



4th Stafford Scout Group

Annual General Meeting of the Group Scout Council

Stafford Cricket & Hockey Club - 16th July 2026

Present: Roland Smith (District Chairman), Steve Smith (District Trustee Member), Rhys Powell (Group Chairman), Cathy Hordern (GLV/BLV), Darren Hordern (Treasurer), Gemma Phillips (Secretary), Alex Windows (SLV), Sarah Phillips (SLV), Andrew Bennett plus Trustees, Leaders, Occasional helpers, Young Leaders, Scout members, Parents & Families

Apologies: Kevin Hewitt (District Lead Volunteer), Lydia Hilton (CLV), Mike Grierson

Introduction & Welcome - *Given by R.Powell*

A warm welcome and thank you was given for attending and supporting the event. The thanks extended to the Cricket club for allowing us to host the event, our dignitaries from the District in supporting us in attendance and our YL and helpers running the event. Special thanks was awarded to those who have generously given to the raffle prizes - The contributions were beyond amazing and huge thanks given to all. Thank You

Governance Topics

- a. Minutes Approval given for the last Annual General Meeting minutes held on 17th July 2025 - **APPROVED**
- b. Adopting the Model Constitution from the Policy, Organisation and Rules (POR) - **APPROVED**
- c. Numbers appointed to the Trustee Board = 12 - **APPROVED**
- d. Trustee Board quorum = 4 - **APPROVED**

Group Review of the Previous Year

The Group Leaders Review - *Given by C.Hordern*

Welcome to our honoured guests from the District trustee board, parents and scouts.

It goes without saying this group of almost 100 young people would not be one of the most successful groups in the district if it weren't for the hard work of all the leaders, as always I would like to thank them all for their continued support and dedication..

Over the years we have been careful to nurture all our aged out scouts, creating an environment where they can return as young leaders, so I would also like to thank our army of young leaders.

Through our young leader programme we have welcomed 7 new adult leaders - who have remained with their sections and continue to assist week in, week out. We do however, say goodbye to Nathan (Conker) and Emilia (Echo) who head to university in September - we wish them luck and see you when you return home for the holidays!

I would like to thank Karl Hilton, who stepped down this year as Chair, for his many years of quiet, tireless service to the group, it has been very much appreciated, we wish him all the very best. We welcome Rhys as our new chair, we thank him for his support and look forward to working with him.

This year we ran a group camp, my thanks firstly to Vista for his hard work behind the scenes, and all the leaders and parents that helped make it such a successful event, it was amazing fun, and lovely to see representation across all four sections. This event did not cover it's costs despite several fund raising initiatives, it was funded from the group's reserves. This has continued beyond the camp, and I am pleased to inform you that we have secured the August to December blue token scheme at Tesco, so I would be grateful if you can vote for us and spread the word.

A couple of final notices.

Lydia - Akela - leader of our cub pack, has advised that she will be stepping down from her role. I cannot describe the incredible impact Lydia has had on the pack - growing it to the dizzying heights of 50 members in 2020 - and to the group as a whole - I mean who will feed us on camps now! Lydia's 13 plus years of service have been phenomenal. You have our whole hearted thanks for everything and you will be missed. This does leave an opening in our team, if you think you can spare an hour a week, please let me know.

In other news, not that she needed any persuading, Lucy (Acorn) will be stepping up as our new Squirrel Drey leader - the Grey Squirrels will start in January 2027, I am aware that planning has already started and we wish Lucy every success with our new section. The current squirrel drey has been renamed , Red Squirrels.

Each section will provide a report of their activities, so no spoilers from me!

Thank you again

Financial Review

The review can be seen as part of the Trustee Annual Report:

The Group's accounts are in good health. Our financial year runs to the end of March, at which point the Group had a balance of £4,552. This is in addition to the individual section accounts, which are used for day-to-day section activities, collecting camp deposits and holding funds raised by the sections.

Our single biggest expense each year is the February Capitation payment to the wider Scout organisation. This payment supports the national, county and district teams, and increasingly helps cover insurance for our young people and volunteers. This insurance enables us to continue running the activities we offer. The Capitation payment in February was £5,525. Despite this significant cost, we have continued to fund each section's termly activities, pay rent for our meeting places and maintain or replace equipment when needed.

During the year, we spent £1,571 on new equipment, £155 on maintaining existing equipment and £285 on insuring our equipment. We managed to subsidise Scout Summer Camp, along with other section activities. We also paid for transport costs, such as minibus hire and trailer maintenance, to help ensure that activities which would otherwise be costly remain open to all. This is mainly achieved through the monthly subscriptions paid by members, alongside fundraising activities such as Easyfundraising and Gift Aid. Gift Aid alone contributed £2,391 last year.

For the next financial year, starting in April, we will continue to support the same programme of activities. We recently increased subscriptions so that we can maintain this programme while also ensuring we hold sufficient reserves, as set out below, rather than reducing activities. We will keep this under review so that we can continue to deliver activities for young people, including subsidising major events such as the successful Group Camp we recently enjoyed.

Appointments

The membership of the Elected Trustee Board members is as follows:

- Rhys Powell: Group Chairman
- Darren Hordern: Group Treasurer

The following members were elected to be members of the Group Trustee Board for the next year:

- Alexander Windows
- Gemma Phillips
- Luke Vernon
- Ian Davis
- Tracey James

Noted: The Group Lead Volunteer Catherine Hordern is an ex-officio member of the board

Agreed and Approved en masse by the council members present. The current number of Trustees totals 8 out of a possible 12.

The following person was elected as the independent auditor for the next year:

- Melanie Blakeman

Section Reviews incl. Presentations – *In addition to the reviews included in the Trustee Report*

Squirrels:

We began the year out and about navigating our way around Victoria Park whilst completing a scavenger hunt. We had a fantastic time at our annual campfire where we baked bananas and sang songs with TicTac (always his favourite night!).

We focused on our community over the second half of the autumn term taking on our biggest ever food bank project and collecting an incredible 49kg of food. Stafford food bank came to visit for a talk about how our collection would help our community and to say a big thank you to our Squirrels! We've had several young leader takeovers that were wonderfully creative and showed just what an incredible bunch our future adult leaders are!

We have had some of our best attendances at district and local events including Remembrance Sunday, Christmas Carol Service and St George's Day parade showing just how much our Squirrels can do!

We have also awarded 2 Chief Scout Acorn awards and 70 other badges with more expected to be awarded by the end of the Summer term. We have seen some Squirrels confidently move on to Beavers and welcomed new faces too.

Spring has seen 2 of our young leaders move up to adult leaders. Conker and Acorn have taken to it like ducks to water. We have also welcomed Bramble, Skye and Henry to our drey and they have been invaluable in the smooth running of our sessions.

This past term we have explored space, celebrated Burns night and Lunar New Year and talked about all the different ways we can look after our world. Looking ahead we are excited to have 4 brave squirrels joining group camp for the first time and we are enjoying the opportunity to run more sessions outdoors as well as looking forward to our hike with the Beavers. We are excited for all the new adventures 2026 will bring as we continue to show the Squirrels can do anything they put their mind to!

Thank you to all at the 4th and beyond for the ever helpful and positive support of our little Drey!

The Acorn Award was given to: Theo M

Beavers:

We have had a jam packed year.

We have been out and about to the chase – cycling and boat racing. The castle to take photos, and Victoria park to explore the gardens.

We have covered our safety badge over the course of three terms, most recently sitting by the river discussing what they would do if I was struggling in the water. I did raise objections to this as I swam 2.5km earlier this year to raise money for the group camp.

We of course covered our experiments badge which as per previous years was more miss than hit – but the LED, battery and pencil experiment was very cool. The jitter bugs on camp were a huge success as well. We don't talk about the gardener's badge either – which again was more miss than hit too, although by all accounts Izzy has grown a multi-coloured nasturtium.

We returned to Crispin court for carol singing, which was well received by the residents, who joined us in a sing-a-long.

Spring term was dominated by our Space badge and culminated in our group camp in May. This was really successful and thoroughly enjoyable. Our final term has been a bit of a mismatch of badges – due to mopping up the remaining bits and pieces for our older beavers, to complete the requirements for their Bronze awards.

My thanks as always to Squirrel, who puts up with my crazy ideas and often wonders where the sessions are heading. Rainbow our permanent parent helper, Echo who eventually turned 18, became a leader and then leaves us for Uni – we wish her all the very best. Tic tac- who also turned 18 and returns in September (hopefully).

To my gang of young leaders – none of what we do is possible without your help week in week out.

This year we have awarded 33 Challenge badges, 193 activity badges, 34 staged badges. And an incredible 6 Bronze awards – Well done to all our young people for their hard work.

The Bronze Award was given to: George C, Joshua P & Isabelle D

Cubs:

The pack has maintained an excellent level of attendance & continues to enjoy a wide range of activities week on week. Highlights of the year have been our Christmas sleepover which is always very well attended & a lot of fun; trips to the chase, Sherratt's Wood, Clip & Climb and water activities.

We've attended St. Georges Day Parade, Remembrance Parade & spent time doing activities with other sections of the Group.

We have 5 adult leaders & 5 young leaders in our team. We are very prepared for our upcoming group camp & are looking forward to spending time with all sections of the Group & making new friends in our Scouting family.

The Silver Award was given to: Meredith D & Elijah D

Scouts:

We pride ourselves on our active outdoor and traditional Scouting programme. And what another action-packed year it has been.

We finished off last Scouting year with our amazing Summer Camp in Dorset, a week of amazing activities, including Water Sports, sailing and windsurfing, as well as kayaking and paddleboarding. The Scouts were fantastic and will have made memories for life.

In addition to summer camp, some of the Troop had the opportunity to take part in our Eryri Peak expeditions. Scaling peaks in North Wales, including Snowdon/Yr Wyddfa. As usual, we have been fortunate to take part in lots of other nights away experiences this year.

Starting the new Scouting year in September with Autumn camp to Milldale, Cheshire. Then our infamous night hike in the Peak District returned, with the Troop hiking over the Roaches overnight to Gradbach.

In February, our oldest Scouts take part in Winter camp, navigating themselves through a series of challenges across North Cheshire and Greater Manchester.

In April, we are pleased to join with the 21st Scouts for our joint Spring Camp at Wrekin Scout campsite. Patrol camping, putting all those traditional scouting skills into action. Adventure is the keystone of our programme; the Scouts enjoyed a gliding experience, piloting their own glider, as well as hillwalking in the Shropshire hills, among some of the things we've done this year.

As always, bushcraft and traditional Scouting skills featured heavily in our programme. The Scouts have taken part in many projects this year, carving their own spoon over several weeks in early 2026, then building and using mini forges in April.

The Gold Award was given to: Skye-Louise E

Closing Remarks & Thank You

R.Powell gave a big thank you again to those in attendance and wished the group well for the next scouting year - then invited everyone for sausages!

Date of Next AGM Meeting - 8th July 2027

Date of Next Trustee Meeting - 7th September 2026

Minutes produced by G.Phillips