

2024 District Annual Report

Chair's Report

At our 2023 District and Group AGMs we all moved from being Executive Committees to Trustee Boards. This was done to bring us in line with good practice guidance set by the Charity Commission and other charity regulators. It was also done to help us clarify our purpose as Trustee Boards. Trustee Boards focus solely on the governance of the charity, not charity operations. So, the start of the 2023/24 Scouting year in September 2023 saw everyone on the District Trustee Board start to get to grips with our new roles and responsibilities, with a clear focus on good governance in the key areas of compliance, finance and risk. I would like to thank everyone on the District Trustee Board for their hard work, help and support over this last year as we have transitioned, or perhaps I should say “transformed”, from Executive Committee to Trustee Board.

The Board continues to meet three times a year, one meeting per term, and at the annual District AGM. It is our responsibility to ensure that the District is run safely and legally and that it is properly supported financially. We are aided in this by the fantastic work of our two sub-committees, the Appointments Committee and the Campsite Committee, and I would like to thank all the members of those committees for their time and commitment to the provision of Scouting in Horsham. Please do read their separate Reports to find out more about what they have been doing this Scouting year.

Dave, Jo, and all the enthusiastic members of the District team have worked incredibly hard this year to get as many District wide events happening as possible. To name just a few, we started the year with another successful Riverside Walk, the Scouts and Explorers enjoyed a very frosty 2-Rings Hike, the Beavers and Cubs had their own District Camps at the campsite, the Scouts rose to the “bake-off” challenge at the District Cooking event, the ever popular Cubs Cyclo-Cross took place and more recently we all came together at the St George’s Day Parade where it was wonderful to see so many of our young people from all sections of all our Groups. The District Trustee Board would love to see more events happening next year, and we have increased the provision in the budget for District events, so please do keep the ideas coming!

The Scout Association’s latest version of POR was published on 1st April 2024, just in time for our 2024 AGM season. It has introduced further changes to the constitution of and selection process for our Trustee Boards. Trustee Boards should have a minimum of five, maximum of twelve, trustees which includes those in ex-officio roles. Ideally two of those trustees should be aged between 18 and 25. Trustees can be appointed for a 1-, 2- or 3-year term and cannot serve for more than 9 consecutive years. The secretary is no longer a trustee role and so does not have the right to vote on trustee decisions. Selection of trustees should be by a formal, rigorous and transparent open-selection process and appointments are made by the Scout Council at the AGM. I would like to thank all our Group Chairs for embracing these changes and doing as much as they can in the time available before their own Group AGMs to ensure that these changes are implemented.

At District level we advertised for new trustees both internally and externally and were incredibly pleased to have sixteen applications for the ten places available on the Board, seven of whom were from candidates who have not served on the Trustee Board before. Our selection panel

have been meeting with the candidates over the last two weeks and will be making their recommendations to the Horsham District Scout Council at the AGM on Wednesday 5th June.

It is wonderful to see scouting in Horsham continue to thrive with the numbers of young people involved increasing year on year. This is thanks to the hard work, energy and enthusiasm of all our adult volunteers who enable Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Explorers, Young Leaders and Network to happen every week, together those involved behind the scenes at Group and District level. My heartfelt thanks to everyone for the difference you make to the lives and life skills of all our young people.

Heather Greenwood, Chair, District Trustee Board

District Commissioners' Report

Well, it certainly has been a very busy year, with Jo and I on a very steep learning curve despite being Deputy District Commissioners for the past four years. How one person in full time employment can keep up with the administration is beyond me! On behalf of the District Jo and I would like to say a huge thank you to our past District Commissioner Sal Dartnell for all her dedicated service and hard work. Thank goodness we are moving to a District Volunteer Leadership Team!

I am very pleased to report that Scouting continues to thrive in Horsham District and our overall numbers have increased by 84, which now makes us the biggest District in the County. Jo and I would like to say a huge thank you to all our adult volunteers for their continued hard work, enthusiasm, and energy. It is really appreciated.

I would also like to say huge congratulations to the 4th Horsham who are celebrating their 40th Anniversary and to St Leonards Forest who are celebrating their 50th Anniversary.

Congratulations also go to Sal Dartnell and Alison Styles on being awarded the Medal of Merit.

Almost all groups & units have a waiting list and there are flexible opportunities for anyone wishing to volunteer. No matter what their skills and interests are, we will definitely have a role to suit them and their availability. Anyone wanting to learn or develop new skills, there is a wide range of training available through The Scout Association website, which can not only help volunteers involved in scouting, but in other aspects of their life too. Jo and I have been volunteering for nearly 80 years between us and we encourage everyone to get involved, share their experiences, and spread their skills with each other and our young people.

As the AGM season approaches, our 15 Scout Groups, 9 Explorer Units, plus the Young Leaders Section continue to do an outstanding job across our local communities. In particular, we would like to give a special mention to the GSL's who do an absolutely amazing job and at times have been bombarded by emails from Jo and me. Please remember that the GSL role can be non-uniformed and can be shared. It is a great opportunity to use or develop leadership and management skills. Training is available and the District Team endeavour to support all GSLs as and when required. With the move to Leadership Teams which is part of the "Transformation" that the Scout Association are rolling out, many Groups are adding Deputy GSLs to share their role to a number of people who bring different skills and perspectives. This can also help with succession planning and provide continuity.

We are very lucky to have an amazing team of District Assistant Commissioners, Assistant District Commissioners and District Youth Commissioners who are able to support the Groups. They organise the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, annual District Events, as well as one off trips like the Cubs recent trip to Amberley Museum and the recent Beavers trip to Legoland.

We are absolutely delighted that the new Squirrel sections in 2nd Horsham and 1st Cowfold are thriving, and we know that other groups are looking to introduce Squirrel Dreys in the near future. The word on the street via our new County Lead Volunteer Tom, is that Groups who have Squirrel Dreys seem to have less trouble finding leaders!

Last summer saw twelve of our young people attend the World Scout Jamboree in South Korea and we eagerly await this year's Roverway which is being held in Norway, where we have three people attending.

Nigel "Fris" Friswell, Heather (District Chair), and Dave (AJDTL) continue to engage with HDC and local developers. They are working on initial plans for a new Group to serve the Mowbray development north of Horsham and also have an eye on Highwood. See separate Growth and Local Development Report.

Unfortunately, our 'Want to Join' Coordinator had to step down during the year so, Jo and I took the decision to point potential new members to our excellent website to contact Groups directly. Thank you Nik and Tim for all your hard work on the continued development of the website. Nik is about to step down from looking after our website after many years of dedicated service and we would like to say a huge thank you to him. Tim Taylor is going to take over and we are very grateful to Tim for taking on this responsibility.

The last year has crept up on us really quickly and at the time of writing this report Jo and I do not know who our new District Lead Volunteer will be. I have absolutely no doubt that I will have forgotten to say something or thank someone. Please be assured that you are all a really valuable part of our team, and we could not provide our 1000 + young people in Horsham District with the Skills for Life without YOU, so thank you!

Dave Hatton and Jo Sands, Acting Joint District Team Leads

District Youth Commissioner's Report

The District Youth team have had a great year and have been able to see first-hand some of the amazing youth shaped scouting in Horsham! We've had great conversations with volunteers around the district about how they are ensuring their sections and teams are youth shaped and how they continue to include young people in all decisions. There is always more we can do though to ensure everything we do is youth shaped and our team is here to help! Just get in touch and we'd be happy to offer support or answer questions about how you can involve young people. The ideal situation is co-creation where young people shape their scouting experiences while supported by incredible volunteers.

We had a fantastic April this year as not only were we involved in the delivery of our St George's Day Parade again, but we were also able to accompany 75 Beavers and their leaders to Legoland! We thoroughly enjoyed the trip, and we hope everyone else did too – potentially could be repeated in a couple of years' time.

The team have taken an active role within our District Leadership Team to support the District Lead Volunteers and Chair to ensure decisions across the movement have young people at the centre. We have also been working with the wider County team representing Horsham and also working with the County Youth Lead to raise issues and opportunities.

We're super excited to be supporting our new District Scout Network Team Lead/Commissioner, Harry, as he takes on the task to reignite and develop the Network section. This vital section offers so many opportunities to young people aged 18-25 and also increases the support for our younger volunteers. It may also help us recruit some more new leaders and trustees!

Personally, I have taken on a new exciting challenge, as I have recently joined the UK Youth Team where I'll be working with the UK Youth Lead and the team to support, develop and embed #YouShape scouting across the country! I'll be specifically focusing on developing The Scouts youth voice strategy, championing youth forum delivery locally and supporting youth leads, volunteers, and trustees at all levels to put young people first in all our decisions. I'll be doing this alongside my local DYL role, which means the district youth team is going to develop and change slightly to ensure we can continue to support you and our young people.

As always feel free to get in touch at dyc@horshamscouts.com. If you'd like to invite one of us along to your sessions or events, we'd be thrilled and do our best to attend, just let us know.

Christopher Styles, District Youth Lead/Commissioner

District Explorer Scout Commissioner's Report

Another busy year for Explorers in Horsham. There were a number of summer expeditions across the District including trips to Guernsey, South Wales & the Lake District.

Several units took part in the Monopoly Run across London and the Theme Park Camp just outside Thorpe Park. Both events brought Explorers together from across the UK. Across the District we took part in the Downsman Hike and also supported local community events including the Rotary Club and Art Trail.

Following the closure of Orion ESU we have moved the equipment owned by the Unit from 2nd Southwater HQ and sorted through to ensure it continues to be used across the District.

Explorer Scout numbers in Horsham increased over the last year with the 2024 census recording 165 members. As we move into next year we are currently working with 2nd Horsham to support the growth in future Explorer Scouts from their troops and exploring launching a new Unit.

As we look to implement a new approach to supporting the 14-25 year olds in Scouting we are excited to have new people join our volunteer team.

As always we are on the lookout for new leaders - not only to help launch a new Unit but also to boost our existing teams but if that is not for you then lots of other opportunities for you to be involved. Please let us know if you or someone you know would be interested.

Dave King, District Explorer Scout Commissioner

District Network Commissioner's Report

A new Network Leadership Team comprising myself, Ned New and Chris Styles, took over from Andy Bray. Considering that both Ned and Chris have current roles within Horsham District Scouts, the plan is that I will lead and manage Compass/OSM. The team have discussed and have lots of ideas to get Network up and running again. Compass/OSM are relatively bare bones at the moment, however this will change with time. At the St George's Parade, I spent some time connecting with as many of the Scout Groups in the district as I could, all of which showed a lot of support for us as a Network team. It was also good to hear the support of the Trustee Board at their last District Trustee Board meeting which I was invited to attend. We are also in contact with Crawley and Mid Sussex Networks to gauge processes that work for them as well as potentially organising joint-District Network events. All-in-all, Network has a lot of promise with the support currently shown. With the Team's drive and the support of the Groups and Network members, I see a great growth of Network throughout 2024 and into 2025.

Harry Lawrence, Network Team Lead

Young Leader's Report



The Young Leaders of Horsham continue to provide a vital resource to sections across Horsham District, providing a unique perspective to the operation of any section. The Young Leaders themselves gain from the experience, as well as from the programme of modules and missions that are run by the "Young Leader Team". Many of the Young Leaders are also Explorer Scouts in other units, but a significant proportion volunteer their time to volunteer alongside the section's adult volunteers.

The "Young Leader Team" itself has been augmented this year by some new adult volunteers, whilst too numerous to mention they all are experienced adult volunteers willing to give yet another few extra hours to support the Young Leaders. This has meant we are now again able to run modules more frequently as well as develop the way we are delivering the modules. Looking ahead our numbers look to remain healthy, with typically over 50 younger leaders taking part in the scheme at any time. However we need to do more with the sections to encourage a bigger take up of the missions, so we can increase the opportunities for our Young Leader to gain their Young Leader belt.

Tim Taylor, Young Leader's Unit Lead

Duke of Edinburgh Award Report

For those that do not know The Duke of Edinburgh award system complements the Chief Scouts Award levels perfectly and participants can gain both awards just by signing up to DofE and

completing the requirements of the Chief Scouts Awards levels (Diamond, Platinum and Kings Scout Award).

This year we have seen some improvements in the way that the Duke of Edinburgh Award is administered throughout the district. Previously the award that was run through three different individual centres. We have now merged two of those sections and the main administering of the award is co-ordinated through a dedicated team of volunteers (Myself, Henry Lewis, Tamsin Jupp, Richard Cooper, Dan Senior and Will Britten) and from the beginning of this year all Explorers throughout the district now have the opportunity to sign up and participate in the Award scheme, if they so wish.

We currently have 50 young adults signed up across the awards levels and run expeditions, opportunities to complete the individual sections (Volunteering, Skills, Physical and Expedition) and awareness sessions regularly throughout the year to ensure that the awards are completed in a timely manner.

This year 11 young people have achieved either the Bronze or Silver levels and most are well on the way to completing their levels of awards over the coming few months.

If anyone wishes to sign up for the award, have any questions or wish to help, please do not hesitate to contact me (rgrover@horshamscouts.com) and we will happily sit down and discuss what is required.

Richard Grover, Duke of Edinburgh Team Lead

Horsham Scouts Support Unit Report

This year the Horsham Scouts Support Unit (HSSU) has helped with a variety of District events. These include events such as the 2 Rings Hike, the Riverside Walk and the Cubs Warnham challenge as well as supporting a Beaver Colony.

We also run monthly meetings for our members where we have guest speakers, such as the recent talk from the Beachy Head Chaplaincy who cover the Beachy Head area supporting vulnerable people, and we organise trips to popular local venues such as the National Trust's Nymans Gardens.

My aim as HSSU Manager (Team Lead) is to try and recruit other, dare I say, younger members of the scouting community to help lower the age percentile of our members. Please contact me if you would like to get involved with HSSU or if you think we could help support you in any way.

Kevin Murdock, HSSU Support Manager/Team Lead

Appointments Committee Report

Herewith a review of the activities of the Horsham District Appointments Advisory Committee for the last 12 months:

- With the current Transformation Project underway it is assumed that the role of the AAC will cease when the new arrangements are fully adopted, although we are mindful that the date has been deferred several times in 2024. However, there will still be a need for a “welcome conversation” to be held, to include someone other than a colleague of the new volunteer; this will be a member of the newly created Volunteering Development

Team. Maybe this is a role for existing AAC members? For the time-being the AAC has been asked to carry on operating as normal.

- The purpose of the AAC is to provide whatever support is needed within the District to ensure that, in the words of The Scout Association, we have “the right people in the right place” to deliver the Scouting programme for our young people. Scouting has an enviable reputation to uphold.
- The AAC currently has 10 members including our Secretary and Assistant Secretary (who do not normally form part of the interview panels unless we are short on numbers for a particular evening). A complete list of current members is appended to this review for confirmation. During the course of the last 12 months we have been pleased to welcome Sebastian Cutter and Phil North as new members of the panel, and would also record our gratitude for the service of Barbara Wyatt and Stuart Cutler who have retired from their roles.
- Subject to the above, we continue to look-out for new committee members to assist the process of discussing with new adult volunteers. They do not need to be current or former members of The Scout Association and appropriate training will be provided. In line with current policy, we are particularly keen to enlist young people in the 18-25 year age-range to broaden the diversity of our panel members.
- Regular panels are normally held on the first Monday evening of each month in central Horsham. Since the beginning of 2016 we have been running two panels simultaneously on most occasions in order to keep pace with the numbers of new volunteers coming forward; this gives us capacity to meet with up to eight candidates during a typical evening.
- Our Local Training Managers also attend panel evenings in order to discuss training arrangements individually with each candidate.
- AAC members also available to meet candidates at other locations/times for any who are unable to attend the normal monthly panels. During the period of the pandemic many interviews took place on Zoom, particularly as for a while we were unable to meet face-to-face; a number of candidates (and indeed panel members) found this a useful alternative to conventional meetings.
- During the last 12 months over 60 “new” adult volunteers have been interviewed by the AAC; additionally the committee has considered nearly 30 changes of role etc when individuals do not necessarily have to attend a panel, and conducted numerous routine reviews of appointments to ensure that training targets are being met and volunteers’ DBS checks are maintained.
- Dealing with suspensions and disciplinary matters is also part of the remit of the AAC which calls for a particular degree of sensitivity and understanding.
- Thanks are due to all of the AAC members for the time which they give to this role, but in particular to Helen Palmer and Robert Gardner, respectively our Appointments Secretary and Assistant Secretary, for all they do behind the scenes to keep things running smoothly.

Don Newport, Chair, Appointments Committee

Note to District Trustee Board for Annual General Meeting

Members of the Horsham District Appointments Advisory Committee serving during the next 12 months (appointed as a sub-committee of the District Trustee Board):

Don Newport	Chair
Helen Palmer	Secretary

Robert Gardner Assistant Secretary

Sebastian Cutter

Stephen Hoad

Phil North

Neil Phillips

Anthony Smith

Sheila Spicer

Bob Tichband

Campsite Committee Report

Our campsite continues to be well used by Horsham groups as well as out of district groups. This year has seen the development of the multi-use Range with a shelter and lighting, making it usable all year round; bunk beds in the leaders' room in Gummy's; and games and other equipment available for groups to use in the storage container. We have also enhanced the security of the site with full access control and CCTV systems, which will hopefully considerably reduce the risk of thefts in future.

Regular help from a small group of dedicated volunteers ensures the campsite is well maintained and safe for everyone to use. However, we are always looking for volunteers to join the team, not only supporting grounds maintenance, but also helping to deliver activities to groups that require instructors, and sourcing materials that are required. As a team together, the task of running the campsite becomes much more manageable. Please contact Alison, Chair of our Campsite Committee, or Bill, Campsite Manager, if you are interested in joining the team.

We would also like to encourage Scouts and Explorers to give back to our district by doing service towards their Chief Scout's awards. Please contact Bill to discuss opportunities.

Over the last few years, we have also benefitted from organisations doing corporate volunteering days. Most recently a team from Chubb Insurance in Crawley donated materials and time to paint Gummy's and over the next couple of months two more companies will be donating time as well. Please contact us if your company supports local charities in this way.

Finally, thank you to all the teams that support the Christmas Tree collection each year. This has been a phenomenal success and has generated significant sums over the last four years.

Alison Styles, Chair, Campsite Committee

Note to District Trustee Board for Annual General Meeting

Members of the Horsham District Campsite Committee serving during the next 12 months (appointed as a sub-committee of the District Trustee Board):

Alison Styles Chair

Joe Triccas Treasurer

Steve Mitchinson Secretary

Bill Power Campsite Manager
Anthony Smith Campsite Bookings Manager
Martin Dold
Tim Aveline
Gareth Witt
Dave Hatton/Jo Sands Ex-officio
Heather Greenwood Ex officio

Growth & Local Development Report

All those homes!

Horsham District Council (HDC) plans for the future envisage that some 20,000 new homes will be built in the district over the next 30 years. It seems long way away but this corresponds to some 2,000 young people who, hopefully, will want to become Scouts. Not only will we need additional Scout Groups and more volunteers, but they will all need somewhere to meet. Anyone who is already involved with Scouts knows the challenges that this will bring. A place where there will need to be space for groups of up to two-dozen youngsters most weekday evenings (plus some weekend activities) engaged in play, instruction, and general interaction. The meeting place (we will call it a Scout Group 'headquarters') must be local enough for the youngest members to be brought by their parents and convenient for older children to make their way from their homes by themselves in safety.

The big question is, "Who will provide these Scout HQs?" The HDC draft Local Plan provides for the need for educational and sports facilities but does not address non-sporting, non-educational community facilities for young people. A Scout HQ is not built overnight and will be needed as soon as families start to move into the new homes, not when each housing estate is completed. As a Scout District we will need to plan for this expansion in good time. We have submitted a detailed response to the draft Local Plan and continue to make representations at local level to HDC and the relevant Parish and Neighbourhood Councils and will continue to work on behalf of Horsham District Scouts to make our needs known.

Nigel "Fris" Friswell