Southend Estuary Scout District Council

Registered Charity No 1045298

Delivering Skills for Life across Southend, Thorpe Bay, Southchurch, Shoeburyness & Wakering

ANNUAL REPORT & ACCOUNTS

2025/26

Annual General Meeting

7.30pm, 15 September 2026

District Headquarters, Eastern Avenue, Southend SS2 4BU



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1. AGENDA AGM 2026

1. **Introduction and welcome - Chair**
2. **Apologies for absence**
3. **Governance topics**
   a. Approve the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 17 Sept 2025
   b. Adopt the model constitution from Policy, Organisation and Rules (POR)
   c. Note the District's financial year
   d. Approve appointed and community members of the District Scout Council
   e. Agree the number of members that may be appointed to the Trustee Board
   f. Agree the quorum for future meetings of the District Scout Council (excluding this AGM)

4. **Review of the previous year**
   a. The District Lead Volunteer's review of Scouts in the Southend Estuary District
   b. Receive and consider the Annual Report of the District Trustee Board, including the annual Statement of the Accounts

5. **Making appointments**
   a. Appoint members of the District Trustee Board, following recommendations from the open selection process initiated by the District Trustee Board

      Trustee Board Recommendation: Amelia Morgan

   b. Re-appoint District Presidents – Bernard Clark and Brian Dawbarn
   c. Appoint the Auditor – Ian Chapman
   d. Nominate representatives of the District Scout Council for County Scout Council
6. **County Representative**
7. **Award Presentations**
8. **Chair closing remarks**
9. **Presentations by 4th Thorpe Bay Scouts and the Explorer Scout Section**

Refreshments will be provided in the hall before and after the meeting

2. MINUTES FROM AGM 2025

Weds 17 September 2025 at 8.00pm

District Headquarters, Eastern Avenue, Southend, SS2 4BU

MINUTES

1. Introduction and welcome

a. Andrew Lewin welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Columbus Explorer Scouts who shared their experiences from their recent Silver Duke of Edinburgh expedition on the South Downs.

b. Following the presentation, Sonja Mackenzie, District Chair gave the introduction and welcome to the 2025 AGM, thanking everyone for attending and being a part of Scouting, helping young people to develop and grow.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Sheila Fenner, Cath Austin and Nadine Neal.

3. Governance topics

g. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 18 September 2024 were approved by District Trustee Board on 4 Dec 2024. Seconded by Claire Gray

h. The Chair proposed we continue to adopt the model constitution from Chapter 5 of the Policy Organization and Rules. A copy of this was available for review and inspection prior to this meeting as sent via an emailed link to all members of the District. Seconded by a show of hands.

i. The District's financial year was noted as 1 April to 31 March

j. No nominations were received to appoint community members to the Scout District

k. POR states Trustee Boards should have a minimum of 5, and no more than 12, Trustees in total. This includes ex officio and co-opted Trustees. The Trustee Board proposed 6 people are appointed to the Trustee Board in addition to the ex-officio members. The District Scout Council approved that recommendation by a show of hands.

l. Agreed by the Council members that the quorum for future meetings of the District Scout Council (excluding this AGM) would be a minimum of 20 people. Seconded by a show of hands.

4. Review of the previous year

a. Andrew Lewin, District Lead Volunteer, invited Claire Brown, Mark Chapman and Dan Wanna to assist him in giving an overview of Scouting in Southend Estuary District.

District activities for the year were highlighted, including the "Big Bounce" fundraiser, the Beavers and Cubs sports day, the Cub camp, and two scout badge weekends. The Explorer and Network sections also reported on their successful activities, such as a Silver Duke of Edinburgh expedition, the Three Peaks Challenge, and a joint fireworks display. The district saw a 2% increase in membership overall.

b. The Chair informed the District Council that the Trustee Board had approved the Annual Report and Statement of Accounts and had received the report on the accounts from the Independent Examiner, Ian Chapman on 8 September 2025.

The District Treasurer, David Keeler, gave an overview of the Statement of Accounts. The district has over £900,000 in assets, primarily from the building, and no debt.
The Chair informed the District Council they receive the financial report for information and not for approval. The Chair then invited questions from the floor. Paul Tanner (GLV 4th Thorpe Bay) asked for an explanation of why the contents of buildings insurance reduced from £73,000 to £39,000. The Treasurer explained the decrease was attributed to a change in insurance valuation.

5. Making appointments

e. The District Chair, Sonja Mackenzie was appointed at the 2024 AGM to serve a 3-year term.

f. The District Treasurer, David Keeler was appointed at the 2024 AGM to serve a 3-year term.

g. The Chair informed the Council that Vicky Scammell had stood down from the Trustee Board. The Chair then explained the open selection process in detail and informed the District Council of the nominations received for approval. Lorraine Walter, Jack Day, Mark Chapman and Kieran Eastell were appointed as members of the District Trustee Board following the open selection process. All were seconded by a show of hands.

h. Bernard Clark and Brian Dawbarn were proposed by the Chair to be re-appointed as District Presidents. This was seconded by a show of hands.

i. Ian Chapman was nominated by the Treasurer, David Keeler as the Independent Examiner and seconded by a show of hands.

j. No nominations were received for a representative of the District Scout Council to represent the District on the County Scout Council. This role will be picked up by the District Lead Volunteers and District Youth Lead.

5. Closing remarks

The Chair closed the formal meeting and thanked everyone for their contribution and support whilst acknowledging that it had been a challenging year for many in the District.

6. Acknowledgements, Awards & Presentations

a. Andrew Lewin was formally thanked by the County Representative for his four years of service as the District Lead Volunteer, and his efforts in laying the foundation for the district's growth were praised.

b. The new joint District Lead Volunteers (DLVs), Lynn Morris and Paul Stibbards, were introduced and invested in their roles by the County Representative, Wendy Bye.

   Lyn and Paul outlined their vision for the district, acknowledging several challenges:

   - Lack of alignment with the new Scout structure.
   - Breakdown of relationships within the district and groups.
   - Insufficient support and training, leading to suspended leaders.
   - Lack of recruitment at all levels.
   - Limited internal and external communication.
   - Insufficient support for group-level charity commission and trustee structures.

c. The closure of the district charity shop was announced as a sad but necessary decision due to financial losses and limited operating hours. A special thank you was given to all the volunteers who worked at the shop over the years. They were each recognised with the Commendation Award.
   Lorraine Walter was thanked for her significant help in managing the closure.

d. Several members were presented with long-service awards, including a few for 30 years of service.

e. The meeting ended with two entertaining presentations: the first by Network on their 3-Peak Challenge hiking up Ben Nevis, Scafell Pike and Snowdon. Next, a video showcased the Explorers and Network taking part in an exciting variety of activities during their SEMAC 2025 trip to the Wye Valley.

3. TRUSTEES REPORT

The Trustees of the Southend Estuary District Scouts ("the District") present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2026.

A. Reference and Administration Details

Charity Name	Southend Estuary District Scout Council
Charity Number	1045298
Scout Association Number	S10001428
Registered address	191 Eastern Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS2 4BU
website	www.southendestuaryscouts.org.uk

Trustee Board

Chair	Sonja Mackenzie	Appointed	Until Sept 2027
Treasurer	David Keeler	Appointed	Until Sept 2027
District Lead Volunteer	Lynn Morris	Ex Officio	*One DLV to be ex-officio; the other to be co-opted*
District Lead Volunteer	Paul Stibbards	Ex Officio	
District Youth Lead	Lloyd Croucher	Ex Officio	
Trustee	Lorraine Walter	Appointed	Until Sept 2028
Trustee	Mark Chapman	Appointed	Until Sept 2028
Trustee	Keiran Eastell	Appointed	Until Sept 2028
Trustee	*vacant*	*Appointed*	*Jack Day stepped down*

Bankers

National Westminster Bank
250 Bishopsgate, London, EC2M 4AA

Independent Examiner

Ian P Chapman

Presidents

Bernard Clark
Brian Dawnbarn

B. Objectives & Activities

The objectives of the charity are as a part of The Scout Association.

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.

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

The Scout Method

Scouting takes place when young people, in partnership with adults, work together based on the values of scouting and: - 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 - make and live by their promise

Public Benefit Statement

The District meets the Charity Commission's public benefit criteria under both the advancement of education and the advancement of citizenship or community development headings.

C. Structure, Governance and Management

The Charity's governing documents are those of The Scout Association. They consist of a Royal Charter which in turn gives authority to the By-laws of the Association and the Policy, Organisation and Rules of The Scout Association and the Constitution of Southend Estuary District Scout Council.

Southend Estuary District Scout Council ('the District') is constituted as an educational charity trust established under its rules which are common to all Scouts. It operates in accordance with a written Constitution (POR 5c.2)

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.

The Trustee Board consists of the Chair, Treasurer and several other Trustees (including Ex-Officio Trustees, and co-opted Trustees) and meets several times a year.

Trustees are appointed annually at the Annual General meeting following an open selection process or may be co-opted by the District Trustee Board during the year.

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.

Trustee Board Responsibilities

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.

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.

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Annual Report and overseeing our Financial Statements in accordance with applicable law and Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Trustees are responsible for making sure our financial statements give a true and fair view of the status of the charity. They also monitor incoming resources and the application of the District's resources for the year.

Trustees are made aware of their responsibilities and through specific online mandatory training.

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.

D. Achievements and Performance

Trustee Board

At the last AGM in September 2025, Keiran Eastell was welcomed as a trustee bringing experience of safety and risk management and an external perspective to the Board.

Jack Day stepped down from the board in summer 2026 and I would like to thank him for his contribution to the governance of the district.

During the year 2025-2026, the Trustee Board have made progress in implementing various actions.

- **Improving Communications**
  - the new District Website was launched in November 2025 and has become a source of up-to-date information for volunteers and visitors with news of events and links to key information such as hall and minibus hire.
  - The Communications Lead, Nadine Neal, has done a wonderful job of improving our social media presence leading to increased engagement and awareness with our communities.

- Reviving the quarterly newsletter 'News & Notes' which is shared with all Adult volunteers to highlight key events and news stories.

- **Governance**
  - Continued alignment with The Scout Association's POR, safeguarding framework, and safety standards.
  - Trustee board evolved to become role based so that all trustees fulfil requirements of the charity
  - Audit of group governance – identified gaps in group trustee boards with an action plan to improve.
  - Distribution and Implementation of the Charity Commission Regulatory Advice to all group trustee boards
  - Encouraging further Trustee training across the district

- **Financial Management**
  - Transparent financial reporting aligned with Charity Commission guidance.
  - Harmonisation of district bank accounts and improving online access
  - Gift Aid uptake remains low - only 6 Groups are claiming Gift Aid despite offers to help groups
  - Introduction of a district Hardship Fund
  - Acquisition of grant monies from the Southend Community Investment Fund ROSCA Trust (minibus)

- **Risk Management**
  - Updated risk assessments including a new District HQ risk assessment – now available to all volunteers via the district website.
  - Training compliance reviewed by DLVs

- **Property Management**
  - Review of utility providers ensuring value for money
  - Review of DHQ hall hire fees
  - Creation of hall hire and minibus hire agreements
  - Establishment of badge and uniform supplies at DHQ following closure of shop

Plans for the coming year.

- Continue with improvements to group governance – implementation of trustee boards
- Complete the Premises Audit for all scout owned properties.
- Undertake a full review of major risks and ensure systems and procedures have been established to manage those risks – to be recorded in the Risk Register
- Continue to tidy the HQ garages and create an Equipment Inventory of items available to be hired out to groups
- Adoption of MIDAS minibus training

Growth & Development

2025/2026 has been a year of consolidation and renewed stability across the. Our Groups continue to deliver high-quality, youth-shaped Scouting supported by a committed volunteer team and strong community partnerships.

From the 2026 Census the District comprised of:

- 13 Scout Groups
  - 2 Squirrel Dreys
  - 11 Beavers Colonies
  - 12 Cub Packs
  - 14 Scout Troops
- 3 Explorer Units
- 1 Network Unit

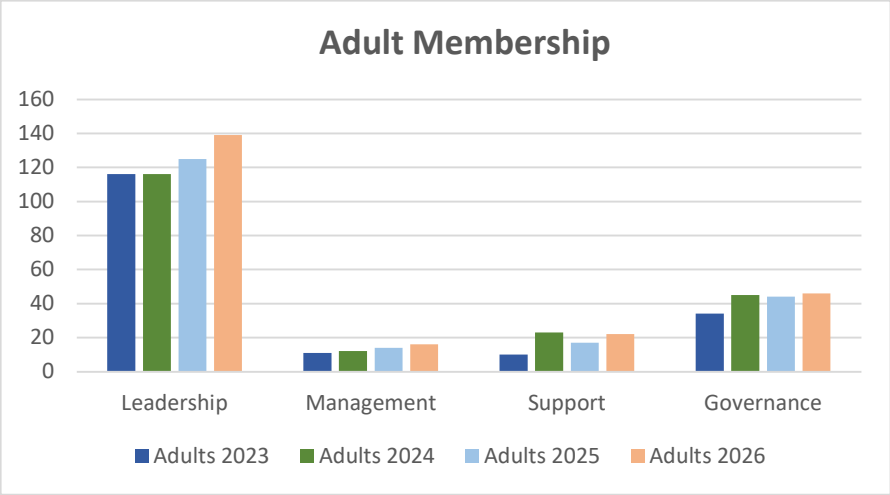
Total membership stands at **616 youth members** (-9%) and **223 adult volunteers** (+12%), reflecting a healthy and resilient programme across all sections.

Southend Estuary Census of Membership

Membership by year

	2023	2024	2025	2026	% diff
Squirrels		10	9	**19**	111%
Beavers	180	170	165	**147**	-11%
Cubs	208	218	219	**189**	-14%
Scouts	189	187	211	**194**	-8%
Explorers	60	69	58	**49**	-16%
Network	11	10	16	**18**	13%
Total Youth Members	648	664	678	**616**	-9%
Total Adults Members	171	196	200	**223**	12%
Total	819	860	878	**839**	-4%

Of the adult membership there are currently 139 volunteers in leadership roles across the district.



Leadership capacity is stable, though recruitment remains a priority in smaller Groups.

There are currently 10 registered Young Leaders across the district.

The District supports a high number of young people with SEND needs and leaders continue to adapt programmes to ensure full participation.

Demand for early-years Scouting remains high. Waiting lists for Squirrels are significant (31 in Jan 2026), reinforcing the need for additional Dreys or expanded capacity in existing Groups.

Priorities for 2027

- **Expand Squirrels** – increase early-years provision to meet demand.
- **Boost Recruitment** – focus on operational volunteers and succession planning.
- **Group Governance** - develop and strengthen certain Groups in need of trustee boards.
- **Increase Gift Aid** – support Groups to register and claim effectively. Increasing this would provide a meaningful financial uplift for Groups and strengthen District wide sustainability
- **Raise our profile within the community** - many people have little or an outdated understanding - of what modern Scouting offers. Changing this perception is essential.

Thank you.

The Trustees would like to thank our new District Lead Volunteers, Lynn Morris and Paul Stibbards for all their hard work this past year getting district operations back on track and building up relationships with all our volunteers.

I'd also like to thank my fellow trustees - their work is not always visible, but it is always vital.

We continue to be in a healthy financial position, so I'd like to thank our Treasurer, David Keeler, for managing our accounts and Mark Chapman for the many hours spent on grant applications to help finance our activities.

I'd also like to pay thanks to the tireless work of Lorraine Walter, Ryan Ward and the HQ Support team in maintaining our HQ and its grounds.

Above all I want to thank every volunteer in all sections and across the District for their time, energy and enthusiasm last year. We are lucky to have a dedicated group of volunteers who make the magic happen. Our young people will reap the benefits, now and in the future with memories and friendships which last a lifetime.

Together, we remain committed to giving young people a **place to belong** and **skills to thrive** across our communities.

Thank you all.

Sonja Mackenzie

District Chair

E. Financial Review

TREASURERS REPORT 2026

The Accounts and Independent Examiner's statement for the period 5 April 2025 – 31 March 2026

The accounts were received and approved by the Trustee Board on 2 September 2026

Overview

The District continues to operate on a sound financial footing.

The principal sources of the Scout Council's income are membership subscriptions and grants and donations from public bodies and individuals.

District holds £150k of cash across its groups, £45k higher than prior year (the majority of which are grant receipts for completed building work expenditure in the previous year)

The District shop permanently closed July 2025. This was due to costs more than offsetting our income, for example, April – July 2025 our running costs were £5k. Uniforms etc. are now sold directly via District HQ, which should provide a modest income going forward.

Assets

Assets, as at 31 March 2026, stand at £1.1 M with no liabilities. This represents an increase over the prior year of £181k of which:

- £128k reflects a change in methodology used by our Insurance Company to value our property for insurance purposes. The new methodology reflects their estimated value. Prior valuations were based on an estimate at a point-in-time, adjusted each year by a set amount – not necessarily reflecting the true value.
- £45k reflects increase in cash (see below).
- £8k reflects change in value of contents, stock and vehicles.

Income & Expenditure

Over the period 5th April 2025 – 31st March 2026:-

Total Income was £139k.

Total Expenditure was £(94)k.

Surplus Income therefore £45k, reflecting:

- £23k Grants/Donations - majority being grant refunds for completed building works expenditure
- £21k Capitation received but not paid out until April 2026.
- £1k Other

Note: Additional £13.5k Capitation received April/May 2026.

I would like to thank everybody for all the hard work they have put in to ensure the District remains financially viable.

Reserves Policy

The Trustee Board's policy on reserves is to hold sufficient resources to continue the charitable activities in the district should income and fundraising activities fall short. The Trustee Board considers that the Charity should hold a sum equivalent to 2 years running costs, circa £25,000 held in an interest-bearing account.

Investment Policy

The Charity does not have sufficient funds to invest in longer term investments. The Charity has therefore adopted a risk averse strategy to the investment of its funds. All funds are held in cash using only mainstream banks or building societies.

David Keeler

District Treasurer

F. Accounts

Southend Estuary District Scout Council
District Assets

	Note	As at 5th April 2025 Total £	As at 31st March 2026 Total £
Fixed Assets			
Tangible Assets			
District Headquarters (as insured)	2025 reflects indexed value 2026 reflects estimated value	764,949	892,956
Marine Assets inc trailers (as insured)		12,140	12,140
Minibus (NBV)		1,400	1,280
Van (NBV)		-	2,030
Contents of Buildings (as insured)		39,924	45,631
		818,413	954,037
Curent Assets			
Stock of badges & scarves		4,533	5,371
Cash at bank and in hand			
District Main Account		21,265	54,398
Shop Account		13,778	15,894
Explorers Accounts (x5)		64,831	75,134
Network		5,341	4,433
Total at bank and cash in hand		105,215	149,859
Total Current Assets		109,748	155,229
Current Liabilities		-	-
Net Assets		928,161	1,109,266

Other Scout organisations in which the District has a Notional Percentage Ownership

Belchamps Scout Centre
There is an interest in the centre which is jointly owned by Castle Point, Crouch Valley, Southend Estuary and Southend West Scout Districts.

Southend Scout & Guide Gang Show
There is an interest in the show

Southend Estuary District Scout Council
Receipts and Payments Summary
5 April 2025 -31 March 2026

A/C Name	Opening Balance			Income			Expenditure			Closing Balance			
	Restricted	Non Restricted	Total Opening Balance	Restricted	Non Restricted	Intra Group	Restricted	Non Restricted	Intra Group	Restricted	Non Restricted	Total Closing Balance	Movement
District A/C	-	21,265	21,265	10,100	34,653	1,625	(517)	(12,673)	(55)	9,583	54,398	54,398	33,132
Shop A/C	-	13,778	13,778	-	10,315	1,500	-	(9,699)	-	-	15,894	15,894	2,116
Net Total	**-**	**35,043**	**35,043**	**10,100**	**44,968**	**3,125**	**(517)**	**(22,372)**	**(55)**	**9,583**	**70,292**	**70,292**	**35,249**
Net District		**35,043**	**35,043**	**10,100**	**44,968**	**3,125**	**(517)**	**(22,372)**	**(55)**	**9,583**	**70,292**	**70,292**	**35,249**
Columbus	-	3,360	3,360	-	958	778	-	(972)	(210)	-	3,914	3,914	554
Nore	-	6,179	6,179	-	2,767	700	-	(924)	(1,343)	-	7,379	7,379	1,200
Patriot	-	5,446	5,446	-	7,260	-	-	(5,045)	(2,024)	-	5,637	5,637	191
Mariners	-	402	402	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	402	402	-
Explorer Units	-	15,387	15,387	-	10,985	1,478	-	(6,941)	(3,577)	-	17,332	17,332	1,945
Explorer District	1,955	47,489	49,444	9,094	52,333	2,124	(3,050)	(49,469)	(2,675)	8,000	49,802	57,801	8,358
Net Explorer	**1,955**	**62,876**	**64,831**	**9,094**	**63,317**	**3,602**	**(3,050)**	**(56,409)**	**(6,252)**	**8,000**	**67,134**	**75,134**	**10,303**
Network	-	5,341	5,341	-	4,623	-	-	(5,111)	(420)	-	4,433	4,433	(908)
Net Southend Estuary District Scout Council	**1,955**	**103,260**	**105,215**	**19,194**	**112,908**	**6,727**	**(3,566)**	**(83,893)**	**(6,727)**	**17,583**	**141,859**	**149,859**	**44,643**
Increase in Valuation of Assets											136,462	136,462	136,462
Total Southend Estuary District Scout Council	**1,955**	**103,260**	**105,215**	**19,194**	**112,908**	**6,727**	**(3,566)**	**(83,893)**	**(6,727)**	**17,583**	**278,321**	**286,320**	**181,105**

Independent Examiners Report

Southend Estuary District Scout Council

Charity Registration 1045298

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees
for the period 6 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with section 145 of the Charities Act 2011. My work has been undertaken so that I might state to the charity's trustees those matters I am required to state to them in an independent examiner's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's trustees, as a body, for my work or for this report.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act') and you consider that the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland, and an audit requirement does not apply.

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements 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 of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I can 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 charity as required by section 130 of the 2011 Act; or

2. the financial statements do not accord with those records; or

3. the financial statements do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in 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 financial statements to be reached.

Signed:



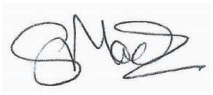
Ian P Chapman

Dated: 25 August 2026

G. Declaration

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

Signed on behalf of the Trustees.

Signature:		Signature:	
Name:	**Sonja Mackenzie**	Name:	**Lorraine Walter**
Position:	**Chair**	Position:	**Charity Trustee**
Date:	**13/ 09 /2026**	Date	**14/ 09 /2026**

4. DISTRICT LEAD VOLUNTEERS REPORT

The first year of our appointment has been busy, as there have been lots of areas within the district that have needed structuring and gain an understand of where the district was at.

As part of our initial strategy statement when we took over as DLVs, we said we would provide sessions to assist member training, which seemed to be an area where improvement could be made.

The result has been an increase in compliance with members training.

We are now mostly up to date with members training and have monitoring processes in place to minimise this occurrence, though recently this has had to evolve as HQ change their practices and push this expectation to the Group Lead Volunteers.

This has been supported with drop-in sessions to help members who required assistance to cover their training.

These sessions, held on Saturdays at DHQ have proved lively, and while they been used as we anticipated, the up take hasn't been as much as we expected however, they evolved in to duel purposes as a forum for planning discussions, welcome chats, loading new members onto the system, and an opportunities for badge and uniform collections. Overall, we think these have been well received, and we plan to continue to offer monthly sessions – the next session is scheduled 26th September.

Following our welcome at the 2025 District AGM we have been busy attending several groups and events:

- 10th Southend Squirrel start up meeting
- Indoor Badge Weekend
- Remembrance Services in both Southend and Shoeburyness.
- Camping competition
- Renewal of Promise

We also attended and worked on stalls at the Renewal of Promise weekend held at Belchamps, which seemed to be very well received.

Paul also represented Southend Estuary at the Belchamps Management Committee Meeting and the full day, County Volunteering Development Team held several times throughout the year.

We also attended the District Cubs 110th birthday celebrations, which was a fun event, managed by an efficient events team – for which we thank you. The cubs had a great time, earned badges, taking part in activities and having fun.

We tried to attend most of the group AGMs and re-enforced the call for new volunteers although this has fallen on deaf ears for the most part.

We have put together a development plan which we are working through, and appointed a Programme Team, led by Amber Sturgeon, which is working towards providing additional district events for all sections.

Volunteers from all sections are also working with us to form a Section-lead team working with Amber to ensure events, both district and county are published to allow these opportunities for our young people.

We have formed the beginning of a Young Leader register and held a Module A training along with other modules; this scheduling will continue into next year including a possible young leader camp.

We are also in the process of forming a district events team, to help provide opportunities to promote the district in fun, entertaining and useful endeavours.

Overall, we have been made very welcome in our first year and can appreciate some of the frustrations the leaders and members are having. We intend to continue with our strategy, but will be concentrating on recruitment, group visits and training support going forward. We would both like to say thank you for the support from the district trustees as we are putting our plans into operation – and providing safe and enjoyable Scouting for all our members – both adults and the young people.

Unfortunately, Lynn has recently had an acute medical incident, which has seriously curtailed her activities, and means that she will not be able to drive for some considerable time. She has therefore decided to stand back from Scouting for the time being, until the situation has been resolved. Paul will move forward with the district until Lynn feels she is ready to be more involved again.

We have reached the halfway point of our expected duration in the role and feel that we have met the majority of our original development plan.

We will be preparing a new development plan for the district which will be published in due time.

We have both enjoyed our first year and meeting the various teams and hope to do more of the same going forward.

Many thanks – from your joint DLVs, Lynn & Paul

Lynn Morris & Paul Stibbards
District Lead Volunteers

Awards Roll of Honour (2025 – 2026)

- **Silver Acorn** – Paul Tanner, Mark Ashton
- **Award for Merit** – Ryan Ward
- **Chief Scout's Commendation for Good Service** – Mattie Day, Jack Day, Kieran Skeggs, Amber Sturgeon

District Beaver Scout Report 2026

The Beaver section has had another good year with lots of district activities. This year the Beavers celebrated 40 years.

We had our annual Carol Concert at the Salvation Army in Southend. The beavers all attended with Hats made at their colony meetings and the leaders in Christmas jumpers. It was a lovely night with lots of fun, hymns and great readings from the Beavers telling the Christmas story.

We did our annual trip to see the panto put on by Southend Drama Society, as usual the Beavers all enjoyed themselves as did the Leaders and helpers. This year was Peter Pan, we are already booked for next year.

In January we all attended Kids Kingdom organised by the explorers and the Beavers go in for the first hour before the explorers take over.

In March we had our annual art attack which is attended by 4 Beavers from each colony making crafts to put on a base decorated by the colony at their usual meetings. This year's theme was Pirates. Thank you to Trudy for organising all the crafts. This year was won by 2nd Southchurch.

Some of the Beavers attended the Renewal of Promise weekend, some camping and some only coming for the day, it was a great event and they all enjoyed it.

We did look at attending the Big Beaver Bash put on by the county at Skreens park but the coach cost was going to make it too expensive so it was decided not to attend as a district. 3rd Thorpe Bay attended and had a great time.

June should have been our annual sports night but this was cancelled due to heavy rain, it has been postponed and is happening on the 23rd September.

Our District hike should have been in July but due to the extreme summer it was decided to go to Belfair's woods and they had a nature ramble and worked on part of the outdoor badge.

We plan to have another year full of activities coming up.

Thank you to all the leaders for their hard work and dedication by offering the Beavers such great activities and lots of badgework, I know how much planning this takes.

Also thank you to all the leaders for their support over the last year with my ill health and treatment, I know I am still waiting for surgery, but this is not likely to be until next spring. Thank you all of you.

Claire Brown
District Beaver Scout Lead

District Cub Scout Report 2026

The District Cubs have had another enjoyable and action-packed year, with plenty of opportunities for fun, adventure and learning new skills.

One of the highlights was an evening at Monkey Business, where the Cubs enjoyed an exciting session of climbing and soft play. It was a great opportunity for everyone to have fun together and try something different.

We also celebrated our 110th birthday with a fantastic day at Belchamps. The Cubs took part in a range of outdoor activities, including collecting firewood, backwoods cooking and making pizzaninis. They also learned and practised fire-lighting skills and enjoyed roasting marshmallows. The afternoon was filled with more fun activities before we finished the day gathered around the campfire.

Our annual Athletics Event unfortunately had to be postponed due to the weather. We are hoping to hold the event very shortly and look forward to seeing the Cubs taking part.

Looking ahead, we also have a Carol Service planned for the end of 2026, which will be a lovely way to bring everyone together and celebrate the year.

Overall, it has been a very successful year for the District Cubs, filled with friendship, adventure and new experiences. We look forward to another exciting year ahead.

Lorraine Walter
3rd Southchurch Cub Scout Lead

District Scout Report 2026

2026 has been a standard year for the Scouting section, we have had the following events: Outdoor Badge Weekend, Camping Comp and Indoor Badge Weekend. Although numbers have been down this year, we have still had great weekends. A massive thank you to all the leaders who have been involved and given up their time to help with these events.

However, 2027 is going to be great with more badges available at the badge weekends, Camping comp as usual and more events in the making to be announced which we are very excited about.

Daryll Chase
District Scout Lead

District Explorer Scout Report 2026

2025–26 has been another amazingly successful, enjoyable and adventurous year for Explorer Scouting in Southend Estuary. We've seen strong membership numbers from Patriots. Nore and Columbus are now showing good recovery, particularly following the significant number of young people who progressed to Network. All our young people embraced opportunities to learn, lead and challenge themselves.

Here are some of the highlights from an unforgettable year...

District Activities

Our District programme brought Explorers together for fun, friendship, and new challenges:

- **Island Hopping**– testing balance and bravery in the muddy Barling creeks
- **Halloween Film Night in the Woods** – spooky fun.
- **Network Firework Display**– legendary fireworks, fire, hot-dogs and soup
- **Christmas Ice Skating** – a festive favourite
- **Kids Kingdom fundraiser** – great examples of cubs-scouts-explorers and network teamwork to raise funds for our much-needed minibus replacement.
- **Sports and BBQ in** the park

Young Leaders as a section is stronger under new leaders Lloyd Croucher and Paul Stibbards, unfortunately Lloyd Croucher is off to university so we are currently seeking an extra YL leader coordinator.

A few Young Leader Explorers, especially Patriots, are giving back by helping local Scout Groups – a vital part of the Scouting journey

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Nore ESU - Activities and Achievements

- Organised a climbing night, pancake night and night hike for feeder troops.
- Joined kayaking training with Southend Canoe Club and took part in several summer beach kayaking events.
- Enjoyed a range of activities including High Ropes at Skreens Park, a Wake-Up Weekend with Crouch Valley and Laser Tag.
- Hiked to the Mulberry Harbour, navigated to Two Tree Island and enjoyed a stargazing evening at Paglesham
- Helped tidy the District HQ grounds as part of an environmental project.
- Two teams successfully completed their Silver DofE expeditions on the South Downs.
- Six Silver Duke of Edinburgh's Awards and Scout Platinum Awards earned.
- Many members gained their Chef, First Aid and Money Skills badges.
- Visited the Old Waterworks Art Club for a fascinating art and historical cinema experience.
- Nore and Columbus joined Adventure Offshore, spending a weekend aboard a large sailing training ship, gaining experience in navigation, helming and life onboard.

- Nore and Columbus took part in the Essex Scout Marathon weekend hike and attended the new Essex Camp ULTRA event at Screens Park.

Columbus ESU - Activities and Achievements

- Focused on Silver DofE training, with teams completing practice hikes on the North Downs before successfully completing their final assessment on the South Downs. Six Silver DofE Awards were earned.
- Enjoyed a Euro Space Centre presentation from James, followed by a discussion.
- IndiRock ran a session to improve Explorers' bouldering techniques and skills.
- Took part in Monopoly – Patriots Edition, finishing as runners-up.
- Attended the new Essex Camp ULTRA, SEMAC and Hammock Camp at Belchamps, developing camping skills and working towards the Survival Badge.
- Took part in High Ropes at Skreens Park, with many Explorers overcoming their fear of heights.
- Hosted several feeder troops climbing nights.
- Created a Halloween film, which was shown at Dove Wood.
- Took part in a community firework clean-up, funds raised going towards the Minibus Fund.
- Attended two community litter picks at Shoebury East Beach.
- Participated in Remembrance Sunday at Shoebury Cenotaph, alongside feeder sections from 3rd Thorpe Bay and 1st Shoebury Scouts.
- Social highlights included the District Christmas Party, District Ice Skating, a Horror Film Night at Dove Wood, and an evening hike from Benfleet to Leigh.

Patriot ESU - Activities and Achievements

- Swedish Scouts hosted Patriots, 2nd and 4th Thorpe Bay Scouts in Stockholm's remote mountains, where Scouts enjoyed an unforgettable adventure including wild camping, cutting down trees to create benches and tables, canoeing, late-night water navigation, hiking, swimming and cake baking.
- During the Swedish visit, Scouts also explored local attractions, including theme parks, museums, and the ABBA and Vasa exhibitions.
- Participated in British Pedal Car Championship, U16 girls team earnt an impressive runners-up, and U16 Boys team achieved 4th place overall.
- Attended the London Monopoly Run and community Remembrance Service, as well as enjoying activities including Kids Kingdom, Squid Game, winter camp, group camp, ice skating, a cooking competition, camping skills, guest speakers, the Eurovision Song Contest and World Record challenges.
- Celebrated Jacob's Gold DofE Award, alongside 4 Silver DofE Awards, Chief Scout Diamond Awards, 2 Bronze Awards and Chief Scout Platinum Awards.
- 6 Scouts were awarded Jack Petchey Awards in recognition of their achievements.
- Jamie was selected to represent the District at the World Scout Jamboree in Poland in 2027.

SEMAC – A District Explorers and Network camp

Our legendary **Multi-Activity Camp** selected a new venue Spitewinter Campsite, in the heart of Derbyshire and on the fringe of the Peak District National Park. SEMAC was another huge success where ~ 40+ Explorers, Network and leaders enjoyed an action-packed weekend of:

- Caving
- Rock climbing
- Abseiling
- Gorge Walking
- Hiking
- Cresta Run, Campfires and a Network-led fancy dress and wide games

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Our **District Minibus** has been a vital lifeline—transporting Explorers for more than one million passenger miles. We have our own ongoing fundraising and were extremely fortunate to further boost funds with a donation from ROSCA Trust. We are equally thankful to have received funds this year from OdysseyRe via Wayne Adams and Essex Youth Trust to help support activities and those in need.

Celebrating Our Volunteers

Jake has relocated to Cornwall with his family, and while we are sorry to see him leave, we wish Jake and his family every success and happiness as they begin this exciting new chapter in their lives.

Thank you, Jake, for everything you have done and for your outstanding service. I know SEMAC will keep you close.

Congratulation to Ryan Ward for his Medal of Merit Award, a well-deserved and overdue recognition for all his help with district explorers, and Great Wakering Scouts, supporting many activities across Southend, Basildon, Essex and much more.

Looking Ahead

This year our explorers had opportunities to join an incredible list of activities each encouraged by a team of very dedicated enthusiastic leaders, assistants, and supporters for which we are all extremely appreciative and thankful. With such a great leadership team, I am confident that the rest of 2026 and 2027 will be equally adventurous and bring even more opportunities for our young people.

Mark Chapman
District Explorer Lead for 14-18 (District Explorer Scout Commissioner)

District Network Scouts Report 2026

Network has continued to develop positively over the past year, with membership numbers growing and an increasingly active and varied programme being delivered. Members have taken part in a range of activities and camps throughout the year, providing opportunities to build skills, strengthen friendships and enjoy the wider Network experience.

Network members have also supported a number of Explorer events and activities, including SEMAC. This involvement has helped strengthen links between the Explorer and Network sections while giving Network members opportunities to contribute their experience, enthusiasm and practical support.

Conversations have taken place with Mark C and Ryan W regarding opportunities for Network members to work towards gaining activity permits. This will help members develop their skills and confidence while increasing the District's capacity to deliver a broader range of activities, camps and events in the future.

Overall, Network remains in a positive position, with growing numbers, an active programme and members who are keen to support the wider District.

Dan Wanna
Network Lead (14-18 Team)

District Support Team Report 2026

District HQ and Community Hall

Following our 2024 refurbishment, a team of volunteers continue to support ongoing maintenance of the building and grounds. Aside the ongoing grass & and landscaping work, we've upgraded the main hall loft insulation that has almost halved our winter heating costs -, upgraded the security camera system, and work is ongoing to improve District storage of camping and boating equipment.

Increased bookings of the venue by nursery/childcare groups, and ad-hoc venue hire from the local community continue to offset the running costs of the building to ensure we can provide the facility to Scouting at a subsidised cost - and this is regularly in use by many district groups for weekly meetings, ad-hoc hires of the field, kitchen etc., and weekend sleepovers

Next priorities include creating trailer storage on the field, further landscaping and tree maintenance, and exploring refurbishment of the toilet facilities.

Garons Lake - Paddlesports

Since 2023, we have worked closely with Garon Park to develop the use of their lake for Scout paddlesport activities. This has involved extensive discussions, water safety testing, and a detailed programme of risk, compliance and insurance reviews.

We are delighted to have now secured an agreement for Southend Estuary and Southend West Districts to use the lake for paddlesport activities. We are equally delighted to have secured funding from a number of partners to support the purchase of boating equipment and fund the programme, including Essex Scouts, the ROSCA Trust and the Community Investment Fund.

The next phase will see site access works progressed this autumn, followed by adult training, with the aim of launching a new paddlesports programme for our members in Summer 2027.

Ryan Ward and Mark Chapman