15th St Helens (St Andrews) Scout Group
AGM Reports 2024

Scouts
15th St Helens
(St Andrews)

GSL Report:

Another packed year for the group. The group is operating at almost its full capacity with a lengthening waiting list across the younger sections.

During the past year all the sections have been very active with numerous activities, camps and competitions, invariably enjoying themselves and always performing and representing the group to a high standard.

Two of our Scout leaders also attended the international Scout Jamboree in Korea as part of the support team, and despite the problems that were faced over in Korea, we were very fortunate to still be able to connect via a live link, here in the Den on the group Jamboree day and hear from participants, everyone that attended seemed to enjoy the day.

Like all in the past year we have seen the cost of almost everything increases, this has seen the group drawing down on its reserves.

There are always opportunities to get involved with the group in lots of different guises, not just as a leader or with DIY! No offer of assistance will ever be turned down, no matter how big or small.

Over the coming year the Scout Association will be implementing various changes to the organisation. This will initially become apparent through the changing of role titles. We will endeavor to keep you informed as and when more information is available.

Carl Latham
GSL

Squirrels:

In September 2022 we increased our Drey size to 24 Squirrels, the maximum we are allowed to take. We also invested two new leaders, so we now have six Leaders, two occasional helpers and three Young Leaders.

We had a very busy fun packed year, although it started on a sad note, with the Death of Queen Elizabeth. We marked the occasion with a ‘Reflection’ evening and made a sympathy card for the Royal Family, each Squirrel wrote a special message inside it.

In October we accepted an invitation from the mayor to visit the Mayors Parlour. We had drinks and biscuits in the Parlour, followed by a guided tour round the Town Hall. November saw us dress up for Halloween and made ghosts out of milk bottles. We also joined the scouts for fireworks, at their Bonfire Bivvy. The Squirrels loved having a look at the bivvys and being shown how to use an axe to cut wood. In December Father Christmas visited our Christmas party.

We started the new year making ‘New Year Wishes’ and in February we made Pancakes, continuing the year making St Davids Day & Mother’s Day cards and having an Easter Egg Hunt. The highlight of

the year for the Squirrels, was attending the St Georges Day Camp on the Saturday, we had a large turn out and most stayed for tea and the campfire (I had to keep phoning parents to ask if they could stay longer than originally planned) some even wanted to camp.

The rest of the year we did numerous activities, including a few Zoom links with our Welsh pen pals in *Mynydd* Isa Squirrel Drey, playing games and doing activities with them. We also visited Sidings Lane Nature Reserve for a bug hunt. Finishing the year with a visit from past and present members of the Jamboree IST team, they talked to the Squirrels about the forth coming Jamboree to South Korea and a past Jamboree in Japan. In August we had our final event, attending the 'Dream Live' event, even though it wasn't as planned everyone had a great day.

Throughout the Year we gave out 178 Activity Badges, 48 Challenge badges, 24 staged badges and 7 Chief Squirrel Acorn awards, the highest award a Squirrel can achieve. Congratulations to the Squirrels who achieved their Acorn awards, we are so proud of you all.

None of this would be possible, without the support from the Squirrel team, so I would like to put on record my gratitude to all the Assistant Leaders, Occasional Helpers and Young Leaders for all their hard work throughout the year.

Julie Gilbert
Squirrel Section Leader

Beavers:

We started the year with 15 children and ended the year with 15 children.

Bronze badges awarded – 2

Overall badges awarded – 85

Events participated in:
Visit to St John's Church
Visit from Dr Louise Dennis from the Computer Science department at University of Manchester (Coding and Mars Rovers workshop)
St George's Day district event
DREAM Live / Korean BBQ Group event at the den.

Paul Carrier
Beaver Section Leader

Cubs:

A total of 61 badges where earned this year, ranging from new members to Silver Chief scout challenge. Especially pleasing was the volume of cubs who have earned at least 1 night away badge over the past year. This is a clear step away from COVID times and helping cubs return to scouting normality.

The group has remained very stable with a core team of 3 leader, and several parent who have been willing to help on a night were needed. We have had one consistent young leader helping across the year. The section is stable, budgets are used and managed well and return a varied

experience for the cubs. There is a lot of open and active involvement/communication with leaders and parents, either face to face or via WhatsApp/email.

Cub numbers have continued to grow this year. With 15 cubs at the start of September, peaking at 25 cubs during the early part of 2023 and settling at 20 at the end of August. The boy/girl ratio has improved this year with 3 girls ending the year as cubs.

The program has been wide range and varied. Everything from night hikes and cooking, to gardening and 1st aid have been covered during our weekly meetings. We have had several bigger events, from the annual cub carol service, Christmas bowling, St Georges weekend camp.

In early February Cubs also had a once in a lifetime opportunity to sleep over at Chester cathedral as part of the Gaia art installation, sleeping under an incredible moving Earth project. We also revived our cub only weekend camp at Tawd Vale. Despite camping in some of the worst storms of the year was a fantastic weekend with 90% of the cubs taking part, either as day visitors or camping for the weekend.

Targets for 2023-2024

- Continue to deliver a wide range of activities/skills and increase cub involvement in planning.
- Continue to try and improve the number of girls in cubs.
- Consider how to improve the % of those cubs achieving the highest awards (chief scout silver).

None of this would be possible without the help and support of those leaders that have given up their time, weekends and energy over the past year. On behalf of the cubs and huge thank you.

Kevin McCooey
Cub Section Leader

Scouts:

The Scouts started the year with a traditional scouting activity in the form of pioneering at the den. The rest of the year saw the return of many of our usual activities/camps, after some down time following the COVID lockdowns of years gone by.

September also saw the first of many bivvies at Bispham Hall throughout the year! This was followed by further bivvies in November, December, February, April & June. The December & February bivvies were in the Swedish Lavvuu's, following the positive feedback from the Scouts the previous year.

In October, we (as always) entered a team into the Chariot Race competition at Bispham hall. We had another successful year, ending as the fastest St Helens team! November then saw a return of another old favourite, a trip to Blackburn swimming baths.

December quickly followed, with the Scouts taking part in the Pinewood Derby competition. There was a great selection of cars with some great designs. We finished the year with a trip to the bowling alley at Warrignton – with a record 100% attendance.

Once we were back in January, we had a very interesting visit to St Helens Fire Station. We got shown around the fire station & engines, and the Scouts got to try on the firefighting gear. Unfortunatley, the trip had to get cut short as both the fire engines got called out on jobs! However, it was a once in a lifetime experience watching the firefighters in action, and the Scouts were amazed how fast they were able to turn out from the station.

In February, we were able to run another Winter Camp, held at Bowley Scout Campsite, near Blackburn. It was attended by 3 brave Scouts who persevered with the cold, wet weather whilst cooking for themselves on personal stoves for 3 nights.

Over the Spring months we once again took part in some of our other regular activities such as night hikes & the annual bike ride. These were supplemented by the attendance of District/County events such as the 999 Competition, The Equinox Challenge & the much love Great Escape Competition.

We rounded out the summer holidays with a Summer Camp to Walesby Forest, near Nottingham. This was a 4-night camp which was attended by 8 Scouts, 2 Young Leaders & 12 Leaders. The Scouts got to take part in various adventurous activities & cook themselves some fantastic meals from a themed menu.

Over the course of the year 62 badges were issued to the Scouts, but this was due to focusing on maximizing other opportunities, rather than badgework. There was also 1 Chiefs Scout Gold award presented.

Approximately 18 Scouts attending the meetings on a regular basis over the latter part of 2022. The interest we have had in joining the Scout section throughout 2023 has once again been immense, and we ended the year with 22 Scouts.

I would just like to thank all the Scout Leaders and parent helpers once again for all their hard work throughout the year. There are quite a few of us now, but that's because we all enjoy what we do & it wouldn't be the same without them!

The difference they all make each week to the Scouts lives is invaluable, and I couldn't run the section without each & every one of them, no matter how big or small their contributions.

Liam Cawsey-Gilbert
Section Leader (Scouts)

15th St Helens (St Andrews) Scouts Treasurer's Report - FY22-23

Introduction

The full breakdown of the Group accounts as reflected in OSM for FY 22-23 is in the appendix document. This report is a written narrative of the current state of the group's finances, summarising that statement. The Groups current Financial Year accounting period runs from September 1st to August 31st, and this appears to be the first time we have had a complete year recorded in OSM under that definition.

Treasurer's Opening statement.

I took over as group treasurer part way through the year and I would like to give specific thanks to Liam for both the caretaker role he did before me and helping me ease into the role.

Summary of Accounts Balances

	Brought Forward	**Carried Forward**	**Net Change**
Expense Account	0.00	192.57	192.57
Treasurers Account	1,593.32	1,707.09	113.77
Reserve Account[1]	3,000.39	3,015.70	15.31
Savings Account	27,677.67	26,612.68	-1,064.99
Fundraising Account	1,529.47	2.95	-1,526.52
Total	**33800.85**	**31530.99**	**-2269.86**

Overall, the group has run at a loss of approximately £2270 for the financial year. However, factors need to be considered when taking this at face value.

[1] Reserve account funds are restricted amount equivalent to 6 months running costs. They are only to be used in the event the group finds itself in severe financial distress with all other monies used.

1, the Jamboree fundraising account: This has been included in the group's finances whilst raising funds for a specific event that happened this year. The run-down of the balance of this account contributes most of the group's loss.
Additional to this, it must be noted the committee's decision to donate towards the cost of our representatives a total of £400 on top of this.

2. Capital expenditure from savings: In this financial year the group has also replaced the car park gate total costs £1116.78.

With these considered, the group appears in a healthy financial position, and we appear to be flat (+38.80) from our position at the start of 2022. However, we cannot be complacent. One of the biggest increases in expenditure appears to be on Utilities which has increased by 150% year on year. A discussion should be commenced by the committee into the sustainability of this

V1.1 Updated report re-categorised £400 of Group Expenses and £7.08 of Maintenance to Savings expenditure as these were costs towards a project. Overall balances did not change.

V1.2 Added footnote to clarify restricted nature of reserve funds.

Section budgets, events, and expenses.

I request all section leaders, occasional helpers and others familiarise themselves with the full policy particularly the requirements for timely claims and submission of accompanying receipts. A new method of submitting these via an online form has been deployed and is live for the new financial year. The form is available on a mobile phone so receipts can be photographed and submitted as soon as the expense occurs. Once submitted the receipts are stored electronically however it advisable to keep them for your own records.
Full policy is available here: Expenses Policy.pdf

Unless opposed, I propose keeping the same section budgets for the next financial year currently defined as follows by the Group Expenses policy.

Squirrels - £4 per member (as at 1st of the month) per month
Beavers - £4 per member (as at 1st of the month) per month
Cubs - £4 per member (as at 1st of the month) per month
Scouts - £4 per member (as at 1st of the month) per month

Any unused funds from these budgets roll over each month (Sep-Aug) but are reset at the end of the financial year (31st August).

Should any Section Leader feel they need to spend more than their allocated budget within the financial year, prior approval must be given by the Group Executive Committee.

FY23-24 Outgoings.

Alongside the expected regular expenses of Insurance, Utilities, Capitation, Cleaning, and servicing (such as fire extinguishers), the committee should examine any foreseeable expense for the coming financial year, to ensure the group can budget for them.

FY23-24 Ring-fenced project funds.

V1.2

As of the end of FY 22-23 The following monies held within the group savings account have been ring fenced for on-going projects. In most case the source of the funding is from grants and thus the monies held are classed as 'restricted'. This ringfencing rolls over into the new financial year 23-24 and as such should be treated as committed funds.

Savings Account Total			**26,612.68**
	Of which ringfenced Total		**5184.00**
		Rear Flagging [1]	500.00
		Car Park Light	250.00
		Shutters [2]	1,140.00
		CCTV/Security	2667.00
		Hive Heating	150.00
		iPads/Tech	2117.00
	Of which non-ring fenced		**21428.68**

Note 1 : 500 was set aside for flagging the rear area on 26-05-2021 as a significant time has passed since this and the work not completed, it is advisable that the committee re-authorise the spend. However as of EOFY 22-23, this was still a ring-fenced amount.

Note 2 : work on the shutters was completed in FY 22-23 with costs paid by the GSL. However these were not back-charged to the group in time to be settled for the end of the financial year.

Note 3: a further ring fencing of 2500.00 has been made since the start of the new FY for Squirrels Tents, this is not included in the above figures as the decision was made by committee in FY23-24.

Who To Contact

If you have any queries relating to this financial report, please contact David Bolton, Group Treasurer (Dave@standrewsscouts.org.uk).

Appendix.

V1.1 Amended appendix.
Annual Report 2022-2023 Compared To 2022 Updated.xlsx

Version Control

Version	Author	Date	Changes
1.0	David Bolton	25-09-2023	First Draft
1.1	David Bolton	28-11-2023	Amended annual expense to re-categorise funds to savings account
1.2	David Bolton	14-12-2023	Section added to cover ring-fenced costs within savings account. Formatting changes

15th St Helens (St Andrews) Scouts

Appendix A: Financial Accounts 2022/23

	2022-2023	2022
Income		
Bank Interest	£163.64	£2.84
Events - Beavers	£31.00	£0.00
Events - Cubs	£1,072.00	£0.00
Events - Group	£2,454.51	£2,689.58
Events - Scouts	£3,636.04	£1,462.50
Events - Squirrels	£42.00	£251.50
Fundraising	£4,486.04	£1,805.53
Grants	£1,639.00	£2,667.00
Group Clothing	£358.50	£0.00
Leader's Expenses Overpayment	£151.47	£0.00
Membership Fees	£12,154.00	£5,304.00
Expense		
Admin	£40.00	£0.00
Camping Equipment	£98.49	£0.00
Events - Cubs	£1,368.01	£0.00
Events - Group	£2,003.09	£2,634.19
Events - Scouts	£3,970.04	£1,792.92
Events - Squirrels	£8.00	£245.06
Fundraising	£5,969.38	£286.11
GoCardless Fees	£741.45	£337.36
Group Expenses	£1,036.95	£634.15
Insurance	£321.61	£327.57
Leader's Expenses Overpayment	£0.00	£151.47
Maintenance	£589.91	£379.29
Meetings - Beavers	£433.96	£253.54
Meetings - Cubs	£310.16	£250.01
Meetings - Scouts	£615.47	£221.14
Meetings - Squirrels	£1,168.40	£615.20

Membership Costs	£3,510.00	£1,908.00
OSM	£140.47	£37.23
Savings Expenditure	£3,285.77	£643.92
Utilities	£2,846.90	£1,137.85
Website	£0.00	£20.00

Account balances

Lloyds Treasurers Account	£1,707.09	£1,593.32
Lloyds Reserve Account	£3,015.70	£3,000.39
Lloyds Savings Account	£26,612.68	£27,677.67
Lloyds Fundraising Account	£2.95	£1,529.47
Expense Account	£192.57	£0.00

Summary

Account balance brought forward	£33,800.85	£31,492.91
Total income	£26,188.20	£14,182.95
Total expenditure	£28,458.06	£11,875.01
Net income	-£2,269.86	£2,307.94
Account balance carried forward	**£31,530.99**	**£33,800.85**

The previous accounting year was an abbreviated year, running from 1st January 2022 – 31st August 2022