

Lambeth District Scouts

Trustees Annual Report for the period 1 April 2023-31 March 2024

Welcome to our 2024 AGM and thank you for being here – we appreciate you taking this time to join us as we come towards the end of another busy year for our Groups and for you, our volunteers.

This report provides a summary of the previous financial year, from April 2023 to March 2024, from the point of view of the District Trustee Board, which it is my privilege to Chair – thank you to Ian Andrews, who deputised as Chair for a while longer than he was expecting to, and to my predecessors as District Chair.

It has been a year of further change for the Scout Association as the Transformation Programme continues. There is an emphasis on making a clearer distinction between governance topics, which are handled by Trustee Boards at each level of our organisation, and operational matters, which continue to be led by the DC (District Lead Volunteer) and all of you who lead and who serve in our Groups across the District.

Section A – Reference and administration details

Charity name Lambeth District Scouts

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

Chair Alan Walker (co-opted in June 2023 after the 2023 AGM)

Treasurer Jackie Hanwell

Minutes Hannah Crampton

Elected members

Gillian Crampton Cheryl Stonebridge

Barbara Parsons Alan Walker

Roger Whittle

Nominated members

Keith Merrall

Sue Byiers-Oldfield

Rosemary Merricks

18-25 – Sarah Flor-Guedes

18-25 – Jamie Frances (from his 18th birthday in September 2023)

Ex Officio members

Wendy Hutcheson – District Commissioner (District Lead Volunteer)

Emma Hutcheson – District Explorer Scout Commissioner

Ben Stewart-Tomkins – District Youth Commissioner (District Youth Lead)

Honorary members

Keith Merrall – President

Keith Hill (MP for Streatham 1992-2010) – Vice President

Mayor of Lambeth in office – Vice President

3 MPs for Lambeth (as at June 2023 prior to the implementation of the four Boundary Commissions changes to Parliamentary constituencies) – Vice Presidents

The County Chair and County Commissioner are also entitled to attend Trustee Board meetings but neither have done so during 2023-24.

Section B - Structure, governance and management

The governing documents of Lambeth District (“The District”) 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 (“POR”)

The District is a trust established under rules which are common to all Scouts. It is an excepted Charity under Charity Commission rules. The Trustees are appointed in accordance with the Policy, Organisation and Rules of The Scout Association. Governance of the District is the responsibility of the District Trustee Board, the members of which are the Charity Trustees of the District, which is an educational charity.

As with all charity Trustees, they are responsible for complying with legislation applicable to charities, and governed by the Charity Commission.

To quote directly from the POR (extracts from section 5.5.6)

“The District Trustee Board is a team of volunteers who work together, as charity Trustees, to make sure the Scouts is run safely and legally. At the heart of their role is a focus on strategy, performance and assurance.

Effective Trustee support helps other volunteers run the Scout programme that gives young people skills for life.

Members of the District Trustee Board must act collectively as charity trustees of Scout District, and in the best interests of the charity’s members.

The District Trustee Board must act in the charity’s best interests, acting with reasonable care and skill and take steps to be confident that:

a) The charity is:

- well managed
- carrying out its purposes for the public benefit
- complying with the charity's governing document and the law
- managing the charity's resources responsibly

b) the charity is operating compliant with POR and the local charity regulator, including effective management of each of the Key Policies listed in Chapter 2 of The Scout Association Policy, Organisation and Rules.

c) young people are meaningfully involved in decision making at all levels

d) the District has sufficient resources (funds, people, property and equipment) available to meet the planned work of the District including delivery of the high quality programme and resource requirements of the training programme (see Rule 4.2.2 of The Scout Association Policy, Organisation and Rules)"

There were 6 Trustee Board meetings held in 2023-24, plus the 2023 AGM.

As of September 2023, these meetings take place in person at the South London Scout Centre, with additional individual attendance on Zoom for those otherwise unable to join.

Our thanks to the team at Granton School who previously provided space for our meetings, and to Gordon Carr at The South London Scout Centre ('The Fort') for facilitating our more recent meetings.

The Board uses the model Agenda for Trustee meetings which can be found on the County website. Board meetings focus on four key themes:

- Resources - people, property and equipment
- Programme delivery decisions
- Funds - Treasurer's report, budget review and finance decisions
- Operational compliance - GDPR and safety

as well as updates from any sub-committees such as the team working on Transformation.

It is also recommended that there be an annual review of insurance, the asset register, a risk register, and Gift Aid at the first Trustee Board meeting after an AGM.

A sub-committee of the 2023-24 Trustee Board will develop a Risk Register in line with guidance set out by the Charity Commission in their document CC26 Charities and Risk Management Guidance.

This will enable the District Trustee Board to identify and review the major risks to which they believe the District is exposed, and establish systems to mitigate against them.

From this AGM the Trustee Board will be made up as follows:

- Chair and Treasurer (Secretary was previously a Trustee role but administrative support can now be provided by a non-Trustee, as it has been to our District for several years – many thanks to Hannah Crampton, who is even now recording these words)

- District Commissioner and District Youth Commissioner who sit “ex officio” by virtue of the role they hold
- A number of other members, which the Scout Association and the Charity Commission recommend (but do not insist) be capped at 8, to make a total of 12 Board Trustees
- With at least 2 of the 8 to be aged between 18 and 25 so that the views of our young people are properly represented on the Trustee Board

It is important to note that as from this 2024 season of AGMs across the Scout Association, Trustees may serve no more than 9 years on any given Trustee Board, and must then spend at least 3 years away from being a Trustee before applying to return, should they wish to.

Section C - Objectives and activities

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.

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

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.

Public benefit statement

The District meets the Charity Commission's public benefit criteria under both the advancement of education and the advancement of citizenship or community development headings.

Section D - Achievements and performance

Wendy will talk in more detail about achievements across the District during 2023-24 – and we take this opportunity to thank her for her very significant work, including a great deal of activity behind the scenes which goes unseen but is vital to the safe and successful operation of Scouting across the District.

Membership

Numbers declared across the District in January 2024 were broadly flat compared to January 2023 – 125 Beaver Scouts (126 in 2023), 201 Cub Scouts (203 in 2023), 233 Scouts (244 in 2023) and 73 Explorer Scouts and Young Leaders (the 2023 number was incorrect due to an inadvertent double counting of Young Leaders).

A big thank you to all our volunteers who work so hard to provide Scouting in our District Groups – it is pleasing to have retained these numbers against a backdrop of challenging economic times and an overall decline in the numbers of school age young people in the Borough.

Section E - Financial Review

District capitation for 2024 was set at £3.50 with the aim of matching income to expenditure without creating any additional surplus, especially in the light of the increase in County capitation (later reduced from £16 to £10).

The District's regular Income and Expenditure is relatively small but major capital expenditure would be required to replace the District minibus in due time. The District has maintained a low risk strategy for its reserve funds, which are held in cash using only mainstream banks or building societies.

A sub-committee of the 2024-25 District Trustee Board will carry out a Finance Review, including a review of reserve funds and how they are held, and an assessment of income, costs and vehicle replacement options for the District minibus.

Thank you to Marco Lecca for his management of minibus bookings, servicing and repairs this year, and thank you to Jackie Hanwell for her stewardship of our finances.

Section F – Other Optional Information

We look forward to an exciting 2024-2025 as we support all Groups in firming up and building on the governance foundations already in place, and ensuring sound finances so that District can support the continued development of Scouting in our area.

It is often said, and entirely true, that without the adults in the District, none of what you read about, hear about or see and experience across the District could take place. So to all adults - Leaders, supporters, Trustees and parents – THANK YOU.

Section G – Declaration

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

Signed on behalf of the charity's Trustees:

Signature

Full names

Position

Date