



CHAIR'S REPORT

It has been a busy year for the District Trustee Board as we continue to focus on our core duties of finance, governance and risk. As part of that we have been reviewing and updating all our District policies and have conducted a thorough review of the District's risk processes. This exercise is almost complete, and these policies can be viewed on our District Website. I would like to thank everyone on the Board for all their hard work in connection with this process, and I want to extend the Board's thanks to our District Safety Lead, Simon Brew, whose help with everything "risk" has been invaluable, as has Tim Taylor's expertise in all things data and GDPR.

The Board has met four times this year, with the AGM still to come. We are fortunate to have a full complement of twelve trustees. Mary Hamilton will be stepping down from the Board at the AGM, and we are very sorry to be losing her. Mary has been actively involved in Scouting in Horsham for many years, and we have very much valued her presence on the Board. We wish her well as she leaves us to spend more time with her family at home and abroad.

We also said farewell this year to our wonderful Appointments Committee, a sad casualty of Transformation. Don, Helen, Robert and all the members of the Committee, past and present, have worked tirelessly for the District over the years and have provided an essential service which has benefitted every Group. I am sure that everyone across the District will join with me as I say a huge THANK YOU to them for everything that they have done to help make sure that our District has (as Dons says in his report) "the right people in the right place". Please do take time to read Don's final report.

Dave, Jo, and their District Team have worked incredibly hard this year to get as many District wide events happening as possible, and you can read about what our Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Explorers, Network and Young Leaders have been doing in the Annual Report. Thank you to everyone involved in the planning and delivery of these events, and a special thanks to the Scout Support Team who are always on hand to help out. Our young people get so much out of coming together at these District Events, engaging in fun, challenging and adventurous activities, making new friends and realising that they are part of the bigger Scouting family, not just their own Groups. Many of these events are held at our Beacon Hill Campsite, and we are extremely fortunate to have such a dedicated Campsite Team who manage the

premises and 27 acres of woodland. My thanks to them for looking after this wonderful facility on behalf of us all.

As Dave and Jo step down from the role of District Lead Volunteer, I would like to thank them both so much for everything that they have done for our District. They have been a great team, and we shall miss them. This is also my last report as District Chair, so a final heartfelt thanks from me to my Trustee Board for their constant support and wise words over the past 6 years, and to all you wonderful adult volunteers in all of your various roles, whether District or Group, for everything that you do to make a difference to the lives and life skills of all our young people.

Heather Greenwood, Chair, District Trustee Board

DISTRICT LEAD VOLUNTEER'S REPORT

Well, it certainly has been another very busy year, made even busier as we finally moved over to the new Membership System. Jo and I would like to give a special thank you to Tim Taylor for all his support in helping us all get our heads around the system as well as developing the new District Website. Thank you, Tim!

We are very pleased to report that Scouting continues to thrive in Horsham District even though our 2025 Census figures were down by around 93 young people. The biggest drop being in the Scout Section, 46. However, since January Rudgwick have opened a second Cub Pack and a Squirrel Drey. And both 2nd Southwater and 1st Shipley are about to start new Squirrel Dreys. Despite the drop in numbers, we are still the biggest District in the County.

We are absolutely delighted that new Squirrel Dreys are starting up and the word on the street via our County Lead Volunteer, Tom, is that Groups who have Squirrel Dreys have less trouble finding Adult Volunteers. Food for thought, maybe!

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. For anyone wanting to learn or develop new skills, there is a wide range of training available through The Scout Associations website, which can not only help volunteers involved in Scouting, but also in other aspects of their life too. Jo and I have been volunteering for over 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, 8 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 GLV's who do an absolutely amazing job and at times have been bombarded by emails from Jo and me. Please remember that the GLV role can be non-uniformed and can be shared. It is a great opportunity to use or develop leadership and management skills by bringing in Volunteers who have different skills and perspectives. This can also help with succession planning and provide continuity. Training is available as well as

support via the District Team who endeavour to support all GLVs as and when required.

We are very lucky to have an amazing District Leadership Team, who are not only able to support our Adult Volunteers, but also organise the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, Annual District Events for all sections, as well as one off trips. Jo and I would like to say a huge thank you to them too.

Our Campsite Committee, ably led by Alison Styles and Bill Power continue to do an amazing job looking after Beacon Hill and we would like to say a very big thank you to them too.

In fact, 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.

It was with great sadness that Dave Tyler died last year and more recently the passing of Tony Finch who was a past DC of Horsham West before the two Districts were merged back together. Both were great ambassadors for Scouting and an inspiration to many young people and adults alike. Fortunately, we managed to award Dave his Medal of Merit before he passed.

On a brighter note, we would like to say huge congratulations to Anthony Smith on being awarded the Bar to the Silver Acorn for his continued excellent service to Scouting in Horsham.

Both Jo and I would like to encourage everyone to nominate our Adult Volunteers for the Higher Awards via the Membership System.

We would also like to say a huge thank you to Heather our District Chair, as well as the District Trustees. Heather, unfortunately this is your last AGM. You have done an absolutely amazing job; it has been a real pleasure working with you and Horsham Scouting is in a much better place thanks to all your hard work.

The last year has crept up on us really quickly and after writing this report, which will be our last too, we are pleased to hand over to Oliver Smith who will our new District Lead Volunteer. We hope that you will all get behind Oliver and give him the amazing support that you have given to Jo and I. It has been an absolute privilege to represent the District. We have had an amazing time, if not challenging at times, but it has been an honour.

We have absolutely no doubt that we 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 the One thousand, three hundred and twenty three young people in Horsham District with the Skills for Life without **YOU**, so thank you!

Dave Hatton and Jo Sands, Acting Joint District Lead Volunteers

DISTRICT YOUTH LEAD REPORT

This year has been another great step forward for youth-shaped Scouting in Horsham. I've continued to champion youth voice within the District Leadership Team and Trustee board, helping to ensure that young people remain at the heart of our decision-making. It's been brilliant to stay involved at a county level too, including supporting the fantastic County Explorer event in September and attending various county events throughout the year.

One of the real highlights for me was seeing a young person from Horsham represent both our district and West Sussex at the UK Youth Forum in March. Moments like these really show the power of youth voice and the incredible potential of our Scouts when they are given the platform to lead.

As I come to the end of my three-year term as District Youth Lead, I've taken some time to reflect on everything we've achieved together. I'm incredibly proud of the progress we've made, but there's still more to do to embed youth-shaped Scouting in everything we do. The search for the next District Youth Lead will be starting soon, and I'm excited to see how they will take this work even further, supported by the brilliant volunteers and young people across the district.

Christopher Styles, District Youth Lead



The Beaver Sections across Horsham District are thriving, with waiting lists in place for nearly every group, a testament to the popularity and strength of the Beaver programme.

The Beaver Leaders continue to meet once per term, offering mutual support and collaborating on planning district-wide events. Two standout highlights remain:

- The annual District Campfire, a long-standing and much-loved tradition
- The Family Christmas Pantomime Trip, which continues to attract excellent attendance and enthusiasm

Currently, a dedicated team of three acting Beaver Programme Leads are supporting the district's activities. However, we are keen to recruit a permanent Beaver Programme Team Lead to help guide the future of the section.

If you, or someone you know, might be interested in this rewarding role, please don't hesitate to make contact. Additionally, if you're able to help with the organisation of district events for Beavers, please speak to one of the team. Extra help is always welcome and appreciated.

Caroline McCurrach, Jo Middleton and Alison Styles, Acting Joint Beavers Team Leads



District Cubs have held many events throughout the last year. Our own Horsham Monopoly Run, Warnham Challenge (incident hike) and Target Sports competition have given the Cubs a taster for the 'real' thing when they move up to Scouts. 4th Horsham are holding all three of these trophies at present. We are so lucky to have many trained instructors to help with the target sports.

We have reintroduced the Cub Chess competition after finding the old trophy tucked away in a cupboard. After a year of hard graft, Grant Ellis and Anthony Higgs ran a tough competition back in January which was won by 1st Broadbridge Heath Cubs.

Back in October 1st Cowfold Cubs won the ever popular Cyclocross Competition with thanks to Nick Evans for supervising the cycling under his new permit.

The annual Cub Campfire brought much merriment and melody to the campsite with 120 cubs sharing their favourite songs and learning many more. Thanks to Anne Heathcock for running the show, we love 'Singing in the Rain'.

Finally, we moved District Cub Camp to June this year to try and avoid a sodden campsite. Unfortunately, due to a foreboding weather forecast, we did not reach our personal target of 200 Cubs. However, this maybe a good thing as Oliver Smith has said once we do reach the target he is retiring from running the camp which he has been doing for the last ten years.

6th Horsham turned up to camp determined to reclaim the Tug of War Trophy that 4th Horsham had claimed in their absence in 2024. Will Fountain has taken on the challenge of pulling together 160 Cubs into an enjoyable competition. It should be noted that the Cubs beat the Leaders.

Next year, we have booked to return with the Cubs to Amberley Working Museum; we can't wait!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Scout Support Unit for always being there to help, to all the Cub Leaders in the District for sharing their ideas and making the programme possible and to Dave and Jo for being there when I need them.

Mandy Longdon, Cubs Team Lead

SCOUTS

A busy year for Andy and myself in our role promoting activities and supporting Troops across the District. Several Groups were directly supported during the year to help new leaders gain experience in building programs and running meetings and activities such as summer camps.

Early in the year, and organised by Steve Elliot, we saw a Leader's Sailing Weekend in Devon. The aim of this event was to provide leaders with a range of experience from novices to permit holders to gain confidence in water sports and to be more comfortable in offering Scouts the opportunity to do water sports (albeit via activity centres) and maybe start the route to being a permitted instructor. 16 leaders from various groups attended this weekend.

In October, we held the Annual Camp Cooking Competition at Beacon Hill Campsite. This year it was won by a team from 3rd Horsham, and in their first year on entering the competition. The standard of outdoor cooking continues to reach new heights and to impress the judges.

In November, we had the annual Two Rings Incident Hiking Event, which was won this year by a team from 1st Roffey. Notwithstanding the challenging weather conditions, a total of 18 teams took part in the event which include navigating a hike, a first aid scenario, a team building activity, along with crate stacking, fencing, archery and rifle shooting. Particularly for the Two Rings event, we must thank those individuals and groups that yet again supported the event in checking hike routes beforehand, walking routes on the day, running the activity bases, marshalling traffic, driving the mini bus, checking the teams, running the event administration, providing catering, helping set-up and take down. This sort of event just isn't possible without this support.

Unfortunately, we were not able to run the District Raft Race last year, due to weather conditions on the day (forecasted thunder and lightning); but we would like to thank Don and his team who planned the event and we hope to see it run this year.

We welcomed Simon Collins to the District team, who is helping support Scout Troops in the District (notably the 12th Horsham), as well as supporting our District Events.

Finally, we say a fond 'farewell' to Andy Sands (along with Jo) who after several years as ADC Scouts has retired for a quieter life by the sea in Norfolk. Andy has made a huge impact over the years to the Scout Sections in the District and will be greatly missed.

David Lawton, Scouts Team Lead

EXPLORERS

This is the first year that Henry and I have written this report. Over the past 6 months we have been overwhelmed about the commitment and innovation of the young Adults and Leaders around Horsham, which makes Explorer Scouts so great.

Explorer Scouts are the next stage up after Scouts and the provision is for those young people who are aged between 13.5 and 18 years of age. Traditionally Explorer Scouts in Horsham has been really strong and over the past year this has continued. Presently in Horsham we have 42 leaders who are actively involved in the development of this age group across the District and a steady 176 Explorer Scouts who are involved in our 8 Units.

For those that don't know Explorer Scouts is more about the young adults taking more of a lead in the development of the programme they want to do and the Leaders facilitating that process with help and encouragement. Our Units and Leadership teams successfully implement this ethos and as a result a varied programme, ideas, events and programmes are being run. This makes for a really interesting, exciting and committed Units, who are doing exceptional things. Our Units continue to award the Chief Scouts Platinum and Diamond Awards and have started to work with several on their Kings Scouts Award.

The units have continued to run summer camps and other events over the past year with camps to Norway, Lake district, Snowdonia and the Purbecks with other events being the Annual Monopoly Run in London, The Downsman Hike and The Overland Hike.

Community events have also featured highly this year with two of our units helping the Rotary Club with their annual Santa Collections and participating in the Midnight Walk amongst other things.

Leaders are always a focus for us, and we are always in need of extra help. Explorer Scouting is always a fun area to work in, and you get to see, interact, and help development of our future Community Leaders, Scout Leaders, and have a lot of fun along the way!!! Whatever time you are able to give is welcome and we would be happy to talk to anyone about what it's all about.

Many thanks to all of the Explorers and Leaders for a brilliant year and all the work that is put in.

We have already seen some plans across the District for the next year and we can't wait to see the results and the photos!!!

Richard Grover and Henry Lewis, Joint 14-25 Team Leads

network

Network continues to grow into 2025, and hopefully onwards into 2026. We relaunched Network in May with an exciting afternoon of shooting and tomahawk throwing at Beacon Hill's facilities, encouraging everyone to get involved. The future holds the potential for more exciting events including a water sports day and campfire games evening. With the launch hosting around 12 Network Members and 8 soon-to-be Network Members, the word still needs to be spread that Network is back and running activities again in order to maintain the capacity to host exciting events. As with last year, I still see a great growth of Network into 2026, with the potential of an international trip being planned for summer 2026. As always it would be great to have some help with planning and running these events, so if you would like to get involved, please get in touch.

Harry Lawrence, Network Lead



As of this report, we're thrilled to have 75 young people actively volunteering as part of the Squirrel, Beaver, Cub, and Scout section leadership teams across Horsham and beyond.

These Explorer Scouts are doing far more than just lending a hand at weekly meetings. They're committing to leadership training, completing challenging missions, and often contributing to other Explorer units — all while managing schoolwork, including GCSEs and A-levels. Their dedication is truly inspiring.

This year, five Young Leaders have gone the extra mile to complete all their training modules and missions, earning their Young Leader Belts — a significant achievement that reflects their growth and commitment.

Of course, none of this would be possible without the fantastic support of the Young Leader Team, who deliver the training modules, and the section teams who mentor and guide these young people through their missions. Your collaboration and encouragement are what make this programme such a success.

Thank you for continuing to support and empower the next generation of leaders in Scouting.

Tim Taylor, Young Leader's Unit Lead



Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme

We continue to offer the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme across the district. This provision goes from strength to strength. We presently have 59 young people signed up at various level from many of the units across Horsham.

As a district we have run three Bronze award expeditions opportunities and two silver expedition opportunities and for the first time have offered our Explorer and Network members the chance to start the gold award, which is the highest achievable level.

This year we have awarded thirteen (13) Bronze awards and five (Silver Awards). Which is a fantastic achievement.

This is a growing area within the Explorer Scout and Network provision and we are always in need to extra help.

If anyone is interested in helping out or if anyone wishes to sign up for the award (you need to be in either year 9 or 14 years old to sign up for bronze) please do not hesitate to contact us.

Richard Grover and Henry Lewis - Duke of Edinburgh advisors



SCOUT SUPPORT TEAM

With the changes in Scouting this year, the Horsham Scout Support Unit (HSSU) has now become Horsham Scout Support Team (HSST) which falls under the District Support leg.

We are made up of members who are either still involved in the weekly scouting activities or those who have provided help for a number of years and no longer commit to full time support but still want to get involved periodically. These members

have covered the majority of roles in scouting, from running and assisting with all the sections, the Executive committee and a number of ex DCs.

This year the HSST has helped with a varied number of District events. These range from helping support a Beaver colony to other varied outside events like the Riverside walk, St Georges Day Marshalling and the Cubs Warnham challenge. We also run a monthly meeting of varied events.

This year one of our long term members Geraldine Haylar, has had to stand down due to moving away from the District. She was a big part of the HSST and will be truly missed. She will still, where able, attend our events. Thank you Geraldine for everything you have done. This role in the HSST has now been taken up by Linda Barker, thank you Linda for stepping up.

My ongoing aim as HSST 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 the HSST or if you think we could help support you in any way.

Kevin Murdock, HSST Lead

CAMPSITE TEAM REPORT



Thanks to the regular support of a small group of dedicated volunteers, the campsite is well maintained and safe for everyone to use. A major focus this year has been ensuring the ongoing safety of the site, particularly in relation to woodland management. A tree survey, commissioned by the Trustee Board, identified work needed to remove dead and hazardous trees and branches. The essential work has now been completed, helping to safeguard all who use the site.

We have benefitted from several corporate volunteering days in recent years, most recently with UK Power Network. These days make a real difference, and we are always eager to host more. If you know of a company interested in a day of volunteering, or if your Scouts or Explorers are seeking opportunities to complete service elements of their top awards, please speak to Bill (Campsite Manager) or Alison (Campsite Chair) to find out how they can help.

A huge thank you goes to everyone involved in the annual Christmas Tree Collection. This has been a phenomenal success over the past five years, raising

substantial funds that have directly contributed to the site's ongoing maintenance and development. These funds help to ensure the campsite remains safe, well-equipped, and welcoming for all.

Beacon Hill continues to be well used by both Horsham groups and visiting groups from outside the district and we were particularly pleased to welcome the County Explorers Camp last September – a fantastic weekend was enjoyed by all. We look forward to another successful year and appreciate the continued support from all individuals and groups who contribute to making the campsite a thriving resource for our community.

Campsite Team

APPOINTMENTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (AAC)

Sadly this will be the final report of the Horsham District Appointments Advisory Committee as the role of the AAC duly ceased in November 2024 when the Transformation Project was fully implemented. The onus of ensuring that the Scout Association has “the right people in the right place” as regards its adult leaders will in future rest primarily upon the Group Lead Volunteers.

- Some time was spent at the time of the transition to see whether it might be possible for existing AAC members, with all their experience of talking to prospective new leaders, to have a guidance role working alongside officially accredited welcome team members. However, TSA policies were quite clear that this would not be permitted.
- Essentially welcome conversations can in future only be undertaken by such accredited members.
- The welcome conversation will typically be organised by the Group Lead Volunteer and will comprise – in addition to the prospective volunteer – a leader who is known to the recruit (very likely their section leader), and a leader from another Group who is already volunteering in a similar role to the recruit. Both parties to be “accredited”.
- Exactly how these new arrangements operate remains to be seen, and in particular whether there is sufficient independence and scope for challenge.
- The AAC’s role of dealing with reviews, suspensions and disciplinary matters does not appear to have been absorbed within the new arrangements and will presumably fall to the District Lead Volunteer.

In closing I would like to express the District’s thanks to all of the AAC members for the time which they have given to this role, particularly as the majority of them have taken the view that, after many years service, now would be an appropriate time to retire from active involvement. In particular I should mention our special thanks to Helen Palmer and Robert Gardner, respectively our Appointments Secretary and Assistant Secretary, for all they have done behind the scenes to keep things running smoothly.

Don Newport, Appointments Committee Chairman