

# Trustee's Annual Report

For the period from 01 April 2023 to 31 March 2024



## Section A Reference and Administration Details

Charity Name            3<sup>rd</sup> Ballymena Scout Group  
Charity Number        103874  
Principal Address      West Church, Ballymoney Road, Ballymena, BT43 5BS

The trustees that manage the charity are –

Name	Office	Dates acted, if not for full year
Leslie Carswell	Group Scout Leader	
Mark McKane	Chairperson	
Steven Potter	Treasurer	
Jane Thompson	Secretary	
Mark Dick	Trustee	
Douglas Hogg	Trustee	Retired 26 June 2023
Hilary Caithness	Trustee	

## Section B Structure, Governance and Management

### Type of 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 of The Scout Association.

### How the Charity is Constituted

The Group is a trust established under its rules which are common to all Scouts.

### **Trustee Selection Methods**

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

### **Group Executive Committee**

The Group is managed by the Group Executive Committee, 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 Committee consists of 3 independent representatives, Chair, Treasurer and Secretary together with the Group Scout Leader, and a representative parent from each section of the Group. Additionally, some members are co-opted onto the Committee from time to time. The Committee meets at least once every 6 months.

The Group Executive Committee exists to support the Group Scout Leader in meeting the responsibilities of the appointments and is responsible for:

- The maintenance of Group property and equipment
- The raising of funds and the administration of Group finance
- The insurance of persons, property and equipment
- Group public occasions
- Assisting in the recruitment of leaders and other adult support
- Appointing any sub committees that may be required
- Appointing Group Administrators and Advisors other than those who are elected

### **Risk and Internal Control**

#### **General**

The group has in place systems of internal controls that are designed to provide reasonable assurance against material mismanagement or loss. These include 2 signatories for payments and comprehensive insurance policies to ensure that insurable risks are covered.

The Group Executive Committee 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 property and equipment**

The Group would request the use of buildings, property and equipment from neighbouring organisations such as West Church and other Scout Groups. The Group has sufficient buildings and contents insurance in place to mitigate against permanent loss.

#### **Injury to leaders, helpers, supporters and members**

The Group through the capitation fees contributes to the Scout Association's national accident insurance policy. Risk Assessments are undertaken before and during activities.

### **Reduced income from fund raising**

The Group is primarily reliant upon income from subscriptions and fundraising. The Group does hold reserves to ensure the continuity of activities should there be a major reduction in income. The Committee 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, this would result in the complete closure of the Group.

### **Reduction or loss of members**

The Group provides activities for all young people aged 4 to 15. If there were a reduction in membership in a particular section or the group as whole then there would have to be a contraction, consolidation or closure of a section. In the worst-case scenario, this would result in the complete closure of the Group.

## **Section C Objectives and Activities**

### **The Purpose of Scouting**

The purpose of Scouting is 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 Values of Scouting**

As Scouts we are guided by these values:

- Integrity - We act with integrity; we are honest, trustworthy and loyal.
- Respect - We have self-respect and respect for others.
- Care - We support others and take care of the world in which we live.
- Belief - We explore our faiths, beliefs and attitudes.
- Cooperation - We make a positive difference; we cooperate with others and make friends.

The Scout Method Scouting takes place when young people, in partnership with adults, work together based on the values of Scouting and:

- Enjoy what they are doing and have fun
- Take part in activities indoors and outdoors
- Learn by doing
- Share in spiritual reflection
- Take responsibility and make choices
- Undertake new and challenging activities
- Make and live by their Promise.

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.

## Section D Achievements and Performance

### Group Scout Leader's Review

Compared with last year, the total group numbers of young person members taken in the January 2024 census showed a total of 65 youth members (under aged 18). This represents an increase of 21 members on the January 2023 census and finally more than the January 2021 census figures which was recorded as 55, the pre-covid census. (As in previous years, any Scout member over 14 and a half years of age are recorded in the District Explorer Unit and do not appear here.) Since last year's census the Squirrel figures showed a modest improvement of 1, Beavers 3, Scouts 2, the biggest increase was in the Cubs section which showed an increase of 13. Based purely on numbers, as the Cub numbers increase, it is expected that the Scout census figures will begin to increase in future years. Each of the sections showed the boys still predominated in terms of total numbers although where the gender figures do change, the number of girls do show a modest upward change.

The leaders within the group showed a large change. The Cub Leader and Assistant Cub Leader retired so this presented a problem. Fortunately, one Leader in the Beaver section moved up to becoming the Cub Leader to be joined by two new Assistant Cub Leaders. With such stability and great enthusiasm by the leader group, it is no surprise that the number of Cubs greatly increased. The Beaver section in terms of leadership also needed attention. The previous Beaver leader retired from her role as did the male Beaver Assistant Leader but fortunately she had been able to lead her section towards the highest number of Chief Scout Awards in the Group up to the end of the Beaver year in June 2023. A new Beaver Leader and at least another Assistant Leader were needed, and a husband and wife joined the Beaver Leader team again with great enthusiasm which ensured stability in numbers. The Squirrel section showed no change in their leader team and again lead with great enthusiasm. The numbers of this section we believe are right given the number of leaders and the very young age of the Squirrel members (4 to 6 years of age). The Scout section is very aware of the average age of the leader team and is looking for young leaders to engage with the Scout members for the future but in the meantime under the existing enthusiastic leadership, continues to provide an exciting programme for the Scouts.

As I reported last year, some measure of progress within the Group can be made through examining the number of badges earned and awards gained. The younger sections facilitated progress towards badges in virtually every night of their meeting particularly through a range of crafts and games. The difficulty in writing this report which is to focus on the financial year ending 31 March each year is that although much progress is being made towards the Chief Scout Awards for each section many are not completed until nearing the summer. I am convinced with the current leadership teams during the Scouting year from September to June in the following year, there is much more continuing focus on these awards being gained in all sections. The number of these awards being gained is increasing each successive year. Well done.

This year saw the introduction of the Trustee Board for the Group. Its role is to ensure that the Group follow The Scout Association Policy Organisation and Rules. Many of these are in the process of being updated and I can report that our Group is focusing on these changes. Also, it has a role of Governance hence this includes financial prudence. When largish sums are being considered by all sections for expenditure, the Trustee Board will consider these given the financial position of Group finances and whether their proposed expenditure falls within the expenditure allowed under the terms of the grant from the Education Authority. It also has a role in seeing that the Group consider their role in terms of the wider society. It reports to the Group Scout Council and the AGM. 3<sup>rd</sup> Ballymena Scout Group run an efficient Trustee Board.

Finally, our thanks go to our Chair, Secretary and especially to our Treasurer who is retiring at the AGM. He has served the Group extremely well over the last 8 years and we thank him for his hard work which often goes unnoticed. Our thanks also go to all in the leader teams of each section for their energy, commitment, enthusiasm and progress in facilitating more badges and awards being gained and furthering the "Skills for Life" aims and objectives of The Scout Association.

## **Section E Financial Review**

### **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 Executive Committee considers that the Group should hold a sum in reserve equivalent to 2 years running costs, circa £5,000 in reserve.

### **Investment Policy**

The Group's Income and Expenditure is 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.

### **Treasurers Statement**

The attached statement of accounts shows the Group Income and Expenditure details and Bank Account balances as at our financial year end of 31 March 2024 (FY24). The Group operates and reports on a Cash Accounting basis.

Our main sources of income are normally from subscriptions, gift aid and fund raising.

The Group's policy to maintain reserves at a minimum of £5,000 continues, with reserves at 31 March 2024 being £9,941. The £5,000 level of cash reserves is deemed appropriate to cover any cash flow timing issues and also enable the Group to continue to operate for at least two years should funding such as Gift Aid cease. The Group is also keeping this under review.

## **Section F Declaration**

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

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees by -



**Mr Mark McKane**  
**Chairperson & Trustee**

**Date:- 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2024**