Four Marks and Ropley Scout Group
Executive Committee Chairman's Report: 2025 - 2026

Chair's Report 2025/26

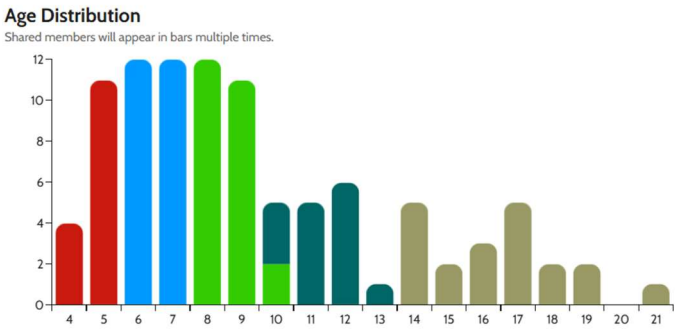
It has been another busy and, at times, challenging year for Four Marks and Ropley Scout Group, but one in which there has also been much to celebrate.

At the heart of everything we do remains a simple purpose: **to provide young people in our community with the opportunity to enjoy Scouting, develop skills for life and reach their potential.**

None of this would be possible without the considerable commitment of our volunteers, leaders, helpers, trustees, parents and supporters.

Overall, our sections are running at or close to capacity, with demand remaining strong across the Group.

Squirrels	15
Beavers	24
Cubs	25
Scouts	15
Explorers/Network	20
Total	**99**



2025/26 at a glance

This year has seen the Group continue to grow, invest in its facilities and contribute actively to our local community. Highlights include:

- **Our first Squirrel section opened**, extending the Scouting journey to younger members of our community.
- **Demand for Scouting remains strong**, with sections at or near capacity and waiting lists continuing to grow.
- **Our Scout Hut lease has been renewed**, giving us greater security in our home and confidence to continue investing in it.
- **New windows and CCTV have been installed**, improving the security, safety and usability of the Scout Hut.
- **Our partnership with Four Marks Parish Council continues**, including discussions about the hut supporting wider community activities.
- **The Group has remained active in community events**, including the Village Picnic, Fireworks, Alton Model Railway Show and Alton Family Fun Day.
- **We continued our involvement in the Monopoly Run**, which brings together around 10,000 Scouts and Guides in London and provides valuable income for the Group.
- **Termly subscriptions are currently planned to remain unchanged**, despite continuing increases in many of our operating costs.

- **We continue to support families who need financial help**, so that personal circumstances are not a barrier to taking part in Scouting.
- **Our biggest opportunity remains volunteering** - attracting more adults will strengthen our existing sections and allow us to offer Scouting to more young people.

Growing Scouting - and our need for volunteers

The opening of our first Squirrel section is a significant step for the Group. We are extremely grateful to the new Squirrel team for stepping forward and making this possible, extending Scouting locally to younger children.

Across the Group, demand remains strong. Our constraint is not a shortage of young people wanting to join, but the number of adults available to support them. With additional adult help we can strengthen existing sections and, where sustainable, create more opportunities for young people currently on waiting lists.

Volunteering does not have to mean a weekly commitment or becoming a uniformed leader. There are many ways people can contribute their time and skills, and even occasional support can make a real difference. Growing our volunteer team will therefore remain one of our most important priorities.

Our community and our home

Scouting continues to play an active role in the wider Four Marks, Ropley and Alton community. During the year our members, leaders and supporters contributed to the 2026 Village Picnic, Fireworks, car parking for the Alton Model Railway Show (FEBEX), and the Alton Family Fun Day. These activities raise valuable funds while demonstrating the positive contribution Scouting makes locally.

Our relationship with Four Marks Parish Council also continues to develop. Formal renewal of the Scout Hut lease gives us greater security and confidence to invest in our home. During the year we installed new windows and CCTV, improving the safety, security and usability of the building.

We are also continuing discussions with the Parish Council about its wider plans for community facilities, including the potential use of the Scout Hut as an interim meeting place for local clubs and activities while work on the Benian's Sports Pavilion extension is undertaken.

The hut may not be the most attractive building from the outside, but it is our home and an important community asset. We will continue to invest sensibly in making it safer, more secure and more usable for our young people, volunteers and, where appropriate, the wider community.

Fundraising, finances and keeping Scouting accessible

Fundraising continues to make an important contribution to the financial sustainability of the Group. The Scout Active Support (SAS) team has again played a major part, including coordinating catering for the school-organised Fireworks event at the Recreation Ground and the Alton Family Fun Day. Our particular thanks go to Teresa Hammond and the wider team for their continued commitment and support.

Our involvement in the nationally run Monopoly Run is another important source of income. Around 10,000 Scouts and Guides take part in this annual London event during the first weekend in March. Being part of the core organising team helps provide a fantastic experience for young people while generating valuable income for our Group.

Like many voluntary and charitable organisations, we continue to face rising costs. Insurance, utilities, maintenance and annual capitation payments to District, County and The Scouts represent substantial commitments, while infrastructure and service costs continue to increase.

Despite these pressures, and subject to our current financial projections, we currently plan to keep termly subscriptions unchanged for the coming year. The Trustee Board's responsibility is not simply to balance the books for one year, but to ensure that the Group remains sustainable and able to provide opportunities for future generations.

Gift Aid remains an extremely valuable source of additional income. Where parents and carers are eligible, the Group can reclaim tax on membership subscriptions at no additional cost to the family. We therefore encourage every eligible parent or carer to complete a Gift Aid declaration.

Supporters can also raise funds for the Group through easyfundraising, where participating retailers make a donation when registered supporters shop online, at no additional cost to the shopper or the Scout Group.

At the same time, we remain committed to ensuring that financial circumstances do not prevent a young person taking part in Scouting. Discreet support remains available where needed, including help with subscriptions, uniform, activities and camps. This remains an important part of what we believe Scouting should be.

Oakhanger District and changes within Scouting

It is now just over a year since Rotherfield and Petersfield Districts came together to form Oakhanger District. The merger represents a new opportunity for Scouting locally, and it has been encouraging to see a growing programme of District activities being coordinated for our young people.

The wider Scout movement is also continuing through a period of significant change, including changes to organisational structures and the introduction of a new adult membership system. These changes are intended to simplify volunteering while strengthening areas such as training, safety and safeguarding.

As a Group, we will continue to adapt to these changes while ensuring that the safety and experience of our young people remain our priorities.

Looking ahead - and thank you

I would like to finish by thanking all our leaders, Scout Active Support members, trustees, helpers, parents and supporters for everything they have contributed during another demanding but rewarding year.

We enter the coming year from a position of considerable strength: young people want to join us, our community supports us, we have secured our home and we have volunteers who continue to give generously of their time.

Our biggest challenge - and opportunity - is to grow that volunteer team. Whether regularly or occasionally, behind the scenes or working directly with young people, there is a role for anyone willing to contribute some time and skills. You do not need to have been a Scout or to know everything about Scouting; you simply need to be willing to help.

Four Marks and Ropley Scout Group has supported the development of young people in our community since 1952. Together, we can ensure that story continues for many years to come.

Mark Hughes
Group Chair
Four Marks and Ropley Scout Group
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May 2026

Four Marks & Ropley Scout Group

Registered Charity No 302240

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

OPERATING ACCOUNT

2024 TOTAL	INCOME	2025 TOTAL
£10,489.00	Subscriptions	£10,425.00
£4,770.80	Camps and activities	£5,483.60
£294.00	Uniform sales	£205.50
£15,553.80		£16,114.10
£4,959.08	Fund raising	£3,150.06
£15,502.00	Donations	£5,355.54
£0.00	Hut Hire	£0.00
£200.00	Minibus Hire	£250.00
£3,406.79	HMRC Gift Aid	£0.00
£2,636.93	Interest	£2,281.30
£32.00	Other: Floats/Transfer/Admin	£0.00
£245.00	Restricted Funds - activities	£0.00
£0.00	Restricted Funds - hut	£0.00
£42,535.60		£27,151.00
£5,000.00	Transfer from/to Newbury BS	£5,000.00
£1.55	Transfer from/to Petty Cash	£0.00
£47,537.15		£32,151.00

2024	EXPENDITURE	2025
£4,400.00	District & National levy	£5,002.00
£514.25	Go Cardless Fees	£491.50
£1,122.68	Admin and floats	£658.91
£6,564.34	Camps and activities	£5,733.17
£1,016.79	Uniform and badges	£727.60
£1,914.79	Hut running costs	£1,298.19
£4,414.39	Hut maintenance	£13,694.81
£1,151.18	Hut & personal insurance	£1,237.73
£41.25	Restricted Funds - activities	£0.00
£0.00	Restricted Funds - hut	£0.00
£21,140.37		£28,843.91
£3,401.37	Minibus costs	£1,409.72
£5,020.60	Fund raising costs	£949.34
£1,701.50	Other (lease advice)	£2,779.40
£5,000.00	Transfer from/to Newbury BS	£5,000.00
£36,263.84		£38,982.37

£11,273.31	OPERATING SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	(£6,831.37)

OVERALL FINANCIAL POSITION

£9,504.50	Current Account (Barclays Bank) Balance	£5,393.38
£1.55	Petty Cash	£0.00
£82,769.85	Hut Account (Newbury Building Society) Balance	£80,029.48
£857.08	Minibus Account (Newbury Building Society) Bala	£878.75
£93,132.98		£86,301.61
	Represented by:	
£81,859.67	Balance b/fwd from 2024	£93,132.98
£11,273.31	2025 Operating surplus/deficit	(£6,831.37)
£93,132.98	Balance c/fwd end 2025	£86,301.61