



# **The First New Cross (The Greys)** Scout Group

Annual Report and Accounts  
2023/24

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# **Trustees' Annual Report**

1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024

## A. Reference and Administration Details.

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Registered Charity Number: 1021328

Scout Registration Number 44935

Headquarters: 25 Breakspears Road, Tack Mews, Brockley, London, SE4 1XW

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### Names of the Charity Trustees who manage the Charity:

Alan McKinnon – Chairman	David Fricker – Exec Member	Eileen Fricker – Exec Member
Elizabeth Fricker– GSL	David Cohen – Premises Manager	Luke Cohen - Quartermaster
Brian Sweeting – Treasurer	Debbie Cohen – Cub Scout Leader	David Liddle – Exec Member
Eleanor Clarke - Secretary	Peter Buckle – Asst. Beaver Leader	Zoe Gaffen – Exec Member

### Other members of the Group Executive Committee:

Stacey Ingrassia, Katie Sturgess, Matthew Coleman, Roe Hennessy-Littlejohns, Shelby Millard, Joanne Fuller, Gemma Whitelaw, Sam Sheead, Kate Woodward, Tamara Lees

## B. Structure, Governance and Management.

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The Group'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.

The Group is a Trust established under its rules which are common to all Scouts. The Trustees are appointed in accordance with The Policy, Organisation and Rules of The Scout Association.

The Group is managed by the Group Executive Committee (soon to be Trustee Board), including the members who are also the "Charity Trustees" of the Scout Group, 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.

Currently, The Group Executive Committee consists of three independent representatives, Chair, Secretary and Treasurer together with Group Scout Leader, individual Section Leaders (optional), parents' representation and others, and meets six times annually unless any extraordinary meeting needs to be convened. It exists to support the Group Scout Leader in meeting the responsibilities of the appointments and is responsible for: the maintenance of Group property; the raising of funds and the administration of Group finance; the insurance of persons, property and equipment; Group public occasions; assisting in the recruitment of Leaders and other adult support; appointing any sub-committees that may be required and appointing Group Administrators and Advisers other than those who are elected.

## C. Objectives and Activities.

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The objectives of the Group are as a unit of the Scout Association. The aim of the Scout Association is to provide the development of young people in achieving their full physical, intellectual, social and spiritual potentials, as individuals, as responsible citizens and as members of their local and international communities. The method of achieving the Aim of the Association is by providing an enjoyable and attractive scheme of progressive training, based on the Scout Promise and Law and guided by adult

Leadership.

Amongst measures required to achieve our objectives are the production and implementation of informative, interesting and fun programmes and activities for all Sections plus the maintenance of numbers. Attendance at Cub and Scout District Camps and District sleep-overs for Beavers is typical of the external activities encouraged, as is taking part in broader based activities with other organisations and various Scout District and County organised events.

With costs rising sharply an income of around £10,000 per year is required to pay the Group's mandatory expenditure – Council tax, utilities, insurances, plus additional funds for exceptional and unexpected matters and vehicle insurance and running costs etc. More traditional methods of fund raising such as attendance at fairs continue to be in the main abandoned due to almost total lack of assistance and public apathy. Other methods of fund raising are being used including a direct method of raising establishment funds based upon the number of Scouts, Cubs, Beavers and Squirrels benefiting from our facilities, a couple of on-line shopping system which generates a percentage fee from the retailer, the Lewisham Lottery and numerous sponsored events and social evenings. The use of our Headquarters two days a week by three external organisations generate much needed donations as does the use for children's parties, however this is not necessarily throughout the entire year but we appreciate their continued support. The requirement of funds for the Group excludes the needs of funds for the Sections for expeditions and other activities.

#### D. Achievements and Performance.

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The Group continues to go from strength to strength and is well supported by the Group Executive Committee (Trustee Board from September 2024). As outlined on a number of occasions, there is an ongoing requirement to encourage parents to become more involved in fundraising and social events which generate a much needed source of income, without which we would struggle to continue. The new structure that will be coming into place will allow us to create Teams based on requirements needed for the Group and we are hopeful that the parents will be able to support the Team for Fundraising.

The provision of Scouting in Brockley continues to be adequately maintained. At the 2024 Census (January), our numbers had increased over a 12-month period in most sections, with strong retention rates. In the two months until the end of March 2024, our numbers have been maintained at maximum capacity in all sections with waiting lists. We need to ensure that this continues and maintain our extensive recruitment drives which are currently in progress and to concentrate on maintaining the youth membership. We have also continued to maintain sufficient numbers in adult leaders in all sections, but will continue to recruit to cover all eventualities

The Squirrel Scout, Beaver Scout, Cub Scout and Scout Section Annual Reports are appended at the end of this report. Also appended separately is a report from the Golden Hind Explorer Scout Unit which although they are District based, is affiliated to the First New Cross, meets at our premises and is part of our Scouting Family.

The sections have undergone some leader changes in the past year and we have welcomed a number of new leaders and helpers into the Group. Sadly one of our long-standing Beaver Leaders and Trustee, Peter Buckle passed away and he will be sorely missed by us all, not least the children in the Beaver Section. We also have a number of Occasional Helpers into the Group. The Group website, [www.1stnewcross.co.uk](http://www.1stnewcross.co.uk) originally set up by Luke Cohen, continues to grow and is constantly being updated and expanded, continuing to provide visitors to the site with a great deal of information about the Group and its activities, fundraisers and events. The website looks fantastic. Our thanks to Luke Cohen for keeping this eloquently

updated and maintained giving full transparency of the Group's activities. This is now being lovingly cared for by Katie Sturgess.

Our Lead Trustee, Alan McKinnon, has embraced and championed the start of the new transformation and is leading the way in getting everything in place.

The completion of training of Leaders through District and County run courses still continues to be a priority and we are pleased to say that the majority of Leaders are all up to date. All persons sitting on the Trustee Board also need to complete the online Trustee Induction Training. Alike with all other Scout Groups, all Leaders are volunteers and undertake their duties without any financial reward, indeed they are out of pocket, having to purchase uniform items and using annual leave to attend camps and other activities. We are extremely fortunate to have a group of very enthusiastic, dedicated Leaders who give as much of their own time as possible for the benefit of Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers, not just at weekly Drey/Colony/Pack/Troop/Unit meeting nights and camps or expeditions but also in administration, advance programme planning, fundraising, Headquarters maintenance, advertising, recruitment and undertaking their own training. Without this very devoted team, the First New Cross could not perform to its full potential. Our sincere thanks go to them all.

The members of the Group Executive Committee, that are not uniformed Leaders, are also unpaid volunteers and they too give up their spare time freely for the benefit of the Group and need to be DBS cleared and have minimal training. The Committee continues to retain and increase its member numbers however would still benefit immensely from increased parental involvement. All fundraising and social events arranged by the Group require the support of the parents that have children within the Group to provide essential assistance in organising and running those events.

We had five representatives from the Scout & Explorer Sections who went to South Korea for the World Scout Jamboree in 2023, the only representatives from Lewisham District. There were also a number of leaders that were also involved. Although this trip didn't go to plan or how anyone would have thought, the young people all gained an enormous amount of experience from it and did the group proud.

In addition to this we had a number of young people that were selected to go on the County trip to Croatia in 2023, again with a number of leaders also selected and Liz Fricker & David Liddle are part of a team of 4 heading the Leader team. This is an outstanding achievement and once in a lifetime experience for all. This trip was a complete success and all that went came back with memories that will last a life time. A reunion camp was planned for May 2024.

There have been a number of section camps, sleepovers, trips and excursions throughout the year giving our youth element a wide and varied window of opportunities to enjoy different things and basic camping skills alike. The section reports appended to this report give a full and in-depth insight into what these were and the enjoyment that was had by all.

In November 2023 the Group attended the Deptford War Memorial for our Remembrance Parade along with 2<sup>nd</sup> & 32<sup>nd</sup> Deptford Groups, where poppy wreaths were laid in remembrance.

Chief Scout Awards for each section have been gained this year, the latest of which will be presented at the Group AGM & Awards Evening, a date for which will be announced shortly. The Group Annual Sectional Awards will be announced and presented at the Group AGM & Awards Evening. This year we have introduced 2 new awards for Young Leader of the Year and Leader of the Year. Both of these awards were nominated by their peers.

The Annual Awards, which will be presented at the AGM are:

- Michelle Buckle Award – Squirrel of the Year
- Joe Curd Award – Beaver of the Year
- Barbara Collins Award – Cub of the Year
- Alan Collins Award – Scout of the Year
- Sid Reader Award – Explorer of the Year
- Geoffrey Morriss Award – For Outstanding Achievement
- Peter Buckle Award – Leader of the Year
- Brian Sweeting Award – Young Leader of the Year

## E. Financial Review.

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### i. Background.

*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. Given the recent rise in costs of utilities and inflation, The Group Executive Committee considers that the Group should hold a sum equivalent to 12 months running costs, approximately £10,000.00. This amount was held at the year end.*

With both Central and Local Government requiring further economies, there is a possibility that the only external financial assistance we receive, being the Mandatory 80% discount on Business Rates, could be reduced or even scrapped, particularly as a re-valuation of all Business Rates has recently been undertaken with possible new higher charges expected soon.

The Financial situation and details of Income and Expenditure are appended to this report.

**The First New Cross Scout Group is totally self-supporting receiving no external financial assistance or regular grants from any source whatsoever save for the reduction in Business Rates as currently dictated by Parliament for premises used by Registered Charities.**

We are very fortunate in having a substantial piece of freehold property within inner suburban London with a main hall, storage facilities and adequate space to undertake external Scouting and other activities. However, alike with any other business or domestic premises we have to pay our way finding funds for Rates - Water and Business; Gas; Electricity; Media Communications; Property, Equipment, Contents and Vehicle Insurances and, as with any premises owner or householder, maintain our land and the trees and buildings upon it in a reasonable condition. Indeed, as an organization dealing with Youth and other members of the public, the standards we are required to maintain are much higher than normal "Housekeeping". Also being a Scout Group and a Registered Charity, we are classified as a "Commercial" organization and thus all tariffs charged to us reflect this classification.

The ways that the necessary funds are raised to meet these commitments are limited and all require the assistance of the Leaders, Trustees, **parents** of the Youth of the Group and other adults. Leaders and other adults working with the 1<sup>st</sup> New Cross are **unpaid volunteers** giving their own time and expertise for the benefit of the local Community. All Leaders and Trustees have to undergo mandatory training courses to suit their position in the Group, often at locations away from home and for weekends or longer periods. This is in addition to planning and running Squirrel, Beaver, Cub or Scout meetings each week; planning and running activities, camps and expeditions; keeping attendance and financial records; attending Scouters' meetings within the Group and within the Scout District; up to and including this year, attending Group Executive meetings and serving on various sub-committees for fund-raising or maintenance - the list is endless. On top of all this, most of our Leaders still find time to organize fund-raising events and undertake valuable work around the buildings and grounds.

Whilst we are not permitted to hire out our premises for gain upon penalty of losing the Business Rates discount, a number of other organizations and individuals have made use of our premises and afforded donations towards

establishment costs, and for this we are very grateful. Fixed rate donations have also been made by other Scout Groups and individuals towards the running costs of the Mini-bus and trailer. The figure for the running costs of the Minibus does not usually include fuel. Where the vehicle is used by external parties, the vehicle leaves our Headquarters full of fuel and is returned in the same manner. When used by the First New Cross, fuel costs are included within the individual Accounts for camps, expeditions, etc.

Every Squirrel, Beaver, Cub and Scout (and Explorer) is required to pay an Annual Membership fee (or Capitation) to the Scout Association and this is collected as part of weekly subscriptions. This is not First New Cross money; we merely collect the fee and pay it on annually through Lewisham Scout District and this year was a total of £6,292.00. The Membership Fee goes towards paying the costs of all the many services provided by the Scout Association for its juvenile and adult members including the upkeep of Headquarters' Camping and Activity sites such as Gilwell Park. Most importantly perhaps, this fee covers the Insurances provided for all members of the Scout Association whilst taking part in any recognised Scouting activity. Currently (2024) the Membership Fee stands at £60.50 per head per year; that equates to approximately £1.68 per week for each of the weeks that the Drey/Colony/Pack/Troop meet in an average year - good value for all the activities, adventure and knowledge available.

## ii. 2023/2024 Results.

There has been a decrease in our earnings for this year and this is largely due to grants having been received in previous years, which have not been available this year. The use of our premises by external entities is steady although is less than it has been in previous years. Our fundraising events have been, on average, as successful as last year but these will need to increase in frequency and attendance with the events were more widely supported. Once again, the lack of backing for the Gift Aid system has contributed to this. All parents will again be requested to complete a Gift Aid form, if they are able to, to afford us the opportunity of claiming 25% back in Gift Aid. As previously advised, for subscriptions from April 2022, this should not have been a problem as Online Scout Manager has been used to collect subscriptions and event payments and Gift Aid information can be automatically generated. However, most parents have not checked the required box required for the system to be able to do this, so the system subsequently fails. Parents will again be requested to check this box on OSM.

The continuing increases in necessary expenditure emphasizes the need for a substantial contingency figure to be contained in the annual establishment costing and how important it is for parents/guardians of the Youth within the First New Cross to be supportive of our aims and needs, otherwise this 116 year old Scout Group, probably the oldest extant Scout Group in the World, could, in extreme circumstances, be forced to close, thus depriving your children and the rest of the local neighbourhood of any Scouting provision. We are also aware that our premises, although in a usable condition, could benefit from some updating and modernization. To this effect we have had an architectural survey undertaken with some drawings made for the means of identifying where this could be achieved. Of course, this is a project that would require a large amount of external funding through grants, but not an impossibility.

Excluding the monies generated purely for the benefit of the Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts (weekly subscriptions, camp fees, etc.), the majority of our income came from the use of our Headquarters for educational and social occasions, and for use of the Mini-bus and trailer, and some Fund-Raising events organised by the Executive Committee and the Leaders. There has not been many events in number this year but we did manage a Christmas Event (Winter Fayre & Jingle Mingle) raising £528.32 and a very well attended Bonfire Evening raising £1,136.34, but we hope that next year will afford a greater variety such as Quiz, , Community Fun Day, Karaoke Night, Jingle Mingle, and possible New Years' Eve event, which sadly only generated a fraction of our required income. We also secured amounts from online outlets such as Easyfundraising - £166.07, Lewisham Lottery - £386.50 and Amazon Core Europe - £72.08 and payments from Raffall for previously held online raffles totalling £1,267.20. All liaison and other arrangements regarding the use of our premises and the minibus by third parties falls to a few Warranted and unpaid Leaders who already run Uniformed Sections and Trustees. It can therefore be disappointing and demoralising if fund-raising and/or social events organised for the benefit of other people's children are poorly supported by the parents, even having to be cancelled at the last minute for lack of interest, although the events that have taken place have been better attended this year, so your continued support in future events would be much appreciated and is vital to the success of our ability to raise funds.

Income Tax reclaim (Gift Aid) is claimed back from HMR&C one year in arrears. We have made no claim since the 2015/16 Financial Year for several reasons including difficulties in contacting HMR&C, late receipt of the necessary application forms, a computer error and most importantly, a dearth of signed Gift Aid forms from parents/guardians



of the Beavers, Cubs and Scouts in the Group in that year. A circulation of all parents/guardians will be made with new and revised Gift Aid forms. For all weekly subscriptions paid, we can claim a further 25% amounting to around **£1,500** each year and thus we ask all parents/guardians who are able, to sign the appropriate Gift Aid form or to check the necessary box in the personal details section of OSM. This is a genuinely easy and simple method of raising funds without any impact upon the time or pockets of the parents/guardians of this Scout Group's Youth and without your assistance, as detailed above, we cannot claim this.

The outgoings upon Utilities including Business and Water Rates, Gas, Electricity, Phone & Broadband and Insurances were largely within our budgetary expectations. Under recent legislation, all minibuses used by Youth organisations under a Section 19 minibus permit must also have 10-weekly safety checks which is an added cost and quite expensive at the increased rate of £1,138.80 for the year, although that does include an annual service and MOT test. This has been entered into for a third successive year but ensures that the vehicle that children and leaders are travelling in is checked regularly and well-maintained.

Business and Water Rates are due on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 and will be followed by Utility Bills each quarter, annual Insurance and Mini-bus costs and funds must be raised to cover these mandatory outgoings. All expenditure save Utility, other mandatory bills and routine housekeeping is laid before the Executive Committee for approval.

The Number 2 Bank account has shown increases in funds however this is purely temporary due to some final payments being made for the World Scout Jamboree 2023 in South Korea which in turn is paid on to County, and ongoing payments for a County Trip to Disneyland Paris in 2024, again to be forwarded to County.

The Golden Hind Explorer Scout Unit are not part of the First New Cross Scout Group but are "controlled" both administratively and financially directly by Lewisham Scout District as is normal procedure laid down in the Policy, Organization and Rules of the Scout Association. Nevertheless they are part of the First New Cross "Scouting family" sharing our Headquarters and facilities and with some Adults serving in both the First New Cross (1NX) and the Golden Hind (GHESU).

## F. Comments upon the Future

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We aim to continue to maintain and strengthen our position in terms of numbers and the quality of Scouting available to the local community as always.

There continues to be recruitment campaigns through our website and social media with regard to bringing more children into the adventure that is Scouting (even though we have waiting lists currently), together with recruiting more adults to serve as leaders or on the Trustee Board and/or as officers of the Group. We will need to maintain the retention of our leaders in the sections and we need to also maintain the youth membership to keep them interested in staying with us particularly in the Scout Section as increasing schoolwork can put increased pressures on this age group. Leader training will continue to be a priority. The Group will continue to promote itself through recruitment campaigns to ensure that Scouting in Brockley is properly maintained. We are all very pleased to be back to face to face Scouting and long may that last

The efforts of the maintenance team and others have helped to keep our premises in a reasonable condition which will need to be continued. A work weekend will usually be scheduled within the summer break to tackle any work that needs doing. The pathways to the premises would all benefit from being resurfaced and we propose to apply for a grant for this. The substantial trees on our property have been pollarded/reduced as they were substantially overgrown and this was paid for using a grant from Morrisons. There is however still work that will need to be done on these. Also with this grant we purchased raised beds for vegetables which are being put together with a view to each section looking

after one. We will however need to look into applying for another grant to get the residue of the trees, not covered by this grant, to be pollarded/reduced. Therefore our fundraising efforts may need to be raised to encompass part of the cost albeit to offset our contribution to any grant application, as is usually expected.

Full details of our conventional fundraising and social events have not been finalised and we will advise on dates for these as soon as we are able to. The Fundraising Sub-Committee will meet in November to discuss and plan for the Fundraising events for 2025 and then present these to the Trustee Board for approval.

The 2024 Group Fundraising/Event calendar as it stands is:

- MAY-JUNE 2024 – LUCKY SQUARES (new initiative)
- 7<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2024 – END OF SUMMER SOCIAL & AGM
- 12<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2024 – CHILDREN'S DISCO FOLLOWED BY RACE NIGHT
- 18<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2024 – CHRISTMAS HAMPER RAFFLE LAUNCH
- 10<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2024-- BONFIRE EVENING
- 11<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2024 – REMEMBRANCE DAY PARADE
- 7<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2024 - JINGLE MINGLE including CHRISTMAS HAMPER RAFFLE DRAW

We will continue to raise funds through Easy Fundraising which allows anybody to purchase goods on line acquiring a donation from the retailer for the Group at no extra cost to themselves. We will continue to promote the Lewisham Lottery which will help raise funds for the Group. We will continue to update our website and attempt to include as many links as possible to assist navigation of other associated sites and to provide our members with up to date information of Group, District and County activities and events.

We are fairly unique in Inner London in having a freehold property with a fairly large plot of land. Our conservation of this area is to be maintained, not only with consideration of our own use for training, games and camping, but also for the benefit of wildlife, of which there is evidence of substantial species. We see our husbandry of the trees and flora throughout the site as being a worthwhile legacy for the future. All youth Sections will continue to be encouraged to take part in the beneficial maintenance of the grounds.

The Group and GHESU will attend the Annual Remembrance Day Service at the Deptford War Memorial in November 2024 representing Scouting in Lewisham.

This coming year will again be a challenge given the amount that we need to achieve, however, with your help, we will achieve our goals. The teamwork and general enthusiasm shown by the Executive Committee (as was, now Trustee Board), Section Leaders and general support from the District and its team needs to be carried forward and where possible improved upon. It is imperative that recruitment within the sections is ongoing and successful to ensure that numbers in the Group are maintained and where possible increased.

Generally, we are very optimistic for the immediate future, but we fully appreciate the hard work and dedication which will be required, as always, by all adult volunteers in the Group to achieve our desired aims, not least of which is the need to generate funds to allow our aims and objectives to be met and the First New Cross to continue its long, so far, 116 year existence. It is essential that the Trustee Board is retained and strengthened and that all members of the Group Council make every endeavour to assist in the provision of funds, suitably maintained premises and afford the opportunity for even better Scouting in our community. All new members of the Trustee Board MUST submit to a DBS check and undertake a minimal amount of training. Should any parents wish to serve on this committee please speak with any

leader who will pass on your details to the Group Scout Leader. Your assistance would be greatly appreciated.

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

Signed on behalf of the Charity's Trustees:



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Alan McKinnon, Chairman.

Dated: 23.07.2024



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Liz Fricker, Group Scout Leaders.

Dated: 23.07.2024

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# Section Reports

2023/2024



# Squirrel Section Report

April 2023 – March 2024

# Our year

**The Squirrel section continues to thrive, with the maximum 24 squirrels in our Drey and a long waiting list. We have had lots of adventures this year, and lots of badges have been awarded!**

## Summer 2023

The summer term was a busy one, with junk modelling, Lego building, a tea party for the Coronation and den building with the Young Leaders. Bumblebee led an engaging week about BSL, where the squirrels learnt how to sign their own name as well as some key phrases. Chipmunk ran a mindfulness session as part of Earth Day and the squirrels thought about how to look after the planet. Stacey visited to run a session on diversity and we also talked about feelings with a Disney Encanto themed week.



We welcomed Scout HQ to one of our meetings in June, where they took photos of our very photogenic Squirrels. We have been delighted to see some familiar faces in the Scout media campaigns!

## Autumn/Winter Term 2023

The Autumn term saw lots of special guests to our meetings and lots of visits off site too. We recognised harvest festival with a hunger banquet with Simon (Clara's dad) and a food bank collection. Ema visited to help the squirrels to make hedgehogs and hedgehog houses (which they are very good at!). We had our first off-site meeting of the year, at Lewisham Police Station, where we made friends with the police horses and got to try on some very heavy kit! We completed the Exciting Experiments badge over 2 weeks with some hands on science and some demonstrations of bigger reactions.



Mushu, Rainbow Beetle and Chil talked to the squirrels about their adventures at the World Scout Jamboree in Korea, and will perhaps have inspired some young people to aim for the WSJ in 2031!

The Squirrels earned their Emergency Aid badge, with Young Leader Donald Duck showing how to treat injuries and parent helper Jon running a 999 call centre for the squirrels to act out an emergency situation.

Fundraising is a big part of Scouting and the squirrels worked towards their All About Me badge by painting plant pots ready to sell at the Winter Fair. They looked fantastic! Thank you Badger and family for hosting the plant pot stall for our Christmas fundraising!

A special visitor arrived in time for Christmas - the Squirrels partied with one of Santa's elves and had their photo taken by Thumper. We finished the term with a trip to the pantomime at the Albany.

### Spring Term 2024

We had more visitors this term, with River bringing his array of rodents and reptiles to the hut, a gymnastic coach teaching us some moves and a visit from a local Police team.

During the Spring term we spent some time building up our campfire safety knowledge and made lanterns to light up our campfire circle for lunar new year.

We celebrated squirrel appreciation day and our 2nd birthday by decorating some squirrel cakes and having a party.

### Trips and nights Away

12 squirrels joined the beavers at Frylands and dressed up as superheroes for the District Funday in June. They got to try out lots of the different activities on offer and even had a bit of spending money for the Frylands Wood Providore.



We kept Squirrels going during the summer holiday with a trip to the bouldering wall at Surrey Quays in August. This was so popular that we took them again in October. The squirrels also had the chance to watch Elemental on a cinema trip.



In October Thumper organised our first sleepover off site at the Fort, with 32nd Deptford Squirrels. It was a fantastic chance for the squirrels to experience being away from home in a safe but unfamiliar setting. They made new friends and showed how resilient they are!

Sammy the Squirrel continues to have adventures at home with the Squirrel of the week, led by Young Leader Mushu.

**Thank you to all the parents who have supported us this year and a big "Well Done" to our Squirrels who have shown us that age is no barrier to being a great Scout.**

**Squirrel Leaders**

**Learn more.**

**Share more.**

**Be more.**



# Beaver Section Report

April 2023 – March 2024



# Our year

**Our beaver colony has had a busy year, with numbers growing from 29 in April 2023 to 35 in March 2024. All our members are squirrels coming up, or beavers who transfer from other groups. We continue to hold a waiting list.**

## Summer Term 2023

The Beavers have been very busy, and have covered a wide programme of activities this year! Summer term 23 saw the Beavers completing their Sports badge and start their health and fitness badge. They also prepared for and attended camp. Term ended with the traditional water fight.

## Autumn Term 2023

After the summer break, Beavers completed their health and fitness badge and worked on challenge badges. They particularly enjoyed a fantastic capoeira session run by Eagle, which was a brilliant experience for them. The creative badge was completed in the run up to Christmas, with crafts being made to sell at the Jingle Mingle, and a performance of We Wish You a Merry Christmas for parents and other sections, accompanied by Raven on the trumpet.



## Spring Term 2024

Spring term saw the Beavers working on their photography badge, with a competition judged blind by Otter. We were very impressed with their understanding of the rules of photography, and their beautiful pictures. They also took advantage of the winter evenings to complete their Space badge, identifying stars and planets in the night sky. The term ended with Beavers working on their YouShape badge, working well as a group to identify how to support people experiencing homelessness in our community, by choosing a charity and making money collection boxes.



The beavers were awarded an impressive amount of badges this year, with 9 Bronze awards, 79, challenge awards and 195 activity or staged badges!

## Sleepovers and trips

Many Beavers enjoyed attending the Easter Egg hunt family day at Frylands, with 14 Beavers attending the District Beavers sleepover, also at Frylands. They took part in activities such as grass sledging, pond dipping and blindfold trail. They also enjoyed a session at Clip and Climb and a Heroes Fun Day.

The beavers were invited to a Joint sleepover in October with 32<sup>nd</sup> Deptford, further cementing the bonds between our groups.



Thank you all for your support for Beavers this year, we look forward to the 2024-2025 programme.

From all the Beaver leaders

**Learn more.**

**Share more.**

**Be more.**

### Leaders

This year we have had 3/4 uniformed leaders and 2/3 parent volunteers. Bex Stansfield (Raven) joined the section as an Assistant Beaver Leader at the start of this year, alongside Otter and Kestrel. Unfortunately, Jacqui Guest aka Squirrel, has had to step down due to ill health. We all thank her for her service to Beavers and 1<sup>st</sup> New Cross. Kestrel will also be stepping back from Beavers to concentrate on District Scouting work, but will still be supporting the leadership team with her expertise and experience. We have a parent helper who will be going into uniform in June 2024. Thank you to all the volunteers who give their time to the section.

We would like to take a moment to fondly remember our beloved Baloo, who was loved by all the Beavers and anyone who knew him. After many years of service to Scouting, he took a step back from Beavers at the start of the year to concentrate on chemotherapy, having been diagnosed with throat cancer. Unfortunately, he lost his fight in September, and is greatly missed by us all.





# Cub Section Report

April 2023 – March 2024

# Our year

**This year we have continued to grow with numbers rising weekly! We have been able to offer spaces to Young people off our waiting list! We awarded 321 badges this year, with 9 gaining their Chief Scout Silver Award.**

## Summer Term 2023

During the summer term we celebrated the King's Coronation with us making a patchwork quilt and painting wooden carriages. We then tackled some of our challenge badges doing a round robin style night with different bases. We set off to Frylands for a Beaver and Cub camp for Frylands activity night. Kaa and Rama ran a successful Navigator level 1 and 2 (good thing too as Akela has no clue how to read a map still!) and with this Akela and the team closed down for the summer. Summer saw Akela jetting off to Croatia with 3 of the young leaders and nearly 90 other young people for 10 days with the county! Luckily Akela came back in one piece.



## Autumn / Winter Term 2023

We came back in September ready to go and we looked at our code of conduct and came up with a youth shaped way to manage behaviour and consequences. The end of September saw us running off to camp with two other groups that Akela made contact with while on the Croatia camp. For the term's badge work, we got a little messy with fake blood while tackling emergency aid, and our Young leaders ran an olympic night. We gained another young leader. We paid our respects to our fallen soldiers by taking part in the Remembrance Day parade. We cross stitched some poppies and enjoyed becoming a scientist as Raksha ran the scientist badge.



## Actual camps

This is the part of the report I love to write! I absolutely love taking the Cubs camping! Whether we are indoors or out! This year we have been to many camps, from Frylands to Waylands to Wilberforce and Cudham Shaws the Cubs and leaders have loved exploring new and wondrous places! In May we did a joint Beaver and Cub camp, September saw us "trying to catch 'em all" with two other scout groups and a fab Pokemon camp.

December saw the Elves running wild and causing mischief. In February, Kaa ran a one night sleepover at the hall and we finished off the term with a spring camp (Although Akela must learn to look at the calendar when she books camps). Next year we have a Cub/Scout camp in June, maybe with the possibility of Gilwell in August, Disneyland Paris in November and so many new ideas for us to take the Cubs! So watch this space!!



### Spring Term 2024

We started off 2024 with doing the money skills badge, although I'm sure the Cubs liked the sweet end of the deal. We then had River and his animals for a session, planned and made our own pancakes being cautious of people's medical and dietary requirements. We then had some laughs and giggles with the entertainer badge, and started the gardening badge.



### Leader training

Over the last year leaders have been pushing on with their ongoing learning and qualifications. Akela is booked for an archery course in September 2024. Kaa finalised her practice hours for her tomahawk permit and has been running sessions. Rama went and got his Air Rifle permit, Chil and Rama are still working towards their wood badges with the support of the team, and Kaa should be getting ready for her Nights away permit in spring/summer '25. Akela has done some work on mental health and wellbeing, and our Young leaders continue to work through their training scheme.

**Thank you to all parents who have supported us this year. Thank you to all the Cub Leaders and thank you to the incredible 1NX team. More camping awaits!**

**Jo (Akela), Shelby (Kaa), Lili (Chil), Rob (Raksha), Sam (Rama), Rafe (Rikki), Arthur (Rocky), Holly (Viper), Ioana (Hathi), Theo (Mowgli) and Annalia (Mysa)**

### Cub Scout Leaders

**Learn more.**

**Share more.**

**Be more.**



# Scout Section Report

April 2023 – March 2024

# Our Year

The Scout Section has undertaken a wide range of activities in the 2023-24 scouting year to actively engage and support young people in their personal development.

## Scouting skills

Our Scouts participated in hands-on experiences, experiments, and challenges, enabling them to develop practical skills, problem-solving abilities, and a deeper understanding of themselves and the world around them.

We have incorporated learning by doing into our activities throughout the year. Below is one example of our Scouts trying to build a cooking station out of pioneering poles and ropes. When asked if the leaders should show how the station is built first or whether Scouts wanted to “have a go” themselves, all wanted to have a go! We think they did brilliantly.



We strive to offer a variety of new activities to Scouts to keep things interesting and give young people opportunities to taste different activities. It is often at Scouting that young people get introduced to hobbies that turn into lifelong sources of enjoyment.

This year, our newest and most interesting activities included a magic and illusion night, attending a musical and a Warhammer-themed shop visit. We also held a youth-led talent show night where Scouts can share their hobbies with each other in a relaxed and fun environment. We have great talents in all of our Scouts!



## Ready Set Cook!

An activity that best showcases how our Scouts are growing through taking responsibility was the cooking contest Ready-Set-Cook. The Scouts were tasked to (i) plan a 3-course menu, (ii) prepare an ingredient list within a tight budget, (iii) coordinate preparing their dishes in just an hour, all while working as a team. We have seen great success from all teams, fantastic examples of leadership and teamwork. The dishes were also delicious!



## Spiritual Reflection

A key pillar of Scouting is for Scouts to engage in spiritual reflection, whether through moments of quiet contemplation, discussions about values and ethics, or participation in ceremonies and traditions that promote a sense of connection to something greater than themselves.

In May 2023, our Scouts went on a Mindfulness Walk during one Section meeting. Many of our Scouts were introduced to reflection and mindfulness for the first time, and everyone learned a skill to cope with the daily stresses and pace of everyday life using mindfulness.

We also held a very successful and proudly youth-led “Culture Night”, where Scouts brought food, clothes, songs and stories from their culture, spirituality and heritage. Scouts got to respectfully show their curiosity towards other cultures.



## Camps

The Scouts started and ended the year with two fantastic camps. Our first camp was where the very first Scout camp in history took place: Brownsea Island. Scouts enjoyed the beautiful nature offered by the Island’s beaches, open spaces and clean air full of history. At the end of the scouting year, we went on an indoor camp at Cudham Shaw, where Scouts enjoyed a mix of indoor and outdoor activities.



## Leadership

Our adult volunteer team had a really high turnover last year. We have seen 6 adult volunteers and 2 young leaders leave the Section, with 1 regularly attending Leader joining us. Naturally, this has and will continue to have an impact on the quantity and amount of activities we are able to offer.

Having a low number of full-role leaders in a section as large as 30 Scouts means that we are mainly lacking in organisational capacity and recruiting is therefore a priority for us.

In terms of having adult support, we have help from a new Parent’s Rota, which brings adult support during our section evenings from Parents. This has been working well. In addition, we have multiple adults generously offer their help on an ad hoc basis.

**Thank you for you continued support to keep Scouts going. We can’t wait to go on more adventures with Scouts again soon.**

## Scout Leaders





# Golden Hind ESU Section Report

April 2023 – March 2024

# Our year

This adventurous group of Explorer Scouts have had another great year filled with exciting expeditions, outdoor activities, volunteering, and new skills.

## Our adventures

The unit has grown to 33 Explorers and 8 Volunteers. Over the year we have canoed, paddleboarded, sailed, rock climbed, hiked, navigated, bouldered, camped, cooked, parascended, travelled and explored. We've done all sorts of things, including the Southern 50 Hiking Challenge, Monopoly Live, a workshop with the British Red Cross, a debate for UK Parliament Week, and tried crossbow shooting. A highlight for the Explorers was Cudfest, a weekend festival where our party animals partied late into the night alongside Explorers from across the region.



## Expeditions

2 Explorers completed their DofE Silver Expedition by Canoeing and wild camping along the Great Glen Way in Scotland. Starting in Fort William, they paddled on canals and rivers, experienced grade 2 rapids, finishing on the stunning Loch

Ness. 5 Bronzes completed their Expedition on the River Medway and are looking forward to bigger adventures in 2024. These challenging experiences develop resilience, teamwork, independence and outdoor skills, and in 2024 we'll see our biggest DofE group in unit history.



## Canoe Programme

This year we purchased two canoe fleets in partnership with Discovery ESU with funding from the Hedley Foundation. Parents and supporters kindly raised funds to buy further equipment. 3 Leaders qualified as British Canoeing paddlesport instructors this year, funded by the Royal Navy and Port of London Authority. A leader became qualified to tow canoe trailers with our minibus with funding from Scout trusts.

## 25th World Scout Jamboree - Korea

4 Explorers and 3 Volunteers from the unit were selected to attend the 25th World Scout Jamboree in Korea, camping alongside 40,000 Scouts from all over the world. Due to challenges, the Jamboree was moved to Seoul where we explored, tried amazing food and were treated so kindly by local people. Our time finished with a K-pop concert at Seoul Stadium and our Explorers have some incredible memories and stories to tell the unit when they got home.

## County Croatia Expedition

7 Unit Members joined the county Croatia trip in August 2023, alongside over 100 Scouts from across the county. They had a fantastic time taking part in water activities, boat trips, exploring and made lots of new Scouting friends.

## Volunteering as Young Leaders

21 unit members are Young Leaders who volunteer weekly at 1st New Cross, 3rd Crofton Park and 2nd Deptford Scout groups with Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts. We estimate they have given over 800 volunteering hours over the year, which is an outstanding contribution and impact. Thank you to all our fantastic Young Leaders, for all that they do!

## Explorer achievements this year

- 18 Chief Scout Platinum Awards
- 11 Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Awards
- 3 Chief Scout Diamond Awards
- 1 Duke of Edinburgh Silver Award
- 2 Young Leader Awards
- 1 Jack Petchey Award
- 4 Bear Grylls Never Give up awards



## Thank you

Our dedicated team of volunteers give countless hours behind the scenes to coordinate logistics, attend training, manage our finances, plan exciting adventures, keep everyone safe and source and maintain our equipment. Our team go above and beyond to run this ambitious unit, and have developed and grown Explorer Scouting in our local area, Thank you for all that you do.

## Explorer Leaders

**Learn more.**

**Share more.**

**Be more.**

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# Group Accounts

1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024

# THE FIRST NEW CROSS (THE GREYS) SCOUT GROUP

Registered Charity No. 1021328.

Scout Registration No. 44935

First Registered with B-P on 24<sup>th</sup>. May 1908.

## Receipts and Payments Account

For the Year from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024

### Receipts

	2023/24	2022/23
	£	£
<b>Donations and Similar Income.</b>		
Annual Scout Assn. Membership Subscriptions	6,292.00	6,440.00
Annual Scout Assn. Subs. paid on via Lewisham District	<b>(6,292.00)</b>	<b>(6,440.00)</b>
Membership Subscriptions - Section's use	3,479.20	3,333.10
Membership Subscriptions - Establishment	2,741.80	2,314.90
Donations - Puppy School, S.E. London	731.25	1,543.75
Donations – Other (Guides, Church, Secret Adventure, Parties etc.)	8,840.78	12,301.25
- Mini-bus usage	1,185.00	787.50
- Grant from Lewisham Council	-----	1,248.00
- Grant for Squirrels	-----	500.00
Gift Aid ( <i>See note in Annual report</i> )	-----	-----
Youth Programme, Activities, Camps, Inc. WSJ, Croatia etc.	23,011.07	19,225.00
Don Broome Trust Grant	-----	2,500.00
	<b>39,989.10</b>	<b>41,503.50</b>
<b>Fund Raising (Gross).</b>		
Table Sale/Fayres	30.00	581.21
Easyfundraising	166.07	271.62
Bonfire Evening	1,436.50	408.00
Amazon Core Europe	72.08	102.48
Lewisham Lottery	386.50	489.50
Raffall Online Raffle Payments	1,267.20	-----
Jingle Mingle	672.50	321.80
Other fundraising activities	195.00	60.00
	<b>4,225.85</b>	<b>2,234.61</b>
<b>Investment Income.</b>		
Deposit Account Interest	17.87	6.41
<b>Total Gross Income</b>	<b>44,232.82</b>	<b>43,744.52</b>

**THE FIRST NEW CROSS (THE GREYS) SCOUT GROUP**

Registered Charity No. 1021328.

Scout Registration No. 44935

First Registered with B-P on 24<sup>th</sup>. May 1908.**Receipts and Payments Account****For the Year from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024****Payments**

	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2022/23</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Charitable Payments.</b>		
Youth Programme, Activities, Camps, etc. incl. WSJ & Croatia	20,517.28	24,009.09
Council Tax (Business Rates)	648.70	2,495.00
Water & Sewerage	443.32	-2,876.73
Electricity & Gas	2,918.54	1,694.95
Property & Equipment Insurance	1,711.29	1,531.87
Telephone & Broadband	646.24	719.59
Mini-bus running costs. (Road Tax, Insurance, MoT, Purchase, etc.)	3,495.90	2,346.05
Maintenance - H.Q. and Grounds	902.32	3,270.52
Equipment, furniture, etc.	91.92	1,593.09
Online Scout Manager Costs	437.50	637.01
Morrisons Charity funded works	-----	6,750.00
Don Broome Trust Laptop/Banner Purchase	-----	499.06
Other Establishment costs (Misc/ Zettle/ Stripe/GoCardless fees etc.)	3,426.65	3,350.75
	<b>35,239.66</b>	<b>45,750.25</b>
<b>Fund Raising Expenses (including prizes, etc.)</b>		
Table Sale/Fayres	-----	-----
Easyfundraising	-----	-----
Bonfire Evening	300.16	79.66
Jingle Mingle	144.18	104.41
Other fundraising activities	-----	560.00
	<b>444.34</b>	<b>744.07</b>
<b>Total Gross Expenditure</b>	<b>35,684.00</b>	<b>46,494.32</b>
<b>Net of Receipts/(Payments)</b>	<b>(8,548.82)</b>	<b>(-2,749.80)</b>
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	<b>50,717.06*</b>	<b>42,168.24*</b>

# THE FIRST NEW CROSS (THE GREYS) SCOUT GROUP

Registered Charity No. 1021328.

Scout Registration No. 44935

First Registered with B-P on 24<sup>th</sup>. May 1908.

## Statement of Assets at the end of the year.

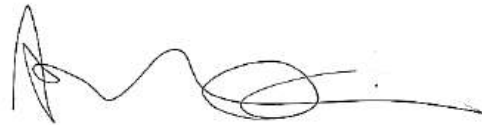
### 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024

	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2024	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2023
	£	£
<b>Cash Funds.</b>		
Bank Current Account (No.1 General Funds)	38,096.75	37,210.15
Bank Current Account (No.2 Expeditions)	8,786.91	2,123.74
Deposit Account (C.O.I.F.)	385.63	367.76
PayPal Charity Account Balance	590.68	561.16
Equals Card Balances	2,857.09	1,426.85
Cash/Floats	0.00	478.58
<b>Total Cash Funds</b>	<b>50,717.06</b>	<b>42,168.24</b>
<b>Ring-Fenced assets from Geoffrey Morriss Bequest</b>		
(Building, Maintaining & Digitising Group Archives)	10,000.00	10,000.00
(Emergency Situation Fund).	2,120.00	2,120.00
County Disney Trip Payments received to be paid to County	7,435.00	-----
<b>Total Ring-Fenced Funds</b>	<b>19,555.00</b>	<b>12,120.00</b>
<b>Non-monetary assets for own use.</b>		
Land and Buildings	190,000.00	190,000.00
Mini-bus	19,500.00	20,500.00
Scouting equipment, furniture, etc.	9,800.00	9,800.00
	<b>219,300.00</b>	<b>220,300.00</b>

The above Receipts and Payments Account and Statement of Assets were approved by the Trustees on the 15<sup>th</sup> Day of July 2024 and signed on their behalf by:



.....  
**Brian Sweeting, Group Treasurer**



.....  
**Alan McKinnon, Group Chair**