



REGISTERED CHARITY NIC103971

## **6<sup>TH</sup> ARDS SEA SCOUT GROUP**

### **AGM**

30 September 2023

#### **PRESENT**

Helen Moore Chairperson

Terry Troughton County Chairman/previous GSL

Alan Poots SL/GSL

Pauline Coulter Treasurer

Sharlene Jellie CSL

Paul Martin ACSL

Andrew Green ACSL

Lynne McCracken ACSL

Joanne Miller BSL

Alison Savage SSL

Claire Hunter ASSL

Allison Kingsmill Group Secretary/ABSL

Alan welcomed everyone and thanked Helen for hosting the meeting.

#### **APOLOGIES**

Maggi Wong, Mark Stinson

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Helen thanked leaders and helpers for all their hard work and commitment during the year. She expressed the opinion that Scouting provided a positive impact on the young people and indicated that she was available to help in any way she could.

#### **MINUTES of AGM 21<sup>st</sup> November 2022**

The minutes of the 2022 AGM were agreed. Proposed by Alison Savage and seconded by Lynne McCracken.

#### **SECRETARY**

No correspondence

## **FINANCIAL REPORT**

The report was prepared and distributed by the Treasurer prior to the meeting. The opening balance was £10,326.25 and the closing balance was £6,600.95. Income comprised a grant of £2,200 from the Education Authority (EA). Unfortunately, it has not been possible to claim gift aid on subscriptions because the online procedure used for the first time to collect registration fees did not provide sufficient information.

It was decided that the Group would revert to manual records and issue written receipts on registration evening for 2023/2024 fees. Various other arrangements were discussed and agreed for that evening. As it is unlikely that any EA grant will be available, fund raising will be necessary. Various ideas were discussed including a hike.

A new auditor will have to be found for next year's accounts.

The financial report is attached.

## **SECTION REPORTS**

Reports from each of the four sections are attached.

### **GSL Report**

The GSL's report is attached

### **County Chairman's Remarks**

Reverend Anne Tolland has asked him to make the arrangements for the uniformed organisations' participation in the Remembrance Day Service to be held in the Church on 12<sup>th</sup> November. A practice will be held in the Church prior to that.

## **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

The Chairman proposed that the current Treasurer and Secretary remain in post. This was agreed.

### **AOB:**

None

### **SIGNED:**

**ALLISON KINGSMILL**

**GROUP SECRETARY**

**HELEN MOORE**

**CHAIRPERSON**

## **6<sup>th</sup> Ards Sea Scouts**

### **Annual Report Sept22 – May23**

#### **Squirrel Section - Alison Savage**

September 22 saw us begin with 5 squirrels having moved some up to Beavers. During the year we managed to add to this and finished with 13 boys.

Since coming under the Scout Umbrella we have a lot more badges to work for. We decided to do 6 activity badges and 2 challenge awards per year leading up to the Chief Acorn Award before they move to Beavers.

Events for the year included a make your own pizza night, Halloween party, we joined the Beavers for a Christmas night out to The Ark Farm to see Santa – made bird feeders, planted bulbs made various crafts for Halloween, poppies for Remembrance Sunday and crafts for Christmas, Easter, Valentines Day and Mothers Day.

We went to Soft Play at the Leisure Centre and had a night at the paddling pool, had a walk to the park and annual trip to Mauds – joined the Beavers for a night at Mountstewart, picnic at the Duck Pond and our last night BBQ at Scrabo. Luckily enough we had great weather for all the outdoor events – lucky we finish In May and not July.

Thank you as always to my great band of helpers Claire, Kim, Jenny, Jack and Janet (who missed part of the year due to illness but thankfully is on her way to recovery now) who I could not do without and Matilda who started with us for her Duke of Ed has agreed to come back again in September.

I'm delighted to say I have 24 names on the books for September so we should have a busy year again next year .

#### **Beaver Section – Joanne Miller**

We started the year with 9 Beavers and finished with 12. A check with parents revealed that some of the children were not returning because they had chosen to attend various sporting activities instead.

Despite our low numbers we undertook a full programme of indoor and outdoor activities, some in conjunction with the Cub and some with the Squirrel Sections.

We joined Cubs for a litter pick along the canal; a Halloween craft and food party; an informative visit from “Wee Critters;” an Easter craft and games session; and an end of season party.

With Squirrels we visited the Ark Open Farm in the run up to Christmas and Mount Stewart in May.

Beavers worked on and earned various activity badges, including “emergency Aid” and “International Activity.” The latter included instruction from a French language teacher. In addition, the requirements for “My Skills” and “My World Challenge” were met.

To try and increase numbers, we held a “Bring a Friend” night in February and 3 children joined the colony.

Our young leaders organised a Scouting Skills evening and an Easter egg hunt at the Leisure Centre play park. We were very grateful to them for their help throughout the year.

We finished on 12 June with Crazy Golf at Pirates’ Cove and a picnic.

### **Cub Section – Sharlene Jellie**

It has been another busy year in Cubs with 21 cubs registered at the beginning of the year and another 2 joining throughout the year.

We had 2 young leaders complete their volunteering section of their Duke of Edinburgh Award with us – Finn Neely and Maggie Jellie. Finn also attended the 25<sup>th</sup> World Scout Jamboree in South Korea. The cub section supported him with his fundraising.

### **Badge Report**

We awarded 244 challenge, staged and activity badges throughout the year. 7 Cubs gained their Chief Scout Silver Awards: Jason Gilmore, Alfie Martin, Noah Campbell, John Allman, Aimee Egerton, Judah English and Luca Jellie.

### **Trips/Outings/Visitors**

We enjoyed lots of outdoor activities this year including Crawfordsburn for team games and activities and a walk in the forest. We met for a night-walk at the floodgates as part of our Astronomer badge and in sixes completed a local knowledge quiz around Newtownards town. Mount Stewart guides provided us with lots of nature activities and in preparation for camp, we went to Scrabo Country park where we practised pitching and taking down tents.

We also enjoyed going bowling at Dundonald Ice Bowl.

We completed our Collector’s badge and invited parents and Beavers in to view all the collections and ask the Cubs questions.

Other badgework included Cubs learning what to do in an emergency, basic First Aid and how to say the Cub Promise using Makaton sign language.

To complete our Scientist badge, we had a Young Leader led night where cubs participated in a range of experiments organised by our Young leaders Finn and Maggie. 'Go Fly Your Kite' also came in and hosted a STEM Space workshop for us.

We enjoyed some joint activities with the other sections. We went to the Somme Centre with Scouts, which was a super trip, as always.

We joined with Beavers to do a litter pick around some areas of the town.

Beavers also joined us for an evening with 'Wee Critters', Halloween, Christmas and Easter celebrations and a games night.

### Nights Away

We ended our year in Cubs with a 2 night Summer Camp in Ganaway. Cubs enjoyed completing a variety of adventurous and outdoor activities including kayaking, laser tag, zorbing and inflatables, climbing, trip to the beach and much more. We also joined another Cub group around the camp-fire and sang camp-fire songs! It was a very successful camp, thoroughly enjoyed by all.

### District/NI events

3 teams entered the Strangford District Cub Quiz, with one of our teams coming 2<sup>nd</sup> place. Very well done!

I would like to thank Paul, Lynne and Andrew and our Young Leaders for all their help and support throughout the year and also special thanks to Alan for all his support in our preparations for camp – very much appreciated.

### Scout Section – Alan Poots

In April and May 2022 we were almost back to normal programme following a relaxation of Covid regulations, but regrettably our very popular Mourne Camp had to be cancelled as I tested positive for Covid. Our Summer Camp was in The Share Centre in Fermanagh and although we had only 8 Scouts everyone had a great experience.

The poor numbers was mainly as a result of parents having family holidays that were booked during Covid and now clashed with Summer Camp.

In September and October 2022 we planned our Night Hike along Helen's Way, Camping on arrival at Crawfordsburn. Pumpkin Camp was a great success and we also spent a couple of troop nights practicing for the Remembrance Parade to the Cenotaph, and I am pleased to say that 6<sup>th</sup> Ards Sea Scouts were a credit on the Morning of the Parade. Our Christmas Outing to Air Tastic followed by McDonalds was also a great success. Our Scout of The Year

2022 was Joey Carson and The Most Improved Scout was Ellyce Robinson, both very well deserved.

We registered 27 scouts in the census for 2023, comprising 19 boys and 8 girls. Planning for our next Summer Camp in the IOM started with an Information Night for both scouts and parents in January. Our thanks to the PSNI Dog Handling Team, who give us a great insight into the life of a police dog. Barn camp was once again a great success and our thanks go to Brian and Lynne McCracken for hosting this annual event. Badge work and camps were all now back on track, our activities included Mourne Camp in May, Patrol Camp in June, along with a great visit to the RNLI in Donaghadee. plus a coastal path hike and an airsoft night at Crawfordsburn.

Summer Camp at the Venture Centre on the IOM was a great success with a total of 18 Scouts and 5 Leaders. Even the Boat Journey was an adventure. I know that many of the scouts have told parents that the camp was the best thing they have done in their lives, parents have also passed on their thanks for giving their young person an experience of a lifetime. The Scout of the Year 2023 was Darsi McMaster and the Most Improved Scout was Annie Hannah, again most deserved.

#### GSL Report: Alan Poots

In the previous Year, April 2021 to March 2022, the Education Authority had funded the group several grants, We were granted our normal Non Generic funding, usually in the region of £400-£500, but because of a new system in place we were given £1800. We also applied for and received a grant for Equipment Purchase of £2000 and a Camping Activity Grant of £5950. Because our total grant aid for the year exceeded £3000 we were then subject to a financial audit prior to the awarding of the April 2022 to March 2023. This audit determined that the unspent money for the Summer Camp should be repaid but also our spending from the Non Generic Funding also had to be fully traceable through each section bank account. Some of our spending from the Non Generic funding could not be categorised within the EA funding requirements, this resulted in the group having to repay approximately £944 of the £1800 granted.

It is important that we have robust systems in place so that this should never happen again.

Our annual census recorded 27 Scouts, 18 Cub Scouts, 7 Beaver Scouts and 9 Squirrel Scouts, a total of 61 young people.

Covid has clearly had an adverse impact on the group especially the younger sections, but I am confident that this will recover over the next couple of years.