
Ajax Sea Scout Group and Explorer Sea Scout Unit

Annual Report and Accounts
for the year ended 31st 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 2028.

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
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GROUP SCOUT LEADER'S REPORT

As I enter my 16th year as a member of Ajax and my 6th 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 200th 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.

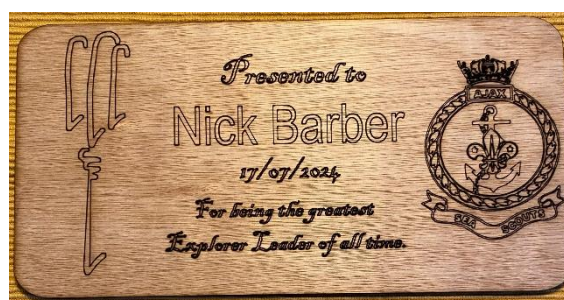
The river was fast flowing during a lot of the winter months, which meant that we were not able to use the Thames for boating. Instead, we ran some pool session in the winter, to build kayaking skills and for swimming practice. We also planned DofE expeditions for our Explorers and are anticipating that 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) 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

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

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

GROUP INFORMATION AS OF 31ST 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

The Trustees present their report and the financial statements for the 4th Thames Ditton 'Ajax' Sea Scout Group for the year ended 31st 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 31st 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 31st 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 31st 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 31st 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

4th Thames Ditton Ajax Sea Scouts Charity Number 303764

Report of the Independent examiner to the Trustees of 4th Thames Ditton Ajax Sea Scouts

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above Charity for the year to 31st 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

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

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
Income from:			
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
Total		135,050	91,739
Expenditure on:			
Fundraising Costs		17,671	16,256
Expenses of the activities by the Group		121,821	88,493
Total		139,492	104,749
Net Income		(4,442)	(13,010)

Balance Sheet

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
Reconciliation of Funds			
Total Funds Brought Forward		82,415	95,425
Total Funds Carried Forward		77,973	82,415
Current Assets			
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)
Net Assets		77,973	82,415
Represented by:			
Restricted Funds		500	1,500
Designated Funds	5	47,473	48,866
Unrestricted Funds		30,000	32,049
		77,973	82,415

Notes to the Accounts

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

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

2	<u>Cash at bank and in hand</u>	2024	2023
		£	£
	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	
	Total	13,769	9,887
	Investment Accounts		
	Scout Association	0	94
	Skipton	4,444	8,972
	Cambridge & Counties	56,003	54,744
	Total	60,447	63,810
	Total	74,216	73,697

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

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

5 Designated Funds	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
Total	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

Ajax Sea Scout Group and Explorer Sea Scout Unit

KEY CONTACTS

Group Scout Leader	Chris West	07967 806818	gsl@ajax.org.uk
Deputy Group Scout Leader	Peter Wadsworth	07527 554029	peter@ajax.org.uk
Beaver Colony	Dan Callaghan	07840 290044	beavers@ajax.org.uk
Cub Pack	Ruth Mortby	07941 206568	cubs@ajax.org.uk
Sea Scout Troop	Robert Elliott	07896 518604	troop@ajax.org.uk
Explorer Sea Scout Unit	Jan Harley	07801 135289	explorers@ajax.org.uk
Group Chair	Andy Davison	07970 265921	andy.davison@ajax.org.uk
Group Secretary	Anjani Srivastava	07850 239833	secretary@ajax.org.uk
Group Treasurer	Peter Drysdale		treasurer@ajax.org.uk

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

Chris West

Email: gsl@ajax.org.uk

For child joining or adult volunteering, go to: www.ajax.org.uk/join

Ajax Sea Scout Group and Explorer Sea Scout Unit
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19a Ditton Reach
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Surrey KT7 0XB

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Telephone: 020 8398 4777

Website: www.ajax.org.uk

Ajax Sea Scouts is a Registered Charity No: 303764