

1st Newry (Earl Kilmorey) Scout Group

Charity Registration No: 103883

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT 1ST April 2023 - 31ST MARCH 2024

REVIEW OF THE YEAR:

Squirrel Scouts.

Shortly following the start of the 2023-24 programme we had quite a number of squirrels move up to the Beaver section and our numbers were somewhat diminished. However we decided to base our programme on challenges and badge work. Since then our programmes have been filled with fun games, arts and crafts, challenges for badge work to educational and informative evenings.

A day trip to Slieve Gullion Forest Park provided the Squirrels with an exciting day, learning about nature, animals and getting outdoors. They joined in on a nature hunt learning fun facts along the way ending with arts and crafts including making their own squirrel mask.

Following the summer break we got creative with squirrels having lots of fun from making Mother's day cards, Christmas cards to painting their own Squirrel pictures and putting them up for our drey wall. We created our own Den and enjoyed a few evenings talking about our favourite books or stories to reading a few under our canvas with marshmallows. After our trip earlier on in the year we decided to get back out taking in nature from bug hunting to planting sun flowers and playing games such as 'Squirrels coming', 'buggy behaviour' to mention a few. In October our local St John's Ambulance team came along to our hall and took a first aid session which all our Squirrels thoroughly enjoyed. Learning about how to call for help, what to do in an emergency to even taking a look inside the ambulance. The evening was filled with fun and educational information. During the months of October through December Hallowe'en, Guy Fox and Christmas festivities took place which were enjoyed by all. However the latter two along with our remaining activities from beginning of November to mid-February had to be held in the Methodist Church Hall due to our own facility being affected by the floods which took place in the City. Whilst this affected Squirrels, Beavers and Cubs and provided a few problems we all managed to continue with an exciting, informative and educational programme until we got back to normal again in our own hall. February through March continued with the Squirrels involved in a variety of badge work along with games, arts, crafts etc. During the year many badges were gained including the following: Get creative, Explore outdoors, Feel good, Story time, First aid and Exciting experiments.

Beavers

During 2023/2024 our Beavers undertook a variety of different activities. Included in this were a number of educational, cultural and learning visits away from our hall to local parks, monuments and memorials etc.

In particular the Beavers along with the Squirrels enjoyed the trip to an educational nature walk in Slieve Gullion Forest Park. There was also a renewed focus on badge work, with the children earning their Astronomy, First Aid, Communicator and Disability Awareness badges. This was of course accompanied by our usual varied programme of team building games and arts and craft nights for various holidays such as Christmas, Easter and Mothering Sunday. As with the Squirrel section the Beavers were affected with the closure of our hall due to the floods and everyone had to adjust their programme to take account of the facilities of the Methodist Church Hall.

However following our return to our own hall in February the Beaver section headcount was bolstered by a large intake of young people moving up from the Squirrel section. At the beginning of the New Year in April we will have quite a number of Beavers soon to move to the cub section so this will allow the capacity for growth.

CUBS

The year began with our focus on the mainly outdoor badges where we planned nature hunts, exploring, many outdoor games and activities. Our main focus being badge work where the Cubs helped to create a programme for our all to work on such as: Entertainers badge, Road safety, First Aid stage 1 (where we had a session provided by St Johns ambulance team) and Nature. To which led us to Halloween in which we had our Halloween party. Although we had an unfortunate circumstance with our hall out of action due to the flooding in Newry it didn't dampen our spirits, (no pun intended) we did have to pause on some badge work however remained to fill our evenings with plenty of fun activities until our return to our normal dwelling, where we resumed our badge work programme. We had organised some fun evenings having a campfire, toasting marshmallows and learning about fire safety in a continuation of the badges we are

aiming to complete such as Science Badge, Continuation of nature badge, Fire safety and Back woods cooking. In addition, we have planned other activities in working towards the challenge award badges in which we have already completed the Team work challenge award.

Scouts.

During the latter part of the year a small number of members of the Cub section reached the age to transfer into the Scout section. However as the numbers were not enough to enable a satisfactory range of programme events/activities it was decided that those member should remain for a short period within the Cub section until the numbers increased. It is our hope that within a short period they should be enough of the appropriate age to recommence the Scout section later on.

THE GROUP

2023/24 proved to be quite a satisfying year for the Group in that all sections provided their members with a varied and exciting range of activities and events. The overall numbers within the Group remained reasonably static. It was pleasing to see Squirrels, Beavers and Cubs in the Group along with the small number of Scouts and their Leaders taking part a variety of activities and events. We in 1st Newry are still fortunate that we have a band of parents, volunteers and helpers who give of their time and energy to not only to take care of our young people but to provide a wide range of activities for all sections and look after the fund raising and other administrative activities which keep the Group well financed and functioning. Later in the year the Group was delighted to hear that one of its longest serving leaders, William McAlpine, Cub Scout Leader, had been awarded the Bar to the Silver Acorn. This prestigious award is only given to those who have provided exceptional service over a long period of time. The award was presented to Billy by the N.I. Chief Commissioner, Stephen Donaldson, at a ceremony held in Belfast on Saturday 15th June 2024. Our Parents' Committee and friends are available to help in whatever way they can. We sincerely thank all those who have supported us in any way over the past year and we look forward to the incoming year with some optimism that the Group will continue to progress and develop further in the years to come. The Parents' Committee would like to thank all the Leaders for the hard work and time over the past year. Thank you, Carol, Billy, Lee, Jonathon, Alana, Sheehan, Roisin and Mervyn.

OUR OFFICE BEARERS: Our thanks go also to our Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer for their support and help in managing the Group's finances and other administrative responsibilities for the past year. We are greatly indebted to you for your time and support. Thank you Linda, Alan, and Jim.

REVIEW OF OUR FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31/03/2024

The Group's policy on reserves is to hold sufficient resources to continue the charitable activities of the group should income and fundraising activities fall short. Our funds are in a healthy state and we do not have any debts or funds in material deficit. We collect subscriptions and fees on a bi-annual basis in order to satisfy contingencies and anticipated expenses.

Agreed by all Trustees



Signed by Alan McGaffin (Chairperson)

Date: 26th September 2024