



Biggleswade Scout Group

Trustees Report and Annual Review

1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024



**Registered in England and
Wales Charity No 300444**

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www.biggleswadescouts.org.uk

Trustees' Annual Report

for the Period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024

Charity Trustees

Chairman	Leigh Wood
Group Scout Leader	Sue Doyle
Deputy Group Scout Leader	Chris Wells
Treasurer	Lucy Courtney
Secretary	Lorraine Bennetts
Neptune Cub Leader	Eddie Fuller
Armstrong Scout Leader	Brian Lawson
Irwin Scout Leader	Jerome Doyle
Explorer Scout Leader	Beverley Lattimer
Mercury Beaver Leader	Jane Thompson
Executive Committee Members	Alan Dansey
	Nick Gurney
	Helen Kingerley

Charity Number 300444

Principal Address
The Scout Headquarters
London Road
Biggleswade
SG18 8EL

Structure, Governance and Management

Biggleswade Scout Group is a registered charity, governed by our Constitution, Declaration of Trust made on 17 April 1962 and also the Policy, Organisation and Rules of the Scout Association UK (April 2022).

The Group Council is the electoral body, which supports Scouting in the Scout Group. It is the body to which the Group Executive Committee is accountable. The Group Council consists of all adult volunteers and supporters, along with the parents of all youth members.

The Group is managed by an Executive Committee (the Charity Trustees) who are appointed and elected from the Group Council. It is their responsibility to support the Group Scout Leader in meeting the responsibilities of their appointment. This includes maintenance of the Group's property and equipment, raising funds and managing the Group's finances, insurance of persons, property and equipment and assisting with recruitment of leaders and other adult support. All new trustees undergo training mandated by the Scout Association.

The trustees regularly consider major risks and are currently undertaking a programme of works to maintain and improve the facilities at Biggleswade Scouts Headquarters. We continue to lobby local politicians in an effort to secure Scouting in Biggleswade for the next 20-30 years for both access to our existing premises and to consider the possibility of a new venue.

The Group is part of the Scout Association UK and as such is guided and supported by the local Scouting District, Biggleswade and District, by the local county, Bedfordshire, by the Regional Team and by the national team for the Scout Associations based at Gilwell.

As a registered charity the trustees also give due consideration to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission.

Objectives and Activities

Our Charitable Objectives are to contribute to the development of young people in achieving their full physical, intellectual, social and spiritual potentials as individuals, as responsible citizens, and as members of their local, national and international communities.

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

Membership for the year 2024 was up slightly from 2023. From 188 to 191.

Biggleswade Scout Group currently runs 3 Beaver Colonies (age 6-8), 3 Cub Packs (ages 8-10.5), 2 Scout Troops (ages 10.5-14) and has a partnership agreement with the district Explorer Unit – Phoenix Explorers (ages 14-18).

We provide a programme of personal development for 223 young people aged between 6 and 18 years old who live in and around the market town of Biggleswade in Bedfordshire.

This programme consists of regular weekly meetings during term time, a number of day trips throughout the year and the opportunity to take part in residential experiences. The programme is based around three themes: -

- Outdoors and Adventure
- World

- Skills

The Scout Group is run entirely by volunteers.

Achievements and Performance

Scouting continues to be very popular in Biggleswade with all sections running on or near their capacity. We have an active Beaver waiting list and currently have 9 young people who are old enough to start but are waiting for places at one of our Beaver Colonies. We also have over a further 52 plus people on the waiting list who are not yet old enough to start.

Through our sections we have successfully delivered a programme of personal development consisting of over 540 hours of activities in a year to our 223 young people—this is over 120,000 hours of personal development for young people in the local area.

We know that our young people are engaging and benefiting from this development by a significant number of Chief Scouts Awards that have been presented this year— the highest recognition of a young person's achievement in each section.

Fundraising events

- Quiz Night 2024 was enjoyed by 71 people and raised £882.25
- Amazon Smile raised £58.94
- Recycle4Charity raised £4.50

Grants

- Taylor Wimpey £1500 – towards fitting out our stores

Biggleswade continues to grow with more housing development on the east and north side of the town. School intakes within the town are increasing with expansions of existing schools and the addition of new schools. This growth represents a significant challenge for an already large Scout Group and we are looking for ways to ensure we can meet the challenge.

The Trustees would like to take this opportunity to thank all the Leaders, helpers, Parents/Guardians and the young people themselves for all their hard work over this past year.

Receipts and Payments Accounts

For financial year ended 31 March 2024

Receipts	31 Mar 24	31 Mar 23
Membership Subscriptions	26,804.48	24,462.26
Residential Experiences and Trips	27,400.73	24,190.98
Activities	0.00	0.00
Bank Interest	531.42	185.48
Fundraising (Incl Donations)	3,059.57	3,649.16
Rent	252.00	416.00
Gift Aid	3,356.48	2,475.04
Other	385.20	962.80
Total Receipts	61,789.88	56,341.72

Payments	31 Mar 24	31 Mar 23
Scout Association Capitation	12,825.00	12,265.00
Residential Experiences and Trips	29,336.65	23,468.73
Activities	2,991.18	4,674.92
Fundraising Costs	744.50	923.75
Headquarters -Utilities	1,374.21	1,469.06
Headquarters-Maintenance and Cleaning	1,027.49	1,343.54
Headquarters Improvements	0.00	0.00
Leader Uniform	439.70	24.00
Insurance	52.00	1,110.81
Rent	968.00	1,034.00
Equipment	610.72	907.23
Resources (including Badges)	2,095.90	2,964.64
Volunteer Expenses	0.00	0.00
Donations	20.00	2,270.80
Other	2757.37	1,269.81
Total Payments	55,242.72	53,726.29

Net Receipts/Payments	6,547.16	2,615.43
Cash Funds Last year end	71,822.99	69,207.56
Cash Funds this year end	78,370.15	71,822.99

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

For financial year ended 31 March 2024

Monetary Assets	31 Mar 24	31 Mar 23
Bank Current Accounts	61,926.26	56,567.94
Bank Deposit Accounts	16,348.01	15,145.01
Cash in Hand	95.88	110.04

Total

78,370.15

71,822.99

Notes to the Accounts

For Financial Year ended on 31 March 2024

This was another successful year for the Group. We made a surplus this year—mainly down to our Fundraising Events and the annual insurance being paid late and coming into the next financial year. We continue to have a very healthy balance at the end of the year.

Receipts

Membership subscriptions – the main source of income for the Group. Up this year due to an increase in the subscriptions rate agreed by the Executive Committee.

Residential Experiences and Trips – Additional money collected from the members for the purposes of paying for specific camps and trips. Usually these take the form of day or weekend activities.

Activities—Additional money collected from the members to pay for activities that take place as part of the weekly programme.

Bank Interest – interest earned in all of the Scout Group accounts.

Fundraising – Shows the income generated through fund raising activities. This year this was mainly from events— Quiz Night—and a donation from Taylor Wimpey.

Gift Aid – As a registered charity we are able to claim Gift Aid on donations and our membership subscriptions qualify as a donation for these purposes. We submitted a claim for 2022-23 this year.

Other—other income—this consisted of a number of items that did not fall into any other category.

Payments

Scout Association Capitation – Annual payment made to the Scout Association based on the number of members within the Group. For 2023/24 this was £12,825 which is slightly more than it was in 2022/23 due to an increase in the Capitation Fee.

Residential Experiences and Trips – Money spent on providing specific camps and trips for our members.

Activities – Money spent on providing activities for our members as part of our weekly meetings.

Fundraising Costs – costs incurred in the course of raising funds.

Headquarters Utilities – Expenditure on Electricity, Gas, Water and Refuse collections for the Scout Group Headquarters.

Headquarters – Maintenance and Cleaning – costs incurred in maintaining the Groups Headquarters and its grounds.

Headquarters Improvements - Money invested in making improvements to our Headquarters building. There have not been any improvements this year.

Leader Uniform – cost of uniform for the Group’s volunteers and provision of Group Neckers and Group Badges.

Insurance – Costs of providing insurance for the Scout Group HQ and all camping equipment

owned by the Scout Group.

Rent – cost to the Group of renting rooms at Trinity Methodist Church to accommodate Neptune Cub Pack. This also included various rents for other adhoc events.

Equipment – Capital expenditure on group equipment.

Resources (including badges) – Resource items purchased for use e.g. paper, glue, paint etc. Purchase of Activity and Challenge Badges to present to the young people.

Volunteer expenses – costs incurred by volunteers in the course of their volunteer work which are reimbursed to them.

Donations - donations made by the Group or Sections to other Charities.

Other—other expenditure—this consisted of a number of items that did not fall into any other category.

Assets

Bank Current Accounts—includes the Groups central Current accounts as well as the individual section current accounts.

Bank Deposit Accounts — Includes the Group Savings accounts, an Armstrong Scout Troop savings account and a very small amount in a Neptune Cub Pack savings account.

In addition to the cash assets, the Group owns the HQ building along with the land and a considerable quantity of camping equipment. These have not been formally valued and so are not included in the accounts.

Liabilities

As at 31 March 2024, the Scout Group had no liabilities.

Declaration

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

Signed on behalf of the Charity Trustees

Signature



Full name

Leigh Wood

Position

Group Chairperson

Date

22 July 2024

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the Biggleswade Scout Group

I report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2024 which are set out on page 6.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act)) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act;
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair view" and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act;
 - have not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:



Date: 24/08/2024

Name:

Kim Clegg FCMA CGMA

Address:

1 Meadowsweet Close, Lower Cambourne, CB23 6ET

Apollo Beavers Annual Report



Badges

7 Beaver achieved Bronze Award

Challenge Badges: 21 Adventure, 4 Outdoors, 9 Personal, 11 Skills, 15 Teamwork, 14 World

Activity Badges: Animal Friend, Book Reader, Builder, Experiment, Explore, Faith, Hobbies, International, Money Skills, Photographer, Space,

Staged Badges: Air Activities, Emergency Aid, Hikes, Nights Away

Thank you!

Many thanks to everyone who's helped and to the Beavers themselves who have been fantastic!

Thanks to all the volunteer leaders and helpers who have assisted us this year.

If anyone has any time they can volunteer to help at our section please let us know.

April 2023

We started this year with an evening in Dunton and meeting Lorraine's Pony. We also did 2 weeks working towards our Navigator Activity Badge,

May 2023

In May we celebrated the Coronation with our own Street Party. We did an interesting evening on Archaeology and finished with walk to Broom East Conservation Area.

June 2023

In June we really enjoyed camping at the Bigg Weekender – and thanks to all the parents that supported this event. We also did an evening of Tracking and Shelter Building at Baulk Wook and worked towards our Builder Activity Badge.

July 2023

We enjoyed an evening at Stotfold Mill doing Pond Dipping. We also held our, now annual, Water challenges and Water Fight at Boyd Field Campsite.

September 2023

We made the most of the light evenings in September with 3 weeks at the Campsite doing Climbing, Tomahawks and Backwoods Cooking.

October 2023

During our weekly meetings we made Bee Hotels and did an evening of activities for the International

Activity Badge. We also had a great evening at Biggleswade Rugby Club.

Our Beavers really enjoyed attending the District Beaver and Squirrel Pirate Funday at Boyd Field Campsite.

November 2023

We focussed on getting our Emergency Aid Level 1 Activity Badge.

December 2023

We had a great evening exploring Space and the Beavers performed their very own Panto.

January 2024

We completed the Money Skills Activity Badge and invited the Beavers to bring along their favourite Board Games for a games night.

February 2024

We had a visit from the Police Community Support Officer, we made Pancakes and had a Marble Olympics

March 2024

The Beavers really enjoyed our Dinosaur themed Sleepover. We spent an evening learning about Structures, had a taster of Tae-Kwon-Do, and celebrated Easter

Gemini Beavers Annual Report



Badges

10 Beavers achieved Bronze Award

Challenge Badges: 13 Adventure, 3 Outdoors, 22 Personal, 12 Skills, 13 Teamwork, 4 World

Activity Badges: Animal Friend, Cook, Creative, Cyclist, Experiment, Explore, Global Issues, Health and Fitness, Money Skills, Sports

Staged Badges: Digital Citizen, Hikes, Nights Away, Swimmer

Thank you!

Many thanks to everyone who's helped and to the Beavers themselves who have been fantastic!

Thanks to all the volunteer leaders and helpers who have assisted us this year.

If anyone has any time they can volunteer to help at our section please let us know.

April 2023

We had a visit from the Police Community Support Officer and the Beavers chose their Personal Challenge.

May 2023

We had our own Coronation Party. We did an evening where we covered lots of different badge requirements and also an evening about endangered animals where we made masks.

June 2023

The Beavers had a fantastic time at Bigg Weekender – a District Jamboree – where we got to do loads of different activities. We also had an evening about Fairtrade and went to visit the Biggleswade Rugby Club.

July 2023

We did a junk modelling night where we made shelters and we finished the term off with a night of fun and games at the local park.

September 2023

We found out all about our bodies and personal hygiene. We did an evening on Space and an evening on fitness. We finished the month off by earning out Air Activities Badge.

October 2023

We had a great evening on our Bikes and an evening making healthy Snacks. The Beavers had an amazing time at the Pirate Themed Beaver and Squirrel District Fun Day at Boyd Field Campsite.

November 2023

We had a visit from the Inflatable Planetarium and learnt all about the Stars and Constallations. We made out own aircraft and earnt our Money Skills Badge.

December 2023

We had an evening imagining we were superheroes, held a family quiz night and finished off the term with lots of Xmas fun.

January 2024

We had an interesting evening earning our Experiment Activity Badge and also had an evening finding out about the Winter Olympic Games.

February 2024

The Beavers brought their favourite board games along for an evening, we spent an evening learning Scouting skills and an evening making sweets.

March 2024

We enjoyed our Minecraft themed Sleepover at Leslie Sell Activity Centre with our friends from Apollo Beavers.

Mercury Beavers Annual Report



Badges

16 Beaver achieved Bronze Award

Challenge Badges: 15 Adventure, 14 Outdoors, 9 Personal, 15 Skills, 15 Teamwork, 10 World

Activity Badges: Animal Friend, Book Reader, Builder, Camp Craft, Collector, Cook, Creative, Cyclist, Experiment, Explore, Faith, Gardener, Global Issues, Health and Fitness, International, Photographer, Safety, Space, Sports,

Staged Badges: Digital Citizen, Emergency Aid, Hikes, Musician, Nautical Skills, Nights Away, Paddle Sports, Sailing, Swimmer, Time on the Water

Thank you to the leadership team at Mercury Beavers, Explorer Young Leaders, our parent helpers and of course to the Beavers for making this another great year full of learning and laughter. If anyone has any time they can volunteer to help at our section, please let us know.

April 2023

We conquered the climbing wall at Boyd and made Marshmallow Catapults.

May 2023

We celebrated the Kings Coronation. Had fun at our annual indoor sleepover at Bromham, learnt our Green Cross code and went on a tree identification hike at Baulk Walk.

June 2023

We took part in the District BigWeekender sleepover, Safety Badge work and water themed games night as it was so hot.

July 2023

We had fun in the new Franklin Rec play equipment and making up our own games.

September 2023

We had fun at a water Activity Day at Luton Hoo, made pitta pizzas and completed Emergency First Aid.

October 2023

We learned to light fires with a "flint & steel" at

Boyd and completed a paper clue Treasure Island escape room to learn how to solve problems.

November 2023

We had the Harpur Trust School Planetarium come to the hut. Took part in Remembrance Day. We had our annual indoor winter sleepover. We also had a coach from FC Biggleswade Youth Football team come in and teach ball skills.

December 2023

We had fun doing Christmas crafts and games.

January 2024

Worked on our Digital Citizen, made bird feeders for the RSBP Big Garden Bird watch.

February 2024

Soft archery and crossbows. Celebrated Chinese New Year and had Pancake fun.

March 2024

We started on the Navigator badge, World Book Day fun and Easter cooking.

Jupiter Cubs Annual Report



Badges

2 Chiefs Scouts Silvers Awards

Challenge Badges: 7 Adventure , 3
Outdoors, 7 Personal, 12 Skills
7 Team Leader, 6 Teamwork and 4 World

Activity

Artist, Athletics, Backwoods Cooking, Chef,
DIY, Scientist

Staged

Hikes, Nautical Skills, Navigator, Time on
the Water, Nights away, Paddle sports,
Sailing

Thank you!

Many thanks to everyone who's helped and to all the cubs for making it a fantastic year.

April 2023: The summer term started with a night of fun and games and participation in a drawing competition.

May 2023: The cubs celebrated the coronation and had a laser tag night in Letchworth.

June 2023: The cubs took part in a sports day for the athletics badge and had a go at cricket. They also joined the rest of Biggleswade at the Big Weekender.

July 2023: Wednesday evenings were spent at Boyd, having a go at pedal karting and rafting. The cubs also took part in the Water Activity Day at Grafham Water.

September 2023: The cubs put their chef skills to the test making pizza swirls and competed against their friends with a conkers night. Some of the cubs also went to sixer and seconder camp.

October 2023: October was spent completing some badge requirements with a pic n mix night

and listening to each other's personal challenge presentations. The cubs also took part in the District Hike.

November 2023: The cubs started their science badge and went on the annual trip to the pantomime in Stevenage. The cubs were also present at the Remembrance Day Parade.

December 2023: The science badge was completed with an engineering challenge and the cubs had a fun Christmas night.

January 2024: The cubs took part in the annual Jupiter Bowling Competition and completed their Stage 2 Navigation Badge.

February 2024: The cubs spent February celebrating Chinese New Year and Pancake Day. They also had loads of fun on Frosty Camp at Bromham.

March 2024: Hard work was put into making Bug Houses to complete their DIY Badge.

Neptune Cubs Annual Report



Can I take this opportunity to record my thanks to the team of Nick, Lucy, Lorraine and Harry for their help and support and to anyone else who has helped the pack in any way during the year.
Eddie Fuller (Akela)

April 2023: During this month we concentrated on team building and this culminated in a trip to Boyd Field Henlow where teams had to collect materials to build a small fire and then they were able to cook bread dough and marshmallows.

May 2023: This being Coronation month we had a coronation party including games. Our Mums and Cubs camp was held this month although our water activity was not possible due to the Environment Agency closing the river due to high water levels. We had a ramble around Dunton including the Community Garden.

June 2023: Two mothers organised a Quiz Night for the pack which was thoroughly successful and enjoyed by the cubs. We had an activity night at Franklin's Recreation Centre. A mapping night was held at Boyd Field Henlow. We have a camp fire night at Penrose Court which was thoroughly enjoyed by all the residents.

July 2023: An archery evening was held and enjoyed by all attendees. A 'float the boats' evening was held on the River Ivel where Cubs made boats from recycled materials and these were then floated down the river. To conclude before the summer break we had a swimming evening.

September 2023: Our first meeting after the summer break was a games night coupled with emergency procedures (fire etc). The annual Dads and Cubs camp was held at Boyd Field Henlow. We had a pioneering night where cubs had to make items of use. An evening using money skills was also held this month.

Badges

1 Chiefs Scouts Silvers Awards

Challenge Badges: 1 Outdoors, 1 Skills
1 Teamwork and 1 World

Activity

Artist, Backwoods, Cyclist, Entertainer, Fire Safety, Home Help, Pioneer, World Faiths

Staged

Hikes, Nights away, Paddle sports, Sailing,
Time on the Water

October 2023: We had a night devoted to science experiments. A quiz night was arranged with assistance of the quiz rounds being provided with parental help.

November 2023: This month we had our annual firework night with refreshments at my house. A town quiz, a mapping evening, festival evening with a Scottish themed evening concluding the month's activities.

December 2023: This being the month we visited Penrose Court to sing carols to the residents meant we had to prepare in advance. The evening was well received and we were provided with refreshments on conclusion of our Christmas programme.

January 2024: We had a visit from the Jamboree Contingent who went to the World Jamboree in South Korea. They gave a very informative account of their activities and answered many questions.

February 2024: The 'Big Loo Push' took place from Saxon Pool to Penrose Court and back again. The Cubs had the opportunity to push go-karts and ride on them. Our thanks to all those who supported the event in any way. We had a Founders night and also a cooking night this month.

March 2024: A night was devoted to preparing for Mother's Day where cubs designed cards and wrapped plants for their mothers. A disability awareness night was held incorporating mobility issues, hearing (using sign language) and blindness. We concluded with a cooking night and making bug houses.

Saturn Cubs Annual Report



Thank you!
Many thanks
to everyone
who's helped

and to the Cubs themselves who have been fantastic!

We have enjoyed a very busy year of Scouting! Thanks to all the leaders and parents who have stepped up to help without you we would be able to do all the fantastic things detailed below.

If anyone has any time they can volunteer to help at our section please let us know

April 2023

Badges

Armstrong Scouts Annual Report

April 23 Undertook activities towards the World Challenge badge and learned the Blinding Lights dance routine for our Fitness challenge. Patrol competition activity building bridges.

May 23 Cooking month where we looked at types of fire / stoves and had a patrol cooking competition for a two-course meal. We also had an evening out at a challenging and muddy obstacle course.

June 23 Team work challenge evening with lots of fun. Evening spent looking at OS maps and learning how to time a plotted route. Theory was put in to practice with an evening hike. Took part in the Bigg weekender.

July 23 Parents Vs scouts games evening and BBQ at Boyd. Final bash involved lots of wet water, the Leaders soaking most of it up! Summer Camp to Buddens Activity Centre in Hampshire



September 23 Activities around food and cooking, always a good event. Learnt some new knots and had an evening creating "art" with staves and rope.

October 23 Had a Skills event weekend at Boyd learning new skills and older scouts teaching younger ones. Started the Astronautics badge.

November 23 Had an evening making paracord poppies, attended Remembrance Parade and finished Astronautics badge. Scouts were given a personal challenge to present to the Troop.

Badges

Gold Award 1

Challenge Badges: 4 Adventure, 4 Creative, 1 Expedition, 1 Outdoors, 6 Personal, 3 Skills, 2 Team Leader, 6 Teamwork, 1 World

Activity and staged badges total 130: Artist, Air researcher, Astronautics, Athletics, Craft, Entertainer, Global issues, Hobbies, Local Knowledge, Master at Arms, Digital Citizen, Emergency Aid, Nautical Skills, Navigator

December 23 Made Christmas cake, went to Laser Tag in Letchworth and Final evening eating Pizza.

January 24 Great time at Frosty Camp. Had a games evening and Forum. Activities with different types of camp equipment and tents and started the World Challenge Badge.



February 24 Looked at community issues and ate Pancakes. Also looked at emergency procedures and action in the home and out and about.

March 24 Learned all things camp site layout and safety. The scouts ran their own evening and we had final bash out playing mini golf.



Irwin Scouts Annual Report



Irwin Scouts have had another great year thanks to an awesome set of young people and an equally-awesome leader team! We have a full house of 30 Scouts, so have a lively active bunch!

In the Spring 2023 term we had 5 taking part in our gold camp, crossing a lock, getting lost and complaining at the big hills of Milton Keynes! At the same time, we ran a skills camp, getting ready for the next set of Golders! We had a disability night, using an AI generated app telling Scouts what age it thinks the leaders are! Faraz and Pete faired very well! For St Georges Day, we slept in HQ and built cardboard castles, before getting to Boyd and have a day of activities. The Bigg Weekender was a favourite by the Scouts, enjoying all the fun on offer. We also used our Monday night after the event to clean the site and complete odd jobs. July we visited a group from the Netherlands staying at Boyd, where we swapped stories and badges and played air hockey!

Summer camp was awesome up in the Lake District, bar the rain! We got soaked on a waterfall walk, soaked on mini golf, soaked on raft building....! We met up with Ben Febery-Watts (now District Network Lead) at his then workplace for an awesome day of sailing and kayaking on Lake Windermere, which we also took a cruise on and went to a sealife centre.

Autumn term we came 2nd in the District Raft Race, as well as a super presentation from the Korean team (great to see many Irwin members attended!) Our skills night is always a laugh, mainly to see Scouts attempt ironing. We also did a double week of planning, buying ingredients and cooking them the following week, one to repeat! We worked with Beavers to keep the astronomy guy for Scouts, showing off planets in the large dome. Our end of term fun with hungry hippos and our District Youth Lead Joe handed out our Youth-Shaped badges we had been working hard on.

In 2024 we have started our 'Outdoor in 24' challenge, set by Gilwell. Our aim for us is for each Scout to take part in 24 unique activities this year. Check our noticeboard thermometer for what we have been up to! Its meant we have flew kites, had a Beaver badge night, chip shop survey and another incident hike!

Our first camp was Frosty camp, this years theme was Space! We tried bottle rockets, space modelling and space food... There was a party, film and silent headphone DISCO to (again) celebrate Jerome's Birthday on another Frosty! We also welcomed a 2nd Young Leader James, joining Dylan to support (and keep the average leader age down!)

Spring gave us another Gold and Skills camp, similar to above but with 5 new excited Scouts! Bad weather didn't affect them, bar needing to be picked up and moved a mile forward due to waist-deep floods....! And don't ask about the runner, who met us 4 times on route as Scouts got lost...! Big Dave and myself enjoyed touring around the pubs of Phasles and supporting as needed.

The team have said goodbye to Tom, who moves to a Thursday night with Armstrong. Tom has been instrumental in providing Irwin to what it is today and can already see great things supporting Armstrong. We were pleased to have a few joint camps with Armstrong this year and look forward to more camps and events in the future, including our joint Summer camp!

We can only provide an engaging programme and great set of camps with our volunteer team, who work together on all things Irwin! Jerome, heading up Irwin, with Big D, Dylan (YL), Faraz, James (YL) and Pete. The team must also thank Helen, who has joined us to support with badges, as well as Sue T, who supports the admin side. Thanks for all the volunteering hours, and looking forward to another year ahead!

David Moulton

Phoenix Explorers Annual Report

Phoenix continues to be an active Explorer Unit in the District partnered with Biggleswade Scout Group. We number 30 plus members. We had another busy Scouting year.



April 2023: We held traditional Scouting nights on food and easter themes.

May 2023: We had a special celebration for the King's coronation with a themed picnic. We helped out at Boyd Campsite as part of The Big Help Out and ran an evening for Mental Health Awareness week.

June 2023: We took part in the Big Weekender, supporting the while camp in many ways on activities and car park duties. We did tracking and hiking during our unit nights.

July 2023: We celebrated with our leavers with our traditional "This is your life in Scouting" night. Jenna and Oliver completed their Chief Scouts Diamond Awards. We did the Fit4OCR assault course and a night at Gravity.

Our Epic Summer Camp was in Crawfordsburn in Northern Ireland. We have an amazing time enjoying what Ireland had to offer including the Giants Causeway, Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge, Belfast Giants Game and mush more.

September 2023: We supported yet again the Community Country Fayre on the Crockery Smash raising funds for a Children's Charity and a local Dementia Charity. We did nights on mapping and hike preparation.

October 2023: We supported the District Beaver Activity Day – setting up and running various

We have had 2 new leaders join our team. We have welcomed Stuart and Sam onto our Leadership Team.

Thank you to our fantastic Explorers for being you and for all the leadership team helping making Phoenix Explorers what it is.

activities. We did a cook a curry from scratch night and pumpkin carving.

November 2023: We attended the local Remembrance Parade, did some outdoor cooking skills and joined in a wide game with Sandy Explorers.

December 2023: We sadly said goodbye to Tasha after 12 years as a leader with us due to her moving away and to David after 9 years as a leader with us but he continues his Scouting heavily involved in the District. We presented them with leaver gifts and thankyou's for everything they contributed to the life of Phoenix Explorers. We had an amazing Christmas Party Weekend at Chellington Centre in Bedford. We also ran our fundraising Christmas Fayre to support our camps.

January 2024: We had a lot of our Explorers attend Young Leader training weekends to help support the Group.

February 2024: We ran charity nights supporting out local foodbanks and a school in Kenya. We enjoyed a shared night with Sandy Explorers wood whittling.

March 2024: We presented Oliver and Ryan with their Chief Scout Platinum Awards. We had teams in the London Monopoly run and tackled the escape rooms in Letchworth.