

# Grove Scout Group



**AGM 2023**





# Chair Report

Dear parents and fellow members of Grove Scout Group,

As I reflect upon my last five years as chair of this amazing organisation, I am filled with gratitude and admiration for all that we have accomplished together.

Despite the challenges of COVID-19, we have managed to create a vibrant community of scouts who have engaged in a variety of activities, from annual events to a new Squirrels section and the prospect of a new hut.

I am particularly proud of how our leaders and volunteers have developed and delivered remote programs that have kept our scouts engaged and excited about learning.

The annual Santa sleigh, Christmas Post, and Remembrance Parade have been highlights of our year, along with a variety of camps, events, excursions, and activities that have provided opportunities for adventure, learning, and skills development for all ages and interests.

None of this would have been possible without the dedication, hard work, and passion of our volunteers, leaders, and senior leadership team. I want to express my heartfelt thanks to all of them for making Grove Scout Group what it is today.

As we move forward, I am excited about our plans for a new, modern fit-for-purpose HQ that will enable us to continue to thrive and grow for years to come. I am confident that the future looks bright for our group.

In closing, I want to leave you with a quote from Bear Grylls, a well-known adventurer and supporter of scouting: *"What Scouting says to people is - Every child has a right to have an adventure. Life is about grabbing opportunities."* Let us continue to provide those opportunities for our scouts and for all those who want to join us.

Thank you for the privilege of serving as your chair for the last five years. I wish the next chair every success in leading this fantastic group and team with huge ambition and drive.

Yours in scouting,

Andrew H

# Group Scout Leader Report

2023 was a frenetic year for Grove Scout Group. Lots was achieved although some of it was the things we had to react to rather than things that we planned for.

Our first job of the year was to carefully close our Friday 'Blackbird' Air Scout Troop due to lack of new volunteers wanting to run Scouts late into a Friday evening. This was done successfully; with the support and commitment of the Young People and their families we transitioned all but three of the impacted Scouts to Seagulls or Red Kites. A further Scout transferred to Wantage. Thanks to Jac Hall, Gemma Seale and the Seagull and Red Kite leader teams for their commitment to making that necessary change a success.

Many of you will remember our amazing Group Camp at Youlbury last April. Over 100 young people from 4 to 17 were able to participate in a memorable event supported by a brilliant leader team. We are planning further Group Camps for March 2025 and April 2026. The April 2026 event will mark 60 years of Grove Scout Group!

The following week we held an open evening for potential Squirrels (our new section for 4 and 5 year olds). We were significantly oversubscribed following that event but thanks to the willingness of a large group of parent volunteers we were able to launch a Drey for 24 young people who:

- met for the first time on 11<sup>th</sup> May
- held their first investitures on 13<sup>th</sup> July
- went for their first hike on 7<sup>th</sup> December

The stability of our leader teams in other age groups meant that the rest of the group carried on as planned and allowed me to concentrate on the Squirrel Drey. For several months in the summer, we had to completely close the group to new members because we were as-good-as full in all age groups. Thank you to all of our leaders, new and old, for your efforts this year.

Our trustees supported significant fundraising through the Grove and Wantage Extravaganza, Christmas Post and Santa Sleigh events. Thank you not only to our wonderful Trustees, but to all of the parents who helped make those events a success last year and who I know can be relied upon to do the same this year.

Our objectives at the time of my last AGM report were as follows:

1. Build a new HQ – ongoing
2. Successfully open at least one Squirrel Drey – DONE
3. Add back a third Cub Pack – not currently required
4. Enhance the potential of the Scout Garden – planned for summer 2024

We will need significant support from our community if we are to succeed with objectives 1 and 4 so, please do shout if you can help us in any way.

Yours in Scouting as always

Andrew S

# **Minutes of Grove Scout Group AGM**

**Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2023 12.30pm @ Youlbury**

## **1. Welcome and introductions**

Present: A list was collated of those present; this will be kept with the Secretary's copy of the AGM minutes.

Andrew Shapland (AS) welcomed all to the AGM and introduced those attending outside of the group: Anne, Wendy and Dave. AS confirmed this will be the last year for AH as chair so the group is looking to nominate a new chair at the next AGM.

## **2. Apologies for absence**

Andrew Hancock (AH) - Chairman, Gareth Smith - WH Harriers, Jo Probert -ABSL, Sarah Hall - ABSL and others listed on the attendees list kept with the Secretary's copy.

## **3. Approval of minutes of 2021 AGM**

The minutes of the 2021 minutes were available for those present to read and sent out prior to the meeting. Approved by Andrew Shapland.

## **4. Annual reports and accounts**

Treasurer report is detailed in the AGM pack and accounts show for the year ending August 2022. As a summary, this year we had £2,000 surplus, £25,000 in income and £27,000 expenditure. Differences from last year were £15,000 less in grants (covid support) and camps, events and fundraising restarted post covid. We have a healthy £97,000 in the property account which is earmarked for development of the new hut. Although not reported in this financial year, we received a large legacy donation this year from Harry Robey.

AS confirmed this was his 7<sup>th</sup> AGM and when he started he had a 2 year old who is now 9 years old with a brother who is 6. He feels he has the same energy and vision now and is looking at a long-term focus for the next 6-7 years. It is the management team that make the extra things happen. Events like this camp and AGM, the Christmas post, a new Squirrel Drey, Santa Sleigh and importantly our new building.

Anne is here today to promote volunteering in scouting and can answer any questions. She confirmed the group is looking for trustees and others who can help with fundraising, projects, supporting management, deputy treasurers and quartermaster.

## **5. Nomination of Chairman**

Andrew was happy to announce that Andrew Hancock will continue in his role of Chairman this year.

## **6. Election of Group Secretary**

Tracy Thomas has agreed to remain as Group Secretary.

## **7. Election of Group Treasurer**

Abbe Irving has agreed to remain as Group Treasurer but is looking for assistants to support her.

## **8. Election of Officers**

AS confirmed that those who hold a particular role in scouting are ex-officio members on the committee which includes section leaders who expressed a wish to be on the committee.

Ex officio members were confirmed as:

Andrew Hancock – Chair	Tracey Beamont – Assistant Group Scout Leader
Tracy Thomas – Secretary	Fiona Stovold – Beaver Leader
Abbe Irving – Treasurer	John Ireland – Cub Leader
Andrew Shapland – Group Scout Leader	Linda Audas – Beaver Leader

Existing elected as a trustee are:

Simon Atkin, Emma Nickerson and Paul Thompson

New elected as a trustee are:

Phil Miles, Phil Mills and John Herbert

These were proposed by Sam and seconded by Trudi with no objections.

Thank you to the existing trustees for agreeing to stay on another year and welcome to the new trustees.

## **9. Appointment of independent examiner**

Thanks to John Hedderley for checking the accounts for 2021/22. John also agreed to continue to independent examine the accounts moving forward. Proposed by Abbe, seconded by Jean.

## **10. Adoption of our constitution**

This was nominated by Tracey and seconded by Andrew.

## **11. Presentation of trophies and awards**

### **- Beaver of the year award**

There were 3 nominees:

*Benji Jacob – Silver Beaver*

In 2022 Benji realised how brilliant Beavers could be when they brought their mature head! With a brilliant attitude and always taking part.

*Charlie Gibbard – Silver Beaver*

He is calm and measured with a can-do attitude even when he thinks he can't do something. He regularly received the beaver of the week award.

*Elouise Gaunt – Buffalo Beaver*

Elouise will be swimming up early next term and has been with us for about 18 months. She is always keen to join in activities. We have seen her work collaboratively with other beavers and her sense of fun is always present.

The award was presented to Elouise Gaunt

### **- Akela's cub challenge trophy**

There was a special mention for:

*Edmund Richards – Falcon Cubs*

With exceptional attendance and arriving with the right attitude, Edmund was given special recognition with a certificate.

There were 3 nominations for this award.

*Kier Pinnel-Jones and George Haseltine – Falcon Cubs*

Both are reliable and trustworthy with outstanding attendance. They listen, engage well and help others. Always well presented and well prepared for activities. They set a good example for others to follow.

*Ruby Connacher – Falcon Cubs*

The trophies were awarded to Kier, George and Ruby

- **Scout of the year award (Simon James Trophy)**

Sarah Connacher introduced the award that was set up in remembrance of her brother, Simon James (known as ACE). He died in an accident on the A338 at the age of 21. Simon went from a 1<sup>st</sup> Grove Beaver to becoming a Leader. He had a passion for scouting, for young people and putting back into the community. He became a Queen scout and was a huge part of Grove Scout Group and an inspiration for others to follow in his footsteps.

There were 5 nominees:

*Maisie MacPhail – Red Kite scout*

Maisie joins in with everything with enthusiasm.

*Austin Cox – Blackbird Scout*

Though Austin is quiet, he will always step up if he is asked. He has done it several times and he is always doing his best. He sets a great example for the younger scouts.

*Milo Hough – Blackbird Scout*

Milo has so often persevered when faced with more physical challenges and it's clear how proud he is to be a scout. He tends not to try to be in the spotlight but brings a sense of calm and will become a great role model as his confidence grows.

*Ethan Boshier – Red Kite Scout*

Never takes himself too seriously and is a good role model.

*Oliver Purcell – Red Kite Scout*

He is always kind, calm and has a sense of fun. He is a role model to all age groups.

The award was presented to: Oliver Purcell

- **Dave Beamont Adult contribution trophy**

This was awarded to Tracey Beamont with a special thanks for running the events with all age groups and doing all the background work for the group camp.

## **12. Any other business**

Each section renewed their promises.

2 long service awards were presented to Jenny for 10 years and Caroline for 20 years.

A moment of reflection was taken to think about gratitude, gratefulness and growth.

The date for the next trustee board meeting will be Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2023 and will be communicated to all trustees later.

Meeting closed at 1.30pm





# Squirrels Report

Grove Squirrels launched on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2023 and what an experience it has been!



24 young people, 10 wonderful adult volunteers and 2 young leaders picked our way tentatively through those early weeks and months while we figured out what this was all about.

The children responded brilliantly, their warmth and enthusiasm motivating the rest of us to keep going.

We have been creative, messy, adventurous,

sporty and scientific in equal measure. The Squirrels enthusiasm for the stories that form part of our weekly meetings has developed to the stage where they regularly suggest the stories that they would like to share with their friends.

Massive thanks to Amber, Louise, Jamie, Jane, Kayleigh, Michelle, Lizzy, Peter, Paul, Ollie and Oliver for the passion, determination and creativity that has sustained Grove Squirrels through our early months.

We now know that we will need to recruit volunteers on a more or less ongoing basis to keep Squirrels running – parents, grandparents, older siblings and other friends of the group are encouraged not to wait to be asked to help, if you think you can help us then please leap forward!

# Silver Beavers Report

The Autumn term began with the news of the recent passing of our Patron to Scouting, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Our meeting was mostly given to thinking about her life and work and welcoming a new Monarch in her place, her son Charles III. One of our Young Leaders read a reflection that The Scout Association recommended to us and then as it was out first night back, we had some games, welcomed our new members and went over the hut safety and code of conduct and a Log Chew of what they wanted to do and badges to cover.

The following week we met at East Challow Village Hall for a dusk hike along the old tow path of the Wilts & Berks Canal along with an A-Z challenge to find as many items as possible for the individual letters of the alphabet. Torches were needed towards the end, and we finished back at the hut. Following on from that, we had a visit from Harambee for Kenya, that Andrew had seen at the Scout Camp in Kent. We learnt how to carve soapstone, play a Kenyan game and to sing a song in Swahili. There was also a stall where we were able to purchase some gifts for Christmas. At the weekend we had a fabulous couple of hours climbing walls at Rockstar in Swindon. There were lots of very excited Beavers being kitted up that morning!

Back in the hut we looked at the Communication Activity Badge. Talking about communication from Nelson's Day right up to these days where we have mobiles, iPad, emails etc! the Beavers were asked, under parental supervision, to send Fiona an email. They also learnt a home contact number and then used it from a Leader's mobile phone. We started the first Stage of the RAL Science badge. All two activities were covered – electricity from a lemon, and how to wrap an egg for protection, and then dropping it from a height to see if the protection was good enough!! Part of the Cook badge was completed the week before half term and Beavers made fruit kebabs and learned to be safe in the kitchen.

Recycling was discussed in the meeting after half term, and we made models from the junk that was brought in by parents and leaders. Beavers do Imagination very well and we had some superb models that were futuristic and had a moving part or two! Always a favourite session within the Colony. November saw us inviting Cuckhamsley Beaver Colony to join with us at the Centenary Lodge in Youlbury for a sleepover. We all had a fab time, did lots of items for badge work and especially that all important night away to go towards the Bronze Award. Back in the hut, we covered the next two items for the RAL Science Badge and took part in the Remembrance Day Parade and service with the Buffalo Beavers in Denchworth. Back in the hut we covered more parts of the RAL Science badge with looking at Space, the weight of the planets and how far away each was. We also learnt about orbits and tried an orbit game in which we all ended up quite confused!

We covered Fairtrade in the following meeting, learning about what it is and why it is important, and we made posters of all the product labels that can be bought in the UK with the logo on them. We also discussed what is an endangered animal and we made a 'zoo' of the cuddly toy endangered animals that had been bought at zoos to help us see how many there are that need our help and preservation with the help of Zoos in the UK and worldwide. Peter invited Revd John Durrant to help us earn our Staged musical badge 1 and we learnt some songs to sing and used some percussion instruments to perform at the forthcoming Christingle service. We joined the Grove District Guides for the Christingle service, along with members of Cubs and Scouts from Grove Scout Group. Always a lovely start to the festive period! Back in the hut once more we made water filters from plastic bottles, washing up cloths, 2 types of sand and some stones on the top. We also discussed the right to fresh clean water and about those who are not so fortunate that have to walk 4-5 miles twice a day to fetch water in a bucket and return home with it and not with the fresh clear water that we know!! The last meeting of the term is always some games and Christmas crafts with a visit from Santa to bring the term and year to a close.

Back to Beavers in the New Year and we found out why January is so called and celebrated Chinese New Year too, being that of the rabbit. The following week we completed the Safety Activity badge with water safety, crossing railway lines and how to deal with strangers. We looked at flags, Promises and greetings in another language to complete the International Activity Badge. Peter ran the Money Skills activities, looking at the history of money, decisions to do with money and looking at the UK coinage seeing that the patterns on them make up a shield of the coats of arms for the UK.

We made pancakes after half term, and we talked about why we had them and about the various festivals worldwide for Shrove Tuesday. We also looked at a balanced diet and what that means. World Book Day was celebrated the week after. We all came down in costume of our favourite character from a book. We also listened to an Aesop fable and talked about how it correlated to our Beaver Promise. Book Reader sheets were given out for Badge work then too. We had a visit to RAF Hendon in London. Jacob's father was able to drive a coach for us all and we invited some of the Cub section to join us as there was plenty of space in the coach. Air Activities Staged 1 was gained. Back home again, we were being creative for Mothering Sunday Gifts in the Funky Teapot in town. Always a fun evening and some great artwork done. Lucky Mums! Junk modelling was back by popular request from the Log Chew and following that we had a look at the heart and what it does and the changes to it and our bodies when we exercise. We also looked at healthy food and made posters of healthy and not so healthy food. We finished the term with an Easter Egg Hunt, plastic eggs containing our Promise in bits to be put into the correct order and we also went on a litter pick and had a competition to find various pieces of litter! All for the Community Impact Staged Activity Badge. We all went home with an Easter Egg!

After the Easter Break, we were back into Beaver Scouting with recycling, slightly differently: Using magnets to check if tins could be recycled and looking at the label punched on the bottom plastic dishes to see if they could be recycled or not.

We then joined the rest of the group at Youldbury Scout Activity Centre for the Group Camp



organised and run by Andrew Shapland, our Group Scout Leader.

Everyone had a wonderful time and were able to get some

items under the belt to tick off that all important badge work towards the Bronze Award. We all had a great time and returned home exhausted! We had a visit to College Farm in Denchworth to visit new-born lambs, got a chance to make up their milk, pour it into bottles and feed them. They were able to use a specially made 'lamb pram' to move the bigger lambs to another pen, before being released down the field in a few days' time. Another activity that everybody loved!

The following week was all about the Coronation of His Majesty, King Charles III and an explanation of the items that are used in the ceremony and why. For the next week's meeting we had a visit out to Letcombe Bassett church, St. Michael and All Angels. This visit was to learn about Bats, why they are living in churches these days and how to spot the tell-tale signs that they are living there. We learnt a lot about bats and the Churchwardens that invited us, set us a challenge to create something for the young visitors that they have in the summer when walking the Ridgeway. *(The end result being on our notice board in the hut).* We then earned our Bats in Churches badge! County Awards Day saw many of our previous Beavers receiving their County Recognition for their Bronze Awards, a proud day for the leaders as well as their parents. The following week we were back in the hut starting out on the Gardening Activity Badge. We planted some seeds learnt about safety with the equipment used and learnt about the seasons. Then returned home to continue growing the plants and helping in the garden. The last meeting before half term was entitled Brush like a Pro! A chance to learn about our teeth. The reason we have them and the need to take care of them. Disclosing tablets were used to reveal the plaque and several of them were surprised to

see lots of coloured plaque even though they had brushed their teeth before coming to Beavers!! They all went home with a toothbrushing chart to complete for four weeks as part 2 of the Leader's Challenge of the My Personal Challenge Badge!



After the half term break, we took part in Ray's Carnival, parading around the market square in the hot sun in front of hordes of people from Wantage and the surrounding villages. The following week we looked at the Bats badge again deciding

what we could do for the challenge set by the Churchwardens. The next week we were out on a scavenger hunt around Grove ending up at the Chip Shop in Millbrook Square – another popular activity with the Beavers!

We joined up with Beavers from Hanney, Challow, Uffington and Wantage on a visit to the Windfarm at Watchfield. A fascinating visit and we learnt lots about the windmills, renewable energy and how electricity is produced from



the wind and the sun. The following week we were back in the hut as our visit for fire lighting at Youlbury was rained off! We looked at recognising disability. Those that you can see and discussed those we cannot see. We invited

Cuckhamsley Beavers and their leaders again to share the sleepover in the Tented village at Youlbury and had a wonderful time on the theme of Canada. (*Beaver Scouts originated in Canada*) All had a fabulous time, and some were asleep in the car almost before they left Youlbury on the way home! We were back in Youlbury again for fire lighting and cooking marshmallows over the fire the following meeting. This time in heavy showers – yes, we did get rather wet, and it all cleared as we were packing up, of course!! Our last meeting of the summer term is always Water Fun!! No one escapes getting wet, including the Leaders and Young Leaders although parent helpers and the hut are definitely off limits!!

Changes within the Leader Team: we said goodbye to Ben who left us to continue with his studies and a change in direction with his career and we welcomed Karen to the team. In the near future we will be welcoming Beata to the team.

Thank you to our Leader Team, Fiona, Trudi, Peter, Karen and Ida, who have been fabulous and without all their hard work and dedication, the Colony would not be the fun it is. Thank you!

I would also like to thank Alex Stone and Naomi Gill for being our Young Leaders, and it has been great to see both become brilliant Young Leaders. It has also been lovely to see their progress from being quite shy to confident young people able to deal with anything put their way. Thank you, Alex and Naomi.

Lastly, I would like to thank all those parents who have helped the leader team out during the year and for all their support.

Fiona Stovold - Leader Volunteer  
Silver Beaver Colony



# Buffalo Beavers Report

I would like to say a huge thank you to the Leaders who have continued to support the Buffalo Beaver Colony over the last year, they are Steve F, Simon B, Jo P, Roisin A, Sarah B, and Paul E. And of course, for all the parents support throughout the last year. We would like to welcome Graeme to the Colony as our newest Assistant Beaver Leader.

We have had a very busy year starting with the AGM camp in April, which was a brilliant camp full of exciting activities and we got to camp with everyone else in Grove Scout Group.



Through our varied programme of walks, camps, modelling, knots, plants, paper craft, painting, fire lighting, campfire singing, bird feeders, Log chews, sports, tennis lesson, scavenger hunts, conker hunts, many different and exciting games, the list is endless - we have completed many badges, Safety, Science, Nights Away, Hikes Away, Navigation, plus the Challenge Badges, to name a few! We have had 9 Beavers gain their Bronze award this last year, well done to all Beavers. Recently we even met on zoom and played games when the Scout Hut was closed due to the flooding!



We camped in June and again in October at Youlbury. We had an exhilarating walk on the Ridgeway, was a tad misty and very cold! We attended the Remembrance Parade and Service at Denchworth and ate all the cake after whilst having fun with the table football!

The Silver Beavers invited us to their Halloween Party which was amazing, exciting but a bit scary at times, especially when the Beavers had to wrap each other up as a mummy.....



The Beavers enjoyed the annual Christmas Party and Shorts n Shades end of the year wet games party where you need to be prepared to get wet!

I would just like to thank everyone again for their continued support.

Linda Audas

BSL, Buffalo Beavers.



# Jaguar Cubs Report



Jaguar Cubs have had an exciting year packed full of exciting challenges and fun filled adventures working towards many badges including activities ranging from:

- a visit to Wantage fire station;
- a tour around Westport solar and wind farm;
- a memorable fun filled Group camp;
- a visit from First Responders for our emergency aid badge;
- visit from the amazing Bright Sparks team for our scientist badge;
- pioneering skills to build a working ballista;
- our annual visit to Funky Teapot ;
- swimming at Harwell school;
- as well as the Jaguar and Falcon cubs annual tradition of a campfire and wide game in the Summer at Youlbury.



In the future we are looking forward to our first Cubs sixers and seconders SAS Camp with Falcon cubs and a Jaguar Weekend camp at Youlbury in April 2024.



Thank you to the Jaguar leader team for your help, flexibility, loyalty and support.

The Jaguar Leader team:

Bagheera -Jenny

Shere Khan- James

King Louis - Lewis

Akela -Tracey.





# Falcons Cubs Report

## Places we've been

Falcon Cubs like to get out and about, and in 2023 it felt like we'd really got the handbrake off! As well as visiting numerous places in Grove and Wantage, we took ourselves off to Ardington, West Challow, Sparsholt, Youlbury, Dry Sandford, Faringdon and London.

Activities away from HQ are great for developing our self-confidence and independence. We learned that travelling can be a purpose in its own right (hikes), or a means to an end (visiting RAF Hendon). We got to see lots of different places and people, helping us understand the wider local and national geography and community that we live in.

## Things we've done

In January we celebrated Burns Night. Haggis, neeps and tatties with a drop of gravy went down well with almost everyone – but it was the Irn-Bru that everyone remembers to this day!

We had a night hike in the full darkness of a new moon from West Challow back to the hut in



February. This was followed by our first proper trip away in 3 years: a visit to RAF Hendon by coach.

April was of course the long-awaited Group Camp, with Falcons joining over 100 other Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and volunteers for the weekend. Archery, go-carting, climbing and tomahawk throwing were on the agenda for this!



We joined young people and volunteers of all ages again in May for Jamboree on the Trail, hiking from Sparsholt. Sadly, this was to be last ever international hiking Jamboree, as the organiser retired after 26 years. Au revoir!

June and July saw us getting our traditional skills together. We pitched and struck (struck?) a whole village of new tents purchased for our group with part of the unexpected and hugely generous donation from Harry Robey. We also had an evening of cooking vegetable couscous, damper bread twists and chocolate banana boats on open fires (safely contained in BBQ drums).

After the summer hols, we donned buoyancy aids and jumped on board for



our first ever Cubs canoe session using the new district equipment. It was great fun, and a super introduction to paddle sports and activities on the water.

October saw our Autumn camp in the secluded site behind 24<sup>th</sup> Abingdon Scout hut. We did loads of activities together on what turned out to be a very frosty weekend, but the memories that keep being retold are: free time playing in the woods, cooking jewelled chicken couscous on Trangia stoves, and having the dampers out on our fire-lighting session by a massive hailstorm!

Falcons presented themselves extremely well for our Remembrance Day parade and service in Grove. November also saw us on another night hike, this time from Ardington, along “conker alley” – a name that will be lost to history after the chestnut trees had to be felled last year.

We finished the year off with a Christmas party and, of course, supporting Santa and Rudolph on their annual and hugely popular tour of Grove. What a great year for Falcons!

## Who we are

Early in 2023 our leadership team considered the future of Falcon Cubs. We had grown to around 36 Cubs, having merged with Bulldog Cubs during the 2020 lockdown. However, challenges had become apparent as we started to meet in person again. These included obvious things like the capacity of the hut for larger meetings and the complexity of running split sessions, to subtle but essential things like the ability of our leaders and young people to get to know each other and work in partnership to support personal development.

Foremost in our minds as we discussed options were the needs to (1) ensure the quality of the Cubs experience that we offer and (2) provide a safe and varied programme.

The leader team agreed that Falcon Cubs should move back to a typical membership of around 24

Cubs. We will also provide support to help establish a new Cub pack and leader team as/when there is sufficient demand.

Consideration was also given to leader numbers. We have a great team of volunteers who plan and run Cubs sessions and events. However, there are times when work and family commitments mean that we don't always have enough leaders available to run sessions for a full complement of 24 Cubs. We are very grateful to parents who joined us on a rota to cover this. If you've enjoyed helping out before or would consider helping out in future then please do get in touch: [johnireland@kascouts.org.uk](mailto:johnireland@kascouts.org.uk). There are lots of way you can help – even if Wednesday evening Cubs meetings aren't your thing!

Akela Kaa and the Falcon Cubs Leaders





# Red Kite Scouts Report

2023 was Red Kites Scout Troop's best year yet. Our original fledgling Scouts who had been with us since 2019 blossomed into an excellent peer leadership group and an influx of new members from Cubs meant that our numbers peaked at 34 over the summer!



It is bittersweet that our older Scouts have now started to leave us and move onto the next phase of their lives, I hope they are all as proud as we are, both of the young adults they have become and of the culture of courage, effort and enjoyment that they have helped to create in Red Kites.

In a small change to our leader team we wished Steve Turner well as he takes a break from Scouts to concentrate on having babies in the house again! Steve's role has been taken on by Frankie Kimmins and we have loved welcoming her as part of the team.

Our Scouts had the opportunity to participate in up to 15 nights away during 2023 in addition to canoeing, climbing, trampolining and expeditions.



We also enjoyed supporting the Williams factory family day for the first time this year.

And so, 2024 and onward!

Andrew, Phil, Nicola, Rachel and Frankie



# Seagull Scouts Report

So, another year, another Seagulls AGM report... I swear it hasn't been a year since the last one!

We started the last year after Easter with the fantastic Group Camp over at Youlbury. It did get pretty cold overnight, with some of the Tents have Ice on them in the morning, but all the Scouts loved the weekend. We even got to invest a couple of Scouts (Along with some from Red Kites), which was quite a special thing to do in lovely sunshine in front of the whole group.

Our first meeting in May coincided with both the Coronation of King Charles and Star Wars Day (May the 4<sup>th</sup>, hehe, get it??), so we had a biscuit decorating session / competition – Royal themed or Star Wars. Very much a mix of designs, although I think most got eaten before they got taken home.

We followed this with a Mexican themed cooking night, so Taco's, Fajita's and Chillis. The Scouts all love a cooking evening and as usual all the dishes were brilliantly cooked. We did invite the parents in at the end, but most of the food had already disappeared!

Pretty much all of our meetings leading up to the Summer break took place outside, so we had a session of outdoor games, then a fab wide game over at Ardington in amongst the woodland and around the Stones. We then had several meetings over at Youlbury, firstly doing some fire lighting and a scavenger hunt (with marshmallows on sticks at the end – rude not to really!), a meeting doing some Crate Stacking,



where the Scouts faced their fear of heights building the highest towers they could using plastic crates whilst they're stood on them. Some of the Scouts got really high and it was fantastic to see all the Scouts encouraging each

other, especially those who weren't keen on getting too high.

On our last session at Youlbury we did some Geocaching.... With a nice big fire and marshmallows



Straight after the summer break, the Scouts took part in the District Patrol Camp, as in previous years it was a fantastic weekend, with the Scouts camping in Patrols and cooking meals for



themselves on Alter Fires whilst also taking part in the fab activities that the organisers had laid on, including Archery, Pioneering, Rock Climbing, Air Rifle Shooting, Camp fire songs and performances, a massive wide game in the dark

(with around 100 Scouts taking part!!).

Straight after this we started planning for CPCW or the County Patrol Camping Weekend. This was well attended by Grove Scouts, with 8 Scouts from Seagulls taking part in two teams. Ours were among the youngest patrols taking part and they did brilliantly. As with the DPC, they had to work in patrols cooking all of their meals for the weekend, with lots of activities to do during the weekend. Both the Friday and Saturday evenings had some excellent entertainment laid on with a full-on Disco on Friday and a Silent Disco on Saturday (which definitely wasn't silent!!).



The Scouts also had a fantastic climbing session over at Swindon, we'll certainly be doing that again! It amazes me how fearless the Scouts are sometimes with several of them negotiating a set of raised pillars with blindfolds on, then leaping

off the top, which must have been 5 ~ 6 metres in the air.

Just before Christmas we had a session in the Funky Teapot in Wantage where the Scouts all decorated mugs before getting them fired and returned for Christmas, some of them were presents, and some the Scouts kept for themselves. After talking to the owners at the end we were praised on how well they behaved and listened to instructions. Even the leaders took part!

Leading up to Christmas we had lots of Scouts taking part in the Santa's Sleigh event, thanks to

all the Scouts that helped – some of them on multiple nights!

For Burns night the Scouts cooked Haggis, Neeps and Tatties, whilst also doing some games. Much to our surprise the Haggis went down really well.

Just before the February half term we joined the Red Kites Ice Skating over at Oxford, some of the Scouts had been before, but it was new experience for a number of them. Although lots of falling over ensued, everyone enjoyed themselves, and there were plenty of smiles to be seen.

Sadly we had to cancel a couple of sessions due to the flooding preventing us getting to the hut, but in spite of this we've managed to do some fabulous things with the Scouts over the last year! Hopefully the drainage will get sorted and we won't have the same problems this year!





# Shackleton Explorers Report



We have seen our numbers drop down into the single figures as more of our members turn 18 or take a break due to exam pressures. This has led to some creative thinking programme wise and we have a core section of keen Explorers who continue to plan the programme themselves with the leader's support.

We have been on many night hikes; played wide games across the District; dusted off our old board games; Warhammered; pioneered (small and large); been in escape rooms; took part in Remembrance; helped Santa with his sleigh; learnt about hazard awareness and first aid; lots



of craft; done show and tell; been on chip shop walks; cooked, cooked and done some more cooking – oh and we cooked for the AGM last year – anything the young people want to do and we can support with!

My thanks as ever to Jeppe Christensen – without his skill set we couldn't function; also thanks to Grove Scout Group and the King Alfred District for their continued support – and thanks to Kristen and Diana for both stepping in when needed and to the parents for lugging Explorers here, there and everywhere – it truly is appreciated.

We're all looking forward to another exciting year of Scouting!

**Paul Steptoe – Explorer Scout Leader – February 2024**



# Membership Report

The following table shows our group membership by age as of the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 as compared to the previous year:

Age	Membership April 2024	Membership April 2023
4	7	9
5	13	
6	16	34
7	17	
8	14	46
9	20	
10	18	46
11	11	
12	10	
13	13	
14	4	
TOTALS	143	135

It is pleasing to see that our group is both bigger and younger on average than it was 12 months ago. On our joining list we currently have:

- 8 children who are not yet old enough to start Squirrels.
- 19 children of Squirrels age who do not have a place in the section.
- 14 children of Beaver age who do not yet have a place in a section.
- 6 children of Cub age who do not yet have a place in a section.
- 4 children of Scout age who do not yet have a place in a section.

Of those 51 on the joining list, 14 have been offered and accepted a place with a future start date. A further 21 have been offered places that they have not yet accepted leaving 16 yet to be offered a place. If you would like to help to increase our capacity by volunteering with one of our sections, or to improve the flow of young people into the group by helping with the administration of our membership process then please contact [gsl\\_grove@kascouts.org.uk](mailto:gsl_grove@kascouts.org.uk)

Andrew Shapland 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024

A message from Emma Nickerson, our membership secretary:

Thank you for stepping up and taking over the Membership lists when I got overwhelmed with it all.

Also thank you for your support once again when my health took a turn for the worse.

I have loved being part of The Grove Scout Group over the years as a parent helper, Scout Leader and Committee Member and working with all of you amazing people and the young people.

I will still be around to support you all when you are doing fundraising events etc, as GSG is a fantastic group and do so much for the young people.

Thank you to you all for being so kind and supportive throughout both of my health issues and the restrictions this has caused in my volunteering roles.

I would also love to come and see the new building when it is completed .

With best wishes, Emma

# Treasurer Report

The annual accounts Sept 22- Aug 23 are provided on the next three pages, and these have been independently examined by John Hedderley. I take the opportunity to thank John for time to do this and his support towards our scout group.

The accounts are very similar to the previous year, apart from two notable exceptions. Firstly, we were fortunate to receive a large legacy from Harry Robey's Estate. We have utilised some of this money to purchase some new tents and the remainder of the legacy has been put towards the new hut.

The other notable difference in 22-23 compared to the previous year was the receipt of three years' worth of gift aid, totally over £10k.

These two above items means that the year resulted in a £61k surplus.

Fundraising increased this year as we helped man the BBQ at the Grove Extravaganza. Your continued support of our fundraising events (Santa's Sleigh, Xmas Post, VOWH lottery and BBQ at Grove Extravaganza) are greatly appreciated and help contribute towards the finances for the new hut. We have agreed that moving forward all fundraising monies will be put towards the new hut (unless a fundraising event is for another specific purpose).

The group remains in a stable financial position with the challenge of needing to generate significant funds for the new hut.

However, costs have increased and subs have not increased since Jan 2020. Every year we pay a membership fee for every member to Scouts (UKHQ, County and District) and this alone has risen by over £20 per member over the last 4 years. We have been able to absorb this increase and other cost increases since 2020. In order to continue providing the rich and diverse programme of activities and adventures for our young people, we need to increase subs from June 2024 to £12 per month. We trust you understand we have not made this decision lightly. Please do remember that Grove Scout Group offer a bursary fund to ensure young people to not miss out of the opportunities that scouting provides due to financial reasons. Should you wish to access this fund for support please email: [gsl\\_grove@kascouts.org.uk](mailto:gsl_grove@kascouts.org.uk) and mark FAO: Simon Atkin – Access Bursary

Abbe - Group Treasurer

## Grove Scout Group

### Statement of Assets and Liabilities at 31 August 2023

	31/08/2023	31/08/2022
<b>Cash Funds</b>		
Property Development Account	£119,125	£70,416
Bank Current Account	£38,663	£25,862
Cash Float	£0	£20
	<u>£157,788</u>	<u>£96,298</u>
<b>Other Monetary Assets</b>		
Debtors	£0	£0
Clothing Stock	£246	£402
Equipment	£466	£559
<b>Total Assets</b>	<u><u>£158,500</u></u>	<u><u>£97,259</u></u>
<b>Liabilities due within one year</b>		
Creditors	£0	£0
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<u><u>£0</u></u>	<u><u>£0</u></u>
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<u><u>£158,500</u></u>	<u><u>£97,259</u></u>

#### Notes to the accounts

##### **Equipment**

The group owns various items of camping equipment, which is insured for £23,000.

Equipment recognised as an asset on the Statement of Assets and Liabilities, if the cost is greater than £500 and the item has more than one year's economical benefit.

All equipment at 31/08/23 has nil NBV apart from the BBQ purchased in 2022.

##### **Grants**

£1500 restricted grant from Oxfordshire County Council (received in 2014) for Ground Surveys remains unspent as at 31st August 2023.

£2,997 Omicron Hospitality (covid) grant was received from Vale of White Horse District Council in 2021/22. There were no restrictions on how this money could be spent.

##### **Other**

Census is collected annually in April and payments passed to District (Apr 2023 - £7568, Apr 2022 - £6519)

In the financial year ending 31st August 2023 Gift Aid claims for tax years 20/21, 21/22 and 22/23 were claimed totalling £10,701.

Payments received via OSM/Gocardless are recorded net of their transactional fees. These fees totalled £797 2022/23 (£783 2021/22).

The above receipts and payments accounts and statement of assets and liabilities were approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by

Chair

*A Hancock*

Andrew Hancock

Date:

*4<sup>th</sup> May 2024*

Treasurer

*AS88*

Abbe Irving

Date:

*04/05/24*

# Grove Scout Group

## Receipts & Payments accounts for year ended 31st August 2023

Receipts	Year Ended 31/08/2023	Year Ended 31/08/2022
Donations, legacies and similar income		
Membership Subscriptions less refunds	£15,844	£15,238
Less: Membership subscriptions paid on (District)	(£7,568)	(£6,519)
Net Membership subscriptions retained	£8,276	£8,719
Donations	£250	£247
Legacies	£48,045	£0
Gift Aid	£10,701	£0
	£67,272	£8,966
Grants		
Other Grants	£0	£2,667
	£0	£2,667
Section Activities		
Camp Fees	£10,401	£10,013
Events	£771	£537
Section Meetings	£45	£161
Badges	£0	£6
Necker Sales	£252	£199
	£11,469	£10,916
Fundraising		
Fundraising	£241	£653
Santa's Sleigh	£2,520	£2,288
Xmas Post	£1,142	£18
VOWH Lottery	£1,134	£909
Grove Extravaganza	£1,381	£0
Clothing	£6	£224
	£6,424	£4,092
Other Income		
Hall Hire	£550	£50
Other Income	£415	£0
	£965	£50
Investment income received		
Bank Interest	£665	£230
	£665	£230
<b>Total Gross Income</b>	<b>£86,795</b>	<b>£26,921</b>
Asset & Investment Sales	£0	£0
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>£86,795</b>	<b>£26,921</b>



# Grove Scout Group

## Receipts & Payments accounts for year ended 31st August 2023

<b>Payments</b>	Year ended 31/08/2023	Year ended 31/08/2022
<b>Premises (Current Hut)</b>		
Rent	£0	£0
Services	£1,863	£229
Insurance	£1,671	£1,349
Other hut costs and Maintenance	£873	£408
Cleaning	£1,176	£2,033
	<u>£5,583</u>	<u>£4,019</u>
<b>Premises (New Hut)</b>		
Planning Application Fees	£0	£0
Architect fees	£0	£0
Other Professional Fees	£0	£270
	<u>£0</u>	<u>£270</u>
<b>Premises (Garden Area at Grove CofE)</b>		
Other Professional Fees	£0	£2,974
	<u>£0</u>	<u>£2,974</u>
<b>Scouting Activities Expenditure</b>		
Scout Troop Expenses	£3,204	£3,216
Camps	£11,304	£10,470
Events	£974	£637
International Contributions	£0	£0
Badges and Uniform	£1,503	£1,365
OSM (less transaction fees)	£232	£0
	<u>£17,217</u>	<u>£15,688</u>
<b>Other Expenditure</b>		
Fundraising expenses	£510	£70
Marketing Expenses	£106	£0
Leader Training	£0	£0
AGM Expenses	£300	£0
Equipment	£1,216	£1,350
Sundry Payments	£373	£89
	<u>£2,505</u>	<u>£1,509</u>
<b>Total Gross Expenditure</b>	<b>£25,305</b>	<b>£24,460</b>
<b>Asset,stock &amp; Investment Purchases</b>	£0	£808
<b>Total Payments</b>	<b><u>£25,305</u></b>	<b><u>£25,268</u></b>

## **Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Grove Scout Group.**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Grove Scout Group for the year ended 31 August 2023.

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

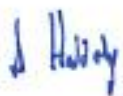
As the charity trustees of the Grove Scout Group you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ( ' the Act ').

I report in respect of my examination of the Grove Scout Group accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all of the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 125 (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 accounting records were not kept in respect of the Grove Scout Group as required by section 130 of the Act.

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.



John Hedderley

Fellow of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants

11 Minns Road, Grove, Wantage, OX12 7NA

17 March 2024