

62nd Belfast Scout Group

**The Annual Report for Year
Ended March 2023**



62nd Belfast Scout Group – Year Review

It is with great pleasure that I introduce you to the 2023 Annual Report of the 62nd Belfast Scout Group. The Scout Group has had another great year with all members of the movement enjoying fantastic activities and opportunities some of which have led to personal achievements. As we continue to battle the full impact of the pandemic, we continue to hear personal stories from parents who feel strongly that the 'uniformed organisations' have really helped the personal development of their kids as they've returned to the 'new normal'.

As a Scout Group, we are blessed to have such an active Group (Sectional) Leadership team and Trustee Board, who continue to go above and beyond the curtain call to ensure that the experience provided to our members is memorable and inclusive. Our pure thanks go to every volunteer within the Scout Group who contributes on a weekly, monthly or quarterly basis as they support the vision of the 62nd Belfast Scout Group being community-led and community-shaped.

At the St. George's Day Service in February, we shared our stories about celebrating our centenary year as a Scout Group. 100 years of being a part of the community in Ormeau and Rosetta, we look forward to continuing our celebrations as the year continues, especially in September 2023 with our Centenary Group Camp.

Finally, the Trustee Board also wish to note their heartfelt thanks to our Sponsoring Authority, Newtownbreda Presbyterian (St. Johns) Church, as without their support the Scout Group would not be able to provide the wide range of activities and memories for our members. As we look ahead, we look forward to strengthening the relationship through sharing resources and assisting with community-led activities.

Deane Dawson, Group Scout Leader

Group Correspondence

All correspondence should be sent to the Primary contact notified:

- **Contact Information:**
 - Scott Robinson, Deputy GSL, Newtownbreda Presbyterian Church,
374/6 Ormeau Road Belfast BT7 3HX.

Personnel of the Trustee Board

The Trustees who comprise the Group Trustee Board on 31/03/2023 are:

- Dr Simon Doherty (Chair)
- Deane Dawson (Group Scout Leader)
- Scott Robinson (Deputy Group Scout Leader)
- Beth Dawson (Secretary)
- Kathryn Eagleson (Treasurer)
- Marjorie Guiler (Squirrel Leader)
- Helen Morrissey (Beaver Leader)
- Liz Dudgeon (Cub Leader)
- Jonathan Dudgeon (Scout Leader)
- Stephen Mallett (Explorer Leader)
- Gordon Myles (Elected Trustee)
- Claire Compston (Elected Trustee)
- Scott Guiler (Co-Opted Trustee)

Please Note: all Trustees live in NI and activities held are based in Belfast County.

62nd Trustee Update:

A small number of Group changes have taken place and the NI Charity Commission website was amended accordingly.

The Trustees have examined the NICC statutory guidance on the Public Benefit requirements and consider they have complied with it in full.

62nd Belfast Scout Group Structure

The 62nd Belfast Scout Group is a constituent member of the UK Scout Association and follows its rules and policies as laid down in a document known as POR (Policy Organisation and Rules). There are 5 sections – Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers which are age-related as set out below in the census section. The Section Leader for each section is a Trustee as per POR and included above.

The Group is a cross-community with different church and ethnic backgrounds represented. 62nd Belfast Scout Group have a Constitution which is agreed upon annually and followed throughout the year by the elected Trustee Board.

Purpose and Benefit

Scouting is established to promote the development of young people in achieving their full physical, intellectual, social and spiritual potential as individuals and responsible citizens.

This also benefits the local and wider communities to which they belong. By gaining Awards and badges set up by Scouts UK they learn and display knowledge and skills which will be of value to them throughout their lives. Activities and badges are tailored for the separate age groups.

62nd Belfast Membership

Census (January 2023)

- Squirrel Drey – 18 Members
- Beaver Colony – 19 Members
- Cub Pack – 19 Members
- Scout Troop – 29 Members
- Explorer Unit – 15 Members
- Active Support Unit – 5 Members
- Executive Members – 14 Members
- Other Leaders – 20 Members
- **Total Number of Group: 129 Members**

62nd Belfast: Finance

The Group is reporting a net surplus of £2,559 (2021/2022: £3,668)

Overview

As noted on Page 5, the 62nd Belfast Scout Group remains to have a positive set of accounts with total income equating to £14,554 (2022: 13,876) and total expenditure equating to £11,996 (2022: £10,208)

Within the reporting year, we were pleased to raise £1,149 at our Duck Race which was donated to Friends of the Cancer Centre and £786 from our Sponsored Walk split between Lagan District Scouts and Cancer Research.

62nd Belfast Scout Group

Registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (NIC 104000)

Financial Statement for the Year ended 31 March 2023

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Income				
Subscriptions	5848	0	5848	5564
Income from activities	3111	0	3111	0
Fundraising for charity	1146	0	1146	0
ELB and other grants	2423	0	2423	6282
Gift aid	2026	0	2026	0
Uniform	0	0	0	110
Transfer from 62nd Belfast Squirrels on merger	0	0	0	1920
	14554	0	14554	13876
Expenses				
Capitation fees	3812	0	3812	3543
Section activities	2443	0	2443	2133
Duke of Edinburgh costs	442	0	442	322
Donations to charity	1146	0	1146	0
Uniform and badges	695	0	695	754
Running costs - scout den	619	0	619	373
Insurance	327	0	327	279
Contribution to heat and light	750	0	750	0
Administration	0	0	0	92
Equipment	1158	0	1158	2575
Miscellaneous	604	0	604	137
	11996	0	11996	10208
Surplus for the year	2558	0	2558	3668
Transfer net deficit Squirrels	387	(387)	0	0
Balance at 1 April 2022	21084	1842	22926	19258
Balance at 31 March 2023	24029	1455	25484	22926
Cash at Bank 31 March	23864	1455	25319	21915
Cash in hand 31 March	165	0	165	1011
Accrued expenses	0	0	0	0
	24029	1455	25484	0 22926
Other assets at insurance value				
Scout den	148672	0	148672	119000
Camp equipment, fixtures and fittings	15982	0	15982	14415
Other liabilities	0	0	0	0
TOTAL NET ASSETS	188683	1455	190138	156341

62nd Belfast: Sectional Reports

Squirrels

Squirrels – M Guiler

This year has been fun for Squirrels – they have made the most of the great outdoors and attended all the NI, County and District events. They started and finished the year with visits to Clip and Climb – some, like their namesakes, were able to scramble to the top of walls, others were more timid but did climb a few steps, an equally good achievement. Other outings included visits to Knockbreda Community Garden and Galwally Lake (to feed the ducks), to Ardnally for the Platinum Jubilee Picnic, the NI Squirrel Fun Day, the Lagan Halloween party and Christmas at Ardnally and to Mount Stewart in September for Catherine's picnic when we remember Catherine Breen and all she brought to 62nd Squirrels. Once again this event was generously sponsored by a parent of a former Squirrel.

For the 2nd year running, all Mondays between September and December were dry, and we met (by choice) in the Church garden, working on badges, playing games, building dens and learning by having fun. The Squirrels gave Santa and his Elf a great welcome at our Christmas party. We moved indoors in January but back out again after Easter.

This year the Squirrels have been awarded the Go Wild, Exciting Experiments, Brilliant Builder and Story Time Activity Badges and the All Together Challenge Award – great work by all. 12 Squirrels moved to Beavers during the year to be replaced by 12 new bright-eyed and bushy-tailed boys. We continue to operate a waiting list.

Thank you to all our leaders, including young leaders Kieran, Nenagh and Harry. Squirrels would not be possible without you!





Beavers – H Morrissey

We have 20 Beaver Scouts who attend regularly on Monday nights and we have continued to operate a waiting list due to a high demand for places.

We lost Steph Russell from our Leadership Team when she accepted a new job and Holly McGonigle who was a young leader. Emily Toolan joined our Leadership Team along with Lara, James and Caolan who are all young leaders and have been a great help this year.

At our weekly meetings, we played games, had a uni-hoc competition and learned about St. Patrick, the Chinese New Year and the Beaver animal. Favourite activities were our experiments to see the effects of salt on our bodies, making dinosaur gliders and taking part in Treasure Hunts around the Church grounds.

We also took part in several events during the year:

Church Event

On Sunday 26 February 2023, 7 Beavers took part in the Annual Thinking Day Service. Matthew read the opening prayer and he along with Conor and Cameron made up our Colour Party. They all did an amazing job. Well done!

Lagan District Events

- 16 Beavers took part in a Hallowe'en Party at Ardnally on Friday 28 October 2022. They followed a Spooky Trail, tried to escape from the spider's web, made various crafts and heard a story at the campfire before the disco.
- 17 Beavers attended the District Christmas Lights Event at Ardnally on Monday 5 December 2022. They followed a Candy Trail, visited the Snowflake Story Tree, made Christmas crafts and enjoyed a campfire in a can.
- 12 Beavers joined Beavers from two other Colonies at St. Bernadette's Hall on Saturday 10 December 2022 for a Christmas Craft morning. Santa visited and everyone made lots of different Christmas crafts and decorations.
- 12 Beavers completed the Annual Ardnally Walk on Saturday 25 March 2023 and they raised a total of £291. Well done to everyone who took part. Half of the money goes towards the upkeep of Ardnally and half was donated to the Northern Ireland Air Ambulance Service.

NI Event

11 Beavers attended Rally Day at Crawfordsburn on Saturday 20 May 2023. We met at Botanic Station and travelled by train to Helen's Bay Station before walking to the NI Scout Centre at Crawfordsburn. The theme was Around the World in a Day and we were issued with our boarding passes and passports when we arrived. We joined around 550 Beaver Scouts and completed several activities in each continent including Europe where we built the Eiffel Tower, America where we did line dancing, Asia where we built the Great Wall of China, Australia where we pretended to be kangaroos and Africa where we had great fun playing the drums.



Power NI

We are very grateful to Gwyneth Compston who works for Power NI, as she kindly nominated the Colony as a local group that could benefit from £300 funding from the company. Gwyneth's nomination was successful and we were able to purchase a gazebo and flask. Power NI came along to Beavers to take a photograph for their internal staff article and a press release on 'Beavers Helping Hand'. We made the following contribution:

'The 62nd Beaver Scout Colony is delighted to have received support from Power NI. In ScOUTing the emphasis is on the outdoors and we will get great use out of our gazebo, especially throughout the spring and summer months when a lot of our activities take place outside. The flask will keep our leaders refreshed with tea and coffee as they help our young people experience new activities and develop life skills.'



Gwyneth Compston, Ahmeek and Ethan Compston



Cubs – L Dudgeon

Cubs continued to meet at Ardnally during April right through to June with approx 26 Cubs in attendance each evening. As the weather was kind to us, water games were especially popular. In May we attended a Jubilee Party at Ardnally for the Queen's Jubilee there were games and a scavenger hunt and all had a good time.

At the start of June, 18 Cubs attended the district camp, the first camp since Covid, and the first camp for a lot of Cubs. 5 further Cubs attended during the day on the Saturday. 7 got their Chief Scout Gold.

In September, we were back meeting in the Church Hall and we said goodbye to 7 senior Cubs as they moved up to Scouts, but we welcomed 4 into the pack from Beavers.

Our leadership changed and we lost 2 assistant leaders and 2 parent helpers but thankfully we obtained Sarah from Network.

Come October, it was Investiture time for the new Cubs. At Halloween, we carved pumpkins and some very interesting faces were created.

At the end of November, we made Christmas tree decorations in preparation for our evening with the PW of the church. The Cubs and the PTA choir of St Michael's sang Christmas carols with the PW and some of the Cubs played their musical instruments.

We also went to Ardnally for "Christmas at Ardnally" where we learnt our elf names followed by Christmas-themed games and crafts.

In January we got 2 more Beavers and we refreshed all the Cubs on how scouting began and how teamwork is important by playing games and learning how to help each other by trying to build towers from just paper or by straws and marshmallows.

In March we enjoyed a quiz about our patron saint, St Patrick and had a night doing badge work which ended by all the cubs earning at least 4 badges each.

In June we will be looking forward to attending Camp ,where the Cubs will learn more skills



SCOUTS

Scouts – J Dudgeon

The Scout Section have primarily been meeting at Ardnally every week, with the odd night off for Christmas or Easter, maybe 2 nights off over Summer, with the occasional meeting off-site for night walks in the local area. We have made a conscious decision to make as much time up as possible due to missing so much time due to Covid restrictions.

When walking we usually encourage the older Scouts to take the lead in navigation. Often our walks have stops for cooking on the Trangia's, a spot of Morse Code or a forage around for wild garlic for Garlic Bread which we can make on a fire back at Ardnally.

At Ardnally, we run a variety of different types of games and activities, often to fit the conditions of the night as the weather can be so variable. We are fortunate at Ardnally to have mature trees that provide ample cover for most rain showers, so the rain rarely actually interrupts our program.

Whilst the leaders (myself Jonnie Dudgeon, Mike 'Fozzy' Forsyth and Kenny Campbell) are running the show, we seek the opinion of all Scouts to know what's fun what's not and so on. We are also assisted by a few Explorers' namely Aiden McCann and Cathal McConnell. Fan favourite activities of note include chariot building and racing with pioneering poles, pumpkin carving, pancake making on tin cans with the heat source being an individual candle, fires and axe work. We don't often play the likes of football or uni-hoc (certainly not as much as when we were at the Church) but when we do the Scouts build their own goals out of pioneering poles and rope.

As we are at Ardnally so often we help out in our small way in the upkeep and maintenance of the grounds. We conduct litter picks, where the Scouts are split up and compete against the other team to collect as much litter as they can in the zone we find ourselves in that night. We also help clear paths of branches and debris after storms and the clearing of the grass of all the branches and stones before it is to be cut.

In August we took around 13 Scouts and 2 Explorers for a 2-night camp in Crawfordsburn. The Camp itself was activity-packed, which included axe throwing, zip line, catapult building, canoeing, and wall climbing in addition to our regular night hikes and campfires.

We also camped on 3 other occasions, twice at Ardnally and once more at Crawfordsburn. At Halloween, several Scouts bivied out in the forest, which meant we had a few fewer tents to put up, whilst the younger ones slept in tents.

Our next camp was at Crawfordsburn where we again bivied out – this time in aid of the Simon community. The Scouts were asked to bring along items the Simon Community could use in the effort to assist the homeless community – which was greatly needed, particularly over the cold winter months.

Our 2nd camp at Ardnally was in March where we again encountered very mild weather.

Buoyed on by the bivy'ers of our last camp, more asked if they could sleep under the stars – which again is less time putting up and taking down tents.

The following morning was the day of the Ardnally walk, our own version started at late on the Friday night with a walk to the Gilchrist Bridge below Edenderry and back to Ardnally. The following morning with an early start we took down our tents, then continued onto the more traditional walk through Belvoir Forest, returning again to Ardnally for the finish – finishing as most groups were just about to start their own walk, and i myself redoing the walk with the Cub Pack!

All 4 Camps were held jointly with the other Scout Troop I am in charge of the 115th Belfast, this gives the Scouts the opportunity to see some fresh faces and hear fresh voices and perspectives – it also means I only have to run 4 camps, not 8!

We also returned to the church halls just before the Christmas break, on a particularly frosty 1st night we made Chocolate brownies within oranges cooked over the fire. In the following weeks we conducted a litter pick in the church grounds and the surrounding roads –with Rosetta Park being particularly bad. In Spring we returned to Ardnally with the coming of the milder weather.

All the work that goes into our programming is guided by the requirements of the Chief Scout's Gold Award. I use this as a sort of curriculum, as it often reminds me that we've done too much Scout'ie activities like fire building, axe work and backwards cooking and not enough items for the required Creative Challenge Award!

At our Founders Day Service 8 Scouts were presented with their Chief Scout's Gold Award, this was the 1st time we could do so in front of a congregation in some years and may have been the Scouts Section's biggest turnout for an awfully long time – as I'm sure those who were squeezed into the pews can attest to!

This turnout and overall number of over 30 is a testament to both the current leadership team and to those who have come before us, who set a standard not only to maintain but to exceed, but more importantly the Scouts themselves who are receptive to our message, week in week out at Ardnally and the Church Halls.



EXPLORERS

Explorers – S Mallett

For Explorers, this Scouting year has been a year focused on getting back outdoors and maximising the programme which we can provide on a weekly basis. With a new Explorer Team consisting of Stephen Mallett, Scott Guiler, Norman McKee, Fynn Bailie and Alessandro Angelone, we are pleased with the diversity of the programme provided.

Kickstarting the term in September, it wasn't long until we were heading for our first Explorer Unit camp in early October 2022 which was based at Ardnally Scout Centre and utilising the resources at the Belfast Activity Centre. Listening to the Explorers, we amended our programme from going from a bi-weekly programme to a weekly programme, we noticed numbers gradually increase with us reporting in the recent census that we had 18 Explorers with 5 turning 18 years old throughout the year.



Stripping Explorers back to the basics, we knew that we had a core group of members who were actively keen to complete their DofE experience from Bronze to Silver levels. As we bounced back from Covid, we were keen to get back into the hills and be able to participate in the scheme whilst having the opportunity to get back to camping in the Mourne Mountains. With over 15 participants in the scheme, we were pleased to be able to get 4 DofE Bronze Awards completed and 6 DofE Silver Awards completed, with the rest of the group looking to complete their DofE experience during the Summer of 2023.



As a Leadership team, we strongly believe and see the benefits of running Explorers as a youth-led activity where everyone feels the benefits of contributing to what they want to achieve whilst being at 62nd Belfast Explorers on a weekly basis. In partnership with the Leaders, key nights which were held over the last term were Mechanics (Car Maintenance), First Response with Annies, Night Hikes, Fires at Ardnally and Swimming to name a few.

Taking this forward, we have had a positive number of Explorers feel the benefits of volunteering via the Young Leaders Scheme. A scheme focused on getting 14-18-year-olds is vital to support for the Scout Group, with over 12 Explorers participating. We were very pleased to see Aidan McCann and Kieran O'Dowd receive their Young Leader awards throughout the year.



As always, we are grateful for our partnership with the 62nd Belfast Scout Group, without their support and partnership we would not be able to deliver the programme which meets everyone's expectations.

Finally, we want to say a big thank you to Newtownbreda Presbyterian (St. Johns) Church for their continued support. We were so pleased to support the Church's Autumn Fete in September 2023 where the Explorer Unit provided a Hot Dog and Tuck Shop stand, we look forward to being able to support more over the next couple of months.

62nd Belfast: Declaration

The Trustees declare that they have approved this report which has been signed by the Chair of the Trustee Board and Secretary on their behalf at the Annual General Meeting in June 2023.

Name	Position	Date
Dr Simon Doherty	Chair of Trustee Board	4 th June 2023
Beth Dawson	Secretary of the Trustee Board	4 th June 2023