



**1st Fenstanton & Hilton
Scout Group**

**Trustees' Annual Report
September 2023**

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1. Introduction - Chair's report

1st Fenstanton and Hilton Scout Group have had another extremely successful year and my thanks go to all the Group's leaders, Trustee Board members, Young Leaders and helpers.

Those of you that have Beavers, Cubs and Scouts will know all about the exciting programmes the leaders provide for our young people, however the section reports (Scouts, Cubs and Beavers) show just how busy they have all been, so well done to our dedicated adult volunteers.

The Group can only continue to thrive from adult support, so if you are able to give any time at all, speak to any of the leaders or Trustee Board members about joining our adult volunteers.

Currently the group needs volunteer support in many areas. Depending where your skill set lies, you may be able to help. It may be as a quartermaster, looking after the group's equipment, it may be as Trustee Board member dealing with governance, or as a helper at weekly meetings.

The group has 80 young people currently with a full waiting/joining list for all sections, so if you are able to donate any time at all please do – your Group needs you.

You will see from the accounts that the Group is financially stable and my thanks go to the treasurer for all the work she has done in maintaining the records and producing the monthly updates and annual statement of accounts. This year the accounts include a large sum from our Gift Aid claim, so any of you that have not signed up for this, please do so if you possibly can.

The long-term plan of securing a permanent building for the group is ongoing and more details are supplied further in this report.

You may recall that I volunteered to step in as your Group's Chair as an interim measure, so if you think that the Chair is the role for you, please contact me: Chair@CromwellScouts.org.uk

Yours in Scouting

Mike Wenham
Group Chair

2. Group Scout Leader's Report

My report for Fenstanton and Hilton Scout Group has been a challenge to write, due to taking over only in November 2022, so I haven't had many months with the group, and I will confess I haven't been to the sections (Scouts, Cubs and Beavers) as much as I would have liked. I first came across Fenstanton and Hilton Scouts last year, where I heard some very joyful children taking part in an activity in the courtyard by my house. It was the Cub leadership team running an activity. Because the courtyard is shared access, and I knew my wife could arrive home at any time, I had to politely ask for the activity be moved to the side. The leaders recognised me from first aid training and invited me to the AGM and it was there that I discovered there was no Group Scout Leader (GSL) for Fenstanton and Hilton Scouts. I was already GSL at Cottenham and whilst I had no intention of leaving, I felt I could help Fenstanton and Hilton with recruitment of a new GSL, Chair and other supporting roles, which I also achieved at Cottenham through running a group activity day. I met with Sue Best, our District Commissioner, and here I am, GSL of two Scout Groups.

At Fenstanton and Hilton I feel the children have a great access to camps and activities, I've seen sections take part in many district events such 'Beavers in Tents' and St. George's Day. There have been fantastic camps, such as the Space Centre Sleep-over, Cubs and Scouts summer camps and many, many more. This is all from the dedication of the leadership team, who I feel are great heroes of the community. There are also great things and ideas I have stolen for Cottenham Scouts.

With the changes that come into Scouting I really want to encourage parent involvement and volunteering; you don't have to be a leader to volunteer in Scouting, there are lots of support roles which could ease the burden on leaders and I really hope in the coming months and years, we can grow the support for the Group.

To sign off, I want to express my sincerest thanks to the leaders and to the board of trustees. It's been an absolute pleasure leading the group and I will always be here to support and offer my services to the group should the need arise.

Asa French
Group Scout Leader

3. Treasurer's Report

Subs were £14 per month until December and were increased to £16 from January, which was the first increase for four years.

The cost of UK Scout Association membership was £4171.50 and is likely to increase for 2023/24.

We have been able to restart fundraising activities and participated in the Fenstanton sports day and Christmas lights event.

Our net of receipts over payments was £8,277.35. This was achieved mainly because we received a grant of £1,449 from the Scout Association to cover COVID losses and we claimed £6,842.34 from HMRC for four years Gift Aid (April 2018 to March 2022).

Gift Aid is an important addition to our finances. If you pay tax and sign up for Gift Aid with the Group, we can reclaim £48 a year from the government for a year's subs, at no cost to you. This gives us more money to spend on your children's scouting activities.

Independent scrutiny of these accounts is complete.

Please see Appendix A for a breakdown of the accounts.

Marilyn Hollingdale
Treasurer

4. Beavers Annual Report

Our Beavers have had another busy year!



We started the Autumn term with a visit to Meadow Lodge Farm, where we did some apple pressing and enjoyed a nature walk. We also attended the ever-popular Sausage Sizzle event at Copley, cooking over fires and enjoying wide games and songs with Beavers from across the Cromwell district. Back in Fen Drayton, we had a skills night, including learning to sew on badges (an essential Scout skill!).

In the spring, we were the first ever community group to visit the new Huntingdon Fire Station, where we were had a tour of the appliances and a really interesting talk about the different jobs the fire service do. Almost all the Beavers went home and checked their smoke alarms too, which was a great takeaway!



Summer was really busy, with us out and about almost every week! Beavers built dens and went pond dipping at Hinchbrook park, undertook a village litter pick and did some archery, in addition to a very competitive Sports Day evening.



We also had two fantastic sleepovers – one at the National Space Centre in Leicester and one night under canvas at the district-wide Beavers in Tents event.



As the Beavers year drew to a close, we celebrated with dampers and s'mores at Copley. Sadly though, we said goodbye to our Beaver Scout Leader, Matt Wynn, who is departing for Sea Scouts. We're looking forward to taking him up on his promise of bell boating next year though!

We end with a 'thank you' to all the leaders, who put in way more than 'just an hour a week' and to our parents, who continue to support us via the parent rota or who come along and share their specific skills and expertise with our young people.

Here's to another busy year of Beavering ahead!

Emma Waldron-Smythe
Beaver Scout Leader

5. Cubs Annual Report

Autumn Term 2022 – Summer Term 2023 - Summary

Wow! Another year has passed and the Cub pack has seen a huge amount of change in my first full year as Akela. We have seen 11 cubs leave the pack, with a further 10 joining us, keeping our pack size one of the largest in the Cromwell district.

We have also seen two young leaders leave the pack, one of whom went to focus on their GCSEs, and the other who stayed within the group and moved to help our Scout troop. What was great, was that we had one of our young leaders from Scouts join the pack to help balance those numbers.

Finally, over the course of this year, we have sadly said goodbye to three assistant section leaders, who have left the pack for various reasons. The exciting news is, this means that we have spaces for leaders within our cub pack, should it interest you 😊

With all that being said, we have achieved a HUGE amount. It is only when looking back to the write the report that I can see just how much our young people have achieved, and it is truly phenomenal. This year, we have been able to award five Cubs with the highest honour they can achieve during their time as a Cub Scout, with them working hard to earn their Chief Scout Silver award. A special shout out to those five Cubs; Finley Harrison, Isla Riddoch, Baxter Gregory, Andrew Bicknell and Kate Hollins. As I said, the pack made some huge achievements and this year we awarded a total of 263 badges across our three terms.



Autumn Term (September 2022 – December 2022)



Autumn 2022 may seem like a long time ago for some, so to remind you of what was happening, we had a busy and fun-packed term that was kicked off by us hosting the Cubs district hike. This saw 13 Cub groups and over 100 Cubs plus adult volunteers descend on our usual meeting place at Fen Drayton Village Hall to do a hike around the lakes, along the guided bus route, down the Fen, past the MUGA and back to our meeting spot. There were bases along the way including a first aid station to learn about bandaging, a knot station to tie (and eat strawberry laces) and a station to commemorate and think about our late Queen who passed away just before our term started.

The Cubs then headed into St Ives for an evening run by Grey Brother on Road Safety, learning the Green Cross Code, as well as identifying and drawing 10 different road signs. While this was fun

and educational, I think the things the Cubs liked most about that evening was the chips at the end of the walk. Flunkey Monkey then kept the fun going, helping the Cubs work on their Entertainer badge as we prepped for our Autumn camp which we held at the end of September.



Our Autumn camp was held at Copley and saw the Cubs participate in a wide range of activities, including making Lego paracord buddies, roller-skating at One Leisure, hiking down the thicket, pioneering by making hammocks and fire lighting. This special birthday cake wheel was a new addition to our fire lighting session, where the cubs had to stuff the candles with fuel and then race to get a spark and light their candle first.

The Autumn term continued with some other great evenings and activities including map reading with Baloo, and working towards the Community Impact badge with a trip to visit the



Godmanchester food bank. In addition, there was an orienteering evening around Copley where the Cubs had to find clues that led them to a location with a lock box, and they had to use the code they found to find the ingredients for... S'MORES around the campfire. The Royal Navy came to visit us to tell us about what they do and to show how important teamworking is with some really fun and interesting games. We celebrated fireworks night by making our own edible marshmallow sparklers, as well as using sparklers outside the village hall. Iki and Jacala worked on the World badge with the pack by talking about Diwali, the festival of light, with a variety of activities including running around with glow sticks in the dark to create light patterns (as evidenced below).



The autumn term was rounded off with another fundraising quiz night hosted by one of our young leaders, Rocky (Georgia Graveling), for her participation in the World Scout Jamboree in Korea. It was amazing to see so many of our Cubs and Cub families there supporting her, so a big thank you. We then did some Christmas crafts, making Christmas cards for a local care home, and learnt some Christmas carols before taking to the streets of Fenstanton to visit some elderly residents, most of whom were over 90, to sing either '12 Days of Christmas' or 'Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer', again, working on giving back to the community in two different ways. I couldn't have been more proud of the Cubs in these two weeks, thinking about others, and the smiles they put on people's faces when they sang was great. Our final session of the autumn term was all about fun as we returned to the Cambridge ice rink for a joint evening with our Scout troop as we went ice skating.

It was sad to say goodbye to Rama (Alison Clough) and Harry Hucklesby (Grey Brother) at the end of this term and I wanted to say thank you to both of them for all of their hard work and all they gave to the pack.

Spring Term (January 2023 – March 2023)

After Christmas, we started with a bang. A new young leader Mang (Alice McMahon), joined the team. We offered another very balanced programme this term working towards all different badges. This included science experiments with Bagheera, making balloon bottle cars, working more on our world badge by learning about Chinese New Year, as well as starting work on our air activities badge with a visit to Duxford Air Museum.



In addition to all of this, in the spring term we introduced bushcraft skills to the pack. I couldn't be prouder of how the leaders managed this, thinking about safety, risk assessments and organisation; how supportive you, as parents and carers were in trusting us; and of our Cub pack in how seriously they took the risks to be and how well behaved they were. We introduced knifework to the Cub pack, first by explaining UK knife law, showing them a selection of bladed items ranging from saws and knives to scissors and world war bayonets



We explained the blood bubble and the danger triangle, we demonstrated how to safely pass a knife from one person to another, how to safely sheath and unsheathe a knife, and demonstrated three different types of cuts you can do, all using wooden knives. We then allowed the Cubs to try these with carrots. Confident with the Cubs' ability, we allowed them to hold a real knife and work with wood to create feather sticks to practice their knifework.

In addition to this, during our spring term the Cubs visited Miller's Music to learn about pianos and reading music, had a chance to make their own magical, Harry Potter-esque wand and also work on their Home and Personal Safety badge. The term ended with a hike around Hilton, as we said goodbye to Flunkey Monkey (Charlie Hitchins) and one of young leaders, Iki (Iris Allen). I wanted to mention them as both have offered a huge amount, and send them both a huge heartfelt thank you for all of their support.

Summer Term (April 2023 – July 2023)

After a short break celebrating the Easter holidays, our summer term kicked off with the district St George's Day parade. We had a really great group presence there, but I wanted to give a special mention to Hannah Jablonska, who represented 1st Fenstanton and Hilton Cubs by doing an amazing job leading the Cub Scout promise in front of over 500 people. The Cubs ran our pipe game from last year's AGM at the event and saw our District Commissioner, County Commissioner and the Mayor of St Ives working together to try and solve our game and show the importance of team working.

We took part in another district event shortly after, as we returned back to Copley for a district sausage sizzle and I am proud to say that the 1st Fenstanton and Hilton Leaders dominated the campfire singing. Our album will be available for purchase shortly, although based on our Summer camp, I think all of our Cubs can sing the songs without our lead now!

The weather was definitely on our side this year with an early summer, so we made the most of some outside activities from May onwards. We went orienteering in Hinchbrook Park and took a nature hike in Knapwell. We also spent some awesome split evenings pond dipping at Meadow Lodge Farm and shooting some arrows in our archery evenings, thanks to our support from our Beaver leaders (Jess Jardine and Matt Wynn).



games on the boats. The second was some kayaking and splashing. Finally, the Cubs were all invited, if they weren't already, to get wet by jumping into the river. I am pretty sure this activity is a favourite for most Cubs and a great evening was had by all.

As we rounded off July, Rocky ran an evening about Independence Day with our Cubs, and we took them all on a joint evening with our Scout troop to Little Paxton Aqua Park.

Our term was wrapped up with our Summer Camp at Jordans Close near Bedford, where we took part in raft building, rifle shooting, hiking and fire lighting. The Friday was very wet while the leaders put up the tents, but the weather held out, and with nearly a full pack in attendance, it was another very awesome camp. We were able to invest some new Cubs and present more Chief Scout Silver Awards, but sadly also used this as our opportunity to say goodbye to Baloo (John Hutchinson) as he stepped down from his

We offered some more weekend experiences for our Cubs, first we took the pack to Shepreth Wildlife Park, where we learnt about conservation, made some posters, played some team games and saw the animals. Second, we had a private session on Holt Island with the Sea Scouts, where we had two sessions on the water. The first was on bell boats, where we paddled down the River Great Ouse, and then moored up and did some



role of Assistant Section Leader to join Sea Scouts. A huge thank you to John who did a lot in his time with the group.

There you go, I said we achieved a lot and I can honestly say that it has been a fantastic year with 1st Fenstanton and Hilton Cubs. As you have seen, we lost leaders every term. As such, I do ask you to think if you can help in any way and encourage you to chat with me or another leader if you think you can. I can promise the leaders have as much fun during these activities as the kids (there have to be benefits, right?) and that this programme and what we have achieved with your young people could not happen if it wasn't for them. For that reason, I want to say a massive, enormous, huge, gigantic, colossal (that's about all the synonyms I think I can use) thank you to Carly Harrison (Jacala), Jamie Ward (Bagheera), Julianne Ince (Raksha), Robin Evans (Chil) and our young leaders; Alice McMahon (Mang) and Georgia Graveling (Rocky), as none of this would have happened if they didn't give up their time and energy.

Akela (Dave Bevan)

6. Scouts Annual Report

The Scout troop have had another busy and successful year in 2022/23. The autumn term programme was a mix of outdoor activities (cycling, hiking, campfire cooking), indoor activities (model making, communication badge, troop forum and a team Lego challenge) and a visit to the aircraft museum at Shuttleworth. For the end of term treat we went ice skating with the Cubs, which we survived with no significant injuries.

In December we ran an indoor camp at the Jarman Centre in Newmarket. We spent plenty of time outdoors, with knifework, campfires, orienteering and games. On Saturday afternoon the patrols took part in the Pizza Challenge, in which they designed their own pizza and packaging, shopped for ingredients and cooked their creations. In the evening everyone joined in with karaoke, displaying great enthusiasm and volume, and perhaps a little less refinement and musical accuracy 😊.



In the spring we spent a couple of evenings improving our navigation skills and practising team challenges. These skills came in handy when we entered two teams in the Forward Hike, a team competition involving navigating a ten-mile route with challenges along the way. The A team did brilliantly, finishing in third place (of 18), and the B team also did extremely well (8th out of 16 teams in their category) for a young team in their first competition. Congratulations to all who took part.

Other activities during spring term included astronomy (many thanks Chris Fewtrell), a treasure hunt organised by Alice, the chip-shop challenge, campfire cooking, learning knots and lashings, a hobbies night, and Morris dancing with the Fenstanton Morris group. We also visited the Institute of Astronomy in Cambridge, and ended the term at bouncing around at InflataNation.

In May we spent a weekend camping at John's Lee Wood campsite. There, we took part in climbing, abseiling, air rifle shooting, low ropes course and shelter building, as well as cooking some delicious meals on the campfires. Most of the Scouts had a go at sleeping in hammocks, and this was so popular we've decided to buy some more to avoid disappointment!





We spent most of the summer term outdoors, with campfire cooking, a treasure hunt, a Scouts vs. leaders competition (which the Scouts mostly won!), a bike ride, archery, sailing and rafting. The end of term treat was the aqua park at South Lakes Water Park with the Cubs. This was hugely enjoyed by everyone who took part – including leaders and parents. We also performed an investiture ceremony out on the obstacles.

Other events during the year included: A quiz night organised by former Scout Georgia, to raise funds for the World Scout Jamboree, Remembrance Sunday and St George's Day parades, the Coronation Big Picnic and Fenstanton Village Sports Day, where Scouts, leaders and parents ran the coconut shy and slippery pole to raise funds for the group. A number of members of the troop joined the Cromwell Mountaineering Club for hill

walking trips in Snowdonia, the Peak District and Scotland. Neil (leader) and Georgia (former Scout) recently returned from the World Scout Jamboree in South Korea, which they enjoyed despite the difficulties widely reported in the news.

At Christmas we said goodbye to young leader Alice, who moved to Cubs. Many thanks for all your help, Alice. And we said hello to Harry and Cameron who have joined us as young leaders.

As announced in last year's report, Jess stood down as the troop section leader at the end of last year, but we're very fortunate that she is staying as a member of the leadership team. Jess was section leader for ten years and did an absolutely brilliant job. Thank you, Jess, for your incomparable enthusiasm, leadership, contributions, and support given to the Scouts and the rest of the leadership team.

This year's programme would not have been possible without the huge amount of time and effort put in by the troop leadership team. Very many thanks to Jess, Paul, Neil, Alice, Harry and Cameron. We'd also like to express our thanks to the wider group leadership team including GSL Asa, and the Board of Trustees. While the existing team of leaders do a great job there are times when we are a little short-handed (usually due to work commitments) and so would love to hear from anyone who would like to join the team.



Finally, a special mention to Poppy who will shortly be celebrating her 90th birthday. Poppy has been a leader at the troop almost forever, was camping with us into her 80s and still comes along occasionally to troop nights. Very many thanks Poppy, and a very Happy Birthday to you from us all.

David Riddoch
Scout Leader

PS More photos from a great year of Scouting are below.





7. Other Information

7.1 Communication

Alongside using OSM (onlinescoutmanager.co.uk) to contact you, we have individual email addresses for our Group, which can be used if you need to contact the sections or members of the executive committee directly. These are as follows:

Beavers - beavers@1st-fenstantonandhilton-scouts.org.uk

Cubs - cubs@1st-fenstantonandhilton-scouts.org.uk

Scouts - scouts@1st-fenstantonandhilton-scouts.org.uk

Treasurer - treasurer@1st-fenstantonandhilton-scouts.org.uk

Secretary - secretary@1st-fenstantonandhilton-scouts.org.uk

Membership - membership@1st-fenstantonandhilton-scouts.org.uk

Communications - comms@1st-fenstantonandhilton-scouts.org.uk

Working with so many different families, we do appreciate that the way we communicate works really well for some families and less well for others, whilst acknowledging that whatever we do (with this or indeed anything else) we are unlikely to please everyone. We use OSM as our primary communication channel. Please make sure all your details are up to date by regularly “checking in” and please do check your email and spam filters to ensure important information about events and activities doesn’t get missed.

If you have any suggestions for consideration (about this or any other topic) please do raise them directly to secretary@1st-fenstantonandhilton-scouts.org.uk

7.2 Fenstanton Land Opportunity

You may be wondering what has happened in the process of securing land for the usage of the Scout group. The situation at the moment is that legal searches have revealed that the area of land under the Huntingdon District Council 106 agreement with Kier Developments has a clause within it on the land that states "it must be used for green space or village hall". Therefore, this agreement has to be changed to enable a different building application (i.e., Scout hut) to be successful. As a group, we wish to ensure that this is all in place before firstly we sign the legal agreement for the leasing of the land (and with it all responsibilities) and secondly, we undertake the application (and necessary expense, fees etc.) for planning permission for a building to be used as a Scout hut. This process to change the agreement has been sitting with Huntingdon District Council (HDC) Planning department for months and has been chased numerous times by our Scout group solicitor, the solicitor acting on behalf of Fenstanton Parish Council and our local District Councillor, Clare Tevlin. The Parish Council have agreed to cover the cost of this change and are as keen as we are to see the process completed. If anyone has a contact at HDC Planning who may be able to help, please speak to Ian Hucklesby. We do hope this change happens in the near future so the lease can be signed and we can move this exciting project forward.

Ian Hucklesby
(Frustrated) Chair Land Group

7.3 Volunteering Opportunities Available

You look like a role model!

At 1st Fenstanton and Hilton Scouts, we LOVE doing what we do – empowering young people with skills for life, helping them make friends for life and starting them on the adventurous journey through Scouting – which can last for life.

But with more than 50 children waiting to join our Beavers, Cubs and Scouts sections, we need your support. Could you be one of our amazing volunteers who can guide the next generation through their Scouting journey?



With roles to fit around your skills and commitments, volunteering with us is a hugely rewarding experience – and looks great on your CV too!

To find out more about starting or continuing your Scouting journey with us, visit our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/1stFenHilScouts>, or email us at comms@1st-fenstantonandhilton-scouts.org.uk.



#SkillsForLife

Appendix A – Accounts for 2022-2023

1st Fenstanton & Hilton Scout Group

Receipts and Payments Account 2022/2023

For the year from 1st April 2022

to 31st March 2023

to 31st March 2022

Receipts		
Membership Subscriptions + program extras	£13,453.60	12,250.00
Less:(Nat/County/Area/District) membership subs	-£4,171.50	-3,686.00
Net subscriptions retained	£9,282.10	8,564.00
Camp/Trip receipts	£5,121.15	4,949.49
Donations	£497.51	543.00
Gift Aid (4 yrs.)	£6,842.34	0.00
Covid grant	£1,449.00	0.00
Grants (Land)	£0.00	72,000.00
Donations (Land)	£0.00	1,050.00
Sub total	£23,192.10	£87,106.49
Sports day	£60.50	0.00
Christmas Lights	£191.79	0.00
Group Uniform	£0.00	167.50
Easy Fundraising	£29.84	22.86
Sub total	£282.13	£190.36
Total Gross Income	£23,474.23	£87,296.85
Total Receipts	£27,645.73	£90,982.85
Payments		
Youth programme	£2,906.92	2,975.70
Camp/Trip costs (& refunds 20/21)	£8,154.11	3,083.13
Uniforms	£0.00	158.85
Equipment	£510.21	194.09
Badges, woggles, neckers	£906.63	587.80
Rent/Insurance	£1,843.53	1,242.98
OSM charges	£180.98	173.70
Unity bank service	£72.00	72.00
Core Expenses	£364.00	1,098.06
Land	£240.00	0.00
Discretionary fund	£18.50	0.00

Total Gross Expenditure	£15,196.88	£9,586.31
(Nat/County/Area/District) membership subs	£4,171.50	3,686.00
Total Payments	£19,368.38	£13,272.31
Net of receipts/(payments)	£8,277.35	£77,710.54
Cash funds last year end	£106,781.95	29,071.41
Cash funds this year end	£115,059.30	£106,781.95