

1st STOCKSFIELD SCOUT GROUP ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2014-2015



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Photo credits

Bob Hubbuck, Malcolm Murray, Bob Reay and Carole Thirlaway



ABOUT THE GROUP

For over fifty years, the 1st Stocksfield Scout Group has been offering fun, challenge and adventure to young people aged 6 to 14 years of age. The Group is based in the Northumberland village of Stocksfield and is part of Hadrian Scout District.



The Group comprises Beavers, Cubs and Scouts, supported by adult leaders. It is registered as a charity with the Charity Commission, charity number 522405.

Principal Address

The Scout Hut
Guessburn
Stocksfield
Northumberland
NE43 7QS

Website

1ststocksfieldscouts.org.uk

2014-15 Trustees

Dr Malcolm Murray – Chair/GSL
Dr Ben Mitchell – Hon. Treasurer
Mike Smith – Treasurer
Helen Schooler – Secretary until Dec 2014
Claire Collinson – Secretary from Jan 2015
Paddy Gascoigne – Group Scout Leader (retired 10-June 2014)
Graham Patton – Explorer Leader
Robert Hubbuck – Scout Leader
John Walker – Cub Leader
Carole Thirlaway – Beaver Leader
Philippa Harpin
Tom Richardson

Advisors 2014-15

Building Committee

Ed Agar – Parent
Alan Chapman – Assistant District Commissioner (Scouts)

Scouting

Claire McDougale – District Commissioner
Hayley Phillipson – Membership

External Auditor

Ronnie Gibson

Governing Document

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*.

www.scouts.org.uk/por

Nature of Charity

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

Charity Objectives

The objectives of the Group are as a unit of the Scout Association.

The Aim of the Scout Association is to promote the development of young people in achieving their full physical, intellectual, social and spiritual potentials, as individuals, as responsible citizens and as members of the local, national 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.

Public Benefit Criteria

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.

The Scouting Movement complies with two key principles set by the Commission with regard to public benefit:

1. Identifiable benefit

The way in which Scouting is carried out helps young people develop towards their full potential; this benefit is directly linked to the Purpose of Scouting.

2. Public benefit

Scouting is a national movement open to young people aged 6-25 and adults. Full membership is restricted to young people and adults who are willing to make the Scout Promise. The Association enables those in poverty to benefit from Scouting; while the Association charges a subscription to its members, the benefits of Scouting are not constrained by the member's inability to pay. Locally, there are arrangements to waive subscriptions and other costs for those who cannot afford to pay. Nationally, there are funds available for uniform and activities so that young people are not excluded from

activities if they are unable to pay. Any private benefits of Scouting are incidental. The benefits of Scouting are further demonstrated throughout this report.

Selection of Trustees

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

Management of the Group

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. This includes the registration, keeping proper accounts and making returns to the Charity Commission as appropriate.

The Committee consists of three independent representatives, Chair, Treasurer and Secretary together with the Group Scout Leader, individual section leaders and parents representatives. It meets every 3 months.

This Group Executive Committee 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 administration of Group finances;
- 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;
- Appointing Group Administrators and Advisors other than those who are elected.

Risk & Internal Control

The Group Executive Committee has identified the major risks to which they believe the Group is exposed, these have been reviewed and systems have been established to mitigate against them. The main areas of concern that have been identified are:

Damage to the building, property and equipment

The Group would request the use of buildings, property and equipment from neighbouring organisations such as the local churches, Stocksfeld Community Association, Broomley First School, Stocksfeld Tennis Club and other Scout Groups. Similar reciprocal arrangements exist with these organisations. The Group has sufficient buildings and contents insurance in place to mitigate against permanent loss.

Injury to leaders, helpers, supporters and members

The Group (through the capitation fees) contributes to the Scout Association's national accident insurance policy. Risk assessments are undertaken before all activities.

Reduced income from fundraising

The Group is primarily reliant upon income from subscriptions and fundraising. The Group does hold a reserve to ensure the continuity of activities should there be a major reduction in income. The Committee could raise the value of

subscriptions to increase the income to the Group on an on going basis, either temporarily, or permanently.

Reduction or loss of leaders

The Group is totally reliant upon volunteers to run and administer its activities. The Scout Association defines minimum adult to child ratios. If the number of leaders fell to an unacceptable level in a particular section, or the Group as a whole, then there would have to be a contraction, consolidation or a closure of a section. In the worst case scenario this could lead to the complete closure of the Group.

Reduction or loss of members

The Group provides activities for all young people aged 6 to 14. If there was a significant reduction in membership in a particular section or the Group as a whole then there would have to be a contraction, consolidation or a closure of a section. In the worst case scenario this could lead to the complete closure of the Group.



ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Scouting is extremely popular in Stocksfield, with the Group continuing to deliver a balanced programme. This reflects the enthusiasm and expertise of our members, our adult leaders and the support from the community. Sadly the demand for places in Beavers and Cubs currently exceeds supply. We have increased the proportion of females in both Beavers and Cubs. There is an urgent need for a larger hut and more adult leaders.

A taste of Scouting in Stocksfield can be obtained from the Group website: 1ststocksfieldscouts.org.uk

Below we provide more details from each of the three sections.



We began 2014 with 25 Beavers and a long waiting list. Over the year we have seen some of our young people move up to Cubs which reduced the waiting list and we now have 26 Beavers and a waiting list of five at the last count. The number of girls in our colony has increased to eight. They have all settled in very well and do not seem fazed at all by the energetic nature of our meetings, holding their own in the boisterous contact games.

During the Autumn term we completed the Global Challenge and worked towards the Creative Badge. The Beavers explored what it is like being a Beaver in other countries, tasted food from Germany and France and enjoyed a visit from the Stocksfield Stompers who sang and played songs from Northumberland. We wrote a firework poem and made some Christmas inspired art work.

Beavers were well represented in the Remembrance Sunday parade and service at the cenotaph in November.

We had a very enjoyable Christmas party and were grateful for all the help and contributions of food and drinks from parents.

We said goodbye to some of our Beavers and also to Tom Richardson, whose son Sam moved on to Cubs. Tom had been a truly valuable support to me since the retirement of Paddy and we were sad to see him leave us. Jo Lewis volunteered to help me on a permanent basis along with Janet Nicholson who had quietly stepped into the role over the previous months. I broke my right arm and left wrist ice-skating which resulted in there being no Beaver meetings in January.

February saw us back with new Beavers replacing those who moved up, keeping the numbers at 25. We finished our Creative Badge and worked on promise activities for new Beavers and to refresh the promise for those older Beavers.

For the following half term we worked on, and completed, the Fitness Challenge and Healthy Eating Badges. We made healthy snacks, healthy eating posters and completed a fitness challenge evening with David Hill who took time out of his busy schedule as a policeman to spend time with our colony. It was a great night.

The end of term saw us saying goodbye to Beavers moving up to Cubs and to Janet Nicholson, whose son Robert was one of those moving on. Janet had always been a great help and is a big miss.



At the start of the Summer term we moved back to the Scout Hut after our winter residence in the Baptist and St. John's churches. During the first half term we worked on the Explorer's Badge and enjoyed exploring the riverside up to Kate's Plain. Caroline Cope kindly led this and provided excellent resources. The Beavers completed worksheets and did some lovely art work. We are now working on the Outdoor Challenge, Hikes Away and Adventure Badges. We are planning our annual hike which will again be a sponsored event for the new Scout Hut.

Early this year I regretfully offered my resignation as Beaver Leader. As I will be 71 by then I feel it is time to pass this worthwhile role on to someone younger. I informed parents of my decision and asked for volunteers to complete the initial training to take over from me. As yet, unfortunately, there have not been any offers but I have

sent a reminder as time is pressing on.

It has been a good year for our colony with, I believe, a lot achieved by our young people. I for one am very proud of them and they prove why Scouting is still so important and why it needs our continued support in the future.

Carole Thirlaway
Beaver Scout Leader



We have 28 Cubs, two full-time and two part-time leaders. This year the pack have worked towards the Global Challenge badge. This involved Cubs finding out about different ways of generating power and presenting their findings to each other. They also completed a series of scientific experiments using dry ice, an electric wand and the ever popular "slime night".

The Cubs have made good use of the fine Summer weather, with a series of activities linked to the 2015 Year of Adventure theme. They have been practicing their fire-lighting and cooking skills, learning to navigate using a map and compass and hiking during both daylight hours and at night.

The cubs have dug out a vegetable plot on site and planted potatoes. They have also been practicing their photography skills – entering their photos in a local arts festival. They recently visited Prudhoe Castle, learning about local history. Inspired by the visit, Cubs used an

online tool to create their own coats of arms.

Having enjoyed a great summer camp near Hexham last year, plans are well underway for this year's camp at Kirkley Hall and the Cub section centenary celebrations in 2016.

John Walker
Cub Scout Leader



The Troop began the year with 15 Scouts, 10 having recently moved on to Explorer Scouts. The Scout meeting night was changed to Thursday. We gained four new members and numbers average about 14 each week. We remain short of leaders and are grateful for the rota of parents who have attended the meetings.

The Troop has enjoyed another varied year: a trip to Flamingo Land, the District 5-a-side football competition (where we came third) and an equally strong performance at the District Shooting Competition. Scouts demonstrated their ability to navigate across open country in the dark (and answer general knowledge questions) - our patrol the "Stocksfield Nightmares" - were fourth in the District Night Challenge at Slaley. Stocksfield Scouts were also highly placed in the District Cycle Challenge. 13 Scouts attended the County "Brass Monkey" Camp at Kielder – for a change the weather was relatively mild. Members of the troop also planted trees at Dilston Campsite. There was a good showing at the village Remembrance Parade.



This year three Scouts received the *Gold Chief Scout's Award*, the highest available to them in this section – congratulations to Jamie Bockett, Joe Green and Daniel McGrane. They will be attending a special ceremony in Newcastle later this year.

The (Stocksfield) *Scout of the Year* award went to Adam Mumtaz, *Patrol Leader of the Year* to Alex Barass and *Badger of the Year* (most badges gained) to Jamie Schooler.

Bob Hubbock
Scout Leader

ADULT LEADERS

This year we have managed to expand the adult leadership team, but key vacancies remain. These need to be filled as a matter of urgency.

Scouts

The Troop is led by Bob Hubbuck, supported by a rota of parents. Bob is actually an Assistant District Commissioner, but has been “filling in” at Stocksfeld for the last 7 years after the previous leader retired. Without his efforts the Troop would have closed. Bob will be returning to his district duties after July and we urgently need replacement Scout Leaders.

Cubs

The Cub Pack is lucky to have two adult leaders – John Walker and Helen Schooler. John is working towards his Nights Away permit this year. We have also two Section Assistants - Rachel and Simon Rees - who provide a third adult leader at weekly meetings and new ideas for the programme.

Beavers

Carole Thirlaway is the current Beaver Leader. She is ably supported by Jo Lewis and a rota of parents. Carole has indicated that she will retire at the end of July 2015. Further Beaver Leaders are needed to maintain this popular section.

Group Scout Leader

The Group began the year with this post unfilled. In December, Malcolm Murray (previously Chair of the Group Executive) indicated that he would be willing to assume this role. He has begun the adult leader training.



The previous Group Scout Leader (Paddy Gascoigne – shown on the left in the picture above) received the Scout Association’s prestigious Silver Acorn Award in 2015 in recognition of his special service.



THE SCOUT HUT

Our hut is the heart of Scouting in Stocksfield. It has served us well for many years but now needs replaced. We are now raising funds to replace it.

New Hut

The Group have continued to raise funds to replace our aging wooden hut.



This year we have had to work around the development of the neighbouring plot whilst new sheltered accommodation was being built. Access was “interesting” at times – particularly after heavy rain. Happily the ground has now been made good again and the houses are now occupied.



This page gives a taste of some of the fund-raising events we have carried out this year.

Atlantic Challenge

We are very grateful for the efforts of former Scout Stephen Harpin, who was part of a small team who rowed across the Atlantic Ocean (from West to East) raising over £10,000 in sponsorship.



Members of the Group, friends and family followed the progress of Stephen and his colleagues on the Group’s website, using the GPS track from their boat. Upon return, Stephen talked about how he drew on his Scouting experiences to survive the 39-day journey.

Quiz Nights

Other activities include a highly successful quiz night at the Stocksfield Cricket Club, where knotting and table-pioneering skills were put to the test.



Hadrian’s Wall Challenge

Over the Summer, the Group are planning to walk and run the length of Hadrian’s Wall.



Two local Mums will run the full length, with Beavers, Cubs and Scouts walking the other way in sections. We already have over £1,500 promised in sponsorship.



FINANCIAL REVIEW

The Group is covering its costs whilst raising significant amounts towards a new hut.



This diagram provides a summary of the Group's finances (splitting income into recurring sources and separately those related to extra fund raising for the new hut). Full accounts are listed on the next page.

Reserves Policy

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. The Group Executive Committee considers that the Group should hold a sum equivalent to 2 months running costs, circa £1,500.

The Group held reserves of approximately £3,000 against this at the year end (if the extra one-off income from hut fund-raising is ignored). As such it met the Reserves Policy.

Extra Income

The accounts show extraordinary income this year of £12,104.02 – funds raised towards the replacement of the Scout Hut.

Investment Policy

The Group does not have sufficient funds to invest in long term investments. The Group has therefore adopted a risk averse investment strategy. All funds are held in cash deposited in mainstream banks.

Gift Aid

The Group is registered with HMRC as a Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC).

Income and Expenditure Account for the Year Ending 31 March 2015

INCOME

	Credit	Debit
Membership Subscriptions	£5,534.15	
Jumble Sale	£916.10	
Scout Post	£424.25	
Other Activities (Ice Skating)	£81.00	
Camp Fees	£2,030.00	
Interest (on Savings Account)	£73.87	
Gift Aid	£2,094.35	
Fundraising	£12,104.02	
Total Income	£23,257.74	

EXPENDITURE

	Credit	Debit
Capitation		£2,646.00
Hut (legal expenses)		£1,020.00
Electricity (heating & lighting)		£182.21
Water		£286.32
Repairs & Maintenance		£0.00
Miscellaneous (community association membership, auditor fees, etc.)		£218.00
Insurance		£1,433.75
Fundraising Expenses – venue hire, advertising, etc.		£155.54
Badges		£238.63
Activities – contribution towards activities, trips, etc.		£348.67
Camp Expenses		£1,596.00
Equipment		£0.00
Total Expenditure		£8,125.12

BALANCE

£15,132.62

Bank Accounts

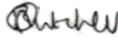
The Group held two bank accounts at the time of this audit: a current account and a savings account (the latter for the hut fund). Opening balances as at 01 April 2014. Closing balances as at 31 March 2015.

Name	Opening Balance	Credits	Debits	Closing Balance
Current Account	£13,005.21	£23,183.87	£8,125.12	£28,063.96
Savings Account	£32,451.89	£73.87	£0.00	£32,525.76
Total	£45,457.10	£23,257.74	£8,125.12	£60,589.72

Funds raised for the new hut have been transferred from the Current Account to the Savings Account since the date of this financial report.

NOTICE OF APPROVAL

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

Name	Dr Malcolm Murray	Dr Ben Mitchell
Position	Group Scout Leader	Honorary Treasurer
Signature		
Date	23rd June 2015	23rd June 2015

