

# 4TH THAMES DITTON AJAX SEA SCOUTS

England & Wales · Charity number 303764

## Details

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Other names	4TH THAMES DITTON "AJAX" SEA SCOUTS, AJAX SEA SCOUTS
Status	Registered
Legal form	Other
Registered	1965-01-01
Register	<a href="#">View on the Charity Commission register</a>

## Contact

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## Activities

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**Objects:** PROMOTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN ACHIEVING THEIR FULL PHYSICAL, INTELLECTUAL, SOCIAL AND SPIRITUAL POTENTIALS, AS INDIVIDUALS, AS RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS AND AS MEMBERS OF THEIR LOCAL, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITIES

**Activities:** Sea Scouting activities in accordance with the Policy, Organisation and Rules of the Scout Association.

## Classification

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- **How:** Provides Human Resources, Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space
- **What:** Education/training, Amateur Sport
- **Who:** Children/young People

## Geography

- **Area of benefit:** THE COUNTY OF SURREY
- Surrey

## Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£103,870	£98,540	-	-
2024-03-31	£135,050	£139,492	-	-
2023-03-31	£91,739	£104,749	-	-
2022-03-31	£52,553	£59,854	-	-
2021-03-31	£59,545	£80,504	-	-

## Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Adrian Mark Smith		2013-09-08
Alexander Soden		2023-02-05
Andrew Murdo Rowan		2017-09-10
Anjani Srivastava		2023-10-01
CHRISTOPHER ANDREW WEST		2011-08-16
GEORGE BARBER		2012-09-16
Heather Ryder		2018-09-09
MARK ANDREW MARRIOTT		
Mark Faulkner		2019-01-10
Nicola McCrossan		2023-10-01
Peter Drysdale		2020-02-03
Peter Robert Lloyd-Jones		2015-10-12

**4TH THAMES DITTON AJAX SEA SCOUTS**

England & Wales - Charity number 303764

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# Accounts

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# Ajax Sea Scout Group and Explorer Sea Scout Unit

Annual Report and Accounts  
for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025

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**National Sea Scout Regatta 2025 – River Thames**

## GROUP CHAIR'S REPORT

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The Trustee Board is a team of volunteers who work together, as charity trustees, to make sure Scouts is run safely and legally. At the heart of their role is a focus on strategy, performance and assurance. Effective Trustee Board governance helps our volunteers deliver fantastic programmes that give young people skills for life.

The Trustee roles consist of a Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, and trustees. Following the last Annual General Meeting on 8 September 2024, Andy Davidson stepped down as Chair and as of June 2025, I have taken on the role.

Ajax Sea Scouts is a registered charity, and all the leaders, helpers, instructors and trustees are volunteers. I'd like to start by giving a huge thank you to all the volunteers that make Ajax Sea Scouts such a success. Especially to all the leaders and assistant leaders of Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers, who have delivered on providing an adventurous, educational and fun programme, in a safe and friendly environment.

A special thank you goes to Chris West, who after 17 years as a member of Ajax and 7 years as the Group Scout Leader, will be stepping back from his position at the end of this year. Your hard work and dedication to the group have been immeasurable and is truly appreciated.

Assistance from parents will, as always, be vital to help fill the forthcoming vacancies in roles and responsibilities. If anyone is considering coming on board and joining our leadership team you don't need a scouting background and there will be plenty of support and encouragement. We will be requiring all kinds of support from managing a sections uniform sale, looking after the minibus or volunteering at one of our few fundraising events. Please look out for requests.

The Financial Report for the year ended 31 Mar 2025 covers the Group's strong financial position and can found on p17. Thank you to our Group Treasurer, Peter Drysdale, for preparing this report but also managing the Group's financial records throughout the year.

Below I am pleased to outline the management of the Group's facilities, equipment, fundraising, and volunteering since the AGM on 8 September 2024.

### Facilities:

- Over the coming year we will need help from families and supporters with maintenance. We frequently run maintenance days which include activities such as painting, cleaning, gardening, tidying and organising. Please look out for our regular requests.
- This year saw minimal facility spending, unlike previous years when projects included the new storage compound (opened March 2024) and roof and gutter repairs.
- However, there are many other future projects that are required to support core Scouting activities and so we appreciate every families support with fundraising to enable these.

### Equipment:

- There has been no significant investment in new equipment over the last 12 months but there have been costs incurred for repairs to the minibus, the power boats and trailers.

### Fundraising:

- Membership fees do not fully cover operating costs and so the group need extra funds to upgrade facilities and maintain equipment. Therefore, Ajax holds several fundraising events each year and we depend on families to support them.
- I'm pleased to report that Ajax had a very successful fundraising season during Spring and Summer this year. A total in excess of £22,200 (2024: £18,400), net of costs, was raised across four events:
  - Ajax Plant Sale, 3-4 May 2025: ~£4,100
  - Esher May Fair, 17 May 2025: ~£13,500
  - Tea Tent, National Sea Scout Regatta, 5-6 July 2025: ~£1,100
  - Bar, Claygate Flower Show, 12 July 2025: ~£3,500
- Congratulations and thank you to all of our supporters and volunteers who helped plan, coordinate and staff our fundraising events over the last 12 months. We literally couldn't do it without you and so please look out for our requests for volunteers for future events.

## Volunteering:

- A big thank you to all the leaders, trustees, parents and others who have supported the Group over the last 12 months. We are dependent upon volunteers and so truly value your support.
- Unfortunately, our Section leadership teams remain understrength. We would welcome assistance from parents and volunteers who are able to commit time on a regular basis. Please contact the relevant Section Leader if you can help or if you would like to know more.
- All families are required to honour the parent commitment as follows. So please consider how you can help!

- Assist at the Group's principal fund-raising event, currently the Esher May Fair
- Assist at a minimum of one other fund-raising event as requested.
  - Claygate Flower Show
  - Plant Sale
  - Regatta Tea Tent
  - AGM BBQ
- Assist at a minimum of one Maintenance Day
- Provide help when the leaders ask for special events, for example lorry loading for summer camp or setting up for Cub camp.

And finally...

- Take on a 'Personal Parental Responsibility' from a list provided or as otherwise agreed – these include uniform shop seller, key role in a fundraising committee, group admin role etc.

Or, if only you cannot take on a specific responsibility from above

- Attend 1 additional fund-raising event AND 1 additional maintenance day throughout the year.



Volunteers at Ajax Tea Tent at the National Sea Scout Regatta



The largest plant sale to date!

Nicola McCrossan  
Group Chair, Ajax Sea Scouts  
[nicola.mccrossan@ajax.org.uk](mailto:nicola.mccrossan@ajax.org.uk)  
07734 190427

## GROUP LEAD VOLUNTEER'S REPORT

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### Group Lead Volunteer Chris West writes:

Another year packed full of excitement, adventures and also changes at Ajax, as we adopt the new way of working in Scouting, here I'm going to reflect on some of the year's activities and events. But as this might be my last report as the lead volunteer of the group, I thought I might also look back on the changes that happened in the past few years since I took over.

The individual section leaders have of course written their own reports regarding the major activities they got up to, so I won't bore you by repeating all the wonderful things the sections have been up to in the past year.

As for group events, the big event at the end of the year is always remembrance Sunday. Last year's event was the first one we've run since the council changed the rules and forced us into hiring a professional company to close the road for us, so that we could perform our usual parade. The event took a considerable amount more planning, including the application of a grant from the council to pay for the company to close the road. The event itself went without a hitch, and we had the usual excellent turnout at the green. I want to say a big thank you to my colleague at the Dittons Scouts, Suzan Baker, their group lead volunteer, who bore the brunt of the administrative work for this event.

The big news in Scouting at the of the year was the Scout associations revamp of our organisation, which included new training and new structures for all scout Groups. When this came to pass my title as Group Scout Leader was gone and I'm now known as the Group Lead Volunteer. There have been similar changes introduced on other positions in the group with many intermediate roles being removed and the system being simplified to a teams-based structure. The change also introduced a whole new training system, mostly online, which resulted in a considerable amount of work to get all of our leaders (they're not called that anymore) trained up on the use of the new system. And then through some new safety training to make sure that we're all as fully safe as we possibly can be. As with any new system there were glitches and bumps in the road, but it now seems to be up and running fully and we have a new digital platform for managing adults within the group.

All my free time at the start of this year was occupied by looking after these new systems and helping the group successfully integrate into their use. The next major event for me was our St George's Day ceremony that we held at the WAC.

We have in the past few years been experimenting with alternative events to mark St George's Day, a very important event in the scouting calendar. This has been whilst listening to the feedback of our young people that they no longer wish to march to a church for the same story they've heard every year. We have in the past been attending small weekend camps, along with The Dittons, but they were unable to do that this year, and our Scouts were looking for something different anyway. So, we looked at another alternative way of marking this important scouting date. We did for, the first time, get the entire group together in our building, something that rarely happens, not even on AGM days, and we held a small ceremony restating our Scout promise together in our building. It was wonderful to get all the sections together at the same time.

As the summer term kicked in and the older sections got back on the water, we were grateful for significantly less rain compared to the previous year, and the allowance to get on the water without the hindrance of a sunken boat or a flooded river. Meanwhile in the background, the new Group management teams were starting to meet and make decisions about equipment and buildings, to take the group forward. I can't complete the summary of the year without talking about the Troop and Unit summer camp of course, my personal highlight of the year. We were once again back at Chichester Harbour, a familiar spot near the Cobnor activity Centre. We had a wonderful 10 days away with only one significant day of rain, which didn't stop activities. There were plenty of activities on and off the water for the Scout and Explorers to enjoy. It was an amazing camp. Next year's camp is already booked back at Roadford Lake in Devon, any parents reading this make sure you have the dates written down.

A few months ago, I announced my intention to step down as the Group Lead Volunteer of Ajax, at the end of this year. I've been in Ajax for 17 years and for the last 7 years I've been the one in charge. When I took over from Mark Marriott, I felt I had some very big boots to fill and it certainly took me some time to figure out how to do things. In my time of being the lead volunteer, we've seen the group grow its footprint on 2 occasions, once by installing a new fence around the compound, which was moved back onto the grass to claim more land for us. And again, with the takeover of half the car park across the road with a new compound. We've also had a number of internal improvements. Replacing the dens with changing rooms was a project I proposed to make our building more suitable for the modern age and provide better

changing facilities for young people. Alongside that was the installation of new toilets and a shower/accessible toilet facility. I know these changes have made a huge impact on how the Group operates. Slightly less noticeably, we had a massive electrical overhaul, making our building safer and easier for leaders to use. I've been in no means in charge of these projects alone, they took people to securing the funding, work with contractors and managing the design and implementation process of getting them done, far too many to name here but I think you will all your support to making these amazing projects happen.

I think the most significantly challenging part of my 7 years in charge was when we had the pandemic. Keeping scouting alive remotely was certainly a challenge for everyone involved and it was a very unique time for all of us. I was very gratified to see that we were recognised after the pandemic as being one of the groups which not only survived through Covid but also managed to somehow grow in numbers. Since the pandemic scouting has of course continued, but I would be remiss in not mentioning that it is very apparent that the interest in volunteering has significantly dropped since then and recruiting of leaders has become a bigger and bigger challenge. And it's not a local problem either, Scout groups across the country are suffering from a lack of adult volunteers.

Whilst I am stepping down from the main role of being GLV, I do very much want to keep involved with Ajax, I'm already well into planning next year's summer camp for example. It is my hope that I can continue to help the group in various ways, either remotely or by attending the occasional camps or weekends away in the future. Volunteering for Ajax for 17 years has been both challenging and exciting, I've learnt so many new things, made many new friends, and have a lot of fun along the way.

I want to say a big thank you to Ruth Mortby, who stepped down as Cub leader earlier this year. We will miss Ruth for her amazing drive, enthusiasm and creativity in creating amazing and unusual events for the Cubs. Dan has written a lovely tribute to her work in the Cub report, so I will leave it to him to tell you more about her work.

Lastly, as always, I want to thank all the other volunteers that make Ajax happen, everyone works very hard giving up many many hours both behind the scenes and with the young people to make sure that amazing adventures happen and ask Scouts have a wonderful time. Thank you all.

## BEAVER SCOUT COLONY

(For young people aged 6 to 8)

**Beaver Scout Team Leader Dan Callaghan writes:**

What a year it's been for our Beaver Colony! We've had adventures, challenges, and plenty of fun moments that have helped our young people grow in confidence and skills.

### Highlights of the Year

My personal highlight has to be the Beaver Camp at Walton Firs, our first proper offsite overnight camp. Getting all the Beavers through the night (and for some, their first night away with Ajax) was brilliant to see. It really showed just how resilient and brave our young people are. We had some fantastic games and they loved charging around the site on the stamp trail. Thank you to all the leaders who made the weekend possible, including the Cub camp team who allowed me to split my attention between the two camps which ran at the same time.



It's been great to welcome Laura, Jane, and Keith to the team this year. They've brought fresh energy and ideas that have made such a difference to the team. They've all fitted in so well and the Beavers seem to love sharing all their facts and eclectic pieces of information with them.

### What We've Been Up To

Our weekly meetings have been jam-packed with all sorts of activities. The Beavers never seem to get bored, and we've covered loads of different topics. We've worked on skills like team leader challenges, first aid and problem-solving, circus skills, and even t-shirt folding! Beavers picked up some important safety skills through the Green Cross Code work. Creative activities have included hand puppet making, biscuit decorating, recycling inventions, and making bird feeders. The nature side of things covered walks, litter picking (combined with learning about our local area), and creating fairy dens at Hurst Park. Animal yoga was a hit, and we explored different animal habitats too. We've celebrated Chinese New Year, had a Brazil theme for New Year in Rio, enjoyed Christmas games, and marked St George's Day and Remembrance Sunday properly. For water activities, we managed to get all the Beavers afloat twice this year – they had hands-on experience with water safety and boat handling in both rowing boats and power boats.

### Thank You

To our parent volunteers, you've been amazing. Whether it's helping with activities or making sure everyone got their essential drink and biscuit during snack time, your support has been invaluable. We sadly said goodbye to Adrian during the summer term, as he moved up to help support the Cub team. Thank you for all your support in the Beaver team. Marina deserves a special mention. Her enthusiasm and creativity week in and week out have been absolutely brilliant throughout the year. She'll be really missed when she moves up to join the Cub team early next year. And of course, thank you to all our Beavers. Their enthusiasm and energy have made running this section such a joy. They've thrown themselves into everything we've done, and that's what makes it all worthwhile.

### What's Next

There are some changes coming, I'll be stepping down as Section Leader at the end of the year after a couple of great years in the role, though I'm hoping to be available where possible to help the team with transitions in the new year. Simone is starting with the Beaver team this term and has done her first muster with us.

Looking ahead, there's plenty more adventure and fun in store. Here's to another brilliant year of Scouting!

## **CUB SCOUT PACK**

(For young people aged 8 to 10½)

**Cub Scout Team Leader Dan Callaghan writes:**

This year has been one of significant change and growth for our Cub pack, filled with adventures, new faces, and plenty of memorable moments that have helped our young people develop their scouting skills and confidence.

### **A special mention for Ruth**

We must begin by paying tribute to Ruth, who stepped down as Section Leader after Easter following many outstanding years leading our Cubs. Ruth drove our programme with incredible passion and creativity, transforming ordinary meetings into extraordinary adventures. Over her years with us, she created some truly spectacular experiences that Cubs still talk about, from the Charlie and the Chocolate Factory themed escape room complete with smoke machines, chocolate rivers, and lickable wallpaper, to Halloween and Detective themed tabletop puzzles, and an Egyptian themed escape room with amazing 3D challenges.

Ruth's vision gave birth to Wizard Camp, which has become hugely popular and has now run twice. She has a talent for finding incredible opportunities like the Legoland sleepovers that gave our Cubs experiences they'll never forget. Perhaps most remarkably, during the challenging COVID period, Ruth kept all our Cubs engaged and connected through remote musters, including an innovative remote space-themed camp that showed her dedication to never letting anything stop the Cubs from having adventures.

Ruth's creativity, energy, and commitment have left a lasting mark on our pack. She will be greatly missed, and we're incredibly grateful for everything she brought to the Cubs over the years.

### **Changes in Leadership**

Following Ruth's departure, I stepped in as Section Leader at the start of the summer term to keep things running (as smoothly as possible). While I'll be stepping back from the role myself at the end of the year, I'll remain available to support the team during the transition period next year.

We've been fortunate to welcome Ed as a leader, who has now completed his first full year with us. His inaugural activity was the sausage sizzle at Thames Ditton, a great way to start! We were also joined by Adrian (from Beavers) during the summer term, who has been brilliant in helping support the Cub pack.

Our young leader JoJo has been with us throughout the year, and it's been fantastic having a younger person for the Cubs to interact. The Cubs really respond well to having someone closer to their age involved in the programme.

### **Camps and Major Adventures**

Winter Camp at Walton Firs was a great success with its detective theme and outdoor physical challenges, the Cubs seemed to love charging around/over/under the slightly damp obstacle course!

Wizard Camp was run again this year, with added magic from a behind the scenes greenscreen workshop where Cubs got to practice their broom flying skills or creep past a sleeping dragon.

Our summer camp at Boidier Hurst was fantastic, with a survival theme that took the Cubs back to basic scouting skills. The weather was kind to us, giving us plenty of opportunities to roam around the site and really make the most of being surrounded by nature. It was brilliant watching the Cubs develop their outdoor skills and confidence, (also a big thanks to Ruth for coming back to support us with this camp, it was critical as I was also trying to deliver the Beaver camp at the same time, lesson learned for next time!)

### **Water Activities**

We managed to deliver boating again this year, though slightly reduced from previous years due to limitations in the number of leaders with permits for different activities. In Cubs we aim to give young people a taster of different types of boats as opposed to instruction/coaching on a particular type of craft. Despite this, all Cubs had the chance to get afloat in both rowing boats (walker bays or coypus) and powerboats.

The Cubs moving up to Scouts were treated to a bonus water session in kayaks by their new Scout leaders, many thanks to Robert and Alex for delivering this extra opportunity. I know it was really appreciated by the Cubs as a special send-off.

### **Weekly Programme and Badge Work**

Throughout the year, our Cubs have tackled a diverse range of activities and badge work. Badge achievements included Athletics, Disability Awareness, and Fire Safety, all important skills that have helped broaden their understanding and capabilities.

We had a brilliant circus skills night delivered by an external provider where the Cubs mastered diablos and then had great fun developing their clown personas using other circus equipment including unicycles, spinning plates, and juggling gear.

The good weather meant we could make the most of outdoor activities with some excellent rounders games and activities on Long Ditton Recreation Ground. We also enjoyed a walk around Bushy Park, making the most of our local green spaces.

Other activities included backwards cooking and important mental health activities that helped the Cubs understand and talk about wellbeing.



### Looking Ahead

As we head into next year, we're looking for people passionate about Cubs to step forward as new leaders. We encourage anyone with an interest in the section to reach out to any of the Cub team to discuss how you can support the section and help continue the excellent work that's been built up over the years.

The Cubs have shown incredible adaptability this year through all the changes, and their enthusiasm and energy continue to make running this section such a rewarding experience.

### Thank You

Thank you to all our parent volunteers who have supported camps, activities, and weekly meetings throughout the year. Special thanks to Claire and Annette who have joined the Cub team as parent helpers this year. Claire has also committed time to regular weekly activities. Both Claire and Annette bring fresh ideas and energy to our planning.

Thanks to Ed, Adrian, James, and JoJo for all their contributions to making this such a successful year. I'm looking forward to continuing to work with each of you this term as well as Lucy who makes a return from Norway to rejoin Ajax after 3 years away.

And of course, thank you to all our Cubs for their energy, enthusiasm, and willingness to try new things. They've embraced every challenge and adventure we've thrown at them.

Here's to continuing Ruth's legacy of creativity and adventure as we head into another exciting year of Cubs!

## SEA SCOUT TROOP

(For young people aged 10½ to 14)

**Sea Scout Team Leader Robert Elliott writes:**

Our year started with boating sessions through to the end of September, giving the opportunity for pulling after dark on the river.

After coming 2<sup>nd</sup> in the District cooking competition in 2023 Ajax won this year beating other groups in Esher. With a base of ingredients, the teams select other items from a central table and have to prepare and plate a meal for the judges to taste, using the standard camp cooking equipment.

Our hike team enjoyed the challenge of the night hike in October, but they forgot to answer any of the questions, so did not fare well in the rankings. Thank you to the parents who manned one of the bases for this event.



Thank you to Chris for running our PL/APL training day, an essential part of our year to teach the older scouts the responsibility of running their patrols, and a fun day to explore some team building activities.

We had a successful community carol event for local residents and parents at the end of the Christmas term offering mince pies and mulled wine. With thanks to Mary Ruth Mortby for piano accompaniment to the Scouts and Young Leaders singing some well-known carols.

Early in the Spring term the Scouts had an opportunity to decide what they would like to do in a future muster. The overwhelming response was a talent show, which took place at the end of January followed by pizzas. Well done to all of the participants for coming up with their entertainments and to the winner of the evening, Erin, for her demonstrations of Irish dance.

January saw us returning to Sandown for an evening on the dry ski slopes and on the high ropes.

Our highlight of the term was Winter Camp in the New Forest. This was at a new venue, Braggers Wood. We had beautiful weather for a hike around Christchurch harbour. On the Sunday we stayed on site for archery, tomahawk throwing and rifle shooting.



Other musters included a demonstration on inflating a life raft, cooking pancakes, reminders on some of the nautical skills to be used when boating. We had two attempts at visiting the local fire station, but on each occasion the watch was called out on a shout, so we had to abandon the visit.

We started our summer term this year with a group wide celebration of St George's day. This was held on site at the WAC with a reminder of why we do Scouting and a re-commitment to the Scout promise followed by hot dogs.

We held a gardening muster lead by May Hainault and Ali Harley learning about different type of plants. We planted seeds for sunflowers and cucumbers, and cuttings for dog wood to take home and grow.

We had a good season of boating this year, with none of the river flow problems of the previous two years. We taught the younger Scouts the art of pulling in our walker bays and gave older Scouts sessions in kayaks, the gigs and Scout class boats.

Monica Harding, our local MP, visited Ajax to celebrate VE day. We took her out on the water to show her some of our water activities.

At the Esher May Fair the older Scouts enjoyed running a candyfloss and ice cream stall, helping on what was a very successful fund-raising event. A group of Scouts and Explorers also volunteered at a half marathon event at Hampton Court.

Our pulling and kayaking musters helped us in preparation for the Annual Sea Scout regatta at Hampton Court, where we performed well against the competition.



For Summer Camp this year we returned to Cobnor for a week's activities, including kayaking, sailing and hiking. We sent each of our three patrols off on an overnight expedition to hike round Thorney Island, camping on a local field before hiking back to camp the following morning. It was great to be able share the opportunity of sailing one of our gigs on the harbour.

Thank you to my team of willing volunteers this year: Alex, Andy, Gerard, Jason, Phil and Rod with additional support from Chris and Diane.

## **SEA SCOUT EXPLORER UNIT**

(For young people aged 15 to 17)

**Explorer team leader Jan Harley writes:**

We have seen a big growth this year in the number of active Explorers, with the Unit, over the last year, growing to 24 members. The year started off with a "Pizza Paddle" – where the Explorers paddle to Hampton Court to earn a pizza on the beach. This was quickly followed up with the district cooking competition.

2024 was a good year for training, with many Explorers gaining valuable sailing qualifications at Cobnor in September 2024, and another trip in May 2025. We also had three more of our Explorers completing their RYA PB2 power boating qualifications.

We also had 14 of our Explorers take part in a Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Expedition last September. The plan was initially to do a rowing and kayaking expedition on the Thames. This had to be re-planned due to poor river conditions and became a two-day hike along the north downs. All Explorers successfully completed the Expedition despite one of the groups setting off in completely the wrong direction losing 4 hours of daylight in the process.

At the end of October, 13 of our Explorers joined us for Winter Camp on the Isle of Wight. The highlight of which was surfing on the beach at Compton Bay.

November saw most of our Explorers taking part in a "Discover Scuba Diving" PADI session. We ended the year with a trip to Hampton Court Palace to go Ice skating, as well as hosting our traditional Christmas event for the community.

In 2025, during the spring term, we focussed on Powerboating, Swimming, and First Aid training. We also managed a trip to White Spider for a climbing session and volunteering at the Hampton Court Half Marathon.

The National Sea Scout Regatta was a highlight for the Explorer Unit. The Explorers did well overall pulling in a solid haul of medals, including first place for the under 18 Gig Pulling (rowing) and first place for the under 16 kayaking.

Summer Camp was another highlight for the Unit. We had 14 Explorers taking part in our 10 day camp at Cobnor. The week was filled with sailing, hiking, paddleboarding and kayaking. As well as the dreaded Operation X, involving a 2-day hike along the North Down Way ending up with chips on the beach in Brighton.

We are now looking forward to our next big event which will be taking part in the Great River Race along with over 200 other boats along the 21 mile route from the Docklands of London to Richmond at the end of September.

## **OUR FLEET**

Work has continued in maintaining our fleet of boats. I want to say thank you to Andy Davison for his amazing repair work on our gigs. Also, thanks to Diane Davison, Alex Soden and Gerard Foley for their continued work in maintaining our fleet.

At a recent water activity meeting it was decided it is time to replace The Stokes, with a smaller and more suitable rib for the Group. It is therefore going up for sale soon, with the aim to purchase a replacement next year.

## **WATER ACTIVITIES TRAINING**

Ajax and Warspite continue jointly to operate a Royal Yachting Association 'Recognised Training Centre' at Thames Ditton, which delivers valuable training synergies for both Groups.

This year we have trained adults in Power boating, Paddle sport instructors, Paddle sport safety and rescue and offered training to issue Pulling Permits.

In addition to our own training, some of our younger adults have been doing well in achieving training from external suppliers, resulting in us gaining a new Dinghy Instructor and a Senior Dinghy Instructor

## **RONA SAILING PROJECT**

(For young people aged over 14)

Rona Sailing Project (RSP, [www.ronasailingproject.org.uk](http://www.ronasailingproject.org.uk)) is a registered charity which provides affordable sail training on purpose-built yachts. Their stated aim is to provide opportunities for young people to develop a sense of responsibility, resourcefulness and teamwork which will help them throughout their lives. Anyone over the age of 14 can apply for a place and we strongly recommend all Ajaccios to do so. In fact a number of the volunteer Skippers and Mates serving with RSP are Old Ajaccios!

We encourage our Explorers to get involved and take advantage of this amazing opportunity.

## **DUKE of EDINBURGH AWARDS**

(For young people aged over 14)

This year we have had several scouts achieving their bronze awards. Several more are awaiting their expedition section to be completed. We also have a few who have nearly completed Gold awards at the time of writing.

Diane has stepped down from running our DofE programme and the responsibility has passed to Jan Harley, our Explorer Team Lead. However with changes in leadership in Explorers, we need parents to step up and let Jan know if they have an interest in finding out more about DofE and doing the DofE training. It's only a day! Please think about it ... working with our young people on this programme is incredibly rewarding.

We'd like to offer special thanks to Diane for leading the DofE programme for Ajax, she's done an amazing job in getting so many young people through their DofE awards.

## **ROYAL NAVY RECOGNITION**

Ajax is one of just 105 Sea Scout Groups in the UK to be officially recognised by the Royal Navy and we have held this recognition continuously from the inception of the Group. Beyond the prestige of RN recognition, there are a number of tangible benefits including access to Grant Aid. We are currently discussing the best use of this year's grant with a view to continuing to improve our kayak fleet.

Following a relaunch of the scheme some years ago, all RN Recognised Groups are now affiliated with a local RN Unit. Together with nine other Groups in the London area, we are affiliated with the London University Royal Naval Unit.

To maintain RN recognition, all Groups are regularly reviewed to ensure the required standards are maintained. Due to changes in the operation of the scheme we have not had an inspection for some time, and we await further information on the relaunch of the review scheme.

## **THANKS**

It's been another amazing year at Ajax, the new compound across the road has been used to it's full potential and has made a huge difference to our operation. Again, I want to echo the repeated comments that we are short on leaders, we need more volunteers and anything you can do to help will be appreciated.

For child joining or adult volunteering, go to: [www.ajax.org.uk/join](http://www.ajax.org.uk/join)

Lastly, I once again wish to give my heartfelt thanks to all the Leaders, Trustees, Instructors and helpers who volunteer so much time to make Ajax happen, thank you all!

**Chris West**  
**GROUP SCOUT LEADER**

## ABOUT 4TH THAMES DITTON 'AJAX' SEA SCOUTS

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In common with all Scout groups, the 4<sup>th</sup> Thames Ditton 'Ajax' Sea Scouts (the "Group" or "Charity") is a charity established under the Royal Charter granted to The Scout Association dated 4<sup>th</sup> January 1912 as amended by supplemental charters dated 28<sup>th</sup> March 1949, 18<sup>th</sup> February 1959, 5<sup>th</sup> May 1967 and 19<sup>th</sup> July 1991. Trustees are appointed in accordance with the Policy, Organisation and Rules of the Scout Association.

### GROUP INFORMATION AS OF 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2025

Charity Registration Number:	303764
Scout Association Registration Number:	25880
Honorary Roles:	
Group President	Mrs Marguerite Rollason MBE
Group Vice Presidents	Mrs Janet Barber Mrs Doreen Neal
Trustees Ex-Officio (Principal Officers):	
Group Chair	Vacant
Group Secretary	Anjani Srivastava
Group Treasurer	Peter Drysdale
Trustees Ex-Officio (Leadership Roles):	
Group Lead Volunteer	Chris West
Trustees Nominated:	
Group Advisers	George Barber Diane Davison Mark Faulkner Mark Marriott
Youth Adviser	Alex Soden
Supporter	Raymond Mears
Trustees Elected:	
Parent representative (Explorer unit)	Peter Lloyd-Jones
Parent representative (Beaver section)	Nicola McCrossan
Parent representative (Scout section)	Andrew Rowan
Parent representative (Scout section)	Heather Ryder
Parent representative (Cub section)	Nicola Slammon
Parent representative (Explorer unit)	Adrian Smith
Trustees Co-opted	
Special Projects Adviser	Andrew Roberts
Custodian Trustee:	The Scout Association Trust Corporation
Independent Examiner:	Barry Hitchens
Contact Name and Address:	Chris West 4 Hartford Road Epsom KT19 9JD

## TRUSTEES' REPORT

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The Trustees present their report and the financial statements for the 4<sup>th</sup> Thames Ditton 'Ajax' Sea Scout Group for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

### Responsibilities of the Trustees

Charity law requires the Trustees to keep accounting records and prepare annual statements of account for the Charity which must be audited or independently examined and provided to the Charity Commission. In preparing the annual statement of accounts the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- Comply with applicable accounting standards subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the annual statement of accounts; and
- Prepare the annual statement of accounts on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume the Charity will continue its operations.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and are responsible for safeguarding its assets and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

### Review of Activity of the Charity

The Group currently has an active Beaver Scout Colony, Cub Scout Pack and Sea Scout Troop and a partnership agreement with the Ajax Explorer Sea Scout Unit. Key details of each Section are as follows:

- The Beaver Colony is for boys and girls aged 6 to 8 years. The Colony meets once a week and as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 had 26 members (2024: 22).
- The Cub Scout Pack is for boys and girls aged 8 to 10 ½ years. The Pack meets once a week and as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 had 33 members (2024: 34).
- The Sea Scout Troop is for boys and girls aged 10 ½ to 14. The Troop normally meets twice a week and as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 had 38 members (2024: 38).
- The Explorer Sea Scout Unit is for boys and girls aged 14 ½ to 18. The Unit normally meets once a week and as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 had 26 members (2024: 22)

All Sections have continued to work in accordance with the progressive training scheme as laid down by the Scout Association.

The Group has continued to operate a Royal Yachting Association Training Centre based at the Water Activities Centre and operated jointly with Warspite Sea Scouts. The RYA Centre's Principal is supported by a team of RYA Instructors with qualifications covering sailing, power boating, VHF communications and first aid.

The Group is one of just 105 Sea Scout Groups in the United Kingdom recognised by the Royal Navy. This prestigious and beneficial recognition is subject to regular inspections at approximately 18-month intervals. To retain recognition, the Group must demonstrate that it continues to achieve the standard required, in appearance, dress, bearing and badge work, as well as showing progress in efficiency.

### Reserves

The Trustees have adopted a formal policy on reserves which is reflected in these accounts. The policy provides that reserves be maintained at a level which has regard to:

- The risks associated with each stream of income and expenditure varying from that budgeted
- The planned activity level
- The Group's commitments
- The need for adequate readily realisable resources to meet the Group's commitments (after subscriptions and camp fees) for the coming twelve-month period.

Readily realisable resources are defined as the balances at the bank less current liabilities and the balance on designated funds for WAC building development.

As at 31 March 2025, the Group held reserves of £30,000 (2024: £30,000), which is the minimum level of reserves required under the policy.

## **Investment Policy**

The Group does not have sufficient funds to invest in longer term investments. All funds are held in cash or "at call" short term investments with The Scout Association, Skipton Building Society and Cambridge & Counties Bank.

## **Governance**

The Group's governing documents are those of The Scout Association. They consist of a Royal Charter, The By-Laws of the Association and The Policy, Organisation and Rules of The Scout Association.

The Group is a trust established under rules which are common to all Scout Groups.

The Group's Trustees are appointed in accordance with The Policy, Organisation and Rules of The Scout Association, to serve on the Group's Trustee Board. As charity trustees acting collectively through the Group's Trustee Board, the Trustees must:

- Ensure that the Charity is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit
- Comply with the Charity's governing document and the law
- Act in the Charity's best interests
- Manage the Charity's resources responsibly
- Act with reasonable care and skill

## **Risk Assessment**

The Group Trustee Board has identified and assessed the major risks to which it believes the Group is exposed as follows:

*Injury to leaders, members and helpers:* The Group, through the capitation fees, contributes to The Scout Association's national accident insurance policy. Risk Assessments are undertaken before all activities.

*Damage to buildings and equipment:* The Group would request the use of buildings and equipment from neighbouring organisations. The Group has sufficient buildings and contents insurance in place to mitigate against permanent loss.

*Reduced income from fund raising:* The Group is primarily reliant upon income from subscriptions and fund raising. The Group does hold a reserve to ensure the continuity of activities should there be a major reduction in income. The Committee could increase the level of subscriptions to increase the income to the Group either temporarily or permanently.

*Reduction or loss of members:* The Group provides activities for young people aged 6 to 18. If there were a reduction in membership of a particular Section or of the Group as a whole then there would have to be a contraction, consolidation or closure of a Section, or in the worst case scenario, the complete closure of the Group.

*Reduction or loss of leaders:* The Group is totally reliant upon volunteers to run and administer the activities of the Group. If there were a reduction in the number of leaders to an unacceptable level in a particular Section or the Group as a whole then there would have to be a contraction, consolidation or closure of a Section, or in the worst case scenario, the complete closure of the Group.

The Group requires two signatories for all payments to provide reasonable assurance against material mismanagement or loss of money and holds comprehensive insurance policies to ensure that insurable risks are covered.

## **Group's Purpose**

The purpose of the Group is to actively engage and support young people in their personal development, empowering them to make a positive contribution to society. The Group aims to achieve this by providing an enjoyable and attractive scheme of progressive training based on the values of scouting, the Scout Promise and the Scout Law, and guided by trained adult leadership.

## INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

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### **4<sup>th</sup> Thames Ditton Ajax Sea Scouts Charity Number 303764**

### **Report of the Independent examiner to the Trustees of 4<sup>th</sup> Thames Ditton Ajax Sea Scouts**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above Charity for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 that are set out on the pages attached.

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

As the charity's trustees, 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 Trust's 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 that gives me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- a) the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act or
- b) the accounts did not comply with the accounting records or
- c) the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of the 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 the 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.

Barry Hitchens- Australian Society of Accountants  
24 Effingham Road, Long Ditton, Surrey, KT6 5JY



1.8.25

## FINANCIAL REPORT - YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2025

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Prepared By Peter Drysdale, Group Treasurer

Ajax Sea Scout Group remains in good financial health. Cash balances at the end of the year were up on last year. We continued to invest in our boats and facilities.

### **Operating Highlights**

The accounts below are laid out according to the Charity Commission's format. The numbers in this commentary are taken from our management accounts which gives a more meaningful narrative. In particular for example payments for activities are included in Income, but from an operating point of view they are not income.

In round numbers, cash in the bank as at the year-end stands at £82,400 - a net increase of over £8,000 over 2024.

Operating income decreased from £35,000 to £31,700. Membership fees (including Gift Aid) was slightly down at £26,000. The previous year was flattered by the one-off sale of a minibus (£4,800) but bank interest increased from £1,900 to £4,400.

Operating costs dropped by £5,000 from £44,000 to £38,600. This was mainly because the previous year included repairs to the roof (£9,000). Utility costs reduced but we had to pay for repairs to the minibus, the power boats and trailers.

Fortunately, fundraising was good. The Esher May Fair realized over £11,400, slightly more than last year. The Plant Sale and Claygate Flower Show realized nearly £7,500 between them – £2,500 more than last year. Fundraising remains important for us as the membership fees do not fully cover the operating costs.

There were a large number of activities, total income exceeded £35,000 but overall broke even (net cost £300).

Expenditure on major items was £7,000, mainly net £5,000 to complete the new trailer park. £2,000 went on sundry smaller items eg tents, sound system for the Esher May Fair.

### **Notes to the financial statements 31 March 2025**

#### **1 Basis of preparation of accounts**

##### 1.1 Basis of accounting

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s) to these accounts. The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (the Charities SORP) and with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102). The Charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

##### 1.2 Going Concern

The Trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

#### **2. Accounting Policies**

##### 2.1 Income recognition

All regularly recurring income is recognised in the period in which it is received. This applies to Subscriptions, Gift Aid on subscriptions and Investment Income.

Donations are recognised once received. In the event that a donation is subject to conditions that require a level of performance before the Charity is entitled to the funds, the income is deferred and not recognised until either those conditions are fully met, or the fulfilment of those conditions is wholly within the control of the Charity and it is probable that those conditions will be fulfilled in the reporting period.

Any Gift Aid amount recovered on a donation is considered to be part of that gift and is treated as an addition to the same fund as the initial donation unless the donor or the terms of the appeal have specified otherwise. It is recognised in the period in which it is received.

Restricted donations and grants will be recognised in the period in which the associated costs are incurred and until then will be treated as creditors.

Income from Fundraising and Activities is recognised in the period in which the fundraising event or activity takes place. Deposits received in prior periods will be deferred until the period in which the activity takes place.

All other income is recognised in the period in which it is received.

## 2.2 Expenditure and liabilities

A liability exists where there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the Charity to that expenditure, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. All such liabilities will ordinarily be discharged as soon as possible. Only material liabilities not discharged by the end of the period will be accrued.

Some annual costs eg Insurance, Subscriptions, Rent and other similar dues which extend beyond the current period and which on a strict accruals basis would to that extent ordinarily be accrued, will be recognised in full in the period in which they are paid.

All expenses including support costs and governance costs are allocated or apportioned to the applicable expenditure headings.

The classification between headings is as follows:

- Expenditure on fundraising includes all expenditure associated with raising funds for the charity.
- Expenditure on charitable activities of the Group includes all costs associated with furthering the charitable purposes of the Group through the provision of its charitable activities.

All expenditure on fundraising events or activities is recognised in the period in which the fundraising event or activity occurs. Prior period deposits will be treated as prepayments.

Materiality: Accruals of expenditure other than that for Fundraising or Activities will only be made where they exceed £500 individually or £1,000 in total.

## 3 Land and buildings at Ditton Reach

The property comprising land and buildings at Ditton Reach that are occupied jointly by Ajax Sea Scouts and Warspite Sea Scouts is held by the Scout Association Trust Corporation (SATC) as tenant under a lease granted on 2 February 2024 by Elmbridge Borough Council as landlord. SATC holds the lease as custodian trustee on behalf of both Groups as beneficiaries. The Groups are responsible for the performance of the tenant's obligations under the lease, which expires on 6 December 2078.

The rent under the lease, which is currently £250 per annum, is subject to indexation adjustment on 6 December 2028 and on every fifth anniversary of that date. The lease contains restrictive covenants that among other things (1) prohibit the assignment or transfer of the lease, or the grant of a security interest in the lease, and (2) govern the permitted subletting, hire, occupation and use of the property.

As a consequence of the restrictive covenants in the lease, Ajax considers that its beneficial interest in the lease does not have any market value.

The Groups have entered into a formal agreement between themselves to govern the management and administration of the leased property, and to coordinate the performance of the tenant's obligations. Among other things, this intergroup agreement (1) allocates parts of the leased property to each Group for that Group's exclusive use, and (2) establishes a joint liaison committee between the Groups

#### **4 Funds**

Unrestricted General Funds are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the Charity. Designated Funds are funds set aside out of unrestricted General Funds for specific purposes or projects. Restricted Funds are funds subject to specific restrictive conditions imposed by the donors or by the purpose of the appeal.

#### **5 Insurance Policies**

The entire WAC building occupied by Ajax and Warspite is insured for a reinstatement cost of £1,417,500 under a joint insurance policy. The premium for buildings insurance cover is allocated 75% to Ajax and 25% to Warspite, which reflects the respective areas of the building occupied by each Group. Ajax has also insured the Group's building contents and equipment for a reinstatement cost of £99,828 and its boats for a reinstatement cost of £95,000 in aggregate.

<b><u>Income &amp; Expenditure 2024 - 2025</u></b>	<b><u>Notes</u></b>	<b><u>2025</u></b>	<b><u>2024</u></b>
		£	£
Income from			
Donations, Legacies. Subscriptions and similar income	1	28,882	54,925
Camp fees		35,529	43,719
Other activities in furtherance of the Charities objects			
Fundraising		35,027	34,466
Investment Income		4,432	1,940
<b>Total</b>		<b>103,870</b>	<b>135,050</b>
Expenditure on:			
Fundraising Costs		15,361	17,671
Expenses of the activities by the Group		83,179	121,821
<b>Total</b>		<b>98,540</b>	<b>139,492</b>
<b>Net Income</b>		<b>5,330</b>	<b>(4,442)</b>

<b><u>Balance Sheet</u></b>	<b><u>Notes</u></b>	<b><u>2025</u></b>	<b><u>2024</u></b>
Reconciliation of Funds			
Total Funds Brought Forward		77,973	82,415
Total Funds Carried Forward		83,302	77,973

<b><u>Current Assets</u></b>		<b><u>2025</u></b>	<b><u>2024</u></b>
Cash at bank and in hand	2	82,390	74,216
Debtors	3	6,796	2,717
Stock of Uniform		3,032	4,393
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	4	(8,916)	(3,353)
<b>Net Assets</b>		<b>83,302</b>	<b>77,973</b>
<b>Represented by:</b>		<b><u>2025</u></b>	<b><u>2024</u></b>
Restricted Funds		500	500
Designated Funds		52,802	47,473
Unrestricted Funds		30,000	30,000
		<b>83,302</b>	<b>77,973</b>

## Notes to the Accounts

<b>1</b>	<b><u>Analysis of Donations etc</u></b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
	Subscriptions	25,219	25,796
	Donations and Legacies	1,870	2,924
	Grants	0	20,000
	Covid Grant		
	Other	1,793	6,205
	<b>Total</b>	<b>28,882</b>	<b>54,925</b>

<b>2</b>	<b><u>Cash at bank and in hand</u></b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
	Current Accounts - HSBC		
	Camp	6,827	6,571
	Main	938	1,450
	Nr 3	0	0
	Bmm	1,878	3,766
	Soldo	0	0
	Subs	2,179	1,749
	Equals Money	925	233
	<b>Total</b>	<b>13,769</b>	<b>13,769</b>
	Investment Accounts		
	Scout Association	0	0
	Skipton	17,788	4,444
	Cambridge & Counties	50,855	56,003
	<b>Total</b>	<b>69,643</b>	<b>60,447</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>82,390</b>	<b>74,216</b>

<b>3</b>	<b><u>Debtors</u></b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
	Cobnor	5,676	2,717
	Activities		
	Gift Aid		
	Other	1,120	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>6,796</b>	<b>2,717</b>

<b>4 Creditors</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Regatta JV	3,207	3,138
Summer Camp Deposits	2,890	
Esher May Fair Deposits	1,330	215
Cobnor	919	
Other	570	
	8,916	3,353

<b>5 Designated Funds</b>	Op Balance	Income	Expenditure	Redesignated	Cl Balance
	£	£	£	£	£
Building Development	18473	3,280		6,049	27,802
Building Repairs	0	892	892		0
Fundraising Equipment	2500	965	965	-2,500	0
All Craft	1500			1,000	2,500
Tentage		328	328	500	500
Minibus		7,000			7,000
HQ Security	15000			-1,000	14,000
New Lease & Trailer Park	10000		4,951	-4,049	1,000
<b>Total</b>	47,473	12,465	7,136	0	52,802

These accounts for the year ending 31 March 2025 were approved by the Group's trustees at a meeting of the Group's Trustee Board held on 9 September 2025.

Authorised signatories for and on behalf of the Group's trustees:



Chris West, Group Scout Leader



Peter Drysdale, Group Treasurer



Nicola McCrossan, Group Chair

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# Ajax Sea Scout Group and Explorer Sea Scout Unit

## KEY CONTACTS

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Group Lead Volunteer	Chris West	07967 806818	<a href="mailto:gsl@ajax.org.uk">gsl@ajax.org.uk</a>
Beaver Colony	Dan Callaghan	07840 290044	<a href="mailto:beavers@ajax.org.uk">beavers@ajax.org.uk</a>
Cub Pack	Dan Callaghan	07840 290044	<a href="mailto:cubs@ajax.org.uk">cubs@ajax.org.uk</a>
Sea Scout Troop	Robert Elliott	07896 518604	<a href="mailto:troop@ajax.org.uk">troop@ajax.org.uk</a>
Explorer Sea Scout Unit	Jan Harley	07801 135289	<a href="mailto:explorers@ajax.org.uk">explorers@ajax.org.uk</a>
Group Chair	Nicola McCrossan	07734 190427	<a href="mailto:nicola.mccrossan@ajax.org.uk">nicola.mccrossan@ajax.org.uk</a>
Group Secretary	Anjani Srivastava	07850 239833	<a href="mailto:secretary@ajax.org.uk">secretary@ajax.org.uk</a>
Group Treasurer	Peter Drysdale		<a href="mailto:treasurer@ajax.org.uk">treasurer@ajax.org.uk</a>

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For more information about this report or membership of Ajax contact:

Chris West

Email: [gsl@ajax.org.uk](mailto:gsl@ajax.org.uk)

For child joining or adult volunteering, go to: [www.ajax.org.uk/join](http://www.ajax.org.uk/join)

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Ajax Sea Scout Group and Explorer Sea Scout Unit  
The Chiefy Sharman Water Activities Centre  
19a Ditton Reach  
Thames Ditton  
Surrey KT7 0XB

(No facility to receive mail at this address)

Telephone: 020 8398 4777

Website: [www.ajax.org.uk](http://www.ajax.org.uk)

Ajax Sea Scouts is a Registered Charity No: 303764

**4TH THAMES DITTON AJAX SEA SCOUTS**

England & Wales - Charity number 303764

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# Accounts

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# Ajax Sea Scout Group and Explorer Sea Scout Unit

Annual Report and Accounts  
for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024

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**Summer Camp 2024 - Roadford Lake, Broadwoodwidge, Devon**

## GROUP CHAIR'S REPORT

---

I am delighted to provide context to the Group Trustee Board's stewardship of the Group's facilities and equipment, and comment on the Group's fundraising activities and volunteering matters since our AGM on 1 October 2023.

The Group's financial position, which is in good standing, is addressed in the Financial Report for the year ended 31 March 2024 - see page 22.

In brief:

- **Facilities:**
  - During 2024, Ajax and Warspite Sea Scout Groups successfully procured the signing of a new long-term lease with our landlord, Elmbridge Borough Council, which expands the combined land occupied by the Groups.
  - With the Council's agreement, the Groups have converted half of the Council-owned trailer park into a secure compound for the Groups, bringing the new compound into use in March 2024.
  - The signing of the new lease and the completion of the new compound deliver enduring benefits to both Ajax and Warspite by significantly expanding the Groups' combined premises - an achievement underpinned by the tremendous efforts and leadership of Ajax trustee Andrew Roberts over several years.
  - Other facilities-related projects completed over the last 12 months include: ~£9,000 spent on fixing roof and gutter leaks, and ~£2,000 spent on measures to improve frost protection within the Water Activities Centre (WAC).
  - We have identified two high priority future projects to support core Scouting activities: (1) a project to install an upgraded fire alarm system which will open-up the prospect for sleepovers at the WAC (potentially ~£10k, rising to ~£30k if we expand the scope to upgrade ceiling insulation and sort ceiling repairs prior to installing a surface-mounted fire alarm system), and (2) a project to relocate, improve and expand our storage (potentially ~£20k). We will likely need to seek 3rd party funding to supplement funds raised by Ajax in order to take either of these projects forward.
  
- **Equipment:**
  - We continue to invest in our fleet. Over the last 12 months, however, our principal costs have been maintenance-related.
  - As Ajax looks to the future, we will need to update our strategy for the delivery of water activity programmes, including the role of facilities at Cobnor, and the mix, location, maintenance and (in due course) replacement of our fleet to support those programmes.
  - We will also need to consider the cost-benefit of running and/or replacing the Group's minibus.
  
- **Fundraising:**
  - We had a successful Spring and Summer 2024, raising in excess of £18,400 (2023: £16,500), net of costs. A big thank you to all involved.
  - We would encourage all Ajax families to get involved in our fundraising efforts in 2025.
  
- **Volunteering:**
  - Thanks indeed to all the leaders, trustees, parents and others who have supported the Group over the last 12 months
  - Unfortunately, our Section leadership teams remain understrength and we would welcome assistance from parents and volunteers who are able to commit time on a regular basis. Please contact the relevant Section Leader if you are able to help or if you would like to know more.
  - Over the coming year we will need help from parents and supporters with fundraising events, boat maintenance and "DIY" building maintenance. Please look out for our periodic requests for volunteers. We are seeking a minimum of 20 hours of volunteer-time per Ajax family over the next 12 months.

These matters are discussed in further detail below.

## Facilities

During 2024, Ajax and Warspite Sea Scout Groups successfully procured the signing of a new long-term lease with our landlord, Elmbridge Borough Council, which expands the land occupied by the Groups.

The new lease was granted by Elmbridge on 2 February 2024 and is held by the Scout Association Trust Corporation (SATC) as custodian trustee on behalf of both Groups as beneficiaries. The Groups are responsible for the performance of the tenant's obligations under the lease, which expires on 6 December 2078.

Alongside the new lease, Elmbridge and SATC also entered into a licence for alterations, which set out the scope of works that the Groups would undertake to convert the eastern half of the council-owned trailer park into a secure compound for the Groups. The installation of a high-security fence for the new compound was completed and the new compound was brought into use by the end of March 2024.



Additional land included within the new lease comprises: (1) a strip of land north of the WAC fenced-in during 2020 (red outline), and (2) the eastern half of the council-owned trailer park (green outline).



Ajax and Warspite volunteers combined efforts to complete site preparation works in February 2024



Aerial view showing the high security fencing as installed around the new compound, end of March 2024

The Groups will shortly enter into an updated agreement between themselves to govern the management and administration of the leased property, and to coordinate the performance of the tenant's obligations. Among other things, this intergroup agreement will allocate parts of the leased property to each Group.

***The signing of the new lease and the completion of the new compound deliver enduring benefits to both Ajax and Warspite by significantly expanding the Groups' combined premises. I would like to acknowledge the tremendous efforts and leadership of Ajax trustee Andrew Roberts over several years - in initiating the project concept, in procuring planning permission, in securing funding support, in leading negotiations with Elmbridge, in leading negotiations with potential contractors, and in project-managing the successful delivery of a new lease and secure compound for both Groups. Well done Andrew, and thank you !!***

Other facilities-related projects completed over the last 12 months include: (1) ~£9,000 spent on the repair and replacement of end-of-life roofing components to address roof and gutter leaks, and (2) ~£2,000 spend on the installation of trace-heating for water pipes to improve frost protection within the WAC.

The Group Trustee Board has identified two prospective projects that are high priorities because of the significant benefits they will bring to the Group's Scouting programmes:

- (1) A project to install an upgraded fire alarm system which will open-up the potential for sleepovers at the WAC, especially for the Beaver and Cub sections. Estimated cost: ~£10k. Ideally, we would upgrade ceiling insulation and address ceiling repairs to improve the energy performance of the building (which we are required to do over time) before we install a surface-mounted fire alarm system. However, upgrading ceiling insulation and undertaking ceiling repairs would add another ~£20k to the estimated cost of a combined project.

- (2) A project to reconfigure and expand our storage space which, among other things, will deliver safe and accessible access to camp gear. Estimated cost: ~£20k.

Both of these prospective projects are expensive and we will likely need to seek 3rd party funding to supplement funds raised by Ajax in order to take either of them forward.

Ajax and Warspite have not renewed their joint membership of Island Barn Reservoir Sailing Club, due to leader constraints and the limited use of this facility. The Group's membership expired on 31 March 2024.

## Equipment

We continue to invest in our fleet. Over the last 12 months, however, our principal costs have been maintenance-related.

As Ajax looks to the future, we will need to update our strategy for the delivery of water activity programmes, including the role of facilities at Cobnor, and the mix, location, maintenance and (in due course) replacement of our fleet to support those programmes. The joint RYA Training Centre that Ajax and Warspite operate delivers valuable synergies for both Groups, and we intend to develop our strategy in coordination with Warspite.

We will also need to consider the cost-benefit of running and/or replacing the Group's minibus, which is some 16 years old and likely to incur significant maintenance and repair costs over the foreseeable future.

## Fundraising activities, Spring and Summer 2024

The investments that the Group has made in facilities and equipment over recent years has been possible because of the past fundraising efforts of Ajax parents and supporters, supplemented by financial support from benefactors and grant providers. Successful fundraising is important because it underpins the wide programme of Scouting activities that Ajax can offer young people, enabled by fit-for-purpose facilities and equipment.

We had a very successful fundraising season during Spring and Summer this year, raising in excess of £18,400 (2023: £16,500), net of costs, across four events:

- Ajax Plant Sale, 4-5 May 2024: ~£3,300
- Esher May Fair, 18 May 2024: ~£11,400
- Tea Tent, National Sea Scout Regatta, 6-7 July 2024: ~£800
- Bar, Claygate Flower Show, 13 July 2024: ~£2,900



A very busy Saturday morning at the Ajax Plant Sale 2024



Thank you to all our visitors to the Esher May Fair 2024



Elmbridge Mayor, Neil Houston, and his wife Veronica, the Mayoress, judged our cake competition at the Fair



Scouts and Explorers were happy to run the Sweet Stall at this year's Esher May Fair



**The Ajax Tea Tent at the National Sea Scout Regatta caters for organisers, competitors and supporters**



**Ajax volunteers ready to open the Bar at the Claygate Flower Show 2024, which attracted more than 5,000 visitors**

Congratulations and thank you to all of our supporters and volunteers who helped plan, coordinate and staff our fundraising events over the last 12 months. Thanks in particular to trustee Adrian Smith, who once again led the Ajax team for the Esher May Fair, and to Ajax parents Erin Willson, Michelle Bowen, Heather Naylor, Jenny Reynolds and Ruth Magennis whose efforts underpinned the success of this year's event.

We would encourage all Ajax families to get involved in our fundraising efforts in 2025.

### **Volunteering matters**

Ajax is entirely dependent on volunteers. Thanks indeed to the leaders, trustees, parents and others who have supported the Group over the last 12 months, whether through the delivery of Scouting activities, or through service as a trustee, or by helping make our fundraising events happen, or by supporting the Group in other ways. We truly value your support.

Thanks, in particular to GSL Chris West for his leadership of the Group over the last year. And to Group Treasurer Peter Drysdale who has managed the Group's income, expenditure, cash position and financial records throughout the year. Thanks also to the leaders and assistant leaders for Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers, who have done a fantastic job in delivering Section-specific programmes over the last year, despite being below-strength. And a heartfelt thank you to long-serving trustee Ray Mears, who will be standing down at our AGM this year. Ray has been an active member and supporter of the Group for over 60 years!

***Unfortunately, our Section leadership teams remain understrength and we would welcome assistance from parents and volunteers who are able to commit time on a regular basis to support the on-going delivery of high quality activities for Autumn/Winter 2024 and into 2025. Please contact the relevant Section Leader if you are able to help or if you would like to know more.***

***Please look out for our periodic requests for volunteers.***

- ***Over the coming year we will need help from parents and supporters with fundraising events, boat maintenance and "DIY" building maintenance.***
- ***For Ajax to be able to provide the high quality programme of Scouting activities that we aspire to provide, we need support from Ajax families. As a minimum, we are seeking 20 hours of volunteer-time per Ajax family over the next 12 months - which is the equivalent of less than 30 minutes every two weeks***

Andy Davison  
Group Chair, Ajax Sea Scouts  
[andy.davison@ajax.org.uk](mailto:andy.davison@ajax.org.uk)  
07970 265921

## **GROUP SCOUT LEADER'S REPORT**

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As I enter my 16<sup>th</sup> year as a member of Ajax and my 6<sup>th</sup> year as the Group Scout Leader, I look back on my time in Ajax and wonder where it's all gone. So much has happened over the years and it seems more things happen each year than ever before. This will be the last time I am referred to as Group Scout Leader in this report as "transformation" is coming and along with some much-improved systems which will potentially make our lives as volunteers easier we're all be getting new job titles. Next year I will be Group Lead Volunteer, something that I believe HQ is hoping will reinforce to many that we're all volunteers, doing what we can to keep Scouting fun, adventurous and most importantly safe for all.

There have again been many highlights of the year for me, from a sleepover in a theme park, to an amazing summer camp in Devon, not to mention the momentous achievement of acquiring new land and therefore allowing the secure storage of our boats in the car park across the road.

### **Since our last AGM**

The first big event after our AGM came in November as we participated with our friends from The Dittons in Remembrance Sunday. A little different this time as the council has now tightened its requirements for road closures and we were unable to march on the road as usual. Instead, we risked many a muddy school shoe and walked around the perimeter of Giggs Hill Green and had our ceremony as usual. This year we will return to the road with a formal road closure, paid for by a grant from the council. Many thanks to my fellow GSL, Suzan Baker from the Dittons for all her hard work in securing the necessary paperwork before the 6-month deadline for this.

I should mention the amazing escape room built by Ruth and Pete, which I think all sections got to enjoy during the half term. Turning our building into a chocolate factory with a working chocolate river was no mean feat!

The year ended with our traditional carol concert with Explorer-made mince pies, always a highlight, especially for our neighbours who always have a great evening.

### **A New Year and New Land for Ajax**

As 2024 begun, the team behind the car park project were well into their final planning, getting ready for the all-important levelling and clearing of the space ready for the fence company to come in. Andy has talked more about this project in his Group Chair report, however I do wish to thank everyone on this project for their hard work that went into making it happen. Most importantly Andrew Roberts, who led the operation, spending countless hours working on the paperwork with lawyers and council members to get everything we needed done, thank you Andrew!

In February I was invited to join the Cubs for their winter camp. This year they had a sleepover at Legoland theme park, yes you read that right. I've never seen so many Lego constructions in one weekend, we had a lot of fun. Then only 2 weeks later I was in the New Forest with the Scouts for a weekend of cycling and activities.

### **Spring and almost a summer**

As we moved into Spring, Scouts and Explorers enjoyed their regular sailing weekends at the Cobnor activity centre, while the Cubs went for a weekend camp at Boidier Hurst.

Meanwhile Andy, Adrian and all the fundraising team leapt into action with the plant sale, Esher May Fair and bar at Claygate Flower Show. All bringing in more funds than ever before. I want to particularly thank Andy for all his hard work coordinating parents into roles to help make these important events happen. And I also want to thank Adrian Smith who has been running the Esher May Fair for many years and also manages our bar at Claygate, thank you Adrian for all the hard work you put in.

Our Summer term also saw us hosting the National Kayaking and Pulling Regatta. We were lucky this year with races charging on, even through rainstorms. Well done to all the teams who participated, but especially to those who brought us back some silverware for the trophy cupboard.

The summer term ended with the Scout and Explorer summer camp. This time at a new venue, Roadford Lake in Devon. Despite the poor weather up to this point, we had one of the sunniest camps I can remember for a long time. In an idyllic location with direct access to a perfect lake for sailing, kayaking, rowing and stand-up-paddle-boarding, it was a great camp.

## **A few thank you's**

There's a lot of change happening at the moment, as I mentioned previously the Scout Association is making dramatic changes to the way Scouting is run, and that is having a knock-on effect to the roles us volunteers have. As well as this change we have had a few people change roles in the Group and I want to recognise their contribution here.

### **Nick Barber – Stepping down as Explorer Section Leader.**

You could say Nick joined Ajax before he was born, his father George was a leader for many years, a Group Scout leader and to this day is a trustee. Nick's interest was always with helping in Explorers, which he started in 2008. In 2015 he took over as section leader and has been running the Explorers ever since. Nick's always had a passion and a drive to keep Explorers exciting and adventurous, and this has kept our Explorer Unit thriving for many years. He announced to me he wanted to step back last year and has been gradually handing over the reigns to Jan since then. Nick will of course not disappear and we're hoping he will return to join us on events and adventures when he can. I want to thank Nick for all his years of devotion to the Explorer Unit.

### **Diane Davison – Former Scout Section Leader, DofE leader and all round volunteer who is always there to help!**

Diane started at Ajax in 2007, following with her children she took on roles as a leader in Beavers, Cubs and then Scouts. In 2015 she took over from me as the Scout Section leader and ran that for an impressive 8 years before stepping down last year. Since then, she has continued to be active in the Group as a trustee, organising DofE volunteering and was central to organising this year's summer camp in Devon, amongst many other things. Thank you Diane for your continued support and efforts in the Group.

### **Andy Davison – Stepping down as Group Chair.**

Andy has been an active member of the Group since 2013. Initially helping out where he could, with both Diane as a leader and their two children in the Group. Showing a keen interest in being on the water, he started attending events like Cobnor Sailing weekends and Summer Camps. Two years ago, when we were about to begin the process of renewing our lease and with the car park project on the horizon, Andy asked if he could help as Group Chair, freeing up Andrew Roberts to focus on what he does best. Since then, Andy has led us through all the legalities of renewing our lease, making sure we're following all Charity Commission guidelines, no small task. His devotion to detail and making sure there was nothing we missed has really put my mind at ease and allowed me focus on Group operations, rather than being bogged down in paperwork. Andy has worked countless hours this year on all sorts of areas of the Groups operation, behind the scenes keeping everything going. I want to offer my heartfelt thanks to Andy for all the work he's done, it's been amazing working with him as Chair and I look forward to what he puts his mind to next.

### **More thanks.**

There are far too many people to thank properly, but there are a few more people I want to particularly mention.

As Group Scout Leader I have a vast amount of paperwork and admin to do. Earlier this year I was approached by Alison Barnett, mother of former Scouts, who mentioned she'd like to help out behind the scenes. Since then Alison has been taking admin tasks off me to help me focus on the day to day operation of the Group. I'm eternally grateful to Alison for the work she's doing, it's freed up so much of my time and made a huge difference to my workload, thank you Alison.

I would like thank Joy Sharman, daughter of Chief Sharman, who continues to support the Group and sends us a regular donation to the Group every year, which contributes to a fund to support any of our members who might find themselves in financial difficulties, thus allowing them to attend camps and events. Thank you Joy and the Sharman family.

Last year Lydia stepped down as Beaver leader and Dan Callaghan offered to "cover" the role after that. However, he seems to like it as he's taken on the role full time and has been doing a great job keeping the Beavers going with fun, exciting and educational activities.

I also want to recognise all the section leaders for the hard work they do to keep the sections going. Ruth who always has the most amazing and creative ideas to keep Cubs fun and exciting. Robert, who stepped up after Diane left, he's done a sterling job taking on the biggest section and getting those Scouts afloat. And last but not least Jan, who has more recently stepped into the role of Explorer leader, I'm certain his enthusiasm for Explorers will be greatly appreciated by the young people he'll be leading. Thank you all.

To every other leader, skills instructor, parent who helps out and anyone else who volunteers their time for Ajax, thank you, the Group would simply not exist without you.

To conclude, we've had so many achievements this year and everyone worked very hard for everything we've done. But, without wishing to sound like a broken record, we still need more help. We can use volunteers in all sections and more people to work in the new teams I'll be forming over the coming months as the Group goes through the transformation into the new style of management. So if you are reading this and think you could give a couple of hours a week, or maybe an odd weekend here and there, or maybe you know someone who can, get in touch.

Thank you.

Chris West – Group Scout Leader.

## **BEAVER SCOUT COLONY**

(For young people aged 6 to 8)

Beaver Section Leader Dan Callaghan writes:

What an exhilarating start to the Scouting year for our Ajax Beavers! The Autumn 2023 term was packed with adventure, learning, and fun-filled activities that kept our young Beavers engaged and excited throughout.

We kicked off the term with a splash, celebrating our older Beavers as they swam up to Cubs, while warmly welcoming and investing new members into our colony.

Our curious Beavers embarked on a nature walk through the beautiful Bushy Park, where they discovered the wonders of autumn and learned about local wildlife. This hands-on experience with nature set the tone for a term full of outdoor adventures and new discoveries.

In our commitment to fostering empathy and understanding, our Beavers earned their Disability Awareness Badge, learning valuable lessons about inclusivity and compassion. These young minds showed remarkable maturity as they engaged with this important topic.

No Scouting term is complete without some outdoor cooking! Our Beavers' eyes lit up as they roasted gooey, delicious smores over a crackling fire, mastering an essential Scouting skill while having a tasty treat.

Halloween brought spooky fun to our colony with a games night that had everyone in high spirits. The Beavers also put on their lab coats for the Experiment Badge, conducting exciting scientific investigations that sparked their curiosity and critical thinking skills.

Our celebration of diversity continued as we marked Diwali, the Festival of Lights, introducing our Beavers to different cultures and traditions. As the festive season approached, creativity flourished as Beavers crafted and painted their own Christmas ornaments.

We wrapped up this action-packed term with a Christmas party and games night, sending our Beavers off for the holidays with smiles on their faces and a term full of wonderful memories.

The end of the year brought significant changes to our leadership team, demonstrating the resilience and adaptability of our Ajax Colony.

We bid a fond farewell to Lydia, our dedicated Beaver Section Leader, whose enthusiasm and commitment had been instrumental in shaping our colony.

With big shoes to fill, I stepped up to the challenge, nervously taking over as our new Beaver Section Leader. Our leadership team was further strengthened when Marina joined myself and Adrian, bringing her enthusiasm and passion.

We've been fortunate to have two committed Young Leaders with us throughout the year.

Their youthful energy and ability to connect with the Beavers have been invaluable, bridging the gap between leaders and young members.

As we entered the new year, we were delighted to welcome Teresa, whose support has already made a positive impact on our colony. Looking ahead, we're excited about the prospect of Laura joining us as a new leader in the coming term, further strengthening our leadership team.



These changes in our leadership team reflect the vibrant and evolving nature of our Beaver colony. Each leader, whether long-standing or new, brings unique strengths to the group, ensuring that our Beavers continue to receive diverse, engaging, and enriching experiences.

The Spring 2023 term was a whirlwind of creativity, learning, and adventure for our Colony.

We kicked off the year with a burst of innovation, turning recycled materials into fantastic "junk inventions." The highlight was an impressive robot designed to dispense and test medications, showcasing our Beavers' ingenuity.

Safety took centre stage as we explored the Green Cross Code, equipping our Beavers with crucial road safety knowledge. We also introduced them to the art of knot tying, a classic Scouting skill that combines practicality with fun.

Our aviation evening was a soaring success! Beavers learned about planes, crafted and flew their own paper aircraft, and even tackled the phonetic alphabet. This activity not only educated them about aviation but also improved their communication skills.

One of the term's most thrilling evenings saw our Beavers navigating games in the dark on the main deck, guided only by the eerie glow of light sticks. This unique experience challenged their senses and boosted their confidence in unusual environments.

As our colony grew, we warmly welcomed new Beavers and held an important "log chew" session. Here, we collaboratively discussed and established colony rules, and our Beavers shared their ideas for future activities, giving them a voice in shaping their Scouting journey.

Embracing creativity and leadership, we encouraged Beavers to invent their own games using sports equipment and then teach these games to their peers. This activity fostered creativity, communication skills, and teamwork.

The term also saw us working towards the Scout Membership badge, deepening our Beavers' understanding of Scouting values and traditions.

As spring blossomed, so did our artistic talents with the creation of Easter salt dough decorations.

The Summer 2023 term was a season of adventure, learning, and community engagement for our Ajax Colony Beavers. Our young Beavers embraced a wide range of activities that combined fun with valuable life skills and outdoor experiences.

We kicked off the term with an thrilling visit to Esher Fire Station. Our Beavers were treated to a comprehensive tour of the building and fire engine, and even got hands-on experience with the fire hoses! This exciting outing was followed by an important session on fire safety, equipping our Beavers with crucial knowledge to keep themselves and others safe.

Green thumbs were on display as we delved into gardening. Our Beavers tried their hands at growing seed heads and Mexican hat plants, learning about plant life cycles and the joy of nurturing living things.

Creativity and community spirit shone through as we prepared for the Esher May Fair. Beavers crafted sailing boats from cork and foam, which became part of our fair activity. It was heartening to see our young members confidently explaining the game to visitors on the day, showcasing their communication skills and community involvement.

The term saw our Beavers achieve their First Aid Level 1 badge, a significant accomplishment that provides them with essential life-saving skills. We also focused on personal well-being, exploring healthy eating habits and the importance of staying active.

Outdoor skills were honed as we practiced putting up tents, preparing our Beavers for future camping adventures. We also discussed energy conservation, instilling a sense of environmental responsibility in our young members.

The expansive Long Ditton Rec Ground became our playground for exciting wide games, allowing our Beavers to enjoy the limited summer weather while engaging in team-building activities.

A highlight of the term was undoubtedly our water activities. Beavers had the opportunity to try their hand at rowing and even experienced the thrill of a powerboat ride up the river. These activities not only provided fun but also taught water safety and basic boating skills.

We concluded the term with a splash – literally! Our last muster involved water-themed games, including bubble-making, relay races, and a hilarious challenge to catch flying sponges. It was the perfect way to cool off and celebrate a successful term.

Beyond our regular term activities, the Ajax Colony Beavers participated in several noteworthy events that deserve special recognition. These experiences not only enriched our Beavers' Scouting journey but also strengthened their connection to the wider community and Scouting traditions.

### Remembrance Sunday Parade

One of the most poignant moments of the year was the Beavers' participation in the Remembrance Sunday parade. It was truly heartwarming to see so many of our young members dressed smartly in their uniforms, marching proudly as part of the parade around the green. Their presence at the subsequent memorial service demonstrated their growing understanding of community, history, and respect. This event not only honoured those who have served but also aimed to instil a sense of duty in our Beavers.

### Beaver Sleepover at the WAC

A major milestone for many of our Beavers was the sleepover event at the WAC. We're immensely proud that nearly all the Beavers who joined us managed to stay through the entire night - a huge achievement for children of this age! This experience was invaluable in building confidence, independence, and fostering friendships within the colony. The success of this event has encouraged us to plan another sleepover for the Spring term, which will give our Beavers the opportunity to work towards their Chief Scout Bronze Award - the highest award a Beaver can achieve.

Our Beavers joined the Cubs in a special ceremony to renew their Scout Promise on St. George's Day. This event provided an excellent opportunity to learn about the legend of George and the Dragon and to understand St. George's significance in Scouting. By participating in this tradition alongside older Scouts, our Beavers gained a deeper appreciation of their place within the larger Scouting family.

These special events have added an extra dimension to our Beavers' Scouting experience this year. They've provided opportunities for personal growth, community engagement, and a deeper understanding of Scouting values and traditions. We're incredibly proud of how our Beavers have risen to these challenges and look forward to more exciting events in the coming year.



## **CUB SCOUT PACK**

(For young people aged 8 to 10½)

The Cub Leadership team writes:

The Autumn 2023 term was an action-packed adventure for our Cub Pack, filled with diverse activities that not only entertained but also educated and developed essential skills in our young members.

We kicked off the term with a creative and environmentally conscious project, constructing Loch Ness Monster models from recycled materials. This hands-on activity not only sparked imagination but also raised awareness about the importance of recycling and its impact on our planet, fostering a sense of environmental responsibility in our Cubs.

Our Cubs' horizons were broadened through an enlightening talk by Elmbridge CAN, offering a poignant glimpse into the life of young refugees in the UK. This experience cultivated empathy, cultural awareness, and a deeper understanding of global issues among our pack members.

An exciting visit to the RNLi at Teddington provided our Cubs with invaluable insights into water safety and rescue operations. They explored state-of-the-art equipment and learned about the crucial work of these brave volunteers, inspiring a sense of community service and respect for those who risk their lives to save others.

Our Half Term escape room, themed around Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, was a sweet success! Cubs put their problem-solving skills to the test, working collaboratively to crack codes and solve puzzles while indulging in tasty challenges. This activity honed critical thinking, teamwork, and communication skills in a fun, immersive environment.

The martial arts taster evening introduced our Cubs to the discipline, focus, and physical skills required. This session not only promoted physical fitness but also taught valuable lessons in self-control, respect, and perseverance.

Another highlight of our term was undoubtedly the space-themed winter camp at Walton Firs. Staying in the lodge, our Cubs embarked on an interstellar adventure, combining outdoor skills with space exploration knowledge. This overnight experience aimed to foster independence, resilience, and a sense of wonder about the universe.

As 2023 drew to a close, we embraced cultural diversity by learning about Hanukkah, enhancing our Cubs' understanding and appreciation of different traditions. We rounded off the term with festive Christmas games and crafts, celebrating the holiday spirit while developing creative skills and strengthening friendships within the pack.

The Spring 2024 term proved to be another exhilarating and skill-building adventure for our Cub Pack, packed with diverse activities that challenged and inspired our young members.

We launched into the term with an electrifying night of glow-stick illuminated games, transforming the darkness into a playground of light and excitement. This unique experience not only provided endless fun but also helped develop our Cubs' spatial awareness, coordination, and adaptability in low-light conditions.

Our inaugural "Appreciate a Dragon Day" celebration was a roaring success! Cubs unleashed their creativity by decorating wooden dragon models, honing their artistic skills. This activity fostered imagination and fine motor skills.

The term saw a strong focus on practical skills development, with the Navigator badge taking centre stage. Our Cubs dove into the world of maps and compasses giving them a basis for future outdoor adventures and everyday life.

We celebrated National Pizza Day in true Cub style – by making our own delicious pizzas! This hands-on culinary experience not only satisfied taste buds but also taught valuable lessons in food preparation and kitchen safety. The Digital Maker badge activities introduced our Cubs to the exciting world of technology and coding.

Our focus on Leadership and Teamwork provided opportunities for Cubs to step into leadership roles, fostering confidence, communication skills, and the ability to work effectively in a team. These experiences are invaluable in preparing our young members for future challenges and responsibilities.

The Scientist badge activities ignited curiosity and critical thinking as Cubs engaged in exciting experiments and scientific explorations. This hands-on approach to science not only made learning fun but also encouraged analytical thinking and a deeper understanding of the world around them.

And let's not forget Winter Camp 2024 – an overnight stay in Legoland – an immensely popular outing for Cubs and Leaders alike.

The Summer 2024 term was a thrilling adventure for our Cub Pack, filled with activities that combined cultural exploration, outdoor fun, and water-based experiences, culminating in an unforgettable cowboy-themed summer camp.

We embarked on a cultural journey to Norway, dedicating a couple of musters to exploring this fascinating Scandinavian country. A highlight was undoubtedly the preparation of delicious Norwegian treats, allowing our young chefs to tantalize their taste buds while learning about international cuisine.

The local recreation ground became our playground for wide games. These expansive outdoor activities not only provided fun but also honed our Cubs' strategic thinking, teamwork, and physical fitness.

Despite some unexpected challenges - including unpredictable weather and a shipwreck outside the WAC - our resilient Cubs still managed to get out on the water. They experienced the thrill of canoeing and the excitement of powerboating, developing water safety skills, confidence, and a love for nautical adventures. These experiences, though fewer than planned, were invaluable in fostering our Cubs' connection with the maritime world and are excellent preparation for their future Sea Scouting journeys.

The term concluded with our eagerly anticipated annual water fight at Colletes. This refreshing event was the perfect way to celebrate the end of the term, promoting friendly competition and creating lasting memories.

The crown jewel of our summer activities was undoubtedly the cowboy-themed summer camp at Boider Hurst campsite. Our Cubs transformed into enthusiastic cowboys, their cowboy hats bobbing across the campsite and Box Hill as they engaged in themed challenges and games. This immersive experience not only provided endless entertainment but also developed skills in outdoor living, problem-solving, and teamwork, all while fostering a sense of adventure and imagination.



## SEA SCOUT TROOP

(For young people aged 10½ to 14)

Sea Scout Section Leader Robert Elliott writes:

It was a challenging year for the Troop section. The weather played havoc with our summer boating season and musters were often flexed to accommodate leadership availability. This echoes last year's report, and the issues were the same. As a leadership team we are stretched most weeks to deliver the activities that we would like to. This year, the river flow together with the added complication of a barge wreck opposite our pontoon hampered our ability to get on the water in the summer months.

However, we delivered a fun program including our two camps, firstly to Ferny Crofts in the New Forest in early March and then the highlight of our year, summer camp at Roadford Lake in North Devon.

In the Autumn term Diane ran two swimming sessions at Colet's in Thames Ditton, with Scouts working their way through the staged swimming badges. We awarded two Level Five and four Level Four badges this year. Level Five is the top award – well done.

During the rest of the term, we had musters focusing on hiking and cooking. We learnt about planning for a day hike, what equipment to take, how to navigate and use maps and what first aid we might need to use. On our cooking musters we looked at the different ways of cooking, on camp burners, outside fires and the indoor stove. We learnt about the risks we might face and how to cook a sausage in a foil box.



Over half term Pete and Ruth put on an escape room themed event based on Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory. This was a great success and enjoyed by those who participated.

We did a night walk on Esher Common following a prescribed route and using the skills learnt earlier in the term. This was followed, in December, by our annual carol concert, mince pies and mulled wine for local residents.



In the Spring term we had a visit from Elmbridge Can, a local refugee charity. We were able to donate family packs prepared by the Scouts containing items such as sweets and biscuits, hand cream and shower gel, scarves and gloves and small toys. It was an interesting evening learning about others in our community who are less fortunate than ourselves.

This was followed by two activities off-site. We spent a fun evening at Sandown Sports Centre making use of the ski slopes and the high ropes. This year we had to do this on a single evening due to the charging structure at Sandown. This is the format that we will adopt in 2025.



With the RNLI celebrating their 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we visited the manned station at Teddington, learning about how busy the stations on the Thames are compared to other locations. The visit included a lucky scout trying to beat the clock to get changed into full RNLI gear for a "shout". The professionals do this in not much more than a minute. With half the troop at the RNLI, the other half



enjoyed preparing pancakes to celebrate Shrove Tuesday.



Prior to our Winter Camp at Ferny Crofts we did some cycling maintenance, ably supported by local cycle mechanic Andrew from Cyclelink in Thames Ditton, and learnt about the countryside code and mountain bike code. This muster was also used to plan our route and think about what we would need and how long it would take. We enjoyed a day's cycling at camp, enduring sun, rain and hail, all



in a matter of hours, and spent pocket money at the wonderful sweet shop in Lyndhurst. All Scouts completed the full route of circa 19 miles, a great achievement.

The Sunday morning was spent at a nearby laser tag site with clearer weather, though rather muddy under foot!

Congratulations to four members of the troop who came second in the Annual District Cooking Competition at Molesey Scout Hut.

Unfortunately, we had to cancel the St George's Day camp that we had planned at Polyapes. This was due to a lack of Scouts and Explorers signing up. Instead, we had a ceremony at the end of one of our musters to remind ourselves of the Scout Promise.



At the end of our Spring term, we like to prepare for on-the-water activities, and venture onto the river on the lighter evenings. For the last couple of years this has been thwarted by the high flow on the Thames, which has continued well into the summer term. This year there was an additional complication with the sinking of a barge

opposite our pontoon, which was raised only in the middle of July. This meant less time for regatta practice. Despite the delayed start however, we achieved some good results at the National Sea Scout Regatta, winning the Under 12.5 Double Dinghy and coming second in the Under 12.5 Kayak and Under 14 Sculling. Well done to all participants despite the challenging conditions on the Saturday with torrential rain at times!



On the Saturday evening of the regatta, it was great to see so many young people out on the water for the RNLI 200 year celebration. We had circa 160 people on the water in a wide variety of craft, ranging from Pico sailing dinghies, pulling gigs, double dinghies to kayaks, open canoes and power boats.

Over the summer term, we had two weekend visits to the Cobnor Activities Centre at Chichester Harbour where we sailed Wayfarers and Scouts worked towards their RYA sailing qualifications. This year we opened the second of these weekends to Scouts who had little sailing experience to introduce them to some coastal sailing. This was with the aim of getting a higher level of participation than we had for the first weekend. The final Cobnor weekend of 2024, in a couple of weeks' time, has similarly been opened to all Scouts, not just those who have already attained their level 1 qualification.



The highlight of the year was our Summer Camp at Roadford Lake in North Devon. Thanks to Diane and Andy for locating this wonderful site, a man-made reservoir with a sailing activity centre and a camping field. At the last minute we had to revise the format of this camp due to a low take-up. The resulting camp of 25 young people and 20 leaders was a great success. Our activities involved kayaking, use of our SUPS, sailing and hiking, including a night hike leaving the campsite after dark and returning in the early hours of the morning! Not forgetting of course, the coxwain's cruise where each patrol took the gig for a row round the perimeter of the reservoir and then camped away from the main site on their own, before returning early the following morning.



This has been my first year of running the troop, which would not have been possible without the assistance of Diane Davison, Phil Shortman, Alex Thurgood, Andy Rowan and earlier in the year Simon Corkin. Thanks also to Chris West, Dane Wilson, Andy Davison, Jason Midgley and Jamie Ashley who helped out at various musters and to Izzy Elliott, Hugo Goodman, Max Kingdon, Alex Soden, Hannah Conroy, Isabelle and Molly Lanigan,

Poppy Lloyd Jones, and Marcus Wilson who have helped when back from university or who have taken work holidays to help at some musters and Summer Camp.

Finally, not forgetting the Young Leaders who helped out earlier in the year.

We started the year at around 41 Scouts, but there have been a number of departures due to the many activities that our young people are involved in now. As a leadership team we are very tight on numbers, which means that we have to compromise in the number of activities that we can offer at our musters. We really need new people to volunteer regularly. Do let us know if you would like to join our friendly team and help us deliver memorable experiences for our Scouts.

## EXPLORER SEA SCOUT UNIT

(For young people aged 14½ to 18)

Explorer Section Leader Jan Harley writes:

The academic year started with the Ajax entry into the Great river Race. This is an exciting 22-mile rowing race from Limehouse in the East end of London to Richmond, open to seaworthy rowing vessels. It is an Amazing spectacle with hundreds of boats taking part. We had both an Explorer boat as well as a leader's boat entered in the race. Both our boats did well with the Explorer's coming second overall in the under 18's category.

The river was fast flowing during a lot of the winter months, which meant that we were not able to use the Thames for boating. Instead, we ran some pool session in the winter, to build kayaking skills and for swimming practice. We also planned DofE expeditions for our Explorers and are anticipating that 12 Explorers will complete their DofE bronze expeditions this September. We were also able to support training for our Explorers with 5 members completing a paddle sport safety qualification and 8 members getting a pulling permit for rowing. The summer term opened the possibility for the Explorer unit to get back onto the river. We were able to plan and execute many happy outings on the river, including kayaking, rowing and paddleboarding.



The National Sea Scout Regatta was a highlight for the Explorer Unit. The explorers did well overall, and fielded teams in both under 18 and under 16 for Gig Pulling (rowing), single dinghies (rowing), sculling over the stern, and kayaking.

External activities included Go Karting, an escape room and ice-skating trip at Hampton Court. Other events included the District Shooting Competition with 13 members attending.



Sadly, we said goodbye to our long-term leader Nick Barber at the end of the Summer Term. Nick has made a huge contribution to Explorers for many years, and we will be extremely sad to see him go. The Explorers were able to celebrate Nick and say thank you and Goodbye at the Wakeboarding event which was held in Nick's honour. Almost everyone was there, including some alumni explorers who also wanted to thank Nick personally.



## **OUR FLEET**

We have focused mostly on boat maintenance in the past year, working both internally and with external suppliers to get keep our fleet operational. One of our main powerboats, the Connie West, has been away for repair and is now back in service, thanks to Gerard Foley for his help in this matter.

We are looking to purchase replacement kayaks and possibly canoes in the future with help of the RN Grant Scheme.

## **WATER ACTIVITIES TRAINING**

Ajax and Warspite continue jointly to operate a Royal Yachting Association 'Recognised Training Centre' at Thames Ditton, which delivers valuable training synergies for both Groups.

This year we have trained adults in Power Boat Instructor, Paddle sport instructors, Paddle sport safety and rescue and offered training to issue Pulling Permits.

In addition to our own training, some of our younger adults have been doing well in achieving training from external suppliers, resulting in us gaining a new Dinghy Instructor and a Senior Dinghy Instructor

## **ISLAND BARN**

There was a Group decision to exit our membership at Island Barn which was completed early this year. This was due to lack of leader resources to deliver at this location.

## **RONA SAILING PROJECT**

(For young people aged over 14)

Rona Sailing Project (RSP, [www.ronasailingproject.org.uk](http://www.ronasailingproject.org.uk)) is a registered charity which provides affordable sail training on purpose-built yachts. Their stated aim is to provide opportunities for young people to develop a sense of responsibility, resourcefulness and teamwork which will help them throughout their lives. Anyone over the age of 14 can apply for a place and we strongly recommend all Ajaccios to do so. In fact a number of the volunteer Skippers and Mates serving with RSP are Old Ajaccios!

We encourage our Explorers to get involved and take advantage of this amazing opportunity.

## **DUKE of EDINBURGH AWARDS**

(For young people aged over 14)

Bronze:

- New this year, we are really pleased to offer for all our bronze participants the opportunity to get involved in Boat Maintenance with the group. 10 scouts/explorers have participated throughout the winter, had a lot of fun and completed their volunteering sections.
- A Bronze expedition of two teams with 12 participants sets off at the end of the month. All participants have worked hard on their training all achieving personal permits in their choice of discipline.

Gold:

- Following last years summer camp expedition we are pleased to see that Amy is about to complete her Gold DofE with school and that Ed is about to complete his Gold with Ajax!
- Poppy Lloyd Jones has also completed her Gold DofE and is awaiting her invitation to the palace!

Congratulations to all DofE participants for all their hard work and achievements!

Diane Davison

Gold Assessor/Supervisor/Leader – Duke of Edinburgh awards

## **ROYAL NAVY RECOGNITION**

Ajax is one of just 105 Sea Scout Groups in the UK to be officially recognised by the Royal Navy and we have held this recognition continuously from the inception of the Group. Beyond the prestige of RN recognition, there are a number of tangible benefits including access to Grant Aid. We are currently discussing the best use of this year's grant with a view to continuing to improve our kayak fleet.

Following a relaunch of the scheme some years ago, all RN Recognised Groups are now affiliated with a local RN Unit. Together with nine other Groups in the London area, we are affiliated with the London University Royal Naval Unit.

To maintain RN recognition, all Groups are regularly reviewed to ensure the required standards are maintained. Due to changes in the operation of the scheme we have not had an inspection for some time, and we await further information on the relaunch of the review scheme.

### **THANKS**

It's been another amazing year at Ajax, the new land and storage space making a huge difference to our operation and giving us space to consider further changes to our storage in the future. Again I want to echo the repeated comments that we are short on leaders, we need more volunteers and anything you can do to help will be appreciated.

For child joining or adult volunteering, go to: [www.ajax.org.uk/join](http://www.ajax.org.uk/join)

Lastly, I once again wish to give my heartfelt thanks to all the Leaders, Trustees, Instructors and helpers who volunteer so much time to make Ajax happen, thank you all!

**Chris West**  
**GROUP SCOUT LEADER**

## ABOUT 4TH THAMES DITTON 'AJAX' SEA SCOUTS

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In common with all Scout groups, the 4<sup>th</sup> Thames Ditton 'Ajax' Sea Scouts (the "Group" or "Charity") is a charity established under the Royal Charter granted to The Scout Association dated 4<sup>th</sup> January 1912 as amended by supplemental charters dated 28<sup>th</sup> March 1949, 18<sup>th</sup> February 1959, 5<sup>th</sup> May 1967 and 19<sup>th</sup> July 1991. Trustees are appointed in accordance with the Policy, Organisation and Rules of the Scout Association.

### GROUP INFORMATION AS OF 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2024

Charity Registration Number:	303764
Scout Association Registration Number:	25880
Honorary Roles:	
Group President	Mrs Marguerite Rollason MBE
Group Vice Presidents	Mrs Janet Barber Mrs Doreen Neal
Trustees Ex-Officio (Principal Officers):	
Group Chair	Andrew Davison
Group Secretary	Anjani Srivastava
Group Treasurer	Peter Drysdale
Trustees Ex-Officio (Leadership Roles):	
Group Scout Leader	Chris West
Deputy Group Scout Leader	Peter Wadsworth
Explorer Sea Scout Leader	Nick Barber
Cub Scout Leader	Ruth Mortby
Ex-Officio Members of Group Trustee Board (Leadership Roles)	
Sea Scout Leader	Robert Elliott
Beaver Scout Leader	Dan Callaghan
Trustees Nominated:	
Group Advisers	George Barber Diane Davison Mark Faulkner Mark Marriott
Youth Adviser	Alex Soden
Supporter	Raymond Mears
Trustees Elected:	
Parent representative (Explorer unit)	Peter Lloyd-Jones
Parent representative (Beaver section)	Nicola McCrossan
Parent representative (Scout section)	Andrew Rowan
Parent representative (Scout section)	Heather Ryder
Parent representative (Cub section)	Nicola Slammon
Parent representative (Explorer unit)	Adrian Smith
Trustees Co-opted	
Special Projects Adviser	Andrew Roberts
Custodian Trustee:	The Scout Association Trust Corporation
Independent Examiner:	Barry Hitchens
Contact Name and Address:	Chris West 4 Hartford Road Epsom KT19 9JD

## TRUSTEES' REPORT

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The Trustees present their report and the financial statements for the 4<sup>th</sup> Thames Ditton 'Ajax' Sea Scout Group for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.

### Responsibilities of the Trustees

Charity law requires the Trustees to keep accounting records and prepare annual statements of account for the Charity which must be audited or independently examined and provided to the Charity Commission. In preparing the annual statement of accounts the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- Comply with applicable accounting standards subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the annual statement of accounts; and
- Prepare the annual statement of accounts on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume the Charity will continue its operations.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and are responsible for safeguarding its assets and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

### Review of Activity of the Charity

The Group currently has an active Beaver Scout Colony, Cub Scout Pack and Sea Scout Troop and a partnership agreement with the Ajax Explorer Sea Scout Unit. Key details of each Section are as follows:

- The Beaver Colony is for boys and girls aged 6 to 8 years. The Colony meets once a week and as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 had 22 members (2023: 19).
- The Cub Scout Pack is for boys and girls aged 8 to 10 ½ years. The Pack meets once a week and as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 had 34 members (2023: 34).
- The Sea Scout Troop is for boys and girls aged 10 ½ to 14. The Troop normally meets twice a week and as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 had 38 members (2023: 46).
- The Explorer Sea Scout Unit is for boys and girls aged 14 ½ to 18. The Unit normally meets once a week and as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 had 22 members (2023: 21)

All Sections have continued to work in accordance with the progressive training scheme as laid down by the Scout Association.

The Group has continued to operate a Royal Yachting Association Training Centre based at the Water Activities Centre and operated jointly with Warspite Sea Scouts. The RYA Centre's Principal is supported by a team of RYA Instructors with qualifications covering sailing, power boating, VHF communications and first aid.

The Group is one of just 105 Sea Scout Groups in the United Kingdom recognised by the Royal Navy. This prestigious and beneficial recognition is subject to regular inspections at approximately 18-month intervals. To retain recognition, the Group must demonstrate that it continues to achieve the standard required, in appearance, dress, bearing and badge work, as well as showing progress in efficiency.

### Reserves

The Trustees have adopted a formal policy on reserves which is reflected in these accounts. The policy provides that reserves be maintained at a level which has regard to:

- The risks associated with each stream of income and expenditure varying from that budgeted
- The planned activity level
- The Group's commitments
- The need for adequate readily realisable resources to meet the Group's commitments (after subscriptions and camp fees) for the coming twelve-month period.

Readily realisable resources are defined as the balances at the bank less current liabilities and the balance on designated funds for WAC building development.

As at 31 March 2024, the Group held reserves of £30,000 (2023: £32,050), which is the minimum level of reserves required under the policy.

## **Investment Policy**

The Group does not have sufficient funds to invest in longer term investments. All funds are held in cash or "at call" short term investments with The Scout Association, Skipton Building Society and Cambridge & Counties Bank.

## **Governance**

The Group's governing documents are those of The Scout Association. They consist of a Royal Charter, The By-Laws of the Association and The Policy, Organisation and Rules of The Scout Association.

The Group is a trust established under rules which are common to all Scout Groups.

The Group's Trustees are appointed in accordance with The Policy, Organisation and Rules of The Scout Association, to serve on the Group's Trustee Board. As charity trustees acting collectively through the Group's Trustee Board, the Trustees must:

- Ensure that the Charity is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit
- Comply with the Charity's governing document and the law
- Act in the Charity's best interests
- Manage the Charity's resources responsibly
- Act with reasonable care and skill

## **Risk Assessment**

The Group Trustee Board has identified and assessed the major risks to which it believes the Group is exposed as follows:

*Injury to leaders, members and helpers:* The Group, through the capitation fees, contributes to The Scout Association's national accident insurance policy. Risk Assessments are undertaken before all activities.

*Damage to buildings and equipment:* The Group would request the use of buildings and equipment from neighbouring organisations. The Group has sufficient buildings and contents insurance in place to mitigate against permanent loss.

*Reduced income from fund raising:* The Group is primarily reliant upon income from subscriptions and fund raising. The Group does hold a reserve to ensure the continuity of activities should there be a major reduction in income. The Committee could increase the level of subscriptions to increase the income to the Group either temporarily or permanently.

*Reduction or loss of members:* The Group provides activities for young people aged 6 to 18. If there were a reduction in membership of a particular Section or of the Group as a whole then there would have to be a contraction, consolidation or closure of a Section, or in the worst case scenario, the complete closure of the Group.

*Reduction or loss of leaders:* The Group is totally reliant upon volunteers to run and administer the activities of the Group. If there were a reduction in the number of leaders to an unacceptable level in a particular Section or the Group as a whole then there would have to be a contraction, consolidation or closure of a Section, or in the worst case scenario, the complete closure of the Group.

The Group requires two signatories for all payments to provide reasonable assurance against material mismanagement or loss of money and holds comprehensive insurance policies to ensure that insurable risks are covered.

## **Group's Purpose**

The purpose of the Group is to actively engage and support young people in their personal development, empowering them to make a positive contribution to society. The Group aims to achieve this by providing an enjoyable and attractive scheme of progressive training based on the values of scouting, the Scout Promise and the Scout Law, and guided by trained adult leadership.

## INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

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### **4<sup>th</sup> Thames Ditton Ajax Sea Scouts Charity Number 303764**

#### **Report of the Independent examiner to the Trustees of 4<sup>th</sup> Thames Ditton Ajax Sea Scouts**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above Charity for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 that are set out on the pages attached.

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

As the charity's trustees, 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 Trust's 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 that gives me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- a) the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act or
- b) the accounts did not comply with the accounting records or
- c) the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of the 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 the 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.

Barry Hitchens- Australian Society of Accountants  
24 Effingham Road, Long Ditton, Surrey, KT6 5JY

 September 6  
2024

## FINANCIAL REPORT - YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2024

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Prepared By Peter Drysdale, Group Treasurer

Ajax Sea Scout Group remains in good financial health. Cash balances at the end of the year were slightly above last year's. We continued to invest in our boats and facilities.

### **Operating Highlights**

In round numbers, cash in the bank as at the year-end stands at £74,200 (2023: £73,700) a net increase of £500.

Operating income increased from £29,000 to £35,000. Membership fees (including Gift Aid) remained the same at £26,000. The increase was mainly due to the one-off sale of a minibus (£4,800) and bank interest (£1,900). The grant for the trailer park brings the total income up to £55,000 as shown in Note 1.

Operating costs increased from £30,000 to £44,000. This was mainly due to repairs to the roof (£9,000) and increased utility costs due to our previous 3-year fix coming to an end (£3,500).

Fortunately, the fundraising was good. The Esher May Fair realized nearly £11,000. The Plant Sale and Claygate Flower Show both realized just over £2,000 each. Fundraising is increasingly important for us as the membership fees do not fully cover the operating costs.

Expenditure on major items was £14,000 made up of net £5000 on the new trailer park (£27,000 cost less £20,000 grant and £2,000 interim contribution from Warspite; £3,600 refurbishing a recently acquired second-hand gig; £3,500 on the WAC. £2,000 went on sundry smaller items eg tents, card readers.

### **Notes to the financial statements 31 March 2024**

#### **1 Basis of preparation of accounts**

##### 1.1 Basis of accounting

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s) to these accounts. The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (the Charities SORP) and with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102). The Charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

##### 1.2 Going Concern

The Trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

#### **2. Accounting Policies**

##### 2.1 Income recognition

All regularly recurring income is recognised in the period in which it is received. This applies to Subscriptions, Gift Aid on subscriptions and Investment Income.

Donations are recognised once received. In the event that a donation is subject to conditions that require a level of performance before the Charity is entitled to the funds, the income is deferred and not recognised until either those conditions are fully met, or the fulfilment of those conditions is wholly within the control of the Charity, and it is probable that those conditions will be fulfilled in the reporting period.

Any Gift Aid amount recovered on a donation is considered to be part of that gift and is treated as an addition to the same fund as the initial donation unless the donor or the terms of the appeal have specified otherwise. It is recognised in the period in which it is received.

Restricted donations and grants will be recognised in the period in which the associated costs are incurred and until then will be treated as creditors.

Income from Fundraising and Activities is recognised in the period in which the fundraising event or activity takes place. Deposits received in prior periods will be deferred until the period in which the activity takes place.

All other income is recognised in the period in which it is received.

## 2.2 Expenditure and liabilities

A liability exists where there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the Charity to that expenditure, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. All such liabilities will ordinarily be discharged as soon as possible. Only material liabilities not discharged by the end of the period will be accrued.

Some annual costs eg Insurance, Subscriptions, Rent and other similar dues which extend beyond the current period and which on a strict accruals basis would to that extent ordinarily be accrued, will be recognised in full in the period in which they are paid.

All expenses including support costs and governance costs are allocated or apportioned to the applicable expenditure headings.

The classification between headings is as follows:

- Expenditure on fundraising includes all expenditure associated with raising funds for the charity.
- Expenditure on charitable activities of the Group includes all costs associated with furthering the charitable purposes of the Group through the provision of its charitable activities.

All expenditure on fundraising events or activities is recognised in the period in which the fundraising event or activity occurs. Prior period deposits will be treated as prepayments.

Materiality: Accruals of expenditure other than that for Fundraising or Activities will only be made where they exceed £500 individually or £1,000 in total.

## 3 Land and buildings at Ditton Reach

The property comprising land and buildings at Ditton Reach that are occupied jointly by Ajax Sea Scouts and Warspite Sea Scouts is held by the Scout Association Trust Corporation (SATC) as tenant under a lease granted on 2 February 2024 by Elmbridge Borough Council as landlord. SATC holds the lease as custodian trustee on behalf of both Groups as beneficiaries. The Groups are responsible for the performance of the tenant's obligations under the lease, which expires on 6 December 2078.

The rent under the lease, which is currently £250 per annum, is subject to indexation adjustment on 6 December 2028 and on every fifth anniversary of that date. The lease contains restrictive covenants that among other things (1) prohibit the assignment or transfer of the lease, or the grant of a security interest in the lease, and (2) govern the permitted subletting, hire, occupation and use of the property. As a consequence of the restrictive covenants in the lease, Ajax considers that its beneficial interest in the lease does not have any market value.

The Groups have entered into a formal agreement between themselves to govern the management and administration of the leased property, and to coordinate the performance of the tenant's obligations. Among other things, this intergroup agreement (1) allocates parts of the leased property to each Group for that Group's exclusive use, and (2) establishes a joint liaison committee between the Groups.

## 4 Funds

Unrestricted General Funds are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the Charity. Designated Funds are funds set aside out of unrestricted General Funds for specific purposes or projects. Restricted Funds are funds subject to specific restrictive conditions imposed by the donors or by the purpose of the appeal.

## **5 Insurance Policies**

The entire WAC building occupied by Ajax and Warspite is insured for a reinstatement cost of £1,350,000 under a joint insurance policy. The premium for buildings insurance cover is allocated 75% to Ajax and 25% to Warspite, which reflects the respective areas of the building occupied by each Group. Ajax has also insured the Group's building contents and equipment for a reinstatement cost of £93,298, and its boats for a reinstatement cost of £90,000 in aggregate.

## Income & Expenditure 2023 - 2024

	<b>Notes</b>	<b>2024 £</b>	<b>2023 £</b>
<b>Income from:</b>			
Donations, Legacies. Subscriptions and similar income	1	54,925	34,321
Camp fees		43,719	35,199
Fundraising		34,466	21,572
Investment Income		1,940	647
<b>Total</b>		<b>135,050</b>	<b>91,739</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>			
Fundraising Costs		17,671	16,256
Expenses of the activities by the Group		121,821	88,493
<b>Total</b>		<b>139,492</b>	<b>104,749</b>
<b>Net Income</b>		<b>(4,442)</b>	<b>(13,010)</b>

## Balance Sheet

	<b>Notes</b>	<b>2024 £</b>	<b>2023 £</b>
<b>Reconciliation of Funds</b>			
Total Funds Brought Forward		82,415	95,425
Total Funds Carried Forward		77,973	82,415
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Cash at bank and in hand	2	74,216	73,697
Debtors	3	2,717	12,075
Stock of Uniform		4,393	4,243
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	4	(3,353)	(7,600)
<b>Net Assets</b>		<b>77,973</b>	<b>82,415</b>
<b>Represented by:</b>			
Restricted Funds		500	1,500
Designated Funds	5	47,473	48,866
Unrestricted Funds		30,000	32,049
		<b>77,973</b>	<b>82,415</b>

## Notes to the Accounts

<b>1</b>	<b><u>Analysis of Donations etc</u></b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
	Subscriptions	25,796	26,437
	Donations and Legacies	2,924	1,685
	Grants	20,000	4,987
	Covid Grant		
	Other	6,205	1,212
	<b>Total</b>	<b>54,925</b>	<b>34,321</b>

2023 has been restated to correctly show donations previously included in Subscriptions.

<b>2</b>	<b><u>Cash at bank and in hand</u></b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
	Current Accounts - HSBC		
	Camp	6,571	2,751
	Main	1,450	1,667
	Nr 3	0	10
	Bmm	3,766	3,552
	Soldo	0	194
	Subs	1,749	1,713
	Equals Money	233	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>13,769</b>	<b>9,887</b>
	Investment Accounts		
	Scout Association	0	94
	Skipton	4,444	8,972
	Cambridge & Counties	56,003	54,744
	<b>Total</b>	<b>60,447</b>	<b>63,810</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>74,216</b>	<b>73,697</b>

<b>3</b>	<b><u>Debtors</u></b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
	Cobnor	2,717	4,290
	Activities		2,969
	Gift Aid		4,500
	Other		316
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2,717</b>	<b>12,075</b>

<b>4 Creditors</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Defibrillator		1,000
Regatta	3,138	3,212
SCRAM 2023		780
Esher May Fair	215	690
Uniform Costs		1,418
Environment Agency		500
	3,353	7,600

<b>5 Designated Funds</b>	Op Balance	Income	Expenditure	Redesignated	Cl Balance
	£	£	£	£	£
Building Development	10,866	13,607	6,000		18,473
Building Repairs	7,500		7,500		0
All Craft	5,000	1,100	3,600		2,500
Tentage	1,500				1,500
HQ Security	9,000	6,000			15,000
New Lease & Trailer Park Project	15,000	20,000	25,000		10,000
<b>Total</b>	48,866	40,707	42,100	0	47,473

These accounts for the year ending 31 March 2024 were approved by the Group's trustees at a meeting of the Group's Trustee Board held on 28 August 2024.

Authorised signatories for and on behalf of the Group's trustees:



Chris West, Group Scout Leader



Peter Drysdale, Group Treasurer



Andrew Davison, Group Chair

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# Ajax Sea Scout Group and Explorer Sea Scout Unit

## KEY CONTACTS

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Group Scout Leader	Chris West	07967 806818	<a href="mailto:gsl@ajax.org.uk">gsl@ajax.org.uk</a>
Deputy Group Scout Leader	Peter Wadsworth	07527 554029	<a href="mailto:peter@ajax.org.uk">peter@ajax.org.uk</a>
Beaver Colony	Dan Callaghan	07840 290044	<a href="mailto:beavers@ajax.org.uk">beavers@ajax.org.uk</a>
Cub Pack	Ruth Mortby	07941 206568	<a href="mailto:cubs@ajax.org.uk">cubs@ajax.org.uk</a>
Sea Scout Troop	Robert Elliott	07896 518604	<a href="mailto:troop@ajax.org.uk">troop@ajax.org.uk</a>
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For more information about this report or membership of Ajax contact:

Chris West

Email: [gsl@ajax.org.uk](mailto:gsl@ajax.org.uk)

For child joining or adult volunteering, go to: [www.ajax.org.uk/join](http://www.ajax.org.uk/join)

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Ajax Sea Scout Group and Explorer Sea Scout Unit  
The Chiefy Sharman Water Activities Centre  
19a Ditton Reach  
Thames Ditton  
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Ajax Sea Scouts is a Registered Charity No: 303764

**4TH THAMES DITTON AJAX SEA SCOUTS**

England & Wales - Charity number 303764

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# Accounts

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# Ajax Sea Scout Group and Explorer Sea Scout Unit

Annual Report and Accounts  
for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023

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**Summer Camp 2023 – Cobnor Point, Chichester Harbour, West Sussex**

## GROUP CHAIR'S REPORT

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As Group Chair, I coordinate Ajax's Group Executive Committee (GEC), which is the decision-making body responsible for the Group's facilities, equipment and finances. The GEC is also responsible for providing sufficient resources for the Group's Scouting activities e.g. by supporting the recruitment of adult volunteers and by fundraising.

Ajax Sea Scouts is a charity and the members of the GEC are its charity trustees. The GEC will be renamed the Group Trustee Board at our AGM on 1 Oct 2023 as we implement a Scout Association-wide initiative to improve transparency around roles and responsibilities.

I am delighted to provide context to the GEC's stewardship of the Group's facilities and equipment, and comment on the Group's fundraising activities and volunteering matters since our AGM on 31 Aug 2022. The Group's financial position, which is in good standing, is addressed in the Financial Report for the year ended 31 Mar 2023.

In brief:

- **Facilities:**
  - We have made substantive progress on our project to enter into a new lease for our Water Activities Centre (WAC) and convert half of the trailer park opposite the WAC into a secure compound for use by Ajax and Warspite Sea Scout Groups. We look forward to bringing the compound into use by April 2024.
  - We have completed several other projects over the last 12 months that enhance facilities at the WAC
  - On-going projects include an urgent project to fix roof and gutter leaks
  - We have identified two high priority future projects to support core Scouting activities: (1) a project to install an upgraded fire alarm system which will open-up the prospect for sleepovers at the WAC, and (2) a project to relocate, improve and expand our storage space. These projects will be expensive (potentially ~£10k and ~£20k respectively) and we will likely need to seek 3rd party funding to supplement funds raised by Ajax.
  
- **Equipment:**
  - We have made significant investments in our fleet over the last 12 months, including a £10,000 investment in new touring kayaks (half of which was funded by a grant), and a £5,000 investment to acquire a refurbished gig
  - As Ajax looks to the future, the Group will need to review the role of facilities for the delivery of water activities (including facilities at Island Barn reservoir and Cobnor), and the mix, location, maintenance and replacement of our fleet to support those activities.
  
- **Fundraising:** We had a very successful Spring and Summer 2023, raising in excess of £16,500, net of costs. A big thank you to all involved.
  
- **Volunteering:**
  - Thanks indeed to all the leaders, trustees, parents and others who have supported the Group over the last 12 months
  - Unfortunately, our Section leadership teams remain understrength and we would welcome assistance from parents and volunteers who are able to commit time on a regular basis. Please contact the relevant Section Leader if you are able to help or if you would like to know more.
  - I am keen to bring new parent trustees onto the Group Trustee Board, especially women who are under-represented on the Board. There is a mechanism to appoint trustees during the year - please drop me a line if you are interested or would like to know more.
  - Over the coming year we will need help from parents and supporters with fundraising events, boat maintenance and "DIY" building maintenance. Please look out for our periodic requests for volunteers.

These matters are discussed in further detail below.

## Facilities

Ajax and Warspite Sea Scout Groups are negotiating a new long-term lease with our Landlord, Elmbridge Borough Council, to include:

- (1) A strip of land north of the WAC, fenced-in during 2020 (see red outline), and
- (2) The eastern half of the trailer park opposite the WAC (see green outline), which will be turned into a secure compound for the Groups.

Details of the proposed secure compound are set out in Elmbridge planning application [2022/0853](#), which was approved in Jun 2022. We have made substantive progress over the last 12 months in our negotiations with Elmbridge, which have recently concluded. The draft lease is now in agreed form, subject to (among other things) review and approval by Ajax trustees, by Warspite trustees and by the Scout Association Trust Corporation.



Once the new lease and other ancillary documents have been signed, Ajax will procure high security fencing and related works to construct the secure compound on behalf of both Groups. The completion of those construction works, expected by April 2024, will deliver enduring benefits to both Ajax and Warspite by significantly expanding the Groups' premises. Ajax's share of financial commitments to deliver the new lease and trailer park construction works is backed by a designated fund of £15,000, which is shown in the Group's accounts as at 31 Mar 2023. Many thanks to Ajax trustee Andrew Roberts who continues to lead this initiative on behalf of both Groups.

Facilities-related projects completed over the last 12 months include (1) safety-related upgrades of electrical wiring and the installation of commercial-grade fuse/distribution boxes within the WAC and workshop, (2) remedial works following a burst pipe over Christmas 2022, and (3) the installation of a defibrillator immediately outside our front door. Thank you to the Ajax family that generously donated funds covering the cost of providing a defibrillator at Ditton Reach.

On-going facilities-related projects include: (1) remedial works to address WAC roof and gutter leaks - investigation has revealed a need for significant investment to repair and replace roofing components that have failed or are near end-of-life, (2) an initiative to install and commission a new Fire Door from the Main Deck, and decommission the original Fire Door which exits from the Ajax Main Deck into the Warspite-owned compound, and (3) an initiative to improve frost protection within the WAC - potentially by installing and/or upgrading trace heating for water pipes.

GEC has identified two projects that are high priorities because of the significant benefits they will bring to the Group's Scouting programmes: (1) a project to install an upgraded fire alarm system which will open-up the potential for sleepovers at the WAC, especially for the Beaver and Cub sections, and (2) a project to relocate and expand our storage space which, among other things, will deliver safe and accessible access to camp gear. Both projects are expensive (potentially ~£10k and ~£20k respectively) and we will likely need to seek 3rd party funding to supplement funds raised by Ajax.

## Equipment

We have made significant investments in our fleet over the last 12 months. In March 2023, we took delivery of 9 new touring kayaks, representing a £10,000 investment, half of which was funded by a grant from the Royal Navy. The Explorers and Scouts have enjoyed using the new kayaks during Spring and Summer, including at Summer Camp at Cobnor Point, Chichester Harbour.



**Ajax's fleet of 9 new touring kayaks added colour to the procession of Scout boats and crews marking Ajax's 75th Anniversary celebrations**

During 2023, we also acquired one of the original batch of Home Counties gigs commissioned by Scout Groups i.e. a sister vessel to PYMBS. The Group's £5,000 investment covered the cost of acquisition and refurbishment to restore "Hercules" to serviceable condition. Hercules has been in use as a Scout gig on the Thames for over 60 years, and its acquisition will enable the Group to get more of our young people afloat developing key knowledge, skills, confidence and teamwork.



**Elmbridge Mayor, Richard Williams, and his wife Agnieszka, the Mayoress, officiated at our boat launching ceremony for Hercules, one of the highlights of Ajax's 75th Anniversary celebrations**

Over the last 12 months, GEC has also overseen: (1) a keel replacement for PYMBS, (2) engine repairs and electrical upgrades to return a water-damaged Connie West to service, and (3) the disposal of one of the Group's minibuses.

As Ajax looks to the future, we will need to update our strategy for the delivery of water activity programmes, including the role of facilities at Island Barn reservoir and Cobnor, and the mix, location, maintenance and (in due course) replacement of our fleet to support those programmes. The joint RYA Training Centre which Ajax and Warspite operate delivers valuable synergies for both Groups, and we intend to develop our strategy in coordination with Warspite.

### **Fundraising activities, Spring and Summer 2023**

The investments that the Group has made in facilities and equipment over recent years has been possible because of the past fundraising efforts of Ajax parents and supporters, supplemented by financial support from benefactors and grant providers. Fundraising underpins the wide programme of Scouting activities that Ajax can offer young people, enabled by fit-for-purpose facilities and equipment.

We had a very successful fundraising season during Spring and Summer this year, raising in excess of £16,500, net of costs, across four events:

- Ajax Plant Sale, 6-7 May 2023: ~£2,400
- Esher May Fair, 20 May 2023: ~£10,800
- Tea Tent, National Sea Scout Regatta, 1-2 Jul 2023: ~£1,000
- Bar, Claygate Flower Show, 8 Jul: ~£2,500



The success of the Esher May Fair relies on the efforts of Ajax parents and supporters

Congratulations and thank you to all of our supporters and volunteers who helped plan, coordinate and staff our fundraising events over the last 12 months. Thanks in particular to trustee Adrian Smith who led the Ajax team that delivered a fun and successful Esher May Fair 2023!

### **Volunteering matters**

Ajax is entirely dependent on volunteers. Thanks indeed to the leaders, trustees, parents and others who have supported the Group over the last 12 months, whether through the delivery of Scouting activities, or through service as a trustee, or by helping make our fundraising events happen, or by supporting the Group in other ways. We truly value your support.

Thanks in particular to GSL Chris West and AGSL Peter Wadsworth for their leadership of the Group over the last year. And to Group Treasurer Peter Drysdale who has managed the Group's income, expenditure, cash position and financial records throughout the year. Thanks also to the leaders and assistant leaders for Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers, who have done a fantastic job in delivering Section-specific programmes over the last year, despite being below-strength.

***Unfortunately, our Section leadership teams remain understrength and we would welcome assistance from parents and volunteers who are able to commit time on a regular basis to support the on-going delivery of high quality activities for Autumn/Winter 2023 and into 2024. Please contact the relevant Section Leader if you are able to help or if you would like to know more.***

***I am keen to bring new parents onto the Group Trustee Board, so that the decisions we make continue to reflect the aspirations and needs of our families. Unfortunately, women are under-represented on the Board and I would like to empower more of our women parents and supporters to help shape the Group as trustees. There is a mechanism to appoint trustees during the year - please drop me a line if you are interested or would like to know more.***

***Please look out for our periodic requests for volunteers. Over the coming year we will need help from parents and supporters with fundraising events, boat maintenance and "DIY" building maintenance.***

Andy Davison  
Group Chair, Ajax Sea Scouts  
[andy.davison@ajax.org.uk](mailto:andy.davison@ajax.org.uk)  
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## GROUP SCOUT LEADER'S REPORT

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Group Scout Leader Chris Callaghan-West writes:

Once again, we complete another jam-packed year full of Scouting activities and as I sit down to write my annual report, I find the task of having so many things to write about to be a welcome one.

After our last AGM the first event that followed as always in November was our Remembrance Day Parade to Gigg's Hill Green in Thames Ditton, which we share with The Dittons Scout Group. This year saw a record number of people joining us and we're now starting to see young representatives from local schools and other youth organisations joining us at the war memorial for our service.



At Christmas we had our carol evening with plenty of mince pies - certainly an event our local residents enjoy, especially those who come over from the retirement home next door.

I was very pleased to have been invited along to the Cubs weekend away in London. We had great fun exploring HMS Belfast, before being entertained and fed by the crew on the Golden Hinde where we then spent the night aboard.

The Explorer Unit had their Winter Walking weekend, and the Troop had their own Winter Camp, neither of which I was able to join them on, but I know both were successful and fun weekends.

For our first night under canvas this year we repeated our St George's camp, a new tradition we started with The Dittons last year. Despite the continuous threat of rain, we stayed mostly dry and were even blessed with sun for our Sunday morning campfire ceremony where all present reaffirmed their Scout Promise.



This year saw the return of our Plant Sale, which, with an amazing helping hand from our sections making their own items to sell, was a sellout success. We followed that weekend with an open day to celebrate the Big Help Out, a national initiative to get more people into volunteering.

The fundraising continued with the Esher May Fair, the first I've missed in many years due to work commitments, but I know from those in attendance that it was once again a busy and popular event.

Meanwhile in May and June, the Scouts and Explorers had their first 2 weekends at our Cobnor base near Chichester, for sailing out in the harbour. Also, in June the Cubs attended SCRAM, the county Cub activity day, with over 3,000 Cubs all in the same field enjoying a range of fun activities, including the escape rooms put on by Ajax.

July started with the National Scout Pulling and Kayaking regatta, held just up the river from our building. We enjoyed a scorching weekend with plenty of excitement in all the races. A big thank you to our friends at Warspite, who co-organised the event with us. I'm very pleased to report that we brought some silverware home this year!

It was a busy month in July as a week later Ajax was once again running the bar at the Claygate flower show, helping many a thirsty customer despite the occasional rain showers. The week after that was the Cub Summer Camp at Boidier Hurst campsite. Whilst I couldn't attend the whole weekend, I did very much enjoy joining the Cubs for an exciting walk around Box Hill, followed by shelter building around the campsite.

The next big event of the year of course was the Troop and Unit Summer Camps. This year we returned to a site we've not been to for a summer camp for many years, Cobnor Estate. Located next door to the Cobnor Activity Centre, where we spend our sailing weekends, we had a field only a short walk from the boat park where our three Wayfarer sailing boats live. Whilst there were occasional rains in the first week, it certainly didn't dampen the Explorers enthusiasm for getting out and enjoying more time in Chichester Harbour. We had one of our home county gigs sailing again, which was a joy to see. The Explorers ended their week with a trip to the woods for some survival skills where they learned to cook a deer over an open fire and built their own shelters for the night. Scouts then arrived for their week after the Explorers had left. The bad weather mostly held off and they got in plenty of time sailing, kayaking, using the stand-up paddleboards and went on the odd hike or two for a jam-packed week.

The absolute highlight of the year has to be our 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary party. To celebrate this important milestone, we had an open day, with a BBQ setup, to let everyone come down and enjoy. I was very pleased that over 200 people could come and celebrate with us. To keep everyone entertained we organised a river pageant, showing off the entire fleet of boats that we operate. With over 75 people afloat at once, guests were treated to seeing our power boats, Pico sailing boats, kayaks, canoes and stand-up paddleboards, all cruising past the building in one long procession. The festivities didn't end there as we recently had the opportunity to acquire another gig, built in the same batch as our original gigs. It had been serviced and brought up to standard ready to be used, so we took the opportunity to launch Hercules, with some very welcome help from the Mayoress who sent the gig on its way. The mayor was present, talking to Ajax members young and old, following a short speech he unveiled the new King's and Queen's Scout award plaque that we'd had commissioned. All in all, a fantastic and a great way to celebrate 75 years of Ajax.



Lastly, I'd like to come back to the issue of finding people to volunteer at Ajax. Nationally volunteering is down, and we are certainly feeling it. Every section is running light on leaders, and we need more people to step up and help out. If you yourself or you know anyone else who might be interested, please reach out to a leader or myself for more information on what we need.

This year has been personally very challenging for me, I've been starting my own business and that's not left as much time for Scouting as I would have liked. I want to thank everyone who has worked so hard this year to support Ajax or picked up in areas where I would normally be handling things.

In particular, I would like to thank Andy Davison, who is expertly steering the Group Executive Committee, making things like our new lease become a reality, ensuring all our fundraising events are well executed and generally making sure Ajax is shipshape and ready to deliver Scouting. In addition, Adrian Smith, who seems to have superpowers when it comes to making the Esher May Fair happen and then when he's barely sat down, he jumps right back in with the Claygate Flower Show bar, thanks Adrian.

I want to thank every volunteer who helps at Ajax. As we are desperately low on volunteers at the moment, this means the current leaders, instructors and helpers have to work extra hard to keep things going. Thank you all for your continued efforts.

As many of you will have heard, our Scout Troop section leader, Diane Davison, has stepped down from her role, to be replaced by Robert Elliott. Diane took over that role from me 8 years ago, and before that she was an assistant leader in Scouts, Cubs and Beavers. All in all, for 16 years Diane has been working hard to make a huge impact on the lives of all the young people in Ajax. Diane's drive and enthusiasm has led the Troop through countless Winter Camps, Cobnor weekends and summer camps. But don't worry, Diane is not leaving us, just stepping back from the day to day running of the Troop, she will still be around looking after camps and special events, as well as many other things I'm sure. I want to personally thank Diane for her hard work and dedication to Ajax, the Troop would not be where it is today without you.



Our Beaver Section Leader, Lydia Thomas, is also planning on leaving us at some point soon. She and her partner Jack, also a leader who helps at camps and events, have been converting a van into a camper in preparation for two years of touring around Europe. Lydia has brought an amazing energy and sense of joy to the Beaver Colony and she will be sorely missed. Of course, we hope she and Jack will return to us after their trip, but until then I wish them happy travels.

To all the other leaders, including our new Troop leader Robert, thank you for all you do, it's an honour and a pleasure to work with you all and I'm looking forward to the next year of Scouting adventures.



## **BEAVER SCOUT COLONY**

(For young people aged 6 to 8)

Beaver Colony Leader Lydia Thomas writes:

Looking back on our Beavers' journey this past year, our leadership team ensured that the musters were both enjoyable and led to an impressive 245 badges being awarded this year – up by 100 from the previous year. The following earned their Chief Scouts Gold award; congratulations to Arthur Craig, Aleksander Evans, Felix Holland, Freddie Hodson, Oliver Naylor, Jackson Reynolds and Emma Raynor, with Eleanor Strudwick set to join their ranks shortly.

On top of the core challenge badges, we also awarded many Beavers their Air Activities, Builder, Cook, Creative, Emergency Aid, Gardener, Global Issues, International, Nautical Skills, and Time on the Water badges. We also ran some "Log Chews" so as to gauge our Beavers' preferences and highlights throughout the year, and contribute to youth lead scouting.

The Autumn term commenced with a reflective tribute to the Queen's memorial, establishing the connection between the monarchy and Scouting. The Beavers' teamwork flourished as we engaged in get-to-know-you games with our newest members. Our resident Pilot, Adrian, captained the Air Activities badge, ending with a paper aeroplane competition. We created bonfire artwork forged from natural materials and learnt about Guy Fawkes. Essential life skills of road safety, first aid, and emergency protocols were taught to the Beavers over multiple sessions. One of the favourite activities this term was the 'junk modelling' session, where our Beavers invented and crafted models of machines designed to save the planet from recycled materials; solar and wind-powered ocean cleanup robots, water filtering machines, food generators and tree planters were amongst some of the imaginative designs.

Following the festive break, the Spring term unfolded with the Book Reader's badge, inspiring us to craft bookmarks and discuss our favourite reads. We investigated safe water practices, constructing water filters from pebbles, sand, cotton wool, and recycled plastic bottles, exploring the magic of mud filtration. Lunar New Year celebrations included delightful Chinese food tasting, a step toward achieving our International Badge. We attended the district Beavers party, joining the wonderland themed activities, and watching a performance of Alice in Wonderland. The term heated up with a Zumba with Amy, transforming our gathering into a colourful, disco-lit Latin party, teaching the Beavers about health and fitness. Our last few sessions included tower-building challenges with spaghetti and marshmallows and enjoying some classic Easter games including an anagram easter egg hunt.

Planting the seed for a green-thumb mentality, the Summer term began with we nurturing plants, learning plant care, and making wildflower seed balls and repurposing old wellington boot into planters to sell at the plant sale for fundraising. Nautical theory and safety preparations set the stage for exhilarating powerboating and rowing adventures, buoyed by splendid weather for our boat cruises. We trundled through Stoke's Field Woods, exploring diverse habitats and their inhabitants, and discussing plant pests and diseases, and the Beavers adored creating fairy houses from sticks and twigs. Culinary delights were on the menu with a messy session making rocky road gifts for Father's Day. Our last few musters made the most of the fresh air, and included a sports day session, wide games at Summer Road Rec, and water-based games outdoors at the WAC, where cooling splashes were welcomed under the hot sun!

In summary, it was a year of challenges, games, and wonderful learning experiences for our Beavers. A huge thank you to Dan and Adrian, along with our dedicated explorer young leaders—Ffion, Leon, Amy, and Nora—for their unwavering support and contributions to another memorable year at Beaver Scouts.



## CUB SCOUT PACK

(For young people aged 8 to 10½)

Cub Scout Leader Ruth Mortby writes:

Another fantastic year as the pack goes from strength to strength, running at (and sometimes above) our maximum capacity of 36 young people. With a growing leader team and brilliant support from our section parents, we've been able to deliver a year of adventures, afloat and ashore.

Highlights from our Autumn Term:

- We started the term in a reflective mood, thinking about the kindness and service of Her Majesty, and then spending some time talking about water pollution and conservation.
- Our half term **Escape Room** is becoming a much anticipated annual event. This year we solved the mystery of the stolen painting with our tabletop adventure.



- **Winter 2022 Cub Camp** took on a superhero theme, with costumes, games and even adventure golf.



Highlights from our Spring Term:

- We welcomed **Elmbridge Museum** to our muster for a fascinating (and messy!) tour of the history of Thames Ditton



- Our **Golden Hinde Sleepover** weekend was a spectacular adventure, with visits to HMS Belfast and the Cutty Sark, along with a cold, but incredible immersive experience as seafarers in Tudor Britan. Our cubs slept on-board the Golden Hinde, learned to defend the ship, load the canons, provision, and even got a lesson from the master surgeon onboard. I think we'll be sticking with modern medicine in the future!



- We finished the term with our annual **Backwoods Cooking** Session at Walton Firs



Highlights from our Summer Term:

- Summer Term saw us back **On the Water** on our Monday musters – an absolute highlight for all our cubs



- We joined 3,500 Cubs and Brownies from across Surrey for this year's **SCRAM** event – a fantastic day to meet other young people and try a huge variety of activities.
- Our **Summer Camp 23** saw us head up to Boidier Hurst Scout Campsite for a jungle adventure with hikes over Box Hill, shelters, campfire and even a Bush Tucker Trial!



These highlights are just some of our larger events for the year, but our weekly program was loaded with challenge and adventure too: we welcomed back Amy for an awesome evening of Zumba, turned our hands to DIY with making birdboxes, a Penny Hike, a water fight at Collets, local knowledge hike around Thames Ditton, as well as learning about new cultures, the environment and many other topics during our evening musters. We repeated our highly successful Cubs in charge night which is now a regular feature of our programme.

Congratulations to all our cubs on your achievements this year – from many first nights away, to those taking on peer leadership roles for the first time. We've awarded 20 silver challenge awards this year, over 50 challenge badges, and more than 300 activity badges! You are achieving so much, I'm now having to stock higher levels of our staged badges (hikes away, nights away, time on the water) than ever before!

Parent involvement with Cubs over the year is something I'd like to say a personal thank you for. With a small leader team in Cubs, getting the support from parents during our musters and events makes a huge difference to the opportunities we can offer. A shout out here to the setup/take down teams, as well as meal-time helpers during Summer Camp and also for all the parent support which was critical in allowing us to get Cubs on the water each week.

We have welcomed Fran, Scott, Jason and James to the leader team, along with our two amazing young leaders, Ed and Molly. To all of you, and our incredible existing team: Dan, Alex and Gavan, thank you for everything you have done this year – I'm thrilled with the programme we've been able to offer and excited for what comes next and growing the team. None of this is possible without you and the time and energy you all give.

Here's to a new year, new adventures, and a whole lot of fun!

## **SEA SCOUT TROOP**

(For young people aged 10½ to 14)

Sea Scout Leader Diane Davison writes:

A challenging year for the Troop section. The weather played havoc with our summer boating season and musters were often flexed to accommodate leadership availability. However, we did manage to deliver a fun and inspiring year.

Autumn term started with huge interest from the Scouts in planning, from start to finish, their own patrol camp. This was a huge learning experience in terms of the detail and thought process to deliver all the elements of a successful camp. The Scouts had huge laughs at some of the menu issues that arose, can you have cereal without milk? Is steak not really affordable?

We managed to keep one patrol each week rowing on the river right up until mid-November. We then visited the Fire station, which we had not been to in a long time, a lot of water was involved, great fun!

We also went swimming and discovered that we have a fantastic group of swimmers, with most of the Troop completing over 30 lengths of Hampton open air pool.

We had a mini-night hike in Black Pond and spent time looking at fire and its role in Ajax. We also put on our second Carol concert to which the local residents and parents were invited – a great Christmas occasion.

Spring term saw us honing our scouting skills and first aid. We also went to the Ashdown Forest to hike to Pooh Bear's bridge where Pooh sticks was compulsory entertainment. The apple crumble at winter camp was a great hit, with every Scout having seconds, amazing considering there was fruit in it! After skiing and climbing the high ropes, we moved onto prep for the summer term.

Summer term arrived or was it autumn?? For the first three weeks of term, we were unable to get on the water, as the river was flowing way too fast. This really was a massive problem as we had great dreams for the Sea Scout regatta, we needed to bring home some cups this year.

The Plant Sale made a comeback this year and the Scouts made a brilliant contribution to the overall success. In their own time they made Seed Bombs and painted pebbles which were sold alongside the plants. There were some particularly stunning ladybird pebbles which of course all sold!

The Esher May Fair saw the Scout Patrol and Assistant Patrol leaders helping run the sweet stall with the Explorers, they had great fun and learned new skills. Basically how to make slush puppies and Candy floss and of course how to eat them. We definitely need to find a Candy Floss badge to award!

Eventually we got onto the water, started boating in kayaks, all types of rowing boats and SUPs, then we started to look at who would make up the teams for the Regatta. We introduced rowing and kayaking to the younger Scouts which they all took to really well and confidently. We had a couple of sailing sessions when there was wind in the evening.

There were two weekends when we went off to Chichester Harbour to go sailing in Wayfarers.... many of the Scouts achieved RYA stage awards, congratulations to all of them.

The Regatta proved to be brilliant particularly for the under 12½ team. The under 14s brilliantly won the Double Dinghy cup. The under 12½ team won the individual kayak trophy and the overall under 12½ trophy.

Please check out the trophy cupboard!

### **Summer Camp, the highlight of the Scouting year!:**



Scouts out for a paddle on Ajax's giant SUP



Sailing a gig is way easier than rowing it!



Clockwise from top left: (1) Sailing in a gig is a new experience for many of our Scouts; (2) Chichester Harbour and its surroundings is a designated area of outstanding natural beauty, a major wildlife haven, and perfect to explore on a day hike; (3) All the Scout patrols shared a central mess tent at this year's Summer Camp; and (4) Learning to sail a Pico sailing dinghy is fun !

We held our camp this year in an area of outstanding natural beauty and it was stunning. Even the weather was with us, most of the time anyway. The Scouts enjoyed a very special camp where, for the first time, they had the opportunity to drive a power boat and to sail one of our traditional Home Counties Gigs, Norge. The camp offered many opportunities to sail with our Picos and Wayfarers in addition to the Gig. The packed programme also included kayaking in our new touring kayaks, messing about on the giant SUP as well as our normal SUPs, hiking and staying away overnight. A full-on week was experienced by all including all the leaders!

The numbers in the Troop have remained fairly consistent at around 45 throughout the year.

The leadership team have worked hard and been incredibly resilient in terms of providing a brilliant experience for the Scouts. Work pressures prey on available time and we have lost a couple of leaders this year – we really need new people to come and join us, have some fun and make a lasting contribution to the lives of our Scouts.

**Ask yourself could you help? Can you commit time to helping us?**

As you are aware I am stepping down as Scout leader. After some 18 years in scouting as a leader and at least twelve of those in Scouts I think I need a break! Robert Elliott has stepped up to take over as Troop leader and come September he will be running things ably assisted by Phil Shortman, Andrew Rowan, Dane Wilson and Simon Corkin and a team of young leaders. I wish them great adventures and lots of fun!

I am not leaving the Group but will be more involved in the Scout camps and events.

I am as ever totally indebted over the past year to the wonderful group of volunteer Leaders, Instructors, and Young Leaders who made the Scout programme this year so brilliant. Again, this year their commitment to the Scouts has been exemplary. Without their generosity of time, holidays, skills, creativity and good humour Ajax would not be the same!

My grateful thanks go to Jamie Ashley, Simon Corkin, Andy Davison, Robert Elliott, Andrew Rowan, Barbara Ruis, Phil Shortman, Dane Wilson - who all regularly attend musters.

Also thanks to Chris West, Izzy Elliot, Hugo Goodman, Max Kingdon, Alex Soden, Hannah Conroy, Molly and Isabelle Lanigan, Poppy Lloyd Jones, Tilly Carrow, Jane and Tom Ruis and Marcus Wilson : most of whom on returning from university or taking work holidays provide invaluable help and enthusiasm at some musters and at Summer Camp.

And last, but certainly not least, our Young Leaders led by Morgan who has been outstanding in his commitment to the Troop. He has been assisted by James, Ben, Jonathan, and Cameron .

Many thanks to you all for all the fun I have had in scouting....so far!

## **EXPLORER SEA SCOUT UNIT**

(For young people aged 14½ to 18)

Explorer Sea Scout Leader Nick Barber writes:

The Unit currently has 20 members comprising six young women and fourteen young men. Early September 2023 we will also welcome 7 new members from the troop (Casper, Dexter, Eben, Ethan, Lucas Shortman, Lucas Symons and Tennyson).

We continue to see that many of our Explorers are also Young Leaders, helping with the other Sections in an adult leadership capacity. The Young Leader Scheme is run by District's Jonathan Perkins who will send out information periodically on how to progress the Young Leader awards and training. Internally the leadership team will then find places for those wanting to be Young Leaders within another section in Ajax (NB Young Leader Module A is a compulsory requirement prior to working with other sections).

Post Explorers we are regularly seeing these fine young men and women coming back to assist in their down time from university and working life in leadership/instructor roles. Scouting is a movement after all, and we have seen a consistent willingness from members post explorers to contribute to the health and longevity of the group, which I applaud.

Now since last September we have done a lot! Most of our activity can be seen visually on our Facebook page. But I will list the activities here, which included using our new touring kayaks, sailing at Cobnor (In Chichester harbour), power-boat-handling courses, a geocache night hike, we continued with the new format for St George's day, which is now a weekend camp instead of a parade, a trip to Buckingham Palace to pay our respects to HRM the Queen, then held a community memorial service at Giggs Hill Green in remembrance of a truly remarkable monarch and patron of scouting. Summer term involved lots of training for the regatta and the Great River Race. We also attended a film night hosted by Hinchley Wood explorers, Xmas carols with residents from Ditton Reach, Ice skating at Hampton Court Palace, the District Winter Activity weekend (hillwalking in the Peak District), first aid training stage 5, scuba diving, the district wide game and the district shooting competition, a unit litter pick on the Thames using the electric Go Boats, and to top it all off our summer camp in Chichester, Operation X, and a successful Gold DoE Expedition!

Looking forward to the New Year we again have the District Winter Activity weekend, and a good repeat dose of the above activities.

I also encourage every unit member to keep an eye out for upcoming 2024's STV's (Sail Training Voyages) aboard one of the Rona Sailing Projects' purpose-built sail training yachts. I enjoyed these when I was a Venture scout and thoroughly recommend the project. STV's also count towards your Gold DoE Residential element so get booking!

It was great to see Ed, James, Amy, Will and Leon completing their DoE Gold expedition in the New Forest. Well done!

Lastly but most importantly, I'd like to thank my team; Jan, Diane, Sergio, Alex, Dane, and Jamie who make Scouting happen for these amazing young men and women.



DoE Gold expedition setting off.

## OUR FLEET

We continue to invest in our fleet of boats. In March 2023 we took delivery of 9 new touring kayaks, and over Summer 2023 we acquired Hercules, a PYMBS-era Home Counties gig, which we have had restored to serviceable condition.

However, we do need help with boat maintenance so if you are able to lend a hand, or know someone who could be interested, please contact Peter Wadsworth ([peter@ajax.org.uk](mailto:peter@ajax.org.uk)), and look out for requests for volunteers from Ajax Bosun, Alex Soden

## WATER ACTIVITIES TRAINING

Ajax and Warspite continue jointly to operate a Royal Yachting Association 'Recognised Training Centre' at Thames Ditton, which delivers valuable training synergies for both Groups.

This year marks our full return to a normal boating season with delivery of training and qualifications for RYA dinghy sailing, rowing, paddlesports, powerboating, marine VHF radio usage and RYA first aid. Unfortunately, we continue to work through the legacy impact of the Covid pandemic which severely curtailed training and development opportunities for our young members and adult skills' instructors over 2020-22.

## ISLAND BARN

Ajax and Warspite have joint membership of [Island Barn Reservoir Sailing Club](#) located in West Molesey. Unfortunately, over the last 12 months, our use of the training and sailing opportunities at Island Barn were limited because our leadership and skills instructor teams are under-strength. If you are able to help, or know someone who might be interested, please contact Peter Wadsworth ([peter@ajax.org.uk](mailto:peter@ajax.org.uk)).

As Ajax looks to the future, we will update our strategy for the delivery of water activity programmes, including the role of facilities at Island Barn reservoir, and the mix, location, maintenance and (in due course) replacement of our fleet to support those programmes.

## **RONA SAILING PROJECT**

(For young people aged over 14)

Rona Sailing Project (RSP, [www.ronasailingproject.org.uk](http://www.ronasailingproject.org.uk)) is a registered charity which provides affordable sail training on purpose-built yachts. Their stated aim is to provide opportunities for young people to develop a sense of responsibility, resourcefulness and teamwork which will help them throughout their lives. Anyone over the age of 14 can apply for a place and we strongly recommend all Ajaccios to do so. In fact a number of the volunteer Skippers and Mates serving with RSP are Old Ajaccios!.

We encourage our Explorers to get involved and take advantage of this amazing opportunity.

## **DUKE of EDINBURGH AWARDS**

(For young people aged over 14)

Ajax ran two successful Bronze expeditions in October/November 2022 which 9 participants completed. Unusually for the Group, one expedition was on water and the second due to weather constraints was Hiking!!!

We are also delighted that at Summer Camp in Chichester this year we were able to run a Gold Hiking Expedition in the New Forest. This was undertaken by Amy, Ed, James, Leon and Will. They experienced typical English summer rain which made the going very muddy. The team spirit of this group was exceptional and they thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

## **ROYAL NAVY RECOGNITION**

Ajax is one of just 105 Sea Scout Groups in the UK to be officially recognised by the Royal Navy and we have held this recognition continuously from the inception of the Group. Beyond the prestige of RN recognition, there are a number of tangible benefits including access to Grant Aid. Our recent purchase of the touring kayaks through this fund has proved a valuable acquisition for the Group.

Following a relaunch of the scheme some years ago, all RN Recognised Groups are now affiliated with a local RN Unit. Together with nine other Groups in the London area, we are affiliated with the London University Royal Naval Unit.

To maintain RN recognition, all Groups are regularly reviewed to ensure the required standards are maintained. Due to changes in the operation of the scheme we have not had an inspection for some time, I fully expect this to change next year.

## **THANKS**

Another exciting year full of fun and adventures all round and with a new gig on the water and new storage facilities coming soon, I fully expect Ajax to continue to thrive going forwards.

I once again wish to give my heartfelt thanks to all the Leaders, Trustees, Instructors and helpers who volunteer so much time to make Ajax happen, thank you all!

**Chris West**  
**GROUP SCOUT LEADER**

## ABOUT 4TH THAMES DITTON 'AJAX' SEA SCOUTS

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In common with all Scout groups, the 4<sup>th</sup> Thames Ditton 'Ajax' Sea Scouts (the "Group" or "Charity") is a charity established under the Royal Charter granted to The Scout Association dated 4<sup>th</sup> January 1912 as amended by supplemental charters dated 28<sup>th</sup> March 1949, 18<sup>th</sup> February 1959, 5<sup>th</sup> May 1967 and 19<sup>th</sup> July 1991. Trustees are appointed in accordance with the Policy, Organisation and Rules of the Scout Association.

### GROUP INFORMATION AS OF 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2023

Charity Registration Number:	303764
Scout Association Registration Number:	25880
Honorary Roles:	
Group President	Mrs Marguerite Rollason MBE
Group Vice Presidents	Mrs Janet Barber Mrs Doreen Neal
Trustees Ex-Officio (Principal Officers):	
Group Chair	Andy Davison
Group Secretary	Tina Chale
Group Treasurer	Peter Drysdale
Trustees Ex-Officio (Leadership roles):	
Group Scout Leader	Chris West
Assistant Group Scout Leader	Peter Wadsworth
Explorer Sea Scout Leader	Nick Barber
Sea Scout Leader	Diane Davison
Cub Scout Leader	Ruth Mortby
Beaver Scout Leader	Lydia Thomas
Trustees Nominated:	
Group Advisers	George Barber Mark Faulkner Mark Marriott
Youth Adviser	Alex Soden
Supporter	Raymond Mears
Trustees Elected:	
Parent representative (Scout section)	Mark Dence
Parent representative (Explorer unit)	Peter Lloyd-Jones
Parent representative (Cub section)	Heather Ryder
Special Projects Adviser	Andrew Roberts
Parent representative (Scout section)	Andrew Rowan
Parent representative (Explorer unit)	Adrian Smith
Trustees Co-opted	
Parent representative (Cub section)	Nicola Slammon
Custodian Trustee:	The Scout Association Trust Corporation
Independent Examiner:	Barry Hitchens
Contact Name and Address:	Chris West 4 Hartford Road Epsom KT19 9JD

## TRUSTEES' REPORT

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The Trustees present their report and the financial statements for the 4<sup>th</sup> Thames Ditton 'Ajax' Sea Scout Group for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.

### Responsibilities of the Trustees

Charity law requires the Trustees to keep accounting records and prepare annual statements of account for the Charity which must be audited or independently examined and provided to the Charity Commission. In preparing the annual statement of accounts the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- Comply with applicable accounting standards subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the annual statement of accounts; and
- Prepare the annual statement of accounts on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume the Charity will continue its operations.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and are responsible for safeguarding its assets and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

### Review of Activity of the Charity

The Group currently has an active Beaver Scout Colony, Cub Scout Pack and Sea Scout Troop and a partnership agreement with the Ajax Explorer Sea Scout Unit. Key details of each Section are as follows:

- The Beaver Colony is for boys and girls aged 6 to 8 years. The Colony meets once a week and as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 had 19 members (2022: 19).
- The Cub Scout Pack is for boys and girls aged 8 to 10 ½ years. The Pack meets once a week and as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 had 34 members (2022: 31).
- The Sea Scout Troop is for boys and girls aged 10 ½ to 14. The Troop normally meets twice a week and as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 had 46 members (2022: 48).
- The Explorer Sea Scout Unit is for boys and girls aged 14 ½ to 18. The Unit normally meets once a week and as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 had 21 members (2022: 19)

All Sections have continued to work in accordance with the progressive training scheme as laid down by the Scout Association.

The Group has continued to operate a Royal Yachting Association Training Centre based at the Water Activities Centre and operated jointly with Warspite Sea Scouts. The RYA Centre's Principal is supported by a team of RYA Instructors with qualifications covering sailing, power boating, VHF communications and first aid.

The Group is one of just 105 Sea Scout Groups in the United Kingdom recognised by the Royal Navy. This prestigious and beneficial recognition is subject to regular inspections at approximately 18-month intervals. To retain recognition, the Group must demonstrate that it continues to achieve the standard required, in appearance, dress, bearing and badge work, as well as showing progress in efficiency.

### Reserves

The Trustees have adopted a formal policy on reserves which is reflected in these accounts. The policy provides that reserves be maintained at a level which has regard to:

- The risks associated with each stream of income and expenditure varying from that budgeted
- The planned activity level
- The Group's commitments
- The need for adequate readily realisable resources to meet the Group's commitments (after subscriptions and camp fees) for the coming twelve-month period.

Readily realisable resources are defined as the balances at the bank less current liabilities and the balance on designated funds for WAC building development.

As at 31 March 2023, the Group held reserves of £32,050 (2022: £20,706), which is above the level of reserves of £30,000 required under the policy.

## **Investment Policy**

The Group does not have sufficient funds to invest in longer term investments. All funds are held in cash or "at call" short term investments with The Scout Association, Skipton Building Society and Cambridge & Counties Bank.

## **Governance**

The Group's governing documents are those of The Scout Association. They consist of a Royal Charter, The By-Laws of the Association and The Policy, Organisation and Rules of The Scout Association.

The Group is a trust established under rules which are common to all Scout Groups.

The Trustees are appointed in accordance with The Policy, Organisation and Rules of The Scout Association.

The Group is managed by an Executive Committee made up of all the Charity's Trustees. As charity trustees, they are responsible for complying with legislation applicable to charities. This includes the registration, keeping of proper accounts and making of appropriate returns to the Charity Commission.

The Group Executive Committee consists of independent representatives comprising Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary and parent representatives of each Section together with the Group Scout Leader, Assistant Group Scout Leaders and the Leaders of each Section. The Committee normally meets five times per year.

The Committee exists to support the Group Scout Leader in meeting the responsibilities of the Group and is responsible for:

- The maintenance of Group property;
- The raising of funds and the administration of the Group finance;
- The insurance of persons, property and equipment;
- Group public occasions;
- Assisting in the recruitment of leaders and other adult support;
- Appointing advisors other than those who are elected.

## **Risk Assessment**

The Committee has identified the major risks to which they believe the Group is exposed. These have been reviewed and systems established to mitigate against them as follows:

*Damage to buildings and equipment:* The Group would request the use of buildings and equipment from neighbouring organisations. The Group has sufficient buildings and contents insurance in place to mitigate against permanent loss.

*Injury to leaders, members and helpers:* The Group, through the capitation fees, contributes to The Scout Association's national accident insurance policy. Risk Assessments are undertaken before all activities.

*Reduced income from fund raising:* The Group is primarily reliant upon income from subscriptions and fund raising. The Group does hold a reserve to ensure the continuity of activities should there be a major reduction in income. The Committee could increase the level of subscriptions to increase the income to the Group either temporarily or permanently.

*Reduction or loss of members:* The Group provides activities for young people aged 6 to 18. If there were a reduction in membership of a particular Section or of the Group as a whole then there would have to be a contraction, consolidation or closure of a Section, or in the worst case scenario, the complete closure of the Group.

*Reduction or loss of leaders:* The Group is totally reliant upon volunteers to run and administer the activities of the Group. If there were a reduction in the number of leaders to an unacceptable level in a particular Section or the Group as a whole then there would have to be a contraction, consolidation or closure of a Section, or in the worst case scenario, the complete closure of the Group.

The Group requires two signatories for all payments to provide reasonable assurance against material mismanagement or loss of money and holds comprehensive insurance policies to ensure that insurable risks are covered.

**Group Objectives**

The aim of the Group is to promote the development of young people in achieving their full physical, intellectual, social and spiritual potentials, as individuals, as responsible citizens and as members of their local, national and international community. The method of achieving this aim is by providing an enjoyable and attractive scheme of progressive training, based on the Scout Promise and Law and guided by trained adult leadership.

## INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

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### **4<sup>th</sup> Thames Ditton Ajax Sea Scouts Charity Number 303764**

#### **Report of the Independent examiner to the Trustees of 4<sup>th</sup> Thames Ditton Ajax Sea Scouts**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above Charity for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 that are set out on the pages attached.

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

As the charity's trustees, 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 Trust's 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 that gives me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- a) the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act or
- b) the accounts did not comply with the accounting records or
- c) the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of the 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 the 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.

Barry Hitchens- Australian Society of Accountants  
24 Effingham Road, Long Ditton, Surrey, KT6 5JY

  
27<sup>th</sup> September  
2023

## FINANCIAL REPORT - YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2023

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Prepared By Peter Drysdale, Group Treasurer

Ajax Sea Scout Group remains in good financial health. Although Covid is largely behind us it throws a long shadow which meant that 2022/23 was not quite back to normal.

### **Operating Highlights**

In round numbers, cash in the bank as at the year end stands at £74,000 (2022: £97,000) a net reduction of £23,000.

Overall, the Income and Expenditure statement shows a net deficit of £13,000. Net Operations was a deficit of £4,000. Subscription Income was £5,000 up compared to 2021/22. But the big increase in apparent Income is due to raw income from activities and fundraising. Costs are largely back to pre-covid levels but there was increased expenditure on maintenance (reflecting increased activity) and £2,000 of insurance for the 2 minibuses kindly donated to us by Hinchley Wood School (one since sold). Fundraising, net of costs, contributed £5,000 – rather less than pre-covid levels.

Major expenditure accounted for £14,000 – principally £5,000 on Kayaks (actual cost £10,000, for which we had received a £5,000 grant from the Royal Navy in 2021/22), with £4,000 on new tents, and £2,000 on a new generator.

The difference between the declared I&E deficit of £13,000 and the cash outflow of £23,000 is that the £5,000 RN grant for the kayaks had been received in 2021/22 and £5,000 Gift Aid for 2022/23 was not actually received until after year end.

### **Notes to the financial statements 31 March 2023**

#### **1 Basis of preparation of accounts**

##### 1.1 Basis of accounting

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s) to these accounts. The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (the Charities SORP) and with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102). The Charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

##### 1.2 Going Concern

The Trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

#### **2 Accounting Policies**

##### 2.1 Income recognition

All regularly recurring income is recognised in the period in which it is received. This applies to Subscriptions, Gift Aid on subscriptions and Investment Income.

Donations are recognised once received. In the event that a donation is subject to conditions that require a level of performance before the Charity is entitled to the funds, the income is deferred and not recognised until either those conditions are fully met, or the fulfilment of those conditions is wholly within the control of the Charity and it is probable that those conditions will be fulfilled in the reporting period.

Any Gift Aid amount recovered on a donation is considered to be part of that gift and is treated as an addition to the same fund as the initial donation unless the donor or the terms of the appeal have specified otherwise. It is recognised in the period in which it is received.

Restricted donations and grants will be recognised in the period in which the associated costs are incurred and until then will be treated as creditors.

Income from Fundraising and Activities is recognised in the period in which the fundraising event or activity takes place. Deposits received in prior periods will be deferred until the period in which the activity takes place.

All other income is recognised in the period in which it is received.

## 2.2 Expenditure and liabilities

A liability exists where there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the Charity to that expenditure, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. All such liabilities will ordinarily be discharged as soon as possible. Only material liabilities not discharged by the end of the period will be accrued.

Some annual costs eg Insurance, Subscriptions, Rent and other similar dues which extend beyond the current period and which on a strict accruals basis would to that extent ordinarily be accrued, will be recognised in full in the period in which they are paid.

All expenses including support costs and governance costs are allocated or apportioned to the applicable expenditure headings.

The classification between headings is as follows:

- Expenditure on fundraising includes all expenditure associated with raising funds for the charity.
- Expenditure on charitable activities of the Group includes all costs associated with furthering the charitable purposes of the Group through the provision of its charitable activities.

All expenditure on fundraising events or activities is recognised in the period in which the fundraising event or activity occurs. Prior period deposits will be treated as prepayments.

Materiality: Accruals of expenditure other than that for Fundraising or Activities will only be made where they exceed £500 individually or £1,000 in total.

## 3 Assets

The lease and building are held by The Scout Association Trust Corporation on Behalf of 1st Cuddington "Warspite" and 4th Thames Ditton "Ajax" Sea Scout Groups. Ground rent is reviewed by Elmbridge Borough Council every seven years based on Retail Price Index since the last review. The current ground rent is £113 per annum. The current lease expires in 2078 but is being renegotiated to include part of the trailer park opposite the WAC. As the lease cannot be assigned or transferred and does not permit subletting it is not considered to have any market value. There is a legal agreement between the two Groups for a Joint Liaison Committee meeting to take place at intervals of not exceeding six months to review matters of mutual interest

## 4 Funds

Unrestricted General Funds are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the Charity. Designated Funds are funds set aside out of unrestricted General Funds for specific purposes or projects. Restricted Funds are funds subject to specific restrictive conditions imposed by the donors or by the purpose of the appeal. The reduction in Restricted Funds reflects the application of the £5,000 RN grant towards the purchase of kayaks. No restricted donations or grants were received in the year.

## 5 Insurance Policies

The WAC building is insured for reinstatement cost of £883,000. Contents at £95,000 and the boats at £90,000.

**Income & Expenditure 2022 - 2023**

	<b>Notes</b>	<b>2023 £</b>	<b>2022 £</b>
<b>Income from:</b>			
Donations, Legacies. Subscriptions and similar income	1	34,321	25,626
Camp fees		35,199	23,431
Other activities in furtherance of the Charities objects			2,752
Fundraising		21,572	70
Investment Income		647	674
<b>Total</b>		<b>91,739</b>	<b>52,553</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>			
Fundraising Costs		16,256	115
Expenses of the activities by the Group		88,493	59,739
<b>Total</b>		<b>104,749</b>	<b>59,854</b>
<b>Net Income</b>		<b>(13,010)</b>	<b>(7,301)</b>

**Balance Sheet**

	<b>Notes</b>	<b>2023 £</b>	<b>2022 £</b>
<b>Reconciliation of Funds</b>			
Total Funds Brought Forward		95,425	102,726
Total Funds Carried Forward		82,416	95,425
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Cash at bank and in hand	2	73,698	96,819
Debtors and prepayments	3	12,075	(4,012)
Stock of Uniform		4,243	2,618
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	4	(7,600)	
<b>Net Assets</b>		<b>82,416</b>	<b>95,425</b>
<b>Represented by:</b>			
Restricted Funds		1,500	5,987
Designated Funds		48,866	68,732
Unrestricted Funds		32,050	20,706
		<b>82,416</b>	<b>95,425</b>

## Notes to the Accounts

<b>1 <u>Analysis of Donations etc</u></b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Subscriptions	28,122	23,015
Donations and Legacies		290
Grants	4,987	
Covid Grant		2,096
Other	1,212	225
<b>Total</b>	<b>34,321</b>	<b>25,626</b>

<b>2 <u>Cash at bank and in hand</u></b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Current Accounts - HSBC		
Camp	2,751	1,321
Main	1,667	1,688
Nr 3	10	1,134
Bmm	3,552	4,166
Soldo	195	304
Subs	1,713	8,043
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,888</b>	<b>16,656</b>
Investment Accounts		
Scout Association	94	134
Skipton	8,972	25,826
Cambridge & Counties	54,744	54,203
<b>Total</b>	<b>63,810</b>	<b>80,163</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>73,698</b>	<b>96,819</b>

<b>3 <u>Debtors and prepayments</u></b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Cobnor	4,290	2,640
Activities	2,969	
Gift Aid	4,500	
Other	316	
Prepayments		-665
Prepayments - Donations & Grants		-5,987
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,075</b>	<b>-4,012</b>

<b>4 Creditors</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>
Defibrillator	1,000
National Regatta	3,212
SCRAM 2023	780
Esher May Fair	690
Uniform Costs	1,418
Environment Agency	500
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,600</b>

<b><u>Designated Funds</u></b>	Op Balance £	Income £	Expenditure £	Redesignated £	Cl Balance £
Building Development	64,433		1,000	-52,567	10,866
Building Repairs				7,500	7,500
All Craft	1,303	4,987	10,107	8,817	5,000
Tentage	106		3,900	5,294	1,500
HQ Security	2,500			6,500	9,000
National Regatta	390			-390	0
New Lease & Trailer Park Project				15,000	15,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>68,732</b>	<b>4,987</b>	<b>15,007</b>	<b>-9,846</b>	<b>48,866</b>

These accounts for the year ending 31 March 2023 were approved by the Group's trustees at a meeting of the Group's Executive Committee held on 17 September 2023.

Authorised signatories for and on behalf of the Group's trustees:



Chris West, Group Scout Leader



Peter Drysdale, Group Treasurer



Andrew Davison, Group Chair

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# Ajax Sea Scout Group and Explorer Sea Scout Unit

## KEY CONTACTS

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Group Scout Leader	Chris West	07967 806818	gsl@ajax.org.uk
Asst. Group Scout Leader	Peter Wadsworth	07527 554029	peter@ajax.org.uk
Beaver Colony	Lydia Thomas	07950 790153	beavers@ajax.org.uk
Cub Pack	Ruth Mortby	07941 206568	cubs@ajax.org.uk
Sea Scout Troop	Diane Davison	07814 131377	troop@ajax.org.uk
Explorer Sea Scout Unit	Nick Barber	07981 037052	explorers@ajax.org.uk
Group Chair	Andy Davison	07970 265921	andy.davison@ajax.org.uk
Group Secretary	Anjani Srivastava		secretary@ajax.org.uk
Group Treasurer	Peter Drysdale		treasurer@ajax.org.uk

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For more information about this report or membership of Ajax contact:

Chris West  
Email: [gsl@ajax.org.uk](mailto:gsl@ajax.org.uk)

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Ajax Sea Scout Group and Explorer Sea Scout Unit  
The Chiefy Sharman Water Activities Centre  
19a Ditton Reach  
Thames Ditton  
Surrey KT7 0XB

(No facility to receive mail at this address)

Telephone: 020 8398 4777

Website: [www.ajax.org.uk](http://www.ajax.org.uk)

Ajax Sea Scouts is a Registered Charity No: 303764

**4TH THAMES DITTON AJAX SEA SCOUTS**

England & Wales - Charity number 303764

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# Accounts

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# Ajax Sea Scout Group and Explorer Sea Scout Unit

Annual Report and Accounts  
for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022

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Summer Camp 2022 – Lake Bala, Wales

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**74<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting  
of the Group Council of the  
4<sup>th</sup> Thames Ditton 'Ajax' Sea Scouts  
(Royal Navy Recognised Group No. 60)  
31<sup>st</sup> August 2022**

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Agenda

1. Group Chairman's welcome.
2. Group Scout Leader's report.
3. Group Chairman's report.
4. Group Treasurer's report and adoption of the Trustees' Annual Report and Statement of Financial Activity for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022
5. Approval of nominations for honorary roles:
  - a. Group President
  - b. Group Vice Presidents
6. Approval of the Group Scout Leader's nominations for the Group Executive Committee for the coming year:
  - a. Group Chair
  - b. Group Vice-Chair
  - c. Group Advisers
  - d. Youth Representative
  - e. Other members of the Group Executive Committee.
7. Confirmation of Section Leaders wishing to be members of the Group Executive Committee for the coming year.
8. Election of lay officials for the coming year:
  - a. Group Treasurer
  - b. Group Secretary
  - c. Independent Examiner.
9. Election of Section Representatives to the Group Executive Committee for the coming year.
10. Any other business.

## GROUP CHAIR'S REPORT

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This is my sixth and final year as Group Chair and it feels like a good time to hand over the reins. It has been an incredible privilege serving as Chair and I want to thank Mark Marriott, Chris West and the Exec for their help and support. Ajax is undoubtedly in great shape. We have come through Covid with a very strong leadership team, have strength in depth across our Group and are in a financially robust position.

Ajax has made huge strides with our building and recently gained planning consent to install a secure compound in the adjacent car park which Ajax and Warspite will use to store our largest boats and trailers. As with the riverside extension of our boundary fence in 2020 we are very grateful for the support of Elmbridge Borough Council officers and Ditton Reach residents. Funding for both projects has relied on third party grants of just under £50,000.

With a following wind the compound will be installed later this year subject to a new long-term lease. Getting our largest boats off-site will improve safety and give us much needed operational space, especially in the winter when many of our boats need to be hauled out.

I would like to acknowledge the partnership we share with Rich Hunt and Warspite which continues to work for the benefit of both Groups. Rich is a constant source of inspiration and always on-hand to further the interests of both Groups.

Behind every great organisation you will find a treasurer managing the cash and keeping the books in order. We are very indebted to Peter Drysdale who keeps a real-time record of our accounts and more importantly constantly improves the way we do things.

Going forward I hope we can make a return to reservoir sailing in the very near future. Island Barn has some shortcomings but almost always provides a consistent breeze and great conditions, particularly for beginners who benefit from the wide-open space away from other river users.

It was a treat for me drop in on the Bala Scout camp and to witness first-hand the rituals, fun and activity that take place at camp which is very much a feature for our Group and really does instil skills of life.

I also want to thank our wonderful leaders who work so hard to make Ajax such a successful Group. We are very fortunate to be led by Chris West who combines a very broad skill set and passion to get things done and improve the way we operate. If anyone is contemplating coming on board and joining our leadership team you don't need a scouting background and there will be plenty of support and encouragement.

I look forward to watching Ajax progress and thrive and have total confidence that it is in very safe hands.

Andrew Roberts  
Group Chair

## GROUP SCOUT LEADER'S REPORT

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It's been a few years since I've had the pleasure of writing a report after a full year of mostly uninterrupted Scouting, and it's certainly been a packed year full of activity.

Going back to the end of last year, the final term was mostly back to normal, with the Scouts and Explorers getting in a weekend of sailing down at Cobnor, Chichester Harbour. Unfortunately their second one was cancelled due to the poor weather conditions. In November, the Group was once again able to march in full to Giggs Hill Green for a well-attended Remembrance Day service. And finally, the Cubs enjoyed a weekend away at Walton Firs enjoying all sorts of activities.

At the beginning of 2022 we planned for a full year of normal scouting activities and for a return to all our important fundraising events. In the leadership team we kicked off with a large number of First Aid courses as we all raced to catch up with our qualifications and bring ourselves back up to speed after several years without the ability to retrain everyone.

In February and March the Cubs and the Scouts both managed to get away for their own winter camps. It was also Esher District's turn to host the Chief Scout's Gold Award ceremony. Congratulations to Cameron Stephen and Jonathan Craig for achieving their Chief Scout's Gold Awards.



In April we had St. George's Day, and for the first time this year we tried a new type of event that would hopefully appeal more to our members. Along with our friends from the Dittons Scout Group, our Scouts and Explorers went up to Polyapes to camp for the weekend. Getting up at the crack of dawn on the Sunday we lit a fire and gathered around it to learn more about the importance of St. George to Scouting. After this we made our way to the flag mast for a more formal ceremony commemorating St. George's Day. It seems that this was a popular new way to handle St. George's Day and hopefully we've started a new tradition.



St George's Day – Polyapes Campsite

In May we returned once again to the Cobnor activity centre for a weekend of sailing with the Scouts and Explorers. Following that our ever-popular Esher May Fair event returned for the first time in 3 years. We were blessed with a baking hot day which produced a great turn out and wonderful sales from our beer, BBQ and tea tent.

In July we were once again hosts, with our friends at Warspite, for the National Scout Pulling and Kayaking Regatta. Again we were blessed with fine weather and whilst not as many Groups attended as normal, the rest of us had a great weekend of racing, with winners in all teams. As usual Ajax ran the tea tent to support the event, and provide a little extra fund raising for us.

The week after the regatta saw the return of the Claygate Flower Show. Ajax provide the bar for this event and again, the weather was amazing. This resulted in a sell out event for us, which is of course a great result.

In late July it was time for summer camp, this year we were heading back to Lake Bala in North Wales. A fantastically beautiful site, surrounded by hills and our field is on the shore of the lake for very easy access to the water. The weather can be quite unpredictable there, in fact we were lashing the tents to the ground with high winds and rain at the same time Surrey was in massive drought. On the whole, the camp was a complete success. The Explorers enjoying white water kayaking and for the first time canyoning. The Scouts getting in plenty of sailing, kayaking and some stunning hikes to the nearby waterfalls.

As Andrew has mentioned in his report, this was his last year a Group Chair. Over the past few years Andrew has had a massive impact on our Group, leading the way with improvement projects such as our new toilets, accessible shower and toilet, new changing rooms and the new fence, which included an increase in our land. Andrew is currently working on the project to install a secure compound in the car park across the road. With this in mind Andrew will not be leaving us, he will be appointed as Chair of the Special Projects committee, with a remit to carry on with these large and important projects, unencumbered by the hassles of the day to day running of the GEC. Andrew's enthusiasm and drive to get these large projects done has been absolutely invaluable to the Group, combined with his excellent communication and negotiation skills that have ensured our local neighbours and the local council continue to be our good friends and supporters to help us grow and improve as a Group. I'd like to offer my heartfelt thanks to Andrew for all his hard work and I look forward to carrying on with these exciting projects in his new role.

As Andrew will be stepping down as Chair of the GEC, I will be appointing a new Chair. Luckily, he is also called Andrew, in the form of Andy Davison, husband to our Scout Leader Diane. Andy has been an active member of Ajax for a long time now and I am very excited for him to join the GEC. Andy is meticulous, organised and driven, all skills which he will bring to driving the GEC forwards. Welcome onboard Andy!

As I look forwards, I see Ajax continuing to thrive and flourish, with such a group of dedicated and enthusiastic people always pushing us to improve I don't see how we can fail. Thanks to everyone who has helped us recover and return with Sea Scouting stronger than ever.

Lastly, many of you will be familiar with the name Chiefy Sharman. He was GSL for 39 years from 1949 to 1988 and generally known as the man who made Ajax what it is today. This September would have been his centenary and to mark the occasion his daughters, Jill and Joy, have sent us this message:

*My sister, Joy, and I would like to make a donation to Ajax Sea Scouts to celebrate our Dad's, "Chiefy" Sharman, centenary on September 2nd this year.*

*Ajax meant so very much to him because he had a lifelong belief that scouting as an organisation could help young people develop and grow whatever their skills, talents and background. He first joined the scouts when he was at school and then became involved with scouting in Surbiton whilst spending his school holidays with an Aunt & Uncle who lived in Tolworth. His links with scouting even continued when he joined the Royal Navy in the Second World War and was part of a deep sea Rover crew on HMS Indefatigable. After the war he renewed his links with the Surbiton troop part of which left to become Ajax Sea Scouts and as they say "the rest is history", and what a rich and wonderful history it has been!*

## Here are the reports from of our training Sections:

### **BEAVER SCOUT COLONY**

(For young people aged 6 to 8)

Beaver Colony Leader Lydia Thomas writes:

Fondly reflecting on the last year, our small leadership team, have successfully run a range of fun musters. We currently have nineteen Beavers, and three leaders; Lydia, Scott and Adrian. A full year without any COVID lockdown interruptions enabled the Beavers to earn 176 badges this year, compared with only 100 last year. Some badges earned this year included Nautical skills, Time on the Water, Experiment, Builder, Adventure, Creative, Teamwork, Explore & Health and Fitness.

Our Autumn term began with a ramble through Stokes field and building a den in the woods. We learnt about world issues of different sorts and talked about how to solve them. The Beavers invented machines, created them out of recycled materials and presented to the colony how their machines would help stop litter, pollution, and climate change. We also learnt about endangered animals and created animal masks. As always, there were also lots of different team games and problem-solving activities throughout the term. In December, we made salt dough Christmas ornaments and painted them, and ended the term with a Ringo and sledging session at Sandown Sports.

We entered the Spring term with a fizz and a bang by conducting science experiments. We learnt about Lunar New Year and the Zodiac story and watched Lion and Dragon dances. We created our own dragon puppets and played a dragon dance game. After learning about kitchen health and safety and creating some posters for the galley, the Beavers cooked pancakes on Shrove Tuesday, and had a pancake tossing race. A highlight of this term was the plasticine modelling workshop run by Steve from Art For Everyone, where the Beavers created models of themselves. The last muster of term was when we said goodbye to Hugo Goodman after his years of help at Beavers.

As always, our Summer term involved lots of outdoor fun and this year began with a nature theme for many of our activities. We learnt about birds and made bird feeders, and once we mastered tying knots, we made knotted macrame butterfly feeders for the Beavers to put in their gardens. After discussing wild animals and bugs in our area and how litter can affect them, we conducted a litter pick outside the WAC and later had a bug hunt on Stokes field. We had a tour of Esher fire station and took turns using the hose! We celebrated Swedish Midsommar with a party in the park where we learnt a Swedish song and dance, made flower garland headbands, and played some team games. We also cooked and tried various Swedish foods. A highlight of the term was the joint sleepover with Cubs at Jump In trampolining park, followed by boating and St George's Day parade.

This was my first year as Section Leader, and I'm looking forward to another year of activities. A huge thank you to Hugo, Scott and Adrian for all their help this year, and thank you to our Explorer young leaders, Amy and Leon.



## CUB SCOUT PACK

(For young people aged 8 to 10½)

Assistant Cub Scout Leader Dan Callaghan writes:

Nothing's stopped us this year, that's for sure! Off the back of an amazing Summer Cub Camp 2021, the Cub leadership team has been busy cramming in all the face-to-face activities and adventures forgone during the last couple of years.

Our key highlights for the year have included:

- **Winter 2021 Cub Camp at Walton Firs:** thank goodness for the cabins providing some protection from the elements, it might have been cold, but oh what a great time we had! Adventures for all the young people including low ropes, bouldering, archery and caving.
- In Winter half term the WAC was turned into an **Egyptian themed escape room** with puzzles and physical challenges to be solved. Smoke machines, theatre blacks, lighting and full theming - the leaders (+ Pete – thanks Pete!) went all out for an immersive adventure experience for the Cubs.
- Our Spring extravaganza saw the WAC once again taking on a new role, this time as a **fully-fledged wizarding school** for the weekend, where students were sorted into houses with sorting hat cupcakes, made magic wands, practiced spells, created slime and played with potions – followed by a formal dinner under an enchanted ceiling with floating candles.
- **St George's Day** and the Cubs joined together with fellow Groups for a service to renew our promises – but we couldn't let an event pass by without some Ajax magic first – how about a sleepover beforehand at **Bounce Trampoline Park?**
- All this and we hadn't even reached the Summer term! After being delayed by 2 years due to Covid, we were finally able to realise the ambition of getting the **Cub section afloat** on the river during musters. Thanks to some strategic planning and coordination with Warspite, we managed to give all our Cubs the opportunities for driving power boats, rowing single handers and also rowing as part of a team (Ajax's future in National Sea Scout Pulling Regatta is looking bright!). And, after weeks of being told to stay in the boats (how boring of us leaders!), we ended the boating term with canoe sessions where Cubs spent probably as much time in the river as in the boats – no complaints were heard though in the glorious weather afforded to us.
- And **Summer Camp 2022?** Yes, that happened too! A return to Polyapes, but this time camping on The Ridge. As leaders it was a delight to see our more experienced Cubs supporting the younger pack members and fully embracing the scouting lifestyle. All members of the pack have developed so much in just a year. Our theme this year (at Cub request) was nature/survival, and as leaders I hope we met their expectations with our Ninja Warrior themed assault course including a slackline amongst our many planned activities!

These highlights are just some of our larger events for the year, but our weekly program was no less ambitious: we welcomed back the Astronomy Dome for an evening under the virtual stars, had a hugely successful trip to Teddington Lifeboat Station, ran several weekend nature walks at Bushy Park, a Cub Hike around Esher, a water fight at Collets, local knowledge hike around Thames Ditton, as well as learning about new cultures, the environment and science during our evening musters. A new feature for 2022 was a Cubs in charge night where us leaders handed over planning to a team of Sixers who came up with (and ran) an evening muster - so they definitely deserve a mention for their contribution to our 2021/2 programme.

It's with sadness that we said goodbye to Lucy, one of our leaders at the end of the Summer Term. She will be missed by the Cubs and also the leader team. Just during the last year Lucy introduced our Cubs to many new skills including cooking cakes in hollowed oranges on fires, creating artwork out of blackberries and oversaw some epic shelter building at summer camp!

We've had some changes in numbers as Cubs have left to take part in other activities on Monday nights, but the pack will soon be restored to its full and raucous strength of 36 come September. Parent involvement with Cubs over the past term is something else to be called out. With a small leader team in Cubs, getting the support from parents during our musters and events made such a difference to the activities we could run (and to us leaders as well). A shout out here to the setup/take down teams, as well as meal-time helpers during Summer Camp and also for all the parent support which was critical in allowing us to get Cubs on the water each week.

To my fellow Cub leaders: Ruth, Lucy, Alex, Gavan and Emma –didn't we do great! Just kidding, we did, but - on behalf of the Cubs - thank you – it was exhausting just writing up this list of accomplishments for the year, but a great chance to reflect on the dynamic programme we've all helped build and deliver. To our 2021/2022 young leaders, thank you also, you'll be missed (and not just as target practice for our end of term water fight!). Given that I have the chance to write this report this year, I want to take the opportunity to say a massive thank you to Ruth who once again has made the last year happen so successfully – with her passion for providing the best scouting experience for Cubs.

And so, I end by saying, 2021/2 = awesome, 2022/3 = just wait and see what we've got in store! New Cubs, new leaders, new activities... Ajax Cubs



Various Cub activities.

## **SEA SCOUT TROOP**

(For young people aged 10½ to 14)

Sea Scout Leader Diane Davison writes:

### **BE PREPARED!**

Never has the Scout motto been so appropriate. We look back at a year of continual change when Covid was still affecting the normal running of Scouts.

We started off the year last September with a relatively normal programme which ran well with Boating happening alongside First Aid training, in fact everything ran smoothly until the arrival of Omicron! This outbreak started to affect us and from the beginning of December attendance at Scouts was dropping as infections in schools started to rise.

We did manage to hold a mass investiture ceremony for some 15 Scouts who had been delayed by the main bout of Covid. In the term we managed to cover off an introduction to Ajax and its history, ably supported by George Barber, former Group Scout Leader and long-term Ajaccio, in addition to pioneering skills, knots, rope skills, expedition planning and a navigation mini hike at Black Pond. However, our Christmas plans were thwarted by Covid and we were unable to entertain the local residents.

Spring term took a very different shape with half the Scouts at the WAC and half on Zoom. We still managed to get some outdoor activities for the whole Troop including skiing, high ropes, and wild games in Oxshott woods. This term also saw a brilliant charity initiative by the Scouts – originally themed "Coats for Calais", this activity morphed into a massive collection of coats that went off to Ukraine to support humanitarian aid work there. A brilliant success for all the Scouts. Another successful environmental initiative was taken on in Scouts, namely to green the WAC! So, many of you will have noticed the recycling of our rubbish that is now taking place; the new bins, the new collection service and the posters around the WAC. A river clean by kayak is also planned.

Summer, with infections at bay, we have been boating and trying to get our skills and experience up to our usual standard. Sadly we did not perform brilliantly at the regatta with a few notable exceptions: Will D excelled in the Sculling as did Chase, Logan and Dylan in the Double Dinghy. Well done all!!

As a leadership team, we were a little disappointed by the lack of attendance at Saturday boating musters in the autumn term. Boating is at the core of what Sea Scouts is all about. This trend carried over into the summer term with a small number of committed Scouts turning up each week. If we are to bring home some trophies we need to put in the work, we are up against tough competition!!

**SUMMER CAMP!** Undeniably the highlight of the Ajax year. 8 days of brilliant activities on a stunning lake in North Wales. Sailing, kayaking, canoeing, SUP boarding, giant SUP boarding, day hikes, knife skills, camping, cooking and cleaning skills! An amazing experience and huge fun for all our Scouts. Thanks go to our Patrol Leaders who rose to the challenge: Amalia, Daisy, Matthew, Will and Zac. And to our Assistant Patrol Leaders who gave great support: Caspar, Ethan, Leo, Oliver and Tennyson

The numbers in the Troop have remained fairly consistent at around 45. The leadership team remains strong but work pressures prey on available time so we are always on the look out for people who can commit time to helping us.

I am as ever totally indebted to this wonderful group of volunteer Leaders, Instructors, and Young Leaders who make all of the above possible. Again this year their commitment to the Scouts has been exemplary. Without their generosity of time, holidays, skills, creativity and good humour Ajax would not be the same!

My grateful thanks go to Jamie Ashley, Harry Ashley, Bernadette Banks, Nick Barber, Simon Corkin, Andy Davison, Robert Elliott, Andrew Rowan, Barbara Ruis, Phil Shortman, Rob Stephens, James Taylor, Peter Wadsworth, Chris West, Dane Wilson - who all regularly attend musters.

Also thanks to Miky Davison, Izzy Elliot, Hugo Goodman, Max Kingdon, Alex Soden, Kristian Squire and Lauren Thompson-Chisnall : most of whom on returning from university or taking work holidays provide invaluable help and enthusiasm at some musters and at Summer Camp.

And last, but certainly not least, our Young Leaders Hannah, Molly, Isabelle Poppy and Tilly who help week in week out! Over the past 6 months, all of these Young Leaders have made the transition to becoming full Leaders which is brilliant!

## **EXPLORER SEA SCOUT UNIT (For young people aged 14½ to 18)**

Explorer Sea Scout Leader Nick Barber writes:

The Unit currently has 19 members comprising six young women, thirteen young men. Our newest arrivals are Jonathan, Nora, Molly and Cameron.

We continue to see that many of our Explorers are also Young Leaders, helping with the other Sections in an adult leadership capacity. The Young Leader Scheme is now currently being run by District's Jonathan Perkins who will send out information periodically on how to progress the Young Leader awards and training.

Post Explorers we are regularly seeing these fine young men and women coming back to assist in their down time from university and working life in leadership/ instructor roles. Scouting is a movement after all, and these next generations have shown a willingness to contribute to the health and longevity of the group.

Since last September we have done a lot of SUPB/kayaking, sailing at Cobnor, power-boat-handling courses, a mystery night hike, trialled a new format for St George's Day, which was a weekend camp instead of a parade, hosted 1st Hinchley Wood Explorers for a boating evening, and ran a number of DoE expeditions. We also got back into our competitiveness at our National Sea Scout Pulling regatta; huge kudos to the team for their efforts. Particularly Ben W who stole the show right at the end with some great determination and sportsmanship whilst being clapped on by a very full audience just before the award ceremony.

The highlight of the year has to be our fantastic Summer Camp, which this year was at Lake Bala in North Wales. The Unit had a great week and this year we were joined by 1st Hinchley Wood Explorers, which worked really well. The combination of Land and Sea Scout Explorers joining up allowed us to mix and match permits for boating and hill walking, which resulted in a fantastic program offering; coastal powerboating, mountain walking, canyoning, white water kayaking and boating on the beautiful Lake Bala and making friends we had not yet met.

Looking forward to the New Year we have the District Winter Activity Weekend, which takes place in the Peak District and we plan to be travelling via our own mini-buses.

I also encourage every member to keep an eye out for 2023's STV (Sail Training Voyages) aboard one of the Rona Sailing Projects' purpose-built sail training yachts. I enjoyed these when I was a Venture Scout and thoroughly recommend the project. STV's also count towards your Gold DoE Residential element so get booking!

It was great to also see Molly, Isabelle, Tilly, Poppy and Hannah completing their DoE Gold expedition which had been postponed so many times due to Covid.

Also, to Miky for her Queen's Scout Award – finally presented to her at Windsor. Brilliant stuff!

Lastly, I'd like to thank my team; Jan, Diane, Sergio, Alex, Dane, and Jamie who make Scouting happen for these amazing young men and women.



DoE Bronze expedition setting off



Remembrance parade



Esher May Fair – Mayor's opening ceremony



Miky #Queenscout



DoE Gold Exped #Be prepared



Summer Joint Explorer Camp with 1st Hinchley Wood @ Lake Bala

## **OUR FLEET**

As you might expect, we have had little change in our fleet again this year.

We do, as always, need much more help with boat maintenance so if you are able to lend a hand, or know who could be interested, please contact Peter Wadsworth ([peter@ajax.org.uk](mailto:peter@ajax.org.uk)).

## **WATER ACTIVITIES TRAINING**

Ajax and Warspite continue jointly to operate a Royal Yachting Association 'Recognised Training Centre' (RTC) at Thames Ditton.

This year has seen a steady return to a more normal boating season, with the team starting to deliver the RYA dinghy sailing and Power boating qualifications again.

## **ISLAND BARN**

With all the changes over the last few years we have undertaken a review of our activities at Island barn recently, while it does offer some benefits to us the decision to withdraw from island barn over the next 12 months has been taken jointly with Warspite.

This was not an easy decision but we believe that maintaining a significant sailing fleet across three locations (The WAC, Island barn and Chichester harbour) is not currently providing the value in terms of supporting additional training and presents a large drain on resources both financially and in volunteer time.

## **RONA SAILING PROJECT**

(For young people aged over 14)

Rona Sailing Project [www.ronasailingproject.org.uk](http://www.ronasailingproject.org.uk) is a registered charity which provides affordable sail training on purpose-built yachts. Their stated aim is to provide opportunities for young people to develop a sense of responsibility, resourcefulness and teamwork which will help them throughout their lives. Anyone over the age of 14 can apply for a place and we strongly recommend all Ajaccios to do so. In fact a number of the volunteer Skippers and Mates at RSP are Old Ajaccios!

The RSP programme returned to normal this year and we saw a number of the group taking part. We will be encouraging even more of the Explorers to get involved next year and take advantage of this amazing opportunity.

## **DUKE of EDINBURGH AWARDS**

(For young people aged over 14)

We ran two successful Bronze expeditions in October/November 2021 which 9 participants completed. One expedition was on water and the second (due to weather constraints) was Hiking!!!

We are also delighted that at Summer Camp a Gold Hiking Expedition was undertaken by Hannah, Isabelle, Molly, Poppy and Tilly. They experienced all the Welsh wilderness could throw at them. Lack of paths, undergrowth, heavy continuous rain and ticks!!! They also camped in the most idyllic wild campsite with a stream as the only utility and a lake. Stunning!

## **ROYAL NAVY RECOGNITION**

Ajax is one of just 105 Sea Scout Groups in the UK to be officially recognised by the Royal Navy and we have held this recognition continuously from the inception of the Group. Beyond the prestige of RN recognition, there are a number of tangible benefits including access to Grant Aid.

Following a relaunch of the scheme three years ago, all RN Recognised Groups are now affiliated with a local RN Unit. Together with nine other Groups in the London area, we are affiliated with the London University Royal Naval Unit.

To maintain RN recognition, all Groups are regularly reviewed to ensure the required standards are maintained. We had our review this year and passed with flying colours.

## **THANKS**

It's been so good to get back to almost full normality, it's been a busy year so far with plenty of activity across the Sections, as well as our fund-raising events getting back into action as well.

As always, I wish to give my heartfelt thanks to all the Leaders who volunteer so much time to make Ajax happen, thank you all!

**Chris West**  
**GROUP SCOUT LEADER**

## 4<sup>th</sup> Thames Ditton 'Ajax' Sea Scouts

In common with all Scout groups, the 4<sup>th</sup> Thames Ditton 'Ajax' Sea Scouts ("the Group" or "the Charity") is a charity established under the Royal Charter granted to The Scout Association dated 4<sup>th</sup> January 1912 as amended by supplemental charters dated 28<sup>th</sup> March 1949, 18<sup>th</sup> February 1959, 5<sup>th</sup> May 1967 and 19<sup>th</sup> July 1991. Trustees are appointed in accordance with the Policy, Organisation and Rules of the Scout Association.

### Group Information as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022

Charity Registration Number:	303764
Scout Association Registration Number:	25880
Honorary President:	Mrs Marguerite Rollason MBE
Honorary Vice Presidents:	Mrs Janet Barber Mrs Doreen Neal
Trustees Ex-Officio:	
Group Scout Leader	Chris West
Assistant Group Scout Leader	Peter Wadsworth
Explorer Sea Scout Leader	Nick Barber
Sea Scout Leader	Diane Davison
Cub Scout Leader	Ruth Mortby
Beaver Scout Leader	Lydia Thomas
Trustees Nominated:	
Group Chair	Andrew Roberts
Group Advisers	George Barber Mark Faulkner Mark Marriott
Supporters	Raymond Mears
Trustees Elected:	
Group Treasurer	Peter Drysdale
Group Secretary	Tina Chale
Sea Scout Parent	Mark Dence
Cub Scout Parent	Heather Ryder
Sea Scout Parent	Andrew Rowan
Explorer Sea Scout Parent	Adrian Smith
Explorer Sea Scout Parent	Peter Lloyd-Jones
Custodian Trustees:	The Scout Association Trust Corporation
Independent Examiner:	Barry Hitchens
Contact Name and Address:	Chris West 4 Hartford Road Epsom KT19 9JD

## Trustees Report

The Trustees present their report and the financial statements for the 4<sup>th</sup> Thames Ditton 'Ajax' Sea Scout Group for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.

### Responsibilities of the Trustees

Charity law requires the Trustees to keep accounting records and prepare annual statements of account for the Charity which must be audited or independently examined and provided to the Charity Commission. In preparing the annual statement of accounts the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- Comply with applicable accounting standards subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the annual statement of accounts; and
- Prepare the annual statement of accounts on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume the Charity will continue its operations.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and are responsible for safeguarding its assets and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

### Review of Activity of the Charity

The Group currently has an active Beaver Scout Colony, Cub Scout Pack and Sea Scout Troop and a partnership agreement with the Ajax Explorer Sea Scout Unit. Key details of each Section are as follows:

- The Beaver Colony is for boys and girls aged 6 to 8 years. The Colony meets once a week and as at 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2022 has 19 members (2021: 20).
- The Cub Scout Pack is for boys and girls aged 8 to 10 ½ years. The Pack meets once a week and as at 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2022 has 31 members (2021: 29).
- The Sea Scout Troop is for boys and girls aged 10 ½ to 14. The Troop normally meets twice a week and as at 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2022 has 48 members (2021: 48).
- The Explorer Sea Scout Unit is for boys and girls aged 14 ½ to 18. The Unit normally meets once a week and as at 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2022 has 19 members (2021: 22)

All Sections have continued to work in accordance with the progressive training scheme as laid down by the Scout Association.

The Group has continued to operate a Royal Yachting Association Training Centre based at the Water Activities Centre and operated jointly with Warspite Sea Scouts. The RYA Centre's Principal is supported by a team of RYA Instructors with qualifications covering sailing, power boating, VHF communications and first aid.

The Group is one of just 105 Sea Scout Groups in the United Kingdom recognised by the Royal Navy. This prestigious and beneficial recognition is subject to a rigorous regular review.

### Reserves

The Trustees have adopted a formal policy on reserves which is reflected in these accounts. The policy provides that reserves be maintained at a level which has regard to:

- The risks associated with each stream of income and expenditure varying from that budgeted
- The planned activity level
- The Group's commitments
- The need for adequate readily realisable resources to meet the Group's commitments (after subscriptions and camp fees) for the coming twelve-month period.

Readily realisable resources are defined as the balances at the bank less current liabilities and the balance on designated funds for WAC building development.

The Group has sufficient resources to meet the level of reserves of £30,000 required under the policy. Although the level of reserves available at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 under the policy is £20,706 (2021: £19,163), should the need arise and to the extent necessary, the Group would curtail or defer its planned capital expenditure and release building development designated funds to general funds.

## **Investment Policy**

The Group does not have sufficient funds to invest in longer term investments. All funds are held in cash or "at call" short term investments with The Scout Association, Skipton Building Society and Cambridge & Counties Bank.

## **Governance**

The Group's governing documents are those of The Scout Association. They consist of a Royal Charter, The By-Laws of the Association and The Policy, Organisation and Rules of The Scout Association.

The Group is a trust established under rules which are common to all Scout Groups.

The Trustees are appointed in accordance with The Policy, Organisation and Rules of The Scout Association.

The Group is managed by an Executive Committee made up of all the Charity's Trustees. As charity trustees, they are responsible for complying with legislation applicable to charities. This includes the registration, keeping of proper accounts and making of appropriate returns to the Charity Commission.

The Group Executive Committee consists of independent representatives comprising Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary and parent representatives of each Section together with the Group Scout Leader, Assistant Group Scout Leaders and the Leaders of each Section. The Committee normally meets five times per year.

The Committee exists to support the Group Scout Leader in meeting the responsibilities of the Group and is responsible for:

- The maintenance of Group property;
- The raising of funds and the administration of the Group finance;
- The insurance of persons, property and equipment;
- Group public occasions;
- Assisting in the recruitment of leaders and other adult support;
- Appointing advisors other than those who are elected.

## **Risk Assessment**

The Committee has identified the major risks to which they believe the Group is exposed. These have been reviewed and systems established to mitigate against them as follows:

*Damage to buildings and equipment:* The Group would request the use of buildings and equipment from neighbouring organisations. The Group has sufficient buildings and contents insurance in place to mitigate against permanent loss.

*Injury to leaders, members and helpers:* The Group, through the capitation fees, contributes to The Scout Association's national accident insurance policy. Risk Assessments are undertaken before all activities.

*Reduced income from fund raising:* The Group is primarily reliant upon income from subscriptions and fund raising. The Group does hold a reserve to ensure the continuity of activities should there be a major reduction in income. The Committee could increase the level of subscriptions to increase the income to the Group either temporarily or permanently.

*Reduction or loss of members:* The Group provides activities for young people aged 6 to 18. If there were a reduction in membership of a particular Section or of the Group as a whole then there would have to be a contraction, consolidation or closure of a Section, or in the worst case scenario, the complete closure of the Group.

*Reduction or loss of leaders:* The Group is totally reliant upon volunteers to run and administer the activities of the Group. If there were a reduction in the number of leaders to an unacceptable level in a particular Section or the Group as a whole then there would have to be a contraction, consolidation or closure of a Section, or in the worst case scenario, the complete closure of the Group.

The Group requires two signatories for all payments to provide reasonable assurance against material mismanagement or loss of money and holds comprehensive insurance policies to ensure that insurable risks are covered.

**Group Objectives**

The aim of the Group is to promote the development of young people in achieving their full physical, intellectual, social and spiritual potentials, as individuals, as responsible citizens and as members of their local, national and international community. The method of achieving this aim is by providing an enjoyable and attractive scheme of progressive training, based on the Scout Promise and Law and guided by trained adult leadership.

**Independent Examiner's Report  
to the Trustees of the  
4<sup>th</sup> Thames Ditton 'Ajax' Sea Scouts**

**4<sup>th</sup> Thames Ditton Ajax Sea Scouts Charity Number 303764**

**Report of the Independent examiner to the Trustees of 4<sup>th</sup> Thames Ditton  
Ajax Sea Scouts**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above Charity for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 that are set out on the pages attached.

**Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the charity's trustees, 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 Trust's 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 that gives me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- a) the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act or
- b) the accounts did not comply with the accounting records or
- c) the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of the 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 the 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.

Barry Hitchens- Australian Society of Accountants  
24 Effingham Road, Long Ditton, Surrey, KT6 5JY



30-8-22

## **Annual Financial Report 2021 – 22**

### **Prepared by Peter Drysdale, Group Treasurer**

Ajax Sea Scouts Group remains in good financial health. Covid meant that 2022 was not a normal year in that there was no fundraising, but a number of activities did take place.

#### Operating Highlights

In round numbers, cash in the bank as at the year end stands at £97,000 (2021 - £99,000)

Overall, there was a net deficit in the year of £8,000. Operationally, we almost broke even with Income at £25,500 being £1,000 short of WAC running cost at £26,500. Major Expenditure at £10,500 was offset by a surplus of £3,500 on Activities – but see below.

The bank balance includes a large donation of £1000 for a defibrillator and a grant from the Royal Navy of £5,000 received near the end of the year. Grants and specific donations are not recognised until spent – hence the bank showing a net reduction of only £2,000 whilst recording a deficit of £8,000

Income at £25,500 is down £9,000 on last year being £8,000 reduction in Covid grants (£10,000 in 2021, and £2,000 in 2022) and £1,000 drop in subscriptions possibly due to changing from parents' standing orders to direct debits.

Total Operating costs were £26,500, £3,500 more than last year. The actual cost of running the WAC was pretty stable at £12,000, Capitation was £6,000 and £5,700 was spent on maintenance of the fleet - £3,000 more than last year. The remaining £3,000 was spent on training, section costs and sundry other items.

Activities includes uniform sales. These sales are quite significant, but over the last several years purchases have exceeded sales by about £500 per year. This has resulted in a stock of uniform valued at £2,600 which has been added back to Income & Expenditure and created most of the surplus on activities. Once again there was no fund raising, but there were a lot of activities including camps which overall showed a net surplus of £2,000.

Major expenditure came in at £10,000 of which the largest single project was £6,000 on a new electrical distribution board; with £1,000 on tents, trailers, the workshop and clearing the trailer park of vegetation. It is hoped that 2023 will be more normal with some fund raising because significant expenditure is planned. The largest value project is to put a security compound in the trailer park. This now has planning permission. The cost, around £30,000, will be shared with Warspite and with matched funding via a grant from a charitable foundation – all subject to a lease extension from Elmbridge Borough Council. Other planned works include new external doors, workshop roller shutter, kayaks and a fire alarm all totalling around £20,000.

Note that the accounts that follow are in a prescribed form and do not show any of the numbers referred above – except for the total overall deficit.

### **Notes to the financial statements 31 March 2022**

#### **1 Basis of preparation of accounts**

##### 1.1 Basis of accounting

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s) to these accounts. The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) issued on 16 July 2014 and with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102). The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

##### 1.2 Going Concern

The Trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

## **2. Accounting Policies**

### **2.1 Income recognition**

All regularly recurring income is recognised in the period in which it is received. This applies to Subscriptions, Gift Aid on subscriptions and Investment Income.

Donations are recognised once received. In the event that a donation is subject to conditions that require a level of performance before the Charity is entitled to the funds, the income is deferred and not recognised until either those conditions are fully met, or the fulfilment of those conditions is wholly within the control of the Charity and it is probable that those conditions will be fulfilled in the reporting period.

Any Gift Aid amount recovered on a donation is considered to be part of that gift and is treated as an addition to the same fund as the initial donation unless the donor or the terms of the appeal have specified otherwise. It is recognised in the period in which it is received.

Grants will be recognised in the period in which the associated costs are incurred.

Income from Fundraising and Activities is recognised in the period in which the fundraising event or activity takes place. Deposits received in prior periods will be deferred until the period in which the activity takes place.

All other income is recognised in the period in which it is received.

Note that there were no fundraising events in the period due to Covid.

### **2.2 Expenditure and liabilities**

A liability exists where there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the Charity to that expenditure, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. All such liabilities will ordinarily be discharged as soon as possible. Only material liabilities not discharged by the end of the period will be accrued.

Some annual costs e.g. Insurance, Subscriptions, Rent and other similar dues which extend beyond the current period and which on a strict accruals basis would to that extent ordinarily be accrued, will be recognised in full in the period in which they are paid.

All expenses including support costs and governance costs are allocated or apportioned to the applicable expenditure headings.

The classification between headings is as follows:

Expenditure on fundraising includes all expenditure associated with raising funds for the charity.

Expenditure on charitable activities of the Group includes all costs associated with furthering the charitable purposes of the Group through the provision of its charitable activities.

All expenditure on fundraising events or activities is recognised in the period in which the fundraising event or activity occurs. Prior period deposits will be treated as prepayments.

Materiality: Accruals of expenditure other than that for Fundraising or Activities will be made where they exceed £500 individually or £1,000 in total.

In consequence of the decision to capitalise the current stock of uniform, purchases of uniform will be added to stock and only the actual costs of sales will be charge to I&E. For this year only, £2,618 of uniform stock has been added to Assets, resulting in an equivalent addition to Income & Expenditure

## **3 Assets**

The lease and building are held by The Scout Association Trust Corporation on Behalf of 1st Cuddington "Warspite" and 4th Thames Ditton "Ajax" Sea Scout Groups. Ground rent is reviewed by Elmbridge Borough Council every seven years based on Retail Price Index since the last review. The current ground rent is £76 per annum, and the next review is due in 2022. The lease expires in 2080. As the lease cannot be assigned or transferred and does not permit subletting it is not considered to have any market value.

There is a legal agreement between the two Groups for a Joint Liaison Committee meeting to take place at intervals of not exceeding six months to review matters of mutual interest

#### 4 Funds

Unrestricted General Funds are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the Charity.

Designated Funds are funds set aside out of unrestricted General Funds for specific purposes or projects. Restricted Funds are funds subject to specific restrictive conditions imposed by the donors or by the purpose of the appeal. There was one donation of £1000 for a defibrillator and one grant from the Royal Navy of £4987 for the purchase of boats

#### 5 Insurance Policies

The WAC building is insured for reinstatement cost of £803,000. Contents at £79,000 and the boats at £90,000.

### **Income & Expenditure 2021 - 2022**

	Notes	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>
<b>Income from</b>			
Donations, Legacies. Subscriptions and similar income	1	25,626	57,835
Camp fees		23,431	1,406
Other activities in furtherance of the Charities objects		2,752	119
Fundraising		70	0
Investment Income		674	185
	<b>Total</b>	52,553	59,545
<b>Expenditure on:</b>			
Fundraising Costs		115	0
Expenses of the activities by the Group		59,739	80,504
	<b>Total</b>	59,854	80,504
Net Income		(7,301)	(20,959)

### **Balance Sheet**

	2022	2021
Reconciliation of Funds		
Total Funds Brought Forward	102,726	123,584
<b>Total Funds Carried Forward</b>	<b>95,425</b>	<b>102,726</b>

### **Current Assets**

Cash at bank and in hand	2	96,819	98,766
Debtors and prepayments	3	(4,012)	3,960

Stock of Uniform 2,618  
 Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

**Net Assets** 95,425 102,726

**Represented by:**

Restricted Funds 5,987  
 Designated Funds 68,732 83,563  
 Unrestricted Funds 20,706 19,163  
95,425 102,726

Notes to the Accounts

	2022	<u>2021</u>
1 <b><u>Analysis of Donations etc</u></b>		
Subscriptions	23,015	20,430
Donations and Legacies	290	1,405
Grants		26,000
Covid Grant	2,096	10,000
Other	225	
<b>Total</b>	<u>25,626</u>	<u>57,835</u>

2 <b><u>Analysis of Cash at Bank and in hand</u></b>		
Cambridge & Counties	54,203	53,542
Skipton	25,826	25,813
Scout Association	134	134
<b>Total Investment</b>	<u>80,163</u>	<u>79,489</u>
Cash in Hand		
<b><u>HSBC Bank Accounts</u></b>		
Subs	8,043	9,534
Camp	1,321	508
BMM	4,166	6,940
Main	1,688	1,215
Nr 3	1,134	100
Soldo Expenses Cash Card	304	980
<b>Total Current Accounts</b>	<u>16,656</u>	<u>19,277</u>
<b>Total</b>	<u>96,819</u>	<u>98,766</u>


3 <b><u>Analysis of Debtors and Prepayments</u></b>		
Prepayments	(665)	
Prepayments - Donations & Grants	(5,987)	
Prepayment - Cobnor	2,640	3,960
<b>Total</b>	<u>4,012</u>	<u>3,960</u>

<b>Designated Funds</b>	Op Balance	Income	Expenditure	Redesignated	CI Bal
Building Development	72,320		7,887		64,433
Canoe	500				500
Small Craft	1,676		873		803
Tentage	1,910		1,804		106
HQ Security	2,500				2,500
National Regatta	4,657			(4,267)	390
<b>Total</b>	<b>83,563</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10,564</b>	<b>(4,267)</b>	<b>68,732</b>

Ajax Annual Report approved by:



Chris West, Group Scout Leader



Peter Drysdale, Group Treasurer



Andrew Roberts, Group Chair

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# Ajax Sea Scout Group and Explorer Sea Scout Unit

## KEY CONTACTS

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Group Scout Leader	Chris West	07967 806818	<a href="mailto:gsl@ajax.org.uk">gsl@ajax.org.uk</a>
Asst. Group Scout Leader	Peter Wadsworth	07527 554029	<a href="mailto:peter@ajax.org.uk">peter@ajax.org.uk</a>
Beaver Colony	Lydia Thomas	07950 790153	<a href="mailto:beavers@ajax.org.uk">beavers@ajax.org.uk</a>
Cub Pack	Ruth Mortby	07941 206568	<a href="mailto:cubs@ajax.org.uk">cubs@ajax.org.uk</a>
Sea Scout Troop	Diane Davison	07814 131377	<a href="mailto:troop@ajax.org.uk">troop@ajax.org.uk</a>
Explorer Sea Scout Unit	Nick Barber	07981 037052	<a href="mailto:explorers@ajax.org.uk">explorers@ajax.org.uk</a>
Group Chair	Andrew Roberts	020 8786 6882	<a href="mailto:chairman@ajax.org.uk">chairman@ajax.org.uk</a>
Group Secretary	Tina Chale		<a href="mailto:secretary@ajax.org.uk">secretary@ajax.org.uk</a>
Group Treasurer	Peter Drysdale		<a href="mailto:treasurer@ajax.org.uk">treasurer@ajax.org.uk</a>

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For more information about this report or membership of Ajax contact:

Chris West  
Email: [gsl@ajax.org.uk](mailto:gsl@ajax.org.uk)

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Ajax Sea Scout Group and Explorer Sea Scout Unit  
The Chiefy Sharman Water Activities Centre  
19a Ditton Reach  
Thames Ditton  
Surrey KT7 0XB

(No facility to receive mail at this address)

Telephone: 020 8398 4777

Website: [www.ajax.org.uk](http://www.ajax.org.uk)

Ajax Sea Scouts is a Registered Charity No: 303764

**4TH THAMES DITTON AJAX SEA SCOUTS**

England & Wales - Charity number 303764

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# Accounts

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# Ajax Sea Scout Group and Explorer Sea Scout Unit

Annual Report and Accounts  
for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021

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**73<sup>rd</sup> Annual General Meeting  
of the Group Council of the  
4<sup>th</sup> Thames Ditton 'Ajax' Sea Scouts  
(Royal Navy Recognised Group No. 60)  
11<sup>th</sup> Jan 2022 held online**

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Agenda

1. Group Chairman's welcome.
2. Group Scout Leader's report.
3. Group Chairman's report.
4. Group Treasurer's report and adoption of the Trustees' Annual Report and Statement of Financial Activity for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021
5. Approval of nominations for honorary roles:
  - a. Group President
  - b. Group Vice Presidents
6. Approval of the Group Scout Leader's nominations for the Group Executive Committee for the coming year:
  - a. Group Chair
  - b. Group Vice-Chair
  - c. Group Advisers
  - d. Youth Representative
  - e. Other members of the Group Executive Committee.
7. Confirmation of Section Leaders wishing to be members of the Group Executive Committee for the coming year.
8. Election of lay officials for the coming year:
  - a. Group Treasurer
  - b. Group Secretary
  - c. Independent Examiner.
9. Election of Section Representatives to the Group Executive Committee for the coming year.
10. Any other business.

## GROUP CHAIR'S REPORT

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It has been a somewhat frustrating but very productive year for Ajax. Being adaptive has been the order of the day. Back to school and then back home. Overseas travel was possible but if you were unlucky, it got pulled at the very last minute. Summer Camp looked unlikely but thanks to a lot of work from our leaders our Scouts had a fabulous time in Poole.

Our new Treasurer, Pete Drysdale, got his feet under the table and has done an outstanding job updating all our accounting systems, keeping track of our cashflow and expenses and helping us to meet our charitable obligations. Historically our accounts were Excel and paper based and updated periodically. Peter has now implemented almost real time accounting on a much better platform which means better reporting and keeping track of our finances, all of which have added value in a year when fundraising was cancelled.

Throughout the summer we have been working with Warspite, Ditton Reach Residents and Elmbridge Council to agree a way forward on how the car park is managed. For the last three decades the car park has been used to dump boats and trailers and as free parking for small boats which can often subsequently be abandoned. All of this conflicts with the Council's objective to use the space to encourage recreational use of the Thames. Working with Warspite we have started to tidy up the car park by removing vegetation and derelict boats and trailers and will shortly submit a planning application for a secure yard to store our large boats and trailers which currently occupy too much of our activity space.

The old adage that if you want something done, best ask a busy person applies to our GSL Chris West who has done an amazing job in very difficult circumstances. We are very much driven by The Scout Association Guidelines, but thanks to Chris and our outstanding leaders we have been able to dramatically reduce "Scouting by Zoom" and very much hope to have even more time on the water in 2022.

In addition to the car park project, we have a number of building projects to complete; these include new doors to the front and rear, a new electrical distribution board, external lighting, changing room benches and external storage for SUPS and boats. Internal LED lights were installed earlier this year and once the distribution board is installed, we will add fire alarms which will provide more flexibility on how we use the site.

Hopefully by this time next year all of these projects will be completed and our normal fundraising activities will be possible. Thanks also to our Exec trustees who help to steer us in the right direction.

Andrew Roberts  
Group Chair

## GROUP SCOUT LEADER'S REPORT

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Once again, I find myself writing a report after a year of mostly locked down Scouting. I think we all thought it would be over by Christmas last year, but Scouting did not return to anything like normal until well after Easter. But what a return it has been. I have seen colossal efforts across all sections to make up for lost time, to get together as much as possible and get out doing what Scouts do best.

From the last AGM in September 2020, right through to Easter 2021, Scouting continued online with continuing heroic effort from leaders across the Group trying to keep young people engaged in Scouting as much as possible. Nobody ever imagined this would carry on for so long and I know how difficult it was to keep things going for such a length of time. I think each and every leader deserve a medal for what they did during this difficult time.

We were unable to have our usual remembrance Sunday parade due to restrictions, but we did send a representative leader and Explorer to Giggs Hill Green to lay a wreath on behalf of Ajax, whilst the rest of us met online to observe the 2 minutes silence together there.

When restrictions started to ease after Easter, Scouting came back in force. We saw the Scouts and Explorers jumping straight back onto the river, with Beavers and Cubs meeting up for outdoor musters in every open space they could find in the area.

The absolute highlight of the year for me was Summer Camp. It was touch and go on whether we could go or in what format, and in fact the plans changed several times up until only a few weeks before we left. This was particularly stressful for myself and the other members of the organising team for the camp, but the important thing is we go there in the end.

For the first time in a long time we split the camp into 1 week of Explorer camp and 1 week of Scout camp, something we had intended to do before COVID as the resources needed to run a 2 section camp were getting beyond us, but with COVID limits in place this also worked out quite nicely.

The Explorers had an amazing week of non-stop activities, for once not diluted by the arrival of the Scout Troop, meaning they didn't have to share equipment or instructors to get on the water. Then after a frantic change over day the Troop arrived for yet another week of non-stop fun and adventure. I'll let the individual leaders fill you in on the details of the camp, but suffice to say, we got away, we camped, we got on the water, it was simply wonderful to be doing a proper camp again after so long.

At the writing of my last report we were just starting the installation of the new fence. Not long after the fence was completed a team of volunteers, led by an expert, laid all the concrete and moved our flag mast to it's new location on the back of the building. Now a year on we have been benefiting hugely from the increased space, much better access from the road and out onto the grass. And of course a much greater sense of security with this vastly superior fence guarding our grounds. Pete Wadsworth has been working with a small team to begin the building wide upgrade of the electrics by replacing all our interior lighting with state-of-the-art LED lighting throughout the building. The next and final step in that project is to replace our main electrics distribution board, which due to be completed soon. Once done, we'll be looking to fit a new fire alarm system for the building. The other major project of course is the car park project. Our Chair, Andrew Roberts, has been putting many hours into progressing that and it's looking highly likely that we will start being able to use that space next year. I will leave Andrew to tell you more in his report.

Lastly, I do have some exciting news to impart, we have appointed a new Beaver Section Leader, Lydia Thomas. I have known Lydia for quite a long time as she was one of my Scouts 10 years ago when I was the Troop Section Leader. I remember then that she was an exceptional leader and I controversially made her a Patrol Leader at quite a young age as she was so good at leading and inspiring others. Lydia has worked her way through Ajax, eventually turning 18 and joining the leadership team. She has been a regular face at many summer camps and helping out in anyway she could whilst studying at uni. Now thankfully she has found a job that keeps her in the local area and she's been a regular leader in the Beaver section for the past year. When I asked her if she would consider leading the Beaver Colony there was no hesitation. I know her endless enthusiasm, energy and positive nature will keep our Beaver Colony going as the fun and exciting section it should be.

Once again, I want to thank all the leaders for their continued efforts, well beyond the expectations of normal leadership to deliver online Scouting. And then since returning to face-to-face Scouting, the leaders again have had a lot to put up with, considering all the rules, restrictions and last-minute changes. Thank you to you all for persevering and keeping Ajax one of the best Scout Groups around. And you don't have to take my word for it, nationally Scouting has shrunk by 24%, Ajax has actually grown in the past year, so well done all!

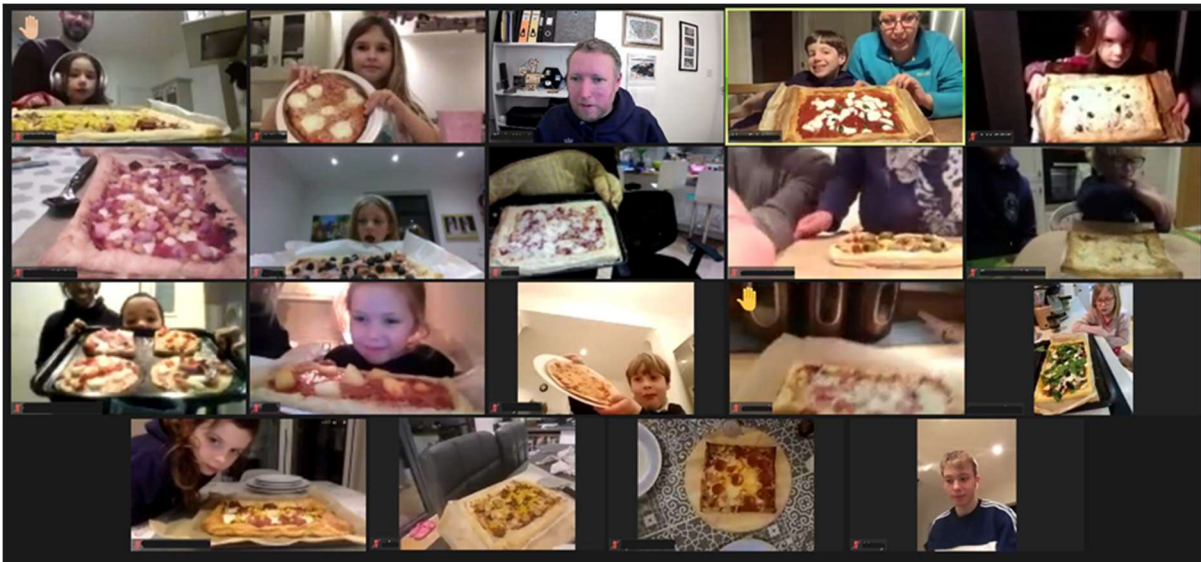
## Here are the reports from of our training Sections:

### BEAVER SCOUT COLONY

(For young people aged 6 to 8)

Beaver Colony Leader Lydia Thomas writes:

The academic year 2020/2021 was another year full of activities, where neither Leaders nor Beavers let the restrictions of the pandemic ruin our fun! The Beavers were fantastic adapting to how we have had to run our sessions throughout the year, and the Leaders successfully modified our plans to continue delivering engaging and fun sessions, whether online or face-to-face.



Despite the mixture of in person and zoom musters, we managed to award exactly 100 badges to the colony over the whole year. Five Beavers achieved their Chief Scout's Bronze Award before swimming up to Cubs in January 2021; congratulations to the following for earning the highest badge available!

- Alannah McGuire
- Jessica Stephens
- Alex Edstrom
- Marlowe Fortune
- Ava Thurgood

We began the Autumn term with a session at Stokes Field, playing a socially distanced wide game and catching up after the summer holidays before having to move to online musters. A highlight of the term was our online annual Beaver Sleepover. The colony had the choice of camping in their garden or making a den in their bedrooms and sleeping on the floor and tuned in for an evening zoom call where we learnt learn some campfire songs. We taught our Beavers about Global Issues, learning about the benefits of Fairtrade and the problems with finding clean and safe drinking water in many places. We learnt about endangered animals and used the IUCN red list to look up the status of our favourite animals. By the end of term, the badges they had gained included Global Issues, Creative, Faith and Camp Crafts, and they had worked towards their Teamwork, Skills and Cooks' badges. In keeping with the Scout Associations aim of "youth shaped scouting", we held a 'log chew' where the colony had the chance to talk about what they liked and what could be improved on for when the leaders planned future sessions. We ended the Autumn term with some Christmas crafts, including decorating melted snowman biscuits and Christmas giftbags. During the Autumn term we said goodbye to some of our older

Beavers who swam up to Cubs and welcomed 6 new starters whose first experience of Scouting ended up being virtual for almost two school terms!

For the Spring term we were still doing virtual musters, and in the spirit of new year's resolutions, we set ourselves challenges to count towards our personal challenge badges. We had a session on the green cross code, where we learnt a song and performed a short play. The Beavers went on nature walks in their own time, followed by a zoom session where we discussed animals and plant species we saw and created artwork using leaves we had collected on our walks. The Beavers managed to earn their "Great Indoors Badge" and we had a zoom session where the colony learnt how to sew their badges on a camp blanket by themselves. A highlight for many was the pizza making session over zoom, where the Beaver's cooked along with the leaders, and everyone joined in with the pizza party together at the end. We later made fajitas as a more advanced cooking session, leading to them completing their cook's badge. We ended the Spring term with our first face-to-face session in a long time! We met at Long Ditton Recreation Ground and played some team games as the sun set – it was the perfect socially distanced return to Beavers, and a great chance for many of them to meet each other, and the leaders face-to-face.



Back into the swing of meeting face-to-face, we came back from the Easter holidays with a session on healthy food, making posters promoting healthy eating. We had a muster learning how to tie knots, what to do somebody is hurt in an accident, and how to deal with minor cuts. We also included some theory about coronavirus and how it spreads. We took advantage of meeting in person, and played lots of team games, focusing on some practical skills that hadn't been used in a while! We learnt to pitch a tent at the WAC and raced to see who could do it the fastest. The colony went out for a historical walk of Thames Ditton, learning about the AC Cars Factory, Thames Ditton Foundry and paid our respects to the soldiers' graves in the cemetery. We completed theory about cycling and boating in preparation for the practical side of the cyclist and nautical badges. The Beavers all brought their bikes and learnt cycling skills and the rules of the road on the basketball courts at the Milk Marketing Board Sports Ground. In our last few musters of the term, we managed to get out in the 'Starfish' boats, where the Beavers could row on their own and get their first taste of boating.



The range of activities discussed above have allowed us to award many badges over the year, our favourite of which were Cook, Cyclist, Explore, Faith, Global Issues, Outdoors, Personal Challenge, Skills, Teamwork and The Great Indoors.

At the turn of the year, in Autumn 2021, we said goodbye to Pete Stephens as he stepped down from being the Section Leader after volunteering his time for the last few years. I'd like to say a huge thank you to the lovely leadership team who helped in the last year; Pete, Scott, Chiara, Janine, Hugo, and Harry have been brilliant in keeping spirits up and delivering fantastic musters despite the challenges we've had. This was my first year of volunteering with Beavers, and I look forward to this next year and further, where I have agreed to take on the role as Section Leader.

## CUB SCOUT PACK

(For young people aged 8 to 10½)

Cub Scout Leader Ruth Mortby writes:

Another fantastic year for the Cub Pack, full of fun, challenges and adventures for our young people.

A mix of a year, with far too much zoom for our liking! Despite everything, I can't believe how much we've achieved again this year.

Over the year we've said goodbye to 21 young people who have gone up to the Scout Troop and welcomed 18 new Cubs. The pack is full at our capacity of 36 young people and is fed almost entirely from our Beaver Colony. Between them the Cubs have earned over 500 badges, and we've celebrated awarding 8 Chief Scouts Silver Awards – the highest achievement a Cub can reach.

Our Autumn term was mainly on zoom, with highlights including our first ever virtual weekend camp – Spytacular!



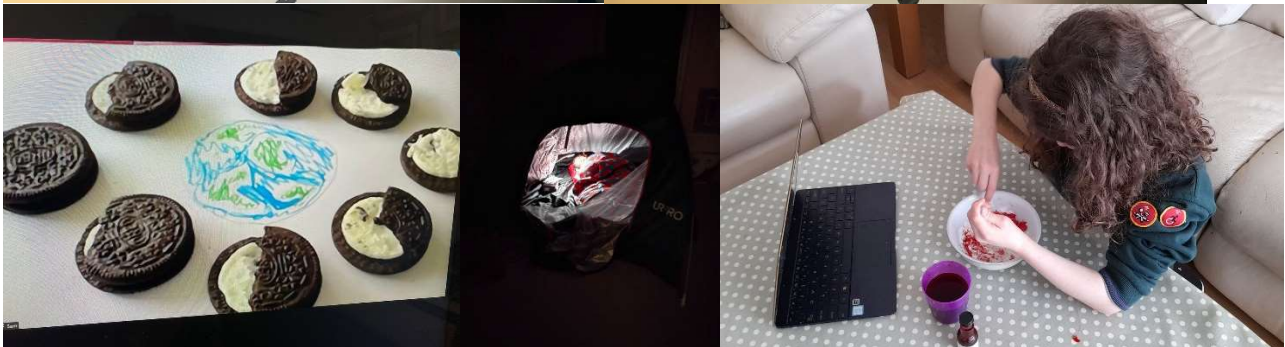
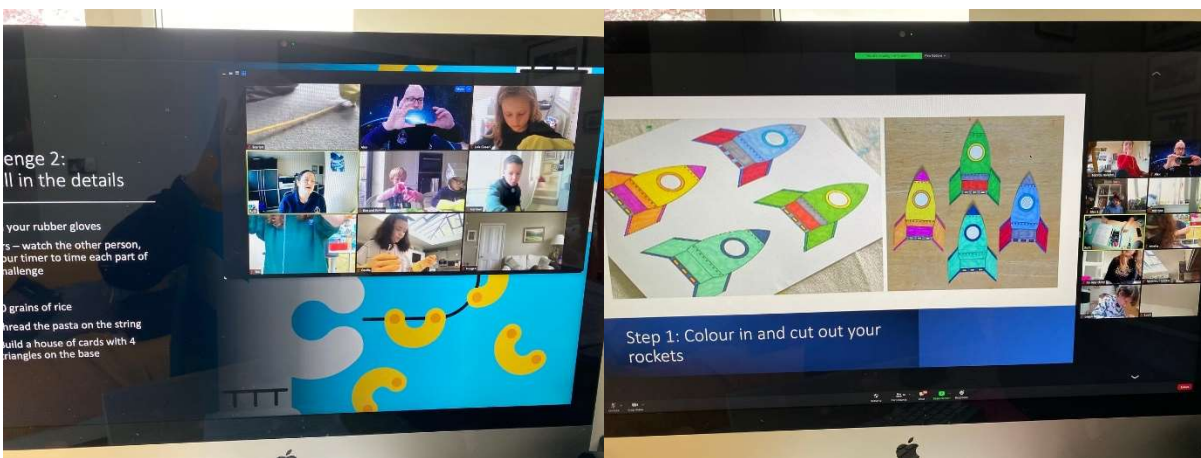
We also made it out and about at Bushy Park with a number of socially distanced nature hikes. I never thought I would voluntarily plan outdoor activities for cubs in December, but it was so good to see everyone face to face again.



Spring term saw us back to zoom again, with highlights including a theatre improv workshop from the Rose Theatre in Kingston and a Junk Drumming workshop. The leaders were all very pleased the latter was on zoom with its handy feature of being able to turn the volume down!



We held another virtual camp this term, with a space and science theme. From astronaut training to making mechanical arms, with space dens to sleep in and some interesting foods to try – a great weekend.



Summer term, with a huge sigh of relief, found us back face to face. However, with 36 active cubs, we couldn't use the building, so we found ourselves in local parks, recreation grounds and even the local streets to try and get enough outdoor space.

We hiked, we tied knots, we played games, we even made mud pies!



Summer term cumulated in another first for us – Polyapes hosted us for our first ever independent cub camp – camping, pioneering, wide games, problem solving and campfires! It was fantastic to be away together and outdoors after so long, and the headaches of planning a covid safe camp were completely worth it!



I'd like to finish with a huge thank you to the Cub leadership team – Alex, Emma, Dan, Lucy and Gavan, and our Young Leaders George and Will. It has been a pleasure working with you all this year. Thank you for all that you do.

## **SEA SCOUT TROOP**

(For young people aged 10½ to 14)

Sea Scout Leader Diane Davison writes:

### **A year of two halves!**

Both halves good! Both attended with enthusiasm and commitment!

September to end of March saw us on zoom still. We covered as much of the scouting skills as we possibly could given the circumstances, for example, navigating within the house including to the toilet using our compass bearing skills, carrying out first aid using siblings or parents to practise putting a casualty into the recovery position within viewing distance of the zoom screen, cooking eggs 5 ways and ensuring that all scout households tried the end product, mince pies with varying degrees of success, to building exceptionally tall constructions of spaghetti, marshmallows and a blown egg!

We have developed our skills on Zoom down to a fine art and throughout our time on screen the scouts have maintained their enthusiasm. Attendance has been brilliant... well done to all our scouts who made it worthwhile! Many thanks also to all our parents for supporting their scouts in all the unusual activities we got up to.... without you providing all the resources we would not have been able to achieve everything we did.

In April we started boating. This gave us a new challenge in terms of managing scout numbers, covid protocols, activities, leader and permit availability. We came up with a 3-group rotation which morphed into a 4-group rotation for sailing! I think all Scouts, parents and leaders deserve awards for keeping up with all the different emails, invitations, OSM reminders etc. BUT it worked!

We got all our scouts out on the water. They all kayaked, and they all developed their rowing skills in single handers.



SUMMER CAMP! The undeniable highlight of this year. 8 days of proper sea scouting in a glorious location in Poole Harbour! 36 scouts attended and had a brilliant time. They sailed, kayaked, canoed, supped, giant supped, hiked night and day, covid tested, whittled, cooked, tug o'warred, BBQ'd, went to the beautiful Studland beach, and kept themselves clean and healthy – fantastic!



camp.

We all had a wonderful time and were one of the few scout groups to run a full camp this summer.

Congratulations go to our Patrol leaders at camp for a super job:

Leila, Jonathan, Lily, Cameron and James

And our Assistant Patrol leaders for providing great support:

Zac, Amalia, Daisy, Oliver and Matthew

Everyone rose to the challenge by doing an excellent job of helping run a smooth, safe and fun

camp. We started off the year with around 50 scouts and but for a couple of movements we still have 50 scouts. Attendance has been strong throughout the year and since April we have been boating on Thursday and Saturdays.

Our leadership team is strong and we are lucky to have had Simon and Phil join us this year.

I am as ever totally indebted to a wonderful group of volunteer Leaders, Instructors, and Young Leaders who make all of the above possible. Again this year their commitment to the scouts has been exemplary. Without their generosity of time, holidays, skills, creativity and good humour Ajax would not be the same!

My grateful thanks go to Jamie Ashley, Harry Ashley, Bernadette Banks, Nick Barber, Simon Corkin, Robert Elliott, Ed Mauleverer, Barbara Ruis, Phil Shortman, Rob Stephens, Peter Wadsworth, Chris West, Dane Wilson - who all regularly attend musters.

Also thanks to, Andy Davison, Miky Davison, Izzy Elliot, Hugo Goodman, Max Kingdon, Alice Morgan, Ruth Mortby, Alex Soden, Kristian Squire and Lauren Thompson Chisnall, most of whom on returning from university provide invaluable help and enthusiasm at musters and at summer camp.

And last, but certainly not least our Young Leaders Hannah, Molly, Isabelle Poppy and Tilly who help week in week out....!!



#### Duke of Edinburgh Awards

We have not been able to run any expeditions this year but the explorer scouts have been working hard on the other sections of the awards. We hope to catch up with expeditions as soon as possible.

## EXPLORER SEA SCOUT UNIT (For young people aged 14½ to 18)

Explorer Sea Scout Leader Nick Barber writes:

The Unit currently has a healthy 24 members comprising nine young women, fifteen young men and we were pleased to welcome external members to the Unit; Phoebe, Freya, Benjamin, Theo and Jack.

We continue to see that many of our Explorers are also Young Leaders, helping with the other Sections in an adult leadership capacity.

Past Explorers are regularly coming back to assist in their down time from university and working life in leadership/ instructor roles. Scouting is a movement after all, and this next generation is ready to contribute to the health and longevity of the group.

Since last September we have done a lot of SUPB/kayaking, with some sailing sessions at Island Barn and honed our navigation skills when in Zoom mode - which will be tested with our second DoE expedition departing mid December, which will be a hike! Our first DoE expedition for this period was completed in Norge (Our Home Counties Gig) and we look forward to seeing our members achieve their Bronze awards soon. Next Gold!



Congratulations to Hannah, Daniel, and Edward who recently completed their Bronze DoE awards.

The highlight has to be our sorely missed fantastic summer camp, which this year was at Cleavel Point in Poole Harbour overlooking Brownsea Island. The Unit had a great week and it really was good to get away and back to what we do best!

Sadly, this year's Great River Race was cancelled again due to COVID. Fingers crossed it will be back in 2022.

Looking forward to the New Year we have the District Winter Activity Weekend, which takes place in the Peak District and we will be travelling via our own mini-bus.

I also encourage every member to keep an eye out for 2022's STV (Sail Training Voyages) aboard one of the Rona Sailing Projects' purpose-built sail training yachts. I enjoyed these when I was a Venture scout and thoroughly recommend the project. STV's also count towards your Gold DoE Residential element so get booking!

Lastly I'd like to thank my team; Jan, Diane, Sergio, Alex, Dane, and Jamie who have made Scouting happen for these amazing young men and women.





## **OUR FLEET**

As you might expect, we have had little change in our fleet again this year.

This year we have repaired and repainted 3 of our scout class rowing dinghies, with the 4<sup>th</sup> in progress, carried out running repairs across our sailing fleet and completed a major overhaul of the console of Stokes our primary safety & training boat.

We do as always need much more help with boat maintenance so if you are able to lend a hand, or know someone who could be interested, please do let me know.

## **WATER ACTIVITIES TRAINING**

Ajax and Warspite continue jointly to operate a Royal Yachting Association 'Recognised Training Centre' (RTC) at Thames Ditton.

Unfortunately, again our usual season of boating has been limited this year due to COVID. We are hopeful of returning to a full season next year.

## **ISLAND BARN**

Island Barn, a reservoir in West Molesey, continues to be a key base for our local sailing activities. It provides a great venue for the more advanced sailing (e.g. spinnaker work) that we deliver for the older Scouts and in the Explorer section.

As with all boating, we've not had many opportunities to get out on the water there this year as the complications of sailing and social distancing have been an issue. However we managed a number of Explorer musters up there as well as a couple of troop sailing sessions.

## **RONA SAILING PROJECT**

(For young people aged over 14)

Rona Sailing Project [www.ronasailingproject.org.uk](http://www.ronasailingproject.org.uk) is a registered charity which provides affordable sail training on purpose-built yachts. Their stated aim is to provide opportunities for young people to develop a sense of responsibility, resourcefulness and teamwork which will help them throughout their lives. Anyone over the age of 14 can apply for a place and we strongly recommend all Ajaccios to do so. In fact a number of the volunteer skippers and mates at RSP are Old Ajaccios!

Due to COVID the RSP programme was severely limited last year, they are starting to operate again and we hope to be able to send explorers next year.

## **DUKE of EDINBURGH AWARDS**

(For young people aged over 14)

The D of E programme continues to grow in popularity with the Scouts and with the Explorers. Like everything else this has mostly been put on hold this year and the proposed expeditions also on hold.

There are plans for a return to exhibitions in the near future, fingers crossed.

## **ROYAL NAVY RECOGNITION**

Ajax is one of just 105 Sea Scout Groups in the UK to be officially recognised by the Royal Navy and we have held this recognition continuously from the inception of the Group. Beyond the prestige of RN recognition, there are a number of tangible benefits including access to grant aid.

Following a relaunch of the scheme two years ago, all RN Recognised Groups are now affiliated with a local RN Unit. Together with nine other Groups in the London area, we are affiliated with the London University Royal Naval Unit under the command of Lt Toby Milligan.

To maintain RN recognition, all Groups are regularly reviewed to ensure the required standards are maintained. As mentioned previously, we had our review this year and passed with flying colours.

## **THANKS**

A big thank you to all who have contributed to the success of the Group over what was another challenging but successful year.

I am very much looking forwards to a return to normal Scouting (and life!) and getting back out to do what we do best.

**Chris West**  
**GROUP SCOUT LEADER**

## Brenda Mary Sharman - 1921-2021



Brenda Sharman passed away on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2021, only four months short of her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. Brenda was a much loved and respected Vice President of Ajax and the wife of Roy 'Chiefy' Sharman, Ajax Group Scout Leader 1948 to 1988. Brenda was always supportive of Chiefy's role in the Group and of the valuable time that he spent on all matters Ajax. In her later years it was always a pleasure to visit her as she loved reminiscing about the many past activities in which she was involved. "Lovely memories" she would often say. Brenda and Chiefy had three children, Jill, Richard and Joy and the following obituary is written by her elder daughter, Jill.

*There are a number of golden threads that weave through the rich tapestry of our mum's life. The first of these is love of family. Mum was the third of four children of Arthur and Dora Jones and although times were hard, in the 20's and 30's she always spoke of how happy her childhood had been and how much fun she and her brothers had.*

*Our mum met and married sub/lieutenant Roy Sharman in 1944 and they remained together for more than 60 years. When we 3 came along they put all their energies into giving us an equally happy childhood. E.g. arranging annual holidays by the sea, no easy feat with three children, lots of suitcases and no car! Mum was so proud of her growing family especially with the arrival of her beloved grandchildren, Adam & Rosie, and her precious great grandsons Finley and Laurence. The total delight on her face when she was able to hold and hug both boys when they came over from New Zealand, was wonderful to see. Mum was also proud of her niece and nephew, great niece and nephews and great, great nephew and nieces being so pleased to welcome baby Violet in March. She loved catching up with their achievements via her Saturday morning gossip Club with her sister-in-law June.*

*Another of the threads has been her Christian faith. While a member of the Christ Church Women's Own she went to one of the first Billy Graham rallies in London and during the singing of Blessed Assurance she stood up and made a public declaration of her faith. She told me "it changed my life". Our mum however never preached about her faith to others but she lived it for the rest of her life through her love, care and compassion. So many of the cards we received highlight how kind and caring our mum was from helping a former neighbour look for a child who had run off to sitting, chatting over a cup of tea with a neighbour at Calverley Court who couldn't leave her flat. The list is endless.*

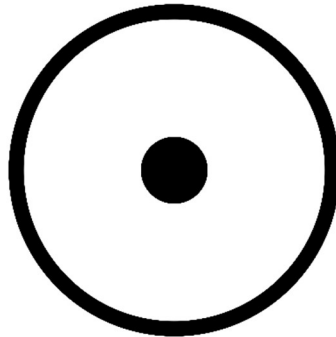
*Education in its widest sense provides another thread. She enjoyed her formal learning at Wimbledon County Girl's School leaving with a matriculation certificate of credits in every subject which enabled her to take courses in Bookkeeping and Commerce at the local Pitman's College. Our mum enthusiastically took Adult education classes every year e.g. Upholstery Yoga, Studies of Pompeii. One year she enrolled on Car Maintenance for women and when asked why she said she thought it would be interesting! Our mum had an incredible memory and encyclopaedic general knowledge which made her a demon scrabble player and general knowledge quizzier. Her thirst for, and interest in, knowledge never dimmed. Just before last Christmas, on a Skype call, she asked to speak with Paul because she wanted to ask him some questions about the Hubble Telescope which she had seen on the TV the night before.*

*Social activities and positive engagement with others also run through mum's life. Before joining the WRNS she had been an assistant Cub Leader in Wimbledon attaining her warrant and leading lots of outdoor activities – a connection that continued with dad's involvement with Sea Scouting. Our mum was always very proud to be one of Ajax Sea Scouts Honorary Vice-Presidents and eagerly looked forward to their annual reports. Our mum also belonged to The Townswomen's Guild for 25 years, taking on the roles of secretary, Chair and National Delegate. Her membership gave her lifelong friends – all the photos of trips, summer schools and holidays show her smiling and happy in their company. She so liked to chat and laugh.*

*The last thread is courage and fortitude - our mum was a very brave person throughout her life. As a young woman she joined the WRNS as a radio mechanic when this county's future was very uncertain. She was very proud of her service career and even more proud when her war service medal arrived 70 years after the war. It was also brave to marry a naval officer who was being sent out to the war in the Pacific without knowing if he would return. She displayed great fortitude when she visited dad daily in hospital for nearly a year, driving herself there despite being over 80. Equally it took courage to move from her home of 40 years after Dad died and settle into a new life at Calverley court. Aged 95 she bravely went to Speirs House for 6 weeks respite care and liked it so much she decided to become a permanent resident, enthusiastically joining in all the activities. She was never afraid to try something new – learning to take Skype Selfies with her beloved granddaughter Rosie just a few weeks before her death.*

*Our mum had a great zest and joy for life and the most amazing capacity to touch and impact the lives of others whatever their age. Even strangers such as the hospital staff who treated her in the last week of her life said 'She was simply unforgettable'*

*We all love you very much and as someone who loved the sea.  
We say to you "God Speed, Fair Wind and Following Seas"*



**1<sup>st</sup> September 2021**  
**4<sup>th</sup> Thames Ditton 'Ajax' Sea Scouts**

In common with all Scout groups, the 4<sup>th</sup> Thames Ditton 'Ajax' Sea Scouts ("the Group" or "the Charity") is a charity established under the Royal Charter granted to The Scout Association dated 4<sup>th</sup> January 1912 as amended by supplemental charters dated 28<sup>th</sup> March 1949, 18<sup>th</sup> February 1959, 5<sup>th</sup> May 1967 and 19<sup>th</sup> July 1991. Trustees are appointed in accordance with the Policy, Organisation and Rules of the Scout Association.

**Group Information as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021**

Charity Registration Number:	303764
Scout Association Registration Number:	25880
Honorary President:	Mrs Marguerite Rollason MBE
Honorary Vice Presidents:	Mrs Janet Barber Mrs Doreen Neal
Trustees Ex-Officio:	
Group Scout Leader	Chris West
Assistant Group Scout Leader	Peter Wadsworth
Explorer Sea Scout Leader	Nick Barber
Cub Scout Leader	Ruth Mortby
Beaver Scout Leader	Peter Stephens
Trustees Nominated:	
Group Chair	Andrew Roberts
Group Vice-Chair	Peter Carrow
Group Advisers	George Barber Mark Faulkner Mark Marriott
Supporters	Raymond Mears
Trustees Elected:	
Group Treasurer	Peter Drysdale ( <i>co-opted 03/02/20</i> )
Group Secretary	Kate Ashley
Beaver Scout Parent	Mark Dence
Beaver Scout Parent	Heather Ryder
Cub Scout Parent	Andrew Rowan
Sea Scout Parent	Misia Collins
Sea Scout Parent	Adrian Smith
Sea Scout Parent	Chris Eyssell
Explorer Sea Scout Parent	Peter Lloyd-Jones
Custodian Trustees:	The Scout Trust Corporation
Independent Examiner:	Barry Hitchens
Contact Name and Address:	Chris West 4 Hartford Road Epsom KT19 9JD

## Trustees Report

The Trustees present their report and the financial statements for the 4<sup>th</sup> Thames Ditton 'Ajax' Sea Scout Group for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

### Responsibilities of the Trustees

Charity law requires the Trustees to keep accounting records and prepare annual statements of account for the Charity which must be audited or independently examined and provided to the Charity Commission. In preparing the annual statement of accounts the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- Comply with applicable accounting standards subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the annual statement of accounts; and
- Prepare the annual statement of accounts on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume the Charity will continue its operations.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and are responsible for safeguarding its assets and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

### Review of Activity of the Charity

The Group currently has an active Beaver Scout Colony, Cub Scout Pack and Sea Scout Troop and a partnership agreement with the Ajax Explorer Sea Scout Unit. Key details of each Section are as follows:

- The Beaver Colony is for boys and girls aged 6 to 8 years. The Colony meets once a week and as at 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2021 has 20 members (2020: 21).
- The Cub Scout Pack is for boys and girls aged 8 to 10 ½ years. The Pack meets once a week and as at 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2021 has 29 members (2020: 38).
- The Sea Scout Troop is for boys and girls aged 10 ½ to 14. The Troop normally meets twice a week and as at 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2021 has 48 members (2020: 40).
- The Explorer Sea Scout Unit is for boys and girls aged 14 ½ to 18. The Unit normally meets once a week and as at 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2021 has 22 members (2020: 26)

All Sections have continued to work in accordance with the progressive training scheme as laid down by the Scout Association.

The Group has continued to operate a Royal Yachting Association Training Centre based at the Water Activities Centre and operated jointly with Warspite Sea Scouts. The RYA Centre's Principal is supported by a team of RYA Instructors with qualifications covering sailing, power boating, VHF communications and first aid.

The Group is one of just 105 Sea Scout Groups in the United Kingdom recognised by the Royal Navy. This prestigious and beneficial recognition is subject to a rigorous regular review.

### Reserves

The Trustees have adopted a formal policy on reserves which is reflected in these accounts. The policy provides that reserves be maintained at a level which has regard to:

- The risks associated with each stream of income and expenditure varying from that budgeted
- The planned activity level
- The Group's commitments
- The need for adequate readily realisable resources to meet the Group's commitments (after subscriptions and camp fees) for the coming twelve-month period.

Readily realisable resources are defined as the balances at the bank less current liabilities and the balance on designated funds for WAC building development.

The level of reserves available at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 under the policy is £19,163 (2019: £27,602) against reserves required of £30,000.

## **Investment Policy**

The Group does not have sufficient funds to invest in longer term investments. All funds are held in cash or "at call" short term investment with The Scout Association, Skipton Building Society and Cambridge & Counties Bank.

## **Governance**

The Group's governing documents are those of The Scout Association. They consist of a Royal Charter, The By-Laws of the Association and The Policy, Organisation and Rules of The Scout Association.

The Group is a trust established under rules which are common to all Scout Groups.

The Trustees are appointed in accordance with The Policy, Organisation and Rules of The Scout Association.

The Group is managed by an Executive Committee made up of all the Charity's Trustees. As charity trustees, they are responsible for complying with legislation applicable to charities. This includes the registration, keeping of proper accounts and making of appropriate returns to the Charity Commission.

The Group Executive Committee consists of independent representatives comprising Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary and parent representatives of each Section together with the Group Scout Leader, Assistant Group Scout Leaders and the Leaders of each Section. The Committee normally meets five times per year.

The Committee exists to support the Group Scout Leader in meeting the responsibilities of the Group and is responsible for:

- The maintenance of Group property;
- The raising of funds and the administration of the Group finance;
- The insurance of persons, property and equipment;
- Group public occasions;
- Assisting in the recruitment of leaders and other adult support;
- Appointing advisors other than those who are elected.

## **Risk Assessment**

The Committee has identified the major risks to which they believe the Group is exposed. These have been reviewed and systems established to mitigate against them as follows:

*Damage to buildings and equipment:* The Group would request the use of buildings and equipment from neighbouring organisations. The Group has sufficient buildings and contents insurance in place to mitigate against permanent loss.

*Injury to leaders, members and helpers:* The Group, through the capitation fees, contributes to The Scout Association's national accident insurance policy. Risk Assessments are undertaken before all activities.

*Reduced income from fund raising:* The Group is primarily reliant upon income from subscriptions and fund raising. The Group does hold a reserve to ensure the continuity of activities should there be a major reduction in income. The Committee could increase the level of subscriptions to increase the income to the Group either temporarily or permanently.

*Reduction or loss of members:* The Group provides activities for young people aged 6 to 18. If there were a reduction in membership of a particular section or of the Group as a whole then there would have to be a contraction, consolidation or closure of a Section, or in the worst case scenario, the complete closure of the Group.

*Reduction or loss of leaders:* The Group is totally reliant upon volunteers to run and administer the activities of the Group. If there were a reduction in the number of leaders to an unacceptable level in a particular Section or the Group as a whole then there would have to be a contraction, consolidation or closure of a Section, or in the worst case scenario, the complete closure of the Group.

The Group requires two signatories for all payments to provide reasonable assurance against material mismanagement or loss of money and holds comprehensive insurance policies to ensure that insurable risks are covered.

**Group Objectives**

The aim of the Group is to promote the development of young people in achieving their full physical, intellectual, social and spiritual potentials, as individuals, as responsible citizens and as members of their local, national and international community. The method of achieving this aim is by providing an enjoyable and attractive scheme of progressive training, based on the Scout Promise and Law and guided by trained adult leadership.

**Independent Examiner's Report  
to the Trustees of the  
4<sup>th</sup> Thames Ditton 'Ajax' Sea Scouts**

**4<sup>th</sup> Thames Ditton Ajax Sea Scouts Charity Number 303764**

**Report of the Independent examiner to the Trustees of 4<sup>th</sup> Thames Ditton  
Ajax Sea Scouts**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above Charity for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 that are set out on the pages attached.

**Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the charity's trustees, 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 Trust's 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 that gives me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- a) the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act or
- b) the accounts did not comply with the accounting records or
- c) the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of the 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 the 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.

Barry Hitchens- Australian Society of Accountants  
24 Effingham Road, Long Ditton, Surrey, KT6 5JY

 4-10-21

**Annual Financial Report 2020 – 21**  
**Prepared by Peter Drysdale, Group Treasurer**

Ajax remains in good financial health. Covid meant that 2021 was not a normal year.

Operating Highlights

Note that these highlights don't add up completely because they are just the big numbers and they differ from the formal accounts which are in a prescribed form and include accruals.

In round numbers, cash in the bank stands at £98,500 which is a reduction over the year of £9,000. This is almost entirely due to expenditure on the fencing and concreting the additional land that resulted from the re-fencing.

Income from subscriptions including gift aid remained pretty much the same at around £24,000. Donations (£1,500) were down by £1000, but we received a Covid grant of £10,000 so that overall our operating income, at £35,000, increased by £8,500. Our operating costs, at £22,500, reduced by £8,500 due to reduced expenditure on general maintenance, section costs and training offset slightly by increased expenditure on fixed overheads.

Fund raising was a total wipe out resulting in zero cash income compared with £12,000 in 2020

Activities – camps etc – are largely self-funding so the few activities that did take place had little effect on cash.

Overall the net operating cash inflow of £10,800 was an increase of £8,000 on 2020

Capital Expenditure

There was however total capital expenditure of £20,000 (£34,000 in 2020). This was spent on:

Completing the WAC upgrade	£13,000
Fencing	£26,000
Concreting	£6,000
Lighting	£2,000

Offset by:

Elmbridge CIL Grant	£13,000 for WAC upgrade
Elmbridge CIL Grant	£13,000 for fencing
Warspite contribution	£3,000 for the fencing

In addition:

8 person paddle board	£700
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Reserves

We have kept the general reserve of £19,000 which is slightly less than 1 years' operating costs

The remaining £80,000 is earmarked mainly for building development but also replacement of tents and boats

Most of the building work will be upgrading the car park opposite the WAC together with fire alarms and new doors for the WAC itself and sundry other improvements including outside lighting.

### Expenses Card

This year we have introduced an expenses card (Soldo) to reduce the amount of expenses paid for and reclaimed by individuals. The amount of cash held on the card is limited both to protect against theft and to ensure that large expenditure is pre-approved.

### Change of Accounting Policy

This arises from recognizing that we are a cash-based organisation. The financial report demonstrates that reconciling cash flow to the formal accounts can be difficult – the numbers just don't match.

The accounting policies from 2021 will change from a strict accrual basis to a cash-based basis with some specific accruals, which it is felt will give a truer and fairer view.

The trustees take the view that the charity is essentially cash based. It does not give credit nor, with one minor exception, does it take credit. It has no loans and does not operate a bank overdraft. The regular cash inflows and outflows are stable and predictable. Therefore, a cash based Income and Expenditure account will be more accurate in explaining the movements in cash from one year to the next rather than accruing / deferring regular cost / income which technically relates to a different period from that in which the income was received or the expenditure paid.

The specific accruals relate to fundraising and activities. These are significant events involving large sums of money both in and out. Some of the fundraising income and some of the activity costs in the shape of deposits are received / incurred in the period prior to that in which the event takes place. These are accrued and recognised in the period of the event since not to do so would be materially misleading.

## **Notes to the financial statements 31 March 2021**

### **1 Basis of preparation of accounts**

#### **1.1 Basis of accounting**

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s) to these accounts. The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) issued on 16 July 2014 and with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102). The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

#### **1.2 Going Concern**

The Trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

### **2. Accounting Policies**

#### **2.1 Income recognition**

All regularly recurring income is recognised in the period in which it is received. This applies to Subscriptions, Gift Aid on subscriptions and Investment Income.

Donations are recognised once received. In the event that a donation is subject to conditions that require a level of performance before the Charity is entitled to the funds, the income is deferred and not recognised until either those conditions are fully met, or the fulfilment of those conditions is wholly within the control of the Charity and it is probable that those conditions will be fulfilled in the reporting period.

Any Gift Aid amount recovered on a donation is considered to be part of that gift and is treated as an addition to the same fund as the initial donation unless the donor or the terms of the appeal have specified otherwise. It is recognised in the period in which it is received.

All other income is recognised once the Charity has received it.

The exception is that offsetting grants will be recognised in the period in which the associated costs are incurred provided that entitlement to the income, the probability that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured reliably

Income from Fundraising and Activities is recognised in the period in which the fundraising event or activity takes place. Deposits received in prior periods will be deferred until the period in which the activity takes place.

Note that there were no fundraising events in the period due to Covid. There were also no major camps for the same reason.

## 2.2 Expenditure and liabilities

A liability exists where there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the Charity to that expenditure, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. All such liabilities will ordinarily be discharged as soon as possible. Only material liabilities not discharged by the end of the period will be accrued.

Some annual costs eg Insurance, Subscriptions, Rent and other similar dues which extend beyond the current period and which on a strict accruals basis would ordinarily be accrued, will be recognised in full in the period in which they are paid.

All expenses including support costs and governance costs are allocated or apportioned to the applicable expenditure headings.

The classification between headings is as follows:

- Expenditure on fundraising includes all expenditure associated with raising funds for the charity.
- Expenditure on charitable activities of the Group includes all costs associated with furthering the charitable purposes of the Group through the provision of its charitable activities.

All expenditure on fundraising events or activities is recognised in the period in which the fundraising event or activity occurs.

Materiality: Accruals of expenditure other than that for Fundraising or Activities will be made where they exceed £500 individually or £1000 in total.

## 3 Assets

The lease and building are held by The Scout Association Trust Corporation on Behalf of 1st Cuddington "Warspite" and 4th Thames Ditton "Ajax" Sea Scout Groups. Ground rent is reviewed by Elmbridge Borough Council every seven years based on Retail Price Index since the last review. The current ground rent is £76 per annum, and the next review is due in 2022. The lease expires in 2080. As the lease cannot be assigned or transferred and does not permit subletting it is not considered to have any market value. There is a legal agreement between the two Groups for a Joint Liaison Committee meeting to take place at intervals of not exceeding six months to review matters of mutual interest

## 4 Funds

Unrestricted General Funds are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the Charity.

Designated Funds are funds set aside out of unrestricted General Funds for specific purposes or projects. Restricted Funds are funds subject to specific restrictive conditions imposed by the donors or by the purpose of the appeal. Ajax Sea Scouts does not hold any restricted funds.

## 5 Insurance Policies

The WAC building is insured for reinstatement cost of £776,000. Contents at £76,000 and the boats at £103,000.

### Income & Expenditure 2020 - 2021

	Notes	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>
<b>Income from</b>			
Donations, Legacies. Subscriptions and similar income	1	57,835	41,581
Camp fees		1,406	39,793
Other activities in furtherance of the Charities objects		119	0
Fundraising		0	25,182
Investment Income		185	2,170
<b>Total</b>		59,545	108,726
<b>Expenditure on:</b>			
Fundraising Costs		0	13,400
Expenses of the activities by the Group		80,504	116,000
<b>Total</b>		80,504	129,400
<b>Net Income</b>		<b>(20,959)</b>	<b>(20,674)</b>

### Balance Sheet

	Notes	2021	2020
Reconciliation of Funds			
Total Funds Brought Forward		123,684	144,358
<b>Total Funds Carried Forward</b>		<b>102,725</b>	<b>123,684</b>

**Current Assets**

Cash at bank and in hand	2	98,766	107,581
Debtors and prepayments	3	3,960	30,096

Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year		0	13,992
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**Net Assets**

102,726	123,685
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**Represented by:**

Designated Funds	5	83,563	104,165
Unrestricted Funds		19,163	19,519

102,726	123,684
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## Notes to the Accounts

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>
<b>1 Analysis of Donations etc</b>		
Subscriptions	20,430	22,812
Donations and Legacies	1,405	2,985
Grants	26,000	15,784
Covid Grant	10,000	
<b>Total</b>	57,835	41,581
<b>2 Analysis of Cash at Bank and in hand</b>		
	<u>2021</u>	<u>2,020</u>
Cambridge & Counties	53,542	53,475
Skipton	25,813	25,739
Scout Assn	134	14,591
<b>Total Investment</b>	79,489	93,805
Cash in Hand	0	816
<b>HSBC</b>		
Subs	9,534	288
Camp	508	383
Bmm	6,940	10,660
Main	1,215	1,629
Nr 3	100	0
Soldo (Expenses card)	980	0
<b>Total Current Accounts</b>	19,277	13,776
<b>Total</b>	98,766	107,581

<b>Analysis of Debtors and</b>			
<b>3 Prepayments</b>		<u>2021</u>	<u>2,020</u>
Sundry Debtors		0	13,315
Gift Aid Receivable		0	3,572
Prepayments Other		0	7,702
Prepayments - Capitalisation		0	5,507
Prepayment - Cobnor		3,960	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3,960</b>	<b>30,096</b>

<b>4 Analysis of Creditors</b>		<u>2021</u>	<u>2,020</u>
Deferred Income Subscriptions		0	210
Expense Accrual		0	12,601
Sundry Creditors		0	1,181
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>13,992</b>

<b>5 Designated Funds</b>	Op			CI Bal
	Balance	Income	Expendure	
Building Development	91,500	26,000	(45,180)	72,320
Canoe	500			500
Small Craft	2,508		(832)	1,676
Tentage	2,500		(590)	1,910
HQ Security	2,500			2,500
National Regatta	4,657			4,657
	<b>Total</b>	<b>104,165</b>	<b>(46,602)</b>	<b>83,563</b>

### **Restated Comparatives**

These are the original 2020 accounts together with the restated accounts under the new policy.

Summary Balance Sheet	<u>Original</u>	<u>Restated</u>	<u>Change</u>
Cash - Current	13,775	13,775	0
Cash - Investment	93,806	92,932	(874)
Debtors	30,096	28,478	(1,617)
Liabilities	(13,917)	(13,917)	0
Reserves	(144,359)	(144,359)	0
<b>BS</b>	<b>(20,598)</b>	<b>(23,090)</b>	<b>(2,491)</b>
Expense	129,400	132,066	2,666
Income	(108,801)	(108,976)	(175)
<b>I&amp;E</b>	<b>20,598</b>	<b>23,090</b>	<b>2,491</b>

There will however be a significant impact on the bottom line of the 2021 accounts as a one off transition from one policy to another as follows:

Gift Aid	4,930	Gift Aid 2021 received post year end not accrued
Capitation	6,236	Paid 2021 relates to 2022 not deferred
Insurance, Subscriptions etc	3,742	Reversed accrual for Insurance etc paid in 2020 but partially covering 2021
<u>Net due to policy change</u>	14,908	

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# Ajax Sea Scout Group and Explorer Sea Scout Unit

## KEY CONTACTS

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Group Secretary	Tina Chale		<a href="mailto:secretary@ajax.org.uk">secretary@ajax.org.uk</a>
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