

# Trustees Annual Report

For the period 6<sup>th</sup> April 2012 to the 5<sup>th</sup> April 2013

Prepared by Executive Members and Edited by Clare Forshaw

Approved by the Group Executive Committee



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## Reference and administration details

Charity name: 1<sup>st</sup> Kirkby Scout Group

Other names charity known as: 1<sup>st</sup> Kirkby Scouts

Registered Charity no.: None

Scout Association reg. no.: 46841

Charity's principal address: Kirkby Scout Centre, Parish Hall,  
Old Rough Lane  
Northwood  
Kirkby  
Merseyside  
L33 0YL

Website: [www.1stkirkbyscouts.org.uk](http://www.1stkirkbyscouts.org.uk)

Charity trustees:	Lee Darbsyhire	Chairperson	(until December 2012)
	Paul Brownrigg	Chairperson	(from March 2013)
	John Wotherspoon	Secretary	
	Nick Rogan	Treasurer	
	Matthew Donnelly	Group Scout Leader	(until 21 April 2013)
	Clare Forshaw	Group Scout Leader	(from 21 April 2013)
	Patrick Brennan	Assistant GSL/ Quartermaster	(until Nov 2012)
	Colin Green	Quartermaster	(from January 2013)
	George Murphy	Building Manager	(until February 2013)
	Lorraine Green	Fundraising Co-ordinator	(from August 2012)
	Alison Mansfield	Assistant Beaver Scout Leader	
	Clare Forshaw	Cub Scout Leader	
	Ian McGee	Scout Leader	(until October 2012)
	Mark Bishop	ESL / SASM	(until March 2013)
	Helen Moss	Group Executive Member	
	Michaela Gates	Group Executive Member	

## **Structure, governance and management:**

The Group's governing documents are those of the 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, the members of which are 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.

During the past year the Executive Committee has had three sub-Committees:

- Building Management sub-Committee – chaired by the Building Manager;
- Quartermaster sub-Committee – chaired by the Quartermaster;
- Fundraising sub-Committee – chaired by the Fundraising Co-ordinator.

The Group Executive Committee exists to support the Group Scout Leader in meeting the responsibilities of the appointments and is responsible for:

- the maintenance of the Group's property and equipment;
- the raising of funds and the administration of the Group's finance;
- the insurance of persons, property and equipment;
- Group public occasions;
- assisting with the recruitment of Leaders and other adult support.

### ***Supporting bodies:***

Our immediate supporting parent body is Altside Scout District, which covers Bootle, Netherton, Aintree, Maghull, Lydiate, Melling and Kirkby. We have benefitted from and contributed significantly to district-wide activities which have served to enhance our programme of activities over the course of the past year.

### ***Risk and Internal Controls:***

The group has in place systems of internal controls that are designed to provide reasonable assurance against material mismanagement or loss; these include 2 signatories for all payments and comprehensive insurance policies to ensure that insurable risks are covered.

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## **Objectives and activities:**

The objectives of the group are as a unit of the Scout Association. The Purpose of Scouting was re-worded by the Scout Association during 2012 as part of a review of the fundamentals of Scouting. Scouting exists to actively engage and support young people in their personal development, empowering them to make a positive contribution to society.

The 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. The Scout Group directly provides activities for 6-14 year olds, and supports the provision of

activities for 14-18 year olds principally through the Black Cats Explorer Scout Unit to which we are partnered, and secondarily through the Altside District-managed Explorer Scout provision. We aim to support of activities for 18-25 year olds through the Merseyside County-managed Scout Network provision.

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.

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### **Achievements:**

The past year has been a very difficult and challenging one for the 1<sup>st</sup> Kirkby Scout Group, however the team of volunteers has risen to the challenges and emerged from it stronger and providing Scouting for more young people than in many, many years. Our youth members have also shown remarkable resilience and a willing to make-do in adversity.

At the outset of the 2012-13 financial year we had plans afoot to make significant strides with our renovation of the Kirkby Scout Centre and the sections were working well. Unfortunately in the early hours of 16<sup>th</sup> June 2012, an electrical fire broke out at the rear of the Kirkby Scout Centre. A passer-by thankfully alerted Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service who – to our relief – brought the blaze quickly under control. However, the damage to the building was extensive and numerous pieces of camping kit were damaged or destroyed. Large sections of the roof were destroyed or damaged; the entire building was smoke and water damaged, and the electrics and water supply totally compromised. Needless to say the Kirkby Scout Centre was beyond use.

Our remaining equipment was transferred to storage kindly offered by the 1<sup>st</sup> Lydiate Scout Group, and subsequently to storage offered by the 7<sup>th</sup> Fairfield Scout Group. To both groups, along with all those who helped with the move from our own group, we are very grateful.

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service once again came to our aid by providing us with a temporary meeting location, making use of the community rooms at Kirkby Community Fire Station. Whilst helpful the rooms aren't large enough to have lots of excited children running around inside them, although they turned out to be ideal for meetings of our Group Team and Group Executive.

Through a parent in the group, Kirsty Smith, we made contact with Mick Adams at Knowsley Council who eagerly and helpfully provided us with free access to the community buildings at Copthorne and Mill Farm Adventure Playgrounds. After a few weeks trialling both places, we set up temporary home at Copthorne whilst repairs to the Kirkby Scout Centre were underway. Mick's help cannot be understated: he made what could have been a very difficult situation much easier and this helped to make our stay enjoyable for the youth members who made full use of the Adventure Playgrounds!

Our Executive Committee took the decision to make the most of the situation, agreeing to channel extra money into the repair works to enable a change to the layout of the Kirkby Scout Centre to improve its usefulness. So, in addition to £58,000 from the insurance company the group contributed £2500 to the project, whilst Cowan and Co. Architects contributed a fantastic £850, plus they waived their professional fees on the extra work to enable us to bring the project in on budget. In the grand-scheme-of-things the sums involved were small but, a time of difficulty for us, made all the difference. It was an excellent example of corporate responsibility and Cowan and Co. have our unreserved thanks!

In support of our decision to invest at this pivotal time, Altside Scout District provided us with £1500 contingency funding to ensure we remained solvent during the year ahead as the funding of the additional works depleted our available funds.

With most of the work completed, the Kirkby Scout Centre was reopened on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2012 by the World Snooker Champion John Parrott MBE. It was quite fitting as the Kirkby Scout Centre used to be a men's club fitted out with snooker tables back in the 1950s! Over 50 people attended the reopening which included food and drinks supplied by parents, a quiz, raffles and prize draws.

In mid-2012 our previous Group Scout Leader, Matt Donnelly, announced his intention to stand down by the 2013 AGM, after 5 years in charge of developing the 1<sup>st</sup> Kirkby Scout Group. After a nomination and selection process organised by Altside Scout District, Clare Forshaw was appointed as Matt's successor to lead the group into the future and formally took over on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2013.

In addition to running the weekly meetings and extra activities of the Beaver, Cub and Scout sections, we have run and participated in several activities as a whole group:

- we ran our first Group Family Camp in July 2012 bringing together members from all sections and their parents for a fun-filled weekend;
- Clare Forshaw and Matt Donnelly completed bell boat helm training in July 2012 and delivered their first bell boat session on 26<sup>th</sup> August to a mix of Beavers, Cubs, Scout and Explorers at Waterside Lodge in Southport;
- a large number from our group attended the Kirkby Remembrance Sunday Parade;
- the Group ran a Brunch with Santa in December;
- we attended the St. George's Activity Day for the fourth year in April 2013, with record numbers attending from our group and the leaders providing bell boating for the first time along with power boating in co-operation with the Liverpool City Maritime Volunteer Service.

In total we provided 12 nights away across the three sections in addition to our various weekly and extra day activities. Despite an immensely tough year for all our volunteers, our continuing success as a group and the great sense of community we have built shows what a dedicated team of adult volunteers we have who provide a fantastic experience for our youth members across the 6-18 age range.

### ***Beaver Scout Colony***

Since a lull in membership in early 2012, the Beaver Colony has flourished in size and by March 2013 is at its current full capacity. This is largely due to the successful operation of the programme this year, initially led by Matt Donnelly who stepped down as Acting BSL in July 2012. Clare Forshaw then took on a supporting role for two new leaders, Gaynor Morris and Alby O'Brien, with the Alison Mansfield assisting throughout. Gaynor has since taken over as the Beaver Scout Leader and the Colony continues to flourish.

A range of badges such as the Friendship Challenge, Air Activities, Faith Award, Promise Challenge, Healthy Eating, Emergency Aid and Animal Friend have been completed this year, and a long-term plan is in place to ensure a full programme is delivered. The Beavers have had a visit from the local police and their canine companions, made smoothies and paper aeroplanes, and had a trip out to the local church during their weekly meetings.

In addition to weekly activities the Beaver Colony has undertaken one sleepover this year in June 2012. We plan to restart sleepovers as the new Colony leadership team grows in experience.

### ***Cub Scout Pack***

The Cub Pack is averaging near capacity on a weekly basis and continues from strength to strength under the leadership of Clare Forshaw and Christine Brennan. We continue to work with Young Leaders and the Cub Pack has had the fantastic help of Emma Brennan. With help from Daniel and Mike Porter, the weekly meetings have been taken up with our fantastic balanced programme.

The Cub Pack all enjoyed their Emergency Aid badge with thanks to Ray McLellan and learnt some valuable lessons about personal safety. Cubs Scouts also had a go on the computers working towards their staged Information Technology badge.

Numbers have been up and down this year but at a steady 16 with a large number of youth members to move up, hopefully, we will again be at capacity.

Cubs also took part in the District St George Activity Day celebration with a great turn out of attendance. They enjoyed activities such as bell boating, bouncy castles, climbing, shooting, archery, zorbing, survival skills and much more. Our aim is to continue to grow and improve on an already brilliant programme for next year.

### ***Scout Troop***

The Scout Troop has faced some difficult challenges in the past year. The Scout Leader at the start of the year, Ian McGee decided to step down due to various pressures, and an Assistant SL, Terry Smith had to do likewise. Matt Donnelly stepped in as Acting SL from October, working with Tony Dickinson and Ray McLellan to keep the Troop functioning. Since then the leadership team has been joined by Phil Bailey – who is new to Scouting – and Paul Woods, who is returning to Scouting with many years of previous experience. Tony has assumed the role of Acting Scout Leader from April 2013 as Matt needed to step down from this role.

Scout numbers have gradually risen in the second half of the year, with regularly high turnouts from around 20 Scouts. They have completed numerous badges and awards throughout the year

The Troop has managed to go camping 3 times this year: the first time to the District Survival camp at Waddecar Scout Camp in May 2012, followed by a joint skills camp with the 12<sup>th</sup> Sefton East Scout Group at Bispham Hall Scout Estate in September 2012, and a very chilly camp in the snow for the older Scouts when the Great Escape competition was cancelled in April 2013. In addition the Troop has participated in the Altside District Pumpkin Challenge: building full-size catapults to launch pumpkins against other teams, and undertaken another chilly event during the 9-hour *Operation: Moonlight* hike-evasion exercise between Skelmersdale and Southport. A tough but rewarding challenge for all involved!

### ***Black Cats Explorer Scout Unit***

Our first year as an Explorer Scout Unit has been a successful one. Numbers are steady at 6 and we have a committed young unit led by Clare Forshaw with assistance from Phil Bailey and Alison Mansfield. The Unit have had 2 nights away at the Mersey Moot Camp at Tawd Vale Scout Camp.

Explorer Scouts also took part in the Ormskirk District event *Operation: Moonlight* in which they lost out by only 5 minutes of a 9 hour hike avoiding being seen. The unit also enjoyed a visit to Skate Academy, a roller rink for any age and everyone survived uninjured.

Section nights have included building catapults, survival nights, repairing damaged items from the fire damaged hut, local hikes, cooking trials among other great activities.

### ***1<sup>st</sup> Kirkby Scout Active Support Unit***

Despite the whole range of challenges faced during the year relating to the Kirkby Scout Centre fire and supporting sectional leadership teams, it was felt there was a need to look toward expanding our capacity to deliver skilled adventurous activities. Matt Donnelly and Mark Bishop, along with the Group Team and Executive, began exploring the possibilities for a Scout Active Support Unit to offer this additional capacity. This culminated in the finalisation of a Service Agreement for the Scout Active Support Unit and its launch in February 2013. It will aim to provide a team of people with the time to deliver water activities, mountain activities, target activities and general support to the sections. This is a new endeavour that will be initially led by Matt Donnelly and currently has half a dozen team members.

### ***Administration and Finance***

This year the work of various background supporters has really become of great importance. The support and effectiveness of the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer to the Group Team has proved invaluable: keeping the administrative cogs of the group turning whilst challenges were overcome. Special note should be made of the effectiveness and diligence of Jess Donnelly as the administrator for all Membership Enquiries – this has made the many recent requests to join the group easier for the leaders to handle.

### ***Building Management sub-Committee***

As the narrative of the Kirkby Scout Centre has been covered already, the main points to focus on are the efforts made to restore our meeting place. The lead on this was taken by the then Group Scout Leader, Matt Donnelly, who liaised with the Kirkby Parochial Church Council, the insurance loss-adjusters, the architects at Cowan and Co., Frank Rogers building contractors and their sub-contractors, and Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service. This culminated in the hand-back of the building to us in December 2012 and the successful completion of final corrective works by May 2013. This final stage was accompanied by the installation of our new secure storage facility at the rear of the building.

There are still a few of outstanding matters to resolve with the building. Primarily, long-term subsidence and associated deterioration of the brick-work pointing which was not covered by the fire repair works: that is now a high-priority.

### ***Equipment sub-Committee***

A £10,000 grant was successfully secured by Ricky Brennan through the Awards For All Big Lottery Fund to improve of range of equipment in order to enhance the kind of activities we could deliver. This ranged from new trailers for equipment transport through to new tents and other pieces of camping equipment to replenish our aging kit. The fire brought this project to a halt for a short while, but with alternative storage in place we completed most purchases and made great use of the equipment despite our circumstances.

Equipment losses caused by the fire also meant we could enhance our intended equipment refresh with other items such as hammocks and tarpaulins to provide a totally new camping experience. The key person in resolving this claim was a parent, Kirsty Smith, who took on responsibility for overseeing our insurance matters at this difficult time. Our new storage facility will also free-up space inside the Kirkby Scout Centre meaning more young people can enjoy Scouting in Kirkby than before, and allow us to more effectively organise and access our range of equipment.

### ***Social and Fundraising sub-Committee***

Since the last AGM we have only had one fundraising event, Breakfast with Santa, which was well attended however suffered through poor organising, mainly lack of time and adults. This is one area in which we are determined to better for next year. We plan to get involved with local bag packing, a Halloween event and hopefully raise some money at the AGM.

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## **Finances Review:**

Please refer to the Statement of Accounts for details of the Scout Group's financial situation for the 2012/2013 financial year.

### ***Reserves policy:***

The Group currently has no official policy on reserve funds, however we are currently operating with a net 'General Fund' balance in excess of £500, which is sufficient to ensure the continuation of our charitable activities for at least four months should there be a shortfall in income or fundraising.

**Investments policy:**

The Group does not have sufficient funds to invest in longer term investments. The Group has therefore adopted a risk averse strategy to the investment of its funds. All funds are held in cash using only mainstream banks or building societies. However, we do hold a small number of historical shares in Lloyds Banking Group.

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**Future plans:**

Our key aim for the future remains to be to grow the group to the best of our ability serving the community of Kirkby in the finest way possible. We are seeking volunteers for a few major roles such as Cub Scout Leader and Explorer Scout Leader which will free up more of the Group Scout Leader's time and help to focus mainly on the group as a whole, its growth and hopefully further success.

Our plans to extend the sections using second section nights may be happening faster than we first thought. Recent communication with the Scout Association's Knowsley development project offers the possibility of working together to launch and develop second section nights – eventually enabling us to cater to the large numbers wanting to get involved in Scouting. With Beavers and Cubs at capacity, this may come in useful rather than using the old method of waiting lists.

The Scout Group will continue the support of the newly established Black Cats Explorer Unit which has increased in numbers from 4 to 6 and has a well balanced programme in place and a strong relationship with the Scout Group.

Most importantly, we aim to continue the adventurous programmes we are delivering to the young people, encouraging the helpers and parents to stay/get involved and strive to make this Scout Group the best it can possibly be year in, year out.

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**Declaration:**

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above. Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:

Name: Clare Forshaw

Name: Paul Brownrigg

Signature: *signed on original*

Signature: *signed on original*

Position: Group Scout Leader

Position: Group Chairman

Date: 21/05/2013