

Hitchin District Scouts

Annual Review to 13th May 2024

Hitchin District Scout Council

President & Vice Presidents

President	Graham Woolley
Vice Presidents	Rose De Roeck
	Tony Freeman
	Peter Hankin
	Bernard Higgs
	Keith McEwen
	Shirley Street

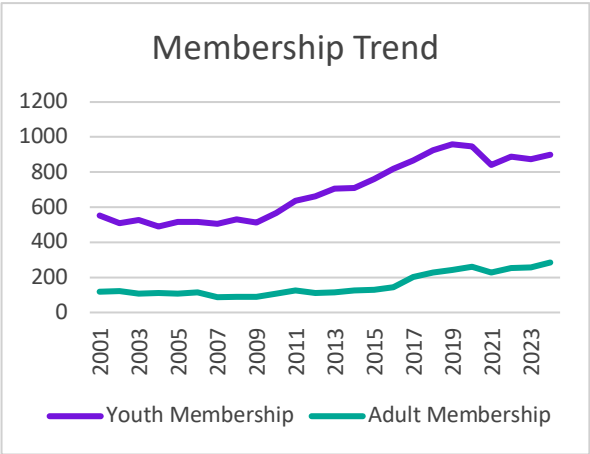
District Board of Trustees

Chairman	Mike Wells
Secretary	Colin Wilson
Treasurer	Craig Wilson
Assistant Treasurer	Anna Pargeter
District Lead Volunteer	Henry Harrison
District Youth Lead	Tom Hankin
Trustees	Denise Wells
	Geraint Edwards
	Alan Langley
	Tony Hankin
	Tracey Higginbotham
	Kevin Hankin

District Membership

Squirrels	9
Beavers	267
Cubs	298
Scouts	217
Explorers	93
Network	14
Total Young People	898
Total Adults	285
Total Membership	1183






This year our youth membership increased by 2.6%. Its brilliant to see our youth membership continuing to grow after the drop caused by the COVID pandemic. It's great to see more young people in Hitchin benefiting from scouting. We are really delighted that the volunteer membership grew by over 10%. This was largely due to a couple of successful recruitment events. Explorer membership also grew a huge amount, from 69 to 93 explorers. Finally, it was great to declare our first Squirrel Drey at 8th Hitchin.



Lochearnhead Group

Groups and Units in Hitchin District

Scout Groups

-  1st Hitchin (Boys' School)
-  2nd Hitchin (Air Scouts)
-  3rd Hitchin (Walsworth Road Baptist Church)
-  4th Hitchin (St. Ippolytts)
-  5th Hitchin (St. Mark's)
-  6th Hitchin (Priory)
-  7th Hitchin (Our Lady's)
-  8th Hitchin (Oughton)
-  9th Hitchin (1st Ickleford)
-  11th Hitchin (Christchurch)
-  12th Hitchin (St. Mary's and Holy Saviour)
-  15th Hitchin (Holwell and Pirton)
-  16th Hitchin (St. Faiths)
-  17th Hitchin (St. Michael's)

Explorer Scout Units

- 1st Hitchin ESU
- BEAR ESU
- DORA ESU
- HYDRUS Young Leaders

Network Scout Unit

- Hitchin District Network



District Awards and Achievements

Silver Wolf

Tony Hankin

Chief Scouts Commendation for Good Service

Anna Wilson

Victoria Hellyer

Bar to the Award for Merit

Wendy Hawkes

Chief Scouts Award for Merit

Andrew Murray Moore

Dennis Richard Alder

Janette Alexandra Innes

Peter Watson

30 Years' Service

Sandra Stokes

20 Years' Service

Julie Hobbs

Robert Annett

Patricia Reiser

15 Years' Service

Gavin Love

Raymond Shakespear

Tim Stroud

10 Years' Service

Claire Slater

Henry Harrison

Geoffrey Eyles

Tomasz Pernak

Tina Hay

Rebecca Roberts

5 years' service

Tom Hankin

Esta Norton

Amy Parker

Helen Matthews

James Cole

Michelle Stafford

Roger Powell

Suzanne Anderson

David Bevan

Richard Burgess

Mark Drury

Daniel Ellis

Emma Faulkner

Helen Neeves

Holly Pomfret

Richard Proctor

Alex Woolston

District Chairman

Hello again and thank you for reading the annual review of Hitchin Scouting. It was very sad earlier on in this Scouting year that we lost Richard Cox who had been our District president for many years. He was a great supporter of Hitchin Scouting and after he stood down from his role, I presented him with a gift of appropriately named rose bushes and an engraved oak plaque. There is good news on the presidential front but I will leave this to Henry to tell everyone.

It has been another very busy year with activities for our young people and I would sincerely like to thank all of the leaders and adult volunteers who have helped to deliver these "Skills for life", we simply could not do it without you. During this year, Hitchin Scouting was represented at the Tilehouse Rotary Youth activities showcase event in the Market Place. This was very successful and I am very pleased to say that a number of new adult volunteers came forward following this event.

I also attended the District Awards Evening at The Priory School to see so many of our young people gain awards and recognition. As I write this, I look forward to the leader information evening at The Highlander and St Georges day parade later this month, and I look forward to welcoming you to our AGM at the Cricket club in May.

Mike Wells
District Chairman

District Treasurer

The Financial Accounts for the calendar year 2023 have been presented for consideration at this AGM. The accounts have been independently examined, and I would like to thank Philippa Morgan-Males for carrying out the examination. Both the accounts and the examiner's report were approved by the District Trustee Board at a meeting on 15th April.

Hitchin Scouts were very fortunate to receive substantial grants and donations in 2023. The attendees of the World Scout Jamboree were instrumental in the success of the District's application for a £40,000 grant from the LIV Foundation. This grant enabled the District to fully subsidise the Jamboree fees for all five of our attendees. In addition, this grant was used to subsidise the cost of the Lochearnhead 2023 trip, and to buy new equipment (bell tents and expedition tents). At the end of 2023, approximately £14,700 of this grant remained. The District Trustee Board agreed at their last meeting that funds from this grant will be used to support volunteer training (£2,000) and to subsidise the 2025 district-wide DAW event (£5,000). A £10,000 donation was also received from the Revere Trust, a local charitable trust. The District Trustee Board has agreed that £5,000 of this donation should be used to further subsidise DAW in 2025.

In 2023, the Scout Association closed its Short-Term Investment Service. This was an investment account available to Scout Groups, Districts and Counties for the purposes of generating a return on invested funds. Hitchin District had just under £12,000 of reserves in this account, and this money was returned into the District bank account. At a meeting of the Trustee Board in September 2023, it was agreed that the District should open a savings account for the purpose of earning interest on cash reserves. The board voted to invest reserves of £40,000 in a 30-day notice account from Dudley Building Society earning 4.1% interest per annum. This account is now open.

Scout Association membership fees for 2023 increased by £2 per young person per year compared to 2022. The District was able to hold their portion of the

membership fee at the same level as the previous year. Furthermore, the District Trustee Board has agreed that the previously awarded Covid grant will be used in 2024 to subsidise the district membership fee for groups, to help offset further increases at the national and county level. Subscription costs charged by groups increased from an average of £32.50 per young person per term in 2022 to an average of £34 in 2023.

Scout Shop income in 2023 was very similar to 2022 at just over £13,750 of sales and £11,400 expenditure. All profits from the shop are re-invested into Hitchin Scouts. Thank you to Denise and the team for all their work.

Gift Aid in the amount of £2,500 was received in 2023 – this consists of £1,200 from the 2022 claim and £1,300 from the 2023 claim.

Expenditure on the Scout HQ building, including insurance and facilities was down by £1,000 compared to 2022. Moving to a cheaper electricity tariff contributed to this, as did the stepping back of the person who did regular tidying up, weeding etc. The Trustee Board is seeking a replacement.

Expenditure on Admin/PR increased by £1,100 compared to 2022. This was largely due to a PR and recruitment campaign designed to promote Hitchin Scouts and attract new volunteers to the District through a series of events held throughout the year.

Expenditure on training increased by £1,700 compared to 2022. This increase was largely due to the mental health training course which was provided for District volunteers and paid for from a grant received from Bedford and Luton Community Fund.

Expenditure on equipment increased ten-fold from around £1,000 in 2022 to £10,000 in 2023. The purchases of tents from grants and donation noted above, along with purchase and refurbishment of second-hand boats (from ringfenced water sports funds) were the main contributors to this increase. Given that all major purchases came from grants or ringfenced funds, there is no concern on the

impact to District finances from this increased expenditure.

Explorer Unit finances are healthy and there are no concerns with the ability to pay the national membership fees for any of the units. Explorer subscriptions will remain at the current level of £30 per term for 2024.

Receipts were £118,915 in 2023 compared with £124,343 in 2022. Both of these figures are substantially higher than typical, because of the awards of the grants and donations mentioned above, and because of the receipts of fees for major events such as Lochearnhead 2023.

Expenditure in 2023 was substantially higher at £130,446 compared to £82,070 in 2022. Almost £61,000 of this expenditure was for the Lochearnhead trip, for which fees and grants were received across 2022 and 2023.

Overall, at the end of 2023, District funds stood at £82,450 compared to £93,980, in 2022. The lower figure is explained by the collection of funds for major events such as Lochearnhead in 2022 which were spent in 2023.

Craig Wilson

District Lead Volunteer

I'd like to give a huge thank you to all our volunteers for their continued commitment, dedication, and enthusiasm. Every week, 900 young people learn skills for life, develop into better citizens and have a great time. This couldn't happen without a huge amount of volunteer time. It was brilliant to see an increase in leadership this year with 27 new leaders, 8 of these coming from the town centre Youth Showcase event. This was followed up with an adult climbing taster session that we will be running again this year.

For many of our Scouts, Explorers and leaders, last year was dominated by our district trip to Lochearnhead in Scotland to stay at an old train station owned by Hertfordshire Scouts. Organising a trip on this scale is a mammoth logistical challenge. Sam and Tony Hankin did a fantastic job making sure that the 66 young people and 50 leaders had an amazing trip. Over the 2 weeks, young people experienced: walking, bouldering, sailing, kayaking, mountain biking and high ropes alongside day trips to Stirling, Highland games and an overnight expedition. For many of the Young People, this is the longest they have been away from home, especially since the pandemic. It is so important for our young people to have these opportunities that they wouldn't get elsewhere.

Last year was also a Jamboree year. Hitchin sent 5 young people to South Korea for the 25th World Scout Jamboree. Although it didn't go totally as planned, I was very pleased to hear that our scouts still managed to have a great time and get a once in a lifetime experience out of the Jamboree. They were able to meet with scouts from every corner of the world and learn about other cultures and customs. The next Jamboree will be in Poland in 2027 and we expect to be looking for participants next year. For those aged between 14 and 18 in August 2027, please keep an eye open for communications next year.

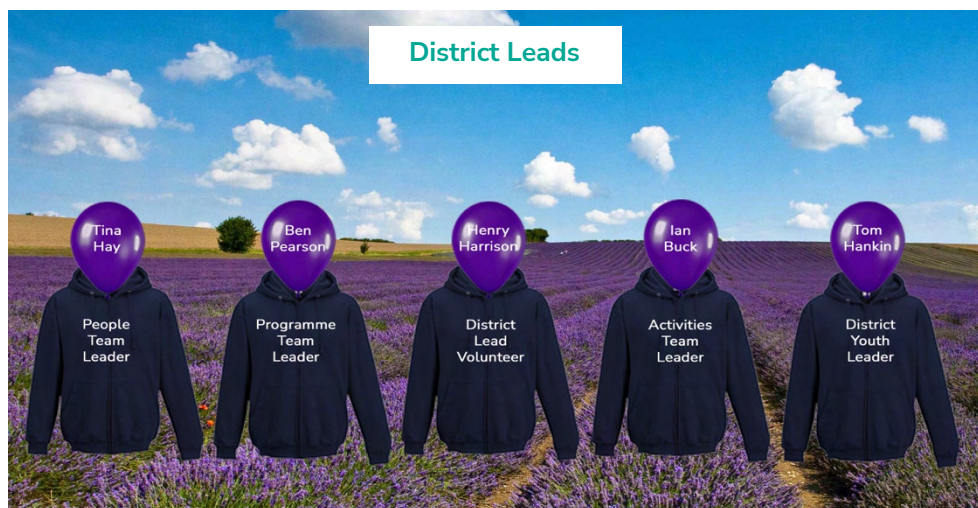
There has been a big focus on safety this year following a couple of incidents and near misses. As we look after 900 children weekly, safety and safeguarding must be a top priority for all of us. Leader training compliance is one element of this. Leaders who have out of date mandatory training will now be automatically suspended. Thankfully, Hitchin has always been relatively good at adult training

compliance. Thank you to leaders for making this as easy as possible! We must also continue to have a risk assessment for every activity that we run. This is something that the district will be improving with and asking groups to look at as well. This year, we are running risk assessment sessions aimed at leaders and committee members. We want to help provide training for skills that our leaders require. Last year we also ran extra training for Mental Health Awareness, this year we ran some Autism Awareness training. If anybody has suggestions for extra sessions that would be helpful, please get in touch.

As ever, there is loads to look forward to coming up in the calendar. Following on from a hugely successful Cub Camp last year, we have a Space themed Cub Camp this summer. We also have a Beaver Activity day and Scout Night Hike towards the end of the summer. In 2025, we will have the return of the District Activity Weekend, a weekend open to every young person in the district. Next year, we also have an Explorer trip to Yellowstone National Park for 8 young people aged 16+.

As part of the wider Scouts Transformation project, the district team will be rebranding to use the new role titles following this AGM. Please see the new roles below.

Henry Harrison



People Team



Programme Team





Vacancies

We are always looking for people to join the district team and help coordinate scouting across the district. If you are interested in any position, please get in touch with somebody in the district team. In particular, we are looking for a People Team Member and somebody to help with the Activities Team.

We need somebody to support the 18-25 age range in the district. This could be young adults who volunteer with us or members who want to stay in touch with the district after explorers. It involves keeping in semi-regular contact with the group, supporting events and acting as a go-between for the network and the district team.

We are also looking for somebody who is good with organisation, IT and planning to help support the Activity Team with organising District Activities.

Finally, we are starting to look for somebody aged 18-25 to support the Youth Lead. As Tom is getting older, we will be looking for the next Youth Lead! Ideally, we would have a longer handover period to make this more effective.

Upcoming events

May	Beaver Activity Day
May	Safety Workshop
June	Duxford Visit
July	Farnborough Air show trip
August	Hermitage Road Day (Hitchin Scouts have climbing wall)
September	Youth Showcase event in the town square
October	District Cub Hike
November	Scout Night Hike
December	Cub Christmas Challenge
January	Beaver Sleepover
February	Celebration Evening
May	DAW

For up to date district and county event dates please see the district calendar:
hitchinscouts.org/calendar

Photos from around the district











Registered Charity Number 302546

Hitchin District Scout Council

Receipts and Payments Account

For the year from	01/01/2023	To	31/12/2023
----------------------	------------	----	------------

Receipts

	2023 £		2022 £
Subscriptions			
Membership subscriptions	47,685.00		46,746.00
Less: Membership subscriptions paid on (National/County/Area/District)	- 43,350.00		- 42,336.00
Net membership subscriptions retained	4,335.00		4,410.00
District Operations			
Premises	298.99		44.99
Administration & PR	-		-
Adult support & training	80.00		-
Equipment	-		-
Sub total	378.99		44.99
District Activities & Groups			
District events & activities	11,382.64		24,776.35
Watersports	6,539.29		7,023.56
Jamboree	- 7,087.50		7,087.50
Explorers	13,435.71		11,365.14
Youth Forum, Young Leaders & Network	-		-
Lochearnhead	19,738.17		32,063.28
Sub total	44,008.31		82,315.83
Donations, legacies and similar income			
Private donations and grants	50,332.00		7,275.00
DHQ Roof	-		10,000.00
Charities Trust	-		500.00
Jamboree Donations and Grants	369.50		6,805.45
Lochearnhead Donations and Grants	2,550.00		-
Benevity and Amazon Smile	524.52		60.35
Sub total	53,776.02		24,640.80
Charitable income to pass on			
Corporate matched funding passed to specific groups	-		82.16
	-		82.16
Scout Shop			
Scout Shop Sales	13,754.02		13,836.27
	13,754.02		13,836.27
Investment income			
Bank interest	157.13		13.86
Gift Aid	2,505.76		-
Sub total	2,662.89		13.86
Total receipts	118,915.23		125,343.91

Payments

	2023		2022
	£		£
District Operations			
Premises	3,188.38		4,213.58
Administration & PR	1,650.71		510.87
Adult support & training	4,229.80		2,545.53
Equipment	10,176.36		928.72
Sub total	19,245.25		8,198.70
District Activities & Groups			
District events & activities	13,327.71		30,806.32
Watersports	4,137.04		5,591.57
Jamboree 2023	5,749.57		12,767.50
Explorers	15,465.68		11,876.36
Youth Forum, Young Leaders & Network	75.77		344.48
Lochearnhead	60,894.52		1,081.18
Sub total	99,650.29		62,467.41
Charitable income to pass on			
Hitchin Initiative	150.00		150.00
Corporate matched funding passed to specific groups	-		68.51
RBL Poppy Appeal	-		30.00
	150.00		248.51
Scout Shop			
Scout Shop Expenditure	11,400.81		11,156.24
	11,400.81		11,156.24
Total payments	130,446.35		82,070.86

Receipts and Payments Accounts Summary

	2023		2022
	£		£
Total Receipts	118,915.23		125,343.91
Total payments	130,446.35		82,070.86
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 11,531.12		43,273.05
Cash funds last year end	93,980.93		50,707.88
Cash funds carried forward	82,449.81		93,980.93

Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the year

	2023		2022
	£		£
Cash funds			
Bank current account	57,754.70		28,618.96
2nd 'Project' account	4,330.38		33,757.10
The Scout Association Short Term Investment Service	-		11,589.88
Paypal	325.48		299.57
Explorers	10,850.65		12,880.62
Equals Cards	0.59		-
Scout Shop current account	6,011.44		4,632.23
Scout Shop Liability	-		-
Scout shop Cash/Floats	25.00		25.00
Scout shop Debtors	3,151.57		2,177.57
Total cash funds	82,449.81		93,980.93

The above receipts and payments account and statement of assets and liabilities were approved by the Trustee Board on 15th April 2024 and signed on their behalf by

Signature

Print Name

CRAIG WILSON	Treasurer
MIKE WELLS	Chair

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Hitchin District Scout Council

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Hitchin District Scout Council for the year ended 31st December 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Hitchin 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 Hitchin 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 Hitchin District Scout Council as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

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:

PHILIPPA MORGAN-MATTHEWS

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

Address:

65 BENJLOW RISE HITCHIN

Date:

14/4/24