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Scouts

1st Merton Park

Annual Report 2023

#SkillsForLife

Chair's Welcome

I am delighted to write the forward to the Annual Report for the 1st Merton Park Scout Group.

Another exciting year has passed, and I have had great pleasure in seeing our scout group grow in both popularity and size. All the leaders and supporters have played a role in ensuring the success of our group, but it would be remiss of me not to specifically mention Zak Clark as Group Scout Leader, who was appointed to his role in April 2022, and who has since driven forward numerous improvements across the board, and who was instrumental in the opening of a Squirrels Section.

Although the Annual Report covers the period 1 January to 31 December 2022, some of the activities reported by the Section Leaders are obviously more recent, but I am pleased to include them, as they reflect the enormous positivity and productivity with which we continue to move forward.

Along with Zak, I'd like to thank all the leaders and supporters for their incredible work in running our Scout Group. Every one of them deserves more than just a pat on the back!

On a personal note, I've been with the scout group for over 16 years, having started by making drinks for the Beavers, then moving on to train as a uniformed leader, then latterly acting as the Chair of the Executive. Both my son and daughter have been through all the scouts' sections, from Beavers to Explorers, and I have seen first-hand how scouting has played a significant part in their successful growth and development. However, it's now time for me to hand over the reins, so sadly this will be my final report as Chair of the Executive.

Yours in Scouting,

Ray Donovan-Hill
Chair of the Executive/Trustees

Group Report

It's been another amazing year here at 1st Merton Park Scout Group. I am amazed with how quickly my first year as a Group Scout Leader has gone and it has been made ever easier by our amazing volunteers.

Over the last year, I've been settling into the role of GSL, getting to grips with how the group runs and working on ways to bring us into the future and keep pushing the group forward. I'm amazed with the popularity of scouting in Merton Park - we have over 100 people sitting on our waiting list, wanting a space within the group, and I wish I could give every young person the chance to join scouting but it takes time to get them into a section, and this is something we are working on.

After we met last year at the AGM, the group held the first group summer camp since the Covid pandemic. This camp was held at Walton Firs camp site. We had over 90 young people with us for that weekend, ranging from Beavers to Explorers. Every young person that attended that camp in my opinion, and in the opinion of the leadership team had an amazing weekend where they could do adventurous activities, push themselves out of their comfort zones and have time in nature. This year, we have decided to change things up and will be going to a different campsite, new to the group, to keep pushing boundaries, and having all young people enjoying their scouting experience.

September 2022 will also be an important moment in our history as we welcomed our newest section, Squirrels. Squirrels is the youngest section within the scouting movement for 4 to 6-year-olds. The popularity of this section with people is amazing. We have over 30 young people on the waiting list and have decided to expand the section from 12 to 16 young people. It's also amazing that we have a completely new volunteer leadership team down in the section. We welcomed back scouts from years past to run the section and have a parent step up into leadership roles as well. It's also important to notice that we are the only scout group in our scouting district to operate a Squirrel Dray. The progress within the section is amazing. We had two young people already moved up to Beavers who achieved the chief scout acorn award which is the highest award you can get within the section.

Group Report Cont.

Over this last year, we have gained and lost members of our leadership team. I would like to welcome Rebecca Fairclough, Ben Clark, Kerry Sheehan, Lara-Jane Sharpe, Marilia Gomes, Sam Warren, Vinnie Renton, Alec Cooper, Jonathan Attley, and Jonny Reeks. I am always amazed by volunteers - without them the scout group would not run, and our weekly meetings would be impossible to achieve. We are always in need for more volunteers, especially within a Scout Section, Beaver Section and Explorer Scout Section.

This year we have started on a new Journey with a new website being launched and with the opening of a new section, and the amazing growth we are seeing in all our sections. I am looking forward to what this scouting year will bring as we have some amazing activities planned and camps booked, and we are always looking at doing more. None of this would be possible without our amazing volunteers and I am always grateful for the amazing volunteers we have at 1st Merton Park Scout Group.

I am pleased and happy to congratulate all our leadership team that have achieved awards over the last year, and who completed the training to become a full wood badge leader. Scouting is not just about the young people- it's also about our volunteers.

I would also like to take this time to thank Ray Donovan-Hill who has been part of the group for over 16 years and has been an amazing Group Chair. His support over my first year as GSL has been amazing and I am extremely grateful for his help.

Yours in Scouting,

Zak Clark
Group Scout Leader



Scouts

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Squirrels

Since opening up Squirrels back in September 2022, We have had a great response from all parents. We opened up with 3 Nests and 12 children and moving into the summer term we now have 4 Nests 16 children with our waiting list up to 28 and growing.

The main focus for the start of the term was to build friendships and bonds and get to know each other better as many of these children have never spent time without their parents due to COVID 19.

We had a very active start doing many different creative activities we also celebrated Diwali and designed and decorated greaseproof paper so the children could then air dry to a candle and takehome. All children were given their individual small pumpkins and painted their own designs and took them home in time for halloween to put them in the windows which they was very excited about. We also had 2 weeks of covering Science experiments where we all talked and learnt about Sinking & Floating, Skittles experiment, Pencil in the bag and also made a lava lamp explosion with food colouring, then finished our term with a Christmas party with some nibbles which all children really enjoyed!!

When starting back for the autumn term we saw that new Disney badges were making their way to the Scout stores so we didn't want to miss the opportunity so we started towards the Moana Disney badge. We done this over the 2 weeks by first decorating our own glow TeFiti Stones and then the children had the fun job of taking part in an indoor assault course where the went under tables, walked a plank of wood, crawl under blankets, jump through hoops to then be able to retrieve their stone in the cove (tent) at the end of the course.

We did our first hike outside to St John Inns Park which was a huge success.

Squirrels were also part of Mother Sunday which was exciting and very new for them as this was a first group event while carrying our very own Red Squirrel flag.

Next term we are planning to complete our Digital Citizen Badge as we will be going out a lot more and will be doing lots of different map readings. Vinnie one of our new leaders will be doing this badge with the children. We have an evening planned at DHQ for wall climbing and Bug hunting which is the first time for many of the children. We also have Deen City Farm booked for Saturday 26th June which should all be great fun and get us all exploring more of the outside but doing it together.

Overall we have covered 6 Activity badges with a Disney badge as well. All the children were rewarded a LVL 1 Hike Badge.

All 12 children have been awarded 3 challenge badges this term we will be covering the 4th one to then they will have earned their Chief Acorn Badge, we had 2 squirrels climb up to beavers which had received their Acorn badge in time.

Yours in Scouting,

Kerry
Section Leader (Squirrels)



Scouts

1st Merton Park

BEAVERS

We're generally full – currently 23 out of a max of 24 Beavers, but we have a healthy waiting list, so expect to be full again soon.

Charles and Rob have stepped down as regular leaders, many thanks to both Charles and Rob for all their help over the years.

1 Wood badge leader for the past year (Andrew)

Lara joining this summer term (moving up from Squirrels)

4 Section assistants

We always have an eye on leaders who plan to leave when their children swim up from Beavers, and so need to be on the lookout for where our next leaders will come from. Section assistant (5 training modules) or Full wood badge are both useful. Squirrels may provide a pipeline of leaders. It's good to have leaders who intend to stay in Beavers for a longer stint than 2 years.

Parents

Our parents are good at helping when needed and requested (thanks).

We've had 2 regular youth leaders, and had a third for a 3 month stint. Youth leaders come from Explorers or Duke of Edinburgh. We have a couple of requests for new youth helpers to start shortly.

Beavers attended 2022 group camp and will be at 2023 group camp.

First time organising a Beavers only camp this coming May (also Andrew's nights away ticket assessment camp).

Attended several district events, such as a campfire at Frylands last October, Laser tag this spring, and Sports day coming up in May.

In the past year we've awarded 10 chief scout bronze awards, and all Beavers who completed a full 2 years at Beavers have achieved chief scout bronze. We've run a good, varied programme, awarding 290 badges in total according to OSM (Online Scout Manager).

Yours in Scouting,

Andrew Maddison
Section Leader (Scouts)



Scouts

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cubs

This year has been a busy year for the cubs and leaders. I would like to start with congratulating Mark and Tony for achieving their woods. Congratulations also need to go to our 2 cubs who achieved their silver awards.

Our cubs have done a lot of work towards many activity badges a total of 319 have been awarded, 77 challenge badges have been awarded and 87 u shape badges have been awarded this year. The cubs have had great fun working towards these the leaders and our wonderful explorers have planned fantastic programs to achieve the badges.

We have attended church parades during the year, we have done a chip shop hike which I think was a highlight for the cubs. We had summer camp again great fun for all the leaders really enjoy seeing the confidence build within the cubs as individuals and as a team. Some of the cubs attended the district chess competition where they played exceptionally well.

We have celebrated the Queens jubilee during our summer term by have our own little street party. We ended our summer term with our sausage sizzle. During the winter term we did six activity badges in one night every cub and leader were amazing and we found out that some have interesting hobbies. We ended our winter term in style with our cubs have talent and they most definitely do. Our spring term was interesting with our cubs learning about the environmental conservation making bird feeders and doing their gardening badge hopefully they still have their sunflower seeds growing nicely to plant by the scouts hut this term.

We have another summer camp to look forward to. The reptile man is coming back to see us this is always a great hit. We are going paddle boarding again and some other great adventures for the cubs to get stuck into.

I would like to thank the parents for their continued support, but more importantly the great leadership team that I owe a great deal of thanks to as without them none of this would have been possible.

Yours in Scouting,

Jane Clark
Section Leader (Cubs)



Scouts

1st Merton Park

SCOUTS

The Scout section had a successful year after coming out of lockdown in 2021. We managed to start some activities away from the hall, with trips to Wimbledon Common, Frylands Wood (for air rifles) the local fire station (for fire safety training), we went paddle boarding in Ravensbury Park, built fires at the scout woodlands – Patches – in Leatherhead, visited the RAF museum and for our last meeting of the year we went karting at Gravity in Wandsworth.

District events started again in 2022, and we took part in the Incident Hike on Wimbledon Common. Sadly we could not raise a full team, but our scouts helped other teams complete the hike. We also competed in the district cyclocross event for the second year.

We welcomed Stephen Hammond to the troop to celebrate parliament week and made homemade mozzarella.

The diverse programme we have run over the past year has resulted in 69 badges being awarded to our scouts, including badges for communication, Community Impact and Physical Recreation.

We have seen our membership numbers drop off after the pandemic, with around 20 scouts regularly attending through the year.

Maintaining the Leadership team remains a key activity, and we're really pleased to have the support of Zak to recruit and support the scout team. We now have 4 regular leaders, which allows us some more options with the programme.

This has all been made possible through the fantastic support we receive from our executive, part funding all of the events we run, and of course the parents who are an important part of the group, allowing their children to attend.

Yours in Scouting,

Mark Renton
Section Leader (Scouts)



Scouts

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Group Accounts

1st Merton Park Scout group
Receipts and Payments Account for the year ended 31 December 2022

2021		2022	
£	p	£	p
21,965.73	Opening Balances	22,196.21	
	Receipts		
0.00	Jumble Sales	7,812.48	
10,343.32	Subscriptions	6,870.45	
5,396.92	Camps	10,427.34	
1,507.56	Other	1,023.86	
17,247.80	All receipts	26,134.13	
39,213.53	Total of receipts and opening balances	48,330.34	
	Less Payments		
1,105.46	Rent and Hall hire	2,509.83	
1,451.19	Hut expenses	1,597.88	
532.53	Insurance	564.51	
0.00	Equipment	867.92	
1,050.00	Uniforms, Training and Books	631.23	
273.98	Admin, Stationery, Printing	897.26	
7,542.16	Camps and Activities	15,131.92	
2,432.00	HQ Membership (Note 3)	2698.00	
1,000.00	Donations	866.36	
0.00	Jumble	1,682.00	
1,630.00	Explorer subs	3,228.00	
17,017.32	All payments	30,674.91	
22,196.21	Closing Balance	17,655.43	

2021	Opening Balances	2022
£ p		£ p
21,908.71	National Westminster Bank Limited	22,139.18
57.03	Cash	57.03
21,965.73		22,196.21

2021	Closing balances	2022
£ p		£ p
22,139.18	National Westminster bank Limited	11,374.53
	Lloyds Bank	6,223.87
57.03	Cash	57.03
22,196.21		17,655.43

Liabilities

None

2022	
Opening balance	£22,196.21
Surplus (deficit)	(-£4,540.78)
Closing balance	£17,655.43

2021	
Opening balance	£21,965.73
Surplus (deficit)	£230.48
Closing balance	£22,196.21

2020	
Opening balance	£12,051.89
Surplus (deficit)	£9,913.84
Closing balance	£21,965.73

The giftaid payment of just over £1,500 we should have received in 2022 didn't arrive until January 2023, so really we are £3,000 down on the year.



Minutes of AGM for 2022

Meeting Date:

04/05/2023

20:00

DRAFT MINUTES OF 1st MERTON PARK ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD IN PERSON AND ON ZOOM ON TUESDAY 4 May 2023

1. Welcome

The Chair of the meeting, Ray Donovan-Hill, welcomed those present including those who had joined the meeting online.

Present in person were:

Ben Clark

Jane Clark

Zak Clark

Jessica Dahlstrom

Kathy Di Franco

Ray Donovan-Hill

John Garrett

Jan Keen

Tim Kerridge

Hannah MacDonald

Emma Maddison

Jonny Reeks

Kate Renton

Mark Renton

Vinnie Renton

Jessica Dahlstrom, Secretary, took the minutes of the meeting.

The Chair welcomed those attending the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and explained changes to be made during 2023 to the governance of Scout groups. An outline was provided of the functions of the AGM.

2. Apologies

No apologies were received.

3. Minutes of the AGM held on 27 April 2022

The minutes of last year's AGM were approved.

4. Matters arising

Further to minute 11 of the 27 April 2022 meeting, a Squirrels section had now been opened and a report from this section was included in the papers for this meeting.

5. Consideration of the Report of the Group Executive

The AGM considered the reports from the different sections and thanked the leaders of the sections for their hard work during the pandemic and recovery. A verbal update on the Explorers section was provided.

6. Consideration of the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2022

This was the first full year after the Covid-19 period. There had been a decrease in the financial balance of around £3,000, which was due to sections being able to recommence activities post Covid-19, with associated expenditure. The Group's bank account had been switched to Lloyds. An overview of jumble sale proceeds was provided.

7. Appointment of Group President

Clive Tullett was appointed as 1st Merton Park Scout Group President. This was an honorary post which would involve ceremonial duties.
Clive was nominated by Zak Clark and seconded by Jane Clark.

8. Appointment / Election of Group Chair

A brief overview of the role of the Trustee Board as per the new Scout governance arrangements was provided by the outgoing Chair. It was noted that the Trustee Board was a team of volunteers who worked together, as charity Trustees, to make sure the Scouts was run safely and legally. At the heart of their role was a focus on strategy, performance and assurance. The Trustee Board would also provide any necessary support to the Group Scout Leader, when required, to assist the opening, change, merging or closing of sections in the Group.

Attendees noted that the full details for the Chair role could be found in Chapter 5 of the Scouts Policy, Organisation and Rules document.

The Group Scout Leader thanked Ray Donovan-Hill for his 16 years of service.

The Group Scout Leader nominated Jan Keen for the role of Group Chair and Jan was appointed. The Group Scout Leader nominated Sarah Drinkwater for the role of Group Vice-Chair and Sarah was appointed.

The new Group Chair and Group Vice-Chair provided an overview of their professional background.

9. Election of Group Treasurer and Group Secretary

Treasurer: John Garrett was nominated by Zak Clark, seconded by Emma Maddison and elected as the Treasurer.

Secretary: Jessica Dahlstrom was nominated by Zak Clark, seconded by Mark Renton and elected as the Secretary.

10. Appointment / Election of Members to Group Executive

The composition of the Trustee Board was outlined. It was made up of the Group Chair and Vice-Chair, the Group Secretary, the Group Treasurer, the Group Scout Leader, persons with a Section Leader role and the Explorer Leader. In terms of Section Leaders, it was noted that Andrew Maddison would not be on the Trustee Board, and Vicky Tullett would represent the Explorers.

Parent members of the Trustee Board were Emma Maddison, Hannah MacDonald and Hannah O'Donogue. It was agreed that additional parents could be co-opted as members of the Trustee Board during the year.

Ben Clark and Kate Renton were nominated as members of the Trustee Board by Zak Clark, and seconded by Jane Clark.

Kathy Di Franco was co-opted as a member of the Trustee Board, nominated by Zak Clark and seconded by Vicky Tullett.

10. Election of Independent Examiner

Marco Di Franco was nominated by John Garrett, seconded by Mark Renton and elected as Independent Examiner.

11. Any Other Business

Members of the Trustee Board noted that information on the composition and operation of the Trustee Board had been circulated, as part of the Scouts Policy, Organisation and Rules document.

The meeting closed at 8.34pm.



Scouts
1st Merton Park

Volunteer!

We are always on the lookout for volunteers to help us run our weekly sections or if you want to help behind the scenes, there is a role for you!

Visit 1stmertonparkscouts.org.uk to find out more about our open roles.

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