

1st Swanley (Hextable) Scout Group

Group Lead Volunteer Report – AGM 2025

GROUP ANNUAL SUMMARY

Safety and Safeguarding

We are pleased to report that very few safety incidents occurred during the year. A small number of accident forms were submitted for minor injuries, all of which were resolved without requiring further medical attention.

No safeguarding incidents were reported.

All of our active uniformed Leaders remain compliant with mandatory training, including First Response, Safety, and Safeguarding modules.

Section Reports

Squirrels

The Squirrel section currently has 9 members, 3 adult leaders plus additional parent helpers.

Key events attended in the year include St Georges Day fun day, Swanley Police Station visit, and Dartford Fire Station visit.

Other fun activities included Pedalos in Swanley park lake, pond dipping in foots cray meadows, making Indian pan cakes for pan cake day and lots more.

Beavers

The Beavers section currently has 23 members, 5 leaders (including Josh who also attends Cubs) and 1 young leader.

Key events attended in the year include District campfire at Horton Kirby Scout HQ, District Beavers Mole Trophy event at West Kingsdown Scout HQ, St Georges Day fun day, Animal Friends Workshop at Crayford Pets and Home, Dartford Fire Station visit, 11 Beavers attended the Group Camp in May and 5 went to the District Beaver Sleepover at Hope Hill Campsite in July.

Cubs

The Cub section currently has 25 members, 2 regular leaders (including Josh who all attends Beavers) and 2 young leaders.

Key events attended in the year include Hextable Village Fair, St Georges Day fun day and Group camp in May, Leeds Castle Invasion, Cubs on the Water at Leybourne Lakes and also at Danson Park, and Wilmington Village Fair in August.

Other activities included a visit from a birds of prey team, visit to Chatham ski centre, movie night, hikes and visits to Farningham Woods.

Scouts

The Scout section currently has 33 members and 3 regular leaders (including Chris who also leads the Cubs section).

Key events attended in the year include the Hextable Village Fair, district St Georges Day event, Group Camp Expedition, and Wilmington Village Fair. Over the summer period the Scouts attended Kent International Jamboree 2025 at Detling Showground in August along with 7000 other Scouts and Guides from all over the world.

We are sad to see some moving on to the Vikings Explorer Unit based at 2nd Swanley but we wish them well in their future Scouting adventures.

Group Activities

Cubs and Scouts ran refreshment stalls at both the District St George's Day Fun Day and Wilmington Village Fair. These were successful events that raised valuable funds for the Group.

The Group Camp in May was a huge success, attended by Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, and a couple of returning Explorers working toward their Expedition badge. The relaxed atmosphere and excellent facilities at Downe Activity Centre made it a memorable experience. We plan to return to this venue.

ACHEIVEMNTS AND CHALLENGES

Key Awards

I am pleased to confirm that the following awards have been gained in the past year:

3 Chief Scouts Bronze Award (Beavers)

8 Chief Scouts Silver Award (Cubs)

2 Chief Scouts Gold Award (Scouts)

In addition, 8 Scouts achieved their Expedition badge during the Group Camp.

Congratulations to all the young people who achieved awards this year!

Challenges

- Squirrels Section Capacity: Although we have enough Leaders to run all sections safely, the Squirrels section is unable to admit more members due to only having 3 uniformed Leaders.
- Waiting List: There are currently 46 young people on the waiting list across all sections.

- Recruitment Needed: We can only provide Scouting opportunities to more young people with the help of more uniformed Leaders and regular parent helpers.
- Trustee Board Vacancy: We urgently need a Chairperson for our Trustee Board. Clive has kindly stepped in on an interim basis, but this is not sustainable.
- Parental Involvement: We also need more Trustee Board members representing each section to ensure effective governance.

STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

As our annual income regularly exceeds £5,000, we will be registering the Group as an independent charity with its own charity number.

We're updating our internal systems to provide a secure and reliable platform for storing key documents like meeting minutes, planning notes, and risk assessments. Further details will be shared with Leaders and Trustees soon.

No other major strategic changes are planned at this time.

Operationally We aim to establish a dedicated fundraising team to apply to the various organisations that offer equipment and activity grants and organise fundraising events to support the Group's development and ability to offer wider opportunities to our young people. If you are interested in helping, we would love to hear from you!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Hextable Parish Council – Thank you, particularly to Tracy Lane, for your ongoing support and use of the hall and grounds.

Roger Davey, our Vice President – for his continued role as liaison between the Group and HPC.

Valerie Page – A heartfelt thank you for your many years of service as Treasurer. Valerie has been instrumental in keeping the Group financially sound and has handed over responsibilities to Michael McGinley, who we warmly welcome into his new role.

Frances Wallis – A huge thank you for her dedication over the years in multiple roles, most recently as our acting Group Scout Leader / Group Lead Volunteer. Frances' leadership has been pivotal to our success. We wish her the very best as she continues her work as District Lead Volunteer. Your contribution will not be forgotten.

SUMMARY

I would like to extend my thanks to all the leaders who enthusiastically put in their own time to organise and supervise the many existing and engaging activities for our young people.

Also, to the Trustee Board members who put in their own time to ensure the group is being run as it should.

With 90 young people, 11 uniformed Leaders, and numerous helpful parents, the 1st Swanley (Hextable) Scout Group remains strong and vibrant.

Looking ahead, our goals are to:

- Increase parental representation on the Trustee Board
- Bolster Leadership teams across all sections
- Establish a Fundraising sub-team to help access external resources and grants
- Continue to provide diverse and high-quality programmes across all sections

We are in a great position moving forward and have a strong reputation within the community.

If you are interested in joining the Leadership Team, supporting with fundraising, or becoming a Trustee, please get in touch – even small contributions of time can make a big difference!

Hugh Tyler

Group Lead Volunteer

1st Swanley (Hextable) Scout Group