

# Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023

## Reference and Administrative details

**Charity name:** York Minster District Scout Council

**Charity registration number:** 1042887

**HQ registration number:** 16422

**Charity's principal address:** 75 St. Aelreds Mews  
York, YO31 0RW

### Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not whole year
Antony Hale	Chair	
David McDowell	District Commissioner	
Katherine Gilpin	Secretary	From 16/5/22
Deborah Watson	Treasurer	
Cleo Duke		From 1/1/23
Gary Gelissen	District Explorer Scout Commissioner	From 23/11/22
Matthew Larkin	Deputy District Commissioner	From 25/5/22
Nathan Bargate	Deputy District Commissioner	From 24/5/22
Harry Pomfret	District Scout Network Commissioner	From 16/5/22
David Ingledew	Deputy District Commissioner	
Stefan Palmer	District Youth Commissioner	
Adrian Pomfret		
Gerald Snowden		
Kevin Winship		
Simon Errington		To 31/12/22

### Names and addresses of advisers

Type of adviser	Name	Address
Independent Examiner	Claire Hutchinson	
Website host/maintenance	HCI	

# Structure, governance and management

## Type of governing document

The District's governing documents are those of The Scout Association. They consist of a Royal Charter, which in turn gives authority to the Bye Laws of the Association and The Policy, Organisation and Rules of The Scout Association.

## How the charity is constituted

The District is a trust established under its rules which are common to all Scouts.

## Trustee selection methods

The Trustees are appointed in accordance with the Policy, Organisation and Rules of The Scout Association.

## Management

The District is managed by the District Executive Committee, the members of which are the Charity Trustees' of the District which is an educational charity. As charity trustees they are responsible for complying with legislation applicable to charities. This includes the registration, keeping proper accounts and making returns to the Charity Commission as appropriate.

The Committee comprises the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer, The District Commissioner, the Explorer Commissioner, and individuals nominated and elected at the Annual General Meeting. The Committee exists to support the District Commissioner in meeting the responsibilities of the appointment and is responsible for:

- The maintenance of District property;
- The raising of funds and the administration of District finance;
- The insurance of persons, property and equipment;
- District public occasions;
- Assisting in the recruitment of leaders and other adult support;
- Appointing any sub committees which may be required;
- Appointing Administrators and Advisors other than those who are elected.

## Risk and internal controls

The Executive Committee has identified the major risks to which they believe the District is exposed, these have been reviewed and systems have been established to mitigate against them.

The principal areas of concern that have been identified are:

- Injury to leaders, helpers, supporters and members. The District through the capitation fees contributes to The Scout Association's national accident insurance policy. Risk assessments are undertaken before all activities.
- Reduced income from capitation because of decreased membership. The District is primarily reliant upon income from capitation, but holds a reserve to ensure the continuity of activities should there be a major reduction in income. The Committee could raise the value of capitation to increase income on an ongoing basis, either temporarily or permanently.

- Reduction or loss of leaders. The District is totally reliant upon volunteers to run and administer the activities of the District. If there was a reduction in the number of leaders to an unacceptable level there would be a contraction, consolidation or closure of a section or Group.
- The District has in place systems of internal controls that are designed to provide reasonable assurance against material mismanagement or loss, these include two signatories for all payments and insurance cover to ensure that insurable risks are covered.

# Objectives and Activities

## Summary of the purposes of the charity as set out in its governing document

### 1. 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.

### 2. 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.

### 3. 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.

## Summary of the main activities in relation to those purposes

The charity has experienced a particularly challenging few years, being without a permanent District Commissioner and leadership team and through the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. Over that time, it has not adequately provided the level of Scouting activities required to meet the purposes and objectives of the charity, but much progress has been made over the reporting period to address this and provide the structure needed to achieve this going forwards.

Appointments have been made to many key roles:

- District Commissioner (DC): David McDowell
- Deputy District Commissioners (DDCs): Nathan Bargate, David Ingledew and Matthew Larkin
- District Youth Commissioner: Stefan Palmer

- District Scout Network Commissioner: Harry Pomfret
- District Secretary: Katie Gilpin
- District Appointments Chair: Jacqui Tankard
- District Appointments Secretary: Alison Stockdale
- District Explorer Scout Commissioner: Gary Gelissen
- New GSL at Stockton on the Forest: Carley Ray
- DofE Coordinator for the District – Dave Petty (GSL at LMO)
- District Special Needs Advisor: Katie Gilpin
- Training Advisors (TAs) – significant progress made on appointing new TAs; currently, there are seven TAs across the District
- First Aid Trainers: we now have two volunteers that have been onboarded and are conducting First Aid training
- District Nights Away Assessor: Dave Petty

The District now has three active Explorer Units and membership growth across adults and young people of nearly 20% (much higher than the national average), putting us at 80 - 90% of pre-pandemic levels.

A significant effort has been made to improve training and compliance; taking us from being the least compliant in the County to the most compliant. There is still work to be done but the increase in number of TAs, the appointment of First Aid Trainers and the tireless effort of the Appointments Team have put us in a much better position than this time last year.

A pool of 7 District Appointments Advisory Committee members supports the Appointments Chair and Secretary and progress is being made on the appointments backlog. It is noted however that there is a very slow uptake from leaders who are waiting for their appointment to be confirmed to attend and also obtaining the required references. This is being addressed by the District Leadership Team.

Until this year, Group Scout Leaders have largely acted in isolation but there has been a drive over the past year to include their views/inputs to how the District operates; a couple of GSL Forums have been held, contributing to improved communication across the District, and there are plans to run these regularly, at least 3-4 times each year.

An Awards Committee is being established to formally recognise and acknowledge the contribution that the work of volunteers in the District make towards enabling it to meet its charitable objectives.

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.

# Achievements and Performance

## BEAVERS

Beavers have been collaborating very successfully across the District and have run several well-attended events – thanks to Jackie Allenby (2nd St Hilda's), Elyce Lamb (1st Clifton) and Cleo Duke (1st Heworth) for organising and running these activities over the last year.

In October we held a Halloween Party, and the Beavers came in fancy dress with a prize given to the best costume. Everyone enjoyed the magic show by Professor Dan and had a great time.

Our theme for the sleepover in March was circus skills. Beavers slept over either Friday or Saturday night with the lodge at Snowball full both nights. Thank you to the Young Leaders from 1st Clifton and 1st Heworth for their help and hard work organising and running activities which included backwards cooking, a wide game (kick the can), and the circus skills session which was a Beaver favourite.

This year we have had several Beavers that have earned their Chief Scouts Bronze Award, with many more well on the way to completion.

In the current year, there has been a summer trip to the Forbidden Corner and four colonies taking part in the North Yorkshire County Beaver Damboree and there are plans for a sleepover, Christmas party and a Christmas trip to Sundown Adventureland – lots to report in next year's annual report!

## CUBS

Osbalwick & Murton Group hosted a very successful and enjoyable Hergarth Trophy day, the first time the event has been hosted by a Group from Minster District for a number of years.

The District would like to thank Annie Hodgson for organising and coordinating a 'Science badge in a day' event at York University and her colleagues who all generously gave their time to run this event, which benefitted around 90 cubs from across the District.

## SCOUTS

Over the past year, it has been noted that there have been no District Scout events; although there have been a number of joint activities, involving Troops from multiple Groups. The District Leadership Team has taken this as an action, to hold 2 or 3 District events over the coming year.

## EXPLORERS – OVERVIEW

Since Gary Gelissen took up the role of DESC, he has focused on developing communication links between the groups. This has been fairly successful but is definitely part of the plan for continued development over the next year. He will also be developing greater links with the Ebor Explorers and aiming for a more unified approach to Explorers across the city. He is hopeful that this will allow for more joint District ventures in the future.

Unfortunately, Simon Errington is retiring from his role with Explorers but we appreciate the incredible work he has put into building up Apollo Explorer Unit and providing some wonderful experiences for the young people in his unit. Thank you Simon for everything you have done.

As a whole District, the Explorers have enjoyed a selection of events and we will be introducing more joint unit events in the coming year.

### **EXPLORERS - APOLLO**

Apollo Explorers has had another great year with numbers averaging across the year at around 20. It continues to attract Scouts who have completed their time at 1st Clifton Sea Scouts and across the District.

Events started to open up post-pandemic and enable the unit to provide some variety to the programme. During the year that included such activities as cooking nights, walking activities, orienteering at Snowball, badge work around fundraising with monies raised for Comic Relief, learning about dementia through a workshop from Diane Petty of Lord Mayors Own, bouldering at Freek Lime and a session at Allerton water agility park.

They participated in a couple of evade capture events, one locally with overnight accommodation, one with no accommodation and 48 hours of variable weather, no sleep and a gruelling landscape in the Lake District; no mean challenge and the team did amazingly well.

Apollo Explorers is a strong and vibrant Unit; it has excellent young people who are keen to learn skills for life, the biggest challenge is having the volunteers to support the Unit. Huge thanks to Simon Errington for unwavering dedication and coordinating the whole experience and to Jess Dunwoody and Tim Staples who volunteered through to September 2022 and to Alex Clarke and Emma Foster who supported Simon to keep the Unit going since then.

### **EXPLORERS - ENTERPRISE**

This year has seen a welcome increase in membership numbers with the expectation of being at around 17 by September due to feed from Christchurch and Huntington.

Activities have included some project work which got all involved plus other life skills with the main challenge being to try and get the unit to gel and work together, with a better balance between seriousness, focus and having fun whilst still learning the necessary skills. Some targets have been set from the activity badges, but the big push is to the main awards finished for as many as possible. A number have been doing Duke of Edinburgh's Award and are close to completion. There has been a camp or two, there is interest in Ignite later this year and we want to fit in another Hike/Exploration camp at some point.

Planning has been reasonable, but often not focused and more reactive so our target is to be far better organised and more adaptable, working smarter and joining in with more cross-District events and activities. By September, there will be a full-term plan, with activities split so they can run two "streams of interest" which keeps it interesting and the need for a 3rd leader.

### **EXPLORERS - PHOENIX**

Phoenix started in September last year, with one member and has grown to six, all of whom attend regularly; five are Young Leaders, supporting across Beavers, Cubs and Scouts in both 1st Heworth and Osbaldwick & Murton Groups. As a smaller unit (for now), the

Explorers have enjoyed connecting with Enterprise for joint activities, camps and hikes; they also had a great time at 'Laser Quest', which was attended by all three Minster District Units.

The main focus of this year, at the request of the Explorers, has been badge work (including the survival skills badge) and working towards the Chief Scout Platinum Award, primarily around the International, Community and Values activities. Two of the members completed the final parts of their Gold Award at Explorers, having not quite completed the requirements in Scouts, and all six are making very good progress towards Platinum (for instance, completing 90% of the requirements for Stage 4 of the Community Impact Staged Activity Badge.). There have been litter picks in the local community, cleaning and maintenance at the Scout hut, and work days at Snowball (Scout Activity Centre/Campsite); as well as disability awareness sessions, including a dementia workshop. Among numerous other activities, the Explorers have enjoyed completing the York Orbital Cycle Route, climbing at Red Goat, activities at Snowball and campfires.

Plans for September include activities to raise awareness and bring in more members; further joint District events; and more weekend camps/hikes, such as Boggle Hole at Whitby.

## NETWORK

### Membership

18 to 25s registered on Compass in the District	40
Members of York Minster Scout Network section on Compass	31
Active members (who have attended events in the past 12 months)	9

### Comments:

- On the 18 to 25 reports for the District the DSNC is aware of several people who are no longer active regularly in the district meaning this figure may not be a true representation of 18 to 25s in the district.
- The DSNC is aware of the need to make the number of members in the York Minster Scout Network section on Compass representative of the number of active members.

### Past Year

Over the past year York Minster Scout Network and York Ebor Scout Network units have been working together to provide a combined programme for 18 to 25s across York. This has proved very successful as the combined attendance numbers have enabled more activities to take place, especially in the case of outdoor & adventurous activities or activities where a cost to participants is involved.

Total number of Network meetings	8
<i>Of which:</i>	
<i>Indoor activities &amp; Social activities</i>	3
<i>Outdoor activities &amp; Adventurous activities</i>	4
<i>Camps/Overnight stays</i>	1

Network members have had the opportunity to partake in multiple activities of varying types, including one overnight event. Event ideas have been proposed by the DSNCs to members then discussed and a date that suits the majority of members agreed. A split of free to attend



events and events requiring a participant contribution have been planned, with the majority of events being free to attend.

The overnight event held was 'The 3 Districts' Network Camp at Snowball Plantation, involving Selby Scout Network, York Scout Network & Ebor Scout Network. This took place from the 14th to 16th April 2023. This event had limited attendance by Minster Scout Network members. Lessons learned based on member feedback:

- Earlier invitations to the event to ensure it is in participants calendars well in advance.
- Review the date for the event as it is close to academic exams creating a conflict for some participants.

During the Winter & Spring terms more indoor & social activities were completed such as a Christmas Meal & a Bowling evening. Moving to the Summer term more outdoor activities have been completed such as multiple walks and outdoor social activities. Towards the end of the Summer term a walk alongside the Scouts and Girl Guides at York University (SAGGY) society was held. This was not attended by any Minster Scout Network members however was a success with Ebor Scout Network & SAGGY members who attended. An interest to arrange more events between the student Scouting community and local Scouting was expressed.

Towards the academic summer holidays a decline in numbers of attendees at Scout Network events has been noticed however we believe this is due to participants returning home from university for the summer break and being away on holiday. When an event is arranged numerous apologies for absence are received, so we are expecting attendee numbers to rise again after the university summer break.

### Looking Ahead

Looking forward to the next couple of months we are trialling a more 'member led' approach to Network Scouting, with members selecting and organising the monthly activities collectively with support from the DSNCs to ensure the activities are safe and compliant. We will evaluate this approach after a couple of months to see if it is successful.

A couple of network members have personally arranged to attend Gilwell Reunion 1st until 3rd September. We hope to be able to arrange a meet-up of Minster & Ebor Network members attending and further gather with other Network groups from across the county.

In the next academic year, we are hoping to work more closely with Student Scout & Guide Organisations within the city to run joint activities for members as well as encourage the student community to become more involved in local Scouting through volunteering with local groups. The University of York has an established Scout & Guide organisation (SAGGY) who have invited the DSNCs from Minster & Ebor Districts to attend a committee meeting to discuss and agree how best to arrange this. York St John University has a new Student Scout & Guide Organisation that is starting this academic year. The DSNC has been in touch with the chairperson of this Student Scout & Guide Organisation, and they are keen to work with local Scouting. Again, we intend to meet to agree how best to arrange this. Initially the DSNCs from Minster & Ebor collectively have some promotional materials that will be provided to both Student Scout & Guide Organisations to assist in the promotion of volunteering and becoming involved with local Scouting at the Freshers Fair events that are to be held in early September.

The overnight event 'The 3 Districts' Network Camp has been rebranded to 'Network Unite' to allow the event to be opened to a wider audience of Network Scout Units and is planned to be held again at Snowball Plantation in April 2024. The DSNC will be working with the organiser to ensure information is sent to members in good time to hopefully ensure a better uptake.

Additionally, we hope to be able to form a Scouts of The World project group within the Network section to enable the completion of this Top Award for those who wish to do so. We are unsure what the uptake will be for this given the limited number of active participants.

## **WORLD SCOUT JAMBOREE**

Abi Clarke from Apollo Explorers will be participating in the 25th World Scout Jamboree as a member of Unit 41, the North Yorkshire Contingent, in SaeManGeum, South Korea this summer. Abi has worked hard to raise the £3,500 attendance fee, completing sponsored open water swims in the Lake District, marshalling at the York Triathlon, selling home-made gifts and cards at her Group's Christmas Fair as well as doing odd jobs for friends and family.

Abi would like to thank the District for the financial support they have provided towards meeting this target which she says has helped to take some pressure off during a really busy year preparing for GCSE exams, attending Jamboree training camps as well as the fundraising efforts.

## **St GEORGE'S DAY**

24<sup>th</sup> April saw the reinstatement of the traditional annual St George's Day Procession and Service at York Minster. Due to capacity issues at the Minster, the decision was made to provide a separate, age-appropriate event for the Squirrels, Beavers and Rainbows in Dean's Park. It was well received by those attending, with particular appreciation on the service content. The use of the Eventbrite ticketing system, administered by the NYS Guides, ensured the two venues did not exceed their capacity limits. However, there had been problems: some groups had apparently over-ordered, which resulted in other groups not being able to attend or opting not to attend. In reality, there were approximately 400 empty seats in the Minster and less than expected attendees in the Mini Dragons marquee. Whilst the numbers were down from the pre-pandemic times, it was good to have the two Scout Districts and the Guide County together and to demonstrate to the City of York that Scouting and Guiding was back in business.

## **CHIEF SCOUTS AWARDS EVENING**

Also reinstated was this event at the Conference Centre, Askham Bryan College. It was very well attended with a large number of top awards being presented across all sections – Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers. This year, it will take place on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> October and for the first time; our youngest members, Squirrels will now be taking part having gained their 'Acorn' award. Minster District is very proud to be awarding its first Kings Scout Award this year.

## **LORD MAYOR'S OWN CENTENARY**

Lord Mayor's Own Scout Group threw a massive party at Snowball to celebrate their Centenary; they spent the afternoon climbing, bouncing, doing archery and of course, knot

tying. The current Lord Mayor, David Carr was the special guest and he was given a tour of Snowball; he also cut the birthday cake. The Group Scout Leader, Dave Petty was presented with the framed necker of a founding member, Ken Appleby by his grandchildren.

## **PLANS FOR THE FUTURE**

The District has 3 key priorities it seeks to achieve over the next 3 years.

1. Young People First

Ensuring we remember to put young people at the heart of everything we do. The Youth Commissioner will take this forward with support from all members of the District. We want to see growth in all areas but particularly in our 14-24 provision (Explorers and Network); focus on the upper age groups will hopefully help to build our Young Leader programme and feed our ambition to recruit more adult volunteers.

2. Recruitment and Retention of Adult Volunteers

We aim not only to increase the number of Adult Volunteers but ensure that they all feel welcomed, supported and valued, and that they have fun, whilst gaining new skills. Clearly, Scouts exists for young people, and we are keen to put “Young People First” but it is also important that our adult volunteers have an exceptional experience, during their Scouting journey; however long or short that might be. We will look at making improvements in the Appointments process, Training, Recognition/Rewards (including Awards), accessible resources, better communications and making support readily available and easily accessible.

3. Community Engagement and support

As a District, we want to raise our profile and improve our messaging; connecting with local people, York businesses, other voluntary organisations and social enterprises, and developing relationships to benefit all. For instance, many companies have Corporate Social Responsibility policies and local Scouting is a great way to deliver on these – from supporting staff to volunteer to sponsorship and help with funding or delivering specific projects.

# Financial Review

## **Review of the charity's financial position at the end of the period**

Full details of the year's receipts, payments and balances can be found in the statement attached to this report. Cash funds held at the year-end amounted to £36,771, of which £1,762 is reserved for the Jamboree fund and £2,898 is reserved for the Explorer's funds. District subscriptions of £6,155 received at the year-end are held in advance against expenditure in the forthcoming year.

## **Reserves policy**

The District's policy is to hold sufficient resources to continue the charitable activities of the District should income fall short. The District aims to keep surplus funds to a minimum and endeavour to hold a level of general reserves equivalent to a minimum of 6 months and a maximum of 12-24 months normal general operating expenditure.

## **Amount of reserves held**

The amount of general reserves held at the end of the financial period amounted to approximately £25,000. This is in excess of the levels required under the District reserves policy and the creation of a District Grant and Distribution policy is underway to ensure that the surplus reserves are reduced in a manner which supports and promotes the charity's principal objectives.

## **Investment policy and objectives**

The District's balances are modest and consequently it does not have sufficient funds to invest in longer-term investments such as stocks and shares. The District has therefore adopted a low-risk strategy to the investment of its funds.

All funds are held in UK banks with Government guarantees and the COIF Charities Deposit Fund.

## Declarations

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

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature		
Full Name	Antony Hale	David McDowell
Position	District Chair	District Commissioner
Date	11 <sup>th</sup> August 2023	11 <sup>th</sup> August 2023