

Objectives and Activities

The Purpose of Scouting

Scouting exists to actively engage and support young people in their personal development, empowering them to make a positive contribution to society.

The Values of Scouting

As Scouts we are guided by these values:

Integrity – We act with integrity; we are honest, trustworthy and loyal.

Respect – We have self-respect and respect for others.

Care – We support others and take care of the world in which we live.

Belief – We explore our faiths, beliefs and attitudes.

Co-operation – We make a positive difference; we co-operate with others and make friends.

The Scout Method

Scouting takes place when young people, in partnership with adults, work together based on the values of Scouting and:

- enjoy what they are doing and have fun
- take part in activities indoors and outdoors
- learn by doing
- share in spiritual reflection
- take responsibility and make choices
- undertake new and challenging activities
- make and live by their Promise

Financial Review

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 Group Executive Committee considers that the group should hold a sum equivalent to 12 months running costs, designating £2400 to this purpose. This was reviewed in full in May 2019 and annually thereafter. The 2021 accounting period set the designated reserves fund at £4000. This was to include the reserves fund as set above with an additional 2 months' worth of loan repayment cover.

At the end of the 2021 financial year, the Group held £52,101.64 cash with unallocated reserves of £11,599.96 held in the Group's current account against this at year end.

This is above the level required for operating expenses. However this can be explained by:

- cash held for operating costs
- the Committee's continued works on the redevelopment of the Shepway Close Centre Project to complete the project.
- Significant grant funding for restricted projects for 2022
- to fully fund the Group's ambitious 2018-2023 growth and development plan.

Investment Policy

The Group's Income and Expenditure is relatively small and as a consequence 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.

The Group Executive regularly monitors the levels of bank balances and the interest rates received to ensure the group obtains maximum value and income from its banking arrangements. Occasionally this may involve using an account that requires a period of notice before funds may be withdrawn, before doing so the Group Executive considers the cash flow requirements. The annual budget setting process takes this into consideration.

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.

Group Chair's Statement

We've had a relatively quiet year, with the main focus of the trustees work centring around getting everyone back together safely. This has involved work on risk assessments, supporting our volunteers meet the requirements for returning to face to face Scouting and ensuring procedures and resources were in place to keep everyone safe.

You'll know that the centre has been equipped with all the hand sanitiser, cleaning materials and safety measures necessary to keep us running safely and I'm very proud of our achievements in keeping things ticking over with the various enforced closures, etc.

Trustees have also worked very hard in securing grant funding and various funding streams to keep the charity operating without placing the full financial burden of that on our members and was a passionate advocate of reducing monthly subs. I am so grateful to our members for continuing to make the reduced subs payments while we weren't offering a full face to face programme. I know we were one of only a handful of groups locally to reduce subs.

The Executive Committee have been fully committed in supporting the Group leadership team develop the Skills for Life growth and development plan to lay out the roadmap for the future of

our Group and Scouting locally, despite the pandemic and supporting the change in direction necessitated by the ever changing world around us.

This exciting plan includes all our hopes and aspiration for our Group and one we believe will make Scouting even more fantastic.

The trustees largest and highest priority element of the plan is the continued renovations of the centre and access to high quality equipment and resources to enable our leaders to deliver great programmes to our young people – week in, week out. This year we have:

- focused on the safety aspects of the centre, reviewing risk assessments and investing in cleaning, cleaning materials and hygiene levels
- continued seeking grants to support our ambitious outside space renovations plan and adding more natural air flow and ventilation to the main hall
- had the second pod to the side of the hall built to allow chairs and tables to stored safely out of the way and provide a new workshop, safely locked away from small fingers!
- financed leaders' activity training.

Because of the way the timings of the financial year and the AGM work, I am really pleased to be able to report that although it is not funded from the financial year we are discussing, we have finally finished the outside space to a high standard and delivered the increased airflow to the main hall with the installation of the bi-fold doors and associated increased security equipment. While this is great, it does leave us a little more vulnerable in terms of cash flow than we are used to. Our budget is healthy-ish and although a little squeaky, we're OK at the moment, despite the continued increases in the cost of living. If and when this changes, I will call an extra-ordinary meeting if necessary. Hopefully, it will not and our continued financial stability through careful management will be assured. Your continued help in this, through paying subs on time, etc. is greatly appreciated.

As always, I'd like to thank my fellow trustees for their continued support and enthusiasm in the stewardship of the Group and of course, our thanks to Craig, Alistair and the leadership team for their hard work and dedication in giving our young people the opportunity to learn skills for life.