



# 1st MERROW SCOUT GROUP

## Trustees' Annual Report For the year 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025

### A. Reference and Administration Details

Charity name: 1<sup>st</sup> Merrow Scout Group

Charity number: 305753

Charity's principal address: Browell Memorial Hall, Bushy Hill Drive, Guildford, Surrey, GU1 2SH

The Trustees who served from 1 April 2024 and up to the date this report was approved were:

Trustee Name	Office	Dates acted if not for whole year <sup>(1)</sup>
Thomas Day	Trustee	Appointed 27 September 2024
Gemma Gregson	Secretary	Resigned 27 September 2024
Claire Grove	Trustee	Appointed 27 September 2024
Martin Jones	Joint Lead Volunteer and Roughs Explorer Scouts Team Leader <sup>(2)</sup>	
Sandy Jones	Joint Lead Volunteer	Resigned 27 September 2024
Matthew Kelynack	Trustee	Appointed 27 September 2024
Melanie Mariner	Trustee	Appointed 27 September 2024
Chris Ney	Scout Leader	Resigned 27 September 2024
Iain Robertson	Cub Scout Leader	Resigned 27 September 2024
Samantha Ritchie	Treasurer	
Denise Stafford	Asst. Beaver Scout Leader	Resigned 27 September 2024
Cheryl de Suys-Shrubb	Beaver Scout Leader	Resigned 27 September 2024
Nicholas Tetley	Trustee	Appointed 27 September 2024
Donald Tournier	Cub Scout Leader	Resigned 27 September 2024
Andrew Whitcombe	Chair	Resigned 29 April 2025

<sup>(1)</sup> In 2024 The Scout Association changed its guidelines regarding the governance of local Scout Groups. As part of these changes it recommended that Section Leaders and the Group Secretary should no longer be Trustees. It also requires that where the Group Lead Volunteer position is shared, only one role holder can hold the ex-officio Trustee position. This change came into effect for 1<sup>st</sup> Merrow at the 27 September 2024 AGM. At the same AGM, several new Trustees were appointed.

<sup>(2)</sup> The Roughs Explorer Scout Unit is legally part of Guildford East District Scout Council and does not form part of the 1<sup>st</sup> Merrow Scout Group (the Group). However, the Explorer Scout Unit shares the facilities and equipment of the Group, participates fully in Group activities and events and operates in most aspects as though it is a section of the Group for practical purposes.

## **B. Structure, Governance and Management**

### **Governing Document**

The Group's governing documents are those of The Scout Association. They consist of a Royal Charter, which in turn gives authority to the Bye Laws of the Association and The Policy, Organisation and Rules (POR) of The Scout Association.

### **Constitution and Governance**

The Group is a trust established under the rules of The Scout Association, which are common to all Scout groups.

The Trustees are appointed in accordance with the Policy, Organisation and Rules of The Scout Association.

The Group is managed by the Group Trustee Board, the members of which are the 'Charity Trustees' of the Scout Group which is an educational charity. 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 Group Lead Volunteer together with other elected and co-opted trustees and meets four to six times per year.

Members of the Trustee Board complete "Being a Scouts Trustee" learning within the first six months of joining the Board.

This Group Trustee Board exists to make sure the charity is well-managed, risks are assessed and mitigated, buildings and equipment are in good working order, and everyone follows legal requirements and the organisation's policies and rules. Their support helps other volunteers run high-quality and safe programmes that give young people skills for life.

### **Risk and Internal Control**

The Group Trustee Board has identified the major risks to which they believe the Group is exposed. These have been reviewed and systems have been established to mitigate against them. The main areas of concern that have been identified are:

- Damage to the building, property and equipment. In the event of loss of use, the Group would request the temporary use of buildings, property and equipment from neighbouring organisations such as local churches, community centres and other Scout Groups. Similar reciprocal arrangements exist with these organisations. The building is periodically surveyed to ensure the asbestos present in some of the building materials is properly managed. Department for Education guidelines for identifying RAAC have been followed and the result was that we do not suspect there is any RAAC in the huts.
- Injury to leaders, helpers, supporters or members. The Group, through the annual subscriptions, contributes to The Scout Association's national accident insurance policy. Risk Assessments are undertaken before all activities. The Group subscribes to the additional personal accident insurance policy taken out by the Scout District.
- Reduced income from fundraising. The Group is primarily reliant upon income from subscriptions and fundraising. The Group does hold a reserve to ensure the continuity of activities should there be a major reduction in income. The Board could raise the value of subscriptions to increase the income to the Group on an ongoing basis, either temporarily or permanently.
- Reduction or loss of leaders. The Group is totally reliant upon volunteers to run and administer the activities of the Group. If there was a reduction in the number of leaders to an unacceptable level in a particular section or the Group as a whole, then there would

have to be a contraction, consolidation or closure of a section. In the worst case scenario the temporary or permanent complete closure of the Group would be necessary, but the Guildford East Scout District would also endeavour to provide support to individual sections and/or the Group as necessary to prevent this from happening, at least in the short term.

- Reduction or loss of members. The Group provides activities for all young people aged 6 to 18. If there was a reduction in membership in a particular section or the Group as a whole, then there would have to be a contraction, consolidation or closure of a section. In the worst case scenario the complete closure of the Group would be necessary. The Group and Guildford East District would work together to try and ensure that existing members could transfer and continue their Scouting in another local Scout Group. The Group currently has a large waiting list for membership at all ages so this risk is very unlikely to crystallise.
- Reduction or loss of trustees. To operate according to the constitution the Group needs between 5-12 trustees, including a chair and a treasurer. In 2024 the Scout Association POR changes increased this risk, with section leaders no longer forming part of the Trustee Board going forward. To mitigate this risk, in 2024 the Group engaged with the Group Council to identify new trustees from the parent and carer community. From 2025 onwards the Group will ensure trustee terms are staggered to reduce the risk of trustee numbers falling below the minimum of five.
- Fraudulent or accidental payments. As the Group has grown to such a size, the finances are becoming increasingly complex, with more people involved in the management thereof. To help mitigate the risk of payments being made fraudulently in error, two approvers are required for all payments from all 1st Merrow accounts and the annual accounts are reviewed by an external examiner. There is also a financial policy that defines the parameters under which Trustee Board approval is required for larger payments.

The Group has in place systems of internal controls that are designed to provide reasonable assurance against material mismanagement or loss; these include mandatory training for leaders, two signatories for all payments and comprehensive insurance policies to ensure that insurable risks are covered.

## **C. Objectives and Activities**

### **The Purpose of Scouting**

Scouting exists to engage actively and support young people in their personal development, empowering them to make a positive contribution to society.

### **The Values of Scouting.**

Scouts 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 Scout Promise.

Subscriptions are charged for membership to cover immediate running costs of the Group plus subscriptions payable to Guildford East District Scout Council, Surrey County Scout Council and The Scout Association. These do not unduly restrict membership. The Group follows the principle that no one should be excluded because of their inability to pay membership subscriptions and has arrangements to provide bursaries or waive fees where appropriate to ensure Scouting is available to all.

### **Public Benefit**

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.

## **D. Achievements and Performance**

The 1<sup>st</sup> Merrow Scout Group has enjoyed another hugely successful year with high membership and engagement of young people. During the year, the Group operated 3 Beaver colonies (Aspen, Maple and Willow), 4 Cub packs (Adventurers, Discoverers, Explorers and Pioneers) and 4 Scout troops (Cyclone, Hurricane, Lightning and Thunder) with 273 young people and 54 adults recorded on the annual census return in January 2025, making 1<sup>st</sup> Merrow again the largest Scout Group, by membership, within Surrey County Scouts.

Excellent adult leadership enabled the provision of another full and varied programme and resulted in the continued achievement of top awards in every section. As well as leadership by the adult volunteers, each Beaver, Cub and Scout section benefitted greatly from the Young Leader scheme which enables Explorer Scouts to develop their leadership skills through volunteering in a younger section. More than 20 Explorer Scouts took on Young Leader roles during the year, either in the Merrow Scout Group or other local Scout groups.

The programme is operated on a progressive basis through the sections such that Beavers experienced their first hike in a walk through the village, Cubs hiked in the Surrey Hills, Scouts took part in a longer night hike challenge and 6 Explorer Scouts undertook an unaccompanied 10-day, 150km expedition in Sweden as part of their Explorer Belt award.

Food preparation is similarly progressive from Beavers decorating biscuits and topping pizzas, through dough twists and s'mores by the Cubs, campfire cooking, camp doughnuts and making Christmas mincemeat with the Scouts and backwoods cooking without utensils and a full Christmas meal for 30 people prepared and cooked by the Explorer Scouts.

Camping highlights ranged from a sleepover at the Scout hut for Beavers, weekend camps at Walton Firs and Broadstone Warren for the Cubs, Scoutabout and a Troop summer camp at Blacklands Farm for the Scouts and a cycle camp (cycling from Guildford to Henfield) for the Explorer Scouts.

Support for, and service to, the local community also featured strongly throughout the year. The Group hosted another Easter Tea with members from across all sections baking cakes and preparing sandwiches which they then served to older or lonely members of the community before providing them with musical entertainment. Various sections were involved in litter picks throughout the year, the Beavers visited the local church, Cubs visited the local fire station, Scouts visited the mosque and Explorer Scouts the local food bank.

There was a large turnout from all sections for the district St George's Day celebration of Scouting and for the annual act of remembrance at the Merrow war memorial where the Group joined the community before attending a special remembrance service for the Group inside the church.

The Scouting programme was designed to be varied, ambitious and balanced, enabling the young people to discover new things and learn skills for life through exciting and fun activities. Achievement of these skills by the young people is recognised through the badge scheme and during 2024/25 a total of 2,074 badges were awarded to members of the Group:

- 16 Beaver Scouts earned the **Bronze** Chief Scout's Challenge badge (the top award available in the Beaver section) and 377 other badges were gained.
- 17 Cub Scouts earned the **Silver** Chief Scout's Challenge badge (the top award available in the Cub section) and 921 other badges were gained.
- 7 Scouts earned the **Gold** Chief Scout's Challenge badge (the top award available in the Scout section) and 736 other badges were gained.

In addition, in the partner Explorer Scout Unit that meets in the Merrow Scout headquarters and to which most Merrow Scouts progress:

- 12 Explorer Scouts earned the **Platinum** Chief Scout's Challenge badge, 8 gained the **Diamond** Chief Scout's Challenge badge (the top Chief Scout's Challenge badge available in Scouting), 6 earned their Explorer Belt and 362 other badges were gained.

The Group Trustee Board expresses its huge appreciation to all the leaders for enabling all these activities and achievements to take place and recognises the substantial time and effort required to plan and deliver them safely, all on a voluntary basis. The Board was delighted to welcome new volunteers to the teams during the year and also to celebrate the input and achievements of those who stood down from leadership for a variety of reasons.

## E. Financial Review

### Annual performance

The Group had total receipts for the year to 31 March 2025 of £66,238 (2024: £45,748) and total payments of £49,685 (2024: £47,351), giving an excess of income over expenditure for the year of £16,553 (2024: £1,603 excess payments). However, the accounts are prepared on a receipts and payments basis so the figures do not necessarily provide a fair representation of the underlying annual financial performance.

2025 expenditure included £3,500 expenses to set-up the new Cyclone section which was funded by a Start-Up grant in 2024. Apart from these expenses, all the receipts and payments in the year related to unrestricted funds and activities.

### Reserves Policy

The Group's policy on reserves is to hold sufficient resources to continue the charitable activities of the group should income and fundraising activities fall short. The Group Trustee Board considers that the group should hold a sum equivalent to 9 months running costs, circa £25,000.

The Group held reserves of £239,512 at year end which is significantly above the level required for operating expenses. However, the Group is actively seeking to generate surpluses and build

up sufficient cash to enable replacement of its current buildings, which are coming to the end of their useful lives.

### **Investment Policy**

The Group's Income and Expenditure is very small and as a consequence does not have sufficient funds to invest in longer-term investments such as stocks and shares. The Group has therefore adopted a low risk strategy to the investment of its funds. All funds are held in cash using only mainstream banks or building societies.

The Group Trustee Board regularly monitors the levels of bank balances and the interest rates received to ensure the group obtains maximum value and income from its banking arrangements. Occasionally this may involve using an account that requires a period of notice before funds may be withdrawn, before doing so the Group Trustee Board considers the cash flow requirements

### **Future Planning**

The Group recognises that the current buildings are at the end of their useful lives and in need of replacement with facilities more fit for current and foreseeable future Scouting. It is planning to redevelop the site as early as funds permit and intends to continue actively raising funds for this building project. This is now a priority for the Group to ensure adequate, fit for purpose facilities are available for current and future generations of Scouts.

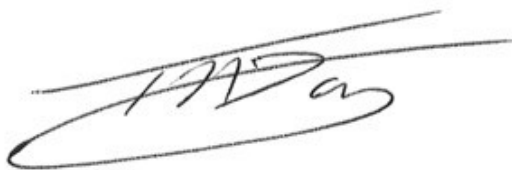
We will continue to develop our volunteer leadership teams for all existing sections, looking at succession, planning to ensure the sustainability of the Group and continuing to provide exciting, inspirational and inclusive programmes that equip all our young people with skills for life.

The Group Trustee Board continue to consider whether and when it might be appropriate to introduce a Squirrel section (for 4 and 5 year olds) to the Group.

### **Declaration**

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

Signed on behalf of the charity's Trustees



Chair of Trustees

27<sup>th</sup> November 2025

# 1st Merrow Scout Group (Charity no. 305753)

## Receipts and Payments Account

	Year start date		0
For the year from	01-Apr-24	31-Mar-25	

### Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the year

	2024/25 Unrestricted funds £	2024/25 Restricted funds £	2024/25 Total funds £	2023/24 Total funds £
<b>Cash funds</b>				
Bank current account	21,080	-	21,080	33,271
Bank Deposit account	155,474	-	155,474	129,675
Charities Official Investment Fund	62,929	-	62,929	59,958
Cash/Floats	29	-	29	56
<b>Total cash funds</b>	<b>239,512</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>239,512</b>	<b>222,960</b>
<b>Other monetary assets</b>				
Tax claim due	23,519	-	23,519	11,527
Debts due from the County/Area/District	-	-	-	-
Insurance claim	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>23,519</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>23,519</b>	<b>11,527</b>
<b>Investment assets</b>				
Investment property - detail	-	-	-	-
Quoted investments	-	-	-	-
Other investments - detail	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Non monetary assets for charity's own use</b>				
Land and buildings (replacement cost )	277,703	-	277,703	264,210
Motor vehicles	-	-	-	-
Scouting equipment, furniture etc (replacement cost )	62,100	-	62,100	42,100
Other	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>339,803</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>339,803</b>	<b>306,310</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>				
Accounts not yet paid	3,617	-	3,617	815
Expenses and reimbursements due to leaders	2,011	-	2,011	6,943
Subscriptions not yet paid	-	-	-	-
due to County/Area/District/Group	-	-	-	-
Other liabilities	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>5,627</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5,627</b>	<b>7,758</b>

The above receipts and payments account and statement of assets and liabilities were approved by the Trustees on 27 November 2025 and signed on their behalf by

Signature	Print Name
	Tom Day
	Samantha Ritchie

**1st Merrow Scout Group (Charity no. 305753)**  
**Receipts and Payments Account**

	Year start date		Year end date	
For the year from			01-Apr-24	31-Mar-25

**Receipts and payments**

	2024/25 Unrestricted funds £	2024/25 Restricted funds £	2024/25 Total funds £	2023/24 Total funds £
<b>Payments</b>				
<b>Charitable Payments</b>				
Youth programme and activities	16,100	672	16,772	12,163
Badges	3,219	-	3,219	3,744
Adult support, recognition and training	454	-	454	72
Water and Sewerage	935	-	935	769
Electricity and Gas	1,951	-	1,951	495
Insurance	2,405	-	2,405	2,124
Repairs and Renewals	1,253	-	1,253	1,673
Materials and equipment	1,701	-	1,701	1,154
Printing, photocopying and postage	207	-	207	149
Camp costs	13,124	-	13,124	20,081
Uniforms	641	-	641	645
AGM and trustee expenses	5	-	5	36
Donations	-	-	-	24
Net membership fees and expenses paid to Explorer unit	-	-	-	2,947
Online services	648	-	648	597
Admin and other expenses	145	-	145	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>42,788</b>	<b>672</b>	<b>43,460</b>	<b>46,673</b>
<b>Fundraising expenses</b>				
T Shirts	-	-	-	-
Other fundraising costs	124	-	124	179
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>179</b>
<b>Total Gross Expenditure</b>	<b>42,912</b>	<b>672</b>	<b>43,584</b>	<b>46,852</b>
<b>Capital equipment</b>	<b>3,273</b>	<b>2,828</b>	<b>6,101</b>	<b>499</b>
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>46,185</b>	<b>3,500</b>	<b>49,685</b>	<b>47,351</b>
<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	<b>20,053</b>	<b>(3,500)</b>	<b>16,553</b>	<b>(1,603)</b>
<b>Cash funds last year end</b>	<b>219,460</b>	<b>3,500</b>	<b>222,960</b>	<b>224,563</b>
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	<b>239,512</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>239,512</b>	<b>222,960</b>

**1st Merrow Scout Group (Charity no. 305753)**  
**Receipts and Payments Account**

For the year from	Year start date	To	Year end date
	01-Apr-24		31-Mar-25

**Receipts and payments**

	2024/25 Unrestricted funds £	2024/25 Restricted funds £	2024/25 Total funds £	2023/24 Total funds £
<b>Receipts</b>				
<b>Donations, legacies and similar income</b>				
Membership subscriptions	47,968	-	47,968	12,817
Less: Membership subscriptions paid on to District	(13,787)	-	(13,787)	-
Net membership subscriptions retained	34,181	-	34,181	12,817
Donations	9,645	-	9,645	300
Gift Aid	-	-	-	-
Other similar income	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>43,826</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>43,826</b>	<b>13,117</b>
<b>Grants</b>				
Start-Up grant	-	-	-	3,500
Other grants	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,500</b>
<b>Income from Charitable Activities</b>				
Youth programme and activities income	3,716	-	3,716	3,223
Camp income	14,210	-	14,210	21,170
Utilities refund	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>17,926</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>17,926</b>	<b>24,393</b>
<b>Fundraising (gross)</b>				
Christmas Fair	275	-	275	337
T Shirts and uniform	236	-	236	555
Other fundraising activities	205	-	205	391
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>716</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>716</b>	<b>1,283</b>
<b>Investment income</b>				
Bank interest	800	-	800	675
Charities Official Investment Fund	2,970	-	2,970	2,780
Interest on Gift Aid	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>3,770</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,770</b>	<b>3,455</b>
<b>Total Gross Income</b>	<b>66,238</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>66,238</b>	<b>45,748</b>
<b>Asset and investment sales, etc.</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>66,238</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>66,238</b>	<b>45,748</b>

## **Independent examiner's report to the trustees of 1st Merrow Scout Group**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the 1<sup>st</sup> Merrow Scout Group ("the Trust") for the year ended 31 March 2025.

### **Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Trust, 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 Trust's 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 Trust 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: *K. Summers*

Name: Karen Summers

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

Address: 7 Clifford Manor Road, Guildford. Surrey GU4 8AG

Date: *27th November 2025*