

South Down District Scout Council

Trustees' Annual Report

The trustee report for the charity for the period 01/4/23 - 31/3/24

Section A Reference and administration

Registered charity name	South Down District Scout Council
Charity reg. number	103947
Principal office	109 Milltown road, Belfast, BT8 4ST

The trustees

The trustees who served for the period are listed as follows:

Mr. J. McMullen (Chair)

Mrs. E. McClimonds (Secretary)

Mrs. S. Smyth (Treasurer)

Mr. R. Watson (Acting Commissioner)

Ms. T. McCall

Mr. A. Hale

Mr. C. McElroy

Mr. R. Ferris

Ms. L. McQuaid

Mr. M. Ferris

Mrs. F. Graham

Ms. Y. Patterson

Mr. M. Cairns

Mr. R. Masters

Mr. M. Scott

Section B **Structure, governance and management**

The District'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.

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

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

The District is managed by the District Trustee Board, the members of which are the 'Charity Trustees' of the Scout District, 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 3 independent representatives, Chair, Treasurer and Secretary, together with the District Commissioner, Group Scout Leaders, individual section leaders (if opted to take on the responsibility) and parents' representation and meets every 2 months.

Members of the Trustee Board complete 'Essential Information for Executive Committee' and 'Trustees' online training within the first 5 months of

joining the Board.

This District Trustee Board exists to support the District Commissioner in meeting the responsibilities of the appointments and is responsible for:

The maintenance of District property (currently none);

The raising of funds and the administration of District finance;

The insurance of persons, property and equipment;

District public occasions;

Assisting in the recruitment of leaders and other adult support;

Appointing any sub-committees that may be required;

Appointing District Administrators and Advisors other than those who are elected.

Risk and Internal Control

The District Trustee Board has identified the major risks to which they believe the District 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. The District would request the use of buildings, property and equipment from neighbouring organisations such as the church, community centre and other Scout Groups. Similar reciprocal arrangements exist with these organisations. The Group has sufficient buildings and contents insurance in place to mitigate against permanent loss.

Injury to leaders, helpers, supporters and members. The District, through the

capitation fees, contributes to the Scout Association's national accident insurance policy. Risk Assessments are undertaken before all activities. Reduced income from fund raising.

The District is primarily reliant upon income from subscriptions and fundraising. The District does hold a reserve to ensure the continuity of activities should there be a major reduction in income. The Trustee Board could raise the value of subscriptions to increase the income to the District on an ongoing basis, either temporarily or permanently.

Reduction or loss of leaders. The District is totally reliant upon volunteers to run and administer the activities of the groups. 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 complete closure of the Group.

Reduction or loss of members. The District 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 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.

Section C **Objectives, activities and Public benefit.**

The Purpose of Scouting

Scouting exists to actively engage and support young people in their personal

development, empowering them to make a positive contribution to society.

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.

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 Promise.

The main activities in relation to these objects are:

- Encourage and develop groups within South Down by ensuring that the rules

and governance of the movement are adhered to;

- Support Groups to deliver a quality programme;
- Be visible, approachable and have an open mindset;
- Be open to change and challenge any action which is not in the interests of Scouting;
- Provide opportunities for Groups to come together for District events.

Public benefit statement

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

With the continued recovery from Covid, our District now supports 8 groups with 30 sections and an Explorer Unit.

- 7 Squirrel Dreys with 73 young people;
- 8 Beaver Colonies with 106 young people;
- 8 Cub Packs with 131 young people;
- 7 Scout Troops with 82 young people;
- 1 Explorer Unit with 14 young people.

This gives us an overall total of 406 young people and 79 adults.

Our goal going forward is to exceed the 2024 membership count, although the

process to officially close the 1st Drumgooland Scout Group is currently underway.

Section E

Finance, reserves and investment

The District's aspiration on reserves is to hold sufficient resources to continue the charitable activities of the District should income and fundraising activities fall short. The District Trustee Board considers that the group should hold a sum equivalent to 12 months' running costs, circa £2,000.00.

The District held reserves of approximately **£3,000.00** against this at year end.

Investment policy

The District'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 District 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 or The Scout Association's Short Term Investment Service.

The District Trustee Board regularly monitors the levels of bank balances and the interest rates received to ensure the District 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 District Trustee Board considers the cash flow requirements.

Section F

Declaration

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

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J McMullen', written in a cursive style.

Mr. J McMullen

Chair of South Down District Scout Council

Date 16/01/2025