

1st STOCKSFIELD SCOUT GROUP ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2015-2016



1ststocksfeldscouts.org.uk

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ABOUT THE GROUP

Formed in 1964, the 1st Stocksfield Scout Group is based in the village of Stocksfield, in rural Northumberland. Part of Hadrian Scout District, it offers fun, challenge and adventure for young people aged 6 to 14 years old.

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

Principal Address

The Scout Hut
Guessburn
Stocksfield
Northumberland
NE43 7QS

Note at the time of this report the hut has been demolished and work on the replacement begun. As such an interim address is provided here.

Interim Address

c/o Murray
27 Apperley Road
Stocksfield
Northumberland
NE43 7PG

Website

1ststocksfieldscouts.org.uk

2015-16 Trustees

Dr Malcolm Murray – Group Scout Leader
Claire Collinson – Secretary
Mike Smith – Treasurer
Philippa Harpin – Treasurer
Dr Ben Mitchell
Carole Thirlaway
Helen Schooler – Cub Leader

Advisors

Claire McDougle – District Commissioner
Alan Chapman – Assistant District Commissioner (Scouts)

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 old Scout Hut, prior to demolition

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 regarding 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*.



Cubs learning about Chinese New Year

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:

1. Damage to the building, property and equipment

The Group would request temporary use of buildings, property and equipment from neighbouring organisations such as local churches, schools and other Scout Groups.

The use of these alternative venues may limit the range of activities the Group is able to offer.

The Group has sufficient buildings and contents insurance to mitigate against permanent loss.

2. Injury to leaders, helpers and members

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

3. Reduced fundraising income

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.

4. Reduction or loss of leaders

Like all other voluntary organisations, the Scout Group is totally reliant on having sufficient trained adult 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.



ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Scouting in Stocksfield has grown again. The Group continues to deliver a balanced programme – with many youth members on-track to receive their Chief Scout's Award. This is a sign of the enthusiasm and expertise of our young people, our adult leaders and the support from the community. Demand for places in Beavers and Cubs currently exceeds supply. More information about Scouting in Stocksfield can be obtained from the Group website:

1ststocksfieldscouts.org.uk

Below are highlights from each of the three sections

BEAVERS

The Beavers have had a good year; they have had a visit from a police officer to discuss "stranger danger", learnt the Green Cross Code, took part in the Remembrance Day service and made their own Christmas decorations. During the summer the Colony spent time outside, learning how to build dens and test them to see how waterproof they were.



June & Matthew testing the Beavers' dens

They went foraging for wild food, made bows, arrows and pretend traps, learnt how to light fires and cook marshmallows outdoors.

The Beaver Leader is supported by a rota of parents, and hopes to recruit a new assistant leader shortly.

There are seven people on the waiting list and around 12 Beavers who will shortly be moving on to Cubs.

Matthew Jefferson
Beaver Scout Leader

CUBS

There are currently 21 Cubs and two adult leaders (John Walker and Helen Schooler). More adult help is needed. The leaders are currently supported by two Scouts. Cub summer camp at Kirkley Hall was very successful – even managing to fit in a visit to the zoo. In October 2015 a group of eight Cubs and as many parents, took part in our cycle challenge. The group cycled right round Kielder reservoir (taking two days), making traps and plaster casts of animal prints on the way. Cubs camped overnight at Hawkthirst Scout Camp and received their Cycling Activity badge, and also completed much of their Outdoor Challenge.

In January, Cubs learnt the lion dance and created some

decorations for Chinese New Year. In March, we had a fun night bowling at Wentworth. In May, we held a 'Bring a Parent Night', where the Cubs performed their own sketches and told jokes – qualifying for the Entertainer Activity badge. A large number of our Cubs took part in the District Cub Camp at the end of June. This was the first time we have attended a District event, and, apart from the weather, we had a great time!

We held the last few pack meetings in July at Dilston Scout Camp, where we made the most of the better weather and held our annual water pistol fight.

We said farewell to six of our Cubs, four of which have achieved their Silver Chief Scout's Award this year – the highest award for this section - Angus Walker, James Agar, James Anderson and Rebecca Green.



Preparations are also well under way to celebrate the 100th birthday of Cubs, which culminates in a party in December 2016.



Helen Schooler
Assistant Cub Scout Leader



Numbers in the Scout section continue to grow – reaching a record 25 young people. Over the Summer meetings were held at Dilston Camp and in Wheelbirks Woods (thanks to Tom Richardson). Scouts built rafts, dens and a beacon fire to celebrate the Queen's birthday.

As the nights got darker, the meetings were arranged around the theme of the Survival and Navigation badges. Scouts have learnt to pluck, gut and cook game

birds, use a knife and axe safely, to cook meals on a range of stoves and open fires and to read contours on a map.

Thanks to three parents, they were also trained in bicycle maintenance, ahead of the annual District Mountain Bike Challenge in Slaley Woods.



Learning to look after your bike

The troop had a memorable time at the District Winter Camp at Kielder in December, which coincided with *Storm Desmond*. The Scouts can be proud that they survived the extreme conditions and maintained good humour

throughout.



Camping amid the trees in Kielder

After Christmas, they honed their night-time navigation skills, first at Wheelbirks Farm and then in the annual District Night Hike – based in the hills around Corbridge.

The troop has also been active in the programme of District activities – mastering the high ropes course at Matfen, sending two patrols to the annual *Back to Basics* camping competition, testing their aim at paintballing, and their nerve on the rides at Flamingo Land.

The Troop are planning to join Hexham Scouts at their camp in Austria in the Summer of 2017.

Malcolm Murray
Group Scout Leader

ADULT LEADERS

Scouting depends on the availability of a pool of trained adult volunteers. This year we have managed to expand the leadership team in some areas, but vacancies still remain.



Helen Schooler and Malcolm Murray getting their Wood Badges



The Cub pack continues to be led by John Walker and Helen Schooler. Helen completed her leader training this year, meaning she is now able to wear the prestigious *Wood Badge* and *Gilwell Necker*, providing a link back to the start of Scouting. This year we bid farewell (and thanks) to Section Assistants Helen and Simon Rees. They provided some memorable activities, including getting the Cubs to plant potatoes beside the hut. More adult leaders are needed in this Section.



Carole Thirlaway retired as Beaver Leader at the end of the Summer. We were very pleased that one of the Beaver parents – Matthew Jefferson – stepped forward and has taken on the mantle of Beaver Leader. He is currently helped by a rota of parents. We hope to recruit an Assistant Beaver Leader shortly, to provide Matthew more support with the Colony.



We recruited a team of new leaders after the retiral of Bob Hubbuck who had led the troop for the last eight years. Jo Mitchell and Phil Wildsmith are taking on the role of Assistant Scout Leaders, with Julie McGrane and Tom Richardson providing support as Section Assistants. Malcolm Murray (the GSL) is providing support whilst the new team gets established.

Group Executive

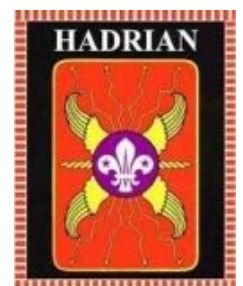
With Malcolm Murray taking on the role of Group Scout Leader, the post of Chair of the Group Executive became vacant. At the time of writing this has not yet been filled. We have volunteers for the other key posts – Secretary and Treasurer – but failed to recruit a Quarter Master at the last AGM.

The Group would like to thank Durham University, which has released Malcolm Murray for three days this year as part of its work to promote community volunteering.



Scout District

Two leaders from the Group (Helen Schooler and Malcolm Murray) sit on the *Hadrian District Appointment Advisory Committee*, helping to interview potential new leaders and review the progress of existing ones.



THE SCOUT HUT

The hut provides a place to support indoor Scouting activities, as well as store and maintain our equipment. The current wooden hut is over 40 years old (was second hand when we got it) and is now beyond reasonable repair. In May 2016, we finally raised enough funds to demolish it and begin work on the new Scout Centre.

Relocating Equipment

We appealed to the community for a temporary home for our tents and equipment. There was an incredible response with offers from local farmers, the GP practice and people with space in the corner of their garage. In the end we took up an offer from Tom Richardson to store the gear in one of his barns. He even provided a tractor to transport it!



Packing up the tents and equipment

Demolition

In early July, the contractors moved onto the site and began the demolition process. Within a matter of weeks the site had been cleared and the old timber taken to Dilston Scout Camp for burning on the camp fires. The lines of the new foundations have been marked out and digging has begun.



The foundations of the new hut

Phased Reconstruction

We are phasing the reconstruction process based on the funds available. The next step will be to build the blockwork walls and concrete floor, which we hope to complete by August. After that we need to raise a little more money before we can construct the wooden frame, insulate it and add the roof, doors and windows. After fitting out the inside we will have a serviceable hut again. The final stage will be the external landscaping and adding extra rooms to provide more storage and a separate kitchen.

Amazon Row

Ex-Scout Stephen Harpin again helped us raise funds with an amazing activity. With three colleagues, he rowed the length of the Amazon.



More funds were raised through grant applications, door to door collections with the Tynedale Lions (Santa Sleigh) and from Scout Post.

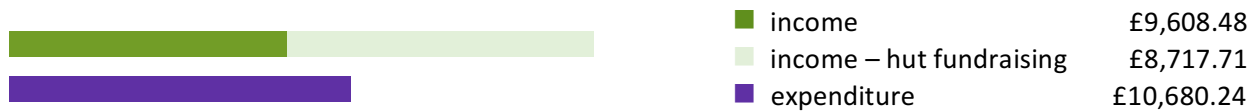


Land Title

The Group has begun the process to transfer the title of the land our Scout Hut sits on. The land is freehold and belongs to the Group. Currently it is held in trust for the Group by two individuals (ex-Leaders). The *Group Executive Committee* wants to follow the *Charity Association's* best practice – using an organisation rather than individuals. After investigating the possibilities, the Group Executive decided to use the services of the *Official Custodian of Charities*. To this end an application to transfer ownership has been made to the Land Registry (with full co-operation of the current named trustees) and we anticipate that this will be completed later in 2016. We are very grateful to Claire Collinson (Group Executive Secretary and a solicitor) for her professional advice with this matter.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The Group has raised a significant amount of money towards their new hut. There has been a re-organisation of the bank accounts to create a clear separation between regular activity and income and expenditure relating to the new Scout Centre.



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 Scout Centre). The regular income is slightly less than the regular expenditure for this year. This relates to income from a summer camp received from parents in the previous financial year, but charges relating to this camp falling in the current financial year.

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 £5,000 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 again this year.

Extra Income

The accounts show extraordinary income this year of £8,717.71 – 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).

Where possible Gift Aid is gathered at source (e.g. via online payment of subscriptions). The Group has authorised Go Cardless Ltd to claim Gift Aid on its behalf from HMRC where appropriate.

Audited Income and Expenditure Account for the Year Ending 31 March 2016

INCOME

	<i>Credit</i>	<i>Debit</i>
Membership Subscriptions	5,981.19	
Camp and Activities Fees	2,418.15	
Interest	105.65	
Gift Aid	1,103.49	
Fundraising Campaigns	5,623.91	
Scout Post	411.00	
Give As You Live (online donations)	82.80	
External Grants	2,600.00	
Total Income	£18,326.19	

EXPENDITURE

	<i>Credit</i>	<i>Debit</i>
Capitation		4,981.50
Hut Expenses		0.00
Electricity (no charge account in credit)		0.00
Water		294.35
Repairs & Maintenance		92.90
Miscellaneous		4.00
Insurance		1,509.12
Badges		522.47
Activities – contribution towards activities, trips, etc.		1,727.56
Camp Expenses		1,326.76
Equipment		139.99
Online Transaction Fees		81.59
Total Expenditure		£10,680.24

BALANCE **£7,645.95**

Bank Accounts


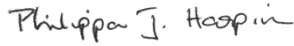
The Group held two accounts at the start of the audit period. One of these (the Santander savings account) was subsequently closed. A new dedicated savings account was opened with *Virgin Money* to hold only funds relating to the Scout hut. This left two active accounts at the end of the audit period. Opening balances as at 01 April 2015. Closing balances as at 31 March 2016.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Opening Balance</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Debits</i>	<i>Closing Balance</i>
Current Account (Barclays)	28,063.96	15,664.09	38,680.24	5,047.81
Savings Account (Santander)	32,525.76	105.65	32,631.41	0.00
Scout Hut Savings Account (Virgin)	0.00	63,187.86	0.00	63,187.86
Total	£60,589.72	£78,957.60	£71,311.65	£68,235.67

The Group's accounts were audited by Ronnie Gibson on the 4th June 2016.

NOTICE OF APPROVAL

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustee's report above.

<i>Name</i>	Dr Malcolm Murray	Philippa Harpin
<i>Position</i>	Group Scout Leader	Treasurer
<i>Signature</i>		
<i>Date</i>	29th July 2016	29th July 2016

