

35TH SOUTH WEST CHESHIRE SCOUT GROUP

England & Wales · Charity number 520281

Details

Other names 35TH SOUTH WEST CHESHIRE GROUP

Status Registered

Legal form Other

Registered 1964-03-09

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

Address 35 Flixton Drive
Crewe
CW2 8AP

Phone 07967800089

Website wistastonscoutgroup.org.uk

Activities

Objects: INSTRUCTION OF BOYS OF ALL CLASSES IN THE PRINCIPLES OF DISCIPLINE, LOYALTY AND GOOD CITIZENSHIP.

Activities: Provides scouting activities for children (of both sexes) aged between 6 and 15 years of age.

Classification

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

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** SOUTH WEST CHESHIRE
- Cheshire East
- Cheshire West & Chester
- Staffordshire

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-12-31	£32,362	£35,809	-	-
2023-12-31	£30,533	£26,922	-	-
2022-12-31	£26,868	£28,687	-	-
2021-12-31	£13,348	£14,725	-	-
2020-12-31	£31,179	£15,002	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Kate Alexandra Blakemore	Chair	2024-09-13
Abigail Hope O'Donnell		2025-09-08
Adam James Pickering		2024-06-10
Alexander James Smith		2024-06-10
Christopher John Ullmer		2024-06-10
Courtney Charles Marsh		2025-09-08
JOHN BENNETT		
MR RICH PICKERING		
Sarah Jane Jones		2010-07-12
Thomas Austin		2024-09-24
Wendy Jane Simons		2022-09-23

35TH SOUTH WEST CHESHIRE SCOUT GROUP

England & Wales - Charity number 520281

Accounts



Wistaston Scout Group (35th South West Cheshire)

Registered Charity No: 520281

www.wistastonscoutgroup.org.uk

ANNUAL REPORT YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31st 2024

I reported last year that our youth numbers, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts, had returned to pre pandemic level. I am pleased to say that trend has continued and we now have in excess of 100 young persons in the group and are the largest group in the District.

The latest national census of scouting at the end of 2024 shows a very small increase in overall national numbers and Wistaston Scouts mirrors that increase. Much is made nationally of the numbers waiting to join scouts, often due to the lack of adult leaders. We do have quite a few children on our waiting list but they are all below Beaver age (6 years old), and there should be a space for them once they reach Beaver age. Our leadership numbers have remained almost constant for several years at 31, that is not to say that we could do with more help, we would welcome it

- We have two Beaver colonies with a total of 31 beavers
- We have two Cub packs with a total of 41 cubs
- We have two scout troops with a total of 28 scouts.

I have spoken before of the brilliant young leader system in South West Cheshire. We fully support that system and believe that these youngsters represent the future core of the group leadership team. At the time of the census we had 8 young leaders and I confidently expect that number to increase in the coming months.

Without being complacent we are in a very good place as far as membership is concerned.

Undoubtedly we can do with extra adult support in one or two of the sections so if anyone can spare that mythical hour a week then please let me know. Just to set that myth right it as much as you want to give but it is about 90 minutes per week (the length of a section meeting). You will need to have a Scout DBS which is free and we can arrange and there is some mandatory training: Safety, safeguarding and GDPR which are all on line and First Aid which is a six hour session usually held in our building. From there you can do as much or as little training as you want to do. If anyone wants to take this challenge and join a very happy and integrated team then please contact me via gsl@wistastonscoutgroup.org.uk

The national Scout Programme has been developed to provide our young people with Skills For Life. We fully embrace that concept and programme, in addition we endorse the **OUT** in Sc**OUT**ing. We have a scout centre in a pretty unique location, on the very edge of Joey the Swan, a SSBI, and we make use of that to develop knowledge and learning of the area, in particular its flora and fauna. We have a number of scout camp sites in Cheshire that we use and also other scout buildings located in areas rich in nature, with hiking trails, indoor accommodation etc.

During 2024 all our Beavers had the opportunity to have one night away at Bickerton Scout Hut. Our cubs had two nights away in the Scout Centre and two nights under canvas at Forest Camp Sandiway. Scouts as you would expect have more nights away, all under canvas and in total they all had the opportunity to have a total of 15 nights away.

The scout nights away includes seven nights at the annual summer camp. In 2024 that camp was held at Gwersyll-Y-Bryniau Scout camp site near Pantperthog, Machynlleth, Powys. In total 63 scouts, explorer scouts and leaders enjoyed a week under canvas, being self sufficient, preparing and cooking all their meals and generally having a great time. The site was chosen as it is on one of the Mach Loops used by RAF for low flying fast jet training. This was a daily feature of life in camp, jets roaring overhead. For some strange reason the theme for the camp was Top Gun! In 2025 the summer camp will be held on a site very familiar to us in Criccieth and scout section programmes from now until July will focus on camp preparations.

All these activities, section meetings in the scout centre, in the area around the centre and the camps, provided the opportunity for the youngsters to gain various awards. There are

literally dozens of activity badges which can be gained. Beavers and Cub Scouts in the main complete these under leadership supervision, although they are encouraged to do much of the work at home in their spare time. Scouts also have dozens of activity badges which they can attain and they are encouraged to be self motivated as to which they take on and complete. There are 43 activity badges for Beavers, 58 for Cub Scouts and 80 for Scouts.

In 2024:

- The two beaver colonies awarded a total of 424 activity and challenge badges
- The two cub packs awarded a total of 355 activity and challenge badges
- The two scout troops awarded a total of 251 activity and challenge badges

The activity badges supplement the Challenge Badges which have to be gained in order for the Beaver, Cub or Scout to be awarded the Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards, the highest award in each section and in 2024 the following were awarded

- 17 Chief Scouts Bronze Awards
- 8 Chief Scouts Silver Awards
- 10 Chief Scouts Gold Awards

In addition 5 scouts were awarded the YouShaped Award badge This Award makes it even easier for groups to have a youth shaped programme, where what they do each week is decided on and led by young people's ideas. At the same time, the YouShaped Award also helps young people work with volunteers to learn valuable skills for life, such as communication, teamwork and leadership

Beavers and Cubs attend a celebration afternoon arranged by the District team with other Beavers and Scouts from South West Cheshire where they receive their certificates.

The Scouts attend a Celebrating Success afternoon in Warrington organised by the County Team. The Scouts along with others in Cheshire receive their certificates (including the YouShaped awards at that event.

Richard Austin, one of the scout leaders spends much of his time photographing and filming

events, in particular summer camp, he then compiles a recording, some 20 minutes long with an appropriate music soundtrack which is premiered at the AGM and is then available online for download.

As Scouts progress through to Explorer Scouts and on to adult scouting and before they are 25 years of age, they have the opportunity to gain the highest award in Scouting, the Kings Scout Award, I am delighted to report that Tom Austin, one of our Scout section leaders, gained this award in 2024. Huge congratulations to Tom who is only the fourth scout from the Group to achieve this award in its 66 years of existence. He will attend the St George's Day parade at Windsor Castle where a member of the Royal Family will be present.

I am often asked how much time each volunteer gives to scouting so I have done a quick calculation of the number of hours our volunteers put into scouting annually. These are minimum figures and do not include time spent in planning camps. For Summer Camp that time is extensive, planning starts from almost the end of the last camp. Normally there will be at least one recce visit to the site, to check out proposed off site activities and find local shops that can provide for example fresh meat, vegetables and bakery products. That sounds quite easy but when we are catering for over 60 people in can be a time consuming business.

Beaver Section Leader: 158 hours including one camp

Beaver Assistant Leader: 146 hours including one camp

Cub Section Leader: 186 hours including two camps

Cub Assistant Leader: 174 hours including two camps

Scout Leader : 459 hours including camps

Scout Assistant Leader: 447 hours including camps

These figures assume that the leaders all attend the various camps, with the exception of the scout section leaders it does not include summer camp. Many of our beaver and cub leaders do attend summer camp, either for a few days or for the week. If they attend the entire week they are giving up 168 hours of their time.

In addition, Leaders are recognised for their service to Scouting. In 2024 the author was awarded the Silver Wolf which is the highest award for leaders. It is the first such award in

the group and at present there are only two others in South West Cheshire with that award. In addition Alex Smith (Cub Leader Rowallan Pack) was awarded the Medal of Merit for outstanding service. Other awards are in the pipeline. All leaders are awarded Service Awards gained at five yearly intervals from the start of their service. It is always pleasing to present these awards of which there were 15 in 2024.

At the end of 2024 the Scout Association rolled out a new digital membership system to replace the outdated Compass system. The new system has not been without its problems but nothing like the issues which beset Compass on its roll out. It is a vital tool to enable leaders to manage their sections.

At the same time the group has been getting used to the transition from a group executive committee which at times had up to 18 members to a new Trustees Board with a maximum of 12 members. This is still work in progress but the signs are that the change will benefit the group.

In 2024 the inquest into the tragic death in 2019, of Ben Leonard, an Explorer Scout from Stockport, was concluded. Ben died on the Great Orme whilst taking part in a Scout activity. The Coroner was scathing of The Scouts and issued a prevention of future deaths report requiring The Scouts to address 39 issues in a short timescale. Some of these required changes at group level. Two of the most important involved training and risk assessments.

Dealing with training, a new safety module has been introduced and is completed on line and we have until July 2025 for all leaders to complete. This training within the group is progressing well and the deadline will be attained. Those who fail to complete the training face the prospect of suspension.

Risk assessments are nothing new to the group and all leaders are now conversant, and comply, with the requirements. These are now produced for all activities ranging from, for example; games played in the scout centre or at Joey the Swan to basic fire lighting and to the annual summer camp (35 separate assessments for the 2024 event). We have developed a library of all our risk assessments which can be accessed by leaders, downloaded, reviewed and updated where appropriate.

In many respects this has been a challenging year for the leaders and trustees as we adapt to the changes. However during this period one thing has remained constant – the level of commitment of the leaders to our young members and the provision of Skills for Life.

Once again, the group is grateful for the continued support from the Parish Council. As ever they made the offer of funding towards equipment. In 2024 our Trustees agreed to a programme of replacement of our ageing canvas tentage some of which is over 25 years old. The first replacement costing £1500 was purchased in 2024 and we are extremely grateful to the Parish Council for donating £700 towards this cost.

Finally I must pay a huge thankyou to our leaders (including our young leaders) and group trustees for the amazing work they have done to provide scouting during 2024. When thanking the adult leaders I must include their wives, husbands, partners, girlfriends and boyfriends (I believe in sporting circles they are known as WAGS and HABS) for their continued support. Without their assistance we could not provide the quality scouting to our young people which they receive in Wistaston Scouts.

April 2025

John Bennett MBE
Group Lead Volunteer (Group Scout Leader)
07825 091114,
gsl@wistastonscoutgroup.co.uk

SURPLUS AND LOSS ACCOUNT - 2024 Year To Date

INCOME

Subs

Current Year - 2024	£	14,064.00	
Previous Year - 2023	£	172.00	£ 14,236.00

Fundraising Etc.

Fundraising	£	2,579.64	
Donations	£	200.00	
Grants	£	-	£ 2,779.64

Miscellaneous

Gift Aid	£	-	
Camps & Activities	£	1,016.00	
Summer Camp	£	13,240.95	
Floats/Cashing Cheques	£	-	
Interest	£	-	
Explorer Rent	£	690.00	
Centre Hire Income	£	-	
Other	£	400.00	£ 15,346.95

New HQ Funding £ -

£ 32,362.59

Transfers between accounts (Excluded from Income/expenditure)

Moving from

Natwest Main Account	547.81
Natwest Activities account	1408.91
Natwest Summer camp	8058.51
OSM Payment Cards	347.81

Moving To

Natwest Main Account	572.41
Natwest Activities account	270.00
Natwest Summer camp	1756.72
OSM Payment Cards	7763.91
Transfer balance	0.00

TOTAL Income £ 32,362.59

Opening Balances 01/01/2024

Cash	£	-
Natwest Main Account	£	30,791.37
Natwest Activities Account	£	6,454.29
Natwest Summer Camp Accc	£	-
OSM Payment Cards	£	2,533.84
Unbanked Cheques	£	-
Assets		
Liabilities	£	-

Total £ **39,779.50**

EXPENDITURE

Utilities

Electricity	£	1,315.00	
Water	£	384.35	
Gas	£	768.00	
Phone/Broadband	£	83.11	£ 2,550.46

General

Training	£	-	
Insurance	£	1,717.87	
Capitation	£	6,384.50	
Subs Expenditure	£	270.44	
Hygiene services	£	73.20	
HQ Expenditure	£	2,360.85	£ 10,806.86

Equipment

Scout & Guide Shop	£	1,582.76	
Camping Gas	£	90.00	
General	£	-	£ 1,672.76

Sectional Expenses £ 1,067.47

Floats/Cashing Cheques £ -

Fundraising Expenditure £ 585.04

Camp & Activity Expenditure £ 1,623.42

Summer Camp Expenditure £ 13,835.51

Gifts £ -

Other £ -

New Equipment Expenditure £ 3,667.91

£ 35,809.43

Net Surplus **-£ 3,446.84**

£ 32,362.59

Current Balance

Cash	£	-
Natwest Main Account	£	29,853.14
Natwest Activities Account	£	5,372.48
Natwest Summer Camp Account	£	690.84
OSM Payment Cards	£	416.20
Unbanked Cheques	£	-
Assets	£	-
Liabilities	£	-
Summer Camp Expected Expenditure	£	-
Summer Camp OSM	£	-
Total	£	36,332.66

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the

.....^{35th} SJC.....SCOUT GROUP/DISTRICT/COUNTY/AREA SCOUT COUNCIL

I report on the accounts of the Group/District/County/Area for the year ended31/12/24.....
which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet and related notes set out on pages.....

This report is made solely to the trustees in accordance with Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011. My work has been undertaken so that I might state to the charity's trustees those matters I am required to state to them in an Independent Examiner's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's trustees for my examination work.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

The Group's/District's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. They consider that an audit is not required for this year (under Section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act)) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts (under Section 145 of the Charities Act);
- To follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under Section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act); and
- To state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Group/District and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent Examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *):

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 130 of the Charities Act ;and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act
have not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply

Name: Simon Prestage

Qualification: RETIRED BANK MANAGER

Address: 53 SANDYLANDS PARK

Date: 9TH JUNE 2025

35TH SOUTH WEST CHESHIRE SCOUT GROUP

England & Wales - Charity number 520281

Accounts



Wistaston Scout Group
(35th South West Cheshire)
Registered Charity No: 520281
www.wistastonscoutgroup.org.uk

ANNUAL REPORT YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31st 2023

I reported last year that our youth numbers, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts, had returned to pre pandemic level. I am pleased to say that trend has continued and we now have in excess of 100 young persons in the group. Although we don't have anybody waiting to join a section (who is of age to join that section) we do have a substantial number of youngsters waiting to join beavers once they are of the age to do so. So the future looks very good. At the same time the number of leaders has shown a small increase but some of these are at university so are only available when down from Uni. One or two sections could definitely benefit from extra help, so if anyone can spare that mythical hour a week then please let me know. Just to set the myth right it is as much as you want to give but it is about 90 minutes per week (the length of a section meeting).

The Scout Association, now to be known as The Scouts, is coming to the end of their latest five year plan (ending at the end of 2025) and there are challenging times ahead. For example:

- There is a new digital membership tool on the horizon. It is currently being tested in a number of areas. It is claimed that it will make leader's lives easier with everything under one programme, it will replace the discredited Compass system. It does mean that we will need reliable Wi-Fi in this building. Parents will, as with Compass, have access to their child's records .
- Training is changing and future leaders will have the choice whether or not to complete the wood badge. Some modules will continue to be mandatory, The

Safeguarding and Safety modules are being strengthened and made more robust. Some of this was planned but the tragic events five years ago on the Great Orme resulting in an explorer losing his life and the resulting inquest has placed training in the spotlight.

- Risk Assessments now drive everything we do, it would be very foolish of me to say that we are fully compliant at all times but what I can say is that everything we do is risk assessed and that assessment is recorded and available for scrutiny. For example when we go to summer camp everything we do during that week is risk assessed from the moment they step on the mini buses in Nantwich to the moment they get back to Crewe a week later. The same applies to Beavers for example on a nature walk in Bluebell Woods on a section evening or cubs at Forest camp site for a weekend camp.
- You may have seen some name changes of roles in scouting. We are all volunteers but the powers that be think that this should be reinforced so I should be referred to as a Group lead volunteer others are Beaver lead volunteer etc or section volunteers. This has not been greeted with universal acclaim.
- A big change which is just under way in which the group is administered. A few years ago we had a parents committee to do this, that was changed to a group executive that has now become the Group Trustees Board with the emphasis on governance. The changes have come as a result of comments by the Charity Commission and the size of the Board has been reduced to between 8 and 12 in number. Wistaston Scouts has always had a strong and active team unlike a number of groups in the district who struggle to recruit adults to their boards. Having said that we would welcome one or two more adults willing to help with the governance of the group.
- One more point worth noting is that there is (another) uniform review under way, what that will result in is anyone's guess at the moment.

I have previously spoken about our young leader programme where youth members aged 14 to 18 years assist with one of the sections as well as having the option of attending Explorers. This programme which is administered by Di Blurton from District continues to pay dividends. Once they reach 18 years of age, they can apply to become adult leaders, most of our young leaders do go on to become adult leaders. So the young leader

programme continues to provide new leaders for the group.

Scouting within the group has, as ever, been great fun with a lot of our youngster achieving the top awards in their sections with:

20 Chief Scouts Bronze Awards (Beavers)

1 Chief Scouts Silver Award (Cubs)

8 Chief Scouts Gold Awards (Scouts)

Being awarded in 2023

In addition and totally out of the blue I was awarded the MBE in the 2023 Kings Birthday Honours. I was amazed, dumbstruck and very, very humbled by this. I mention it in this report because having read the citation this is as much a tribute to the leaders past and present who I have worked with over the last 17 years as it is for me. I was invested into the order at Windsor Castle in February 2024 by HRH Prince of Wales (more of that in the 2024 report). So like Emily Edge who as a Cub met the future Queen a couple of years ago on behalf of scouting and this group, I have now met and shaken hands with the future King what next for the Group?

We are one of only a few groups in the District who can lay claim to holding traditional camps under canvas. That means that once they reach scouts they do everything as a patrol; they pitch their own tents sort their own fires and cook their own meals truly gaining skills for life. There is always a leader in the background monitoring progress and giving guidance where necessary. Added to that scouts have a week long summer camp and have done so for many years (missing out during the pandemic). 2023 saw them using a new (to us) site on Anglesey and a great time was had by all. The highlight for most was a trip to RAF Valley which had been arranged by Phil Spencer who was group chair at the time and had one or two connections in the RAF. The youngsters got to see the working base, sit in a helicopter and generally have a great time. Sadly there was no fixed wing flying whilst they were there so I guess we will have to go back again in 2027.

Once again, the group is grateful for the continued support from the Parish Council. As ever they made the offer of funding towards equipment. In 2023/24 they met half of the cost of a heavy duty Gazebo replacing the old one which has given 15 years service.

Finally I must pay a huge thankyou to our leaders (including our young leaders) and group trustees for the amazing work they have done to provide scouting during 2023. When thanking the adult leaders I must include their wives, husbands, partners, girlfriends and boyfriends (I believe in sporting circles they are known as WAGS and HABS) for their continued support. Without their assistance we could not provide the quality scouting to our young people which they receive in Wistaston Scouts.

August 2024

John Bennett MBE

Group Lead Volunteer (Group Scout Leader)

07825 091114,

gsl@wistastonscoutgroup.co.uk

SURPLUS AND LOSS ACCOUNT - 2023 Year To Date

INCOME

Subs

Current Year - 2023	£	12,528.00	
Previous Year - 2022	£	-	£ 12,528.00

Fundraising Etc.

Fundraising	£	3,524.23	
Donations	£	950.00	
Grants	£	-	£ 4,474.23

Miscellaneous

Gift Aid	£	-	
Camps & Activities		11776.24	
Floats/Cashing Cheques	£	-	
Interest	£	-	
Explorer Rent	£	-	
Centre Hire Income	£	940.00	
Other	£	814.33	£ 13,530.57

New HQ Funding			£ -
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£ 30,532.80

Transfers between accounts (Excluded from Income/expenditure)

Moving from

Natwest Main Account		130.00	
Natwest Activities account		2500.00	
OSM Payment Cards		0.00	

Moving To

Natwest Main Account		0	
Natwest Activities account		130.00	
OSM Payment Cards		2500.00	
Transfer balance		0.00	

TOTAL Income			£ 30,532.80
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Opening Balances 01/01/2023

Cash	£	-	
Natwest Main Account	£	26,215.50	
Natwest Activities account	£	4,838.44	
OSM Payment Cards	£	5,114.27	
Unbanked Cheques	£	-	
Assets			
Liabilities	£	-	
Total	£	36,168.21	

EXPENDITURE

Utilities

Electricity	£	894.00	
Water	£	373.70	
Gas	£	696.40	
Phone/Broadband	£	480.00	£ 2,444.10

General

Training	£	-	
Insurance	£	1,586.79	
Capitation	£	5,605.50	
Subs Expenditure	£	146.61	
Hygiene services	£	101.40	
HQ Expenditure	£	1,386.18	£ 8,826.48

Equipment

Scout & Guide Shop	£	673.79	
Camping Gas	£	-	
General	£	306.00	£ 979.79

Sectional Expenses	£	875.23	
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Floats/Cashing Cheques	£	-	
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Fundraising Expenditure	£	495.98	
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Camp & Activity Expenditure	£	13,169.93	
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Gifts	£	-	
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Other	£	130.00	
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New Equipment Expenditure	£	-	
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£ 26,921.51

Net Surplus			£ 3,611.29
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£ 30,532.80

Current Balance

Cash	£	-	
Natwest Main Account	£	30,791.37	
Natwest Activities account	£	6,454.29	
OSM Payment Cards	£	2,533.84	
Unbanked Cheques	£	-	
Assets	£	-	
Liabilities	£	-	
Total	£	39,779.50	

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the

3574

.....SCOUT GROUP/DISTRICT/COUNTY/AREA SCOUT COUNCIL

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Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

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- To state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's report

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2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply

Name: SIMON PRESTAGE

Qualification:

Address: 53 SANDYLANDS PARK
WISASTON CBW6

Date: 15/8/2024

35TH SOUTH WEST CHESHIRE SCOUT GROUP

England & Wales - Charity number 520281

Accounts



Wistaston Scout Group
(35th South West Cheshire)
Registered Charity No: 520281
www.wistastonscoutgroup.org.uk

ANNUAL REPORT YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31st 2022

At the end of 2021 Face to Face Scouting restarted, during lockdown in common with Scouting nationally we had lost over 20% of our youth membership, however unlike many other groups, we retained the majority of our leaders.

Our young leader programme where youth members aged 14 to 18 years continues to pay dividends. Once they reach 18 years of age, they can apply to become adult leaders. So although some of our adult leaders did leave during the pandemic the young leader programme provided new leaders for the group.

As things started to settle down after the easing of restrictions so our number began to build up to pre pandemic levels and by the end of 2022 our annual census shows having regained most to the lost ground.

We were able to resume camping activities for all sections in 2022. Camping for scouts was very important as we had a summer camp planned for July and for the majority of our scouts this would be their first weeklong camp. We managed to get in a number of weekend camps to get in some vital training for summer camp. In addition our beavers and cubs were able to enjoy weekend camps for the first time since the start of the pandemic. Camping is a vital part of the scout programme with all training geared towards the highlight of the year, Summer Camp.

This year we returned to a familiar camp site (to us) in Criccieth. We use a farmer's field

which is known in Scouting as a “Green Field Site”. The only amenities on site are a water supply, and plenty of fallen timber. Both are vital, water for obvious reasons, timber is needed as all cooking is done over open altar fires, these consist of half a steel drum mounted on legs Unlike fire pits Altar fires do not require a patch of earth to be dug out and do little or no damage to the ground on which they are mounted.

We had a new management team for this camp and they provided a week long experience which was a huge success. We took over 50 youngsters to the camp, the numbers were boosted by Explorer Scouts from Drake ESU who meet in our scout centre. Plans are now underway for the 2023 Summer Camp which will be on Anglesey.

I had stated my intention to stand down as GSL once a replacement could be found. Alex Smith volunteered to be Deputy GSL an offer that was gladly accepted. He was the 2022 Summer Camp leader for the first time and made an excellent job of that. A couple of weeks later I was admitted to hospital which turned out to be an 18 week incarceration followed by a lengthy recovery period. During that time Smithy was at the helm and did a fantastic job for which I and the group are very grateful. With him on board as my deputy I will delay my retirement “Once a scout always a scout”

Despite the challenges resulting from lockdown where most of the weekly meetings were on Zoom we were still able to award in 2022 a total of 10 Chief Scouts Bronze Awards (Beavers), and 3 Chief Scouts Gold Awards (Scouts)

Once again, the group is grateful for the continued support from the Parish Council. As ever they made the offer of funding towards equipment. For once we declined that offer, mainly because the lack of outdoor activities in 2020 and 2021 meant that we did not have any major items of equipment needing replacement, I suspect that will not be the case for the 2024/5 budget!

Finally I must pay a huge thankyou to our leaders (including our young leaders) for the amazing work they have done to provide scouting during the pandemic and helping the group to recover from the effects of the pandemic. When thanking the adult leaders I must include their wives, husbands, partners, girlfriends and boyfriends (I believe in sporting circles they are known as WAGS and HABS) for their continued support. Without their

assistance we could not provide the quality scouting to our young people which they receive.

John Bennett

Group Scout Leader

07825 091114,

gsl@wistastonscoutgroup.co.uk

SURPLUS AND LOSS ACCOUNT - 2022 Year To Date

INCOME

Subs			
Current Year - 2022	£	12,600.00	
Previous Year - 2021	£	48.00	£ 12,648.00
Fundraising Etc.			
Fundraising	£	706.85	
Donations	£	2,230.44	
Grants	£	-	£ 2,937.29
Miscellaneous			
Gift Aid	£	-	
Camps & Activities	£	10,429.80	
Floats/Cashing Cheques	£	-	
Interest	£	-	
Explorer Rent	£	112.50	
Centre Hire Income	£	240.00	
Other	£	500.00	£ 11,282.30
New HQ Funding	£	-	
			£ 26,867.59
Transfers between accounts (Excluded from Income/expenditure)			
Moving from			
Natwest Main Account		10000.00	
Natwest Activities account		0.00	
OSM Payment Cards		0.00	
Moving To			
Natwest Main Account		0	
Natwest Activities account		0	
OSM Payment Cards		10000	
Transfer balance		0.00	
TOTAL Income			<u>£ 26,867.59</u>

Opening Balances 01/01/2021

Cash	£	-	
Natwest Main Account	£	36,964.36	
Natwest Activities account	£	1,023.58	
OSM Payment Cards	£	-	
Unbanked Cheques	£	-	
Assets			
Liabilities	£	-	
Total	£	37,987.94	

EXPENDITURE

Utilities			
Electricity	£	598.00	
Water	£	388.82	
Gas	£	551.80	
Phone/Broadband	£	172.51	£ 1,711.13
General			
Training	£	360.00	
Insurance	£	1,429.97	
Capitation	£	4,929.00	
Subs Expenditure	£	156.80	
Hygiene services	£	384.95	
HQ Expenditure	£	3,693.33	£ 10,954.05
Equipment			
Scout & Guide Shop	£	773.52	
Camping Gas	£	129.00	
General	£	410.41	£ 1,312.93
Sectional Expenses	£		804.66
Floats/Cashing Cheques	£		-
Fundraising Expenditure	£		254.06
Camp & Activity Expenditure	£		11,894.35
Gifts	£		50.79
Other	£		705.40
New Equipment Expenditure	£		999.95
			£ 28,687.32
Net Surplus			-£ 1,819.73
			<u>£ 26,867.59</u>

Current Balance

Cash	£	-
Natwest Main Account	£	26,215.50
Natwest Activities account	£	4,838.44
OSM Payment Cards	£	5,114.27
Unbanked Cheques	£	-
Assets	£	-
Liabilities	£	-
Total	£	36,168.21

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the

35th SWC

SCOUT GROUP/DISTRICT/COUNTY/AREA SCOUT COUNCIL

I report on the accounts of the Group/District/County/Area for the year ended 31/12/22
which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet and related notes set out on pages

This report is made solely to the trustees in accordance with Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011. My work has been undertaken so that I might state to the charity's trustees those matters I am required to state to them in an Independent Examiner's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's trustees for my examination work.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

The Group's/District's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. They consider that an audit is not required for this year (under Section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act)) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts (under Section 145 of the Charities Act);
- To follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under Section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act); and
- To state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Group/District and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent Examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *):

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 130 of the Charities Act ;and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act
have not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply

Name: SIMON PEESTMAO
Qualification: RETIRED BANK MANAGER
Address: 53 SANDYLANDS PARK
WISSTON CROFT
Date: 18th SEPTEMBER 2023

35TH SOUTH WEST CHESHIRE SCOUT GROUP

England & Wales - Charity number 520281

Accounts



**Wistaston Scout Group
(35th South West Cheshire)
Registered Charity No: 520281
www.wistastonscoutgroup.org.uk**

ANNUAL REPORT YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31st 2020

On March 16th 2020 Scouting, as we knew it then, came to a grinding halt when the Scout Association pre-empted the impending national lockdown by suspending all face to face scouting. We did return for about three weeks prior to Christmas before everything stopped again.

So for the majority of 2020 Scouting has been confined to Zoom meetings. The whole scout programme is based around outdoor activities with camping at the centre of everything. That is something that is impossible to replicate via Zoom, although we tried very hard to do that. The consequences of lockdown on the group have been numerous and varied. We have lost about 25% of our youth membership and those who have stayed with us have missed a huge chunk of the programmes which normally would lead to the Chief Scout's bronze, silver and gold awards.

For the scout troops it has meant missing out on the annual summer camp not only in 2020 but almost certainly in 2021. This is the pinnacle of the scouting year which the annual programme is geared around. When we do resume face to face scouting and can camp, we estimate that half of our scouts will not have camped as scouts and the leadership team will have a huge task to make up the lost time, in reality it is the young people who will have suffered.

The ingenuity of our leaders has been almost limitless in creating online meetings for all sections during the lockdown. There have been many examples ranging from Bob's Badges (organised by Bob Humphries), a weekly video demonstrating how our members could gain badges at home, through to two virtual camps. For these the camp started as usual on Friday evening and the kids were encouraged to sleep at home but not in their beds. There was then a range of activities during Saturday and Sunday. Food was prepared by the members at home no doubt under the watchful eye of parents for the younger ones. Saturday night saw a traditional camp fire followed by the ever popular leaders social once the youngsters had gone to bed. The first virtual camp was so successful that we repeated it later in the year. Thanks to everyone who helped organise the camps and also to all; the youngsters who avidly took part.

Online section meetings were held on Zoom. It is fair to say that a lot of youngsters had some issues with this, mainly because their schooling was also held via Zoom and the phrase "zoomed out" was heard regularly. Despite this many of our youngsters were able to gain badges during lockdown and for that they must be congratulated.

In 2019 the group created an impressive ribbon of poppies which was displayed in the scout compound on the run up to Armistice Day. The poppies were created from the bottoms of plastic bottles, sprayed red and fixed to chicken wire. In 2020 we were approached by the Memorial Hall management team and asked to mount the display outside the Hall which we were only too willing to do. The reaction has been amazing and plans are now under way for a much larger display in 2021 in the Parish at an, as yet, unannounced location.

Once again, the group is grateful for the continued support from the Parish Council. In the 2020 budget the Council gave the group an allowance towards the cost of a new frame tent. This was duly purchased but has as yet remained unused. We hope that there may be opportunities to use it at a camp in late 2021.

Finally I must pay a huge thankyou to our leaders (including our young leaders) for the amazing work they have done to provide scouting during an immensely difficult year. When thanking the adult leaders I must include their wives, husbands, partners girlfriends and boyfriends for their continued support. It cannot have been easy to carry on with a normal household when the “other half” has been glued to the computer for a couple of hours a week for section meetings and then for all the preparation time needed to arrange the section activities. Thanks to you all and hopefully we will get back to some semblance of normality in the not too distant future.

John Bennett

Group Scout Leader

07825 091114, gsl@wistastonscoutgroup.co.uk

SURPLUS AND LOSS ACCOUNT - 2020 Year To Date

INCOME

Subs			
Current Year - 2017	£	12,972.00	
Previous Year - 2016	£	-	£ 12,972.00
<hr/>			
Fundraising Etc.			
Fundraising	£	517.31	
Donations	£	571.60	
Grants	£	10,000.00	£ 11,088.91
<hr/>			
Miscellaneous			
Gift Aid	£	4,522.81	
Camps & Activities	£	-	
Floats/Cashing Cheques	£	2,040.00	
Interest	£	4.36	
Explorer Rent	£	472.50	
Centre Hire Income	£	78.00	
Other	£	-	£ 7,117.67
<hr/>			
New HQ Funding			£ -

£ 31,178.58

TOTAL

£ 31,178.58

Opening Balances 01/01/2020

Cash	£	-
Natwest	£	16,374.63
Britannia	£	5,571.77
Unbanked Cheques	£	-
Assets		
Liabilities	£	-
Total	£	21,946.40

EXPENDITURE

Utilities			
Electricity	£	393.30	
Water	£	261.81	
Gas	£	609.00	
Phone/Broadband	£	-	£ 1,264.11
<hr/>			
General			
Training	£	10.00	
Insurance	£	1,316.96	
Capitation	£	5,888.00	
Subs Expenditure	£	134.43	
HQ Expenditure	£	2,342.52	£ 9,691.91
<hr/>			
Equipment			
Scout & Guide Shop	£	909.84	
Camping Gas	£	-	
General	£	108.71	£ 1,018.55
<hr/>			
Sectional Expenses	£	271.48	
Floats/Cashing Cheques	£	1,900.00	
Fundraising Expenditure	£	-	
Camp & Activity Expenditure	£	-	
Gifts	£	-	
Other	£	5.98	
New Equipment Expenditure	£	850.00	

£ 15,002.03

Net Surplus

£ 16,176.55

£ 31,178.58

Current Balance

Cash	£	-
Natwest	£	27,546.82
Britannia	£	10,576.13
Unbanked Cheques	£	-
Assets	£	-
Liabilities	£	-
Total	£	38,122.95

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the

35th SWC Wistaston SCOUT GROUP/DISTRICT/COUNTY/AREA SCOUT COUNCIL

I report on the accounts of the Group/District/County/Area for the year ended Dec 2020 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet and related notes set out on pages.....

This report is made solely to the trustees in accordance with Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011. My work has been undertaken so that I might state to the charity's trustees those matters I am required to state to them in an Independent Examiner's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's trustees for my examination work.

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 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act have not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply

Name: Simon PIESMAYE
Qualification: Bank Manager (Retired)
Address: 53 SANDYLANDS PARK
WISTASTON
Date: 16th FEBRUARY 2021