

# 62<sup>nd</sup> Belfast Scout Group

## The Annual Report for Year Ended March 2024



# 62<sup>nd</sup> Belfast Scout Group – Year Review

As the group volunteer lead it is my pleasure to present the below reports on behalf of all the sections that make up the 62<sup>nd</sup> scout group. At our last AGM I highlighted that we were entering our centenary year and with this AGM we bring our year long programme of events mostly to a close.

I wish to start by thanking all those that support 62<sup>nd</sup> Scout Group, each section requires considerable dedication of all the leaders and helpers involved to deliver exciting, varied, and challenging programmes that challenge our young people to develop in a safe environment, hopefully throughout their entire time with us from Squirrels right up to young leaders. You will find below the section reports written by our Section Leaders relevant to your son and be able to read more about the activities they got up to.

Overall as a group in our 100<sup>th</sup> year we remain in a strong position. We have approximately 105 youth members engaging in a varied scouting programme across 5 sections. Our growth as a group has remained relatively flat over the last 2 years having now fully recovered from Covid. This is mainly due to Squirrels, Beavers and Cubs being at capacity both for the number of leaders available and the hall space. We continue to field regular enquiries for all 3 sections and redirect where possible to other nearby groups. Numbers in Scouts and Explorers continue to increase, Scout Section continues to grow due to scouts bringing their friends who have in turned joined up, which is a brilliant endorsement.

Highlights for this year included our centenary camp in September which was attended by all sections who either visited for the day on Saturday or spent the weekend camping either inside the BP chalet for Cubs or camping out for Scouts and Explorers. There was a full programme of activities throughout the weekend with a particular focus on activities on the Saturday which would challenge all sections with fresh activities that they had not previously done at other camps. The group came together for a campfire that evening.

In February we held a reunion afternoon tea for all past members in the Rosetta Hall at St Johns. It was fantastic that we were able to fill the hall with past members. Particular thanks to John Lyons our Group President for being such a driving force behind this event and all the other leaders and volunteers who made it possible by organising, setting up the venue and serving tea's and coffees on the day.

I would like to express my thanks and that of the 62<sup>nd</sup> Scout Council to the section leaders, Marjorie, Helen, Liz, Jonnie and Scott Guiler and their teams for the programmes they have delivered this year and their continued dedication to Scouting.

It would be remiss of me not to encourage anyone reading to consider volunteering. Scouting has changed and continues to become more modern, now more than ever there is a variety of roles suited to everyone from those that can commit to volunteering once a week to those can only give a few hours once a month. Much of the training has now moved online reducing this requirement also. Please speak to me or Scott Robinson or any of the sections leaders if you would like more information.

Finally, the Trustee Board also wish to note their 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 for our members.

*Deane Dawson (Group Volunteer Lead)*

## Group Location

The Scout Den at Newtownbreda Presbyterian Church, 374-378 Ormeau Road, Belfast BT7 3HX. The Den is a small hall for meetings and equipment storage. Main activities are carried out in the adjoining St Johns Hall.

## Group Correspondence

All correspondence should be sent to:

Deane Dawson G.V.L.

62<sup>nd</sup> Belfast Scout Group

Newtownbreda Presbyterian Church

374/6 Ormeau Road

Belfast

BT7 3HX

62ndgsl@gmail.com



# Personnel of the Trustee Board

The Trustees who comprise the Group Trustee Board on 31/03/2024 are:

- Gordon Myles (Chair)
- Deane Dawson (Group Lead Volunteer)
- Scott Robinson (Deputy Group Scout Leader & County Lead Volunteer for Belfast)
- Beth Dawson (Secretary)
- Marjorie Guiler (Lead Volunteer for Squirrels)
- Helen Morrissey (Lead Volunteer for Beavers)
- Liz Dudgeon (Lead Volunteer for Cubs)
- Jonathan Dudgeon (Lead Volunteer for Scouts)
- Stephen Mallett (Lead Volunteer for Explorers)
- Scott Guiler (Elected Trustee)
- Kenny Campbell (Elected Trustee)
- Michael Forsythe (Elected Trustee)
- Claire Compston (Elected Trustee)
- Norman McKee (Lagan District Commissioner)

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

## 62<sup>nd</sup> Trustee Update

Following the resignation of our previous Treasurer in June 2023 we have yet to appoint a new Treasurer. Our Trustees, Scott Robinson and Marjorie Guiler, have jointly been carrying out this function on a temporary basis.

The role of Deputy Group Scout Leader, currently held by Scott Robinson, will cease to exist at the point of the upcoming Annual General Meeting.

The NI Charity Commission website has been updated with any changes to the group.

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

# 62<sup>nd</sup> 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.

The position of Group President is currently held by John Lyons.

## 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.

## 62<sup>nd</sup> Belfast Membership

### Census (January 2024)

- Squirrel Drey – 18 Members
- Beaver Colony – 22 Members
- Cub Pack – 18 Members
- Scout Troop – 21 Members
- Explorer Unit – 14 Members
- Executive Members – 14 Members
- Other Leaders – 18 Members
- Total Number of Group: 125 Members

## 62<sup>nd</sup> Belfast: Finance

For the 2023/24 financial year the Group is reporting a deficit of £2,559 (2022/23: Surplus of £2,558).

Although income for 2023/24 was £17,376, £2,816 more than the previous year, our expenses of £19,730 resulted in the deficit. Expenditure on camps and outings was significantly larger than the previous year, events at our AGM became a new annual cost and events organised to mark the group's centenary year were a unique expense.

Within the reporting year, we were pleased to raise £778 at our June 2023 Duck Race which was donated to Air Ambulance NI and the Squirrels-Kicks Count which raised £48. The Ardnally Walk raised £534, half of which goes to the Group and half to Lagan District.

**62nd Belfast Scout Group****Registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (NIC 104000)****Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024**

	2024	2024	2023	2023
	£	£	£	£
<b>INCOME</b>				
Subs - Beavers, Scouts, Cubs, Explorers	5840		5,844	
Duke of Edinburgh	525		1,285	
Income from activities / fund raising	1472		2,213	
Camp income	3800		769	
ELB Grant	3577		2,123	
Other Grant	0		300	
Sale of centenary mugs	474		0	
Gift Aid	1689		2,026	
		17,376		14,560
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
Capitation	3720		3,812	
Group activities	1412		1,312	
Camps and outings	3207		562	
Duke of Edinburgh	810		442	
Donations	1594		1,156	
Badges and Scarves	771		702	
EA grant returned	1053		0	
Den running costs / outlays	459		619	
Insurance	355		327	
Newtownbreda Presbyterian - contribution for use	1000		850	
Centenary celebrations	4284		0	
AGM expenses	711		0	
Equipment	328		1,158	
Miscellaneous	25		1,061	
		19730		12002
(Deficit)/Surplus for the year		(2354)		2,558
Opening balance 1 April		25484		22,926
Closing balance 31 March		23,130		25,484
 Cash at bank 31st March		22065		25,319
Cash floats		1065		165
Total		23,130		25,484
Unrestricted funds		21,968		24,029
Restricted funds (Squirrels)		1,162		1,455
		23,130		25,484
<b>Other Assets at Insurance value</b>				
Scout Den	163,548		119,000	
Camp equipment, fixtures, fittings	17,580		14,415	
		181,128		133,415
Other liabilities		0		0
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>		<b>204,258</b>		<b>158,899</b>

**Independent Examiner's report to the charity trustees of 62<sup>nd</sup> Belfast Scout Group**

I report on the accounts of the charity set out in the Annual Report for the year ended 31 March 2024.

**Respective responsibilities of charity trustees and examiner**

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.

It is my responsibility to:

- . examine the accounts under section 65 of the Charities Act
- . follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Commission under section 65(9)(b) of the Charities Act
- . state whether particular matters have come to my attention

**Basis of independent examiner's report**

I have examined your charity accounts as required under section 65 of the Charities Act and my examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland under section 65(9)(b) of the Charities Act.

My examination included a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also included consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as charity trustees concerning any such matters.

My role is to state whether any material matters have come to my attention giving me cause to believe:

1. That accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 63 of the Charities Act
2. That the accounts do not accord with those accounting records
3. That the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act
4. That there is further information needed for a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached

**Independent examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination and have no concerns in respect of the matters (1) to (4) listed above and, in connection with following the Directions of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, I have found no matters that require drawing to your attention.



Denis Guiler, 21 May 2024

Treasurer Newtownbreda Presbyterian Church

Independent Examiner



## 62<sup>nd</sup> Belfast: Sectional Reports

# Squirrels

### Marjorie Guiler

Another fun-filled year for Squirrels! The weather in the summer term was lovely and we made the most of the great outdoors with walks to Galwally Lake to feed the ducks and to the new Lagan Footbridge to see the Squirrel mural. Stephen Harding, who designed the bridge, joined us there to talk to the boys about bridge-building. 2<sup>nd</sup> June saw the duck race – no real ducks were harmed! The water level was low after the great weather but all the boys managed to get very wet. The family barbeque and bouncy castles during the AGM afterwards were well received by all.

The Squirrels practised camping one evening in the church garden before going to the Lagan camp at the end of June – a great end to the summer term. At the beginning of the autumn term, they “camped” again at Ardnally, this time with the rest of the 62<sup>nd</sup> at the Centenary camp. They loved having their dinner with the older boys in 62<sup>nd</sup> and joining in at the campfire and a visit from Party Animals made their day (if not the leader’s day!). I would like to thank a former parent who kindly sponsored this visit – our annual event to remember Catherine.

Squirrels also visited and had fun at Ardnally for Halloween and Christmas at Elfnally, both Lagan District events. They are always ready to celebrate and party – another Halloween fancy dress party, Divali and of course Christmas when Santa took time out of his busy schedule to visit.

We have continued to work (still having fun) on badges and were very pleased to award 8 Squirrels with their Chief Scout Acorn Awards in September before they moved up to Beavers. We have also completed/nearly completed 2 Challenge badges (All Around Us and All About Me) and 5 Activity badges (Local Superhero, Get Creative, Let’s Celebrate, Super Chef and Explore Outdoors). Well done boys!

The Drey has been full throughout the year and we continue to operate a waiting list.

Thank you to all our Leaders –Beth, Rebecca, Claire, Hilary and Laura and young leaders Harry, Nenagh and Adam. I know it takes much more than an hour a week – Squirrels would not be possible without you.



### Helen Morrissey (Ahmeek)

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 several of our young leaders when we finished in June 2023 due to educational commitments. We thank Emily, Lara, James and Caolan for all their help last year. We welcomed Lee-Ann Weldon to our Leadership Team as our new Assistant Beaver Scout Leader in September 2023. Two new young leaders – Matthew Catney and Steven George also joined us and are both volunteering as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Award.

At our weekly meetings we played games, made crafts, had a uni-hoc competition and learnt about St. Patrick and the beaver animal. We have taken advantage of the good weather and had activities and trails outside in the church grounds.

We took part in several events during the year:

**Hallowe'en Event at Ardnally** – 15 Beavers attended a fun filled night at Ardnally on Friday 20 October 2023. They followed a spooky trail, tried to escape from the spider's web, made various crafts and heard a story at the campfire before enjoying pumpkin soup.

**Elfnally** - On Monday 4 December 2023, 21 Beavers visited Ardnally for a magical Christmas experience. They followed a Candy Trail, played games, made crafts and sang along to Christmas songs followed by hot chocolate and marshmallows at the campfire.

**Gathering Drum** - We joined with the Squirrels for a visit from Gathering Drum on Monday 12 February 2024 and the children and leaders all had great fun making lots of noise!

**Thinking Day Service** – 7 Beavers attended the Annual Thinking Day Service in the church on Sunday 18 February 2024. Lucas Weldon and Teddy Harding read the invitation to worship at the start of the service and Ben Myles and Oisin McClean made up our Colour Party. They all did an amazing job. Well done!

**Rally Day** - 13 Beavers attended Rally Day at Crawfordsburn on 18 May 2024. We met at Botanic Station and travelled by train to Helen's Bay Station before walking to the NI Scout Centre at



Crawfordsburn. We joined Beaver Scouts from across Northern Ireland to take part in a variety of activities with an Olympic Theme.

Duck Race and Activity Day – We will finish the year with the Annual Duck Race at Minnowburn on Friday 7 June 2024 and an Activity Day at Ardnavalley on Saturday 29 June 2024.



During the year we enrolled 13 kits (children are called kits until they complete several activities and become a Beaver Scout) and awarded 21 Parliament Badges and 13 Stage 1 Hike Badges.

## Thank You

We are grateful to all our leaders and helpers for making Beavers possible and for their continued dedicated service to the Colony on Monday nights. Thank you to the parents for their support and to the Church for the use of the halls.



## Liz Dudgeon (Akelia)

Cubs meet in the Church halls every Monday evening from March through to May with approx 21 Cubs in attendance. In March we attended the Ardnally walk and the monies raised went to the Air Ambulance. In May-June we met in Ardnally where we were able to do fire lighting, cricket, rounder's, hunt and practice pitching tents.

In June we attended Lagan District Camp where all sections camped, weather had been very hot until the Friday night when rain started. It did not dampen spirits and the cubs enjoyed meeting old and new friends from different units. On Saturday the Cubs did Canadian canoeing, and different bases organised by leaders.

In September we had an indoor camp with the Scouts and the Squirrels and Beavers joined us on the Saturday for activities and birthday cake to celebrate the 62<sup>nd</sup> 100 years of existence. Some of the activities included caving and wall climbing which the Cubs loved.

We said good bye to our P7s and in October we invested our new Cubs. At Halloween we carved pumpkins and interesting faces were made.

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

We also went to Ardnally for "Christmas at Ardnally" where we went on the elf trail, had smores and played Christmas games.

In January we got more new Cubs and all the Cubs refreshed themselves on the Cub laws by playing games and encouraging team building by having a night of board games where some of the Cubs showed how well they can play chess.

In February the Cubs took part in the annual Founder days Church service where some of the cubs did a reading and carried the Cub Flag.

Throughout the year we have completed First Aid badges and navigator badges.



# SCOUTS

## Jonathan Dudgeon

The Scout Section have been quite evenly split between Ardnally and the Church Halls, 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 previous 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 the Den or Ardnally.

At Ardnally, we run a variety of different types of games and activities, often to fit the conditions on 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, Kenny Campbell and Deane Dawson) are running the show, we seek the opinion of all Scouts to know what's fun what's not and so on. 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.

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 June of 2023 we attended the Lagan District camp at Ardnally along with many others from the District. Some of the Senior Scouts assisted in building a gate for our campsite which we shared with the 115<sup>th</sup> Scouts, as was tradition. We had so many admirers or perhaps jealous eyes that the ground just in front of the entrance gradually became quite muddy, so much so that over a year on the grass still hasn't recovered and is looking rather bare.



In September we again camped at Ardnally for the weekend, this time for our 100 Year Anniversary. The Scouts and Explorers camped on the Lagan Site behind the BP Chalet and the Cubs slept in the hall in the chalet. We ran some activities with the BAC in Barnett's Park such as caving and climbing on the climbing wall and went Canadian Canoeing at Shaw's Bridge. On the Saturday evening we had a beautiful birthday cake made by Janine who is a Beaver leader in 115<sup>th</sup>. Whilst some of the Scouts sensibly kept the campfire lit in the evening a dozen or so could escape the Rugby World Cup fever and watched Ireland put 8 tries past a strong Tongan side.

We also returned to the church halls just before the Halloween, on a particularly frosty 1<sup>st</sup> 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.

The Rugby World Cup was a near constant in the Autumn, with our tuck shop time almost glued to the TV to see what we had missed in the previous hour and a half of activities. One of the more memorable moments was witnessing the tail end of Ireland's famous victory over favourites and eventual winners South Africa after doing some fire lighting in colanders at the Den.

Our 3<sup>rd</sup> camp at Ardnally was in March where we again encountered very mild and dry weather. As the annual Ardnally walk wasn't due to happen until September we organised our own scaled down version with a night hike down to Minnowburn and the Terrace Gardens. We didn't quite do a test run for the Duck Race, which will have occurred just before this AGM, but a few Scouts did throw poohsticks in the stream, although one or two may have been disqualified as I think their selection may have been considered pooh-branches or pooh-trunks and could well have created a new Beaver Dam at Minnowburn!

Parents may be encouraged to hear that this might have been the 1<sup>st</sup> camp that the Scouts actually got a full night sleep and didn't come home reeking of campfire! And I was similarly impressed in the morning to discover almost immaculate tents, not a drop of litter or evidence of midnight feasts!

2 of the 3 camps were held jointly with the other Scout Troop I am in charge of the 115<sup>th</sup> 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 3 camps not 6!

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 a 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!

I would like to thank my current leadership team (Fuzzy, Kenny and Deane) and to those leaders who have come before us, who set a really high standard of Scouting that we not only to maintain but try and exceed on occasion, but more importantly the Scouts themselves who are receptive to our message, week in week out at Ardnally and the Church Halls.

# EXPLORERS

## Stephen Mallett & Scott Guiler

Since May 2023 the Explorers have attended two major camps, completed Duke of Edinburgh expeditions and Chief Scouts Awards, volunteered in the community and at a county, district and group level and continued to develop their skills in the areas that a scout would be expected to excel.

The Lagan District camp allowed us to take part in adventurous activities on the River Lagan and nearby mountain bike trails but more importantly we were able to interact with other groups to make new friends and useful contacts.

At the 62nd group Centenary camp we were challenged at Belfast Activity Centre with the wide range of challenges that they offer, we prepared a large campfire for the evening's entertainment and better got to know the other sections in our own group.

In August we had six explorers involved in their DofE expedition in the Mourne Mountains. This proved to be a tough outing for them but they were able to take some key learning points away from it for the future.

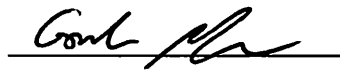
Helping others is a keystone of scouting and volunteering at church events (pizza nights and the Autumn Fete), at Ardnally (ground maintenance and wardening duties) and with Belfast County (Administrative tasks).

"A Scout is expected to be able to" has been the basis of many of the activities in the past year. Fire lighting, cooking, navigation, problem solving, practical knot tying, teamwork and crafting are just a few of the skills we have been developing on Friday nights.

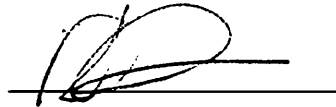
We look forward to continuing our programme into the summer months as we prepare for this year's expeditions, camps and service activities.

# 62<sup>nd</sup> 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 2024.



Gordon Myles  
Trustee Board Chair



Dean Dawson  
Group Lead Volunteer

29/06/2024

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

29/06/2024

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date