

1 Reference and Administration Details

Charity Name: Mersey Weaver District Scout Council
Charity Number: 1145482
Principal Address: The Heath Business and Technical Park, Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 4QX

1.1 Trustees

Jeff Shaw	District Chair
Cath Mudford	District Treasurer
Oliver Chambers	District Lead Volunteer
Grace Wheeler/ Ethan Finley	District Youth Lead Volunteer
Ronald Sayle	Andy Wheeler
Neil Eccles	Ben Nugent
Michelle Pickstock	

2 Objectives & Activities

2.1 Governing Document & Purposes of the Charity

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 (POR) of the Scout Association.

The purpose of the Scouts is to actively engage and support young people in their personal development, empowering them to make a positive contribution to society. By being in the Scouts, adults and young people develop skills for life through participation in a programme, underpinned by our method, and delivered principally in Squirrel Dreys, Beaver Colonies, Cub Packs, Scout Troops, Explorer Units and Scout Networks. The function of all the other adults within our movement is to support the delivery and quality of those programmes in each of our section.

2.2 Main Activities

2.3 District Scout Council

The District Scout Council is the electoral body to which the District Trustee Board is accountable. Membership of the District Scout Council is open to:

Ex-officio Members

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Ex officio members of the District Scout Council are:

- a. all adult members with a District role - see District roles in the Chapter 16 Teams Table of The Scout Association's Policy, Organisation and Rules.
- b. all Group Lead Volunteer members of each Group Leadership Team from the District.
- c. all Group Leadership Team Members of each Group in the District.
- d. all Group Section Team Members of each Group in the District
- e. all Group Trustee Board Chairs from the District
- f. all Group Trustee Board Treasurers from the District
- g. all Explorers (including Young Leaders) in the District
- h. all members of the Scout Network in the District
- i. all parents of all Explorers (including Young Leaders)
- j. the County Lead Volunteer
- k. the County Chair.

Appointed Members

- The appointed members of the Scout Council are other supporters of the Group, District or County appointed by the Scout Council at their AGM on the recommendation of the Trustee Board for a fixed period not exceeding three years. MW has no appointed members.

Community Members

- The community members of the Scout Council are representatives of the local community appointed because of their role rather than by their name. For example, local headteachers, or Parish Council members. The total number of appointed and community members of a District Scout Council must not exceed the number of ex officio members. Mersey Weaver has no Community Members.

2.4 Constitution and Governing document

The District is a trust established under the Policy, Organisation and Rules of the Scout Association. It has a constitution agreed by the District Scout Council, but which is subservient to its governing documents. The constitution is detailed in section 5.5 of POR.

2.5 Trustee Selection

The trustees are appointed in accordance with the District's constitution, the Policy, Organisation and Rules of the Scout Association and best practice from the Charity Commission.

The District Trustee Board should comprise a maximum of 12 Trustees (the total of all ex officio, appointed, and co-opted Trustee categories), with a minimum of five Trustees. In Mersey Weaver it is

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proposed to have up to twelve Trustees who are approved by the District Scout Council at the AGM, two ex Officio, eight appointed and up to two co-opted in any year. The aim is for the District Trustee Board, and any sub committees, to have at least two Trustees aged between their 18th and 25th birthdays.

The selection processes leading to appointment of District Trustees must include a rigorous and transparent selection process, which includes advertising vacancies widely.

All Trustees must complete learning as specified in the appropriate sections of Chapter 16 Roles Table of The Scout Association Policy, Organisation and Rules.

The members of the District Trustee Board are:

- a. The District Lead Volunteer and the District Youth Lead are ex officio members of a District Trustee Board.
- b. The District Trustee Board must initiate a selection process to propose a District Chair to the District Scout Council for appointment at their AGM. The vacancies for the role of Chair only occur at the end of their period of appointment (for example, a District Chair may have been appointed for three years and so does not need to be reappointed after years 1 and 2). The proposal from the Trustee Board is received by the Scout Council at their AGM. The proposal from the Trustee Board does not require seconding by a member of the Scout Council. The action of the Scout Council is to approve (or not) the proposed name from the Trustee Board.
- c. The District Trustee Board must initiate a selection process to propose a District Treasurer to the District Scout Council for appointment at their AGM. The vacancies for the role of Treasurer only occur at the end of their period of appointment (for example, a District Treasurer may have been appointed for three years and so does not need to be re-appointed after years 1 and 2). The proposal from the Trustee Board is received by the Scout Council at their AGM. The proposal from the Trustee Board does not require seconding by a member of the Scout Council. The action of the Scout Council is to approve (or not) the proposed name from the Trustee Board.
- d. The appointed members of a District Trustee Board are persons appointed by the District Scout Council at the District's AGM. This should follow a selection process initiated and overseen by the District Trustee Board. The vacancies for the role of Trustee only occur at the end of their period of appointment (for example, a District Trustee may have been appointed for three years and so does not need to be re-appointed after years 1 and 2). The proposal from the Trustee Board is received by the Scout Council at their AGM. The proposal from the Trustee Board does not require seconding by a member of the Scout Council. The action of the Scout Council is to approve (or not) the proposed name from the Trustee Board.
- e. The co-opted members of a District Trustee Board are persons co-opted annually by the District Trustee Board. They are not appointed by the District Scout Council at its AGM. The number of co-opted members must not exceed the actual number of appointed Trustees (excluding Chair and Treasurer).
- f. The County Chair and the County Commissioner each have the right of attendance at meetings of each of the District Trustee Boards in the Districts in the County.

2.6 District Trustee Board

The Trustee Board remains to support the District Lead Volunteer in meeting the responsibilities of their appointment and to especially to provide guidance, support, and compliance assurance in all aspects of governance inc. safety, legal matters, finance, insurance, data compliance and any other regulatory requirements.

The District Trustee Board is a team of volunteers who work together, as charity Trustees, to make sure the Scouts is run safely and legally. At the heart of their role is a focus on strategy, performance and assurance, working to ensure that the District is meeting The Scout Association's overall aims and strategic goals.

Effective Trustee support helps other volunteers run the Scout programme that gives young people skills for life.

Members of the District Trustee Board must act collectively as charity trustees of the District, and in the best interests of the District's members.

The District Trustee Board is responsible for the governance of the charity, and it is accountable to the District Scout Council. Members of the District Trustee Board must act collectively as charity trustees of Scout District, and in the best interests of the charity's members. Governance roles must be distinct to help manage conflicts of interest. This means that the roles of District Chair and District Treasurer must be kept separate and be done by two different people.

The District Trustee Board members must themselves collectively:

- develop and maintain a risk register, including putting in place appropriate mitigations
- ensure that the District's finances are properly managed, including development and maintenance of appropriate budgets to support the work of the District
- ensure that where one of the District's Explorer Units is partnered with a Group and the operational financing is undertaken by the Group, this arrangement is documented in the Partnership Agreement, and the finance arrangements must follow this guidance.
- Maintain and manage:
 - a reserves policy for the charity including a plan for use of reserves outside the 'minimum'
 - an investment policy for the charity
 - a public benefit statement for the charity
- ensure that people, property and equipment are appropriately insured, and that any property and equipment owned or used by the District is properly protected and maintained
- ensure the appointment and management and operation of any sub-teams, including appointing a Chair to lead the sub-teams. This should normally be one of the District's Trustees.
- ensure that effective administration is in place to support the work of the District Trustee Board
- appoint any co-opted members of the District Trustee Board
- ensure transparency of operation, including:

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- prepare and approve the Annual Accounts and arrange their examination by an auditor, independent examiner or scrutineer as appropriate and as appointed by the District Scout Council at their AGM
- prepare and approve the District Trustees' Annual Report which must include the Annual Accounts and include the report from the auditor, independent examiner or scrutineer
- present the approved Trustees' Annual Report and Annual Accounts to the District Scout Council for their consideration at the District's AGM
- following the District AGM, ensure that a copy of the District Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts is filed as described in 5.7.2.2 and 5.7.2.3 of The Scout Association Policy, Organisation and Rules.
- take responsibility for the District's adherence to Data Protection Legislation recognising that, dependent on circumstances, it may at different times act as a Data Controller and as a Data Processor
- individually and collectively maintain confidentiality regarding appropriate District Trustee Board business
- put in place annually an open and transparent selection process to recommend to the District Scout Council appropriate persons to be appointed members of the District Trustee Board, including Chair and Treasurer. Vacancies for appointed Trustees only occur at the end of their period of appointment (for example, a Trustee may have been appointed for three years and so does not need to be re-appointed or re-selected after years 1 and 2).

Where staff are employed:

- act as a responsible employer in accordance with the Scouts' values and relevant legislation
- ensure that effective line management is in place for each employed staff member and that these are clearly established and communicated
- ensure that appropriate specific personnel insurance is in place

Notye Mersey Weaver has no direct staff employed.

District Trustee Board may create sub-teams it deems necessary to support its governance function. The District Trustee Board must ensure that for any sub-team it appoints:

- its purpose is governance focused and not operational
- its members are agreed and approved by the District Trustee Board
- the District Trustee Board Chair is an ex officio member
- the District Lead Volunteer is an ex officio member

Sub-team members are not District Trustees unless they are already members of the District Trustee Board.

Mersey Weaver District Trustee Board has two sub teams

- Finance Sub Team
- Health, Safety and Environment Sub Team.

2.7 Risk and Internal Control

The District Trustee Board has developed a dynamic Risk Management Process to help identify the major risks to which they believe the District is exposed. In support of this process the Trustee Board has also developed a Risk Register in which to:

- record these identified risks,
- record necessary mitigating actions in place or needed to reduce these risks to an acceptable level,
- assist in the sharing of these risks across the District teams to help understanding, and clarify the wider team's role in managing these risks,
- track to the appropriate progress of mitigating actions,
- support the ongoing maintenance of this dynamic register.

A copy of this Risk Register is available separately on request.

3 Objects and Activities

The primary purpose of the District is aligned to that of the Scout Association namely:

'to actively engage and support young people in their personal development, empowering them to make a positive contribution 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 co- operate 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.

The activities of the District

- The provision of the Scouting programme for 14–18 year old members (Explorers)
- The provision of scouting for 18–24 year old members (Network)
- The provision of support to Scout Groups within the District
- The provision of communication channels between Scout Groups within the District and between those Groups and the rest of the Scouting Organisation.

4 Achievements and Performance

2024 has been another vibrant and rewarding year for Scouting in Mersey Weaver. The success of our District is a testament to the dedication, commitment, and passion of our leaders, volunteers, and young people who continue to deliver safe, varied, and adventurous programmes across our communities. This was once again celebrated at our annual **BigThankYou event at Queen Charlotte's Wood**, recognising the collective efforts that make Mersey Weaver such a special place to Scout.

A highlight for 2024 was the excellent progress made by our full time Local Development Officer, Emma Jenks and Growth & Development Programme Steering Group, in helping grow the District. In 2024 we have seen a further 43 new squirrels (YP) start scouting in the District, 6 new sections opened, and to help deliver an exciting programme to these new YP, lots of new adult volunteers. The funding was secured for two years, so we still have 2025 to make yet further progress and bring scouting to yet more Young People in Mersey Weaver.

Overall, the 2024 Census saw total growth in YP by 5.2%, and a further a 5.8% increase in adults. Growth was seen in most sections with a small reduction in Beavers and Explorers. Once again and as noted above Mersey Weaver continued to see very strong growth in Squirrels. MW is now back to 96.5 % of its pre pandemic levels and it is hoped that next year we will exceed pre-pandemic membership

Once again the 14-24 Team and in particular the Explorer units have continued to deliver an exciting adventurous programme with activities including climbing; micro-lighting; landyachtsing; sailing; pioneering; hill walking; and thanks to our Top Awards Team and several Duke of Edinburgh training events, practice and qualifying expeditions. There has also programme of joint events including a contingent of Explorers joining in with a large camp in North Wales called Gladstonbury.

Good progress has continued with the Youth Forum under the joint leadership of the District Youth Lead Volunteers, Grace and Ethan. This has included attendance at Local, Cheshire and National Youth Forums, running an excellent well being weekend at both Clogwyn and QCW, and the delivery of a SEN webinar developed in 2023.

This year, our young people have achieved a remarkable array of awards, including:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • 24 Chief Scout's Gold Awards | • 2 BTEC Awards |
| • 12 Chief Scout's Platinum Awards | • 4 Explorer YouShape Awards |
| • 2 Chief Scout's Diamond Awards | • 1 Explorer Belt participant |
| • 5 Young Leader Belts | • 2 King's Scout Awards |

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These achievements reflect the quality of the programmes being delivered and the opportunities available to young people in Mersey Weaver.

A particular highlight was our outstanding performance in the **2024 Cheshire Hike**, where Mersey Weaver teams came close to achieving a clean sweep of the competition. **1st Moore** were victorious in the **Pathfinder section**, while Explorers from **Aquila** and **Cestrian** units claimed top prize in the **Explorer section**. In **Pathfinder Plus**, **1st Norley's team** secured a close second place.

2024 was a quieter year for International scouting however we were proud to have two Explorer Scouts, Scarlett and Maisy, who represented us at Roverway (a meeting of 6000 Scouts from Europe in Norway). In the latter half of the year a significant effort has gone into selecting and training of a Kandersteg contingent of around 50 young people who will visit the International Scout Centre in 2025. As you will see some the accounts there has been extensive fundraising to support this exciting event with an ambitious ~£100k to raise, this will continue in 2025.

2024 has been another successful year for the Activity Centres. Clogwyn has seen an increasing number of bookings thanks to the work of Ben Nugent and Mike's continued work to develop the facility and sustain the necessary maintenance. Work has also started to renew the lease. Queen Charlotte's has seen very busy year of bookings, once again thanks again to Ben helped by the support team led by Matt Morris in ensuring the facility is well maintained and presented. Good support from the Community Payback Team continued in 2024 and we were even used as a case study by the Ministry of Justice as how schemes like community payback can have mutually favourable outcomes.

Once again the District Scout Centre has benefited from further progress with its refurbishment with help from the Community Payback team and Kevin Holland and Colin Chamber. These improvements include the start of a project to replace the outdated and ineffeicent heating system, further work on roof repairs, and preparation for the completion of entrance and entrance hall improvements.

2024 was a challenging year for the minibuses with reduced bookings and some unexpected costs (notably an unbudgeted cost for a trailer overhaul) which led to a small overspend in the year. We are seeing an increase in external bookings from other Districts and even counties and it is hoped an increase in the offering of schedule MiDAS courses as well as a more flexible way of completing the scheme will increase the number of drivers. These critical resources have the potential to enable a more varied and quality programme so we are keen to ensure they remain sustainable.

The District Scout Shop has once again helped provide cost effective Scout Uniform, badges and equipment to the people across the District as well as making a valued contribution to the District finances. It has been key in the growth and development project in being able to offer uniform at less than RRP prices.

The Awards and Recognition Team continued to do an excellent job identifying volunteers across District to be recognised for their service and contribution, and the Appointments Panel continued to be productive in helping appoint new volunteers into key roles in the district. This team played a key in preparing for the switch to a new Welcome process. We were proud that 24 volunteers were recongised with good service awards and notably Bruce Lane, Derek Hillbeck, Jeff wood and Mike

Walker were all awarded with the Silver Wolf. Colin Chambers received the Silver Acorn and Laura Lambert the Medal for Meritorious Conduct. Congratulations and thank you to all the worth recipients.

At the end of 2024 we started our transition to both a new way of working and digital tools as part of The Scouts transformation to the Volunteer experience and look forward to reporting on our progress next year.

5 Financial Review

5.1 Reserves Policy

The District has undertaken a review of its potential liabilities in the face of foreseeable risks and has currently determined that a reasonable minimum sum to hold as reserves is one year's District operating cost: nominally £90 000.

2024 has seen further investment in the District facilities, as well as in the Local Growth Officer (LGO). The year end funds (£203,779) are higher than the agreed reserve level, and higher than the end of 2023. However a significant amount of this money is (£68,374) is Designated, a significant portion for the Kandersteg international camps which will be spent in 2025. £25,939 are Restricted fund a large portion set aside for the support of Clogwyn. The increased level of funding the TSA have resulted in a lower level of spend on the LGO.

It has been agreed that the District will continue to fund the LGO throughout 2025. External support funding has been secured from the Scouts Association and this will reduce the further depletion of reserves. However, it has still be seen as prudent to limit and non-essential development of the Activity Centres in 2024 to reserve funds to support the new targeted Sections and Groups across the District.

It is expected that significant sums will be spent on the refurbishment of the DSC in 2025 and discussions are planned on potential extended funding of the LGO into 2026. It is expected that a combination of these factors, along with ongoing inflation pressures will see the reserves deplete towards the target level over 2025 – 2026.

The overall finances have continued to be managed in a prudent and professional manner, with expenses settled promptly. Once again, the finance processes led to an accurate and speedy closure for the year end accounts to the full satisfaction of our IE. It was noted that the IE did comment on the sustained level of reserves in excess of the target value and that it was increasingly important that this money is spent to benefit the purposes of the charity.

The District will continue to support exciting activities and events to enhance the provision of scouting in the District. These continue to be proposed, approved, and tracked using our project proposal and approval process.

Resolution of Gift Aid application remains outstanding.

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5.2 Investment Policy

The District has adopted a low-risk strategy with all funds held in cash, using only mainstream banks, or building societies. Following the closure of The Scout Association's Short-Term Investment (STI) services, these reserves have now been transferred into a secure account giving a higher rate of return with CAF bank.

An Investment Policy is in place to reflect this strategy.

6 Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:

Signature:



Date: 28/04/2025

Full Name: Oliver Chambers

Position: District Lead Volunteer

Signature:



Date: 28/04/2025

Full Name: Jeff Shaw

Position: District Chair

Mersey Weaver District Scout Council
Income & Expenditure Statement

31 st December 2023				INCOME	31 st December 2024			
Total £	Unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £		Total £	Unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £
64,408.50	64,408.50	-	-	- Membership Fees	70,475.00	70,475.00	-	-
2,514.33	2,514.33	-	-	- Investment Income received	1.14	1.14	-	-
3,661.38	2,433.38	-	1,228.00	Donations and grants	6,206.94	1,809.12	2,925.32	1,472.50
19,533.62	582.93	18,950.69	-	- Fund Raising/International Camps	40,262.16	0.00	40,262.16	-
39,167.85	35,992.00	3,175.85	-	- Activities / Projects	22,755.74	22,755.74	-	-
60,753.22	60,753.22	-	-	- Fees and Charges	95,877.21	95,877.21	-	-
0.00	0.00	-	-	Equipment	0.00	0.00	-	-
2,736.28	2,736.28	-	-	Administration	1,213.88	1,213.88	-	-
34.71	34.71	-	-	- Other Income	28.80	28.80	-	-
192,809.89	169,455.35	22,126.54	1,228.00	Total Income	236,820.87	192,160.89	43,187.48	1,472.50
				EXPENDITURE				
40,806.00	40,806.00	-	-	- Membership Fees	42,408.00	42,408.00	-	-
59,856.61	59,856.61	-	-	- Activity Centres	64,874.44	60,997.27	3,877.17	-
50.00	50.00	-	-	- Donations & Grants	350.00	£100.00	-	250.00
36,587.05	30.73	36,556.32	-	- Fund Raising/International Camps	19,342.33	1.15	19,341.18	-
41,966.64	34,313.67	7,652.97	-	Activities / Projects	52,964.70	52,884.84	79.86	-
31,385.74	31,385.74	-	-	- Administration	19,191.68	19,191.68	-	-
0.00	0.00	-	-	- Sundry Expenditure	0.00	0.00	-	-
8,126.54	8,126.54	-	-	- Equipment	8,876.38	8,876.38	-	-
218,778.58	174,569.29	44,209.29	0.00	Total Expenditure	208,007.53	184,459.32	23,298.21	250.00
-25,968.69	-5,113.94	-22,082.75	1,228.00	Income less Expenditure	28,813.34	7,701.57	19,889.27	1,222.50

31 st December 2023				ACCUMULATED FUNDS	31 st December 2024			
Total £	Unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £		Total £	Unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £
200,934.71	105,602.08	71,843.53	23,489.11	Reserves brought forward	174,966.02	100,488.14	49,760.78	24,717.11
-25,968.69	-5,113.94	-22,082.75	1,228.00	Income less Expenditure	28,813.34	7,701.57	19,889.27	1,222.50
174,966.02	100,488.14	49,760.78	24,717.11	Reserves carried forward	203,779.37	108,189.71	69,650.05	25,939.61
				REPRESENTED BY				
0.00				Charity Bank Fixed Term Account	85,000.00	15,349.95	69,650.05	
187,191.68	112,713.80	49,760.78	24,717.11	Bank Balance at close per bank	117,148.28	91,208.67		25,939.61
-2,512.72	-2,512.72			Unknown Receipt/Wise Account	1,785.63	1,785.63		
-7,983.47	-7,983.47	0.00	0.00	Prepaid Income	-5,939.14	-5,939.14		
244.41	244.41			Receipts not on bank statement	6,266.60	6,266.60	-	-
-1,973.88	-1,973.88			- Payments not on bank statement	-482.00	-482.00	-	-
174,966.02	100,488.14	49,760.78	24,717.11	Cash Book Balance	118,779.37	92,839.76	0.00	25,939.61
174,966.02	100,488.14	49,760.78	24,717.11	Total Represented By	203,779.37	108,189.71	69,650.05	25,939.61

Cath Mudford
Mersey Weaver District Scout Treasurer

C E M

13/2/2025

Eric Bennett
Independent Examiner

ER Bennett

13/2/2025

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the Mersey Weaver District Scout Council

1. Accounting Period

I report on the accounts of Mersey Weaver District Scout Council for the period 01 January – 31st December 2024.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

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

It is my responsibility:

- to examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)b of the Charities Act, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair" view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent Examiner's Statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention

- 1 which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act

have not been met; or

- 2 to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed

Eric Bennett



Date 13.2.2025