



Chelmsford Scouts
Annual Report and Accounts
2022-2023



Scouts
Chelmsford

Annual General Meeting
Thursday 31st August 2023
1st Writtle Scout Headquarters
Paradise Road, Chelmsford, CM1 3HW

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The Chelmsford District Scout Council is a Trust established under the rules of The Scout Association. Trustees are appointed under the Policy, Organisation and Rules of The Scout Association.

Chelmsford District Scout Council

President

Richard Oscroft MBE

Contact Address

District Secretary, 43 Shimbrooks, Great Leighs, CM3 1SG

Trustees

Roger Cole (Chair) - Ex-Officio

Frederick Balding (Secretary) - Ex-Officio

David Clarke (Treasurer) - Ex-Officio

Suzanne Ball (Co-District Commissioner) - Ex-Officio

Leanne Oscroft (Co-District Commissioner) - Ex-Officio

Bruce Knight (District Explorer Scout Commissioner) - Ex-Officio

Christopher Oscroft (District Network Scout Advisor) - Ex-Officio

Danyel Horner (Deputy DC - Youth Support) - Nominated

Nicola Hills (Deputy DC - Development) - Nominated

Stephanie Bendall - Nominated

Christopher Harpley (Riffhams Campsite Manager) - Elected

Andrew Missen - Elected

Malcolm Taylor - Elected

Christopher McCann (Safety Advisor) - Co-Opted

Advisors

Kristopher Reynolds - Media & Communications

Yan Guo - Financial Support

Independent Examiner

Community360, Winsleys's House, High Street, Colchester, CO1 1UG

Bankers

CAF Bank

Insurers

Unity Insurance Services

Charity Registration Number

302033

Trustees Report from the District Executive Committee

2022/2023 saw a welcome return to many activities and events throughout the District as Groups and Units bounced back, with our dedicated leaders delivering the “Skills for Life” to our young members.

Our Mission

Scouting exists to actively engage and support young people in their personal development, empowering them to make a positive contribution to society in general and local communities.

Our Values

As Scouts we are guided by these values:

- **Integrity**- We act with integrity, we are honest, trustworthy, and loyal.
- **Respect** - We have self-respect and respect for others.
- **Care** - We support others and take care of the world in which we live.
- **Belief** - We explore our faiths, beliefs and attitudes.
- **Co-operation** - We make a positive difference; we co-operate with others and make friends.

Our Goal

Our aim is to continue to develop Scouting in the Chelmsford District, to become more inclusive, to be shaped by young people and to strengthen our role within the community. The method by which we aim to achieve this through providing an enjoyable and attractive scheme of progressive self-education, based on the Scout Promise and Law and guided by adult leadership in a safe environment for all concerned. This responsibility ranks equally with other responsibilities incumbent upon those providing Scouting activities and events.

Scouting is open to all young people between the ages of 4 and 25, regardless of their background, ethnic origin, nationality, race, gender, marital or sexual status; mental or physical ability; financial status, political or religious belief.



Scouting for the almost 2,000 young people in Chelmsford District is provided through 26 Scout Groups (consisting of Squirrels (aged 4-6 years), Beavers (aged 6-8 years), Cubs (aged 8-10½ years) and Scouts (aged 10½-14 years)), 9 District Explorer Scout Units (for ages 14-18), and a District Scout Network Unit (18–25 year-olds). The 26 Scout Groups operate as independent charities with their own Trustees and prepare their accounts independently. The Explorer and Network Units are District based and their accounts are part of the District reporting.

The Scout programme in Chelmsford is delivered by over 300 trained adult volunteer leaders, aided by over 200 adult volunteers in Governance and Active Support (ASU) roles. The District Executive Committee acknowledges that these volunteers are its most valuable asset and resource, without whose support, it would not be possible to provide Scouting for the young people in our District. As a membership organisation, one of the main priorities has been to recruit and retain adult volunteers. Unfortunately, our adult volunteer numbers have not built back up to the pre-Covid levels. Numbers were 5% down (516) compared to last year (543) and over 20% lower than pre-Covid (706 in 2019). This trend reflects the national picture.



Over the past year, Scouting in Chelmsford District has fully returned to face-to-face meetings. Young people have continued to return to their sections or joined afresh and overall numbers of young people are up 6.8% (1888 compared to 1767 last year).

Structure, Governance & Management

Chelmsford District Scout Council is the body which supports and encourages the development of Scouting in the District and operates in accordance with a written constitution. It is this body to which the District Executive Committee (the Trustees) is accountable. Details of the Trustees are shown on page 1.

The Trustees are appointed annually at the Annual General Meeting of the Chelmsford District Scout Council either by election, nomination or by Ex-Officio appointments. Trustees may also be co-opted by the Executive Committee during the year.



Trustees are made aware of their responsibilities, and all undertake Trustee training within 5 months of appointment. The Trustees ensure that young people are involved in decision making and strive to have at least one 18–25 year-old as a member of the District Executive Committee. Young people are also given opportunities across the District, and encouraged to become the Leaders of the future, thereby enhancing the prospects of better retention of young people through to potential adult volunteering roles.

The District Executive committee met on six occasions during the year. The Executive Committee is supported by 3 sub-committees (Finance, Riffhams Campsite, and Appointments Advisory) with the District Scout Shop and Grants each being led by a nominated trustee with any major decisions taken by the full Executive Committee. Where appropriate, the Trustees continue to undertake activities to improve the management of Trustee meetings, the information flow for Trustees and governance for Sub Committees.

The Executive Committee has started to address the reduced income in our finances over the Covid period by initiating a Finance Action Plan, together with the introduction of an annual District levy of £3 per person. The key objective is to return the District's finances to a "break-even" position following 4 years of £10,000 negative end-year results. The introduction of the District levy was regrettably felt to be necessary and has certainly helped improve the finances. This, coupled with income from Riffhams Campsite, the Gang Show and other youth events, the District Scout Shop and from ASU fund raising activities have almost achieved the "break-even" objective. The 2023 year-end figure is in fact approximately £7,000 positive, but this is due to three exceptional one-off items (a £5,000 donation to one Explorer Unit; £2,000 donation from Kent Jamboree to the ASU for running the bar and a Covid donation from 1st Broomfield being moved from restricted to unrestricted funds).

The introduction of a District levy for the first time in over 50 years has prompted the question – "What do we receive for our money?". The District offers the following to all of its members, (though not all choose to avail themselves of these opportunities):

- **Riffhams Campsite** - free use for day/evening sessions at our District campsite.
- **District Grants** - available to groups and to young people in need.
- **District Activities & Events** - a wide range of District activities including annual Gang Show; competitions; training events and development days.
- **District Equipment** - a large inventory of equipment in our District store for loan or hire.
- **District Scout Shop** - offers a discount on uniforms and other items compared to RRP.
- **District Motion Picture License** - enables all sections/groups/units to legally play DVDs or stream movies in meeting rooms or at camp and events.

Many of these opportunities were already available to members prior to the introduction of the District levy, however prior to the levy and for at least 10 years, our accounts have always been "in the red" at year end. Our annual deficit has ranged from between £2,000 to more than £10,000, slowly reducing our financial reserves year-on-year. Covid accelerated the rate of depletion requiring urgent action to redress the situation.

Trustees' Responsibilities Statement

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England & Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the situation of the charity and of incoming financial resources and application of resources of the charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
- observe the methods and principals in the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements.
- prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts Reports) Regulations 2008 and trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Reserves Policy

The Charity's reserve policy is reviewed regularly. The Trustees are satisfied that there remain sufficient reserves to carry on the daily running of the charity to meet expected needs on an ongoing basis and cover any contingencies that might arise. During the year the Trustees have continued to take steps to seek ways to consolidate the Charity's funds across its various activities. They have confirmed that cash reserves should fall to no less than £60,000 to meet ongoing commitments and support regular Scouting activities. Any future capital developments will be reviewed against this background. During the year the Trustees continually reassess the utilisation of the Charity's cash reserves for the benefit of Scouting within the District.

Public Benefit

The Trustees confirm that they have paid due regard to the Charities Act 2011 to demonstrate that our aims are for the public benefit. Our assessment is that we have met the public benefit criteria under both the advancement of education and the advancement of citizenship or community development headings. The main principles of Scouting demonstrate that our aims are for the public benefit in the following ways:

- Developing young people towards their full potential, through the Scouting programme.
- Demonstrating there is a clear link between the purpose of Scouting and the benefits to young people.
- The various and numerous Scouting activities are managed with the health and safety of the young people always a priority. We plan to ensure that the benefit of these activities far outweighs any associated potential risks.

Achievements & Performance

During the past year the number of young people engaging in Scouting within our District has continued to grow and is currently almost 2000. Unfortunately, we are still seeing the effects of the pandemic as a number of adult volunteers have not returned. We are continuing to promote Scouting with the hope of attracting more adults who wish to join in the fun. As part of the District's support to Groups, a recruitment event is scheduled in June 2023. Adult recruitment and retention are something that many of our Groups have been focusing on, and throughout the current "Transformation" period, more help will be forthcoming with this.



Despite a lower number of adults volunteering, we are proud that Scout Groups have continued to provide their young people with many wonderful residential experiences, giving them the best of memories and putting the 'out' in Chelmsford Scouting. Over 500 nights away have been offered across the District ranging from HQ sleepovers to week-long camps in venues new and old. Scouts and Explorers have been given the opportunity to complete both the Bronze and Silver Duke of Edinburgh Award.

Inspiring activities throughout the year have ranged from the Handicraft competitions for Beavers and Cubs to a Christmas festive hike for Scouts. We have offered our young people the opportunity to kayak on local rivers, walk the "Plainsman hike", visit London for the Lord Mayor's Show, experience an international activity, perform a "Show in a Day"; and celebrate Queen Elizabeth II at various Jubilee events to mention but a few. On a weekly basis, our sections have visited the various emergency services; been taught life skills and generally grown through their Scouting adventure, all under the guidance of our volunteers.



Our Active Support Unit (ASU) has held some social events during the past year and has supported the District by willingly helping at various activities such as St. George's Day and the annual Swimming Gala. ASU members also supported the Kent Jamboree by organising and running the staff bar and evening entertainment area. Our thanks go to them for their continued commitment, and we look forward to seeing them supporting the District at future events.

Our Executive Committee, soon to be known as the Trustee Board, continues to work in the background ensuring that we are offering the best support to our volunteers and Young People.

The Chelmsford Scouts' Gang Show returned in April 2022 and continues to go from strength to strength. Cast numbers are increasing and reaction to the show has been very positive. Feedback has also been received regarding the visible growth and development of the young performers, who may have never been given this opportunity outside of Scouting. Early indications suggest that the upcoming 2023 Show promises to be even bigger and better!



Several adult volunteers and Explorer Scouts from the District will be attending International events in summer 2023, including the 25th World Jamboree in South Korea, the USA and Jersey. We look forward to hearing all about their adventures at future District events.

Heartfelt thanks are extended to each one of our adult volunteers – both those in leadership and support roles. We hope you have enjoyed making new memories; learning new skills; teaching old skills; meeting new friends and strengthening old friendships throughout the past year. Without your time, knowledge and care, our young people wouldn't be on this journey. We want to continue offering high quality and safe Scouting to our young people, and to grow the District. The challenge now is to offer this amazing opportunity to new volunteers, encourage them to give what they can, thus allowing them and our young people to experience the incredible Scouting programme that Chelmsford has to offer.

Riffhams Campsite

2022/23 has seen the welcome return of Scouts and other campsite users as well as an improvement in campsite income. 25 out of our 26 Scout Groups and 6 of our Explorer Scout Units have visited Riffhams in the past year. 3,383 Chelmsford Scouts were welcomed, and a total of 1,240 people enjoyed camping overnight at our site.

The team have worked hard together making numerous improvements to the site, including some

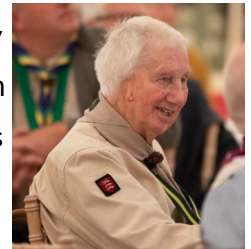


innovative work developing a tree nursery to grow our own saplings for transplanting around the campsite. A scheduled coppicing programme has been carried out in one area of the site as part of the woodland management plan. The site has hosted several working parties of Explorer Scouts, together with their leaders, both from within and outside the District. The site hosted a Ford community day helping us to maintain buildings, fencing, and firepits. Some recent boundary fencing by a neighbour has impacted on available space for car drop-off/parking and alternative parking options are being explored by the Riffhams team.

Thank you

The last few years have been unprecedented and have presented the Trustees and our volunteer leaders with many challenges. It has been a testament to our volunteers that, despite some adult helpers choosing not to return to Scouting post-Covid, the majority have stayed with us and faced up to the various challenges in an amazingly responsive way. The Trustees wish to express their thanks to these, and to all who support the work and development of Scouting in the Chelmsford District.

Finally, we recently lost a number of local Scouting colleagues including our highly respected and much-loved former President of Chelmsford Scouts, Malcolm Treacher MBE. Scouting was Malcolm's life and we greatly benefitted from his staunch support for our District over many years. He will be sadly missed.



Report of the District Treasurer

The Covid shutdown period had resulted in 3 years of lost income with annual deficits during this period in excess of £10,000 per year and our cash assets rapidly dwindling towards our reserve figure. In 2022/23 we set a budget which indicated a potential deficit - but with the hope that income generation would start to return from activities such as Riffhams campsite, the Gang Show and the Scout Shop. We also felt it necessary to introduce a District levy for the first time to try to bring us back towards a balanced budget. The levy was set at £3 per person and had the desired effect of moving us closer to break-even. Though we ended the year operationally with a surplus, this was due to one-off exceptional income items (an unexpected donation of £5,000 to one of the Explorer units and over £2,000 from ASU for running the bar at the Kent Jamboree). Taking these items into account leaves us with about £2,000 in deficit overall - an improvement over the past 3 years. Other items to note are:

- Reduction in bank charges
- Improved interest on savings investments
- Increased surplus from 2022 Gang Show
- Increased surplus from Riffhams campsite
- Improved cash/savings balances

Risk Management

The Executive Committee has identified a number of risks they believe the District is exposed to and has taken action to mitigate them. The main areas of concern are:

- **Riffhams Campsite** – damage to buildings or other areas of the property or equipment. A Campsite committee meet regularly to review site management and the District has recently reviewed buildings and contents insurance to mitigate against permanent loss.
- **Injury to leaders, helpers, supporters and members** – The District is covered by accident insurance policies. Safety incidents are reviewed by the District Safety adviser and any issues brought to the attention of the District Executive. Risk Assessments are undertaken before all District events.
- **Reduced income from fundraising activities** – The District has previously relied on income from its Riffhams Campsite; the annual Gang Show and other Youth activities, the District Scout Shop and boosted with fundraising by the ASU. Covid-19 brought into sharp focus how vulnerable the District was when these activities ceased and income effectively dried up. The introduction of a District membership levy for the first time enabled us to reduce the deficit and as income streams start to return we hope to gradually reduce the need for the levy.
- **Internal Controls** – The District has in place systems of internal controls that are designed to provide reasonable assurance against material mismanagement or loss. These include two signatories for all payments and a comprehensive insurance policy to ensure insurable risks are covered.

Accounts

Receipts & Payments Account

For the year ended 31 March 2023

Receipts

	2023	2022
Group membership subscriptions received	£70,550	£61,050
ESU membership subscriptions received	£7,726	£5,484
ESU programme and activities	£19,168	£9,211
Interest	£1,300	£514
Donations and grants	£7,811	£675
Network membership subscriptions recv'd	£120	-
Network programme and activities	-	£200
Other revenue (ASU)	£2,050	£125
Youth prog., activities & events (inc. GS)	£29,162	£9,723
Retail - shop income	£9,176	£11,604
Riffhams income	£4,656	£3,803
Total Receipts	£151,719	£102,389

Payments

	2023	2022
Total membership fees paid out	£71,918	£66,075
Adult Support	£76	£215
Appointments Advisory Committee	£480	£299
Bank charges	£725	£966
Card fees	£58	-
Equipment	£329	£396
Explorers programme & activities	£21,731	£9,330
Youth programme, activities and events	£25,853	£6,935
General expenses	£1,520	£2,297
Governance, inc. audit	£502	£502
Grants - support fund	-	£360
Gift aid	-	-
IT software & subscriptions	£297	-
Insurance	£4,095	£3,937
Meetings/venue hire	£299	£66
Network programme & activities	£495	£400
Postage, print & stationery	-	£34
Retail shop	£145	£257
Riffhams expenses	£2,143	£1,521
Store hire	£9,412	£8,830
Website costs	£294	-

Cost of Sales

	2023	2022
Purchases badges	-	£(601)
ESU membership subscriptions received	£(4,459)	£(10,847)

Total Gross Income

2023	2022
£147,260	£91,481

Total Operating Expenses

2023	2022
£140,372	£102,420

Net Surplus/Deficit

2023	2022
£6,888	£(10,939)

Statement of Assets & Liabilities

For the year ended 31 March 2023

Cash Funds

	2023	2022
District CAF Bank Current Account	£10,460	£11,878
Cash in hand	£169	£169

Other Monetary Assets

Cash in Explorer Unit Bank Accounts

	2023	2022
Columbus ESU	£1,923	£1,992
Evolve ESU	£5,094	£6,357
Havoc ESU	£816	£812
Kraken ESU	£5,893	£619
Monster ESU	-	£202
Quo Vadis ESU	£2,478	£2,400
Relentless ESU	£1,582	£773
Syndicate ESU	£2,043	£1,584
Tsunami ESU	£1,093	£1,042

Direct Investment Assets

	2023	2022
Fixed Rate Bond (Closed)	-	£66,000
3-Year Deposit Bond	£15,000	-
Fixed Rate Bond (1)	£30,000	-
Fixed Rate Bond (2)	£30,000	-

	2023	2022
Total Bank, Cash & Investments	£106,551	£94,358
Less Explorer Unit Cash Assets	£(20,992)	£(15,781)
District Cash/Investments Balance	£85,589	£78,557

Non-Monetary Assets

	2023	2022
Shop Stock	£6,578	£4,578

Fixed Assets

	2023	2022
Freehold land/property (Riffhams Campsite)	£100,000	£100,000
Fixtures, fittings & equipment	£25,458	£25,458

Liabilities

	2023	2022
Accounts payable/Accruals/GS income in advance/WSJ & USA Camp	£13,357	£6,754

Census

Membership

	January 2023	January 2022	% Change
Squirrel Scouts	27	24	+12.5%
Beaver Scouts	482	459	+5.0%
Cub Scouts	639	599	+6.7%
Scouts	529	505	+4.8%
Explorer Scouts	191	175	+9.0%
Network Scouts	20	5	+300%
Adults	516	543	-5.0%
Total Young People	1888	1767	+6.8%
Total Membership	2404	2310	+4.0%

Sections

	January 2023	January 2022
Squirrel Dreys	1	1
Beaver Colonies	30	28
Cub Packs	32	32
Scout Troops	30	31
Explorer Scout Units	10	11
Scout Networks	1	1
Active Support Units	2	2