

SITTINGBOURNE, MILTON AND DISTRICT  
SCOUT COUNCIL



## ANNUAL REPORT

For Period September 2024 to September 2025

President: *Position Vacant*

Vice Presidents: *Position Vacant*

District Chair: Jon Foot

District Lead Volunteer: Tom Manktelow

### OUR MISSION STATEMENT

We aim to promote the progressive development of young people in Sittingbourne, Milton and District and help them to make the most out of life, by providing them with opportunities to participate in an attractive and enjoyable programme appropriately and locally delivered by an effective and fulfilled Leadership.

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## District Lead Volunteer Annual District Report 2025

Wow – what a year it has been for Sittingbourne, Milton and District! A year full of ups, downs, and change.

This year, our District plan has continued to focus on our three key pillars: **DEVELOP, GROW, and SUSTAIN.**

### DEVELOP

Campsite development, led by Paul, has gone from strength to strength, renewing activities and facilities and creating more opportunities for young people. This year saw the addition of a tomahawk range, an updated archery range, and the installation of floodlights, enabling activities to run 365 days a year. We have also invested in frisbee golf and acquired a new two-seater go-kart.

Looking ahead, 2026 will bring the renewal of the climbing barn, including the bouldering wall, along with key developments to maintain site safety. None of this would be possible without the dedication of our phenomenal campsite crew, who work tirelessly to ensure young people have access to such a fantastic space.

The development of young people has also been supported through a strengthened programme team.

- **Beavers** enjoyed a beach visit, a District sleepover, and “Beavers Take Over” at Lower Grange Farm, with another event already planned.
- **Cubs** visited the local panto, took part in their annual Cub Camp (with all groups represented – a fantastic achievement, breaking silos and uniting Cubs across the District), and will soon enjoy a sleepover at SOAR.
- **Scouts** braved a cold and wet pioneering camp in November, with over 120 young people building all kinds of structures – including a working Ferris wheel! They also ran a survival camp, where young people built shelters and learned skills such as skinning and butchering a deer.

Across the District, we also marked Founder’s Day, St George’s Day, and are preparing for the Festival of Light, Remembrance Day Parade, and District Panto.

Our top awards success continues to grow, with the District achieving record numbers of Bronze, Silver, and Gold awards. The **14-25 team** have raised their game yet again, providing opportunities for many young people to secure their Young Leader Belt, Platinum and Diamond awards, and one young person even achieving the King’s Scout Award. The **DofE team** has done an amazing job guiding young people through Bronze and Silver, with several expected to complete Gold shortly.

Over the year, **132 members from Sittingbourne, Milton and District attended KIJ**, representing eight groups or units. The Network team also successfully ran the Grasslands campsite – many visitors will remember the sea of orange, thanks to Beth’s leadership! Altogether, members of the District spent **14,872 nights away** this year – equivalent to 40 years!

## **GROW**

According to the 2024 Census, the District grew by 20 young people. We also opened a new Squirrel Drey, bringing the total to four, with work already underway to open another this year.

The number of Adventurous Activity Permits and competencies increased by six, giving even more young people the chance to take part in exciting activities. All groups continue to operate in a stable and sustainable way.

## **SUSTAIN**

We remain committed to reducing the District's CO<sub>2</sub> footprint from our activities and operations. A major step forward was the recent installation of solar panels at Bexon Lane, which, at the time of writing, have already offset 1,452kg of CO<sub>2</sub> – the equivalent of three return flights to New York.

This was made possible through the DEFRA Generation Green Grant, which also provided knock-on benefits for many groups across the District.

None of these achievements would have been possible without our incredible volunteers – those supporting groups, the District, and the campsite crew. A huge thank you to each and every one of you.

It has been a pleasure to see the District and its young people grow and develop this year, and I am excited to see what 2026 brings.

**Tom Manktelow** ~ District Lead Volunteer

## Chair's Report 2025

This past year has been particularly full of exciting activities and enriching opportunities for our young people to come and spend time engaging with their peers, spending time in the local community and further afield, and learning and developing life skills. These experiences are only possible thanks to the incredible dedication of our volunteers, who generously give their time to plan and deliver these programmes. From leaders and assistant leaders to trustee board members and parent helpers, every adult plays a vital role.

This year has also been our DLV Tom's first full year. He has filled it with projects and activities throughout the District and has been particularly successful at accessing external funding and grants to assist with District camps and activities, and also improvements to Bexon Lane. These improvements include providing a range of construction materials, along with electrical updates including more efficient heating and a large solar panel and battery system on the roof of Bexon Lane hall to help reduce our utility bills.

We remain incredibly lucky to have our beautiful campsite which continues to be maintained and supported by our committed team to whom we remain extremely thankful.

Progress has also been made on protecting our campsite from the nearby potential housing development, with the impending risk of construction works impacting Bexon Lane hopefully now averted.

The year hasn't been without its difficulties, with a situation arising during the summer that has been very damaging to the District, deeply affecting a number of people some of whom are no longer with the organisation. As chair, I want to pay tribute to all involved, acknowledging the deep impact it has had on their personal lives, families and in some cases professional lives. Scouting is fundamentally based on volunteering and the benefit to all of the giving of time and skills for love and nothing more. For this situation to have so negatively impacted all involved is so very tragic, and I look forward to working with County and HQ to understand how such a situation will be prevented from happening again.

Lastly, a large contingent from the District attended the nearby Kent International Jamboree, both as attending groups and also as a sub-camp team with responsibility for around 1,500 campers. I can attest first hand to the huge amount of effort and commitment everyone gave at group and sub-camp team level, that made KIJ the huge success it was. And it reminded me just what Scouting is all about and why all of us must do all we can to protect and maintain the fragile, precious and vital organisation that it is.

Yours together in Scouting

**Jon Foot** ~ District Chair

## **District Treasurer's Annual Report 2025**

The financial year ending March 2025 proved to be much better financially than the year before. This was due to additional income generated through the Scout HQ Defra Grant plus a couple of legacies and a Local Councilor grant.

The Defra grant enabled both our Scout Groups and Bexon Lane to generate much needed funds. The grant's purpose is to support Groups with camps and residential experiences. The District benefitted due to capital income as part of the grant. The District will use this grant in the next financial year, to install solar panels on Carey House, Bexon Lane, so that we can try to reduce our electricity bills. With this grant, the District were able to put on some really good section camps. A big thanks to Tom Manktelow who found this grant and managed it with HQ.

Bexon Lane for the first time turned a small profit of £2,932 – this is through the Defra Grant plus careful management of the expenditure and utilities – especially the cess pit.

This year our independent scrutineer, Kevin Funnell has finally been able to retire. Kevin has been supporting us for many years as Chairperson between 2002-2008 and then our scrutineer. I would like to extend our thanks to Kevin for all of the support he has given us. Claire Knight has come forward, and worked with Kevin this year end so that a handover can be done, and Claire will work with us going forward.

**Tracey Swift** ~ District Treasurer

## **Bexon Lane Campsite and District Headquarters 2025**

As always, the team have been very busy in 2025 with general maintenance and repair around the site. But it's been an odd year as we also had KIJ25. Several crew members supported Beth, Angela and James at KIJ and everyone got involved with the preparation ...Unfortunately this took up more crew time than we had hoped, but the extremely positive feedback "Grasslands" sub camp received demonstrates that Sittingbourne, Milton and District, again showed County the way.

Spending prep time on KIJ of course meant that some maintenance and project work did not get completed. The dry weather also played its part and by the end of the summer the site was looking a little shabby in places. Some of this "Shabbiness" however, was not weather related, but down to a lack of respect, thought and care from some users both external and within District.

Financially Bexon Lane has benefitted from some generous grants and donations and a couple of bequests from wills. These have enabled investment in solar power; this has reduced our summer electricity costs substantially. To further reduce our electricity use we are currently investigating LED lighting and a change to the hall heating and water heating. This however is expensive but is supported by a local council grant. Our mandatory electrical testing revealed some issues. These again need a quick resolution. We did manage to get some tools from Wickes and the Rotary club, but suffered the theft of the tractor Auger. This has held up a project while the insurance and replacement are sorted out.

In the summer a family event was held in the big marque which was then left up ...this shelter from both sun and rain proved popular but suffered as its not designed to be up for any duration ...After a casual conversation at KIJ, with Tunbridge Wells District, we now have a more permanent marquee, for FREE! This will be left in position for as long as the roof lasts ...We would then aim to replace with a permanent roof ...Again this needs to be respected by all users.

The Explorer area is nearly complete and worth a look. Barn with log stove, new paved area and an undercover area. Somewhere to call their own. The Axe range is complete and appears popular. Many of the projects we tried to do will have to roll into 2026; the climbing barn, the shooting range, the obstacle course needs work and many more besides ...we will be prioritising and planning for 2026 in the next couple of weeks. We will try to be more realistic next year and focus on completing a couple of projects along with general maintenance tasks. If you think we are focusing on the wrong thing, please let me know ...Likewise if it's the right thing we would also like to know.

As always, I must thank the campsite crew for all the effort they put in, always with enthusiasm regardless of the weather.

**Paul Dickens** ~ Campsite Warden

**Remember crew days are 2nd and 4th Sundays from 9am**

What an amazing year we have had. Plenty of young people gaining their top awards and attending our annual event. It is the same with adults. It is good to see so many achieving so much. Well done to all.

The challenges we have faced this year have been from the new system making our work difficult with the long delays in replies from HQ. Many awards have been delayed. Please do be patient.

We have responded to all recommendations and advised the DLV accordingly. Doesn't always mean they are successful, but will be considered. There is a criterion!

We are up to date and have logged all those who have had awards or are to receive awards up to the end of September.

Please let us know when your young people achieve their awards by filling in the link <https://forms.office.com/e/MkHv6eimbR> so we can invite them to the celebrations. Why not put the link on your OSM dashboard for each section. That way your leaders can notify us promptly.

This all cannot be done without the help of all you amazing volunteers giving the young people a great scouting experience.

Thank you to the team for all their efforts in getting everything in place and organizing for the awards event.

The next celebrations will happen next year – dates to be confirmed soon.

**Linda Curson, Joan Pantony & Frank Pantony ~ Local Awards Advisory Group**

(email [awards@sittingbournescouts.org.uk](mailto:awards@sittingbournescouts.org.uk))



## 14-25 Section Annual Report 2025

The year 2025 has been a busy, engaging, and rewarding one for our Explorer Scout and Network sections, with each term bringing fresh activities, new achievements, and continued growth. Across the year, both the Phoenix and Dragons Explorer Scout Units have remained at the heart of our programme, while the Network section has developed its own rhythm of social and structured opportunities. Together, they reflect the strength of our District's commitment to youth-led scouting.

### Explorers

The Phoenix and Dragons Explorer Scout Units have both enjoyed an active and productive year. From the outset, young people have continued to take ownership of their own programmes, leading meetings, choosing activities, and supporting one another in developing new skills. In the early part of the year, both groups created lively and enjoyable sessions that carried them through into spring, while also looking ahead with enthusiasm to the Kent International Jamboree (KIJ) later in the year.

Phoenix Explorers spent their time immersed in activities such as tomahawk throwing, frisbee golf, fire challenge boxes, and progress towards the Challenger badge. Meanwhile, Dragons Explorers developed skills through cooking student-style meals, enjoyed the creativity of painting, took part in team games such as rounders, and Hunted. Both groups made the most of the variety available to them, with every term offering something fresh and engaging.

The units have remained close to full capacity throughout the year, reflecting the popularity of the section. While the aging out of older Explorers has eased pressure slightly, demand remains strong enough that an additional Explorer unit could still be of benefit. However, such expansion would require further adult volunteer support to ensure it could be delivered sustainably.

### Network

The Network section has also had a successful year, seeing a strong rise in attendance earlier in the year with the introduction of a simple but effective social programme. The monthly "trip-to-the-pub" initiative encouraged regular attendance, built camaraderie among members, and created a structure that many could rely on.

Over the summer months, the pace of Network's programme slowed somewhat, as members' personal commitments reduced the time they could dedicate to meetings. However, this has not dampened enthusiasm, and the intention is to pick up momentum again as the year closes. A review of membership early in the year reduced numbers from 47 to 26, ensuring that all remaining members are active and engaged. This step has strengthened the group by focusing on those who are genuinely committed, providing a better foundation for future programme planning. Firelighting, Laser tag, Ninja and a camp are in the plans for the future.

### Awards and Achievements

The achievements of young people across both Explorers and Network have been particularly impressive. Several members earned top awards this year, including the Chief Scout's Platinum Award, the Chief Scout's Diamond Award, and the Young Leader Award. Each of these recognises not only individual effort but also the supportive environment in which these young people are encouraged to thrive.

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award programme has also gone from strength to strength. Thanks to careful planning and delivery by the DofE team, participants have had access to a well-structured and enriching programme. This has offered Explorers and Network members alike the chance to

challenge themselves, work towards meaningful goals, and build skills that will serve them both within and beyond scouting.

### **Membership and Capacity**

Membership across both sections has remained healthy throughout 2025. As noted, Explorer groups continue to be full, and the natural turnover of young people moving on has helped balance capacity slightly. However, interest remains high, and demand for another Explorer unit persists. The challenge continues to be finding and supporting new adult volunteers to make this expansion possible.

For Network, the membership review earlier in the year has brought greater clarity to the group's identity. With 26 active members, the section is now better positioned to deliver relevant and appealing activities. The combination of social meetups and more structured plans has created a balanced programme that caters to a range of interests and availability.

### **Financial Status**

Financially, the year has been steady and positive for both Phoenix and Dragons. Early in the year, both units agreed to establish a shared fund that could be used for joint expenses, such as equipment and the refurbishment of facilities, including the Explorer barn. This collaborative approach has ensured that resources are used effectively for the benefit of all.

Thanks to the support of Ann Hodnett, Dragons' bank account has now been fully updated with correct signatories and online banking in place, ensuring smoother management. Phoenix are still in the process of setting up their account, but progress is being made. Overall, both units remain in a comfortable financial position and have the means to provide their members with engaging programmes and the equipment necessary to support them. With both groups within one combined account, the total amount for the account currently stands at £18,878.20.

### **Facilities Improvements**

Significant attention has been given to facilities this year, with ongoing improvements to both the Explorer barn and the Network hut. The Explorer barn has been steadily transformed into a welcoming and functional space, thanks in large part to the tireless efforts of Paul and the wider crew. A new sheltered area has been built, allowing the barn to be used in all weathers, and James English has even taken pride in successfully growing fresh grass around the site. These developments have made the barn not only more practical but also a place young people and leaders alike are proud to use.

The Network hut, however, remains in need of substantial refurbishment. While improvements have been identified and plans are forming, major work will be required in the near future to bring it up to the same standard as the barn. This will be a priority moving forward into 2026.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, 2025 has been a year of steady progress and significant achievement for both the Explorer Scout Units and the Network section. Membership has remained strong, finances have been well managed, and the young people involved have continued to demonstrate enthusiasm in everything they do. The dedication of leaders, volunteers, and supporters has been instrumental in making all of this possible. Looking forward, there is still work to do, particularly in expanding capacity and improving facilities, but the foundations laid this year give every reason for optimism about what 2026 will bring.

**Bethan Foot ~ 14-25 Team Leader**

# Sittingbourne, Milton and District Scout Council

## Annual Accounts

For the Year from April 2024 to March 2025

### Accruals Accounts

Receipts	2024-2025			2023-2024
	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £	Total Funds £
<b>Donations, legacies and similar income</b>				
Membership subscriptions	40,106.40	(5,834.90)	34,271.50	27,908.80
Less: Membership subscriptions paid to HQ/County	(34,426.50)	-	(34,426.50)	(31,440.00)
Net membership subscriptions retained.	5,679.90	(5,834.90)	(155.00)	(3,531.20)
Donations	407.13	26,585.00	26,992.13	250.00
Grants	-	-	-	-
Gift Aid	-	-	-	-
Section Activities	17,916.13	684.69	18,600.82	5,248.00
Badges	26.00	-	26.00	517.30
Other Income	34,210.77	-	34,210.77	5,152.60
WSJ 2023	-	-	-	2,367.68
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>58,239.93</b>	<b>21,434.79</b>	<b>79,674.72</b>	<b>10,004.38</b>
<b>Grants</b>				
Maintenance Grant	-	-	-	-
Other Grants	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Fundraising (gross)</b>				
Detail 1	-	-	-	-
Detail 2	-	-	-	-
Detail 3	-	-	-	-
MISC Income	-	-	-	-
Other fundraising activities	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Headquarters</b>				
Property rent (Camp fees/Hall hire)	13,699.34	4,574.40	18,273.74	11,003.72
Activities hire	2,000.00	-	2,000.00	1,405.64
MISC Income	-	16,400.00	16,400.00	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>15,699.34</b>	<b>20,974.40</b>	<b>36,673.74</b>	<b>12,409.36</b>
<b>Investment income</b>				
Bank interest	-	-	-	-
Other investment income	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>73,939.27</b>	<b>42,409.19</b>	<b>116,348.46</b>	<b>22,413.74</b>

# Sittingbourne, Milton and District Scout Council

## Annual Accounts

For the Year from April 2024 to March 2025

### Accruals Accounts

Payments	2024-2025			2023-2024
	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £	Total Funds £
<b>Charitable Payments</b>				
Youth Programme and activities	19,350.77	3,282.39	22,633.16	5,142.62
Adult support and training	127.50		127.50	1,742.48
Badge expenses	427.80		427.80	1,106.80
Admin costs	552.00		552.00	83.19
Donations	3,500.00	(3,500.00)	-	-
Bank charges	209.97		209.97	248.99
Hospitality	504.49		504.49	382.03
Cards	-		-	1,002.27
General expenses	-		-	416.00
Computer and software	1,779.80		1,779.80	2,522.35
Contribution to Headquarters	1,200.00		1,200.00	1,126.60
Defra Grant expenditure	31,440.00		31,440.00	-
WSJ 2023	-		-	2,931.48
Reconnect	-		-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>59,092.33</b>	<b>(217.61)</b>	<b>58,874.72</b>	<b>16,704.81</b>
<b>Headquarters</b>				
Sewage/Water	2,920.00		2,920.00	6,308.59
Utilities	3,018.82		3,018.82	3,674.65
Broadband	262.80		262.80	-
Insurance	1,800.48		1,800.48	1,897.42
Licences	538.90		538.90	508.26
Tractor Maintenance	557.97		557.97	365.59
Building/Grounds Maintenance	1,831.62		1,831.62	2,371.26
Health and Safety	-		-	1,452.75
Refuse	1,418.08		1,418.08	1,332.20
Cleaning	318.15		318.15	817.20
Activity Maintenance	100.19	400.82	501.01	214.72
COVID Recovery			-	-
COVID Costs			-	-
Special Project			-	-
Project 20X			-	-
Reserves			-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>12,767.01</b>	<b>400.82</b>	<b>13,167.83</b>	<b>18,942.64</b>
<b>Fundraising expenses</b>				
Other Fundraising Costs	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>				
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>71,859.34</b>	<b>183.21</b>	<b>72,042.55</b>	<b>35,647.45</b>
<b>Net of receipts(payments)</b>	<b>2,079.93</b>	<b>42,225.98</b>	<b>44,305.91</b>	<b>(13,233.71)</b>
<b>Cash funds last year end</b>	<b>9,780.64</b>	<b>18,854.74</b>	<b>28,635.38</b>	<b>70,270.39</b>
<b>Less membership received in advance last year</b>				<b>(28,401.30)</b>
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	<b>11,860.57</b>	<b>61,080.72</b>	<b>72,941.29</b>	<b>28,635.38</b>

## Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the year

### Cash Funds

Bank current account (Unity)	112,855.41
Pocket Cards	107.81

Total Cash Funds 112,963.22

### Other monetary assets

Tax Claim	
Debtors	2,017.93
Pre-payments	-

Sub total 2,017.93

### Investment assets

Investment property - detail	
Quoted investments	
Other investments - detail	

Sub total -

### Non monetary assets for charity's own use

Badge stock	
Shop stock	
Other stock	
Land and Buildings	255,000.00
Motor Vehicles	15,000.00
Scouting equipment/furniture etc	78,372.00
Other	

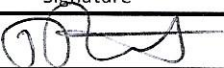

Sub total 348,372.00

### Liabilities

Lloyds Card	-
Expenses incurred but not invoiced	
Subscriptions not yet paid	42,329.85
Loan -detail	
Other Liabilities	-

Sub total 42,329.85

The above receipts and payments account and statement of assets and liabilities were approved by the Trustees on 16th July 2024 and signed on their behalf by...

Signature	Print Name	
	J. FOOT	Chair
		Chair
	T. SWIFT	Treasurer

## Notes to the accounts

### Bank reconciliation

Cash in Bank	112,963.22
Year end cash funds	<b>72,941.29</b>
Membership fees in advance	<b>42,329.85</b>
Less cash owing to District	(6,209.65)
Less payments made in advance	(2,017.93)
Lloyds cards outstanding	-
Less money owing to creditors	<b>5,919.66</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>112,963.22</b>

## INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

### **Sittingbourne, Milton and District Scout Council**

Registered Charity No: 273173

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Sittingbourne, Milton and District Scout Council for the year ended 31 March 2025.

#### **Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Sittingbourne, Milton and District Scout Council you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Sittingbourne, Milton and District Scout Council accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

#### **Independent examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Sittingbourne, Milton and District Scout Council as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:



Name:

**Kevin Funnell**

Relevant professional qualification or membership of professional bodies (if any):

**F.M.A.A.T.**

Address:

10 Nutberry Close, Teynham, Kent ME9 9SP

Date:

12 July 2025