



Scouts

1st Ince and Elton

1st Ince and Elton Scout Group

Trustees Annual Report

2023/2024

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1. Reference and Administration Details

Charity Name: 1st Ince and Elton Scout Group
Charity Number: 1025963
Principal Address: 28 Lime Grove, Elton, Chester, CH2 4PX

1.1 Trustees

Ashley Proctor	Group Lead Volunteer
Alex Foulds	Group Chair
Lynda Canham	Group Secretary
Nicole McNally	Group Treasurer
Sarah Price	Section Leader – Beavers
Graham Proctor	Section Leader – Cubs
<i>Position Vacant</i>	Section Leader – Scouts

Sharon Lennon, Jack Whibberley, Linda McKay.

2. Structure, Governance and Management

2.1 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 By-Laws of the Association and the Policy, Organisation and Rules (POR) of the Scout Association.

2.2 Group Scout Council

The Group Scout Council is the electoral body to which the Group Trustee Board is accountable. Membership of the Group Scout Council is open to:

- Scouters
- Colony, Pack and Troop Assistants
- Administrators
- Advisers
- Patrol Leaders
- All parents of Beavers Scouts, Cubs Scouts and Scouts

- any other supporters including former Scouts and their parents who may be admitted by the Group Scout Leader, the Group Trustee Board, or the Group Scout Council

2.3 Constitution

The Group is operated as an educational charity under the Policy, Organisation and Rules of the Scout Association. It has a constitution agreed by the Group Scout Council, but which is subservient to its governing documents.

2.4 Trustee Selection

The trustees are appointed in accordance with the Group's constitution and the Policy, Organisation and Rules of the Scout Association.

2.5 Group Trustee Board

The Group is led by a Group Scout Leader and managed by a Group Trustee Board. They are accountable to the Group Scout Council for the satisfactory running of the Group.

The Trustee Board exists to support the Group Scout Leader in meeting the responsibilities of their appointment.

Members of the Trustee Board must act collectively as charity Trustees of the Scout Group, and in the best interests of its members to:

- Comply with the Policy, Organisation and Rules of The Scout Association
- Protect and maintain any property and equipment owned by and/or used by the Group.
- Manage the Group finances.
- Provide insurance for people, property and equipment.
- Provide sufficient resources for Scouting to operate. This includes, but is not limited to, supporting recruitment, other adult support, and fundraising activities.
- Promote and support the development of Scouting in the local area.
- Manage and implement the Safety Policy locally.
- Ensure that a positive image of Scouting exists in the local community.
- Appoint and manage the operation of any sub-Committees, including appointing a Chair to lead the sub-Committees.
- Ensure that Young People are meaningfully involved in decision making at all levels within the Group.

- The opening, closure, and amalgamation of Sections in the Group as necessary.
- Appoint Administrators, Advisers, and Co-opted members of the Trustee Board.
- Approve the Annual Report and Annual Accounts after their examination by an appropriate auditor, independent examiner, or scrutineer.

2.6 Risk and Internal Control

The Group Trustee Board has identified the major risks to which they believe the Group is exposed which are:

2.6.1 Injury to Leaders, Helpers, Supporters or Members

The Group supports compliance with the Safety Policy and ensures appropriate risk assessment; elimination, reduction and control measures are taken to reduce the likelihood of any injuries.

In addition, through membership fees, the Group contributes to the Scout Association's national accident insurance policy.

2.6.2 Damage to Buildings, Property or Equipment

The Group would request the use of buildings, property and equipment from neighbouring organisations. The Group has sufficient buildings and contents insurance in place to mitigate against permanent loss.

2.6.3 Reduced Income from Subscriptions and Fund Raising

The Group is primarily reliant upon income from subscriptions and fund-raising. The Group holds adequate reserves to ensure the continuity of activities should there be a major reduction in income. The board could also raise the value of subscriptions to increase the Group income either temporarily or permanently.

2.6.4 Reduction or Loss of Leaders

The Group is totally reliant upon volunteers to run and administer the activities of the Group. If there were a reduction in the number of volunteers to an unacceptable level, then there would have to be a contraction, consolidation or closure of activities or sections.

2.6.5 Reduction or Loss of Members

If there were a reduction in membership of a particular section or the Group as a whole then there would have to be a contraction, consolidation or closure of a section.

3. Objectives and Activities

The primary objective of the Group is that of the Scout Association generally, namely:

“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 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 activities of the Group are:

- The provision of the Scouting programme for 6–14 year old members

4. Achievements and Performance

4.1 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.

4.2 GLV Report

Ashley Proctor – Group Lead Volunteer

It's been nearly 2 years since I took on the role of Group Lead Volunteer, and between the duties of that role, and continuing supporting the Scouts section – I've certainly got my work cut out!

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, our overall numbers have taken a dip – and unfortunately this has continued again for another year. Thankfully our Beavers and Cubs Section numbers have remained stable during this time, but the decrease in numbers is certainly noticeable in the number of our volunteers and also through the number of young people in our Scouts Section.

We do have a project in with our District's Local Growth Officer which I'm keen to get kick started to help us overcome these challenges with recruiting new volunteers and hopefully start some traction with getting Squirrels going in the village.

Numbers aside, we've certainly been busy in the last twelve months, with the Beavers, Cubs and Scouts getting up to all sorts of different badge work, activities, and trips – however, I'll leave it to the sectional reports to update you with what each of the sections have been up to.

Last year's Firework Spectacular proved a challenge on several fronts – first was the weather as some pretty significant downpours prior to starting the display resulted in a dip of attendee numbers (and the damp also resulted in challenges getting the fireworks lit)! Another challenge being that the event only just broke even, and that was with the help of some fund-matching through some of our volunteers' employers! We did also struggle getting the event set up on time this year too due to a dip of available volunteers during the day. Thankfully we got the final bits ready just as the gates opened!

We're making some changes for this year's event to help secure its viability for years to come. One such change we can announce is that we're moving it from the Friday closest to Bonfire Night to the Saturday closest to Bonfire Night – as such, we're aiming to run this year's event on Saturday 2nd November!

Things on the Elton Events Committee seemed to have quietened down following the village fete, with only the Elton Christmas Light Switch-On taking place. That said, we continue to remain committed to supporting our local community where we can, so if we get wind of any future community events, we'll make every effort to be there!

Finally, I'd just like to say a huge THANK YOU to every single one of our Volunteers, Trustee Board Members, Parent Helpers, Parents, and our Young People for the support that they continue to provide the group.

4.3 Beavers Section Report

Sarah Price – Section Leader (Beavers)

We have had an amazing year at Beavers. At the time the report was written we have 20 active Beavers 2 young leaders and 3 leaders.

We have had a great year and had lots of fun. We have covered many badges including builder, craft and adventure. We have awarded 113 badges, and 2 Beavers achieved the highest accolade for Beavers, their Chief Scout Bronze Award before leaving us for Cubs.

The Beavers have taken part in various activities throughout the year. In the Autumn Term we visited Queen Charlottes Wood to play night games, we made cakes for MacMillan, we attended a joint Messy Church with the rest of the group and made Harvest craft, we also attended the Harvest festival. We made Remembrance Day crafts and left them at the Church when we paid our respects. We attended the Christmas Light Switch-On in the village. We made Christmas gifts for our families and attended a Christmas sleepover in the hut.

In the Spring Term, we went to the Chester Gang Show, which resulted in some of our Beavers wanting to take part in one next year. Our theme for this term was joining in. We have made Chinese food and wrote our names in Chinese, we have solved puzzles, and attended and won the District Craft Competition.

We welcomed the lighter nights and took full advantage by tracking, going on small walks and orienteering. We had a sleepover in the hut and went for a nature walk identifying birds and flowers.

The Summer Term will be visiting Manley Mere and the end of year bash.

Finally, I would like to thank Hayley and Christie for all their support, we couldn't do it without you!!.. and not forgetting Tilly and Flynn, you are both fab!

4.4 Cubs Section Report

Graham Proctor – Section Leader (Cubs)

Over the past year since the last AGM, Cubs have been busy doing many activities in and around the HQ – starting in July where the Cubs tried their hand at Air Rifling Shooting, followed by the Summer BBQ where we awarded Silver Awards and activity badges.

In the Autumn term, we finished several badges including Gardener, Communicator, and First Aid. We made cakes for our McMillian Coffee Evening, took part in team building activities, tracking and for Remembrance Sunday, we crafted poppies and attended the Sunday Service. We also visited Encirc to see how glass bottles were created and recycled!

The Cubs took part in a “Cubs Got Talent” (where they were joined by the Scouts (to help them complete their Creative Challenge badges), followed by Christmas crafts where we

made glitter globes. The cubs finished the year at Ten Pin Cheshire Oaks to do some bowling - all trying to beat the little Esmael!

We started 2024 making bird feeders ready for the light evenings. Athletics badge was covered, followed by knots for Pioneering and testing their Mapping and Grid Reference Skills to prepare our older Cubs for the move up to Scouts.

Then came along Chinese New Year, and we celebrated by tasting new foods and making crafts. In the following weeks we tossed pancakes for Pancake Day and made Mother's Day crafts. Some of the Cubs also attended the group trip to Chester Gang Show. We finished off the term with a Delamere Forest easter trail that was set up by Akela, where the Cubs followed the trail with their torches on a rather cold and muddy night.

After the easter break the Cubs have been finishing off some badge work including learning about the solar system as part of our Astronomer badge, and then a walk around the village testing their Local Knowledge as the weather is now improving! We finalised the Navigator badge by making compasses using pegs and rope!

Some of our Cubs have moved up to Scouts, of which we are awarding five Chief Scout Silver Awards this term - they have all done amazing throughout their journey in Cubs. We wish them the best in the Scouting world. The rest of the Cubs have been awarded many badges fulfilling the programme this year.

We look forward to continuing our program and working towards the future covering all aspects of badge work needed and getting out and about and enjoying ourselves.

As part of the Leader Team, we thank parents in making our programme successful, and also to our volunteers Akela, Kim, Jamie and Tina on their continued work with Cubs.

4.5 Scouts Section Report

Ashley Proctor –Section Leader (Scouts)

2023/4 was a very enjoyable year with the following activities that were well attended:

- An Autumn Camp at QCW which included another trip to Wildshore, this time to try the Aqua Park.
- Another trip to Games Workshop in Chester to make Warhammer models – Ticking off elements of the Creative Challenge badge.
- Christmas Trip to Chill Factor E – visiting the Snow Park.
- Another visit to Chester Gangshow.
- Den Building and First Aid Scenarios at Delamere Forest.
- Archery at QCW – Master at Arms activity badge.

One key focus for our troop over the last 6 months is Teamwork – we've been running multiple evenings to encourage greater teamwork ranging from solving puzzles to more recently trying the video game "Keep Talking and Nobody Explodes".

The purpose of the game is that a Scout is placed in front of a computer (the bomb) and the rest of the team are given a manual on how to diffuse the bomb. Diffusing is a matter of completing a series of puzzles, it's a lot harder than it sounds, and certainly requires lots of patience, and more importantly teamwork!

We've tried this game a handful of times over the years with our section – however this time the Scouts did very well in managing to get past levels 1 and 2 (some of the teams managed to get much higher this time).

More recently, 3 of our Scouts took part in a District Challenge Day at QCW and joined up with Scouts from 1st Norley to form a joint team. The team worked really well together and gave the activities their all – the sun even shone which always makes activities like this a even better!

Normally in this report, we'd be talking about the Cheshire Hike – however due to ground conditions at the start of the year, the decision was made to postpone the hike until 5th/6th October. We're hoping to be entering at least 2 teams this year!

Finally, but certainly not least we have 1 Scout who has done an amazing job achieving their gold award.

We have got lots planned for the next year including another camp and a trip to Cosford Air Show amongst other things.

5. Financial Review

5.1 Treasurer's Report

Nicole McNally – Treasurer

We continued our fundraising events, but unfortunately the Fireworks display didn't raise as much funds as in past years, we think due to the significant downpour just as the event was about to start and fund matching opportunities were not as available in this year.

Income

The total income for 2023 was **£11,495**.

	2023	2022	2021	2020
TOTAL INCOME	£11,495.00	£15,974.02	£84,400	£21,300
Subs/membership Fees	£5,228.24	£5,107.41	£4,600	£4,600
Donations and grants	£2,033.56	£8,073.57	£64,600	£13,000
Fundraising	£2,209.03	£853.29	£10,300	£1,100
Outings and Activities (all sections)	£1,441.38	£1,599.75	£200	£2,100
Other	£784.18	£340	£4,700	£500
Stripe/Go Cardless Fees	-£201.39			

Donations and Grants

We were fortunate to receive donations from Elton Parish Council and Cheshire West this year.

Fundraising

The Firework Spectacular, despite the weather, managed to generate over £300 in fundraising which although significantly less than previous years, will be discussed at Board level to improve the fundraising amount moving forward.

Outings and Activities

The children have taken part in lots of activities and several outings further outlined in the section reports. The £1,441.38 figure is the amount we have collected from parents/carers towards outings and activities.

Expenditure

The total expenditure for 2023 was **£15,004.24**.

	2023	2022	2021	2020
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£15,004.24	£22,562.47	£68,600	£8,900
Hut Renovations/& Maintenance	£1,731.99	£8,252.20	£53,300	£100
Fundraising			£2,600	£600
Equipment& general expenses	£403.35	£646.72	£2,100	£400
Outings and Activities/Events	£6,438.01	£6,533.87	£1,500	£500
Badges and uniform	£324.06	£1,339.04	£400	£200
Camps	In Events	In Events	£100	£1,000
Utilities (heat, water, light)	£1,119.55	£1,231.36	£200	£1,600
Census	£2,700	£2,729.50	£2,400	£2,900
Insurance	£1,435.40	£423.02	£300	£300
Other (bank charges, admin, donations)	£851.88	£723.76	£5,700	£1,200
Training for Leaders		£683.00		

Renovations for the hut were completed last year, meaning spending this year has been on maintenance including the external grass areas being professionally maintained (meaning it can be used more frequently by the children).

We have plans for the heating in the HQ to be renewed this year before the colder months arrive and some new camping equipment is needed. The events and activities were subsidised again this year with funds being available.

Subscriptions

Membership fees cover the costs of the group, including the Census, hut maintenance, weekly activity costs, etc.

We calculate a yearly cost and then divide by 12 for lower monthly payments, so please all be aware that the subs don't stop during the summer holidays. We are trying to continue with the £12 per month sub fee for as long as feasibly possible.

Bank Accounts

Amounts held in Bank Accounts or cash as at 31/12/2023 were £31,226.53. A full set of the Annual Accounts for 2023 are included in the appendix below.

5.2 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 appropriate level of reserves for operating the group for 6 months is judged to be circa £6,000.

As reported earlier in this report, the group ended 2023 with total funds, including reserves and grant monies of £31,226.53, which is above the level required for operating expenses. However, this can be explained by:

- we still haven't spent the surplus from previous years with the receipt of COVID-19 grants from the local authority accruing in 2020 and 2021.

However, a chunk of this money has been ringfenced to resolve some electrical issues in our HQ building and also to replace the building heating before the colder weather returns in the Winter.

- the Group Trustee Board was also mindful of the ongoing impact of the Cost-of-Living crisis (and fluctuating energy prices) and wished to hold extra reserves for this purpose until the next review of our reserves policy.

These extra reserves are also helping us provide support to several young people through our Hardship Policy.

5.3 Investment Policy

The Group's Income and Expenditure is very small and consequently, 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 or building societies or The Scout Association's Short Term Investment Service.

6. Declaration

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

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:

Signature:

Date:

Full Name:

Position:

Signature:

Date:

Full Name:

Position:

Appendix 1 – Full Accounts 2023

1st Ince and Elton Scout Group			
Annual Accounts for Year Ended 31st December 2023			
Opening Balance as of 01/01/2023			
		Bank	£ 33,077.31
		Cash	£ 950.67
		Stripe account balance(OSM	£ 643.68
		equals card balance	£ 64.11
Total			£ 34,735.77
Income		Expenditure	
Subscriptions	£ 5,228.24	Admin	£ 749.54
Donation	£ 2,033.56	Census	£ 2,700.00
Fundraising	£ 101.85	Events & Activities	£ 6,438.01
Events& Activities	£ 1,441.38	Utilities	£ 1,119.55
Rent	£ 340.00	Hut Maintenance	£ 1,731.99
Sundry	£ 444.18	Badges	£ 324.06
Stripe/Go Cardless	-£ 201.39	Equipment	£ 403.35
cash from fundraising	£ 2,107.18	Insurance	£ 1,435.40
		Sundry	£ 102.34
TOTALS	£ 11,495.00		£ 15,004.24
Closing Balance as of 31/12/2023			
		Bank	£ 27,140.81
		Cash	£ 3,057.85
		Stripe account balance(OSM	£ 1,016.10
		Balance on equals cards	£ 11.77
Total			£ 31,226.53
Opening balance at 01/01/2023			£ 34,735.77
Income			£ 11,495.00
Expenditure			£ 15,004.24
Closing Balance at 31/12/2023			£ 31,226.53

Appendix 2 – Independent Examiners Report

Scrutineer's Report to the Trustees of the 1st Ince and Elton Scout Council

I report on the accounts of the Group for the year ended 31st December 2023.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Scrutineer

As the Group's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that neither the audit nor independent examination requirements of the Charities Act 2011 apply. It is my responsibility without carrying out an audit or independent examination to scrutinise the accounts and to report to you.

Basis of Scrutineer's Statement

In accordance with the directions given in the Group's constitution, I have scrutinised the records and the accounts set out on pages 11 to 13, and 15.

Scrutineer's Statement

In my opinion the accounts are in accordance with the records produced to me and comply with the constitution.

Name: Judith Dodd
Address: "Iona",
Willington Road,
Willington
Cheshire
CW6 0ND

Date: 26/05/2024