

Sutton Coldfield East District



Annual Report. 2022 – 23

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Foreword by District Chair

I am glad to welcome you all to this year's Annual General Meeting.

This has been a year of steady growth for Scouting in Sutton Coldfield, with youth members increasing, and the resumption of many of the District activities and events that had to pause during the pandemic.

Once again, this Annual Report shows what volunteers can achieve, bringing their combined expertise, passion and skills together. The kids see this as fun, but we are laying the foundation for a stronger Sutton Coldfield with Scouting.

Here's to another year, and thank you all.

Karl Nightingale – Chair of District

SUTTON COLDFIELD EAST DISTRICT SCOUT COUNCIL
Annual General Meeting
Friday 7th July 2023 19.30hrs at Dale Farm
AGENDA

1. Introduction and welcome
2. Apologies for absence
3. Approval of the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 8 July 2022
4. **Governance topics**
 - a. Adoption the model constitution from Policy, Organisation and Rules
 - b. The District's financial year
 - c. Agreement of the number of members that may be elected to the Trustee Board
 - d. Agreement of the quorum for each of the District Scout Council (including this AGM), meetings of the District Trustee Board and meetings of any sub-committees
5. **Review of the previous year**
 - a. The District Commissioner's report
 - b. Receive and consider the Annual Report of the District Trustee Board including the Statement of Accounts
6. **Making appointments**
 - a. To (re-)appoint District President and/or Vice-Presidents
 - b. To note any other supporters who may be admitted to membership of the District Scout Council, by the District Commissioner, the District Trustee Board or the District Scout Council.
 - c. Approval of the District Commissioner's nomination of the District Chair
 - d. Election of the District Secretary
 - e. Election of the District Treasurer
 - f. Elections of members to the District Trustee Board
 - g. Approval of the District Commissioner's nominations to the District Trustee Board
 - h. Appointment of the Independent Examiner
7. **Comments by the County Representative**
8. **Any Other Business** (previously notified)
9. **Presentations**
10. **Thanks and close of meeting**

SUTTON COLDFIELD EAST DISTRICT SCOUTS

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Friday 8th July 2022 19.30hrs at Dale Farm

1. Present – Please see attendance list

2. Welcome - The Chair of District welcomed all present In particular the County Commissioner Mr Andrew Lloyd

3 .Apologies were received from – Richard Shields(3rd), Susan Chitty (District), Duncan Smith (District), Nigel Bean (8th), Sarah Minshull (8th), Sean Ruddock (Network), Fiona Belk (Trinity), Ed Darby (4th), Janet Keenan (8th), Rabeena Gulzar (12th), Frahana Darwich (12th), Mark Ellis (7th), Nigel Worship (District), Alan Underwood (SAS), All Leaders 5th SCE (on camp), Jacqui Archer (District), Debra Thomas (4th Exec), Eileen Lyndon (7th), Gillian Sheward, Neil Silverton (17th), Vicky Brack (17th), Tony Cartwright (17th), Chris Higgs (17th), Roger Poole (17th), Dave Phillips (17th), Adam Hodson (6th/District), Ian Siu (17th), Russell Dale (17th), Tim Cooper (17th), Jess Underhill (4th), Janet Ramshaw (District), Matt Allen (16th), Nick Taylor (16th).

4. Election of District Chair – The District Commissioner Mr David Thebridge nominated Dr. Karl Nightingale to be District Chair for the forthcoming year. This was seconded and overwhelmingly supported by those present, there being no objection.

5. Minutes of last meeting - There were no comments on the last minutes and they were therefore agreed by those present to be a correct record.

6. District Commissioners Report – The DC gave a brief summary of his report which is provided in more detail in the Annual Report and Trustees Report available to all those present at the meeting and all members of the District.

In summary the DC advised that the District had done well over the past year with increases in youth membership across all sections, in particular Beavers and Cubs which are almost at capacity. It is hard to increase capacity in current Groups e.g. by starting a second lodge/pack due to the lack of leaders and venue availability. Explorer Units in the District are also close to capacity with little space available for 2 – 4 years. Given the projections for demand It was stated that a further 2 Explorer Units are needed. Although there are some Young Leaders coming up the limiting factor in all sections remains the shortage of adult leaders.

The DC took the opportunity to thank all the leadership within the District for their work over the year.

7. Address by the County Representative – The County Commissioner Mr Andrew Lloyd expressed his pleasure at being able to be in attendance at the AGM and in not having to meet by Zoom. He congratulated the District on the activities that all sections have been doing over the last year and what the District did on Zoom during the pandemic. He also suggested that we have all learnt from the use of Zoom that there are different ways of doing things which we would not have considered without the experience. He expressed delight at the progress with the Falcon Lodge Group with 83 attending the taster session which was “awesome”. He welcomed the progress toward the opening of Squirrels, the first of which in

Acceptance of DC Nominated District Executive Committee members

David Evans	Deputy District Commissioner
Adam Hodson	Assistant District Commissioner Scouts
Nigel Worship	Assistant District Commissioner Cubs

Acceptance of Appointment of District Honorary Independent Examiner

Colin Philpott	Honorary Independent Examiner
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District advisors and additional roles

Susan Chitty	Chair, District Appointment Advisory
Committee	
Janet Ramshaw	Badge secretary
Nigel Palmer	Chair, Gang Show
Duncan Smith	Leader Training Manager

12. Any Other Business Previously Notified – Janet Ramshaw wished to record her thanks to the District for its support following the sad loss of Keith.

13. Thanks – The DC proposed a vote of thanks to Paul Gilmore and his family for the use of their garden and facilities and to the BBQ team and all those who had helped set up.

14. Presentations – The Nigel Speakman “Spirit of Scouting” award which is in the gift of the DC was awarded to the 16th SCE. A very well deserved Queens Scout Award was presented to Aaron Williams by the County Commissioner with his particular congratulations for achieving this during the period of the pandemic.

15. The meeting was closed by the District Chair.

District Lead Volunteer/DC's Report to AGM

The year to March 2023 has seen us move past Covid but we still see the effect on a year with fewer new Beavers and even older Cubs and Scouts having very limited experience of camping and lacking basic skills. Overall we have recovered well with little financial impact and it has been fantastic to witness Beaver, Cub and Scout district events giving young people fun and learning life skills as detailed elsewhere in this annual report.

As leaders and Trustees we can get distracted by the transformation changes and frustrated at name changes, not being able to use third party DBS's, or work courses, for safety, safeguarding and first aid and so on, but in our week by week programmes, events and camps we help young people grow in confidence and develop social skills. This is a privilege and ultimately why we give up time whether the mythical hour a week or almost full-time scouting.

Over the year the 19th at Falcon Lodge has continued and now has a small Scout section, 12th now have a Scout section and the 22nd at Walmley has launched with Beavers and Cubs. Beavers at 19th are growing in numbers but we need one or more leaders, any offers for a Monday will be appreciated.

The third new group formed for SEND young people has started as 14th Sutton Coldfield West with just Scouts for now, who attended the recent West District camp. It is a joint endeavour with leaders from both districts.

There are no plans for more new groups at present, we need to add Scouts at 22nd when the time is right and continue to add more Squirrel Dreys. We have added these at 4th and 17th in this year to join 16th that started last year. The current year is for consolidation and concentration on adult recruitment in our current groups and units. There is still a need to expand Explorer provision and it is disappointing that we have not identified leaders to make this happen.

We have made great progress in maintaining high levels of compliance with DBS, safety and safeguarding and are able to remind leaders and line managers as any of these are falling due. We do need to ensure that these on-line courses are re-done BEFORE expiry of the old one as days of grace are numbered. Many thanks to everyone who has completed courses or encouraged others to do them. It is essential that not only is scouting a safe place, but that we are seen to be doing this.

Thanks, in no particular order, to Jess Underhill and Vikki Brack who as paid staff helped create 19th, 22nd and 14th, to Maggie Carrington who has stepped down as acting ADC Beavers for many years and leaves a big hole to fill, to Duncan Smith for taking on LTM and County Training role. I could go on to list many more people who have done so much to support me and scouting in the district. I am proud to lead this wonderful district of Sutton Coldfield East.

We are in a good place. We have the challenge of widening leadership teams at section, group, Explorer and district level, trying to delegate tasks down and working more closely across groups and districts to avoid duplicated effort but I am confident that we can achieve this. We are far from alone in this, it is a problem across all scouting and many volunteer run organisations.

My thanks to everyone who has helped in whatever small or large way to deliver scouting to about 800 young people week by week.

David Thebridge - District Lead Volunteer/ Commissioner

Higher Awards

Julie Bardsley	Award for Merit
Margaret Carrington	Commissioners Commendation, Bar to Medal for Merit
Alan Hurst	Silver Acorn
Darren Kyte	Commissioners Commendation
Martin Richardson	Award for Merit

The Nigel Speakman – “Spook” – “Spirit of Scouting” Award

The “Spirit of Scouting” award is given in memory of a former District Commissioner Nigel Speakman, affectionately known throughout the Scouting world as Spook. Sadly after over 40 years service he “went home” much too early in 2017 as a result of an illness which he had been battling for some time. The award given annually in his memory is in the gift of the current District Commissioner, to the group, section or individual(s) who have demonstrated the values of Scouting, sometimes in adverse circumstances.

Past winners of the award:

2018 – 3rd Sutton Coldfield East Group

2019 – 17th Sutton Coldfield East Group

2020 – Not awarded*

2021 – Not awarded*

2022 – 16th Sutton Coldfield East Group

* Not awarded during the pandemic as the heroic efforts by all members to keep Scouting going during this time made it difficult to single out a winner.

Beaver Section Report

There is no doubt that the Covid pandemic caused a major disruption to Scouting amongst all sections. However, since restrictions were lifted there has been a terrific increase in the number of enquiries for Beaver places at local colonies, and this is now causing problems as there are limited places available. Many of the colonies throughout the district are now full, and in some cases are over their ideal capacity. Many have waiting lists – some have closed their waiting lists to new additions. The Beaver section in our district is now stronger than pre-pandemic.

To help overcome this surge of interest in Beavers, the re-opening of a colony at Falcon Lodge Methodist Church, known as 19th S/Coldfield East, commenced in September 2022 with 3 warranted leaders, and a strong interest for Beaver membership. Unfortunately, the 3 leaders have since given up their positions and it is now being led by the DC himself with support from other leaders. Beaver numbers have dropped but there are indications that interest will increase.

The re-establishment of the Beaver colony at 12th continues to flourish, although numbers are low and the opening of the 22nd at Walmley with a strong parent and leadership team appears to have been successful.

A total of 35 Beavers, from 6 colonies, achieved their Bronze Chief Scout Award. Congratulations to all recipients – and their leaders!

A Christmas Beaver Sleepover originally scheduled for 2020, cancelled due to Covid and rescheduled for November 2021, then postponed due to an unexpectedly heavy fall of snow causing a power outage, eventually took place in November 2022! Over 70 Beavers from 5 colonies took part in the event and due to its success, a similar event is booked for November 2023.

A District Space event in March held at URC S/C was well attended by over 100 Beavers. Through games, crafts, experiments and the facility of a large inflatable planetarium, the Beavers learned about all aspects of space and the solar system – and even the potential for life elsewhere!!

As ever, the lack of Beaver Leadership within the district remains a concern. Without additional leadership recruits, it is envisaged that some colonies may find it difficult to continue, it may cause other colonies to increase to a level in excess of the recommended maximum capacity, and leave a potentially high number of prospective Beavers from the area without a place in a colony.

The continuing success of Beaver Scouting within the Sutton Coldfield East District, is due entirely to the hard work and dedication of leaders, assistant leaders, section_helpers and parental supporters. **Well Done Everyone – and Thank You!**

Margaret Carrington (Temporary!) ADC Beavers

Cub Section Report

This year has seemed to have flown past having returned to Cubing, we have successfully had a joint district camp in June 2022, with a good badge day. Along with an outing to Cosford, we are glad to welcome the 19th & the 22nd packs into our district. Night hike, chess and a new formatted BONE Trophy all went well, finishing off with a good, returned Camp at Beaudesert. I would like to thank all the leaders in their ongoing support of the cub section. Especially all those who have filled in the gaps when I have been by myself. Finally thank you to the SAS for the support throughout the year and David and the District for their support at times.

Many thanks

Nigel Worship - ADC Cubs.

Scout Section Report

Sutton Coldfield East District Scouts enjoyed another busy Programme throughout the year. In July 2022 the joint District Scout raft race was cancelled last minute due to health risk on the water caused by a build-up of algae! The next event is scheduled for July 2023. Also in July 2022 several members of the Leadership team attended a District BBQ event at Dale Farm.

In Sept 2022 we mourned the loss of our sovereign Queen Elizabeth II. Our stable, trusted, and valued monarch. She gave service like few others, was humble beyond expectation, dedicated to the end and led by example to us all. In Oct 2022 we took part in the BrumVenture activity weekend. There was good participation from SCE Scouts & support from SCE Leadership team. Also in Oct 2022 we ran a JOTA/JOTI event station at Douay Road. A possible joint District event is planned for Oct 2023. In Nov 2022 we commemorated Remembrance day. Several Groups took part in their own Church services. A limited service & parade also took place at King Edward's Square in Sutton Coldfield with some participation from SCE. Also in Nov 2022 there was another Toys 4 Birmingham collection at the Edgbaston Stadium. In Dec 2022 we took part in the County iceSCOUT activity camp. There was good participation from SCE Scouts & support from SCE Leadership team. Also in Dec 2022 some members of the SCE Leadership team took part in a Christmas social event in Sutton Coldfield & a similar event is planned in 2023.

In Jan 2023 we held the District Scout air rifle target shooting competition. Approx. 55+ Scouts, Leaders & helpers attended the competition at the Aldersley Stadium in Wolverhampton. It was noted that all who attended enjoyed the event & that their behaviour & approach to the event was a credit to Scouting. Well done to 5th for winning the overall team competition & the highest scoring individuals will represent our District in the County competition later on in the year. Well done to all who took part or helped out. The venue has been booked for 2024 & will follow the same format as 2023. In Feb 2023 several members of the SCE Leadership team participated in a skittles fundraising event in aid of WSJ2023.

Also in Feb 2023 we took part in the District gang show. Keith Ramshaw was remembered. There was some participation from SCE Scouts & support from SCE Leadership team. The next gang show will take place in Feb 2025. In March 2023 we took part in the 39th annual Chase Walk event on Cannock Chase. SCE was well represented by Scouts from the 3rd, 5th, 6th, 7th, 11th, 16th & 17th who all completed the Scout section of the walk & were awarded with their Chase Walk badges & certificates. There was also overwhelming support from the SCE Leadership team.

Also in March 2023 over 60 Scouts, Explorers, Leaders, Helpers & parents took part in an action packed 'Getting To Know You' day at the 11th S/C East Scout HQ in Mere Green in preparation for the District Scout International Activity Camp in Buitenzorg, Baarn in The Netherlands. The afternoon consisted of a brief presentation, a Q&A session followed by several team building games like Spijkerpoepen & Koekhappen plus an opportunity to learn how to tie a friendship knot. The Scouts, Explorers & parents were also treated to a fantastic Dutch themed quiz organised by Reinart, one of our Young Leaders. During the fun & games we also took some time to do a clothing check just to make sure we all fit into our camp clothing!

In April 2023 44 Scouts, Explorers & Leaders from Sutton Coldfield East took part in the District Scout International Activity Camp at the Scout Centrum campsite in Buitenzorg, Baarn, The Netherlands. It was a non-stop activity filled camp including day trips to Amsterdam, Arnhem & the Walibi theme park. There were also many other activities organised for the Scouts to take part in over the week including; clog painting, pioneering, axes & saws, fire-lighting, spoon carving, chef's activity badge with a cooking competition, woggle making, campfire songs, skits & more. The Leadership team worked extremely hard and everyone had a fantastic time, made new friends and will hopefully remember the experience for many years to come. We aim to run an international camp outside of the UK every 4 years so hopefully our younger Scouts may get the opportunity in 2027. Also in April 2023 Aaron & Rohan received their Queen Scout award at Windsor, one of the last Queen Scouts award ceremonies to take place. Well done to them both.

In May 2023 we celebrated the coronation of King Charles III, long live the King!

Forthcoming events include: District Scout cooking competition, joint District Scout raft race, Sutton community games, County Bivouac & BrumVenture, District Scout expedition challenge (training & assessment), District Scout orienteering competition, District Scout chess competition & JOTA/JOTI depending on time available.

Finally I would like to take this opportunity to thank every Member of the Scout Leadership team for their hard work, commitment and enthusiasm over the year & I apologise if I have missed out the efforts of any one individual. I look forward to working with you all again in 2023/4.

THANK YOU.

Adam Hodson - ADC (Scouts)

Explorer Scout Section Reports

Trinity ESU

I took over Trinity ESU from Marcus and Kelly in September 2022. There is now a solid leader team of myself, Fiona (existing leader) and Attila and Adrian who have joined in the past year.

Over the year we have offered a varied programme, including the Explorers completing their Emergency Aid Stage 5 badge, being visited by local Polish Scouts, Dragon's Den evening, whittling totem poles and a sausage cooking competition, as well as trips to Drayton Manor at Halloween and trampolining.

We have offered a camp every term and hope to continue this next year, with the potential for an overseas camp next summer.

We have been involved in District and County events with a Trinity team of Zach, Ralph, Harry and Toby completing the Chase Walk in under 14 hours and we are making the most of a County Climbing day on 8th July in the Peak District as part of our Summer Camp with 10 Explorers attending.

Finally, along with myself there are two Trinity Explorers, Amy and James who are attending the World Scout Jamboree over the summer and are looking forward to sharing their experiences with the District as a whole when they return.

Beth Winterbottom - Trinity ESU Section Leader

Phoenix Explorer Scout Unit

Although most of our members turned 18 during covid our numbers now have bounced back, and we are once again providing a full programme.

Activities as you would expect tend to have a fiery theme but include several camps, green field camps, hikes and general Scouty things.

Paul Gilmour – Phoenix ESU Leader

FOCUS Explorer Scout Unit

Focus Explorers has had a great year with 33 current members and we welcomed new leader Jonathan Clark to the team! We are proud to have awarded 7 higher Scout Awards, in addition to Focus leader Aaron Williams receiving his Queens Scout Award in Windsor. Notably, FOCUS member Craig Williams, who has recently left the group, won gold representing Great Britain in hockey for the 2023 Special Olympics!

We had an action-packed year with our annual Summer Camp taking place in the Lake District with activities ranging from kayaking and paddle boarding to escape rooms and traversing a via ferrata with Royal Air Force jets flying below. We attended the Drayton Manor

Spooktacular with Trinity Explorers and had a blast lighting fireworks on bonfire night with all district Explorer units. Throughout the year we have raced in go-karts, battled the white-water rapids in Wales, celebrated the King's Coronation, attended Ice Scout, hiked over 150 miles, and supported local events such the Royal Sutton Fun Run and Party in the Park.

Explorers continue to take centre stage on the programme, organising evenings such as Chinese Culture night, Focus Film Festival, and even leading Kayaking sessions with their own canoe clubs for the unit. We look forward to the rest of 2023, with four of our Explorers attending the World Scout Jamboree in South Korea and our first Summer Camp situated in the New Forest.

Marcus Harrington – FOCUS ESU Leader

International Report

An interesting year, with Scouting getting back to normality and camps and jamborees being re-instigated, the main one being the Scouts International Camp.



The District International Camp finally took place, after a year in the planning, where we returned to Buitenzorg in The Netherlands. Over Easter week, we took 28 Scouts, 6 Explorers and 10 Leaders, from 11 Groups, for 10 days of activities and fun, which included the Arnhem Museum, High Ropes, Nemo Science Museum, Mountain Biking, Amsterdam, Chef's Badge, Scout Bases and much more. We are sure that if they ask any of those that attended, they will mention all the fun and the experiences gained (#Skills for Life)



We have members from Sutton Coldfield East District attending as part of the Birmingham Unit Contingent, the 25th World Jamboree in South Korea in July/August 2023. All funds have been raised in full and we are sure that they will encounter the experience of a lifetime

The Scouting International world have a few camps and jamborees from 2024, which include Essex 2024, Larkin 2024 and Poacher 2025, etc.; for Scouts and Explorers and Roverway 2024 for Explorers. So, there are plenty of opportunities for that International Experience. Should you require any assistance with planning for an International Camp, then please let us know, so it can be ensured that all bases are covered. Please just let me know if you do attend any other jamborees, as we will support you as much as we can.

Brian Stacey - ADC (International)

Treasurer's report

We reduced the district levy for 2023 and as a result our main income has dropped but we still have nearly £50,000 in the bank account. The apparent loss is a result of repaying monies to FOCUS; when they moved banks last year we received their fund to look after. The new bank advised that we could only pay in up to £1,000 at a time for the first 6 months to avoid triggering their anti-money laundering procedures. Excluding this there is a surplus.

Income depends on the number of district events. Expenditure for the district is limited to website, insurance, minor repairs to district equipment and purchase of badges, most of which are re-sold. There are always district events for which we have paid deposits well in advance, and we have supported groups with capitation and the new groups to cover rent, consumables, neckers and badges for an initial period as well as acting as banker for groups moving banks or without signatories for a period.

District are also sharing the costs of setting up and running 14th SEND scouts with SC West so this will be a modest ongoing call on funds. With half the number of members in a mainstream group it will always be difficult for that group to cover its costs.

Since the year end interest rates have risen, we have opened a savings account.

The trustees are happy to support groups and district events and have subsidised the Cub coach trip to Cosford, other district Cub events, as well as the Beaver sports day and have paid for badges for some of the events. We also were ready to support the Scout trip to Holland in the event of a shortfall. Our funds are available to be used to support scouting and to help cover subs, event fees and even uniforms where scout families are struggling financially. We are also able to help fund training for leaders. Please apply for funding before making any commitment to spend money, as we cannot provide funds retrospectively

Learning & Development Update

During 2022 we had many adult volunteers complete and renew their mandatory modules. Safeguarding – 60, Safety – 56, First Aid – 50, GDPR -33.

The County has undertaken to send out reminders of all due module renewal requirements to supplement the e-mails from HQ. I am sure you are all aware of the importance of the mandatory modules to ensure that everyone from the individual through the group, district, and county is compliant. Safety and Safeguarding modules are under constant review by HQ and externally, the courses are then updated as necessary.

As announced last year the learning and development process is under review and will be rolled out during the next year or so. All current, validated modules will all be carried over onto the new system so please check on Compass your own status. If any volunteer needs advice about any modules, please contact me and I'll do my best to assist.

Duncan Smith - LTM

Nights Away Advisors Report

During the last year, the first post pandemic one, ten Leaders have had their Nights Away Permits renewed. One new applicant has been successful obtaining a Permit and another is waiting for an assessment as this report is being written. Please give the Nights Away Team plenty of notice if an assessment is required. This gives the team adequate time to make the necessary arrangements. The form NAN has recently been revised and the authority to take the young people away is not valid until a positive approval has been received from the DC or his nominated representative. You need to include the necessary risk assessments and contingency plans.

David Evans

Appointments Committee Report

46 adult volunteers have been seen and approved in the past year. Many were still seen by zoom although the volunteers for the new Groups (19th and 22nd Sutton Coldfield East, from the Pears project), which were about 19 new leaders, were carried out in person as were meetings with the 6 volunteers for the 12th Scouts. We also interviewed one further person face to face who needed further checks and assurance before being approved. There are currently 7 new adults requiring an AAC, which we plan to complete over the next few months, so any new adults that are now added, can be interviewed as soon as possible.

I would like to thank the committee for their time in conducting these interviews and in particular Brian Stacey for his diligence in making all the necessary arrangements

Sue Chitty - Chair, Appointments Committee

District Census. 31st Jan. 2023 (2022 figures in brackets)

The membership numbers in youth sections have increased overall. The high numbers are challenging for leaders in many sections and young people on waiting lists are not always able to be accommodated.

Groups	12 (12)	Network	2 (2)
Dreys	2 (0)	Squirrels	13 (0)
Colonies	13 (12)	Beavers	254 (255)
Packs	13 (12)	Cubs	266 (233)
Troops	11 (10)	Scouts	205 (210)
Explorer Units	4 (5)	Explorers	56 (67)
Adult Members			
Programme Delivery	140		
Line Manager	10		
Grp/Dist Governance	42		
Group/District Support	26		
Active Support	17 (12)		
Total Adult Members	235 (222)	Total Youth Members	796 (765)

Total Membership

Youth membership 796 compared to 765 in 2022, an increase of 31 (4%).

Adult membership all roles 235 compared to 222 in 2022, an increase of 13 (6%).