

STAFFORD DISTRICT SCOUT COUNCIL

Registered Charity No 524528

Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts for the period 1/1/2023 -1/12/2023

For the Annual General Meeting 24th June 2024

Names of the Charity Trustees who manage the charity

| | |
|----------------|--------------------------------------|
| Sue Hewitt | District Commissioner |
| Nick Lloyd | District Chair Nominated |
| Sharon Hill | District Treasurer Elected |
| Helen Ashwood | District Secretary Elected |
| Andrew Preston | District Explorer Scout Commissioner |
| Chris Rafferty | District Scout Network Commissioner |
| Elaine Neville | Nominated |
| Juliet Maiden | Nominated |
| Keith Low | Nominated |
| Paul Askey | Nominated |
| Trudi Smith | Nominated |
| Cathy Hordern | Elected |
| Graham Smith | Elected |
| Paul Evans | Nominated |
| Andrew Clode | Chairman of Appointments |
| Steve Smith | Nominated |
| Helena Hordern | District Youth Commissioner |
| Jack Blakeman | District Youth Commissioner |
| Roland Smith | Scout Active Support Manager |
| Kevin Hewitt | Camp Warden |

Type of governing document

The District's governing documents are those of The Scout Association. They consist of a Royal Charter, which in turn gives authority to the Bye Laws of the Association and The Policy, Organisation and Rules of The Scout Association

How the charity is constituted

The District is a trust established under its rules which are common to all Scouts

Trustee selection methods

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

Risk and Internal Control

The District has in place systems of internal controls that are designed to provide reasonable assurance against material mismanagement or loss, these include 2 signatories for all payments and a comprehensive insurance policies to ensure that insurable risks are covered

Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document

The Purpose of Scouting – Scouting exists to actively engage and support young people in their personal development, empowering them to make a positive contribution to society

The Values of Scouting – As Scouts we are guided by these values. Integrity, Respect, Care, Belief and Co-operation

The Scout Method – Scouting takes place when young people, in partnership with adults, work together based on the values of scouting

Public Benefit Statement

The Trustees have an awareness of the Public Benefit Guidance with regard to Scouting's involvement with the local community. The District meets the Charity Commission's public benefit criteria under both the advancement of education and the advancement of citizenship or community development headings.

Financial Review

Reserves Policy – The District's policy on reserves is to hold sufficient resources to continue the charitable activities of the District should income and fundraising activities fall short. The District Trustee Committee considers that the District should hold a sum equivalent to six months running costs, circa £8,000.

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year as set out in the following reports –

District Commissioners Report

I cannot believe that it is time for the Districts AGM once again. I am writing this report thinking about what fantastic scouting has been done in Stafford District over the last 12 months

There are so many committed volunteers & the AGM gives me the time to think about what has happened over the last year. Hopefully next year will be just as good.

Following a review of Census for the end of 2023 where we had a net loss of 29 members (3%) to 926. As a District we now seem to be improving with our numbers and hopefully we will hit 1000 members by the end of 2024.

Stafford District has a huge opportunity to offer Scouting to more Young People due to the continuing large growth of all the new housing estates that keep popping up here and there.

We have 2 new schools that are being built which could help further with our numbers.

We have now 4 Squirrel Dreys in the District & 2 more groups have expressed interest in opening new dreys later this year.

The main problem is that we are still in desperate need of adult volunteers to make our groups run. Our usual District activities took place. We had our annual Lord Stafford Cup camping competition which should have taken place at Sherratts Wood but unfortunately this event was cancelled due to

lack of numbers. Activities are organised throughout the year but we do need the support of groups and sections to take part in these activities to make these events happen.

Remembrance Day Service was represented by our Explorers and they laid a wreath on behalf of Stafford District.

The District Carol Service was again held at St. Mary's and as always it was a good turnout.

Then 2024 was kicked off again with a District Quiz organised by St. Vincent Explorer Scouts and this year was won by the 9th Sea Scouts.

We have also had our District Football for cub and scouts which if I remember was a very cold and windy day so well done to everyone involved.

St. George's Day Service was led by the 7th Hixon & once again a good turn out with lots of awards and the parade returned back to its usual route through the Town Centre.

A very well organised Pioneering weekend for Scouts was held at Sherratts Wood and I believe 28 to 30 Scouts took part and built catapults, bridges and towers, I'm sure this event will grow even bigger in future years, thanks to all those that helped organise the weekend.

All that leaves me to say is a big thank you to you all for your support & hard work throughout the year & I would especially like to thank Nick Lloyd for his years of hard work as our District Chairman and for all the support he has given me.

Sue

District Lead Volunteer

Chairman's Report

It is great credit to everyone associated with Stafford District that we continue to provide those children and young adults in our charge with an environment and experiences they will never forget.

The contribution made by our "volunteers", leaders, helpers, Executive (Trustee Board),parents enable such experiences to seemingly just happen- "this is Scouting".

Once again the District has been active in many areas, continually looking at ways to enhance the activities available. Whether it be Squirrels, Campsite experiences, water based fun and land based challenges.

Stafford District is meeting head on the "Transformation Journey" requiring new Trustee Boards, changing roles and responsibilities- this all adds to the volunteering challenge.

As I will be standing down as Chair I would like to acknowledge the support I have received from everybody- it has been a real a privilege to be involved in such a fantastic organisation.

In finishing I would like to thank Sue our District Lead Volunteer- who in January 25 completes 10 years in this role.....well done Sue.

In closing I would like to leave with a simple statement —

You make a living by what you get. You make a life by what you give.

Winston Churchill.

Nick Lloyd —District Chair

District Explorer Unit

It has been a 'steady' year for the Explorer Units within the Stafford District. St Vincent Unit has low numbers but have linked in with the Scout troop in order to rebuild. Pegasus, North Star and K2 have over 10 regular attenders and are slowly building. Elements and 7A are thriving. Both these Units are planning foreign camps next year. All Units run exciting and varied programs.

7A are leading the way with DofE at all levels; Elements are busy establishing their DofE program. We have a proactive volunteer ready to promote DofE within the District.

The OB Cup from last year was postponed to March due to weather conditions and again proved a successful event with 24 attenders. The numbers were down by 8 who were due in October: Pikes Pool campsite have offered up to 24 camping spaces over 2 nights due to the reduced numbers – no Unit has yet taken up this offer – as a result, I am happy for any Group to take advantage of this free of charge.

Plans are in place to offer a weekend of training for Young Leaders to complete 9/11 modules towards their YL Belt.

Effy Preston

District Lead Volunteer for Explorers

Stafford Network report

Network consists of six members. Up until September they were meeting every other week. They were doing activities such as climbing and canoeing. Unfortunately in September last year, due to my work commitments I had to take a step back from Network. It was my hope that the members would continue to meet regularly organising the meetings themselves. The group seems to have lost momentum however I am now in a position to start supporting Network again so I hope to reconnect and get the group meeting on a regular basis. We will also be looking to increase the size of the group.

Chris Rafferty

District Lead Volunteer for Network

Stafford District Growth and Development report

Since the end of the pandemic, Stafford District has been concentrating on recovering our young member numbers to pre-pandemic levels. This has now been achieved despite a small loss in numbers last year.

Looking forward, we have a huge opportunity to offer Scouting to more Young People due to the large growth of new builds in the West (nearest Group the 21st but looking at a new school based Group at Doxey) & the North (nearest Groups are the 20th and the 11th).

Also, at many of our village based Groups such as 15th (Penkridge) and 7th (Hixon) there have been new house builds offering the opportunity to boost numbers.

This year, we are planning to grow by a minimum of 10% to over 1000 young people. This

we will attempt to achieve by encouraging Units & Groups to concentrate on recruiting new Leaders using the new processes being introduced. Also, making use of the existing resources & recruitment workshops available & if possible, appointing a recruitment officer at Group level to spread the load.

The new Squirrel sections are starting to take off with 4 groups giving it some focus. There is a chance 2 or 3 dreys will start in September 2024 subject to enough Adult Volunteers being found.

However, the growth of Scouting in Stafford remains very challenging with a lot of time being spent on keeping existing Groups & Sections open. If we can get recruitment right, this frees up the greatest barrier for Growth.

As always, we remain committed to offering Scouting to as many young people as we can but recognise the challenges in making this happen. The new transformation project will become the main focus as we move to a new system & way of delivering Scouting which may hinder the speed of growth in 2024.

Many thanks to all who are giving up their time to deliver Scouting to allow young people to develop skills for life. Hopefully, as their Scouting journey finishes, this will enable them to give something back to the Movement as they become Adults.

Steve Smith

Lead Volunteer, Growth and Development

Stafford District Beaver report

The Beaver Leaders have met several times since the last AGM. There is a greater sense of interest from groups in taking part in events throughout the year.

We held a successful day camp at Sherrats in September with the majority of groups represented, fun was had by all, there was an issue with the boggy carpark, and the odd downpour, but otherwise positive feedback was received.

The Christmas party was held in December and my thanks to Sean of the 20th for his DJ skills. We have just held a Beaver Drive, and despite leaders never having played it before, fun was had by all.

Cathy Hordern

District Team Lead Beavers

Cub Scout Section Report

It was a great honour in October to be given the opportunity to take over from Lydia in the role of ADC cubs and start a programme of activities in the hope of bringing the packs together. This will not be seen until 2024 or maybe 2025 before the programme ideas can be fitted into the district packs already busy programmes. My hope is to provide activities to bring the packs together, have regular leader meetings and to also have a few social times for just the leaders. Every leader has something they can share with the district to help it grow.

My first action as ADC was to simply try and get around to each of the packs, find out where they were, what they were up to, meet the leaders and cubs, and of course discover what they want from me. I have lots of ideas from my scouting experience, but need to get the packs, scattered to the four corners of the district, on board and meeting up. To let them know they are not alone.

Come back for next year's report, which will either show the success or failure of my endeavours.

Roy Clarke ADC (cubs)

Scout Section Report

All our Scout troops have enjoyed active and varied programmes this last year.

Taking full advantage of the district facilities at Sherratts Wood Campsite, the Canoe centre and the climbing wall. We have run the usual District events. The Scout Quiz which was very well supported and run by The Earl St Vincent explorers. Many thanks to them for a great evening. Lucie and David from the 11th organised the Lord Stafford Cup which took place at Sherratts Wood with several troops taking part. The weekend saw them showing off their camping skills in order to take home the trophy. There was also the chance for them to take part in shooting and archery at our shooting competition and all who took part had a fantastic experience. Thanks goes too Lee Smith for all his efforts.

Last month saw the launch of a pioneering weekend run by Andy Cropp, Alex Windows and the District pioneering team. We had 26 scouts take part and learn some new skills. We have invested in some pioneering equipment ready for future events and hope to build on the success of this weekend.

Chief Scout Gold Awards have been gained again this year. I would take this opportunity to remind Leaders that when these are presented within the troop it would be nice if you could invite either Sue or myself to the presentations.

Yet again I would like to thank all the Leaders and Volunteers who turn up week in week out to deliver their programmes to the young people. Without you all none of this would be possible.

Yours in Scouting

Graham Smith

ADC Scouts

District Activities Report

The kayaking team this year had over 300 Cubs and Scouts on the water, also, a number of the Explorer groups have used the facilities and run their own sessions. The session dates which were released in February were very quickly taken up within days. No one who requested a session did not get one, but there were requests for Cubs and Scouts to be able to paddle that had missed the deadline and in most cases, we were able to accommodate them. Our thanks go to Stafford Boat Club for allowing us to have a building on their land for storage and a centre for running the sessions.

We have also continued to upgrade some of our kayaks and equipment. There have also been a number of day trips on the river for the more experienced scouts.

Tom Kent the Explorer Scout (the Bean Fund has been sponsoring his equipment to allow him to compete in white water events at a national level) is currently hoping to get into the British National team.

The climbing wall has had a fairly quiet year with bookings slightly down on previous years. Most groups in Stafford have had at least one visit. The County Mountaineering Team have run a number of courses over the year. We have continued to replace items of equipment that have reached their

recommended life span.

A number of groups have had trips into the hills over the year with most of the groups operating in terrain 1 and 2.

As a result of the Great Orme tragedy we are currently revising the Districts Activity forms.

My thanks go out to the activity team members for all there help and commitment putting on these activities over the last year.

Paul Askey

ADC Activities

Sherratt's Wood Site Warden

We had a successful year, booking were slowly coming back to where they used to be.

For the last 12 months April, may, June, July, September had booking for every weekend October had 3 weekends booked. August, November and December had 0 bookings and January , February and March 2024 have had 1 booking each.

On the maintenance side, a lot of work has been going on and most of it un noticed but some of the visual improvements are the rooms upstairs in the toilet block have been changed , one into a lecture/ classroom with Wi- Fi and Tv screen and the other room will be used as a games room with kitchenette facilities. Three of the field shelters have now been improved and have the capability to have a catering cooker installed at for an extra hire charge.

The weather has been a big hurdle this year to getting outside work done as most of the site has been awash with water and even the grass cutting had to be put on the back burner until much later this year. That said we were able to have a contractor in to create more hard standing on half of the activity field overflow carpark and the second half will hopefully be completed in the near future.

Pistol and crossbow shooting along with tomahawk and "soft tomahawk" throwing have also been added to the comprehensive list of activities available on site.

The only downside to that is we very much struggle supplying these activities as volunteer instructors don't seem very eager to come forward.

Most of the districts sections have been to the campsite in the last year and I would like to thank them for their support, we are here for you to use.

The site crew have worked exceptionally hard over the last 12 months and particularly in the atrocious weather of the last couple of months and I would like the thank them all for their time and effort.

Kevin Hewitt

Site Warden

Appointments Committee

This will be the final report of the Stafford District Appointments Committee (SDAC).

The Scout Association is currently adjusting the Appointment process by the introduction of a 'warmer welcome'. This means that going forward the current set up is redundant, and the responsibilities now pass to others.

I am immensely proud of the work that SDAC has carried out over the last 5 years in my tenancy as Chair. We have interviewed hundreds of leaders and established a robust and integrated process

involving the DC, Training with both in person and on-line interviews to work with prospective leaders.

I would like to thank the following individuals for their support and dedication over several years: -

Roland Smith

Paul Evans

Adam Davies

Liz Smith

Kevin Hewitt

Helen Carson

Doreen Smith

Juliet Maiden – Co-ordination

Sue Hewitt – DC

Vikki Williams - Training

We have established a number of mop up sessions in June 25th & 29th and October 2nd & 5th prior to the new system going live. SDAC will work with the new District Recruitment Lead Volunteer when appointed.

Andy Clode

Chair

Stafford Active Support Unit Report

SAS continues to support Stafford District as much as possible.

Assistance was provided by some of our illustrious team at this year's Gang Show, by either undertaking Car Park Duties or assisting with Front of House requirements.

We also undertake the organising of St Marys Church on the St Georges Day parade and service as well as providing refreshments for the Bands. Setting up the Church takes quite a while with the positioning of Televisions and Video Equipment to enable visibility of the service by as many individuals as we can. We also undertake the logging in, admission and refreshments for the District AGM.

A number of our members also engaged with the Warrants Committee which will sadly fail to exist with the advent of "Transformation", we will until that time provide what assistance we can.

We are a small band of dedicated individuals who provide what assistance we can, but our numbers are not great and often we have to ask for assistance off family and friends to assist in some of the tasks we take on, as such we are always on the lookout for individuals who wish to remain in scouting but are unable to take on full time commitments to join our little band.

Roland Smith

Manager Stafford Scout Active Support (SAS)

4th Stafford (St Paul's) Scout Group Report

This year our Squirrels turned 1, and has had its ups and downs. A change in leadership has steadied the boat. They are now meeting every week with 12 fully invested children, 2 adult leaders and 3 young leaders, there is a waiting list. They are enjoying a full programme

of exploration and games.

Our Beaver numbers remain static at 27 with a healthy waiting list. They are also enjoying a varied programme with lots of getting out and about. The leadership team remains settled with 2 adult leaders. Trips to the fire station, rugby club, cricket club and the many parks within Stafford. For our annual sleepover, we have had to join forces with the 7th to ensure it's financial viability. We have attended the district events with good numbers.

Over the last 12 months, Cubs have been very busy, they have an allotment and successfully grew a variety of vegetables. They have continued to earn plenty of badges and continue to build on their basic scouting skills. Another great annual Christmas sleepover and several weekend camps with fabulous weather. Another fun and successful year of scouting.

Another packed year, seeing the Troop undertake 6 camps at various locations, including our Island Paddle Camp in Nottingham and our infamous Night Hike in the Peaks. The Scouts have honed their navigation skills on hillwalking courses, as well as developing their rock climbing and kayaking.

We concluded the previous year with our annual summer camp, in the stunning scenery of the Lake District. The Scouts enjoyed all sorts of activities from Gorge walking, to climbing and hiking as well as some amazing bushcraft activities, it was amazing. We're now looking forward to our summer camp on the Isle of Wight this Year!

The Scouts have been very busy each week taking part in a huge range of Scouting based activities during our troop nights including, parliament week, fires and cooking skills, micronav and pioneering.

The Scouts have been brilliant; risen to challenges, developed skills and achieved so much.

We're pleased to be able to offer so many and such a range of different activities, and fantastic opportunities for all our youth members, who get so much out of and always pushing the limits of Scouting.

We produced a 4th Stafford wrapped - over 3200 face to face scouting hours in 2023 (who said it was 2 a week?) 237 nights away, 101 hikes undertaken, 10 young leaders and 3 new leaders - 367 activity badges awards, 215 staged badges, 157 challenge badges awarded, 1 acorn, 4 bronze, 4 silver and 5 gold.

I would like to thank all my leaders: Helena Hordern, Sarah Phillips, Gemma Phillips, Lydia Hilton, Hannah Ward, Andrew Bennett, Sam Scriven, Alex Windows, Darren Hordern, Jake Scriven, Adrian Dickson - their ongoing commitment to providing experiences for our youth members every week is greatly appreciated.

I would like to extend my thanks to the army of young leaders, their ability to bridge the gap between the leaders and the young people is invaluable. Their ongoing support in running meetings is greatly appreciated by myself and the leaders.

Cathy Hordern

4th Stafford Team Lead

6th Stafford (Trinity) Scout Group Report

2023/24 has been a challenging year for the Group, with a lot of changes taking place and being planned for the future.

As a Group we are continuing with our remit to rebuild the scouting skills lost during the various

lockdowns of the past few years, which is taking quite a lot of time, by camping and doing outdoor activities as much as we possibly can. However recruitment of, and losing, both leaders and members is unfortunately hampering our efforts. We remain positive that the downturn is temporary. However, the Group has been extremely active and busy....

A couple of highlights for our Group:

Celebrating the 1st birthday of our Squirrel Drey in January 2024

Continuing to develop our community ties, with activities at Victoria Park and visits to Stafford Heritage sites as well as Stafford Station.

A leaflet drop to try to encourage new members, which different sections took part in.

An exciting evening doing traditional rafting at Kibblestone with our Scouts and older Cubs.

A very enjoyable Young Leaders camp at Coton Clanford where the YL's were honing their skills ready to teach our Cubs and Scouts at Group Camp.

A very successful and well-attended Remembrance Day Parade at Trinity Church focusing on peace and reconciliation.

We've had several camps this year, the highlight of which is always our Group Camp at Sandon which is special to us as a Group, and we appreciate the relationship that we have had with the estate and Lord Harrowby for over 60 years now. We hope this year to be undertaking some working group activities on the estate to assist with their rewilding plans.

Cubs and Scouts enjoyed a fantastic Winter Camp at Kibblestone having a Gladiators theme.

Our Beavers had a great time at their joint 'Magical' sleepover at the 9th HQ.

Our Squirrels have extended the fun they had visiting our Group Camp by making dens and 'Camping at Home'

We congratulate our members on achieving 4 Chief Scouts Acorn Awards; 6 Chief Scouts Bronze Awards; 8 Chief Scouts Silver Awards (with 1 due soon); and 5 Chief Scouts Gold Awards (with 3 due soon) in the past year.

We have welcomed some new Young Leaders to the Group – Jack and Aeddan (who assist with our Scout Troop), Charlotte (Mao who assists with the Cub Pack) as well as Evie (Kaa who assists with the Cub Pack and the Squirrel Drey). We also invested a new leader into the Squirrel Drey, Lauren (Redwood). We also had Rebecca (Oak) as our new Squirrel Section Leader, along with her Beaver Scout role.

We would like to thank members of our Trustee Board for their work over the past year, particularly Stuart (our Treasurer) and Jenny (who is our Squirrel Parent Rep). We remain committed to gaining new, non-leaders, to join our Trustee Board, however recruitment remains difficult.

Our numbers currently stand as follows:

Squirrels - 12

Beavers – 11

Cubs – 17

Scouts – 18

During the past 12 months we have taken part in several events such as:

The Cub Pack attending the 'Scouts Takeover Day' at RAF Cosford, earning their level 1 & 2 Air Activities badges and having a lot of fun!

The Beaver Colony have been active in the community taking part in crafts with the residents of Crispin Court and having a joint 'Magical Sleepover' with another Beaver Colony.

6 camps, with attendees from all sections: including Scouts expedition camp at Sherratt's

Wood, Cubs autumn camp at Sherratt's Wood and a Christmas Sleepover as well as our annual Winter Camp at Kibblestone.

The Cub Pack also really enjoyed the return of the District Indoor Games Day.

The Group have 'adopted' Stafford Station as part of the 'Platforms for Change' programme, if you visit the station you will see artwork from all of our sections in the various notice boards.

As GSL's we have had another extremely stressful and busy year (with no signs of slowing down!) and would like to express our thanks to all our Leaders and Supporters for their assistance, with special mentions to Dave (Skip) and Rebecca (Oak) who stepped up to becoming Scout Leader and Squirrel Scout Leader following the departure of James and Emma.

Regards, *Justin L. & Vikki L. Williams*
(Group Scout Leaders)

7th Stafford (Trent Valley) Scout Group Report

Squirrels

10 members

3 leaders

1 young leader

In September 2023 we opened our squirrels drey with 3 squirrels. We have grown consistently throughout the year and are projected to continue to grow, likely at a slower rate, over the coming year. 4 Chief Scout Acorn awards are due for presentation.

Beavers

25 members (+3 compared with June 2023)

4 leaders (+3 compared with June 2023)

2 young leaders (+2 compared with June 2023)

Recent activities include joint indoor sleepover with the 4th, litter picking and trip to Birches Valley. Large majority (likely all) achieve Bronze Award.

Cubs

20 members (-4 compared with June 2023)

3 leaders

Difficulty this year with Akela recently stepping down. There have been some difficulties with covering the section in her absence, but these should settle down with a new Akela with good support from other leaders. As a result, no overnight activities this summer.

Successful joint cub/scout sleepover in the winter. Kayaking booked for next month. Aiming to arrange group indoor camp in the autumn. Good number of Silver Awards being achieved.

Scouts

22 members (same as 2023)

2 leaders plus a regular "helper" who has the potential to join the leadership team

Kayaking booked. Difficulties as discussed at district level with completion of expedition. This limits the Gold Awards.

GSL's report

2023-24 has been a less tumultuous year for the 7th. We had our long overdue AGM in October. This was well attended by members and parents, and has prompted a reset of the culture of the group, moving towards a transparent and better led group with the experiences of our members and leader welfare as core values. We reformed the Trustee Board and were delighted to recruit a new treasurer to take over from Kevin who has stood down from the group after 12 years of service.

Member numbers are stable, with overall growth with the opening of the squirrels section. At the start of the year we recruited 3 new leaders, but we have unfortunately lost Akela and an assistant leader from cubs, and one of our other leaders who volunteers at squirrels, beavers and cubs is unfortunately moving away in September for university. This means that although the leader numbers in each section look adequate, the reality is that we have a very flexible leadership team who are all cross-covering various sections. The actual number of leaders is just 7 across all four sections, plus the GSL to help out where needed. There are 13 children on the waiting list, with 12 of those being under 4, and the 4 year old currently waiting for beavers. We are not struggling for places at the moment.

This year we have introduced a new neckerchief with an embroidered emblem representing the hut and the river Trent. We are absolutely delighted with them and our members and leaders alike are proud to wear them. They looked particularly smart on display at the St George's parade which was very well attended by our members. Leaders have also been offered uniform upgrades in order to improve their sense of value as well as their comfort when volunteering. Finally, a termly newsletter has been introduced in order to improve the communication with members and parents with very good feedback.

The main problem that we have currently is that we still have no outdoor permit holders. We would welcome any help, advice and support from the district/other groups in moving forwards with this. The lack of district camps has negatively affected our members due to our current lack of permits. Outdoor permits, leader recruitment and improvements to the group admin processes (particularly risk assessments) will be our main priorities for the coming year.

Sarah Nightingale
Group Scout Leader

9th Stafford (Sea Scouts) Scout Group Report

Renowned for its vibrant and active participation in various land and water activities, is experiencing a period of remarkable growth and enthusiasm. This report highlights the group's upcoming summer camp at Lake Windermere and the exciting introduction of a new Squirrels section in September 2024.

The 9th Stafford Sea Scout Group is celebrating its 70th year and over the years has steadily grown in numbers and increased the number of activities we can offer our young people. Ranging from Beavers to Explorers the group has cultivated a strong sense of community, enthusiasm, and adventure. The leadership team comprising of experienced and dedicated volunteers who plays a pivotal role in maintaining the group's dynamic and supportive environment. The group's activities are diverse, including regular sailing, kayaking, and canoeing sessions, as well as land-based activities including Camping, hiking, climbing, abseiling and not forgetting badge work encouragement and support for our young people for achieving awards. This variety ensures that members develop a wide range of skills. from navigation to teamwork and on to leadership.

Summer Camp at Lake Windermere One of the most anticipated events in the group's calendar is the annual summer camp. This year, the 9th Stafford Sea Scout Group hope to have Scouts from Gnosall join us this year. Our young people in attendance will engage in a range of activities

designed to challenge their physical abilities and enhance their problem-solving skills. Additionally, the camp will include Scouting skills and survival skills.

Launch of the Squirrels Section In line with the group's mission to nurture young minds through adventure and learning, a new Squirrels section will be introduced in September 2024. The Squirrels section, aimed at children aged 4-6, will serve as an entry point into the Scouting, focusing on play-based learning and early social skills development.

The introduction of the Squirrels section reflects the group's commitment to inclusivity and early childhood development. By engaging younger children, the 9th Stafford Sea Scout Group hopes to instil a love for adventure and community service from an early age, creating a foundation for lifelong learning and growth.

The Sea Scout Group continues to offer enriching experiences to its members through well-organized activities and innovative new programs. The upcoming summer camp at Lake Windermere promises to be a highlight of the year, while the launch of the Squirrels section marks an exciting new chapter in the group's evolution. Through these initiatives, the group remains dedicated to skills, values, and Scouting for the next generation.

Spencer Hewitt

9th Stafford Sea Scout GLV

11th Stafford Scout Group Report

Well, it's been a pretty good year for the 11th . Since last year and our low numbers of

both Young People and Leaders, we are growing again. As I understand it, we are now off the critical list with county, although I feel the main push from HQ still focuses on Young People numbers first rather than Adult Volunteers, but He Ho.

We have now settled in to our new home in the Exhibition space at the New Beacon Group and word is spreading, allowing us to re-build and get back to all 3 sections meeting separately on a Thursday. We still rely on some great parent helpers as life still gets in the way of having a full complement of volunteers every week.

We are still tight on finances after the low numbers for the last few years, but we have had a few grants thanks to our treasurer and we are starting to build our coffers again, but with lots of new parents it's time to get the fundraising team again and start really building.

We have got nearly everyone away under canvas or indoor camping this year, including getting 14 beavers away for one night during our first group camp in 5 years. It's so good to see everyone out and really enjoying the great outdoors and makes all the hard work so worthwhile.

I cannot say enough about our small team of Leaders and Executive members who continue to put so much into keeping our small group going. Thank-you thank-you thank-you.

Finally, I will say a big thank-you to all our members of the district for your continued support of the group and let's continue teach our members Skills for Life as we continue to build in both the 11th and Stafford District.

Dave Francis

11th Stafford Scout Group

12th Stafford (Berkswich) Scout Group Report

Another very busy year under our belt even though along with other Groups our numbers dropped due to the aftermath from Covid. Happily we are back up to the 300 mark again with all 9 sections running at high numbers.

All Sections were very busy with their own Camps as well as a full Group Camp which turned out to be an amazing weekend. Section Leaders worked very hard to provide the Beavers, Cubs and Scouts with good scouting and lots of adventurous activities plus trips out to place like National Space Centre for cubs and scouts were invited to Keele University to search for life on other planets using there huge telescopes. Kayaking, climbing, hiking, Pioneer and everything scouting is always a great favourite with all of our children and the leaders go all out to make sure they all have the opportunity to experience most if not all that's Scouting. At this point I would like to thank absolutely everybody involved with the 12th for their dedication time and commitment which they show every week of the year.

By the end of the year we are looking to start Squirrels which will be interesting I'm sure. After nearly 80 years we now need to replace our toilet blocks and I am happy to say work will commence end of July at a cost of £15k. Then our next priority is to work on our building which is now in need of some serious TLC.

As most of you know our Scout Max Farish who received the Jack Cornwall Award for bravery and courage lost his battle against cancer and passed away last July. In his memory we are going to turn our bottom fire lighting area into a memorial adventure Garden in his name. Hopefully a place where all the children can have some fun and also a place for his parents and us leaders to quietly reflect on the happy time Max spent doing something he was so passionate about – Scouting.

Last but not least I would like to thank Sue and Kevin for their non stop support, help and advice throughout the years. We are truly grateful for everything you do for us.

Kind regards to you all

Doreen Smith

Group Lead Volunteer

15th Stafford (Penkridge) Scout Group Report

Our numbers remain steady and there is a varied programme in all sections and we have a new member to our Cub leadership/volunteer team

Beavers 36 members

2 transferring to cub at half term, 4 joining after half term.

10 on waiting list (not yet old enough to join)

Varied programme based around challenge badges with some activity badges.

Some child led sessions based on their interests and activities.

Lots of outdoor visits and trips during the summer term to local attractions.

Warmest Regards

Kelly Whitby

15th Penkridge Mohawk Cup Pack

We have 29 Cubs and 7 Young Leader along with 4 Leaders and have just welcomed a 5th new Leader to our group.

Last year Cubs went on 4 camps and Hikes on the Chase visited Cosford to complete the Air Activities badge they went to the Fire Station for their Fire Safety Badge we even had a night in the Hut for Christmas so parent could go and do some shopping.

This year Cubs have enjoyed since January 2 camps with another camp being arranged for July and a week-long summer camp in August.

Cubs have enjoyed working towards or completing Badge work which consisted of science badge/Backward Cooking/Team Work/Team Leader/Our Adventure / Our Outdoor/Our Skills/Nights Away/Hikes to name a few.

Akela Scouts

21 young people (5 aging up)

0 on waiting list (unsure of upcoming cubs)

Programme focused on challenge badge activities, trying to get as much time outside as possible, working with district to sort some extra activities and camps

R Elsmore

16th (Wheaton Aston) Stafford Scout Group Report

Members at Census (Jan'24)

Beavers: 10

Cubs: 10

Young Leaders (Supporting Beavers): 1

The number of children attending Beavers has increased in the last 12 months and also since census, with 12 Beavers regularly attending this summer term. 2 Beavers will be moving up to Cubs during 2024. Cubs numbers has decreased from last year due to age and families moving away from the area. It currently has 11 children regularly attending, 5 of which are aged 10+ and will be leaving before the end of 2024.

As a small village group, there is limited ability to grow the Group. There is no Squirrels or Scout sections due to lack of demand and volunteers to run them.

Leaders

Beavers: 3 +1YL (undertaking Silver DofE)

Cubs: 3

Activities

Both sections have undertaken a variety of diverse activities, with both sections awarding more than 70 badges during the last 12 months.

Beavers have attended a number of District events e.g. District Beaver Day, Christmas Party and St Georges Day Parade. 4 Beavers joined the 6th Beavers on a sleepover mid April which was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended.

A number of Cubs have camped overnight within the village last year and recently attended PGL in Shrewsbury.

Financials

Funding from Staffordshire Voluntary Youth Services for rental of St Mary's First Academy ceased

for this academic year. We negotiated a discounted rate however, based on the membership in census, the annual subscriptions are insufficient to cover the costs of capitation and hall rental, leaving a small shortfall. Reserves, from historic fundraising and compensation for the loss of our Scout Hut a few years ago, are being used to fund the shortfall and activities for the sections. The situation will continue to be monitored.

Di Rowlands

Group Scout Leader

17th (Gnosall) Stafford Scout Group Report

We have had quite a few changes in Gnosall this past year with our long serving beaver leader Cheryl Souter retiring from her role which has led to us gaining two new leaders to take up the reins. Bethan and Tracy who have slotted into their roles perfectly.

We have also just lost our chairman Mike Loveless who had been with the group for many years first in a cub leader role. We are now on the lookout for someone to fill the role.

Beavers are currently running at 12, cubs at 22 and scouts at 14.

At the end of February we had a group indoor camp based on Hogwarts and much fun was had by all with beavers coming out for a day visit, we all enjoyed the magical creatures that visited for the day. We are hoping that next time we do a group camp we can actually get them camping as well. Watch this space!

Scouts held quite a few weekend camps including the expedition one where some of the older ones took part in the chase walk following map and compass to get around and completed with hardly any going off route. We also went to Cosford taking part in their special scouts day to gain badges.

Cubs had a great fun camp at Patshull and are aiming to return this year.

We are trying to keep up with the changes as they come our way but our aim is business as usual!

Lesley Worsley

17th Stafford (Gnosall) Group Scout Leader

20th Stafford (St Bertelin's) Scout Group Report

The group currently operates three sections, Beavers on a Monday with 15 children attending, Cubs on a Thursday with 15 children attending and Scouts on a Friday with 14 children attending. The leadership group is steady at the moment, we recently had a volunteer day at the hut where employees from EDF & Capula came down and did some valuable work in and around the hut, new LED lights were installed, along with a new water heater for the kitchen and hinge protectors on all internal doors, also the outside of the hut was painted to remove all graffiti.

Joanna Miller Scouter in charge

20th St Bertelin's

21st (West) Stafford Scout Group Report

2023 has presented the group with an extraordinary number of challenges, many of which we will carry forwarding o 2024.

As would be expected our biggest issues are leaders and money, but unexpectedly also membership. The Leader situation started to improve towards

the end of the year as some new names and a few changes took place. Like all groups we can always use more help. With all the talk about the changes coming with the 'transformation' we are hopeful of the recruiting getting easier.

Despite these issues in the background the group has offered an excellent programme across all the sections from Squirrels to scouts. The leaders always pull together and make me very proud in how they support each other across the sections to make interesting evenings with new and refreshed challenges and experiences. With such a wide breadth of skills, experience and knowledge they have plenty to offer the scouts.

There have been a few CSA's across the group, lots of hikes, camps, adventurous activities, learning, leadership opportunities, team work and fun. Notable events of the year have been the usual camping and sleep overs but also numerous visits to people and places, water fights and backwoods cooking, craft sessions and wide games, hikes and treasure hunts, games and first aid. Each section has built on the previous sections teachings and the members have achieved personal challenges and skills. The addition of the squirrels has upped the game plan for the other sections as they are learning more scouting skills earlier. Overall, another excellent year for scouting at 21st. Most sections have 5 leaders and two YL's delivering the programme each week.

Also in the background, it has been accepted that our HQ is not really fit for purpose and an embarrassment, meant as a temporary option in 2002 it has passed its use by date. To this end we have been using the church hall which comes with additional cost. However, we know this option is also drawing to a close as the church eyes up what they could do with the land, From this our trustees and leaders, we have taken the move to resurrect the project for a new Headquarters. The original plans were re-costed and found to be prohibitive, so a new plan has been developed and an architect engaged to design our dream that we hope to put to planning early in 2024.

Roy Clarke

Group Scout Leader

Elements Explorer Unit Report

The unit has had another great year with excellent attendance to our varied and popular programme created by the members and the leaders. Along with several camps and over night experiences the unit put a team in the chase walk, summer camp had to be re-planned due to leader availability but was good fun for them in Warwickshire.

Out back garden is the chase and saw lots of evenings out, walking, playing and cycling. Working towards their CSA's the unit have experienced visits and talks. A night learning about Islam first hand at the Muslim prayer hall was the latest in our exploration of faiths. Another night saw them getting the inside story on how the council works, elections and roles of councillors presented by the Leader of the Council and the Mayor. We also had a behind the scenes tour of St Mary's accompanied by some bell ringing.

Keeping the indoors to a minimum we got out for archery, tomahawks, shooting, canoeing, go-karting, ice skating and more.

Over half the unit are Young leaders in various groups across the district, so some of our activities are aimed at giving them ideas for their sections.

Big thank you to my leaders, Nina, Lexie, David and Jake along with help from

Effy and Natalie.
Roy Clarke
Explorer Scout Leader

Pegasus Explorer Unit (Gnosall) Report

Pegasus ESU is approaching our 5th birthday this September! As of the January

2024 census the Unit had nine Explorers and three Leaders. We currently have seven Explorers, but hopefully we will have two Scouts coming to join us over the next Term. We are also looking to do more active recruitment over the next term and half, for additional Leaders and Explorers.

We have had a busy and varied twelve months with highlights including:

May-August 2023 🕒

Unit weekend camp at Patshull Campsite

A dusk to dawn hike from Sherratt's Wood Campsite back to Gnosall

Leaders helped steward the Giant Challenge Bike Ride

Three of our Explorers and myself were luck enough to go to Kanderstag, Switzerland for just under two weeks.

September-December 2023

Night Hike across Cannock Chase

Hut Maintenance Day

Making paracord woggles

Completing the chef activity badge

Christmas treat, tubing at Stoke-on-Trent Ski Centre.

January-May 2024

Sponsored Hike up the Wrekin to raise money for the Hut

Group & Unit Harry Potter themed indoor weekend camp in February at Kibblestone International Campsite.

Climbing and Bouldering at Newport Rock

Hike from Gnosall to Ellenhall

Making a Da Vinci Bridge

In addition, we have continued to regularly maintain the dog poo bag holders around the village as part of the Chief Scout Awards.

Finally, I would like to say a big thank you to Lesley Worsley and Andy Manners for all their help and support over the last 12 months. As well as thank you to many of 17th Stafford Leaders who have volunteered to help out when we have been short for Leaders on a Friday.

Thank you,

Will Swinnerton

Explorer Scout Leader

K2 Explorer Unit Report

In the last year we have had 5 Explorers leave and 4 join, resulting in numbers remaining

stable but reducing by 1 to currently 14. Presentations to 12th scout troops over the last few months leads us to believe that, post Covid, the number of scouts coming up to Explorer age will increase. We are now seeing the beginning of this trend. We currently have 5 leaders, 3 with wood beads.

We held our annual summer camp in 2023 at Symonds Yat for 5 days, mainly centred around canoeing, with the involvement of the district outdoor activity team. Plans are well ahead for this year's summer camp in the Yorkshire Dales, again with the outdoor team participating. Other trips included a weekend in Snowdonia mountain climbing and a visit to the Peak District for some rock climbing. It is planned to repeat these activities in the coming year, with some kayaking also planned.

Our programme for this year has seen 2 members participate in the District Explorer OB cup weekend. We have put on a range of activities, from vehicle maintenance to construction skill, like catapult, bridge and flying model making. A range of outdoor activities has included activities around the HQ eg. bivi making, firelighting and cooking, to orienteering, wide games and hikes on Cannock Chase. There have also been other indoor activities such as debates and scouting skills like first aid, pioneering and navigation exercises and debates. Unfortunately we have fallen foul of GCSE exams this year, so several additional activities like our annual winter camp and another mountain weekend have had to be cancelled due to school/exam pressures leading to low uptake, but they will come back onto the programme in the coming year..

We have successfully worked towards several staged badges, including navigation, first aid and camping being awarded and have helped 4 Explorers gain their bronze DofE and one his Silver. We are now encouraging them to gain their relevant scout awards, and other to also participate in the awards schemes.

Andy Goode

K2 Leader

North Star Explorer Scout Unit report

The unit has enjoyed another year, partaking in a programme focused around Teamwork, scouting themes and outdoor activities. The highlight being summer camp in North Wales last August.

The leadership team have supported individuals that have shown an interest in running badge work nights, in turn the younger explorers have seen how it is done, I look forward to more explorer lead evenings going forward.

Weekly numbers have been on average around 12 explorers, sadly we have said goodbye to those who have reached the 'old' age of 18, luckily new recruits from our feeder groups have topped the numbers back up during the year.

Our team on the OB Cup did their best to compete with the rest of the district, who knows maybe next year will be our year.

From try dive to pantomime there has been events for all, Thank you to all involved with North Star, you help make the unit what it is today.

Guy Allcock

Explorer Scout Leader

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signatures

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
|--|--|

Full names

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
|--|--|

Position

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
|--|--|

Date

.....

Stafford District Scout Accounts - Income & Expenditure - 1/1/2023 to 31/12/2023

Stafford District Scout Council

| | | |
|---------------------|---|-----------|
| Opening Balance | £ | 8,592.28 |
| Capitation Received | £ | 52,174.00 |
| St Peters | £ | 2,520.00 |
| Jamboree | £ | 4,841.62 |
| Dividend M & G | £ | 1,940.85 |
| Transfer | £ | 2,092.22 |
| Arthur Gerrard | £ | 72,500.00 |

| | |
|---|------------|
| £ | 144,660.97 |
|---|------------|

| | | |
|-----------------------|------------|-----------|
| Capitation to County | £ | 41,867.00 |
| Trustee Expenses | £ | 812.21 |
| Event Expenses | £ | 1,949.96 |
| St Peters Expenses | £ | 2,357.88 |
| Grants not transferre | £ | 6,814.38 |
| District Purchases | £ | 2,175.08 |
| Minibus | £ | 75.00 |
| Donations | £ | 404.33 |
| Jamboree | £ | 7,034.29 |
| Insurance | £ | 1,078.21 |
| Transfer | £ | 32,942.00 |
| Closing Balance | £ | 47,150.63 |
| £ | 144,660.97 | |

District Explorer Units

| | | |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|
| Opening Balance | £ | 14,000.12 |
| Subscriptions | £ | 21,515.64 |
| £ | 35,515.76 | |

| | | |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Capitation | | |
| Other Expenditure | £ | 21,615.21 |
| Closing Balance | £ | 13,900.55 |
| £ | 35,515.76 | |

Sherratts Wood Shop

| | | |
|-----------------|----------|----------|
| Opening Balance | £ | 5,835.38 |
| Shop Takings | £ | 3,583.76 |
| £ | 9,419.14 | |

| | | |
|-----------------|----------|----------|
| Purchases | £ | 2,251.57 |
| Closing Balance | £ | 7,167.57 |
| £ | 9,419.14 | |

Sherratts Wood Camp Site

| | | |
|--------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Opening Balance | £ | 27,700.91 |
| Camp Fees Received | £ | 17,896.54 |
| Transfer | £ | 650.00 |
| £ | 46,247.45 | |

| | | |
|--------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Insurance | £ | 1,188.17 |
| Utilities | £ | 4,666.37 |
| Equipment Purchase | £ | 3,442.96 |
| Maintenance | £ | 5,652.47 |
| Fuel | £ | 795.29 |
| Misc Purchases | £ | 24.49 |
| Campsite Purchases | £ | 2,194.92 |
| Closing Balance | £ | 28,282.78 |
| £ | 46,247.45 | |

Gang Show

| | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Opening Balance | £ | 6,109.83 |
| Ticket Sales & Gang Show revenue | £ | 12,325.94 |
| £ | 18,435.77 | |

| | | |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Gang Show Expense | £ | 12,884.39 |
| Closing Balance | £ | 5,551.38 |
| £ | 18,435.77 | |

District Activities

| | | |
|-----------------|----------|----------|
| Opening Balance | £ | 3,209.10 |
| Activity Fees | £ | 2,202.86 |
| £ | 5,411.96 | |

| | | |
|-------------------|----------|----------|
| Activity Expenses | £ | 1,626.60 |
| Rent | £ | 330.00 |
| Membership Fees | £ | 15.00 |
| Closing Balance | £ | 3,440.36 |
| £ | 5,411.96 | |

Badge Secretary

| | | |
|-----------------|---|----------|
| Opening Balance | £ | 939.16 |
| Badge Sales | £ | 2,866.05 |
| | £ | 3,805.21 |

SAS

| | | |
|-----------------|---|----------|
| Opening Balance | £ | 1,600.92 |
| Interest | £ | 7.56 |
| | £ | 1,608.48 |

District Beavers

| | | |
|----------------------|---|--------|
| Opening Balance | £ | 846.05 |
| Beaver Party Revenue | £ | 76.00 |
| | £ | 922.05 |

District Cubs

| | | |
|-----------------|---|--------|
| Opening Balance | £ | 463.51 |
| | £ | 463.51 |

District Minibus

| | | |
|-----------------|---|----------|
| Opening Balance | £ | 1,600.82 |
| Hirings | £ | 1,140.00 |
| | £ | 2,740.82 |

| | | |
|-----------------|---|----------|
| Badge Purchases | £ | 2,708.99 |
| Postage | £ | - |
| Closing Balance | £ | 1,096.22 |
| | £ | 3,805.21 |

| | | |
|--------------------|---|----------|
| Transfer | £ | 1,487.94 |
| Bank Charges & Don | £ | 120.54 |
| Closing Balance | £ | - |
| | £ | 1,608.48 |

| | | |
|---------------------|---|--------|
| | £ | - |
| Beaver Party Expens | £ | 400.78 |
| Closing Balance | £ | 521.27 |
| | £ | 922.05 |

| | | |
|-----------------|---|--------|
| Event Expenses | £ | 50.00 |
| Closing Balance | £ | 413.51 |
| | £ | 463.51 |

| | | |
|-----------------|---|----------|
| Maintenance | £ | 376.66 |
| Vehicle Tax | £ | 325.00 |
| Insurance | £ | 812.65 |
| Closing Balance | £ | 1,226.51 |
| | £ | 2,740.82 |

Opening Balance £ 70,898.08 Closing Balance £ 108,750.78 -£ 37,852.70

Other District Assets

| | Opening Balance | Closing Balance | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---|
| Liquid | | | |
| Lloyds Bank Savings | £ 15,118.90 | 22,875.67 | |
| Stafford Railway | £ 51,710.24 | 52,750.06 | |
| M&G Charifund | £ 33,358.10 | 32,574.27 | |
| Lloyds Bank Savings - Fixed Term Depo | - | 25,000.00 | -£ 37,852.70 |
| Total | | 133,200.00 | |
| Fixed | | | |
| Sherrats Wood Land | - | 300,000.00 | Valuation |
| Sherrats Wood Fixtures & Fittings | - | 35,800.00 | From Inventory |
| Kayak Store | - | 20,000.00 | This is notional value based purely on the Insurance of t |
| Kayaks & Equipment | - | 35,000.00 | This is notional value based purely on the Insurance of t |
| St Peters Building | | 214,225.00 | This is notional value based purely on the Insurance of t |
| St Peters Fixtures & Fittings | | 34,458.00 | This is notional value based purely on the Insurance of t |
| Minibus | - | 3,265.00 | Web valuation |
| Total | | 642,748.00 | |

The above receipts and payments accounts and statement of assets and liabilities were approved by the Trustees on xx June 2024 and signed on their behalf by -

District Chair - Nick Lloyd

District Commissioner - Sue Hewitt



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

Charity Name
Stafford District Scout Council

On accounts for the year
ended

31 December 2023

Charity no
(if any)

524528

Set out on pages

File attached with back up information

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/12/2023 DD/MM/YYYY.

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, 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 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 (~~other than that disclosed below~~) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which 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.

Signed:

Roland Skelton

Date:

30/5/24

Name:

ROLAND SKELTON

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

AAT.
Part Qualified IPFA

Address:

29 HEATH DRIVE

STAFFORD

ST16 1RB