops, such as boating activities, archery, shooting, assisting with training teams, joint camps and especially when Troops are experiencing leadership problems. I would like to thank all the Scout Troop Leaders, Assistant Leaders, supporters and the teams who take the time to support and organise the District events.

I would like to take a moment to recognise the dedication and commitment shown throughout the year by so many people across the District. Special thanks must go to the District Scout Leaders, to Carole Needham our District Appointment Secretary, the DC team and also to the other ADCs for their continued support.

Looking forward to another busy and exciting Scouting year.

## 5.5 District Explorer Scouts

**Tom Wilkinson**  
District Lead Volunteer

Thank you to all our Explorer Leaders who have delivered adventurous and engaging programmes across the District while also growing the number of Explorers in the District from 197 to 211, a 7% increase. This has once again been achieved without a District Explorer Scout Commissioner due to the dedication of all our Explorer volunteers across our groups. We have continued the ongoing system of letting the ESLs run the show and an effective use of WhatsApp and OSM group has ensured good communications with support from the DLV team.





We continue to thank Jonathan Perkins for his work in organising the Young Leader training programme and congratulations to all those who were awarded their YL belts; see his report for more details. The District 'Dragon' DofE programme has continued to be successful with most of our Units combining skills and resources, thanks to Mark Southey and Mark Burrows for their continued admin and expedition organisation. We have also started to work more closely with County's 'Western Watch' DofE team to provide Gold hiking expeditions to Explorers across all our Units.



In September, Claygate hosted the popular cooking competition with 1st place going to Claygate and 2nd and 3rd place both going to teams from Weston Green and Oxshott. The shooting competition was moved to 2024 and a new venue as discussed further below.



In mid-February a slightly smaller WAW was run in wet and windy weather taking all the hiking groups up onto Kinder Scout. We stayed at Gradbach, a quaint Scout-owned cottage setup for hiking in the Peaks. Massive thanks to the organising team of Anne Boland, Russell King, Jess Lane, John Daoud and Nick Barber for delivering the event on a short timescale.

There was a successful Incident Hike at the end of February with lots of activity bases and several teams from a good number of Units. Once again thanks to James Horsburgh for organising and well done to the winning Claygate team.



The Shooting Competition was moved to Polyapes in the Summer term - giving more room for one of our most heavily subscribed District events! With more space the team from 3rd Molesey were able to offer archery as well as shooting. Congratulations to 1st Molesey for winning overall and Lacey from 3rd Molesey for the best individual score.

Finally, our annual Explorer social was run by the Dittons team, also at Polyapes. It proved to be a lovely way to end the term. Special thanks to Julia Hawkins for jumping in to run the event when I unfortunately tested positive for COVID.



On a group level Explorers have gone camping either as Explorer units or joint with Scouts groups in places as far afield as Scotland and Morocco. Oxshott & Weston Green Explorers went to St Austell in Cornwall; Dittons went to the south coast and the Trossachs in Scotland; Claygate went to both Scotland & Morocco; 1<sup>st</sup> Molesey undertook kayaking expeditions on the River Thames and Medway.





Congratulations to those who went on DofE and other expeditions and events this year; which included the following Explorers getting their Explorer Belts:

Explorer Belt	
Chris Long	2nd Molesey
Tree Finucane	3rd Molesey



A productive Explorer Leader meeting at the end of the year means there will be even more District events on the calendar for 2024-25. We look forward to an adventurous and action-packed new year!

## 5.6 District Explorer Scout Young Leaders

**Jonathan Perkins**  
Esher District & Surrey Scouts Young Leader Adviser

The Young Leader programme in Esher District continues to deliver both support to the younger sections and opportunities for our Explorer Scouts. Young Leaders are Explorer Scouts who volunteer with a Squirrel Drey, Beaver Colony, Cub Pack or Scout Troop. They plan, organise and run games, activities and parts of the programme. Young Leaders bring new ideas and youth-shaped thinking. They provide positive role models to the young people they're leading. They are integral members of the Section's leadership team. They play a full part in planning, leading and delivering their Section's week-by-week programme. Young Leaders stand out from their peers and friends because of their highly practical leadership capabilities and experience. A number of the activities they complete as part of the Young Leader programme also count towards the other Top Scouting Awards such as the Chief Scout Platinum and Diamond Awards and the Kings Scout Award.

During the year there were 79 Young Leaders in the District. Our Young Leaders are managed through an Esher District Explorer Scout Young Leaders Unit. This includes 10 members who are not members of an active Explorer Unit as well, 5 of whom enjoy this role so much that they have converted from being DofE volunteers to become Explorer Scouts so that they could continue to volunteer as Young Leaders.

In my County role, I run the two Surrey Young Leader conferences held in October and March each year. I am very grateful to Phil Guildford, Rachel MacArthur, Caroline Li and Mark Aulds



from the District for their support as Leaders at these conferences. Over 130 Young Leaders attended the last conference from 15 Districts in Surrey with the support of 35 Leaders. From the Esher District, 29 Young Leaders attended in October 2023 and 35 in March 2024, the highest numbers of participants in the county from a single District. The Surrey Scout Young Leader conferences enable Young Leaders to develop their leadership skills by taking part in practical workshops. These include running games, teaching skills, and the planning and delivering of a scout programme. There is also the opportunity to validate a First Response level First Aid qualification.

During the year 2023/24, 20 Young Leaders in the District completed their Young Leader Award (16 in 2022/23). These were from the following Groups: 1<sup>st</sup> Claygate, Oxshott, 1<sup>st</sup> Weston Green and 1<sup>st</sup> Molesey.

Also, 19 of our Young Leaders have so far opted to continue their leadership development by participating in the unique Surrey Scouts Senior Explorer Scout Young Leader Award scheme (SESYL). The SESYL enables Young Leader Belt holders to further develop their leadership skills and is completed by attending three additional Young Leader conferences. The final stage of the SESYL is completing a BTEC Level 2 Diploma in Teamwork and Personal Development in the Community, which is provided and validated by an external provider the Cadet Vocational College. The BTEC recognises the core skills which are achieved through the Young Leader programme and through the completion of the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award. A number of our senior Young Leaders are very close to completing their SESYL and BTECs. I am very pleased that Lauren from The Dittons did complete her BTEC during this period.

Several Young Leaders also enjoyed a weekend Bushcraft Camp at Polyapes in July 2023. This was the first time the county Young Leader team laid on a camp specifically for Young Leaders and was led by the same team that runs the adult courses in the county. It was a great success and the Young Leaders were able to bring back the skills they learnt into their section meetings.

Finally, a number of our Young Leaders star in several videos promoting the Young Leader scheme on the Surrey Scouts website. See if you can spot anyone you know!

The first county Young Leader Bushcraft camp at Polyapes, July 2023







Seth from Oxshott demonstrating his Bushcraft skills

Young Leaders from Esher and across the county at the Conference in March 2024





Lauren receives her BTEC from Joe Rogerson the Surrey Lead Volunteer

## 6 District News

### 6.1 Appointments Report

**John Baldwin**  
Appointments Committee Chair

	Leader	Assistant Leader	Section Assistant	Skills Instructor
Squirrels	1	3	0	-
Beavers	0	4	12	-
Cubs	1	6	6	-
Scouts	0	1	1	-
Explorers	0	0	2	-
Group	1	0	0	3

They were spread across the District as follows:

Group	Number	Group	Number
Ajax	3	Claygate	11
Cobham	0	The Dittons	0
3 <sup>rd</sup> Esher	2	Hinchley Wood	3
1 <sup>st</sup> Molesey	10	2 <sup>nd</sup> Molesey	2
3 <sup>rd</sup> Molesey	6	Oxshott	2
Weston Green	2	District	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>41</b>	

41 people in total, an increase from last year probably due to the fact that more Squirrel sections are opening up.

A busy time, figures slightly up but lots of Beaver Section Assistants and new leaders for Squirrel Dreys!

This year has been interesting, feeding back to GSLs afterwards with recommendations of folk starting as Section Assistants then progressing to Leaders plus making sure Mandatory modules are being completed in a timely fashion depending on when we see them. Most people come to us with these done so we can chat about other things.

The main thing here is my thanks to all who serve on the Appointments Committee including Katelyn our latest member but special thanks to Carole (Appointments Secretary) for all her work in getting folk to us and chasing the new folk for references etc. before we see them. A BIG THANK YOU Carole!

**Carole Needham**

John and Carole would like to thank the panel members, past and present, who have supported all the adult volunteers who have joined Scouts. The way we welcome volunteers is changing and soon, the panel will be replaced by a Welcome Conversation with a more personal engagement.

John and Carole will still be around to iron out any wrinkles though.

## 6.2 Adult Training

**David Saunders**  
District Training Administrator

Adult Training in Esher District has continued to be maintained at very high compliance levels, albeit - across all of the key mandatory items of 'Mod1', 'GDPR', 'Safety' and 'Safeguarding' - we closed the year to end March, with all four elements at 99% compliance, regrettably one point down on the same period last year.

Such evidence shows the outcome of continued attention over recent years on what is a never-ending quest, with each year a new cohort of Members to support. Behind the headlines this support involves the hard work of a number of Leaders and Members - from Group Scout Leaders, Training Advisors and Line Managers, via the work of the 'Appointments Advisory Committee', through to the c.130 individual members (c.30% of the total), who were validated for completing or re-completing one or more of these courses during the past year.

Grateful thanks must therefore once again go to all of them in full measure for all that they have achieved and put up with - as well as for the valued support provided by County team members, when sought or needed.

Members' completion and validation of all elements of the mandatory Adult Training programme has continued to be a top priority for the Scouting Association, ahead of planned developments - so has continued to be effectively tracked and reported on both locally and nationally, as summarised here.

As a consequence, follow up on elements such as 'First Response' and 'Trustee Intro' training have been a high priority. That has led to further advances, moving us up to our highest ever year-end position of 98% and 99% compliant respectively - both one point up on our previous highest level at the same time last year.

Updates on training progress continues to be provided on a regular basis (normally quarterly) to Group and District level stakeholders (Group Scout Leaders, Training Advisors and the District Leadership Team) highlighting all key elements for the current and successive quarters - so that awareness of successes achieved, as well as the challenges remaining, is easy to understand and act upon locally.

Challenges to note as we move forward include:

- a) Continuation of the focus on effectively managing 'Safety', 'Safeguarding' and 'First Response' training renewals against the 3-yearly requirement.
- b) continuation of the focus on timely first-time training of all new Members - in alignment with 'approvals' processes pertaining to i) Sectional & Leadership Members and ii) to Trustee Members.
- c) continuing need to support and encourage Members to complete 'Wood Badge' training, where required, in a timely manner.
- d) preparing for changes to Adult Training requirements, as determined by the Transition Plan.

This has been my first report to provide as 'District Training Administrator' - reason being that the Role of 'Local Training Manager' has, despite all efforts made, in effect remained vacant for the past year or so.

## 6.3 Polyapes

**Chris Daley**  
Polyapes Chair

The last year at Polyapes has again been a positive one. The use of the site remains high, and the range of activities offered continues to expand.

The King's Coronation Big Help Out day in May 2023 was a great success at the site. Volunteers came from both owning Districts and from a good selection of other local Districts and Counties. There were also a few local non-Scouting volunteers. Most of that day's effort was put towards completing the wild garden, which is flourishing and is still growing an interesting selection of plants, herbs and vegetables.

Other green initiatives on site have included installing compost bins for food waste and grass cuttings, and all the lights on the site have now been changed to LED fittings. Furthermore, Surrey County Council gave the site 600 hedgerow saplings and 100 other trees which have now been planted on the site.

On a less positive green note, ash dieback has been a problem on the site and many affected trees have had to be removed. Some of this work had to be undertaken by professional tree surgeons, which was costly for the site, but was essential for safety reasons. Various improvements have been undertaken by the service crew. Of particular note the toilets to the Mowgli building have been refurbished and new signage has been installed on the site, including an illuminated entrance sign. Additionally, the wood pile has been moved so it is now closer to the fire circle and some works were undertaken to the drainage pipework to the septic tank.

Simon, Hannah and the rest of the service crew at the site have again done an amazing job running and maintaining the site. In addition, they have also helped the military vehicle group at their displays in return for donations to Polyapes. So, a double thanks to the Warden and all his helpers for their considerable efforts in the last year.

## 6.4 Adult Awards

### Good Service Awards

The following Good Service Awards have been awarded across the District:

Chief Scout's Commendation for Good Service	
Patrick Berton	Lindsey Blake (awarded by Walton & Weybridge)
Anne Boland	Elizabeth Bruce
Alistair Carruthers	Mark Faulkner
Roger Hoad	Camille Lobjoit (awarded by Richmond)
Ruth Mortby	Heather Owen
Robert Owen	Heidi Smith
Rhid Tinkler	Allen Widdowson
Award For Merit	
Helen Amys	Suzan Baker
Anja Davidson	Katie Ernest
Tiana Humphries	Russell King
Liam Quinn	
Silver Acorn	
Richard (N) Hunt (awarded by Surrey)	Mark Marriott (awarded by Surrey)
Silver Wolf	
John Baldwin	Adrian Ducker





### Chief Scout's Length of Service Awards

The following Chief Scout's Length of Service Awards have been awarded across the District:

5 Years	
Christopher Andrews	Richard Applin
Rex Batey	Sophie Beaney
Neil Beardmore	Katrina Butterfield
Daniel Camp	Margaret Creigh
Pauline Davies	Mikayla Davison
Geoffrey Day	Isabel Elliott
Nigel Harris	Scott Harverson
Philip Hawkins	Claire Hemming
James Horsburgh	Richard (V) Hunt
Felix Jackson	Laura La Frenais
David McKenzie	Scott Mayer
Simon Morris	Louise O'Gorman
Jacqui Signor	Lloyd Smith
Jon Southey	Kristian Squire
Gary Stephenson	Aron Stewart
Alexander Thurgood	Rhid Tinkler
Barry Walker	David Walker
Simon Walmsley	Nathan Ward
Kirstie Wood	
10 Years	
Paul Collyer	Anja Davidson
Lisette Julio-Quinn	Caroline Li
Carl Rowell	Emma Shipp
Mark Woodward	
15 Years	
Thomas Ballard	Nick Barber
Michael Davies	Katie Ernest
Sarah-Jane Kelland	Terence Price
Chris West	
20 Years	
Elizabeth Bruce	Mark Faulkner
Andrew (Fletch) Fletcher	Richard (N) Hunt (awarded by Epsom & Ewell)
Robert Lonnon	Heather Owen
John Thompson	
25 Years	
Ross Manning	Lisa Weller
30 Years	
Andrew Burns	Sally Shortman
40 Years	
Tyrone Weller	

Congratulations and well done to all recipients



## 6.5 Membership as at 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024

Census January 2024 - Summary - Esher															
Name	Dreys	Colonies	Packs	Troops	Explorer Units	Networks	Squirrels	Beavers	Cubs	Scouts	Explorers	YP 4-18	Network Members	Total Adults *	Total
Esher	-	-	-	-	10	1	-	-	-	-	211	211	58	121	332
1st Claygate	-	4	3	1	-	-	-	91	103	57	-	251	-	84	335
1st Cobham	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	14	12	10	-	36	-	10	46
3rd Esher	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	17	19	33	-	69	-	19	88
1st Hinchley Wood	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	23	30	33	-	86	-	29	115
1st Molesey (Jaguar)	1	1	2	2	-	-	20	24	60	62	-	166	-	74	240
2nd Molesey (St Pauls)	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	32	25	26	-	83	-	14	97
3rd Molesey (Matravers)	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	18	23	25	-	66	-	35	101
1st Oxshott	1	1	1	1	-	-	16	18	30	29	-	93	-	14	107
4th Thames Ditton (Ajax) Sea Scouts	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	18	36	41	-	95	-	50	145
The Dittons	-	2	2	2	-	-	-	42	61	51	-	154	-	25	179
1st Weston Green (All Saints)	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	23	21	25	-	69	-	22	91
Totals	2	15	15	13	10	1	36	320	420	392	211	1379	58	497	1876

Census 2024 - Trends - Esher															
Name	Squirrels			Beavers			Cubs			Scouts			Explorers		
	2023	2024	Growth	2023	2024	Growth	2023	2024	Change	2023	2024	Change	2023	2024	Change
Esher	0	0	-	0	0	-	0	0	-	0	0	-	197	211	+14
1st Claygate	0	0	-	84	91	+7	109	103	-6	80	57	-23	0	0	-
1st Cobham	0	0	-	15	14	-1	19	12	-7	5	10	+5	0	0	-
3rd Esher	0	0	-	19	17	-2	27	19	-8	20	33	+13	0	0	-
1st Hinchley Wood	0	0	-	24	23	-1	31	30	-1	33	33	-	0	0	-
1st Molesey (Jaguar)	0	20	+20	24	24	-	55	60	+5	69	62	-7	0	0	-
2nd Molesey (St Pauls)	0	0	-	26	32	+6	26	25	-1	32	26	-6	0	0	-
3rd Molesey (Matravers)	0	0	-	23	18	-5	21	23	+2	30	25	-5	0	0	-
1st Oxshott	10	16	+6	18	18	-	31	30	-1	32	29	-3	0	0	-
4th Thames Ditton (Ajax) Sea Scouts	0	0	-	23	18	-5	30	36	+6	45	41	-4	0	0	-
The Dittons	0	0	-	54	42	-12	51	61	+10	52	51	-1	0	0	-
1st Weston Green (All Saints)	0	0	-	24	23	-1	23	21	-2	24	25	+1	0	0	-
Total	10	36	+26	334	320	-14	423	420	-3	422	392	-30	197	211	+14



## 7 Trustees' Annual Report

Esher District Trustees' Annual Report  
for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024

This report follows the format of that recommended by The Scout Association document LT700001.

### 7.1 Section A: Reference and Administration Details

**Charity Name:** Esher District

**Registered Charity Number.:** 1063001

**HQ Registration Number.:** 15409

**Charity's principal address:** Gary Ernest, 55 Oaken Lane, Claygate, KT10 0RQ

Names of the charity trustees who managed the charity during the year:

Trustee	Name	Office
<b>David Vorbrich</b>	District Chair	[Ex-officio]
<b>Gary Ernest</b>	District Treasurer	[Ex-officio]
<b>Lisa Cross</b>	Secretary	[Ex-officio]
<b>Tom Wilkinson</b>	District Co-Commissioner	[Ex-officio]
<b>Mark Burrows</b>	District Co-Commissioner	[Ex-officio]
<b>Peter Hanna</b>	Trustee	Elected
<b>Chris Daley</b>	Trustee	Elected
<b>Stephen Valter</b>	Trustee	Elected
<b>Carole Needham</b>	Trustee	Elected
<b>[18-25 Vacancy]</b>	Trustee	Elected

Names and addresses of advisers – there were none

Other appointments are

Independent Examiner: **Barry Hitchens**

Vice-Presidents: **A J Palmer, C W Salter, R W Umney**

### 7.2 Section B: Structure, Governance and Management

#### 7.2.1 Description of the charity's trusts

The District's governing documents are those of The Scout Association. They consist of a Royal Charter which in turn gives authority to the Bye Laws of the Association and the Policy, Organisation and Rules of the Scout Association.

The District is a trust established under its rules which are common to all Scout Districts, and appoints its Trustees in accordance with the Policy, Organisation and Rules of the Scout Association.

The District is managed by the District Trustee Board the members of which are the 'Charity Trustees' of the District which is an educational charity. As charity trustees, they are responsible for complying with legislation applicable to charities. This includes the registration, keeping of proper accounts and making returns to the Charity Commission as appropriate.

During this period the Board has consisted of six independent representatives, Chair, Treasurer, and four independent Trustees together with two District Co-Commissioners, and meets every two months. The members for the year under review are listed above and met together during the period on the following dates: 24th April 2023, 3rd July 2023, 25 September 2023, 20 November 2023, 4th January 2024, 19th February 2024.

Members of the Trustee Board have completed Trustee Introduction Training within the first 5 months of joining the Board and are all DBS-checked.



This District Trustee Board exists to make sure the charity is well-managed, risks are assessed and mitigated, buildings and equipment are in good working order, and everyone follows legal requirements and the organisation's policies and rules.

### 7.2.2 Risk and Internal Control

The District Trustee Board has identified the major risks to which they believe the Group is exposed, these have been reviewed and systems have been established to mitigate against them. The main areas of concern that have been identified are:

1. *Injury to leaders, members, helpers and supporters:* Risk Assessments are undertaken before all activities whether virtual or face to face. These follow guidance from the Scout Association and Government as appropriate. In addition, the Trustee Board has a standing item on their meeting agenda to consider any mitigating action required to address any reported incidents. The District, through the annual membership fees, contributes to the Scout Association's national accident insurance policy.
2. *Reduced income from fundraising:* The District is primarily reliant upon income from subscriptions and fundraising. The District does hold a reserve to ensure the continuity of activities should there be a major reduction in income. The Trustees could raise the value of subscriptions to increase the income to the District either temporarily or permanently.
3. *Reduction or loss of leaders:* The District is totally reliant upon volunteers to run and administer the activities of the District. If there was a reduction in the number of leaders to an unacceptable level in a particular Group, or the District as a whole then there might have to be a contraction, consolidation or closure of a group, or, in the worst-case scenario, the complete closure of the District.
4. *Reduction or loss of members:* The District provides activities for all young people aged from 6 years of age and upwards. If there was a reduction in membership in a particular section or Group as a whole then there would have to be a contraction, consolidation or closure of a group, or in the worst-case scenario, the complete closure of the District.
5. *Any event causing widespread or severe health issues among young people, leaders and others, which impact the District:* Groups will be run virtually using tools like Zoom. Risk assessments for the resulting scenarios will be considered and implemented following Government guidance and guidance from the Scout Association as appropriate. Expenditure will be monitored to ensure lower revenue does not adversely impact the District's financial situation.

The District has in place systems of internal controls that are designed to provide reasonable assurance against material mismanagement or loss. These include two signatories for all bank payments and comprehensive insurance policies to ensure that major insurable risks are covered.

### 7.2.3 Section C: Objectives and Activities

#### District Objectives

The aim of the District is to promote the development of young people in achieving their full physical, intellectual, social and spiritual potentials, as individuals, as responsible citizens and as members of the local, national and international community. The method of achieving this aim is by providing an enjoyable and attractive scheme of progressive training based on the Scout Association Programme and guided by trained adult leadership.

#### Overall District Strategy

- **Growth** – to recruit and retain adults, expand/add sections taking numbers off waiting lists and to develop a plan to potentially start a new group. Enhance programme
- **Inclusivity** – to attract and include a wider range of young people, genders, ethnicities, special needs and faiths.
- **Youth Shaped** – to ensure Scouts are actively influencing programming and planning at Group and District level





- **Community Impact** – to encourage Group/District involvement in one publicised community engagement per term.

## 8 Financial Review 2023-24

Gary Ernest  
District Treasurer

### 8.1 Financial Strategy

There has been no material change in the financial organisation of EDSC in the year to 31 March 2024. Esher District Scout Council (EDSC) maintains the following three funds:

- The **Group Scout Leaders' (GSLs')** Fund is raised through a levy on all eligible scout members across the 11 scout groups ("the Groups") that comprise the District. The GSLs' levy recovered from Groups in March 2024 (to cover the 2024/25 financial year (FY)) was £2.00 per member, compared with £1.50 in the prior year (PY). The Fund is used at the GSLs' discretion to support scouting projects across the District. In particular, the Fund is used to provide 50% of the cost for local Explorers to attend the World Jamboree every 4 years, and to fund one-off grants to Groups or individuals in support of scouting activity.
- The **Building Repair (Bob Aldridge)** Fund represents a legacy from the estate of JS Easter received in 1997. The Fund is used to provide short-term loans to Groups for urgent building repairs and renewals.
- The **General Fund** comprises all other monies held by the EDSC and is used to fund day-to-day expenditure by the District. No levy was charged in March 2024 (to cover the 2024/25 financial year) compared with £0.50 per member in March 2023 (to cover the PY).

EDSC's financial strategy is to hold sufficient reserves within the General Fund to be able to continue the charitable activities of the District should income fall short. The Trustee Board considers that the District should hold a sum equivalent to 12 months' running costs, about £2,000, plus funds to meet significant property repairs, £10,000 – so £12,000 in total. On March 31<sup>st</sup> 2024 the General Fund stood at £14,874 (March 31<sup>st</sup> 2023 £14,379).

### 8.2 Financial Review 2023-2024

The accounts, as shown in Appendix A, are prepared on a receipts and payments basis, as provided for in the Charities Act 2011.

#### 8.2.1 Fund movements

Balances of the District's funds at the beginning and end of the current financial year are as follows:

£	1 Apr 2023	31 Mar 2024
GSLs' Fund	4,577	5,615
Building Fund	21,455	21,709
General Fund	14,379	14,874
TOTAL	40,411	42,198

For the financial year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 total funds increased by £1,797.

The **GSLs' Fund** increased by £1,038. This is a combination of receipt of the levy for the 24/25 FY of £2,758, less the final payment to Scouts HQ for the South Korea World Jamboree in 2023 (£1,720). The GSLs' Fund is now being re-funded ready to assist with costs of District members to attend the Poland World Jamboree in 2027.



The **Building Repair (Bob Aldridge) Fund** increased by £254 due to interest received on the Scout Association Deposit account. No loans to Groups are currently outstanding.

The **General Fund** increased by £494. This movement is a combination of payments received and paid out for District activities such as District Beaver party, District Cub camp, Scouts' Night and Day hikes and Explorers' Winter Activity Weekend, offset by general running costs such as insurance for District Officers, the AGM and other District admin costs.

This year the events included the District Camp held at Walton Firs in June 2023. Overall, this broke even, but because the deposit for Walton Firs was made in the previous financial year the figures for 23/24 show a surplus of almost £4,000, offsetting the deposit.

Note that costs for 22/23 include the premium for the public liability top-up insurance paid by the District on behalf of Groups – and recovered from Groups in the Insurance Fees received. In previous years this has been deducted from the fees received, but an up-to-date understanding of FRS 102, the accounting standard that applies to preparation of charity accounts, suggests that it should not be offset but treated as a specific cost. PY accounts have not been restated.

### 8.2.2 Assets and liabilities


As the accounts are maintained and prepared on a receipts and payments basis, there is no District balance sheet.

The Scout Association Short Term Deposit accounts was closed in 2023 and the balance transferred to CAF bank. An account has been opened with CCLA to be used as an instant access facility, but the transfer to that account did not take place until May 2024 after this financial year closed.

No liabilities or pre-payments are carried forward.



## 8.3 Appendix A



Esher District Scout Council

1063001

Receipts and payments accounts

For the period from

1st April 2023

To

31st March 2024

CC16a

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £
<b>A1 Receipts</b>					
Capitation & Insurance Fees received (Note 1)	3,304	66,537	-	69,841	66,372
Less: paid to County	-	(63,779)	-	(63,779)	(60,638)
Less: paid to Unity (PIP insurance)	-	-	-	-	(3,502)
Net Capitation Fees received	3,304	2,758	-	6,062	2,233
Course Fees received	-	-	-	-	730
Activities and district camps	35,231	-	-	35,231	14,791
2023 Jamboree (from Groups)	-	1,745	-	1,745	9,900
Interest receivable	85	254	-	339	298
Other receipts	-	-	-	-	27
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>38,620</b>	<b>4,757</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>43,377</b>	<b>27,978</b>
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>38,620</b>	<b>4,757</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>43,377</b>	<b>27,978</b>
<b>A3 Payments</b>					
Activities and district camps	33,650	-	-	33,650	13,040
2023 Jamboree paid to UK HQ	-	3,465	-	3,465	19,723
Administration and miscellaneous payments	1,019	-	-	1,019	572
PIP insurance for District/Groups	3,456	-	-	3,456	-
Training costs	-	-	-	-	630
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>38,125</b>	<b>3,465</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>41,590</b>	<b>33,964</b>
<b>A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)</b>					
Equipment purchases	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>38,125</b>	<b>3,465</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>41,590</b>	<b>33,964</b>
<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	<b>495</b>	<b>1,292</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,787</b>	<b>(5,986)</b>
<b>A5 Transfers between funds</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>A6 Cash funds last year end</b>	<b>14,379</b>	<b>26,032</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>40,411</b>	<b>46,397</b>
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	<b>14,874</b>	<b>27,324</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>42,197</b>	<b>40,411</b>







## 8.4 Appendix B: Auditors Note

### **Esher District Scout Council Charity Number 1063001**

#### **Report of the Independent examiner to the Trustees of Esher District Scout Council**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above Charity for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 that are set out on the pages attached.

#### **Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 (the Act).

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

#### **Independent Examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination.

I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination that gives me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- a) the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act or
- b) the accounts did not comply with the accounting records or
- c) the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of the accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a "true and fair" view which is not a matter considered as part of the independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Barry Hitchens- Australian Society of Accountants  
24 Effingham Road, Long Ditton, Surrey, KT6 5JY

*Barry Hitchens* 28<sup>th</sup> May 2024



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