

4th Ashby Scout Group

Annual Report 2023 - 2024



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Reference and Administration Details

| | |
|--|---|
| Charity name: | 4th Ashby Scout Group |
| Registered Charity Number: | 1125053 |
| Scouts Association Registration Number | 32054 |
| Charity's principal address: | Donisthorpe Scout Centre 3 Church Street Donisthorpe Swadlincote Derbyshire DE12 7PX |

| Trustee Name | Office | Dates acted if not for whole year |
|-------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| Philip Jonathan Bloor | Group Lead Volunteer and Trustee | |
| Andrew Leake | Seeonnee Cub Scout Lead Volunteer and Trustee | |
| Alice Bush (nee Legate) | Assistant Group Lead Volunteer and Trustee | |
| Nikki Davies | Chair | From EGM on 23rd November 2024 |
| Deborah Crumley | Outgoing Treasurer | |
| Jess Southwart | Incoming Treasurer | Aug 2024 |
| Mark Timson | Trustee | |
| Mark Randall | Trustee | From EGM on 23rd November 2024 |
| Paul Wright | Trustee | From EGM on 23rd November 2024 |
| Madeline Warren | Incoming Trustee | To be voted in |

Structure, governance and management

Type of governing document:

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

How the charity is constituted:

The Group is a trust established under its rules common to all Scouts.

Trustee Selection Methods:

The Trustees are appointed following the Policy, Organisation and Rules of The Scout Association.

Additional governance information:

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

Our year end has recently changed from January to August 31st.

Group Trustee Board

In April 2023, the Scout Association renamed Executive Committees and Executive Committee Members, as Trustee Boards and Trustees respectively. Doing this brings us in line with good practice guidance set by charity regulators. It also clarifies purpose. Before the name change, Executive Committee members performed the roles of charity trustees and were responsible for charity governance. Trustee Boards are set up to focus solely on the governance of the charity not charity operations, and the name change makes this focus clearer.

It'll also help us to recruit new volunteers to Trustee Boards. With an easier to understand purpose, volunteers have a better idea of whether they can get involved in a way that works for their skills, interests and availability.

The Trustee Board is a team of volunteers who work together, as charity trustees, to make sure Scouts is run safely and legally. At the heart of their role is a focus on strategy, performance and assurance. Effective Trustee Board governance helps our volunteers deliver fantastic programmes that give young people skills for life.

Who's in the team

- Chair
- Treasurer
- Trustees
- The Group Lead Volunteer is automatically a Trustee because of their roles in Scouts.

We currently have 8 trustees, with one leaving and 2 incoming. 24/25 will see us have 9 trustees in total. Trustee Boards should have a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 12 members. Appointed Trustees are appointed by the Scout Council (all youth members parents and guardians plus all leaders and volunteers as well as trustees) for up to three years and can be re-appointed by the Scout Council at the AGM. Trustees may only be on the same Trustee Board for a maximum of nine years, before taking a break of at least three years. This applies to any role, but not ex officio Trustees (Lead Volunteers or Youth Leads). Because of the above changes, all trustee terms are reset as of April 2024. No current board members need re-voting in as yet.

All Trustees must complete:

- The learning everyone needs
- Being a Scouts Trustee

Trustees work together to make sure that we:

Manage money well

- Have enough money for now and in the future. This means having a reserves policy and making sure fundraising takes place, if it's needed.
- Have a budget in place. Trustees then agree how to manage the budget with other volunteer teams.

Follow Scouts policies and relevant legislation

- Follow [POR](#), [key policies](#) (including [safety](#), [safeguarding](#), [data protection](#), and equality, diversity and inclusion), and charity regulations.
- Follow employment law if staff are employed, and act as a responsible employer in line with relevant legislation and Scout values. Make sure effective line management is in place for each staff member, which can be delegated to others.

- [Create Trustees Annual Report and Statement of Accounts](#)
- Have Statement of Accounts audited by an appropriate person before the Annual General Meeting. If they're a registered charity, they'll need to share it with the charity regulator.
- Hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM).

Look after buildings, insurance and property

- Look after records of ownership of property and equipment.
- Have the right insurance for people, buildings, and equipment.
- Make sure buildings and equipment are working well.

Manage risks

- Maintain a risk register and put the right risk mitigations in place.

Help the charity to operate well, today and in the future

- Work with Lead Volunteers to meet their charity aims.
- Champion [Our Volunteering Culture](#), and make sure volunteers are aware of it, reflect on it, commit to it, and apply it in their teams.

In carrying out the above, Trustees also:

- Make sure effective administration is in place to support the work of the Trustee Board.
- Make sure records of Trustee Board meetings are kept and complete any actions that are agreed.
- Run [open selection processes for appointing Trustees](#).
- Co-opt Trustees onto the Board if they need people with particular skills or knowledge.
- Get expert advice, if needed. This could be on health and safety, managing money, buildings, equipment, or employment.
- Network with other Scouts Trustees to share knowledge and experience.

What are AGMs?

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) is an opportunity for members, that's every young person's parents or guardians and all our adult leaders and helpers, to meet with the Trustees and hear their report on the charity, review of the accounts, and other administrative business.

It's a compulsory yearly meeting that happens within 6 months of the end of the charity's financial year, and where the Scout Council appoints their Trustees.

Objectives and activities

The Purpose of Scouting

Scouting exists to actively engage and support young people in their personal development, empowering them to contribute positively to society.

The Values of Scouting

As Scouts, we are guided by these values:

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

The Scout Method

Scouting takes place when young people, in partnership with adults, work together based on the values of Scouting and:

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

4th Ashby Scouts

Vision

We want to deliver first class scouting to as many children in our local catchment area as possible, to give all involved inspiring opportunities to do and be our best and develop life skills to make our world better.

Mission

We want to continue to grow our successful scouting offer to our full capabilities without compromise on the quality of experience, by enabling flexible volunteering and keeping scouting fun.

Public benefit statement:

The Group meets the Charity Commission's public benefit criteria under both the advancement of education and the advancement of citizenship or community development headings.

Risk Assessment:

The Group Trustee Board has established the following risks that we are actively working to mitigate:

- **Safety and Safeguarding:** We are constantly updating and reviewing our processes to ensure our members are as safe as possible
- **Injury to leaders, helpers, supporters and members** - Through membership fees, the Group contributes to the Scout Association's national accident insurance policy. We also have additional insurance for occasional volunteers. Risk Assessments are undertaken before all activities.
- **Volunteer team:** Risk of leader overwhelm and losing volunteers, which is a potential risk to Scout group. If Scout team members leave, sections are at risk of closing due to numbers, or worst case, group is at risk of closure. We are actively reaching out to parents and the local community to recruit more volunteers for both GTB and Scout Team. We will be looking at other ways to recruit. We are also working hard to ensure our leaders are effectively supported.
- **Facilities risk** - no long-term security on scout hut – we are actively working with the District to improve this situation
- **Damage to the building, property and equipment** - The Group would request the use of buildings, property and equipment from neighbouring organisations such as the church, community centre and other Scout Groups. Similar reciprocal arrangements exist with these organisations. The Group has sufficient buildings and contents insurance in place to mitigate against permanent loss.
- **Reduced income from fundraising** - The Group is primarily reliant upon income from subscriptions and fundraising. The group does hold a reserve to ensure the continuity of activities should there be a significant reduction in income. The Board could raise the value of subscriptions to increase the income to the group on an ongoing basis, either temporarily or permanently.
- **Reduction or loss of members** - The Group provides activities for all young people aged 6 to 18. If there were a reduction in membership in a particular section or the group as a whole, then there would have to be a contraction, consolidation or closure of a section. In the worst-case scenario, the complete closure of the Group. We currently have a waiting list for all sections so are reasonably confident that this is a slight risk.

Financial Review

Reserves Policy:

The Group's policy on reserves is to hold sufficient resources to continue the charitable activities of the group should income and fundraising activities fall short. The Group Executive Committee considers that the group should hold a sum equivalent to 6 months of running costs, circa £16,000.

The Group held reserves of approximately £21k against this at year-end. This is above the level required for operating expenses. Leaders have highlighted that a significant investment in our Scouting equipment will be needed during the camping season due to many items reaching the end of their useful life.

Investment Policy:

The Group does not have sufficient funds to invest in long-term investments. The Group has therefore adopted a risk-averse strategy to invest its funds. All funds are held in cash using only recognised UK banks or building societies.

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of 4th Ashby Scout Group

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the 4th Ashby Scout Group for the 18-month ended 31 August 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the 4th Ashby Scout Group, 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 4th Ashby Scout Group 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 giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the 4th Ashby Scout Group as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of 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 an 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.

Signed:



Name: Sarah-Jane Statham

Relevant professional qualification or membership of professional bodies (if any): ACMA,CTA, TEP

Address: C/O Donisthorpe Scout Centre, 3 Church Street, Donisthorpe, Swadlincote DE12 7PX

Date: 27/10/2024

Receipts & Payments Account: For 18-month Period Ended 31st August 2024

| Receipts | 01/03/23 - 31/08/24 Unrestricted Funds £ | 01/03/22 - 28/02/23 Unrestricted Funds £ |
|---|--|--|
| Membership Subscriptions | 29,564.00 | 18,337.00 |
| Less membership fees paid on (To district, county, and national) | -16,020.70 | - |
| Net Membership Subscriptions Retained | 13,543.30 | 18,337.00 |
| Bank Interest | 736.28 | 144.55 |
| Donations | 16,800.00 | - |
| Events (Activities/Camp) | 27,139.26 | 13,657.00 |
| Events (Group e.g. AGM, etc) | 113.41 | - |
| Fundraising (Easy Fundraising/Amazon and any others) | 283.57 | 238.11 |
| Gift Aid | 3,627.32 | 2,541.14 |
| Grant Income | 18,982.75 | 450.00 |
| Member/Other Payment Refund | 0.00 | 13.28 |
| Other Income (e.g. Badge sales) | 84.00 | 29.83 |
| Total Receipts | 81,309.89 | 35,410.91 |

| Payments | 01/03/23 - 31/08/24 Unrestricted Funds £ | 01/03/22 - 28/02/23 Unrestricted Funds £ |
|------------------------------------|--|--|
| Admin (Sundries/Website/Training) | 993.94 | 1,270.09 |
| Badges & Uniform | 3,168.12 | 2,470.49 |
| Bank Fees (Go Cardless, OSM, CAF) | 1,406.84 | 1522.92 |
| Equipment | 1,894.65 | 1,215.27 |
| Events (Activities/Camp) | 27,758.91 | 13794.74 |
| Events (Group e.g. AGM, etc) | 754.77 | 71.44 |
| Grant Expenditure | 17,374.21 | 0.00 |
| Insurance/Minibus Permits | 552.34 | 254.59 |
| Meeting Costs | 2,301.19 | 996.67 |
| Member/Other Payment Error | 0.00 | 35.74 |
| Other Expenses | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Project Expenditure | 37,687.39 | 0.00 |
| Sub Total | 93,892.36 | 21,631.95 |
| Building Expenses | | |
| Phone/Broadband | 271.99 | 97.50 |
| Cleaning | 2,834.41 | 1,234.97 |
| Building Maintenance - Minor Works | 3,045.32 | 5,836.01 |
| Rent (inc Elec/Gas) | 6,300.00 | 1,400.00 |
| Sub Total | 12,451.72 | 8,568.48 |
| Total Receipts | 106,344.08 | 30,200.43 |

| | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Net receipts/payments | -25,034.19 | 5,210.48 |
|------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|

Statement of Assets and Liabilities at the end of the year

| Cash Funds | 23/24 | 22/23 |
|-----------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Bank Current Account | 6,339.01 | 4,858.04 |
| Bank Deposit Account | 13,954.12 | 40,243.00 |
| Pre-Paid Card Balance | 892.79 | 1,125.07 |
| Cash/Floats | 6.00 | 0 |
| Sub Total | 21,191.92 | 46,226.11 |

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Liabilities not paid as at end 22/23 | | 30,183.60 |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| Sub Total | | 30,183.60 |
| Net Cash Funds | 21,191.92 | 16,042.51 |

| Non-Monetary assets for own use | 23/24 | 22/23 |
|---------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Badge Stock | 1,187 | 150 |
| Scouting Equipment/Furniture | 10,000 | 10,000 |
| Total | 11,187 | 10,150 |

The above receipts and payments account and statement of assets and liabilities were approved by the trustees on 01/11/24



D Crumley
Group Treasurer



N Davies
Group Chair

Minutes of the Extraordinary General Meeting held on 23rd Nov 2023

4th Ashby Scout Group Scout Council

Extraordinary General Meeting

23rd Nov 2023 19:30 / DSC

| Introduction & welcome | | |
|---|--------------|--------------------------------|
| The GSL welcomed all attendees to the meeting of the Extraordinary General Meeting | N/A | N/A |
| Apologies for absence | | |
| Apologies have been received from Mark Timson (trustee) Alice Legate (trustee) District County Council | | |
| Governance Topics | | |
| It was noted that: The meeting attendees constitute the Group Scout Council (GSC) for 4th Ashby. That we are re-adopting the model constitution from Policy, Organisation and Rules in line with the recommendation from Scout Headquarters. A copy of this is always available on request. | N/A | N/A |
| Group's Financial Year change | | |
| It was noted to the Members of the Group Scout Council that our charity's financial year is to become 1st September to 31st August to bring it in alignment with our planning year. To facilitate this, the present year will run from 1st March 2023 - 31st August 2024. The next AGM will be held, around, Nov 2024 | N/A | N/A |
| Voting Rules | Proposed | Seconded |
| The Group Scout Council agreed that The minimum number of people that can be elected to the Trustee Board is 4 | Mark Randall | Sharon Harris - Christenson |
| The minimum number of Group Scout Council members that must be present at a meeting of the Group Scout Council, to form a quorum, is set at 30 persons. | Nikki Davies | Roz Wright |
| The minimum number of trustees that must be present for a Trustee Board meeting, to form a quorum, is set as one third of Trustee board members plus one | Henry Dann | Ramona Petraru |

| Making appointments | | |
|--|-------------------------|-----|
| It is noted that Beth Skea has formally resigned from the post as Chair. We wish to thank her for all her input and time. The following new Trustees were appointed Nikki Davies as Trustee and in the role as Group Chair Mark Randall Paul Wright | Unanimous vote from GSC | |
| The following were reappointed in their positions as Trustees Andrew Leake Alice Legate Mark Timson Debbie Crumley as Trustee and in the role as Group Treasurer | Unanimous vote from GSC | |
| Sarah Jane Statham was approved in her role as the Independent Examiner and Auditor | Unanimous vote from GSC | N/A |
| Closing Remarks | | |
| Request for help in The Board of Trustees was asked | | |

Please note that the following trustees confirm that there were more than 30 Members attending the EGM.

Minutes for 4th Ashby Scout Groups AGM – 18th May 2023

Held at Willesley Scout Campsite, Willesley Woodside, Ashby de la Zouch. Leicestershire LE65 2UP

Minutes taken by Mark Timson (group secretary)

Jon Bloor (GSL) started the evening by welcoming running through the proceedings of the evening and then by continuing with the following.

- Jon Bloor (JB) welcomed the following for being in attendance and started with the formal part of the AGM.
 - Parents, beavers, cubs and scouts
 - Leaders and committee (now the Group Trustee Board)
- JB – Explained that we are our own registered charity and it is a legal requirement to hold a AGM “we form the scout council which is the body which have charity governance responsibility for Scouting in the Group, District or County. The Trustee Board is accountable to the Scout Council. 8 categories of membership, including all adults in the group, patrol leaders and parents of beavers, cubs and scouts”.
- Apologies – District Reps – Duncan Watts, Louise Bailey, Martin Farrer.
- Beth Skea – 4th Ashby Chair
- Minute from the previous meeting where asked if they were a true and proper account of last year’s AGM
 - Proposer – Matt Simpson confirmed they were.
 - Seconder – Ross Wright
- JB then ran through the re nomination of committee members and the Appointment to roles
 - Chair - nominated by GSL - approval sought for Beth for 6 months
 - Proposer - Jon Bloor
 - Seconder – Mark Timson
 - Secretary - M Timson - approval sought for Mark until a replacement is found
 - Proposer – Debbie Crumley
 - Seconder – Matt Simpson
 - Treasurer - D Crumley
 - Proposer – Alice Legate
 - Seconder – Andrew Leake
- JB then asked if anyone else would like to become a member if so they could approach him or a member after the AGM.
- Leaders – Andrew Leake is currently the only leader and Alice Legate has agreed to also now join the committee
- Appointment of examiner or scrutineer – is still to be Sarah Jayne Statham who audits the accounts on our behalf. This is a non-nominated role
- JB then continued by giving his thanks to:
 - Thanks to Ashby & Coalville Scouts for the use of the campsite
 - Thanks to Kathryn, Jons wife for allowing him to put all the hours he does into scouting
 - Thanks to leaders for their time and dedication
 - Thanks to committee for their time and support
 - Thanks to Mark Timson, Paul Campion and people at working party for their help in shaping DSC to become a great place to meet

- Thanks to Mark Porter for his help with leader training
- Thanks to parents and beavers, cubs scouts for coming – without them we would not have a 4th Ashby Scout Group
- JB then gave a quick outline of the next 12 months - more awards, lots of moving up, hoping for more camping and to offer more places
- JB then mentioned the following for achieving the following Awards during the past 12 months:

Adult Awards

- Training completed:
 - Ramona Patraru
 - Alice Legate
 - Vicky Peddar
- 20 Years' service: Paul Campion
- JB then awarded the below awards
 - Bronze Awards

| | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ James Wright ▪ Darcey Simpson | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Noah Wall ▪ Daniel Foote |
|--|---|
 - Silver Awards

| | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tommy Ahern ▪ Layla Ali ▪ James Beavin ▪ Tristan Bloor | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nicholas Drew ▪ George Harling ▪ Benjamin Nash ▪ Thomas Ward |
|---|---|
 - Beaver Scout of the Year
 - Woodland Colony: Archie Botherhood
 - Riverbank Colony: James Wright
 - Cub Scout of the Year
 - Seeonnee Pack: Isaac Bridge
 - Waingunga Pack: Alfie Burrows
 - Scout of the Year
 - Challenger Troop: Leon Bealing
 - Discovery Troop: Felicity Goodwin

The Harry Watson Award

Harry was a Scout with a huge sense of fun, and a strong sense of responsibility and was an advocate for many in spite of facing many personal difficulties and constant pain. We lost him whilst waiting for the presentation of his Gold Award.

In his memory, the Scouts made a trophy and it is presented to the member of the group who has, in the opinion of the leaders, been pleasant in their Scouting and gone further than could be expected to help others, to raise funds or to champion a cause they are passionate about.

In 2023 Harry's Dad/Sister is here to present the trophy.

2023: Paul Campion (unfortunately was unable to be in attendance)

JB then close the AGM and thanked everyone for their attendance

Attendance

Review of 2023 - 2024

Chair's Report

In Scouts our main priority is enabling young people to develop life skills and confidence whilst having fun and adventures – as safely as possible. This year there have been updates for safety and safeguarding from the national Scout Association and we continue to follow their guidance and requirements and ensure we are fully compliant on all training.

We have also embarked on an internal audit of processes and reporting and are now working together to set group standards that will ensure, as we continue to develop our scouting offer, we are delivering the safest and most accessible scouting possible.

We continue to improve the facilities in line with our fire and safety audits– safety and security are top of the agenda with door upgrades and fire alarms coming soon.

Security of tenure remains a risk we are acutely aware of and we continue to work with the District to try to be as secure as possible.

This is my first full year as Chair and Trustee and as you've hopefully read above – there have been changes to the governance structure over the past year. We are confident that we are compliant with the new requirements.

Many, many thanks to our amazing scouting team, my fellow trustees and group leadership team for their continuing efforts and support.

You have all hopefully seen our emails and messages concerning volunteering. The reality is that we need more people to join the team – we desperately need more leaders and helpers to get involved, especially for the Scout age range, but all sections need more help. We do not want our volunteers to be overloaded. The more people we have, the more the load can be shared.

We also need help with the “operative” tasks, in other words the day-to-day tasks that need doing.

If you can help in any way – social media, admin, minute taking, building fixing, fundraising and grant applications – the list goes on. We are a really friendly team and need you. If you can spare any time please get involved – even if you've never done it before. We will help you every step of the way.

Please email gtb@4thashby.org.uk and get involved.

A final note about financial pressures – we are keeping an eye on the ongoing increases in running and membership costs. We may need to put our monthly sub fees up to £13. We are discussing this at present and will advise if this is the case via email. As always, we do not want monetary restrictions to stop any child from accessing Scouts, so please do have a chat with their leader, or Jon or myself if we can help in any way. Many thanks for your understanding and continued support.

Nikki Davies

Group Lead Volunteer's Report

It is my pleasure to provide an overview of the group's activities.

I greatly appreciate the support from the leaders, board of trustees, parents and other volunteers.

In January, our census numbers showed an increase of 5% again, and adult numbers were up slightly, too—that doesn't mean that we couldn't use more help, particularly in the scout troop.

Last year, I reported that we had 40 children on the waiting list; this has now topped 100! We are keen to open more sections with support from the District and County.

Sadly, we lost Mark Porter, who moved away to be with his family, but we have gained several other volunteers. In addition to Cubs, Mark took on an additional role to help with adult training. We've had a big push on helping adults complete their required training and maintain their ongoing learning, but we would welcome assistance in managing this at a group level.

Beavers, Cubs, and Scouts have had superb night-away opportunities and busy weekly meetings throughout the term. Over 1,400 badges have been presented, including 15 top awards.

Our Young Leaders have been again invaluable, and we have enjoyed helping them to grow and complete their young Leader Training and missions as part of their personal development,

Looking forward, we hope to increase the number of open sections that support adults and be a more significant part of our community.

Thank you again to all the adults, whether leaders, parents, committee members, van loaders, tent unpackers, register takers, or helping the group.

Jon Bloor

Woodland Beaver Colony

Woodland Beaver Colony has had another busy year. Our Beavers have been working hard towards new badges, with nearly 200 being awarded.

Highlights of our activities this year included a visit from Harry the Therapy Dog, who helped us learn about disability awareness and animal care and was more than happy to be cuddled by everyone. We planted a range of vegetables which flourished in the car park of the Scout Centre for our gardener badge and cooked up some tasty treats for the cooking badge. Two of our Young Leaders spent an evening talking about their trip to WSJ in Korea with our Beavers, showing their kit and teaching some traditional Korean pastimes. At Christmas, Woodland Beavers built their own Christmas tree, added some beautiful handmade decorations, and proudly exhibited it at Treefest in Moira.

In May, some of our Beavers joined in an activity weekend and sleepover at Beaudesert Outdoor Activity Centre in Cannock, where they tried archery, grass sledging, climbing and coracling.

For their adventure challenge, Woodland Beavers have enjoyed both kata-kayaking and go-karting at Conkers, cycling at Hicks Lodge and climbing at Alter Rock. At the campsite, they have tried building fires, tracking, backwoods cooking, and held a campfire. We finished the term with an evening of water fun and games, culminating in a huge water fight.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank Rachel (Owl), our four young Leaders, and all the parents who have volunteered their help this last year.

Lynne (Fox)

Riverbank Beaver Colony

What an exciting year - no, 16 months - it has been for Riverbank Beavers. We thought the previous year would be difficult to top, but somehow we managed it.

Our core team has again grown, with Rose and Riley joining us as Young Leaders from 4th Ashby, and 1st Appleby Magna with Measham respectively. We have also had support, especially at Willesley from 1st Appleby's Scout Leader Claire.

As with the rest of the group, Riverbank Colony continues to be oversubscribed and so our numbers have remained static at 24-26 over the course of the year.

So what have we been up to?

We have spent well over half our meetings out and about. Willesley Campsite features heavily, but we have also spent evenings: exploring Ashby; Kata canoeing at both Conkers and at Moira Furnace; visiting Pets at Home and exploring local woodlands both on foot and by bike.

Our programme at Willesley saw us Ziplining, Caving, Den Building and Backwoods Cooking, including inviting dads along for a Fathers' Day Sausage Sizzle. Despite raining heavily, this was a fun evening and we managed to cook some fantastic sausage rolls and some delicious baked apples.

Further afield, we have also been abseiling and climbing at Alter Rock - this is fast becoming a favourite activity for the colony, and in the Autumn half term we spent a late night at Rosliston Observatory, learning about the stars and telescopes.

We had plenty of new experiences however, including flying Hawks at Cattows Farm with Hawkwise, and a rugby skills session at Ashby Rugby Club.

We even spent a day sailing at Foremark Reservoir. This was particularly exciting, and we will definitely do this again next year.

Back at the DSC, we hosted a visit from Aquabox who explained the importance of clean water in Crisis areas; held a tea and cake night for Mothers' Day; and baked biscuits for Halloween. All this, as well as our usual programme of craft activities, show and tell nights and experiments.

A big highlight however was the cardboard box caving night organised by Gorilla. A brilliant way to burn off energy after the Christmas break.

2024 also saw the return of the County Beaverree. This year's reality-TV themed event was a big hit, with a magician, adventurous activities, and a disco amongst others.

In May we joined with Cubs and Beavers from across the group, in an Activity Weekend at Beaudesert Activity Centre in Cannock Chase. This was a very fun weekend with Grass Sledging, Archery and Kayaking, and was enjoyed by all.

We are fortunate to have a large leader team, but we couldn't have done all this without the support of the parents. Thanks to all those who have stepped in, sometimes at short notice, to help at both the DSC and at Willesley.

However, we must give special thanks to:

- Andy and Charlotte for running our Rugby session;
- Naomi and Mark for helping at the Beaverree;
- Kenny for supporting our Remembrance activities, and many evenings at Willesley

We awarded around 240 Activity and Challenge badges, including 2 Bronze Awards. Congratulations to Noah and William.

Matt

Seeonnee Cub Scouts Report

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| April 23 | Cubs learnt about the St George's flag in preparation for St George's day and the Kings coronation. |
| May 23 | We celebrated the King's coronation with a party at Willesley campsite and completed a picture treasure hunt around the campsite. |
| June 23 | We held a very enjoyable camp at Oaks campsite with Waingunga Cubs where the Cubs had a go at Zorb football and tomahawk throwing. We also held an annual Fathers' Day backwoods cooking evening and did go-karting at Conkers. |
| July 23 | Cubs enjoyed a water fight for our last meeting before the summer holidays. |
| September 23 | We welcomed new members and undertook some skills challenges. We also completed the blue plaque trail around Ashby as part of the local knowledge badge |
| October 23 | Cubs worked towards their teamwork challenge and air activities badge and had a fancy-dress Halloween party. |
| November 23 | We enjoyed a campfire and wide games at Willesley campsite as well as completing the Personnel safety badge. Cubs were proud to join hundreds of others in Ashby's Remembrance Sunday. |
| December 23 | Highlights included a Christmas party at Rebound inflatable park. |
| January 24 | We completed the Cubs road safety badge which included a walk around Donisthorpe highlighting possible dangers and identifying various road signs. |
| February 24 | All the Cubs enjoyed cooking a stir fry for Chinese New Year and pancakes for Shrove Tuesday, but the biggest highlight was a visit to Ashby fire station where we were given a demonstration of the danger of pouring water onto hot oil. |
| March 24 | We had an easter egg hunt at Willesley campsite and made an emergency escape plan for our hut. |
| April 24 | The focus this month was the naturalist badge by doing bug hunting, identifying trees and pond dipping. |
| May 24 | We held a joint activity weekend with Waingunga Cubs and both Beaver colonies at Beaudesert activity centre near Cannock where we got to have a go at grass sledging, Archery, Coracling and Jacobs ladder. Cubs also had a great night at Cocks doing either go-karting or Kata Canoeing. |
| June 24 | During June the Cubs learnt how to pitch and pack away tents and build mini catapult's as well as a backwoods cooking evening with a parent and a hike. Also, we had a great night canoeing at Moira furnace. |
| July 24 | Cubs enjoyed a water fight for our last meeting before the summer holidays. |
| Summer Holidays | We held a week-long camp at Cornel Scout Centre in North Wales. 22 Cubs had a great time and enjoyed visits to Colwyn Bay, Llandudno, the national slate museum and Zip world which included bounce below, deep mine tour and Fforest coaster. |

A big thank you to Angie, Sean, Ramona, Mark, Kirsty and David for their help during the period. We have also benefited from regular help from Roz and Matt, who are Beaver leaders. I am also very grateful to parents who have helped with sessions or supported their cub.

We have welcomed many Beavers into Cubs and a few new members from other Cub packs. We have lost a few along the way, but we are pleased with the numbers we currently have. At the end of August, we had 25 cubs and 5 adults.

We continue to support Cubs in working towards their Silver Award. We are delighted to report that Samuel Onions, Maxwell Robins and Junior Thornton have completed their award.

We hope to share the planned camps and activities for 2025 soon and we continue working towards the silver award for our older scouts.

Thank you again for all the help I received.

Andrew Leake

Cub Scout Leader

Waingunga Cub Pack

Waingunga has been a busy pack since the last AGM! We currently have 23 Cubs, 2 Young Leaders, and 5 Leaders. Over the previous year, we have had many achievements, with 7 Cubs having been awarded the top award in Cubs, earning their Chief Scout Silver Award.

We have earned many activity badges, including Astronomer, Cyclist, Disability Awareness, Chef, Entertainer, Fire Safety, Gardener, International, Local Knowledge, Money Skills, Home Help, Pioneer, Air Activities, Emergency Aid, Hikes, Musician, Navigator, Snowsports, and Paddlesports. Over the last year, 522 Challenge, Activity, and Staged badges have been achieved within Waingunga Cubs!

Waingunga was lucky to be visited by the 1st Ibstock Band, The Rotary Aquabox Scheme, and Peter Armitage MBE, who gave a talk about the Postal Service through the Second World War. For our end-of-term Christmas party, we visited Swadlincote Ski Centre and had a fantastic time; for some Cubs, it was their first experience of learning how to ski! Waingunga has also participated in canoeing, dinghy sailing, cycling, and visiting the Apple Store in Sheffield to learn how to make music digitally!

In addition to our meets, both Waingunga and Seeonnee Cub packs have had lots of camping adventures. In June 2023, Cubs from both packs camped at The Oaks near Loughborough. In March 2024, Cubs jointly camped at John's Lee Wood, near Markfield.

Cubs also shared a camp with Beavers, staying at Beaudesert Campsite in May 2024. More recently, in August 2024, Cubs from both packs attended our bi-annual summer camp at Cornel campsite near Snowdonia. Activities included visiting Zip World Bounce Below and Fforest Coaster, The National Slate Museum, and a beach day at Llandudno. Waingunga has achieved 148 collective nights away since the last AGM!

During the Summer of 2023, we said goodbye to James and Jenny as they moved across to Scouts to assist the group as Assistant Scout Leaders. In the Summer of 2024, we also said goodbye to Camilla, who stepped down, having achieved her 10-year service awards. We have also had a new face join the team: Dan has stepped up as a Section Assistant and is working towards his Wood Badge. I want to take this opportunity to thank Kathryn, Carrie, Chris, Dan, Camilla, James and Vicky for all their help in the last 18 months. Your support and time during meets and outside have made Waingunga Pack a pleasure to participate in – thank you!

Alice Bush (Akela)

Combined Challenger and Discovery Scouts Report

Our two scout troops follow the same programme and work together for camps and activities.

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| March 23 | <p>We trained in map and Compass and then went on a hike. We went to Willesley and played wide games. Richard Nevin trained scouts in first aid.</p> <p>Scouts participated in a Digital Skills workshop at the Apple Store in Meadow Hall, which our cub leader, Mark Porter, arranged.</p> |
| April 23 | <p>Scouts started moving outdoors. We fielded three teams in the first county incident hike, Rambling Fox. Our teamwork scores were good. We also participated in St George's Day with the Ashby & Coalville district.</p> |
| May 23 | <p>We took advantage of the district water team's services to have a kayaking session at Moira Furnace. It was good for 35 scouts to join many others across the district for a scout camp.</p> |
| June 23 | <p>In addition to weekly meetings, we held a survival skills camp and made tarp tents to sleep in (except for George, who rolled out).</p> |
| July 23 | <p>Scouts did two cycling sessions, starting at Donisthorpe Woodland Park and the. At Hicks Lodge, we were mindful of the new scout's rules which restrict what we can do.</p> |
| Summer Holidays | <p>We had sessions on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, which Taff kindly organised at Conkers. These included karts, Kara canoes, archery and raft building.</p> <p>Many of us headed to Beaudesert campsite, where we took advantage of their ready-erected tent village and catered service—a great idea that needed some polishing! Scouts could sleep in hammocks for one or more nights, a popular option!</p> |
| September 23 | <p>We welcomed new members and undertook some skills challenges. We also trialled a new activity at Conkers, paddling tubes across the basin!</p> |
| October 23 | <p>Scouts worked towards their teamwork challenge badges.</p> |
| November 23 | <p>We welcomed Ray and Sylvia Spare of the Rotary, who explained their vital Aquabox project to us.</p> <p>As ever, cooling proved popular. We also tried a film night.</p> <p>Scouts were proud to join hundreds of others in Ashby's Remembrance Sunday.</p> |
| December 23 | <p>Highlights included a winter hike and a noisy trip to Laser Quest in Derby.</p> |
| January 24 | <p>We completed team challenges, made bee hotels and enjoyed a night playing wide games at Willesley.</p> |
| February 24 | <p>All scouts enjoyed the Warhammer activity packs supplied as part of their partnership with Scouts, and several scouts have taken up the hobby as a result.</p> <p>With Shrove Tuesday falling early, we also enjoyed pancakes and pancakes challenges.</p> |
| March 24 | <p>We welcomed the County Shooting team for some air rifle sessions and completed our local knowledge badge in Ashby.</p> |

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| April 24 | The focus here was training for the upcoming expedition challenge. It was also the Rambling Fox event again, and both our teams enjoyed it. Again, scouts took part in St George's Day. |
| May 24 | With the support of parents and past leaders, we were able to support six teams, including one from our friends at Ashby Hastings Scouts. A last-minute cancellation of the campsite we booked provided a little excitement, but it led to us discovering the excellent 'Fire and Stars' site, worth a visit by families and scouts alike. Some super walking in the heat and expedition rations sustained us well (with thanks to Basecamp Foods at Melbourne, who helped us out tremendously). Troop night included wide games and learning some fire lighting skills. |
| June 24 | With other scout groups, we joined the organisers, Whitwick Scout Group, to support the Royal British Legion in commemorating the 80th Anniversary of the D-Day landings. A moving procession of flags representing all the countries that took part, lit by candlelight, headed to the nationwide beacon lighting. We also did kata canoes at Conkers and made campfire pizzas. |
| July 24 | Scouts enjoyed cycling, activities at Conkers and team games. |
| Summer Holidays | Over the summer, we made the most of the weather to enjoy many activities organised by Taff at Conkers, including karting and raft building. We held a week-long camp at Rangemore outside Burton. 33 Scouts enjoyed patrol cooking, visits to the NMA and Sudbury Hall and swimming at Moorways. Scouts also made paracord items and tried pyrography and embroidery. Highlights included Clout archery and whittling. |

A huge thanks to Richard, Blossom, Vicky, Chrisi, James, Lynne, Sean, Karen, Esther, Carmen, Jack, Dan and Ollie for their help during the period. We have also benefited from regular help from Kathryn and Alice, who are Cub leaders, and Paul and Mark, who thought they had hung up their neckers! I am also very grateful to parents who have helped with sessions or supported their scout.

We have welcomed many Cubs into Scouts and quite a few new members. We have lost a few along the way, but we are pleased with the number who have moved up to Explorers. At the end of August, we had 27 on Tuesday and 34 on Thursday.

We continue to support scouts in working towards their Gold Award. We are delighted to report that Lacey-May Lowrie, Harry Flanagan and Leon Bealing have completed their award.

We hope to share the planned camps and activities for 2025 as we continue working towards Gold for our older scouts. Places in Explorers have been secured.

Thank you again for all of the help I received.

Jon Bloor

Group Lead Volunteer and Acting Scout Lead Volunteer