



Scouts

Oxford Spires

District Report 2025

OXFORD SIPRES DISTRICT SCOUT COUNCIL

Annual General Meeting

WEDNESDAY 16TH JULY 2025 at 19:30

28th Oxford Scout Group HQ, Fairlie Road, Littlemore, Oxford OX4 3SW

AGENDA

1. **Introduction and welcome**
2. **Apologies for absence**
3. **Governance topics**
 - a. Approve the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 3rd July 2024
 - b. Adopt the model constitution from Policy, Organisation and Rules (POR)
 - c. Note the District's financial year - 1st April to 31st March.
 - d. Agree the number of members that may be appointed to the Trustee Board (minimum 5, maximum 12)
 - e. Agree the quorum for future meetings of the District Scout Council (excluding this AGM) - 15 people.
4. **Review of the previous year**
 - a. The District Lead Volunteer's review of Scouts during the past 12 months in Oxford Spires
 - b. The County Lead Volunteer's remarks
 - c. Receive and consider the Annual Report of the District Trustee Board, including the annual Statement of the Accounts
5. **Making appointments**

The Trustees for the District were appointed last year for 3 years and there are no Trustee vacancies at the present time.

The Board of Trustees is comprised of the following:

 - District Chair: Val Butcher
 - District Treasurer: Mark Coughlan.
 - District Lead Volunteer (Ex-Officio): Anthony Morris
 - Members of the District Trustee Board: Shane Clark, Brian Carvel, Coling Doling, Jim Ellis, David Eyles, James Heydon, Kevin Heydon, Rebecca Thomas, Stuart Weekes.
 - Bill Butcher is appointed administrator to the Board of Trustees but is not a Trustee.
 - a. Appoint the Scrutineer / Independent Examiner / Auditor [Delete as appropriate]
 - b. Nominate representatives of the District Scout Council to represent the District on the County Scout Council - Anthony Morris & Val Butcher
6. **Closing remarks**

OXFORD SPIRES SCOUT DISTRICT
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
HELD AT 28th OXFORD (Littlemore) Headquarters
Wednesday 3rd July 2024

Present: - Val Butcher BEM, Bill Butcher, Anthony Morris, James Heydon, Kevin Heydon, Naomi Heydon, Rebecca Thomas, Wendy Tatham, Amber Hodges, R. Owen, Ami Walter, Colin Doling, S Thompson, C. Kalaja, Sue Springfield, Brian Carvell, Mark Coughlan.

Apologies received: - Shane Clark, Jo Noble, David Eyles, Simon Welsh, Sarah Meler, Emma Wyatt, Andrew Innes, Giles Puleston, Jim Ellis, Andrew Frawley, Tim Greaves, Phil Earl, Margaret Boggs, Anna Weekes, Stuart Weekes, Linda Philips.

Minutes of the previous AGM: - The minutes of the AGM held on 5th July 2023 were approved.

Governance: - The Model constitution as laid out in Policy, Organisation and Rules (POR) was adopted. The financial year was to remain as 1st April to 31st March.

The minimum number of Trustees on the Trustee board should be 5 and the maximum 12. The Board of Trustee recommended we have 12.

The Board of Trustees recommended the quorum for District Scout Council meetings should be 15. The meeting agreed. (Not including this meeting)

Review of 2023: - Anthony Morris provided an overview of the previous year and was pleased to say the district was able to provide exciting and adventurous activities to the young people of the District. There is still a waiting list which we are doing our best to reduce. Whilst a lack of leaders is a major contributing factor there are other reasons such as providing accommodation when many scout centres are in use every night.

Mark Coughlan then gave an overview of the scrutinised accounts which were approved by those present.

Appointments: -

Chairman: -Val Butcher stood down as chairman and handed the meeting over to Anthony Morris. Anthony immediately nominated Val Butcher to continue as

chairman. She accepted the role for a tenure of three years. This was approved by those present. Val resumed the chair.

Treasurer: - Mark Coughlan agreed to remain treasurer, again for a tenure of three years. This was approved by those present.

Members of the Trustee Board: - Anthony nominated ... to be members of the Trustee Board. Bill Butcher has agreed to remain as secretary/administrator of the board. but will not be a trustee.

Scrutineer: - Mark Coughlan nominated Caroline Hield as scrutineer. This was approved by those present.

Nomination of the District Scout Council's representatives to the County Scout Council.: - Val Butcher and Anthony Morris were approved to perform this role.

Val then thanked everyone for they do for Scouting in general and Oxford Spires in particular. She then invited Wendy Tatham to address the meeting. She too thanked everyone for everything to do.

The meeting closed at 21.13

Oxford Spires District Scout Council

Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2025

	2024/25	2023/24
	£	£
Total Income	30,298.79	52,065.23
Total Expenditure	(45,247.94)	(18,837.61)
Surplus/Deficit	(14,949.15)	33,227.62
Balance Sheet		
District Current Accounts	123,822.27	123,822.27
District Reserve Account	3.25	3.19
District ESU Accounts Total	7,127	32,179.17
Total for the District	130,952.52	156,001.44

The total income for the year of £ 30298.79 included income for District camp but most of the income for that was in the previous financial year. However, most of the expenditure for District Camp was in this financial year hence why the account shows a deficit of £14949.15 for the financial year.

As the Explorer Units come under the District, it is the District that claims the gift aid and then passes it onto the Explorers

The District has also helped with grants supporting young people, Leaders and Groups in some of their activities.

For full copies of the accounts please email treasurer@oxfordspires.org.uk and ask for them.

Oxford Spires Scout District

Income		Expenditure	
Activities		Activities	
Cub Boating	£675.00	Cub Boating	-£400.00
Cub Sixer and Seconder Weekend	£555.00	Cub Sixer and Seconder Weekend	-£428.64
Cub Sport	£0.00	Cub Sport	£0.00
District Camp	£14,755.00	District Camp	-£33,599.17
Scout PL and APL Training Weekend	£0.00	Scout PL and APL Training Weekend	£0.00
Scout Cooking Competition	£180.00	Scout Cooking Competition	-£169.34
Activities Sub Total	£16,165.00	Activities Sub Total	-£34,597.15
		District Team and BofT Expenses	-£704.30
		Insurance	-£691.77
		MPLC Licence	-£575.00
		Appointments Committee	£0.00
Gift Aid	£5925.29	Gift Aid	-£5,925.29
Badge Sales	£318.00	Badge Purchases/Expenses	-£155.00
3rd Oxford Hall	£2,976.00	3rd Oxford Hall	-£2,599.43
District Membership Fee	£4,914.50		
Total Income	£30,298.79	Total Expenditure	-£45,247.94
Total Surplus/Deficit			-£14,949.15

Balances		
Date	31/03/2025	
District Current Account	£10,147.19	Nat West
District Reserve Account	£3.25	Nat West
District Lloyds	£113,675.08	Lloyds
Amadeus ESU - bank account		
Angelmead ESU - bank account		
Angelmead ESU - saving account		
Acquistion ESU		
Buzz ESU - bank account	£6,519.65	
Buzz ESU - cash	£45.41	
Falcon ESU - bank account		
Falcon ESU - cash		
Felix ESU - bank account	£561.94	
Felix ESU - cash	£0.00	
Gordo ESU - bank account		
Red Kite ESU - bank account		
Red Kite ESU - cash		
Wanderers ESU		
Total for District	£130,952.52	

Programme Team

Below are the reports from the District Section. A huge thank you to them for all their hard work.

The District had a large contingent of about 120 at the Oxford City Remembrance Day Parade. Many Groups supported town and village Remembrance Day Ceremonies and it was great to see large turn outs there.

David Eyles

DDC Programme



The only event beavers have done since last AGM is the annual sports day in September. It was a shame that Groups that had said they would support the day were unable to do so for varying reasons.

On the week before the event there were storms and high winds predicted and there was lots of discussion if we should continue as only had small indoor accommodation available.

We decided to do event with change of risk assessments. We also discovered although we had sole use of outdoors & field building, that we were sharing venue carpark with 2 -3 other largish events taking part in school.

By time of event brilliant sunny day and just under 40 beavers and siblings [aged 4.5 – 8.75 years] from 6 colonies [some only getting 1 child out of those booked] had a great afternoon, five teams doing six bases each.

Then some refreshments followed by “old fashion” races and prize giving.

After the event several of main leaders got together to discuss viability of doing District events. We decided to change things around and not do fun day in March at Thame, possibly move sports day to end May beginning of June and have indoor event Oct/Nov.

Unfortunately due to main leaders encountering family health/bereavements or own illnesses we have not met for any leaders meetings in January or April and not organised any events.

We are hoping to put on a big event in 2026 possibly end Spring / beginning of summer term to celebrate beavers 40th anniversary.

Chief Scouts Bronze Awards approx. 80 this year. Oxford Spires Had about 75 Bronze Award Achievers attend Oxfordshire County Awards day.

Sue Springett

Top Awards Volunteer Beavers



A number of activities for the Cubs in the District have taken place this year.

District Cub Sixer & Secondar Camp March 2025: Held at the 28th Oxford Headquarters around 30 Cubs from 2nd, 4th, 28th and 33rd Oxford Mowgli & Jacala Packs attended. We ran a programme on basic Scouting skills, including Cubs cooking their own dinner. The Cubs and leaders mixed well together.

The District Boot & Compass competition was held at the end of April. This was an orienteering exercise held in Bernwood forest. We had 11 teams, with Cubs from 4th, 10th, 43rd and 33rd Oxford Mowgli. Thank you to Ed for running this event.

The District Cub Boating Day was held in June. Cubs from 10th, 43rd and 33rd Oxford Mowgli attended. The Cubs had a go at both canoeing and kayaking. Thank you very much to Dave Eyles and his team of instructors.

Finally, a Big Thank You is due to Claire Rylatt who stepped down from her District Cub role last year after several years. Thank you Claire for all you have done.

Tom Plant

Top Awards Volunteer Cubs

SCOUTS

The scout section as had another busy year, as displayed with the number of scouts attending the county awards day and receiving recognition of their efforts in gaining the chief scouts gold award.

A number of troops attended County Patrol Camping Weekend at Horley and competed well in the competition.

The troops were well represented at Remembrance parades though out the district either in Oxford city, or surrounding villages and parishes.

Scout District Cooking Competition - 18th February 2025

Scouts compete in teams of four to cook a three course meal. This is done "ready-steady-cook" style, with a set of compulsory ingredients and common items in a store cupboard. This year we had 9 teams take part from 8 different troops. A team from the 33rd Sea Scouts were the overall winners (2nd - 43rd; 3rd - 10th). Special thanks to our judges Emily (10th) and Naomi (Yarnton).

Quest Oxford - Sunday 23rd March 2025

This was the second time we have run this event for Scouts. Quest Oxford is a quiz / scavenger hunt for teams of 3-5 scouts in the city centre. The event is designed for scouts to find out about the history of our city and the university. Answers were located around the city and within some of the colleges. About 60 scouts took part in 14 teams from 7 different troops. Gold awards (for the highest scores) were earned by teams from the 8th Oxford and Yarnton. All scouts who took part earned their "Local Knowledge" activity badge. Special thanks to St Edmund Hall and Mansfield College for providing facilities and helping us run the event.

The support for events has been good and many thanks go to the team of leaders who willingly help run these along side running their own troops, we love to see new events and hope more leaders will come forward with suggestions.

Thank you Jon (Yates) for taking on the organisation of Quest and Cooking Competition.

Scout Top Awards Team

EXPLORERS

There are nine Explorer Units in the District and all of them continue to offer great Scouting programmes including Chief Scouts Awards, Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and Explorer Belt. The Census in January showed that Explorer numbers were up again and for the first time in our Districts history were over the 200 mark.

All the units completed Summer Camps last year of various shapes and sizes and looking forward most of the units have camps planned for this summer and a trip to Malta in October for Angelmead.

Notable events include Raidox, a county weekend long scavenger hunt, with over half the units in the District taking part.

I wish to say thanks to all the Explorer Leaders, Assistants and Helpers for their hard work.

Stuart Weekes who has been the District Explorer Scout Commissioner decided to step away from that role or the equivalent with the introduction of the new membership system and the new 14-24 Team structure. A huge Thank You! to Stuart for what he has done over the last 8 years for Explorers in the District!

network Network is continuing in the District but continues to be a challenge, training to get everyone together and co-ordinated is difficult with work/university etc.. naturally taking priority. There is a team of people trying hard to co-ordinate this and we look forward to continuing to grow this resource with the new 14-24 Section Team.

With the change in the Membership system and the structure our Network Scout Commissioner has moved on to new things. Thanks you Amy for your time in helping us get going!

Growth & Development

This remains a challenge in the District and again the Census in January showed that Growth in the District was static with the number of Adults not changing from Census 2024 and the young people numbers being up by 1 young person last years figure and over the last three years these figures have varied by 13. It is likely that this has changed since January but not by much as most of our sections are full and the waiting list for young people in the District still numbers about five hundred.

The reasons for the membership total not going are probably numerous but three of the main ones are: lack of Adult Volunteers; lack of space the meeting places so sections can't expand; lack time slots in the buildings. These are all things that we as a District need to try and tackle over the next few years if the District is to grow.

Since January we have opened a new Scout Troop in the District and are looking to start a new Beaver Colony.

For various reasons we are still looking to get 3rd Oxford (Wolvercote), 27th Oxford (Barton) open and running and maybe get some new sections open at other Groups to try and reduce our overall waiting list.

District Lead Volunteer

The start of the 2024 -2025 academic year saw Scouting preparing to take on a new membership system. This eventually "kicked off" at the end of November and had us all confused, frustrated and wracking our brains as to how we cope with this new system. Despite the various Training courses, it hasn't been plain sailing and there have been many bugs, some fixed, some being fixed, some..... A huge thank you to all of you especially District Team and Group Lead Volunteers for sticking at it and getting on with great Scouting despite the challenges being thrown in our direction.

The Census in January was good for the District showing we are maintaining our numbers and growing in some areas - Explorer Scouts getting over the 200 young people mark for the first time in Oxford Spires history. The fact we have maintained our numbers is brilliant and a testament to the dedication and enthusiasm from our entire Leadership Team across the District.

Our Adult numbers in Leadership Team roles have increased but we have lost a lot of the "behind the scenes" volunteers. Many taking time to revue where they were in their Scouting journey with the introduction of the new system in November 2024. The challenge now is to find volunteers to fill the new "behind the scenes" roles.

I am always in awe of the great Scouting that our Leaders, Helpers and Supporters provide throughout the year for the Young People and this year has been no exception with an amazing amount of Top Awards in every section including two Kings Scout Awards. A brilliant and fantastic achievement. Thank you everyone!

Every year people move on from their roles and this year is no exception and I want to say a huge THANK YOU to Maria Chaundy who was our Local Training Manager for 7 years and did an immense job in bringing Scout Learning to a huge team of Leaders. Thank you to Margaret Boggs for leading the AAC and for starting our welcome team. To Anna Weekes for doing the Recognition Awards Role and to Stuart Weekes who headed up Explorers in the District for 8 years seeing it over the 200 young people mark. To all the Leaders, helpers, supporters that have now moved on - a huge THANK YOU for what you have done and do come and see us occasionally!



Lastly a huge THANK YOU to the District Team and the District Board of Trustees for keeping me and the District on the right path. Also to all the Leaders, Assistants, Supporters who are out “in the field” delivering Scouting in many different ways and giving the young people of the District brilliant Scouting.

Anthony Morris

District Lead Volunteer