



# 6th Shirley (St James the Great) Scout Group

## Annual report 2024/25

16<sup>th</sup> June 2025



## **AGM Chairperson's Report 2024/25**

New Chair. No Report



## 6th Shirley Group Volunteer Lead Report 2024/25 Jackson

Nicky

A Welcome to 6th Shirley Scout Group and Drake ESU's AGM meeting. Despite writing many reports over the past few years, this is my first time writing a report as Group Lead Volunteer. For those that don't know me, I have been part of the scout movement since 2001 and have been involved in scouting as a leader at 6 th Shirley Scout Group (within the Scout section) for 12 years. I was given so many opportunities when I was in the youth movement and my aim as the Group Lead Volunteer is to give similar opportunities back to the young people in our community.

In partnership with Drake ESU, 6th Shirley Scout Group provides a consistent provision for those aged from 6 to 18 years old. I have said in previous years, and will continue to say, I am driven to ensure that the young people within our group are provided with a safe and enjoyable place that enables them to develop the life skills that scouting has to offer. It is important to inform you that across the four sections, we continue to run on a very reduced leader team, and we are desperately in search of parents who are interested in becoming part of the scout group and leadership team. In September, there will only be one leader in the Cub section and unless we are able to recruit more leaders before then, the section will sadly have to close.

Being a leader at any of our sections enables you to create vital opportunities for young people, try new things and challenge yourself, get outdoors and get stuck in and to make memories for yourself that'll last a lifetime. As part of becoming a leader, you will be given free training (including first aid) and you will be able to get a DBS from the Scout Association. There will also be opportunities to learn practical skills, leadership skills, and organisational skills - taking on responsibility as and when you are ready for it. The more volunteers there are, the less time you will need to give each week and the easier the role for the leadership team will be.

If you are interested in offering your support to 6th Shirley Scout Group or Drake ESU, and are unable to commit to becoming a leader, then please get in touch as there really is something for everyone within the scouting movement. This could be supporting with our online presence, helping the leader team with admin, offering some time to clean and maintain the hut, assisting with various fundraising events across the year or joining our Trustee Board. The Trustee Board meet once per term



and currently consists of a limited group of people, and we would love for more people to join us to ensure the continuity of the scout group so that many more young people can enjoy the scout movement. It gives you an opportunity as a parent to be you child's advocate and have your say about the future of the group.

I would like to end my report by giving thanks to Alison, our Group Secretary, who ensures that the Trustee Board meets regularly and that agreed actions are completed in a timely manner. As well as to Nick, our treasurer, who works tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure that the group is financially stable.

A final reminder that we really need all and any support that you can offer to ensure that the Group can continue to provide new and exciting experiences for the young people within our community. I look forward to getting to know more of you over the coming months and continuing to grow the group, both with young people and adult volunteers.

Thank you for taking the time to read this report,

Nicky

Group Volunteer Lead



## Beavers Annual Report 2024/25

Mark Slater

After Tracey and Barry stepped down as Beaver leaders in summer last year, myself (Mark Slater), Josie Hall, Zuzana Bull, Ollie Soames and Charlotte Tonks took over from September. Over the year we have gradually become more confident with both leading the meetings and managing the Beaver Colony on OSM. This has been aided greatly by at least one parent volunteering to help with each meeting. In order to spread the responsibilities, from Spring term leaders volunteered to organise most/all aspects of a particular meeting leaving the others to be helpers on the night.

Our Beavers numbers have stayed consistent over the whole year of between 16-20. We seem to have regular interest in the new Beavers joining so that should hopefully keep the numbers up over the next 6 months when 8-10 are due to move up to cubs. We maintain a 'cap' of 20 Beavers as we feel that is the maximum we can safely look after.

Each term, the team meet a week or so before the first meeting to plan out the sessions for that term. Everyone contributes and we generally have more ideas for activities than weeks available. We do our best to tie in meetings to badges and have consequently managed to award 156 badges through the year. As the time the children spend as Beavers can be quite short (if they join at 6.5-7 years old as most do, they only have 1 full year) we want to make sure they have a good chance to earn the badges available to them, though getting to Chief Scouts Bronze award is tricky and may require some adjustments to our programme. Over the year we have done:

Getting To Know Everyone/Log Chew

Football Coaching

Lego Construction

Show and Tell/Performance

Cooking

Halloween Crafting

Science Experiments

Navigation in the hut

Pioneering/Knots



Christmas Craft and Party

Taboganning

Stargazing and Space

Chinese New Year

Construction Challenges

Valentines Crafting

Bird Feeders

Games Night

Disability Awareness

Mini Night Exercise

Rock Climbing

Easter Crafts

Mini Beast Hunt

Sports Day

Sponsored Litter Pick

Grass Heads

Visit from the Guide Dogs Association

Sleepover after family fun day (2 Beavers attended)

With the following still to come:

Teamwork Games

Mini Raft Race

Kayaking

Nature Walk

The Beavers seem to have really enjoyed the programme and seem to have been very engaged with all the activities. We try to offer a wide range of things to do and always accommodate Beavers who don't enjoy some of the activities as much as others, e.g. some prefer the crafts to sports. We also try to have a session away from the hut each term (e.g. Tobogganing and Rock Climbing) and if possible, depending on our outlay during the term, we try to subsidise these trips to keep it accessible for everyone. I wanted to mention in particular the fund raising they did for the Guide Dogs Association - overall they raised nearly £200 by litter picking in Shirley Park.



Looking forward to the next year, we unfortunately may find ourselves short of leaders again as the children of 3 of our leaders are moving up to cubs. Though they are hoping to stay on it will understandably become harder for them to devote the time demanded by the role and so it would be great if we could get another parent or two to volunteer as a full leader to make sure the remaining members of the team don't get overwhelmed. Hopefully, with the way we divide up responsibility for the meetings and the continued fantastic support of the other parents, we can continue offering the activities we managed too in the last year.

Many Thanks,

Mark Slater on behalf of the Beaver Leader Team



## Cubs Annual Report 2024/25 Downing

Jonathan

What a fantastic start to the year we had, my first solo Cub camp, cooking and hot chocolate, first aid and personalised tree decorations. The camp went well, some lessons were learned, and others were found out the hard way, but everything went well, the Cubs and adults all had fun and everyone did something new, whether it was staying in a tent, climbing, archery, learning about other cultures or waiting in a 3 hour line for an ice cream. The Cubs all had fun bandaging each other for their first aid badges and in a different session, made hot chocolate and enjoyed that, we rounded the term with Christmas decorations for their tree, or wherever they wanted to put them, and a party.

For the second term of the year we did some astronomy looking at the stars, science and our personal challenge, as well as the usual activities around Lunar New Year and Pancake Day (Shrove Tuesday). The scientist Cubs will remember growing crystals at home (regular salt) and making lights with electricity through circuit boards (introduction to STEM) The astronomers will remember looking and identifying the stars in our sky by the constellations they make, then taking an app and finding what they look like when we can actually see them. Everyone will remember eating lots of pancakes and our personal challenge of giving something they like up for lent. The more bi-lingual will remember my bad handwriting in mandarin / Cantonese for Lunar New Year.

Jonathan Downing  
Akela  
Cub Leader





## Scouts Annual Report - 2024/25 Jackson

Nicky

If you are reading the reports in order, then this is the second report that I have been asked to write – the hope for the future is that another member of the leadership team will take over the reins of 6 th Shirley Scout Troop (especially the report writing) and you will only be hearing from me in my role as Group Lead Volunteer. Don't worry though, I will still be helping with the section and working together with the rest of the leadership team: Rosie, Marcus, Barry, Kerry and Abi.

We currently have 24 scouts, who have enjoyed participating in a huge variety of activities over the year. At the start of each term, we provide the scouts with an opportunity to plan their own programme through a troop forum. Cooking, problem solving and team games remain popular activities on Thursday evenings, and we have also enjoyed visits to Clip n Climb, Adventure Golf and Ice Skating.

Across the year the scouts have participated in a variety of county events, such as: Night Hike, Operation Chameleon and the Cooking Competition. We also took part in a much larger event – Strategy – which is where we are off to again next weekend. We will be updating the display board in the hut over the next few weeks, so please make sure you pop in to see all the exciting things that we have been up to.

Last year, I informed you that the scouts had chosen to fundraise for Wythall Animal Sanctuary and through participating in a family quiz and a sleepover in their own shelters and have raised just over £400 for the sanctuary. Highlights from the sleepover were getting to light their own fire, 'rescuing' the many frogs that they found by returning them to the stream and a visit from a very friendly fox in the middle of the night.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone (scouts, parents, leaders and the trustee board) for their continued support throughout the year.

Nicky  
Scout Leader



## Drake Explorer Unit – Blythe: Annual Report 2024/25

Chris Nix

Since the last AGM we have welcomed a number of new members, with the unit now standing at 22 Explorers. 6th Shirley and 1st Dickens Heath Scout troops have continued to be our direct feeder groups. Currently around 25% of the unit are working towards their chosen Duke of Edinburgh and Chief Scout Awards.

At the start of the Summer Term we headed to London, to take part in the Monopoly Run. The event is based around real Monopoly locations all around London, with the aim is to visit as many designated sites as possible. The weekly programme featured an array of activities such as a Dragons Den evening, Street Tag treasure hunt and an International evening themed around Euro 2024. Later in term we visited Biblins Activity Centre for our District Explorer camp, with Explorers taking part in Kayaking, Climbing, Archery and Backwards Cooking.

In July we headed up to the Lake District, for an action packed Summer Camp. The camp featured an array of activities, which included Crag Climbing, Ghyll Scrambling, Paddle Boarding, Tree Climbing and Sailing on Ullswater. The Autumn Term kicked off with a trip to the District Wood, for an evening of fire lighting and cooking. The weekly programme went on to feature activities such as a Rude Goldberg Machine challenge, House of Games game show and Ice Skating.

November was a busy month, which included the Shirley Remembrance Day Parade and Operation Chameleon. Operation Chameleon is a huge game of hide and seek, which involves teams of Explorers trying to get around a course in a mystery location gaining points while avoiding being caught by teams of leaders! The year concluded with the unit participating in Winterfest, a Christmas themed camp for Explorers across Solihull Scout County.

Our 2025 Winter/Spring Term Programme featured an array of activities such as Paracording, Karaoke night and a Monopoly Run around Shirley. In late January we went and watched the Solihull Barons take on the Hull Jets, with the Barons securing a late overtime victory!. March saw the unit return to Cannock Chase, to take part in the Chase Walk. It is one of the toughest events we offer, starting early on Saturday morning team's head out for a gruelling 40 mile walk across Cannock Chase.

None of the above would have been possible, without the support of our fantastic leaders **Lucy Weston, Jack Wilson, Dan Hulbert, Ben Brown** and **John Kidner**. We have also



had the continued support of **Nick Tickner** as unit treasurer.

Chris Nix

Explorer Scout Leader



## Treasurers Report – Year Ending 31 March 2025

### Tickner

Nick

#### Treasurers Report - Year ended 31 March 2025

	2024-2025	2023-2024
Income		
Bank Interest	2,618	140
Events	14,842	12,132
Fundraising	175	240
Gift Aid	1,832	3,144
Membership Fees	8,499	8,196
Minibus Income	493	932
Total Income	28,460	24,783
Expense		
Activity Equipment	59	125
Admin	411	339
Badges	358	573
Bank Fees	0	0
Camping Equipment	764	121
Events	11,679	10,445
Insurance	1,179	1,148
Meetings	2,416	1,471
Membership Costs	4,471	3,496
Minibus Expenses	1,477	1,223
Rent	236	720
Utilities	2,879	12
Venue Maintenance	2,457	1,902
Total Expense	28,386	21,574
Account balances		
Expense Account	658	1,670
Scouts Treasurer - 00493105	2,654	5,144
Explorers - 01041496	4,993	1,136
Accessible Savings	9,651	9,415
Savings - Fixed Deposit	100,000	100,517
Total Cash	117,956	117,882
Summary		
Account balance brought forward	117,882	114,672



Total income	28,460	24,783
Total expenditure	28,386	21,574
Net income	74	3,209
Account balance carried forward	117,956	117,882

## Report

The accounts continue to be managed by using the Accountancy tools within OSM. This minimises the effort involved, and allows an easy allocation of income & expenditure to various categories and events across the year. It lets us see what profit or loss is made from individual events quite easily.

The capitation charge increased notably this year, which has been offset by an increase in the subscription. The group is running at roughly break even. Notable differences from last year include the utilities (electricity at the hut), where we had a special temporary dispensation from EDF for a number of years which ran out in 2023. After a period of struggling to adjust our debit order, there was a lump sum payment to EDF which is higher than would be the cost for a typical year. As a result, Utilities are much higher this year, but would be expected to settle at roughly half that number in the 2025-26 financial year.

The group is still in a healthy position, with over £100,000 in savings which is earmarked for the refurbishment / replacement of the hut, as well as an eye towards replacing the minibus (which is still operating well at present). It should be noted that the minibus nearly paid for itself last year, as donations were made by other groups borrowing it, however this year we have used it more ourselves, and therefore the income towards the bus has been significantly lower.

Nick Tickner

Treasurer