
AGM 2026
HITCHIN DISTRICT
HERTS
HITCHIN

Hitchin District Scout Council

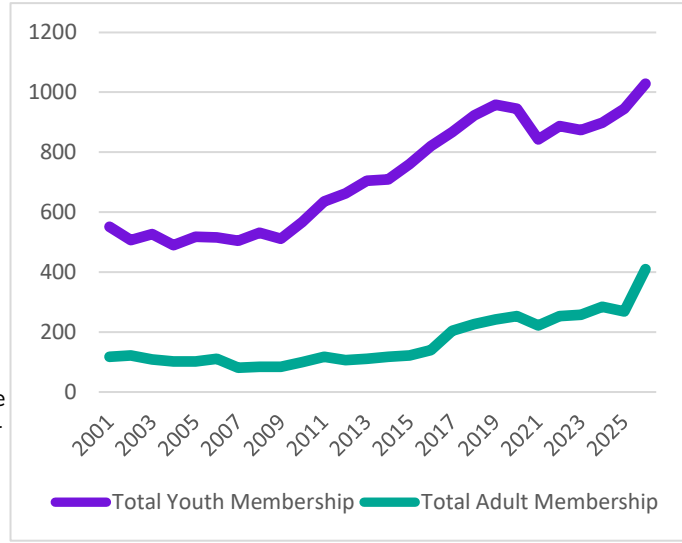
President & Vice Presidents

President	Graham Woolley
Vice Presidents	Rose De Roeck
	Tony Freeman
	Bernard Higgs

District Board of Trustees

Chairman	Mike Wells
Secretary	Colin Wilson
Treasurer	Craig Wilson
District Lead Volunteer	Henry Harrison
Trustees	Denise Wells
	Geraint Edwards
	Tony Hankin

District Membership



This year, our youth membership exceeded 1000 youth people for the first time ever. This is largely down to a big increase in cubs and scouts as the number of beavers did decrease for the second year in a row. Due to this we have actively been recruiting beavers and have changed the wording on the joining form to make it clear that some beaver colonies do have space available. Adult numbers also show As hugely increased. However I think this is largely due to a change in how the data is gathered. I believe that there is a fair amount of double counting in the adult membership data.

Squirrels	45
Beavers	235
Cubs	302
Scouts	317
Explorers	103
Network	27
Total Young People	1029
Total Adults	410
Total Membership	**1439**



Groups and Units in Hitchin District

Scout Groups

- 1st Hitchin (Boys' School)
- 2nd Hitchin (Air Scouts)
- 3rd Hitchin (Walsworth Road Baptist Church)
- 4th Hitchin (St. Ippolytts)
- 5th Hitchin (St. Mark's)
- 6th Hitchin (Priory)
- 7th Hitchin (Our Lady's)
- 8th Hitchin (Oughton)
- 9th Hitchin (1st Ickleford)
- 11th Hitchin (Christchurch)
- 12th Hitchin (St. Mary's and Holy Saviour)
- 15th Hitchin (Holwell and Pirton)
- 16th Hitchin (St. Faiths)
- 17th Hitchin (St. Michael's)

Explorer Scout Units

1st Hitchin ESU
BEAR ESU
PHOENIX ESU
HYDRUS Young Leaders

Network Scout Unit

Hitchin District Network



District Awards and Achievements

Silver Acorn
Ben Pearson

Chief Scouts Award for Merit
Elizabeth Cranfield

Chief Scouts Commendation for Good Service
Helen Matthews
Nicola Cross
Michelle Stafford
Mark Waples
James Cole
Janice Chapman
Dionne Thompson
Jasmine Livings
Nick Senechal
Jeremy Foyle
Geraint Edwards
Matt Dormer
Lindsey Goldsmith

30 Years' Service
Ben Pearson

25 Years' Service
Paul Pinkstone
Phil Hobbs

20 Years' Service
Gordon White

15 Years' Service
Hayley Cross
Sam Hankin

10 Years' Service
Geraint Edwards
Matt Dormer
Julie Henton Pusey
Pete Hibbs
Lindsey Goldsmith

5 years' service
Ollie Moorey
David Sansom
David Bradbury
Matthew Sutcliffe
Colin Wilson
Emma Clarke
Sarah Tooley
Liz Bannister
Karl Foster
Matt Kaplan
Jonathan Pritchard-Barrett
Ruth Fennemore

District Chairman

Hello again and thank you for reading the annual review of Hitchin Scouting. I am sure you will agree that the past year has again been a great success for Hitchin, especially as we have topped the 1000 young people in membership for the first time.

Many of you will know that I will be stepping down as district chair this year. I think I have done 19 years in various non uniform roles 2 stints as district chair and one as chair of the 17th. As well as being camp chef for the 17th for many years until being promoted to District chef for DAW weekends.

I would sincerely like to thank Henry, Craig, Colin and all of the district trustee board past and present for their support and of course all of the leaders and adult volunteers who have helped to deliver these “Skills for life”, we simply could not do it without you. I look forward to welcoming you to our AGM at the Boyd Field Camp site in Henlow on 20th June.

Mike Wells
District Chairman



District Treasurer

The Financial Accounts for the calendar year 2025 are presented for consideration at this AGM. The accounts have been independently examined, and I would like to thank Philippa Morgan-Males for carrying out the examination. Both the accounts and the examiner's report were approved by the District Trustee Board at a meeting on 20th April 2026.

By using grant funds, District once again subsidized our annual membership fee to keep it at £2.50. District retained income from membership fees was £2,325 compared to £2,210 in 2024, reflecting the increase in youth membership numbers. The increases in the National and County membership fees for 2025 were reflected in increased subscription costs charged by groups to members. Group subs increased from an average of £35.17 per term in 2024 to £38.63 per term in 2025.

In 2025, the Trustee Board voted to start using District Funds to purchase OSM Gold+ subscriptions for all groups. By centrally purchasing subscriptions, an annual saving of 10% is available. This was initially funded through grant but in future years will be funded by the District membership fee.
In financial terms, the largest two District events in 2025 were DAW and the Explorers trip to Yellowstone, and these are shown separately in the accounts. The DAW event made a surplus which will be used to reduce costs for the next DAW event. The Yellowstone trip broke even despite some unforeseen circumstances which arose.

Scout Shop income from sales in 2025 was £14,384 (2024: £12,899) and expenditure was £12,781 (2024: £11,452), after adjustment for a sizeable 2024 invoice which was paid in 2025. Thank you once again to Denise for running the shop, and Jen Clarke for preparing the accounts. All profits from the shop are re-invested into Hitchin Scouting.

Bank interest income increased from £314 in 2024 to £1,512 in 2025, reflecting a full year of interest from the building society savings account.

Gift aid income increased from £1,491 in 2024 to £2,192 in 2025. A substantial donation from a member of the District Sailing team accounts for most of the increase, this donation was used to fund the purchase of an electric outboard motor.

Explorer unit income and expenditure were both higher than 2024, once again demonstrating the dedication of the Explorer leader teams in running many events throughout the year, including multiple DoE expeditions, camps, and of course Explorer attendance at DAW. Unit finances remain healthy.

In 2025, the District Sailing Team, with Trustee Board support, undertook a significant project to purchase six new dinghies for District sailing events. The expected costs of the boats were in the region of £25,000. The team and the board agreed that £10,000 would be made available from existing funds, and that the remainder would need to come from fundraising. A significant

fundraising effort was therefore undertaken, and I would like to thank Marion Caslake for running this. Thanks to Marion's tireless efforts, the fundraising met, and indeed exceeded the required amount, enabling the team to not only purchase the dinghies, but also enhance the secure storage facilities at Blue Lagoon to help keep the new craft safe. The dinghies were purchased in December 2025 and delivered in early January of this year. I would now like to mention all the organizations which granted funds for the purchase:

Hertfordshire Community Foundation	£10,000
Leslie Sell Trust	£1,650
Hitchin Youth Trust	£,1500*
North Herts District Council Community Fund	£1,500*
Robert Clutterbuck Trust	£1,000*
Hertfordshire County Council Locality Budget	£500

* Grant funds received in 2026, not shown in 2025 accounts

Note that the terms of the Hertfordshire Community Foundation grant were that the monies were held in Restricted Funds, to be used only for the purpose stated in the grant application. This is accordingly reflected in the 2025 accounts.

Overall receipts in 2025 were £112,185 compared to £77,569 in 2024. Income from the DAW and Yellowstone events plus the grants mentioned above account for this increase.

Overall expenditure in 2025 was £137,182 compared to £80,286 in 2024. The expenditure on the DAW and Yellowstone events, plus the purchase of the new dinghies account for this increase.

Overall, at the end of 2025, District funds stood at £54,736 compared to £79,733 in 2024. Excluding any ring- fenced funds (e.g. specific grants, Explorers, Sailing, funds held for future events), District 'free' reserves stood at £14,813 (2024: £14,995). The reserves policy requires £15,000 of free funds, but this small shortfall does not cause the Trustees any concerns.

Craig Wilson
Treasurer



District Lead Volunteer

The period since last years AGM has been a successful year of growth, adventure and focus on safety compliance for Hitchin Scouts. The district expanded its local impact through the launch of new Squirrels and Cubs provision in Ickleford, alongside continued membership growth at other groups across the town. Ickleford scouts now has 2 cub packs to help meet demand for the section. As demand for Squirrels continues, we are also planning to open a 4th drey later this year. Many of our cub and scouts sections are now full and this is also true for explorers; 1st ESU and BEAR ESU Explorer units are now operating essentially at capacity. However, we do have spaces at the new unit- Phoenix ESU at the 5th Scout Hut.

To support adventurous activity, the district purchased some brand new fusion dinghies. Thanks to the sailing team for organising this and continuing to deliver fantastic opportunities throughout the sailing season. Thanks to Marion for coordinating applications and finding grants to help fund the purchase.

Supporting this expanding membership requires continued commitment to safety and inclusivity. Over the year, leaders have successfully accommodated a significant rise in members with Special Educational Needs (SEN), ensuring scouting remains an inclusive and supportive environment. As a movement, scouting undertook a massive effort ahead of the summer camping season last year to bring mandatory online safety and safeguarding training up to date. Thanks to the dedication of our volunteers, the vast majority achieved compliance, with only a handful of suspensions required in the district. To maintain these standards, the district provided regular face-to-face First Response training and safety workshops, while reminding groups that new volunteers must complete their essential modules within four weeks of appointment to avoid automatic suspension.

Following a selection process run by the county with over 200 applications, eight scouts successfully secured their places to represent the district at the 2027 World Scout Jamboree in Poland: Annabel Burrows, Ebony Bush, Ethan Cole, William Hankin, Zuzu James, Thomas Johnston, Dexter Roberts, and Amelie-Su Thompson. Additionally, 14 scouts successfully secured places for the county trip to the

Azores. This highlights how strong the district is and how young people from Hitchin have been set up by their leaders with the right skills to shine.

I'd like to extend our thanks to Mike, who is stepping down as District Chair at the June AGM after providing vital governance, leadership, and oversight. Massive thanks also go to Max Pearson, who has stepped down as District Youth Lead to begin his new life in London; Max was fantastic at linking district leadership to the youth membership and will be greatly missed. Conversely, we celebrate Ben Pearson, who received the well-deserved Silver Acorn award for his invaluable dedication to organizing trips for Scouts and Explorers. Further thanks goes to Diana for revamping the district's social media strategy to boost recruitment , and to Denise, who is stepping down as district Scout Shop manager to focus on her role as GLV at 16th Hitchin. The resilience and dedication of all our volunteers have made this a standout year for the district.

Henry Harrison
District Lead Volunteer



District Activity Team Lead

Over the past year, the activities teams have been busy delivering exceptional experiences for our Scouts.

The Climbing and Archery teams have been fully booked for most terms. We have given over 640 young people the chance to try these sports under the guidance of our qualified instructors. We have had a few new faces join the Archery and Climbing teams and would welcome more help if anyone could spare an odd Wednesday evening to join the fun.

Our Sailing team has revamped the club by purchasing new sailing dinghies and a rescue boat, enabling our groups to sail over the summer months.

We have held three MIDAS training sessions over the year, giving the district and groups the opportunity to increase the number of qualified minibus drivers.

Over the past year, we have run a number of activities.

- Cubs pool party: 150 took part
- Squirrels and Beavers Christingle: 180 took part
- Beaver sleepover at Christchurch: 100 Beavers took part
- Scouts night hike in Meppershall: 200 scouts
- St. George's Day great turnout
- District Squirrel and Beaver Camp: over 100
- Cub hike: 220 Cubs

All this takes time, and the teams I have worked with have been second to none, with many new faces stepping forward to help with large events.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to Hazel and Ian White and to Louis Higgs for all the time and effort they have invested in planning and running these events.

I am planning a Scout hike/challenge in October and am looking for a team to help plan and put it in place to run it with me. Please let me know if it's something you are interested in helping with.

Last of all, a massive thanks to all the teams, too many to mention. Let's keep providing experiences and memories for our Hitchin Scouts, with Skills For Life at the heart of it all.

Ian Buck
District Activity Team Lead



District Programme Team Lead

The Programme Team exists to help every section run a safe, enjoyable and quality programme.

The Programme Team has co-hosted, with the activities team, termly meetings for Beaver, Cub, Scout and Explorers leaders which provide opportunities for leaders to share best practice, successful programme ideas and give feedback directly to the District Team.

Our achievements this year include:

- 19 Scouts from across the District completed their Expedition Challenge Award through the District Programme
- DofE Bronze and Silver practice and qualifying Expeditions completed under the leadership of Michael Cranfield and Ben Pearson, Hitchin's Duke of Edinburgh Team.
- 5 DofE Silver Awards and 6 DofE Bronze Awards completed during the year.
- 15 Nights Away Permits awarded by the assessor team of Ben Pearson and Ashley Theakstone.
- An OSM Training workshop to help groups get the most out of the tool.
- Safety Workshops to reinforce how to run safe scouting.
- Leaders Social to improve communications across the District
- The Programme Team conducts visits to engage with leaders during their section meetings.

Ben Pearson
District Programme Team Lead

District Volunteer Development Team Lead

We are now approaching 2 years since the introduction of the new scouting membership system, and with a lot of hard work to get to grips with new processes on how to manage members roles, I can confidentially say we have been successful at trying to meet the targets set for the Transformation process.

The Transformation was to achieve three areas
-Creating a warmer welcome for new members
-Simplifying volunteering with changes to roles and team structures
-Making training more valuable, realistic and convenient

To meet these areas, we have run DHQ training, 1-2-1 meets ups, bitesize learning, coffee meets (my favourite!), First Aid sessions, drop-in sessions, digital tools training, numerous A4 sheets of 'know-how', Welcome Chats and today's Leaders Skills Weekend, alongside the AGM, to support Hitchin members whenever needed.

My thanks goes out to all the Volunteer Development members, who have gone above their own roles, to support these sessions in Hitchin.

Going forward, Volunteer Development in Hitchin will, in-line with The Strategy to 2035, review the first stages of the Focus Area recently announced with the introduction of UK Strategy 2035.

The impact of the Strategy to 2035 will focus Hitchin Scouting on what we do best – giving young people 'Place to Belong' and giving them '#SkillsforLife'. Our new strategy is about helping even more people find a place to belong.
It has been shaped by 28,000 people in Scouts and beyond, including more than 3,000 young Scouts who made their voices heard.
It's a place to be yourself and be part of something.

The Scout UK Vision is to empower more young people through adventure, teamwork and shared values, to take the lead on making a positive difference in the world. Our Core Pillars are to deliver an adventurous and inclusive Programme and supporting our volunteers.



Thank you to every Hitchin Scouting members from the leaders, team members, helpers, GLV's, trainers, Young Leaders, tea-makers, new programme dreamers, new hike route planners, specialist area supporters, Trustees, skills members, activity planners, mentors, and so many more of you who are prepared to give back to Hitchin Community to hopefully enjoy it as much as the young people do!

Tina Hay
District Volunteer Development Team Lead

Vacancies

We are always looking for people to join the district team and help coordinate scouting across the district. If you are interested in any position, please get in touch with somebody in the district team. In particular, we are looking for trustees and somebody to manage the scout shop. The shop is a really valuable asset that brings money into the district and provides a valuable service. The role could be split between a couple of people so that you don't have to be there every Monday.





Registered Charity Number 302546

Hitchin District Scout Council
Receipts and Payments Account

For the year from	01/01/2025	To		31/12/2025

Receipts

	2025 Unrestricted £	2025 Restricted £	2024 Unrestricted £
Subscriptions			
Membership subscriptions	61,380.00		48,620.00
Less:Membership subscriptions paid on (National/County/Area/District)	- 59,055.00		- 46,410.00
Net membership subscriptions retained	2,325.00	-	2,210.00
District Operations			
Premises	400.00		702.96
Administration	-		-
Adult support & training	-		485.18
Equipment	510.00		-
Sub total	910.00	-	1,188.14
District Activities & Groups			
District events & activities	5,659.50		15,121.00
Watersports	7,683.35		8,374.33
DAW25	28,582.00		350.00
Explorers & Network	28,243.66		26,792.83
Yellowstone	15,994.96		7,044.54
Sub total	86,163.47	-	57,682.70
Donations, legacies and similar income			
Private donations and grants	4,150.00		1,231.54
Herts Community Fund Grant		10,000.00	
Benevity and Amazon Smile	492.50		492.50
Sub total	4,642.50	10,000.00	1,724.04
Charitable income to pass on			
St Georges day - MACs	-		-
Corporate matched funding passed to specific groups	56.03		60.84
	56.03	-	60.84
Scout Shop			
Scout Shop Income	14,384.10		12,898.67
	14,384.10	-	12,898.67
Investment income			
Bank interest	1,511.57		313.66
Gift Aid	2,192.27		1,490.52
Sub total	3,703.84	-	1,804.18
Total receipts	112,184.94	10,000.00	77,568.57

Payments

	2025 Unrestricted £	2025 Restricted £	2024 Unrestricted £
District Operations			
Premises	2,534.35		5,874.18
Administration	2,598.53		953.03
Adult support & training	2,305.24		3,198.14
Youth Support (Hardship Fund)	95.67		-
Watercraft Insurance	240.85		379.44
Equipment	17,595.10	10,000.00	2,795.02
Sub total	25,369.74	10,000.00	13,199.81
District Activities & Groups			
District events & activities	6,763.94		18,377.65
Watersports	4,240.14		4,312.40
Explorers & Network	31,024.25		27,464.49
DAW25	33,432.07		3,657.56
Yellowstone	19,587.18		3,409.00
Jamboree 2027	1,900.00		-
Sub total	96,947.58	-	57,221.10
Charitable income to pass on			
Hitchin Initiative	150.00		150.00
Corporate matched funding passed to specific groups	42.51		47.32
RBL Poppy Appeal	39.90		67.10
	232.41	-	264.42
Scout Shop			
Scout Shop Expenditure	12,780.89		11,451.64
2024 Invoices paid in 2025	1,851.33		- 1,851.33
	14,632.22	-	9,600.31
Total payments	137,181.95	10,000.00	80,285.64

Receipts and Payments Accounts Summary

	2025 Unrestricted £	2025 Restricted £	2024 Unrestricted £
Total Receipts	112,184.94		77,568.57
Total payments	137,181.95		80,285.64
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 24,997.01	-	- 2,717.07
Cash funds last year end	79,732.74		82,449.81
Cash funds carried forward	54,735.73	-	79,732.74

Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the year

	2025 Unrestricted £	2025 Restricted £	2024 Unrestricted £
Cash funds			
Bank current account	11,023.38		10,420.78
2nd 'Project' account	-		3,985.54
Savings Account	21,825.23		40,313.66
Paypal	1,221.20		299.93
Explorers	12,427.67		12,225.87
Equals Cards	- 0.00		0.59
Scout Shop current account	8,215.39		10,791.48
Scout shop Cash/Floats	22.86		22.86
Scout Shop Liabilities	-		- 289.20
Scout shop Debtors	-		1,961.23
Total cash funds	54,735.73	-	79,732.74

The above receipts and payments account and statement of assets and liabilities were approved by the Trustee Board on 20th April 2026 and signed on their behalf by

Signature	Print Name	
Craig Wilson	CRAIG WILSON	Treasurer
	MIKE WELLS	Chair

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Hitchin District Scout Council

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Hitchin District Scout Council for the year ended 31st December 2025.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Hitchin District Scout Council, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

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

Independent examiner's statement

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Hitchin District Scout Council as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

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

Signed:

Name: Philippa Morgan-Mais

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

Address: 65 Benslow Rise, Hitchin SG4 9QY

Date: 11/4/26