

1st Sandwell Scout Group

Annual General Meeting

**Presentation of Year End Accounts to 31st December 2025,
Trustee and Section Reports**

1st Sandwell Scout HQ

19:30 - 22nd June 2026

AGENDA
1st Sandwell Scout Group
AGM
1st Sandwell Scout HQ
19:30 - 22nd June 2026

- 1 Introduction and welcome**
- 2 Apologies for absence**
- 3 Governance topics**
 - 3.1 Approve the minutes of the 2025 Annual General Meeting**
 - 3.2 Reaffirm the adoption of the model constitution from, Policy Organisation and Rules (<https://www.scouts.org.uk/por/5c-constitutions-of-groups-districts-and-counties-except-in-scotland/#5c.1>)**
 - 3.3 Note the Group's financial year**
 - 3.4 Confirm the number of members that may be appointed to the Trustee Board**
 - 3.5 Confirm the quorum for future meetings of the Group Scout Council (excluding this AGM)**
- 4 Review of the Trustee's Annual Report 2025**
 - 4.1 Receive and consider the Trustees Annual Report (TAR) the Group Trustee Board, including the annual Statement of the Accounts**
 - 4.2 The Group Lead Volunteer's review of Scouting in the 1st Sandwell Scout Group**
 - 4.3 Section reports**
- 5 Making appointments**
 - 5.1 Appointments to the Group Trustee Board.**
- 6 Presentation of Awards**
- 7 Closing remarks & AOB**

Item 3.1

Approve the Minutes of the 2025 Annual General Meeting

Agenda

1st Sandwell Scout Group

Annual General Meeting

7 May 2025

Present: Brigitte Hatfield (Secretary), Chris Jones (GSL), Alan Dean (Treasurer), Toby Hatfield (Sectional Assistant), Vanessa Hitchon (Chairman), Ben Hatfield (Section Leader), Lewis Tucker (Section Leader), Graham Jones (Exec Member), Reece Williams (Assistant Section Leader), Kim Morgan (Assistant Section Leader), Adam Morgan (Assistant Section Leader), Carol Payton (Section Leader)-late, Jason Cross (Assistant Section Leader), Nicola Dean (Section Leader), and parents / carers of young people from the group.

Apologies: Nicola Johnson (District Commissioner)

1. Welcome

A welcome was extended to all leaders, parents and young people in attendance. No further apologies were noted. It was agreed at last year's AGM that we set a minimum of 10 people as the quorum for Group Scout Council meetings (of which this is one) and as we do have more than 10, it was confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

2. Governance Topics

a. Minutes of Last Meeting

The Chair of the Trustee Board stated that all should all have seen or have access to a copy of the minutes of the last meeting. It was asked who would like to propose that these are accepted as read? There was a show of hands in agreement with no amendments noted.

b. Adoption of model constitution

In line with changes to the Scouts Policy Organisation and Rules, last year we adopted the model constitution, and we continue to be governed by this via the Trustee Board.

c. Noting the Group's Financial Year

The Chair asked all present, as the Group Scout Council to note that the charity's financial year runs from 1st January to 31st December.

d. Number of members on the Trustee Board

The Chair reminded all present as the parents and carers of the young people that they constitute the Group Scout Council and also to let them know that there were no additional nominations as Group Scout Council Members.

The Chair noted that Scout Association good practice suggests that a Trustee Board should have a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 12 Trustees in total (including ex officio and co-opted Trustees). It was noted that the Group Scout Council must agree to the number of people to be appointed to our Trustee Board. The Trustee Board recommends that we set this at 10 people. This was approved by a show of hands.

e. Quorum for AGM meetings

It was further recommended that for an AGM to be quorate would again require a minimum of 10 people to be present. This was again approved by a show of hands.

3. Review of the previous year's Trustees' Report

a. Treasurer's Report

The meeting was then passed to the Treasurer for the presentation of the Group's financial accounts.

"As you will see from item 4.1 on page 7 of the AGM information pack, the treasurer's report is now part of a wider Trustee's report with the finance balance sheet and notes being shown on pages 10 & 11. The Trustee's report is now required to meet the Charities Act 2022 changes (implemented in 2024).

Trustees must look at all risks that may affect the operation of the charity, both now and in the future, including; Governance Risks, Operational Risks, Legal and Regulatory Risks, Data Protection Risks, External Risks and Financial Risks. As trustees we are both responsible to you as parents and report to the Charity Commission as our regulator.

Financial risks are a significant part of our remit. Both by ensuring that current funds are well managed and that there are funds available to meet any identified risks now and in the future.

You will see in the report that we made an operational loss of £3,423 in 2024, this was in some extent due to expenses carried over from 2023 and capital expenditure to allow us to move the equipment stores. The capital expenditure was taken from our instant access account, this money is used for capital works on the headquarters building and land.

This still left us with an overall operational deficit of £508 for the year, With expected additional increases in our core operating costs, including; utilities, building insurance, National Scout HQ charges, land rent and rates charges, a decision was reluctantly taken to increase the membership subscription from April 2025, this being the first increase since 2018.

You will note from the balance sheet that there was an accounting error that had been carried forward from 2023. This was identified and corrected in 2024, and these changes were accepted by the scrutineer in February 2025. This now gives us as of the 31st of December 2024 an operating balance, including reserves of £29,590, compared with £33,013 on 31st of December 2023."

Alan Dean

Treasurer

b. Group Lead Volunteer review

The Group Lead Volunteer then read the following statement to those present as her review of the previous year.

WHERE HAVE WE BEEN

Our Association has been through some major changes in the last 12 months, which have been quite challenging and at times have tested our patience to the limit. However, like good Scouts we have persevered, not given up, and have now almost reached the light at the end of the tunnel. It has created more work and more training for our leaders, but hopefully we will soon be back to normal, albeit a new kind of normal. There have been name changes, which some of us have adopted but some have not, and that's

fine. We have had a new database which has had a lot of hiccups but they are slowly being sorted out and we are nearly there.

WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED

The section reports are included in the Annual Report, when you have time to read them you will realise how much we have achieved. There have been a huge amount of activities and a variety of programmes. The young people have been out and about and as Carol said 'Looking Wide'. A very famous person said that many years ago, our Founder, Lord Baden Powell said we should teach our young people to 'Look Wide'. One of the activities which all sections joined in was JOTI (Jamboree on the Internet). This was a new one for us, and it was amazing to witness our young people sitting in our HQ interacting with other Scouts across the world.

Lots of badges have been awarded covering a wide range of subjects Backwoods Cooking to Pioneering, Scientist to Safety, Hiking to Ironing and so many more. Some of our young people have also gained the top awards in their section:-

- Chief Scout Bronze Award – Vili, Noah, James and Issac.
- Chief Scout Silver Award - Ethan, Thierry and Noah W.
- Chief Scout Platinum Award – Marris

A massive 'Well Done' to all of them; a lot of hard work goes into gaining these top awards.

Our leaders have also worked hard to achieve certain awards and activity permits.

Adam and Kim have gained their Wood Badge, which is the top training award for adult volunteers. Reece is nearly there with only one module to complete.

Ben has done his Walking Permit and Lewis is working on his and both have achieved their Archery Permits. Ben, Lewis and Adam have also done their Air Rifle Shooting Permits. This gives them the ability to offer these skills to our young people without the cost of expensive Instructors. We, of course, have had to pay for them to do these courses but it is still very much worth it in benefits to our members.

WHERE ARE WE NOW

Our numbers are lower than we would like them to be, but this has happened before and then we have grown again. Our Beaver numbers are low but we only have two Leaders in this section so it's a fine balance between trying to encourage more young people to join but needing extra Leaders so that we are able to take them in. Cubs are bursting at the seams but need more Leaders. Scouts are low in youth members but has a solid team of 4 Leaders so there is room for recruitment there. Adam is working on increasing our media presence so hopefully that will help. We are also hoping to get into Q3 during one of their parents evenings and have a promotional stand. The Explorer Unit is small and that's quite normal. Of course, at that age we have to compete with the pressures of their education and other extra activities which they are involved in. Ryan one of our Explorers had his last night at Explorers last week. The meeting was just what he wanted it to be, watching a movie and eating pizza and cake. Ryan joined us in the Beaver Section when he was 7 and has progressed through the sections until he was 18. We wish him well in the future. Our Chair of the Trustee Board, his Mom, thought she could retire now that her boys were no longer with us, we gently explained it did not work like that! Our Secretary Brigitte tried the same conversation when her boys left but she found our arguments against the plan too powerful to resist.

WHERE ARE WE GOING

Our Association now has a new Section, Squirrels, and we are looking at the possibility of starting a Squirrel Drey, this is for 4 – 6 year olds. We have a meeting this coming Saturday with our County Growth Officer to

discuss this. Maybe by this time next year we will have this new Section in place, but this will only happen providing we can get Adults who are prepared to Lead it. Unfortunately, I don't have a cupboard in the Resource room with a box of Leaders in it!

As far as our financial situation is concerned, fortunately we have an excellent Trustee Board who keep a close eye on this. Because our expenditure was greater than our income, after much heart searching and deliberation, we increased our monthly subscriptions. After quite a bit of research I discovered that many other Groups and similar organisations, had come to the same conclusion, our fees were much lower and still are. Hopefully this increase will make our deficit smaller next year, fingers crossed the utility bills do not go up again.

WHAT ARE WE HOPING TO ACHIEVE GOING FORWARD

A Squirrel Drey as part of our group.

An increase in the Leadership Team, please think about this, volunteering is good for you, a survey told us it gives people a 'Feel Good Factor' also talk to other people you know who may be interested. Our efforts to find more Leaders are ongoing and hopefully Adam's 'Media Recruitment Drive' will help with increasing our youth membership numbers and our leadership numbers.

We are very much hoping that the improvements needed to our HQs will get underway. We may need some help with practical tasks, not on a regular basis, but as and when. If you can give a few hours on a Saturday/Sunday morning when the need arises, please sign the list, the more names on the list, the less time each person needs to give.

Most of all we are looking to continue to achieve our aim, GIVE MORE YOUNG PEOPLE SKILLS FOR LIFE.

Scouts is a global phenomenon, united by a shared Promise and common values. As our former Chief Scout, Bear Grylls said, we are the most amazing family on earth, yes we are, the Scout family.

Scouts began with a single brilliant idea. To bring young people together from different backgrounds and help them develop 'Skills for Life'. 118 years later and we are still doing this, we need to go on doing it.

With our fantastic Leadership team, supported by our Trustee Board, I am sure that we can.

To quote Walt Disney; "All our dreams can come true, if we have the courage to pursue them."

Thank you for joining us tonight, thank you for the support you have given over the last year and for the support I hope you are going to continue to give in the coming year.

Chris Jones.

Group Scout Leader.

c. Section Reports

These were presented as part of the pack of information in front of parents on the evening. It was proposed that these be taken as read and accepted as a true record. The section reports will be published on the website for all to read in detail and a letter sent to all parents with a link to them.

3. Election of Chair & Trustees

Note that under the new POR governance structure, most of our Trustees were appointed last year for a period of 3 years.

Since last year's AGM we have co-opted a new Trustee, Ben Hatfield. We are also in the process of co-opting an additional Trustee Lynn Barlow who unfortunately cannot make this evening. The Chair asked the Scout Council to approve their appointment for a 3-year period. There was a show of hands in approval. We do have a further vacancy and we would specifically like someone who has financial skills or experience of making grant applications as we really need to start raising funds.

4. AOB/Closing

A video was then shown of some of the young people's activities throughout the year while the Cub section continued to serve tea/coffee and cake.

The Group Lead Volunteer then thanked everyone for their attendance: "We really appreciate the support that you continue to give us. As a reward for you all for sitting so patiently this evening, the Cub Scouts are going to serve you all with Tea and Cake. Whilst you're eating and drinking, a video will now be played to the group by Adam Morgan (with the help of the Scouts) showing some of the activities that the sections had taken part in over the course of the last 12 months."

End of the minutes of June 2025 meeting

Item 4.1 **Trustees' Annual Report**

For the period:

From		To	
	1 st January 2025		31 st December 2025

Charity Name	1st Sandwell Scout Group
Charity Registration Number	1179166
HQ Registration Number	10011455

Objectives and activities

<p>Summary of the purpose and objects of the charity as set out in its governing document</p>	<p>The objectives of the charity are as a part of The Scout Association.</p> <p>The Purpose of Scouting Scouting exists to actively engage and support young people in their personal development, empowering them to make a positive contribution to society.</p> <p>The Values of Scouting 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</p> <p>The Scout Method Scouting takes place when young people, in partnership with adults, work together based on the values of scouting and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - enjoy what they are doing and have fun - take part in activities indoors and outdoors - learn by doing - share in spiritual reflection - take responsibility and make choices - undertake new and challenging activities
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	- make and live by their promise
Summary of the main activities in relation to the purpose and objects	Providing a comprehensive training programme to members in both Scouting activities and community engagement. Provide a meeting place and land.
Statement confirming the trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit	The Trustees confirm that the charity meets the Charity Commission's Public Benefit criteria under both the advancement of education and the advancement of citizenship or community development headings.

Achievements and performance

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year identifying the difference and impact the charity's work has made, including on sustainability	<p>Our achievements during the year include providing a very varied programme of activities, both indoors and outdoors, across all of our sections. We aim to provide our young people with 'Skills for life'. These activities include practical skills, exploring global and environmental issues, faiths and beliefs, team building and how to keep themselves and each other safe. In order to meet our objectives, we encourage our young people to persevere even when things get tough and we support them in their personal development, empowering them to make a positive contribution to society.</p> <p>All of this work is only possible because of the dedicated volunteers who lead the sections and give so much of their time and also the members of the Trustee Board who give their time to support them with governance and financial matters. Without these volunteers the Group could not continue to operate.</p>
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<p>You may choose to include further statements, where relevant, about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Achievements against objectives</i> • <i>Fundraising activities</i> • <i>Contribution made by volunteers</i> 	<p>We are currently undertaking recruitment of young people, and we are also starting a recruitment campaign aimed at adults because we desperately need to add to our team of volunteer leaders to work with our young people.</p>
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Financial review

Review of the financial position	During the financial year 1st January 2025 to 31st December 2025 the following changes were made to the income and expenditure of the Group.
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	<p>During April 2025 there was a change in subscriptions that we charge members, up from £15 to £20 per month; an increase of 33%.</p> <p>The total number of young people in our group fell from 48 members to 39 members between 2024 and 2025: a decrease in numbers of 18%. These changes resulted in a ~£530 increase in received income from members up 5% on 2024 income.</p> <p>At the same time there was a reduced payment to National HQ of ~£100 (due to lower membership numbers) even with the increase of £8.00 per member charged by National HQ and local levies.</p> <p>A further reduction in expenditure was recorded for activities other than meeting nights, administration costs, badges purchased for young people and leader training.</p> <p>During 2025 there was an increase in expenditure for camping equipment compared to 2024. There was also an increase in capital projects expenditure. Capital projects relate to the work carried out on the bottom access drive to the site.</p> <p>Weekly meeting costs are similar to 2024 levels for all sections. However, the Beaver and Explorer weekly expenditure was reduced due to a reduction in members.</p> <p>Following an expenditure of ~£2,085 during 2024 there was no further work during 2025 on the new stores project.</p> <p>Overall, our operating costs for the year returned a slight surplus of £39.00. This compares well with the actual operating costs in 2024 of -£507. This is after exceptional items in 2024 have been taken out of the final balance.</p> <p>Our funds were then boosted by a one-off donation by the Allen Family of £10,000 following the sale of the land adjacent to our site. This shows income over expenditure of £10,039 for the 2025 financial year.</p> <p>The Group is financially sound and can weather the fall in membership numbers during 2025.</p>
<p>Policy on Reserves, why they are held, and the amount of reserves</p>	<p>The policy on reserves is to hold sufficient resources to continue the charitable activities of the charity should income and fundraising activities fall short. The Trustee Board considers that the charity should hold a sum equivalent to 12 months running costs, circa £8,000, this is held in a reserve account.</p> <p>In addition, the charity held further reserves of approximately £25,000 against this at year end. This is above the level required for operating expenses. Included in the £25,000, the charity also holds funds designated for Headquarters improvements.</p>
<p>Policy on Investments and investment performance</p>	<p>The charity's reserves are small and as a consequence does not have sufficient funds to invest in longer-term investments such as stocks and shares. The charity has therefore adopted a low risk strategy to the investment of its funds. All funds are held in cash using only mainstream banks or building societies.</p>
<p>A description of the principal risks</p>	<p>The Headquarters building is a sixty-year-old wooden structure, this will have to be replaced or extensively refurbished in the near future.</p>

Structure, governance and management

Type of governing document	The charity's governing documents are those of The Scout Association. They consist of a Royal Charter, which in turn gives authority to the Bye Laws of the Association and The Policy Organisation and Rules (POR) of The Scout Association. https://www.scouts.org.uk/por/5c-constitutions-of-groups-districts-and-counties-except-in-scotland/#5c.1
How the charity is constituted	The charity is a trust established under its rules which are common to all Scouts. It is constituted as an educational charity.
Trustee selection methods	The Trustees are appointed in accordance with the Policy Organisation and Rules of The Scout Association.
Policies and procedures for the induction and training of trustees	All Trustees complete The Scout Association trustee and mandatory learning within the first six months of joining the Trustee Board, they also complete other Scout Association mandatory learning periodically as required.
	<p>The charity is managed by the Trustee Board, the members of which are the "Charity Trustees". As charity trustees they are responsible for complying with legislation applicable to charities. This includes the registration, keeping proper accounts and making returns to the Charity Commission as appropriate.</p> <p>The Trustee Board consists of the Chair, Treasurer and 6 Trustees and meets 5 times a year. The Trustee Board is supported by a Board Administrator.</p> <p>The Trustee Board exists to support the Leadership Teams in meeting the responsibilities of their appointments and in supporting them to run high-quality and safe programs that give young people skills for life. The Trustee Board maintain appropriate governance policies and oversight.</p> <p>The Trustee Board is responsible for carrying out its purposes for the public benefit, complying with the charity's governing document and the law, and managing the charity's resources responsibly.</p> <p>The Trustee Board is responsible for ensuring the charity is well managed, risks are assessed and mitigated, buildings and equipment are in good order, and everyone follows legal requirements and Scout Association Policy, Organisation & Rules.</p> <p>This includes responsibility for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting a positive image of Scouting in the community, as well as its development; • Developing, maintaining and regularly reviewing a risk register, including putting in place appropriate mitigations; • Ensuring that the finances are properly managed, and there are sufficient resources (and reserves) to deliver high quality Scouting; • Ensuring a system of internal controls is in place that is designed to provide reasonable assurance against material mismanagement or loss; • Ensuring that property is appropriately managed;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining appropriate insurance of persons, property and equipment; • Assisting in the recruitment of leaders and other adult support; • Having an open and transparent selection process for the recruitment of Trustees; • Appointing Advisors as required; • Ensuring effective administration is in place to support the Trustee Board; • Ensuring compliance with applicable governance and charity regulations, including in respect to safety and safeguarding; • Ensuring incidents are appropriately reported in line with regulation and policy; • Ensuring applicable policies and regulations are regularly reviewed and changes implemented as appropriate; • Ensuring transparency of operations, including in the preparation of accounts and holding and AGM; • Ensuring compliance with Data Protection legislation; • Acting as a responsible employer for any employees, who are effectively managed.
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Plans for future periods

Plans for future Periods	We are currently undertaking recruitment of young people, and we are also starting a recruitment campaign aimed at adults because we desperately need to add to our team of volunteer leaders to work with our young people.
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Reference and administration details

Principal Address	Scout Headquarters, Marston Grove, Great Barr, Birmingham. B43 5ED
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	Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year
1	Vanessa Hitchon	Chair	
2	Christine Jones	Lead Volunteer	
3	Alan Dean	Treasurer	
4	Graham Jones		
5	Lewis Tucker		
6	Brigitte Hatfield		
7	Ben Hatfield		
8	Lynne Barlow		


Name and address of advisors

Type of advisor	Name	Address
Independent Examiner / Auditor	Clair Smallwood	60 St Georges Place, Cheltenham GL50 3PN

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees by:

Signature		
Full name	Vanessa Hitchon	
Position held	Chair	
Date	17 th June 2026	

1st Sandwell Scout Group Accounts 2025

	INCOME		Expenditure			
	2025	2024	2025	2024		
Bank Interest	£ 359	£ 364	£ 201	£ 346	Activity Equipment	
Distributed Funds	£ 689	£ 100	£ 144	£ 367	Admin	
Donation	£ 12,507	£ 2,507	£ 387	£ 898	Badges	
HMRC	£ 77	£ 378	£ 165	£ -	Camping Equipment	
Fundraising	£ 810	£ 1,256	£ 881	£ -	Capital Projects	
Events - Beavers	£ -	£ 150	£ 1,017	£ 1,035	Cleaning	
Events - Cubs	£ 625	£ 948	£ 714	£ 930	Distributed Funds	
Events - Explorers	£ 3,629	£ 3,422	£ 76	£ 210	Events - Beavers	
Events - Scouts	£ -	£ 250	£ 721	£ 1,290	Events - Cubs	
Events Group	£ 1,117	£ 2,081	£ -	£ -	Events - Explorers	
Membership Fees	£ 10,543	£ 10,005	£ 586	£ 959	Events - Scouts	
Rent	£ 10	£ 365	£ 3,179	£ 3,378	Events Group	
Sales	£ -	£ -	£ 2,421	£ 2,284	Insurance	
Utility Refund	£ -	£ -	£ 58	£ -	Leader Donation	
		£ -	£ 228	£ 338	Meetings - Beavers	
Total Income	£ 30,366	£ 21,827	£ 313	£ 279	Meetings - Cubs	
			£ 84	£ 166	Meetings - Explorers	
			£ 203	£ 159	Meetings - Scouts	
			£ 2,835	£ 3,380	Membership Costs	
			£ 566	£ 591	OSM Charges	
			£ 1,871	£ 1,871	Rates	
			£ 20	£ 20	Rent	
			£ -	£ 2,085	Stores Project	
			£ 285	£ 560	Training	
			£ 1,903	£ 2,546	Utilities	
			£ 658	£ 789	Venue Maintenance	
			£ 292	£ 290	Waste collection	
			£ 521	£ 479	Wi-Fi and telephone	
			£ 20,327	£ 25,250	Total Expenditure	

Summary			
Opening Balance	£ 29,590	£ 20,327	
Total Income	£ 30,366	£ 21,827	
Total Expenditure	£ 20,327	£ 25,250	
Closing Balance	£ 39,641	£ 29,590	
1st Sandwell Main Account	£ 5,585	£ 4,481	
1st Sandwell Instant Access	£ 25,772	£ 16,296	
Petty Cash	£ 12	£ 2	
Expense Account	£ 272	£ 811	
Reserve Account	£ 8,000	£ 8,000	
Total account balance	£ 39,641	£ 29,590	

Account balance carried forward	£ 39,641
Income over expenditure	£ 10,039

Signed Treasurer 31st March 2026

Signed Chair 31st March 2026

Signed: 29th May 2026

Name: Clair Smallwood Independent Examiner

Notes to the accounts for 2025

- 1 Our operating costs are in line with our expenditure.
- 2 We received a one-off grant from the Allen family; this was following the sale of the land adjacent to the headquarters.
- 3 Events for all sections are broadly a neutral cost to the group as all events are self-funding.
- 4 Gift Aid claim from HMRC, this is lower, again due to lower membership numbers.
- 5 Bank interest is slightly higher but is expected to fall during 2025.
- 6 Group building insurance increases by about 6% year on year.
- 7 Membership costs (what we pay out for National and local Scout support, member insurance etc.) rises by about 6% year-on-year
- 8 Utility costs, mainly electricity, are rising year-on-year by about 8%.

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of 1st Sandwell Scout Council

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the 1st Sandwell Scout Group for the year ended 31st December 2025.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the 1st Sandwell Scout Group, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the 1st Sandwell Scout Group accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the 1st Sandwell Scout Group] as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:



Name: Clair Smallwood

Relevant professional qualification or membership of professional bodies (if any): ACCA

Address: 60 St Georges Place, Cheltenham GL50 3PN

Date: 29 May 2026

Item 4.2

GROUP SCOUT LEADER REPORT 2026

Scouting exists to engage and support young people in their personal development, empowering them to make a positive contribution to society. As you will see when you read the section reports all the Leaders in our sections aim to do this by offering a varied programme of activities both indoors and outdoors. A wide variety of badges and activities have been offered this year covering Global and Environmental issues, Faiths & Beliefs, Camping, Climbing, Air Activities, all aspects of Safety, Cooking, Hikes and Nights Away. There have also been skill building and team building activities that support the aims and values of Scouting to help our young people grow in confidence and make them ready to take on new challenges, the list is endless.

4 Beaver Scouts have gained their Bronze Award, 4 Cub Scouts have gained their Silver Award, and 1 Explorer has gained the Diamond Award, congratulations to all of them, I look forward to hearing of their next achievement. Congratulations also to Evan Hunt who was selected to join the County contingent to the next World Scout Jamboree in Poland in 2027. We wish him a safe journey, a wonderful adventure and look forward to hearing all about it when he gets back. We are also proud of the two other applicants who successfully passed the first stage of the selection for the Jamboree, which out of 100 applicants is a significant achievement.

All of this only happens because of a small team of dedicated Leaders who run the sections, without their expertise, and the time they give none of these achievements would be possible. Our team of Leaders is getting smaller and our challenge for this coming year is to recruit more adult volunteers. All of our Leaders have `day jobs`, homes to run, and families to look after, just like you, but if the teams were bigger the work for each person would be less. Please consider joining our Team, we do not get paid but the work can be very rewarding. If you do not feel you can help, maybe you know someone who can. Just speak to one of our Section Leaders or contact me direct on 07778 781326, no matter how much or how little time you can give your help will be appreciated and your contribution could make a huge difference to the achievements of our young people.

During the year we also organised a sponsored walk for `Children in Need` to encourage our members to think of others and support those less fortunate and we encouraged families to join us. The support for this event was not as good as we had hoped for, but the weather was kind, we had a great walk, and we were still able to send a very respectable donation to the BBC Children in Need fund. Many thanks to those young people and families who did support this event, the young people certainly did keep their Promise "To Help other people".

During the year we have also started refurbishment work on our Headquarters, this work is ongoing and can only be done when we have enough money to pay for the work or when we manage to secure Grants. So far, we have had our building completely rewired. This work was made possible because we secured a Grant from `Better Youth Spaces`. Our thanks are due to Ben and Lewis who did the bulk of the work in putting this grant bid together, not an easy task. If you want to be given £16,000 you must work hard and justify it. Part of this grant also bought some new camping equipment. Thanks to the work of our Group Chair, we have also been given a grant to put down a concrete base for a new `Stores Cabin`. This work will be starting on 4th July; we have a team signed up to help with the first stage but may be looking

for offers of help when it comes to actually putting the concrete base down. I have been in negotiation with Sandwell Local Authority and through a scheme working with local businesses we are going to have all the double-glazing units in our Headquarters replaced free of charge. This work will be starting in the next few weeks. We have had some problems with plumbing but again we have been working with a Plumber who has done work free of charge, because as he put it, he used to be in the Scouts and wanted to `give something back` for the good times he remembers. It is so good to know that there are people out there who feel that way and we are extremely grateful to them. Future work includes developing the piece of land to the side of our drive to make a car park which I know you will all be glad to hear, but it all takes a lot of labour and money. Like good Scouts we are doing our best, but it all takes time, any support you can give us will be very much appreciated. Graham and I have kept in touch with members of the Allen family, who owned the land which was our car park. After many months of battling with Solicitors, which is very costly and stressful, the Allen family had to accept that the land would be sold. They had always supported us and were mindful of the difficulties that the loss of the car park would create for us. As a result, they made a very generous donation to our Group to help us with the development of our Stores Cabin and a new car park. Our grateful thanks are due to Pam and John and the other members of the Allen family; your gift is greatly appreciated.

All of these achievements and progress is because of our dedicated volunteers, our Leaders and the members of our Trustee Board, who give so much of their time to 1st Sandwell Scout Group for the benefit of your children, our young people. If they all reach their full potential, which many of them strive to do, all of the hard work will be worth it.

Chris Jones.

1st Sandwell Scout Group Leader.

Item 4.3

Section Reports

Beaver Scout Section Report.

1st May 2025 / 31st May 2026

This year our colony focus has been on recruitment. On one hand we have had success in recruiting a new leader. Olivia is a real asset to our team, and it eases our leadership situation enormously. Sadly, we have had little success in increasing our Beaver numbers. We have altered our times so that we have an earlier finish in a bid to attract new members, but we do not seem to be able to grow our numbers. Interestingly, we are still at 13, the same numbers we reported this time last year. We currently draw from a number of schools, which should help widen our net, but any new starters we get seem to be 7 already and are therefore only with us a short while before moving on. We need to start attracting the 6-year-olds if we are to stand any chance of growing our numbers. So please, spread the word.

Awards wise, we continue to push on with the challenge awards with every challenge award being awarded over the year. Throughout the year we have awarded a total of 98 activity badges: air activities, book reader, campcraft, communicator, cook, creative, explore, global issues, hobbies, international, photographer, space and swimmer badges as well as Beavers adding to their Nights Away and Hikes badges.

A very well done to Eva-Rose, Kairav, Tyler and Zara on earning their Chief Scouts Bronze Awards, the top award in Beavers - this award is not easy and requires a great deal of commitment and hard work. So, B R A V O to you all.

2026 marks the 40th anniversary of Beaver Scouts. We started the year looking back at Beavers over the years and held a family fun day and party to celebrate our birthday along with the Cubs who are 110.

We continue to offer a varied weekly programme with games, crafts and activities and try to make the most of the outdoors and get out as often as we can. Over the year we have enjoyed visits to the Leather Museum and Walsall Arboretum, The RSPB and RAF Cosford and we have been visited by Rhythmicity drumming workshop. The Beavers love to cook and we have tried our hand at baking, ice-cream making as well as pizzas and fruit skewers. Other big hits with the Beavers are the annual water night and our parents' night where you can come along and enjoy a night of fun and games with us.

The Beavers have also enjoyed colony sleepovers at the hut and camping at Hoo Zoo and Dinosaur World and at Blackwell Court, where they were able to have a go at several adventurous activities.

Scouting is all about the wider Scouting family, and this year the Beavers have taken part in the District Communicator Badge Day and enjoyed a morning at Inflata-Nation with the rest of the district.

Looking forward, we have a climbing session at Rock Up to look forward to, and we are hoping to be able to offer some activities in the summer providing we get sufficient support.

Thanks as always to the Cub and Scout teams for providing extra leaders when necessary and allowing us to join you on so many occasions.

And.....Huge thanks as always to Reece for his continued support.

The Cubs have also been busy working on their badges and awards; Air Activities, Digital Maker, Fire Safety, Road Safety, Personal Safety, DIY, Backwoods Cooking and of course Nights Away and Hikes Away. They are also always achieving parts of their challenge awards which goes towards their Chief Scout Silver Award.

Four Cubs achieved their Chief Scout Silver Award since the last AGM, and we are very proud of them. Well done to Jacob, Josette, James & Ryan. This is the highest award a Cub can achieve, and it is our aim that every Cub shall have the opportunity to achieve this award during their time with us.

Going forward, we are planning some trips out during the summer holidays and a one night camp with Sandwell District Cubs at Beaudesert.

I would like to say a big thank you to all the leaders for all their hard work and support. I could not do this without Toby, Vera & Alan and of course, our Beaver leader Carol. And finally, a huge thank you to our parents - your support is always appreciated.

Nicola Dean

Team Lead for Cub Scouts

2025-2026 1st Sandwell – Scout Section Report

Over the last 12 months, the Scout Section has enjoyed a busy and successful year, providing a varied programme of adventure, skills development, and fun activities for our young people.

One of the highlights of the year was our camping trip to Kinver, where Scouts had the opportunity to develop their outdoor skills and enjoy the challenges and excitement that camping brings. Activities included campcraft, cooking, hiking, and evening campfires.

The section has also focused on a number of badge activities throughout the year. Scouts worked hard towards their Air Activities Badge, learning about the principles of flight, different types of aircraft, and the role aviation plays in modern society. Another successful programme area was the Chef's Badge. Scouts planned and prepared a variety of meals, learning about food hygiene, nutrition, and cooking techniques. They demonstrated creativity and teamwork while developing practical life skills that will benefit them well beyond Scouting.

Archery proved to be one of the most popular activities of the year. Scouts learned the importance of safety, correct shooting techniques, and concentration while taking part in supervised archery sessions. It was encouraging to see many members improve their accuracy and confidence throughout the activity.

Alongside these activities, the section has continued to participate in regular weekly meetings, games, challenges, and skill-building activities that support the aims and values of Scouting. It has been rewarding to see our Scouts grow in confidence, take on new challenges, and support one another throughout the year.

We have faced a number of challenges over the last 12 months, including the departure of several of our volunteers, leaving us with just two permanent leaders. On this note, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Jason for his continued dedication and invaluable support. Without him, the section could not continue to operate.

With well over 20 Scouts now on our books and more to come from the Cub section soon, it is vitally important that we recruit more adult volunteers so that we can look forward to many more years of exciting year of adventure and achievement and can continue to provide the high quality Scouting on which 1st Sandwell continues to pride itself.

Ben
Scout Section Leader

Hatfield

Earhart Explorer Scout Unit Report 2025-2026

Earhart Explorer Scout Unit has continued to provide opportunities for young people aged 14–18 throughout the year, despite operating with relatively small membership numbers. During the reporting period from May 2025 to June 2026, the Unit maintained a membership of five Explorers, supported by two volunteer leaders: Lewis Tucker, Explorer Scout Team Leader, and Reece Williams, Explorer Scout Team Member.

Whilst low membership numbers continue to present challenges when planning and delivering programmes, the Unit has remained active and focused on providing meaningful experiences for its members. Recruitment at Explorer age remains difficult, although we continue to receive enquiries from young people outside the Group. Unfortunately, these have not yet translated into long-term membership growth. Looking ahead, we expect membership to reduce slightly in August 2026 as one Explorer reaches their 18th birthday and moves on from the section.

Throughout the year, Explorers have participated in a varied programme designed to support their progress towards the Chief Scout's Awards. Activities have included target sports, survival skills, practical Scouting skills, and a particular focus on developing cooking. Four members are currently working towards their Chief Scout's Platinum Award, while we are delighted to congratulate Marisa Dawes on achieving her Chief Scout's Diamond Award during the year.

One of the highlights of the year was our return to the Chase Walk competition in 2026, our first participation in the event for two years. We entered one team consisting of leaders Ben, Lewis and Reece, alongside Explorers Marissa, Evan, Kenzie and Rosalie. Three participants successfully completed the walk, including Marisa, Lewis and Reece. Whilst not every team member reached the finish line, we are incredibly proud of all those who took part. Notably, our first withdrawals occurred at Checkpoint 9, significantly further into the event than in previous years, demonstrating the determination and resilience shown by the team. The experience has clearly inspired our Explorers, with several already expressing an interest in taking part and completing the challenge in 2027.

The Unit has also celebrated significant individual achievements. Three members applied to join West Mercia Scout County's World Scout Jamboree Unit from a field of approximately 100 applicants. All three successfully passed the first stage of the selection process, which in itself is an excellent achievement and

reflects their commitment, confidence and Scouting experience. We are particularly pleased to congratulate Evan Hunt, who was successfully selected and will represent the County at the 26th World Scout Jamboree in Poland in 2027. We are equally proud of the other applicants, whose success in reaching the latter stages of the selection process is a considerable accomplishment.

Camping opportunities continue to be challenging to deliver with small numbers, and during the year the Unit participated in two camps. To ensure activities remain affordable and viable, we have often worked alongside the Scout Section and neighbouring Explorer Units. Over the coming year we hope to significantly expand our nights away programme, with a greater emphasis on expedition-style experiences where Explorers will navigate between campsites over a weekend. We also intend to strengthen links with other Explorer Units to increase opportunities and provide a broader range of adventurous activities.

The coming year promises to be an exciting one. Scouts UK is introducing a completely refreshed programme, including new badges and awards, representing the most significant change to the Explorer Scout Section since its formation. As further details are released, the Unit will begin transitioning to the new programme and embracing the opportunities it presents.

We are also pleased to announce that 1st Sandwell Scout Group is now an approved Duke of Edinburgh's Award Centre, enabling us to offer both Bronze and Silver Awards directly through the Group. Work is already underway to expand this provision further and offer the Gold Award in the future, creating even more opportunities for our Explorers to challenge themselves and develop valuable life skills.

Finally, I would like to thank Reece for his continued support and commitment to the Unit throughout the year, along with all leaders across 1st Sandwell Scout Group and neighbouring Groups who have supported our activities. Our thanks also go to the Group Trustees, supporters and friends of the Group whose efforts behind the scenes make our programme possible.

Despite the challenges that come with running a small Explorer Unit, I remain incredibly proud of what our young people have achieved this year and look forward to building on these successes in the year ahead.

Lewis Tucker

Explorer Scout Team Leader

Earhart Explorer Scout Unit