

Birstall Scout Group. Leaders and Trustees Annual Report. 2024/25.

Group Scout Leaders' Overview

This report covers the period from Easter 2024 to Easter 2025. It has been a successful year with all sections having a busy year taking part in section meetings and outside events. One major one was Group Camp 2024 where all sections took part in outdoor activities, learning new skills, advancing past skills, and making new friendships.

Our annual bonfire night increases in size each year as we grow and has become a well-enjoyed night with singing (even the parents joining in), hot food and a good old firework display. This upcoming year will see our group/sections being involved in more fun experiences and ventures.

Nearly every event of note for every section has already been featured on our 'Birstall Scout Group' Facebook page. If you are not yet a member, you can contact us through the Scout Association's website [here](#).

We would like to thank everybody involved with the everyday running of our scout group who generously volunteer their time to help with events, section nights, trustee meetings and general help. Year on year, our group has gone from strength to strength and long may it continue!!!

The number of youngsters in each Section of the Group is shown in the table. Every section is co-educational.

Including the Joint Group Leaders, there were 19 Leaders and 8 Assistants at the start of the year. At the end of the year, there were 21 Leaders and 8 Assistants plus 7 parent helpers.

Section	Easter 24	Easter 25
Squirrels	10	20
Beavers	37	33
Cubs	34	47
Scouts	17	20
Explorers	0	Coming in Sept
Young Leaders	1	2
TOTAL	99	122
Waiting list	7	13

The Scout Association nationally has changed some role titles to include the word 'volunteer'. **EVERY LEADER, ASSISTANT, HELPER AND TRUSTEE AT BIRSTALL SCOUT GROUP IS A VOLUNTEER.** To save space and avoid repetition, we haven't used full titles in this report.

Nick Farnham & Sue Farnham, Joint Group Leaders

Section Reports

Squirrels

This year has seen a variety of engaging activities and outings for the Wednesday Squirrels scout group. One of the highlights was the group camp visit, where members enjoyed a jungle trail and showcased their talents in a campfire performance. This experience allowed everyone to bond and made for an enjoyable adventure into the great outdoors.

Throughout the year, regular meetings have provided opportunities for exploration and learning. Activities ranged from local superhero themes to exciting experiments, fostering creativity with tie-dye shirts and kites, and hands-on experiences like cooking and den building. Seasonal

events, such as the Halloween craft session and the festivities surrounding Chinese New Year, added to the vibrancy of the meetings, creating a well-rounded programme for the children.

In addition to the group camp visit, other notable events included an Annual General Meeting where members had a chance to reflect on the past year, a Christmassy Afternoon filled with festive cheer, and a community gathering around Bonfire Night. These events provided wonderful moments for families to connect while celebrating the spirit of scouting together. Throughout the year, six Chief Scout Acorn Awards were presented with five more due, recognising the dedication and commitment of the young scouts.

A heartfelt thank you goes out to all the leaders who have devoted their time and effort to supporting the group, planning activities and ensuring a welcoming environment for everyone. Their input has been invaluable and greatly appreciated by both children and parents alike.

Looking toward the next year, members can anticipate another visit to Group camp, offering even more exciting adventures.

As we move forward, thanks are due as well to the children for their enthusiasm and participation, making the experiences memorable and enjoyable for everyone involved. We also extend our appreciation to the parents and other volunteers who work tirelessly behind the scenes, ensuring the smooth running of the group. It is this support that truly enriches our scouting experience. We look forward to another year of fun and discovery in scouting.

Maisie Farnham, Squirrel Section Team Leader

Tuesday Beavers

Beavers have enjoyed another amazing year, with plenty of badges being gained. The Beavers have enjoyed a challenging and varied programme over the past year, which has supported their work towards activity and staged badges. Creating various crafts, cooking, working towards their Gardening badge, bonfire night at the local scout camp to name but a few. We have a number of Beavers who will have achieved their Chief Scout Bronze Award once they've completed the night-away requirement.

The Beavers enjoyed celebrating Diwali; they got to try different Indian foods and learnt about the story and history of how Diwali started. Towards the end of last year, the Beavers also took part in a joint sleepover at the Scout Hut and did various Christmas-themed activities.

This year the Beavers have already had a jam-packed programme which includes celebrating Chinese New Year and working on our disability badge with a sensory night. We also became Engineers, making and launching our own Rockets!

After Easter, the Beavers have been invited back to visit Loughborough Greenfields Bowls team and have a go at Lawn Green bowls which we hope will be fully enjoyed by the Beavers and the Club members.

My many thanks to the Tuesday Beaver Leadership team for their very hard work.

Sarah Putt, Beaver Section Team Leader

Wednesday Beavers

This past year has been quite engaging for the Wednesday Beavers. Notably, the group enjoyed a variety of exciting events and activities that fostered team spirit and creativity among its members. The group camp, which involved multiple new activities, allowed participants the opportunity to explore and learn in an outdoor setting. Bonfire night was another memorable occasion, featuring hot dogs and a spectacular fireworks display, which made for a wonderful evening spent with families. The Christmas sleepover was particularly enjoyable, with craft activities, games, and films that kept everyone entertained while snuggled in their beds.

Throughout the year, the Beavers held a number of meetings, each designed to teach skills and introduce new ideas. Activities such as cheese rolling, Church games, and various sessions on cooking and painting helped to enrich the group experience. Meetings like 'Introductions, Rules and Respect' and 'Money Skills' provided essential learning opportunities, ensuring that the Beavers developed a well-rounded skill set while having fun. 142 Activity Badges and 6 Chief Scout Bronze Awards have been presented in the last 12 months

We would like to extend our deepest appreciation to all the leaders, especially Ben and Maisie, for their unwavering commitment and creativity in providing new ideas and bringing them to life for the Beavers. Their efforts are invaluable to the success of the group.

Looking ahead to the coming year, there are several exciting activities planned, including another bonfire night, a group camp currently in the planning stage, and a Christmas sleepover with confirmed dates. These events promise to offer plenty more opportunities for fun and learning.

As we reflect on the contributions made by each member, we would like to thank the Beavers for their enthusiasm, which has made this year enjoyable for everyone involved. We also extend our gratitude to the parents and volunteers who offer their support and assistance in running the group behind the scenes. Your involvement helps create a positive environment for the Beavers, and we look forward to another year of adventure and growth in Scouting.

Sue Farnham, Beavers Section Team Leader

Wednesday Cubs

This past year has been filled with exciting and diverse activities for the Wednesday Cubs, showcasing their adventurous spirit and enthusiasm for learning new skills. We had several highlights worth noting, including a visit to the fire station, where Cubs had the chance to tour the facility and even experience the smoke house. During a special police visit to our hut, members enjoyed sitting in the police car, which added an element of fun and excitement. The group camp was another memorable experience, allowing participants to engage in a range of new activities and build camaraderie. The Christmas sleepover featured crafts, games, and movies, providing a wonderful way to celebrate the festive season. The end-of-term event at John's Lee Wood offered a relaxed atmosphere for cooking sausages and enjoying the great outdoors.

Throughout the year, the Cubs engaged in numerous meetings, each designed to teach important skills and foster creativity. The sessions included painting Airfix models, competitive games of rounders, and the popular chip shop hike, among others. Specific sessions focused

on practical skills such as cooking, problem-solving, and knot tying. Notably, activities like Pancake Day and Halloween provided a fun way to celebrate with themed events and challenges. All this resulted in 2 Chief Scout Silver Awards and 184 Activity badges being awarded.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to our leaders, Keith, Maisie, Sarah, and Sue, for their unwavering support throughout the year. Their dedication and guidance have significantly contributed to the enjoyment and educational value of our sessions.

Looking ahead, there are plenty of exciting activities planned for the coming year. The group camp is being organised, with its itinerary packed with thrilling new experiences. The Christmas sleepover dates have been set, and we are eagerly anticipating a splash day with the district, along with a night of canoeing in the summer. It promises to be an action-packed year ahead.

As we reflect on the past year's successes, we also appreciate our Cubs for their enthusiasm and positivity, making every moment enjoyable for the leaders. A special thank you goes to parents for their continued support and encouragement, which plays a vital role in the smooth running of our group. We look forward to welcoming new members and sharing more adventures together in the year to come.

Ben Farnham, Cub Section Team Leader

Thursday Cubs

As we look back on the past year for the Thursday Cubs, it is evident that we have had an action-packed and fulfilling time. Among the highlights were the wonderful experiences at group camp with the other sections, where Cubs had the opportunity to connect and enjoy the great outdoors together. The Christmas sleepover was also memorable, filled with crafts and games; this event allowed friendships to flourish. Lastly, the end of term surprise at John's Lee Wood saw the Cubs tackle a rather wet night filled with cooking sausages, which certainly added to the adventure.

Throughout the year, our meetings were diverse and enriching. They included a mixture of engaging activities such as game nights, nature walks, and team-building exercises. We also focused on important topics such as road safety, cooking, and disability awareness, incorporating fun elements like kayaking and even an Easter egg hunt. Each meeting provided an opportunity for the Cubs to learn new skills while fostering a sense of camaraderie within the group. This resulted in 268 activity badges being awarded and 2 Chief Scout Silver Award are due to be presented

As we take a moment to express gratitude, a heartfelt thank you goes to our leaders Maisie, Kam, and Shyamal. Their creativity and steadfast support have been invaluable in planning and leading the sessions, ensuring that the young people had a rewarding experience throughout the year.

Looking ahead, there are exciting events on the horizon. In June, the Cubs can look forward to a night of canoeing, a splash day with the district, and another group camp at Oaks. Additionally, plans are underway for another Christmas sleepover, which promises to be filled with fun and festive cheer.

As there are no leavers to mention from the group this year, our focus remains solely on the positive developments ahead. We are grateful to the children for their enthusiasm and energy, which truly makes it enjoyable and fulfilling for all leaders involved. Furthermore, our appreciation extends to the parents for their continued support, and to all the volunteers who work diligently behind the scenes to ensure the smooth running of the group.

Here's to another year of adventures and growth in Scouting!

Sue Farnham, Cub Section Team Leader

Scout Section

As we reflect on the past year, it is important to highlight the significant achievements and engaging activities that have shaped our scout group's journey. One notable aspect was the extensive preparation work on skills for the Rambling Fox challenge, where our scouts demonstrated exceptional proficiency and enthusiasm, culminating in their successful participation. These skills included map reading and navigation, first aid and teamwork, and we are very proud of how well they did in this county competition.

This year, we have awarded a total of 118 badges, which speaks volumes about the commitment and progress made by our scouts.

During the year, we organised a variety of engaging events that provided our scouts with opportunities for adventure and learning. The group camp and scout camp in June provided memorable experiences in the outdoors. The sleepover at Conkers allowed for a unique blend of fun and camaraderie, while bonfire night offered a delightful occasion for families to gather. The Walesby scout camp further enriched our scouts' experiences with a chance to try more adventurous activities, bond and develop essential outdoor skills.

Our past meetings were equally diverse and aimed at broadening the scouts' skill sets. From yoga and backwoods cooking to rifle shooting and pioneering skills, the activities were designed to challenge and engage them in various ways. The Halloween Party was particularly memorable; who will forget the flour wars that took place?!? The escape room experience just before Christmas was brilliant, fostering creativity, critical thinking and teamwork. Our scouts were all successful in escaping and were a credit to our group. Another highlight was two of our scouts making their promise in front of the Christmas decorations at Leicester's Town Hall Square. The range of activities illustrates our commitment to offering a well-rounded programme for all scouts.

As we look forward to the upcoming year, there is much to be excited about. Plans are in place for more camping trips. Preparation is also underway for an anticipated trip to Belgium, which promises to add an exciting dimension to our scouting experience.

It is with mixed emotions that we acknowledge the departure of some of our older scouts as they will transition to the Explorer section. Their contributions to our group have been invaluable, and they will undoubtedly be missed by both leaders and fellow scouts. We wish them all the best as they embark on this new and exciting phase of their scouting journey.

This year has been enriched by the hard work and dedication of our leaders: Nick, Kam, Emma, Daniella, Jess, Sarah, and Rachel. Their tireless efforts have been instrumental in delivering a rewarding experience for our scouts, and we extend our heartfelt thanks to them.

Lastly, a big thank you goes out to all the children for their enthusiasm and spirit that makes scouting enjoyable. To the parents, your support remains crucial in helping us provide a solid foundation for our scouts, and we appreciate all the effort from our volunteers who work diligently behind the scenes.

The adventure continues, and we look forward to another exciting year of scouting together

Rachel Turney, Scout Section Team Leader

Trustees Report

Our official title is the 59 Leicester (Birstall St James) Scout Group although we are better known as Birstall Scout Group. Our address is the Scout Hut, Birstall Road, Birstall LE4 4DJ.

We are registered with the Scout Association, number 12137/3. The Association's Royal Charter gives authority for the Association's bye-laws and rules under which we are governed. The Group adopts the policies of the Scout Association. We are an unincorporated educational charity and, since 2018, have been registered in our own right with the Charity Commission, number [1181325](#). Our key policies are included on the Commission's website. They will be reviewed in 2025/26. We are a member (ID:32383) of the National Council of Voluntary Organisations.

We do not employ any staff. The Hut is cleaned by a self-employed cleaner. All other regular work connected with the Group is carried out by volunteers.

The trustees have met three times since the last Annual General Meeting (less than usual due to a combination of factors). A list of trustees is shown at the end of this report. All have served for the full year.

Objectives

The objectives of the Group are those of the Scout Association: to help young people develop skills, values, and confidence to become responsible members of their communities. Scouting provides opportunities for young people to have fun, experience the outdoors, and take part in a range of activities.

Other aims include helping young people to:

- make new friends, gain confidence, and reach their full potential
- develop the skills, values, and confidence they need to make ethical choices
- identify opportunities to help others and get involved in their community
- appreciate the features and diversity of society

The Scout Association's core values include integrity, respect, care, belief, and co-operation.

Achievements and Performance

The Leaders' Reports earlier in this document highlight the wide range of achievements within the Group during the year. The Trustees wish to place on record their appreciation of the time, effort and commitment of all leaders, assistants and parent-helpers who made this happen. It's worth repeating that EVERYONE connected with the group is a volunteer.

Constitution and Trustees Review

We adopted a new constitution in 2018 when we became a registered charity in our own right. The Scout Association has recently produced a recommended operating plan for trustees and a new model constitution. During the past year, we have reviewed the responsibilities of trustees; hence the slightly amended format of this report. We have also carried out a skills analysis to identify any areas of relative weakness. New trustees who could assist with the Group's communications and marketing would be welcome. An article in March's Birstall Post reported on recent activities and included a call for new adult helpers including 'back office'.

We have started work on a risk register. Actions still to be completed include the introduction of a public benefit statement and a data protection policy (considering when we are data controller and data processor). Our data controller is Sue Farnham. We are looking to adopt the model constitution in 2026.

Trustees currently serve a one-year term, renewable at each AGM. That will become a three-year term when the new constitution is introduced.

Premises and Property

We own the Scout Hut freehold. The buildings are insured for £203,425 and the contents for £24,310. These sums are index-linked. The Group's insurance policies include protection for claims following injury to third parties or damage to their property.

The buildings are inspected regularly and maintained by volunteers, mainly trustees. We haven't needed to carry out any major work in the past year and none is scheduled.

The trustees look to generate income by letting the Hut when it's not required for scouting activities. It's used for maths and English classes by the local branch of Kumon UK on Mondays, Thursdays and Saturdays. Enquiries about hire should be made to Nick Bryan at nickjbryan5@gmail.com or any trustee.

Camping and other equipment is checked after each use. It is replaced if not fit-for-purpose or out-of-date. We replaced more camping equipment than usual in 2024, as highlighted in the Treasurer's report.

Finance

Our accounts are prepared on a receipts/payments basis for a financial year ending on 31 December. Two signatures are required on cheques. There is an equivalent security system for bacs payments. The second signatory is the Group Lead, Nick Farnham. The 2024 accounts have been independently scrutinised and are included in this report.

In addition to a current account with Barclays Bank, our reserve funds are held in a Common Investment Fund (COIF) operated by CCLA Investment Management Ltd. Our total balance equates to around four months of operating costs. In the event of major expenditure being needed - planned or unplanned - we are aware of the sources of grants for which we might successfully bid.

Treasurer's Comments on 2024 Accounts

At the year end, we had an operating profit of £1,179 and a balance of £10,740. This is a satisfactory result and gave us a good footing to start 2025.

Income. For Events there is an overspend of £1,251 being the difference between £10,307 expenditure against £9,056 income. This is mainly due to a Sleepover at the Space Centre where the majority of the income, £598, was taken in 2023 with all the expenditure being in 2024. There was a loss of £640 for the Walesby Scout Camp in September. There was a £398 loss for Fundraising, because the expenditure for the Proms in 2023 was not claimed until 2024.

Expenditure. There was an increase in spending on Equipment because numerous tents and other camping items needed replacing. The cost of Utilities dropped considerably after I was able to negotiate a better deal for Gas and Electricity. Administration Costs are accounted for by the cost of our operating system, Online Scout Manager (OSM), and the auditor.

We pay a total membership fee (capitation) up the line of £53.90 per member. £38.00 goes to National HQ, £11.20 to County and £4.70 to District/John's Lee Wood/St George's Day. The national levy increased by £2 (6%) over the previous year. Other charges were unchanged.

Income & Expenditure Account for 2024

	2024		2023	
	£		£	
INCOME				
Membership Fees	15,423		14,682	
Events	9,056		7,443	
Donations	-		984	
Grants	-		3,000	
Uniforms	5		14	
Fundraising	273		1,000	
Gift Aid	2,932		2,675	
HQ Hire	2,098		2,314	
Bank Interest	125		196	
TOTAL		29,912		32,308
EXPENDITURE				
Events	10,307		7,777	
Badges	1,042		1,381	
Section Activities	2,504		2,169	
Equipment	1,665		505	
Fundraising	671		132	
Capitation & Membership Costs	5,608		7,024	
Repairs & Renewals	1,776		7,673	
Insurance	1,058		996	
Utilities	2,583		3,948	
Meetings	452		874	
Training	-		261	
Uniforms	156		358	
Administration Costs	910		886	
TOTAL		28,732		33,984
EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE		1,180	-	1,676

Balance Sheet

	£	£
CURRENT ASSETS		
COIF Charities Deposit Fund	2,500	2,500
Cash at Bank	8,240	7,060
TOTAL ASSETS	10,740	9,560
Represented by:-		
ACCUMULATED FUND		
Opening Balance	9,560	11,236
Excess of Income over Expenditure	1,180	- 1,676
	10,740	9,560

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of 53rd Leicester [Birstall St James] Scout Group

I report on the accounts of the Group for the year ended 31 December 2024

Responsibility of Group Executive Committee

As the charity's trustees, the Group Executive Committee is responsible for the preparation of the accounts.

Basis of Examiner's Report

My examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Group 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 you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit. Consequently, I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent Examiner's Statement

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

- 1] to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached,
- 2] which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the accounting rules of the Group's constitution have not been met.

A F Tomlinson, Accountant, 10 Melba Way, Birstall, Leicester LE4 4GT

17 April 2025

The current trustees are:

Michael Kerchey	Chair		Vic Dolby	Trustee
Nick Farnham	Joint Group Lead		David Mason	Trustee
Sue Farnham	Joint Group Lead		Ged Sessions	Trustee
Nick Bryan	Treasurer		Keith Torrance	Trustee & Secretary
Sam Bone	Trustee			

Trustees Report signed by:

..... Date:.....

Michael Kerchey (Chairman)

..... Date:

Nick Bryan (Treasurer)