



**Hertford District Scouts**  
**Annual Report 2023**

## District Commissioners Report 2023 - Around the District

I am pleased that the change from Executive Committees to Trustee Boards at District level has provided a more focused approach to governance. The Trustees have improved the management of the Explorer finances, started work on a risk register and supported the Groups with assessing risks. The new district website has been project-managed by Ian Smith. It promotes Scouting in the wider community and provides our volunteers with useful information including details of events, who's who and minibus bookings. Richard Allen has continued to support Hertford Scouting by managing our IT cloud services and providing individuals and sections with email addresses and access to Office 365. 2023 was a very busy year for the District Treasurer. Apart from the usual workload there was the mammoth task of recording the transactions for the Lochearnhead Expeditions – thank you Ian for your dedication to this role.

Lochearnhead Scout Station has undergone a major refit with improved accommodation and facilities. Hertford was one of the first districts to use this amazing activity centre when we took 108 Scouts, Explorers and adults on our summer expedition to the Highlands of Scotland. Ten days of hill walking, cycling and water activities that develop life skills and provide adventure and fun that few other organisations can provide. Team Hertford pulled out all the stops to deliver this expedition; just feeding that number of people is a major undertaking – thank you to all that made this work.

Edward, Ilam, Aiden, William, Amy and Martin represented the District at the 25th World Scout Jamboree in South Korea. They showed outstanding resilience in exceptional circumstances by making the most of this dynamic situation.

We have successfully recruited new adult volunteers again this year which has allowed us to re-open the Beaver Colony at Letty Green and strengthen other teams. The appointments panel: Helen, Amy, Heidi, Xander, Uggi and Ben has meet regularly to welcome these new volunteers. Our Young Leaders are an important part of the section teams; congratulations to Ryan Allen who has gained his Young Leader Belt by completing the Young Leader Training Modules.

1st Hertford have applied for planning permission for a two storey Scout Headquarters with storage and workshops. Watton at Stone are considering the options for a new Headquarters and Letty Green are in the early stages of having their own building again. 2nd Bengeo have a challenging financial situation with increased rent from EHDC and high maintenance costs. Hertford Heath headquarters is only used on one evening and with high insurance premium and liability for managing the wooded area surrounding the HQ, they are looking at ways to manage costs.

Our president The Mayor of Hertford was delighted to visit the Night Hike at Cottered where she chatted to the young people and was interested in the finding out more about the local Scout and Guide units. Scouting in Hertford has generally excelled at providing new and interesting things for the 'Scouts' to do; it pleases me to witness the range of activities and the enjoyment this provides. Our active support unit meets on the first Friday of each month for a social event and contribute to Scouting in the District by volunteering at events.



1st Hertford Scout Group provides 96 young people aged 6-14 years with teamwork, leadership and decision-making skills that will help them to stand out from the crowd when seeking to get a job or gain a place at university.

Our volunteer team of adults have taught the young people a wide range of practical skills, including: in Beavers, they have learnt how to use a compass, how to keep healthy and how to make poppies for Remembrance Sunday. The Cubs have learned about other cultures, cooking and home skills as well as archery, kayaking, model making and code-breaking. The Scouts have learned how to maintain their bikes and how to be at the height of fashion with their tie-dye T-shirts. The Sea Scouts have built and raced model cars and learned about navigation and safety on the water.

Nights Away (Camping) is a key part of Scouting and the Beavers held a sleepover at the Scout HQ when the County Beavers in Tents event was cancelled due to adverse weather. This was the first night away from home for many; they sang songs, ate pizza, played games and had a great time! The Cubs learned how to pitch a tent and cook on an open fire on their weekend camp at Danemead. The Scouts attended the County Green Beret Competition and Triathlon. Both troops attended the summer expedition to Lochearnhead, went on canoe expeditions and weekend camps.

Marie joined us as Beaver Leader two years ago and very quickly found interesting and engaging activities for the Beavers to do. Earlier this year Marie stepped away from running the weekly meeting to concentrate on family commitments and passed the mantle to Patrick, Sharon and Oscar who now lead the Colony with an excellent programme that continues to give the young people #skillsforlife.

Lynda, Dean, Ben, Sharon, Nicola, Peter and Jack run a very busy programme at Cubs with time spent on the water and plenty of fun and adventure. Lynda has built up a supportive group of parents and young leaders to help out each week and at events which has enabled the cubs to benefit from a full and varied programme.

Congratulations to our Scout Leader, Matt Young, on his appointment as Assistant County Commissioner (Scouts). Matt had led the Wednesday Troop for three years and was a popular leader with the Scouts and parents. We welcomed Mike George as Scout leader in May and, with his skills as a paddling instructor and knowledge of practical scouting, the Scouts are gaining new skills and enjoying a wide range of challenging activities – thank you Mike.

The Sea Scouts is one of two Sea Scouts Troops in Hertfordshire that are Royal Navy Recognised; during the summer months they spend Monday evenings on the water discovering Hertford from the river. Sue, Bruce, Luke, Paul, Molly, David and Richard keep the Sea Scouts engaged in activities whilst providing a safe environment for them to learn new skills. Sue will be stepping down from the team, to devote more time to her family and career, in the summer after 7 years outstanding service to 1st Hertford. Her organisational skills, empathy, fun and dedication to scouting will certainly be missed. We wish her well and hope that she will find time to continue to take an interest in Hertford Scouts.

Sarah, Duncan, Roy and Rod lead the team that provide our Quiz nights four times a year. This

event is popular with the local community and friends of 1st Hertford and provides a valuable source of income that all go towards our new HQ.

Our Trustee board, chaired by Richard Watson, provides governance for the Charity. Rod Day, our Treasurer, works hard to ensure that our finances are well managed and reminds parents to pay subs and sign up for gift aid.

The 'Scouts' nationally are going through a transformation to update the way we welcome volunteers, how we work in teams and our use of digital platforms. We hope that by sharing tasks across the teams and providing a warmer welcome we can encourage more adults to come and join Team 1st Hertford and share the workload of some of our current volunteers. We will soon be launching our new website and will advertise specific vacancies there – [1sthertford.org.uk](http://1sthertford.org.uk)

1st Letty Green continued to move from strength to strength in 2023.

September saw the relaunch of the Beaver colony with Steve, Kate-Leigh and Sarah taking the lead. Cubs Leader Dawn had an enormous hand in emailing those on the waiting list and Mike and Paul helped them get to grips with OSM and planning a full and exiting program. The new leaders completed their training throughout the summer months. Steve joined the team from 1st Hertford Beavers, and Katie joined having switched from 1st Birch Green Brownies to join the scout movement instead.

Katie went on maternity leave from Oct 2023 half term through to Jan 2024 and Steve and Sarah along with the help of parents and cubs leaders saw a very successful term of 12 beavers attend and enjoying their weekly meetings. Throughout the winter they enjoyed the Night Hike in Sept along with the Sponsored Walk. They paraded at our special Remembrance Day service in the village and visited Hertford fire station where the children got to experience a ride in the fire engines, and a practice smoke house experience. They also visited Bayfordbury Observatory, saw the stars through the massive telescopes and went inside the planetarium, earning the children their space badge. On meeting days, they learned some first aid skills also earning towards their First aid badge and played lots of indoor games, one referred to as 'chaos tag' (which the leaders still don't quite understand the rules but the Beavers seemed to)!

A highlight for me was our summer camp at Tolmers where we had some of the best weather of the year! It was my turn to lead the camp as my Nights Away permit was up for renewal. Unbeknown to us when we decided on the weekend, we chose the same dates as the District British Legion Cup (in which some of our Cubs competed) and a County Executive meeting, both also taking place at Tolmers. Not sure if was our bright orange camp tee shirts that attracted the great and good from the county and district to our site, but we were definitely punching above our weight that day!!



At the Hertfordshire Archive the Cubs got to see some of the most precious artefacts in the archive, including a document signed by Henry VIII. They also made their own coat of arms to reflect their lives and personalities. At the end of term summer party, fun and games were had by both the Brownies and the Cubs together. S'mores and other yummy food was also consumed as well as playing games.

The District Night Hike was at the beginning of the autumn term where our two Cubs teams came in 13th and 15th out of a total of 19 teams.

We also had a Monster night (Cubs, newly formed Beavers and the Brownies) with apple bobbing and other ghoulish activities, games and food. At the end of the year the Cubs and Brownies had a joint visit to Wickes in Welwyn Garden City and a Christmas party.



Finally, I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all the Leaders, Paul and Dawn, Steve, Kate-Leigh and Sarah for the time and energy they put into planning and running meetings and events. Thanks also to my co-Trustees, Denise, Paul and Dawn who, without their additional work, the group would struggle to survive

Mike Crafer – Group Chairman



During 2023 I am pleased to see our newer leaders blossom into their roles, bringing fresh ideas and enthusiasm to the Group and our more experienced leaders sharing their knowledge. Each Section has excelled with its programme and has given the young members some very important 'Skills for Life'.

I would like to thank the group team of leaders for all they have done and are doing for the young people. Special thanks go to Dianne & Brad who re-opened our Beetles Colony and have been running a successful section.

During the summer term Beavers completed the gardening badge by putting the plants they had been looking after into the raised beds in the garden. They also learned about money and bartering and had a combined group visit to St Leonards Church. With the nicer weather they had a challenging visit to Hartham playground to climb the big climbing frame and make sand sculptures. In May 2023 we had a fantastic Beaver camp with loads of great activities. Many of the Beavers were sleeping away from home for the first time and they were all brilliant.



The Autumn term included navigating a walk around Bengo to learn how to read a map and pick out key points and they also had a walk to the park in the dark to try and find some star constellations. Towards the end of term, they attended the Christmas carol concert where the Beavers told everyone what was their favourite thing to do at Christmas (apart from opening presents). Two teams were entered into the night hike where we all had a great time and did very well on the challenges with Beavers finishing in 5th and 8th place.



Buffalo Beaver Colony have had a jam-packed 2023! During the Spring Term, the Beavers had great fun earning their Cook Badge by learning how to be safe in the kitchen and putting this into practice by making a stir fry to celebrate Chinese New Year and making pancakes for Shrove Tuesday. We also got together with the Beetle Beavers to learn about stranger danger from two local PCSO's. The PCSO's also took fingerprints and turned them into keyrings. In March, the Beavers worked hard to earn their Gardener Badge. They grew sunflowers, chives and tomatoes. We even had more tomatoes to harvest in September! The Buffaloes also enjoyed making clay

models for Mother's Day, learning about St Patrick's Day and about Scouting in Mexico for their International Badge.

The Summer Term began with our annual St George's Day Parade. We also enjoyed celebrating the Coronation of King Charles with a fun day and a litter. The Buffaloes once again came together with the Beetle Beavers to visit St Leonard's church. They were very lucky to have a tour of the oldest building in Hertford! Some of our Beavers enjoyed a sleepover with the Cubs at Well End Activity Centre. They spent the weekend working towards some of their Challenge Badges. We finished up the term with our annual Sports Day.

The Autumn Term began with us working towards our Navigator Badge. The Beavers learned about compasses and maps by taking a walk around Bengo. This really helped to get them ready for the Night Hike. The Beavers had a fantastic time and really coped well with quite a lot of walking! As the evenings got darker and colder, we used this to our advantage and learned more about space. We spent time stargazing and learning about constellations. We were also very lucky to have Melanie come along to help the Beavers with their Experiment Badge. They had a great time making balloon rockets! The term ended with a fantastic Christmas party!

Throughout the year we have said hello to lots of new Beavers as well as a lot of goodbyes to our oldest Beavers who have crossed the river to Cubs. In particular I would like to mention Seb, Sebby and Sam. They all worked incredibly hard to earn their Chief Scout Bronze Awards. This is the highest achievement a Beaver can earn, and I am incredibly proud of the three of them. Well done boys! I would also like to take the time to thank every single one of the Beaver parents. Your support is invaluable. Giving up your time every term to come along and help really is appreciated. we certainly wouldn't be able to do it without you.



Night Hike Practice



Litter picking with the Mayor

Once again, Bumbles and Buzzard Cubs supported the local food bank with the help of Bengo community 's generosity, donating food & toiletries for us to collect.

The Cubs & Beavers enjoyed a sleepover at Well End campsite, Borehamwood, practicing their back to basic skills, cooking on fires, orienteering, crazy golf and more.

For summer camp we had a joint camp with the Scouts, travelling by coach to Skreens Park in Chelmsford. It started with some challenging torrential rain to put the tents up in and we were very grateful for the parents that came along, to help us set up. It didn't stop us keeping busy with lots of activities which included climbing, kayaking, air rifle shooting, pedal karts, and a trip to Colchester Zoo.

The Cubs have taken part in the annual District and County events, coming second in the swimming gala for the older team, District Night Hike, Johnstone Cup, County Bushcraft Day, St George's Day Parade, Remembrance Parade and the Carol Service.



Those that took part in the Entrepreneur Scheme raised around £1,000 for the Group and our Coronation sponsored Litter Pick Walk was a great success which finished back at our HQ for a mini fete. I would like to thank Sue Barber Hertford's previous Mayor for supporting that event and walking with some of the teams.

In the summer term we went to ESSA Water Activity Centre and the Cubs went out on the bell boats and on did some kayaking, which we hope to do again.

We had the Friends of Rib & Quinn (FORQ) visit us to give a talk on our local rivers and took us out for a bat walk, which the Cubs really enjoyed, followed by some pondlife identifying.

On a cold night in November, we visited Bayfordbury Observatory and got shown around their planetarium and outside to spot the planets through the giant telescopes.

Other weekly activities have included craft, map & compass work, cooking, cycling, safety and we ended the year with a Christmas Party.

Numbers in both Packs have now dropped as many have transferred up to Scouts since last summer, so we have room to welcome new members.

Congratulations goes to those Cubs who have gained their Chief Scout Awards during the year and special thanks goes to our Section Team Members & Trustees who have given us great support throughout the year.

Since re-invigorating the Scout troop in 2022 our approach has been based on the "three-legged stool" – Badges, Skill Building and Fun! This continued in 2023 with a mixed programme that delivered all three in abundance. We worked hard, challenged ourselves and fell about laughing together – it's been as much a learning experience for the leaders as Scouts. As we do every year, we paraded for St. George's Day, and helped others through fundraising for the Mayor's charities at Hartham Park. This year the troop has expanded, enriching our community with fresh perspectives and energy. In 2023 we had 10 scouts join taking us to 21 members. Through mentoring and inclusive activities, we have ensured a smooth transition from Cubs, fostering a supportive and welcoming environment.

## **Badges**

A highlight of the year was the Chief Scout Awards (Gold) given to Carmen and Cecily, who have now left the Troop to continue as Young Leaders. When you reflect on such experience you realise how much growth happens for Scouts. We now have a relatively young Troop, and we are starting to build up their breadth and depth of knowledge. In 2023 this included Local History, Morse Code machines, Teamwork, Rifle Shooting, Knots, Athletics, Cooking, Craft, Canoeing with 1st Hertford, Pioneering, and even got the Mayor involved with our Media badge and press release. Going back through all our planning documents, I could go on ad nauseum about all the badges we have covered – we have generated lots of sewing for the Scouts (we hope!). Our aim is to put more of our young people on track for Chief Scout Awards before they leave us.

## **Skills**

Of course, there is a great deal of overlap between skills and badges but if we just approached it with just a badge in mind it would be too narrow a focus. We want to prepare our young people to be independent, and able to engage with the District's bigger challenges. This includes hikes and nights away at camps which involve knowledge around kit, self-care, and safety, and building resilience to deal with inclement weather, distances travelled and working as a team. We have worked on our navigation and using compasses, den building and survival skills, tent checking, and fire-lighting/cooking over fires, with much eating at the end of it! At the District Night Hike event, a lot of this learning came together as we entered three teams with some of our youngest scouts taking part: 2nd Bengeo came overall winners with Carmen's team! We also sent groups to Danemead, Thriftwood and Summer District camp and they acquitted themselves well. Often our scouts have completed a personal challenge which pushes them beyond what they thought they were capable of.

## Fun!

Scouts are always learning, and we do that as much through fun activities as anything else. We love an outdoor fire, toasting marshmallows and making Campfire donuts. We even made hand-made pasta this year. In January we had an exciting start to 2023 when 2nd Bengeo brought honours back to Watermill Lane at the District's "Ready Steady Cook" competition, securing an impressive second place. Trained by "head Chef" Jenny Foster, they whipped up a Korean dish on a tight budget. After a short trial run at the hall, we held our breath as they cooked live, and alone in front of assessors: cheers went up as we learned of their placing.

Later in the year the Scouts learned bellringing during a visit to the belltower at Holy Trinity church. So proficient was our troop that this turned into a performance at the end-of-year carol concert, thanks to expert coaching from Donna Matthews.

And finally, some of our activities have been out and out fun. Sliding downhill in rubber donuts at Welwyn, Games Night, Circus Skills, and being locked in a gaol. A day out at Tolmers delivered fun-filled activities, games, and camaraderie, and delving into the world of cryptography, and celebrating the Coronation with our "Buggingham Palaces" have all bonded the troop and created lifelong friendships.

As we look forward to the coming year, we remain committed to providing engaging and enriching experiences for all our scouts, empowering them to reach their full potential and make a positive impact on the world around them.



Scouting is going through a huge transformation programme to improve flexibility, leader learning, safety, safeguarding and introduction of new role names. This will open up new roles within the Group and sections which can be shared or aligned to the time and availability of our volunteers. If you have a skill or profession that you could share with the group, that could be used to help us with a programme activity, governance requirement or maintenance issue we would welcome your support.

Thanks also go to the District Team for their support to the Group.

Debbie Ryan  
Group Lead Volunteer (Group Scout Leader)

I am sure you have already heard from your own young people, about the great fun they have in Scouting as they build great skills for life. It has been great to see this reflected in the success our Cubs and Beavers are having in District competitions and achievements in Activity and Challenge badges received by the Young People including Chief Scout Bronze and Silver awards.

This success is driven by our volunteer leader team including Shane, Paul, Jane and Dani who continue to provide the Young People of 1st Hertford Heath with an exciting Scouting programme to deliver great development opportunities, fun and excitement for the Beavers and Cubs. It's great they have had support from various Young Leaders (<16yr olds) through the Scouting Young Leader programme and occasional help and support from parents – which continues to be critical to our on-going success as a Group.

We know that Scouting has a significantly positive impact in a Young Persons development and providing them with lots of great skills for life but the same is true for adults too. Volunteering has both a positive impact on the Young People we support but also proves great impact on volunteers' wellbeing.

It has therefore been a privilege to welcome both Shane Bowden and Paul Cox to the full Leader Team as Beaver Leader Team member and Cub Leader Team member respectively, this year.

It's also been great to see the support that several parents have given to the leaders throughout the year, helping support meetings. This has been valuable and I know the Leaders have seen how great this has been for the Young People and I want to thank the parents for their help and ask them to continue to do this, as flexibly as they want to, but that having this support from parents is key for our Leaders own wellbeing.

I would like to offer my sincere thanks to the members of our Trustee Board – Ruth Boulton who is our Treasurer, Catherine Mignacca our Secretary and Andrew Gradwell our Chairman committee members, along with Dani & Paul Cox who work together to ensure the Group is sufficiently provided for in terms of finances, premises and resources to deliver the great scouting opportunities to all the Young People of 1st Hertford Heath Scout Group.

The job this team of volunteer Trustees provides to the Young People in the group is essential and directly ensures we can continue to deliver fun and exciting Scouting activities.

Looking forward, as we aim to continue to provide skills for life to our young people, we hope to grow the numbers within our sections. This will help us deliver more to our current members, making activities away from our normal meetings including camps more cost effective and feasible. To do this we will be looking for support from parents to 'spread the word'

## **Beavers ...**

2023 – Well, another busy year for us!

The Spring term saw us having fun with a Games Night, making and eating pancakes, decorating cookies and, on Burns Night, trying haggis and 'neaps'. Problem solving skills were undertaken and we also learnt about first aid. We undertook craft activities for Mother's Day and Easter.

Summer Term saw us undertaking the Builders Activity Badge and junk modelling, growing sunflowers and making seed bombs that got taken home. We had an evening of water games and activities and most people got VERY wet. We learnt about fire lighting and cooked bananas and chocolate – mmm scrummy!

We celebrated the Coronation of King Charles III with a party and dressing up in red, white and blue!

The Winter Term saw a number of new beavers joining us – we made a friendship circle of hands, undertook the Disability Badge, a couple of the parents came in and spoke to the Beavers about their work within the community – a teacher and charity worker – thank you.

For Hertford Heath Village Fireworks we made the Guys to go on the fire. We also had fun with Lego, making Hearts so Lego would donate sets to children in hospital.

At Christmas we made, marzipaned and decorated Christmas Cakes – which was thoroughly enjoyed.

In June this year we attended the Gilwell Funday and all the attending Beavers rose to the challenge set by Jane and Dani that they were to try a new activity!

In August a couple of the Beavers spent the night at camp with the Cubs in Wymmondley Woods undertaking archery, sporting activities, attended a camp fire and had fun! And earned some badges.

We took part in the District Night Hike – which was enjoyed by the Beavers and parents alike.

This year we handed out 52 Badges which consisted of 8 Beaver Challenge Badges, we invested 11 Beavers and 2 joining in badges – the remainder activity badges.

'Thank You's should go to Paul, who has now become a warranted leader and to our Duke of Edinburgh volunteers

## **Cubs ...**

The Spring term saw us having fun with a Games Night, we talked about Personal Challenges, we cooked pancakes on tins and in the frying pan. We tried haggis on Burns Night, undertook the role of Team Leaders. Took part in craft activities for Mother's Day and Easter.

We took part in District Events this term such as the Swimming Gala – well done to those that took part include the Dad that took part and won the leaders race. There was also a county event – which was Bushcraft – an enjoyable afternoon of activities at Leeswood Scout Campsite.

Summer Term saw us undertaking the Gardeners Badge – identifying tools used for gardening,

sowing and growing seeds and making seed bombs that were taken home. We had an evening of water games and activities which meant all the cubs got wet. We undertook fire lighting and cooked bananas and chocolate – mmm scrummy!

In May we celebrated King Charles III Coronation with a party and all dressed in red, white and blue!

In June we attended the Gilwell Funday and all the attending Cubs rose to the challenge set by Akela that they were to try a new activity! Some of the parents achieved this too !!!!

We also took part in the Cub Challenge Cup, a competition comprising of a number of activities – which we won – Well done to the team!

In August we camped at Wymmondley Woods undertaking archery, sporting activities, made a natural picture, den building, attending a camp fire and had fun! Which all led to badges being earned.

The Winter Term saw the Cubs undertaking Team Challenges, preparing for and then taking part in Night Hike – a much enjoyed event. As a pack we worked towards the Johnstone Cup, handicraft competition, the entry was based on Guy Fawkes – Congratulations and Well done for winning the Cup!

For Hertford Heath Village Fireworks we made the Guys to go on the fire. We also had fun with Lego, making Hearts so Lego would donate sets to children in hospitals.

We also represented the Group at the Remembrance Service on Hertford Heath and the paraded the colours down to the war memorial.

This Christmas we made, marzipaned and decorated Christmas Cakes – which was thoroughly enjoyed.

During the year a total of 97 Badges were awarded – this consisted of 4 Chief Scouts Silver Award, 23 Challenge Awards. We invested 11 new cubs and presented 10 joining in awards. 'Thank You's' should go to Paul, who has become a warranted Leader, to Jane for her help in running Cubs and also to our Duke of Edinburgh volunteers.

The Group is in a strong and growing position with a great set of leaders and Helpers, providing a well-balanced and active programme for all members. Thank You Leaders and Helpers.

#### Summary:

- Beavers – 24+ members – full leader and parent team
- Cubs – 28-32 members – full leader and parent team
- Scouts – 10+ members – full leader and parent team
- Explorers – tight alignment and integration across the Group
- Guides – 8 members
- Waiting list – very healthy for the Beaver and Cub sections
- Financial
  - the Groups finances are in good shape and well managed
  - Outstanding debts – the Group has no outstanding debts.
  - Group fully utilises online banking and OSM.
- Hut and Grounds:
  - The main hut needs replacement due to its age and renovation is limited
  - Outside grounds – well-kept and well used due to the size and the woodland.
  - Safety – electric, fire and building safety checks have been externally validated and tested.
  - Risk Assessment and Fire Evac Points – Good and updated
- Communications – To parents and members is via WhatsApp and OSM
- Parish Council and Woodhall Park – good and open relationship

#### Beavers highlights include:

- Halloween and Christmas Parties
- Cottered Night Hike participation
- Visit from Jeff the Paramedic for the Emergency Aid stage 1 badge
- Firework night sparklers evening
- Book Swap evening
- Easter Egg Hunt
- Church fete games run by Beavers
- Beavers activity day camp at Phasels Wood in June (rock climbing, archery, low ropes, areoball)
- Beavers “sports day” planned and run by one of our beavers
- Water games evening in the mini heatwave
- Beavers first “chip walk”

We've had lots of parents offer help throughout the year which has been a massive help at getting the beavers out doing activities.



Cubs highlights include:

- Norfolk – Camp staying in a converted windmill
- Adventure – Hiking
- Teamwork – Games Charity
- Sport - Tubing Craft and Building
- Life Skills – First Aid
- Camping Skills
- Outdoor Adventure
- Awards and Badges
- Cooking
- Creativity – Art & Craft
- Participation in District Competitions

Scouts highlights include:

- Adventure
- Teamwork
- Friendship
- Challenge
- Culture
- Fun
- Organization
- Social
- Participation in all District Competitions



Our group is blessed with strong support from all the volunteer leaders, committee and supporters of 3rds. Thanking all of you in this report never quite feels enough. It is difficult to fully appreciate the hard work put in by those both each evening as well as all the unseen effort and time it takes to keep our group running so well. Even with my unique perspective and visibility I know too well that much goes on that I do not see. Attending sectional evenings from time to time and seeing photos of activities undertaken is but a small window into the enjoyment that all our members experience. Reading the section reports I am reminded of the great activities that took place over the year. The smiling faces and achievements of our young people is a testament to everyone's hard work.

We must not forget that our volunteers themselves achieve great things too. Not only the immediate hard work of running the group and providing the activities, but also their own personal development. Volunteers, even uniformed ones, don't get the same level of recognition that our young people do but they are always renewing training and certifications, considering new skills and exploring new opportunities to support their work with us. It is a privilege to see our volunteers grow and be rewarded as much as it is our young people and I am happy to be able to support them in these aspirations.

Finally, the parents, who provide us with young people eager to take part and share in some unique and varied activities over the year. Without young people we wouldn't have anyone to run things for.

That just leaves me to say a massive thank you to all that make 3rd Hertford the thriving and successfully group it continues to be!!

### **Beavers ...**

We have had 13 Beavers move up to Cubs having gained their Chief Scout Bronze Award. River and Forest Colony have again had an enjoyable year giving the Beavers a fun and varied programme of meetings, learning skills such as knots, safety, morse code, navigation and other life skills.

During the past year we have taken part in some traditional celebrations including hosting a Tea Party for Mother's Day, an evening at the hut celebrating Guy Fawkes ritually burning the Guy on the bonfire, followed by sparklers and toasting marshmallows and a Remembrance Day poppy wreath laying ceremony, helped by a very smart Bob Cinnamon from Scouts, who met us at the memorial wearing his military uniform.

We have enjoyed getting away from the hut whenever possible doing mini hikes and Nature trails through Panshanger woods, Waterford and Broxbourne woods Sculpture Trail which the beavers thoroughly enjoyed and we have been river fishing at Waterford. Taking part, and winning the annual Night Hike. Also enjoyed a successful visit to Bayfordbury Observatory and the Alpacas at Anstey.

### **Cubs ...**

Highlights of the year include:

- Bird feeders
- Cycling and road safety
- Fire lighting
- Nerf Battles
- 7 Chief Scout Silver Awards
- Archery



## Scouts ...

In 2023 3rd Hertford Scouts engaged in numerous exciting and enriching activities, helping our members develop new skills and create lasting memories.

Major activities or events held

Survival Camp - Held in May at Danemead, this camp focused on teaching essential survival skills such as shelter building, fire making, and backwoods cooking.

District Challenge Cup Camp - July, also at Danemead, our scouts competed in various patrol challenges focussed on traditional scouting skills.

District Expedition - In August, we embarked on a thrilling expedition to Lochearnhead, where scouts participated in hill walking, sailing, kayaking and much more.

Green Beret - This challenging event took place in November at Phasels Wood, testing our scouts' endurance and problem-solving abilities and ability to cope with severe mud!

Highlights from our regular meetings and events

Our visit to the Hertfordshire Observatory was both educational and inspiring, giving scouts a glimpse into the wonders of astronomy.

The troop won the District Ready Steady Cook competition and performed admirably in the County final at Tolmers.

The Ware Chip Shop Hike was a fun and engaging way for scouts to practice their navigation skills while enjoying local delicacies.

We also organised stand-up paddleboarding sessions at Stanborough Lakes, providing a unique water sports experience.

Other activities included shooting, archery, and climbing, along with our participation in the Remembrance Parade and St. George's Celebration.

Our weekly meetings were filled with diverse challenges and engaging activities, keeping our scouts motivated and active.

Achievements and Awards

One Scout gained her Chief Scout Gold award which was presented at Lochearnhead.

Community Involvement

3rd Hertford Scouts are committed to making a positive impact in our community. We conducted a successful food bank collection, helping those most in need locally.

Our scouts also participated in litter-picking activities, contributing to a cleaner and greener Hertford.

Conclusion

The Troop have had another remarkable year filled with adventure, learning, and fun. We are proud of our scouts' achievements and look forward to another year of growth, fun, and making a difference in our community.

Thank you to our volunteer leadership team and parents for their unwavering support. Together, we continue to inspire and shape the young leaders of tomorrow.



Meetings were held at Bengo HQ during the winter when we had a variety of activities and talks. We played Boccia with a difference this time. Talks included an evening with an excellent power presentation from the Jamboree participants Edward and William, who agreed it was a special experience staying in hotels and then meeting up with other Scouts at reorganised events as the campsite was evacuated due to the weather. Our own Amy then gave an insight of the life of a Leader during their visit to Seoul re-scheduling events, eg Closing Ceremony in a large stadium. Scouting is nothing if not adaptable!

Other talks included on-line safety and possible scams. Evenings also included quizzes, table top games and a create your own mosaic coaster which proved a popular activity, occasionally attempting to cut the small tiles to fit a pattern was challenging.

During the summer a carless (ie walking) rally around Ware was enlightening Daphne as usual had us hunting for the obscure to answer the set clues. We also had a walk around Waterford Heath followed by a picnic.

We continue to support both the District Scouts and Guides events throughout the year from cooking, sports, camping and challenge cups.

Maureen Shattock

## Activities Report for 2023

The sections have again been very busy and the events have run with good participation.

In January the Ready Steady Cook competition was run with a theme of "Korea" This was won by 3rd Hertford Scouts, at the county competition they came 7th.

A well-attended St Georges day overcame the rain, and we had a successful parade. A big thank you to all the marshals along the route, as in a change the onus is now on the Scouts to operate the road closure.

The Cub Challenge for 2023 was held at Tolmers in Sunshine and was a giant scavenger hunt and was well supported. The winners were 1st Hertford Heath, with a second place to a joint Letty Green and 1st Hertford Team.

This year's Scout Challenge Cup was held at Tolmers, the winners were 3rd Hertford

A memorable expedition back to Lochearnhead with our new friends from South Brent was held over 10 days with all forms of weather being thrown at the participants, with plenty of expeditions, water activities, hill walking, biking etc. This is a major effort to put on and draws on an incredible number of leaders to carry off.

The night hike was back in full force and had over 550 walkers and many supporters, it was held at Cottered Guide Centre. This year's theme was Video Games. The results were (1st place) 3rd Hertford (Tuesday) Beavers, 1st Watton Cubs, 2nd Bengeo Scouts and NOMAD ESU.

Nomad Explorer Scouts entered Peak Assault which was in Wales and came 12th in their section.

The Green Beret was supported by 1st Hertford Scouts and Sea Scouts, 3rd Hertford and 2nd Bengeo Scouts with a good contingent of Explorers also supporting the activity. It was a very muddy event!

Once again I must thank all the Scout / Guide leaders and helpers, Members of Mid-Herts District, ASU members / FOG, Trefoil Guild for their time and effort and considerable assistance in making these events run to a high standard. Without this continued support the District would not have events, which are the envy of the County.

Peter "Uggi" Knight



**HERTFORD DISTRICT SCOUT COUNCIL**  
**Registered Charity Number 302543**

**BALANCE SHEET AT 31 DECEMBER 2023**

	2023	2022
	£	£
<b>BANK BALANCES</b>		
CAF Cash account      Bank balance as at 31/12/23	662.00	25,641.58
CAF GOLD account      Bank balance as at 31/12/23	<u>25,997.61</u>	<u>0.00</u>
	26,659.61	25,641.58
<b>OTHER GROUP Bank Balances</b>		
Hertford District Scout Active Support Unit	1,298.83	1,298.83
Hertford District Explorer Scout Unit - Istari	3,090.77	3,108.51
Hertford District Explorer Scout Unit - Nomad	7,482.93	6,829.35
Istari new account              CAF bank	0.00	0.00
Nomad new account              CAF bank	5,112.86	0.00
Funds held for Jamboree              Funds held b/fwd	(2,194.20)	0.00
	Funds in	(12,874.20)
	Funds out	<u>10,680.00</u>
	<u>0.00</u>	<u>(2,194.20)</u>
<b>INVESTMENTS (Current Value)</b>		
(Charifund - Income units 4,649.751/4,649.751	66,723.46	68,329.02
(Total original investment cost £44,119.90/£44,119.90		
	<u>£ 110,368.46</u>	<u>£ 103,013.09</u>
Funds brought forward	103,013.09	100,346.72
Surplus for the year	3,212.23	11,532.05
Other Groups bank movements	5,748.70	(4,835.27)
Increase/(Decrease) in value of Charifund over and above additional investment or withdrawals	(1,605.56)	(4,030.41)
<b>Funds carried forward</b>	<u>£ 110,368.46</u>	<u>£ 103,013.09</u>

We have examined the accounts of the Council for the year ended 31 December 2023 and certify that they are in accordance with the information, documentation and explanations supplied to us.

Thickbroom Coventry Limited  
Chartered Accountants  
147A High Sreet  
Waltham Cross  
Herts  
EN8 7AP

**HERTFORD DISTRICT SCOUT COUNCIL**  
Registered Charity Number 302543

**REVENUE ACCOUNT for the year ended 31 December 2023**

	2023			2022		
	Income	Expenditure	Net	Income	Expenditure	Net
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>						
Subscriptions/PA Insurances	3,304.00	0.00	3,304.00	3,400.00	0.00	3,400.00
OSM	0.00	967.50	(967.50)	0.00	1,161.00	(1,161.00)
Herts Lottery	0.00	0.00	0.00	43.03	0.00	43.03
Charifund Interest	3,975.54	0.00	3,975.54	3,859.29	0.00	3,859.29
Badges & sweatshirts etc	0.00	351.00	(351.00)	5.00	112.51	(107.51)
Training	88.00	390.00	(302.00)	0.00	510.28	(510.28)
Mini bus	3,625.00	3,285.29	339.71	2,610.00	1,361.12	1,248.88
Miscellaneous (inc bank charges and lease costs)	0.00	60.00	(60.00)	0.00	81.00	(81.00)
Printing, postage, stationery	0.00	14.39	(14.39)	0.00	120.30	(120.30)
Thankyou gift donations	110.00	0.00	110.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Bank Interest	526.54	0.00	526.54	19.84	0.00	19.84
Recruitment & Marketing	0.00	26.00	(26.00)	0.00	846.78	(846.78)
Hertford Team	0.00	753.20	(753.20)	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>DISTRICT EVENTS &amp; COSTS</b>						
AGM & Meetings	0.00	124.55	(124.55)	0.00	0.00	0.00
St. Georges Day Costs	1,052.08	1,611.71	(559.63)	200.00	1,052.58	(852.58)
Cub camp	0.00	0.00	0.00	4,680.00	3,711.74	968.26
Norfolk weekend	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,860.00	2,049.29	(189.29)
Locheahead 2023	52,498.66	55,668.15	(3,169.49)	7,700.00	400.00	7,300.00
Young Leaders	0.00	0.00	0.00	74.00	219.17	(145.17)
District donation re Jamboree	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,800.00	(1,800.00)
<b>SCOUTING EVENTS</b>						
Night Hike	3,705.65	2,988.56	717.09	4,417.66	3,781.71	635.95
Swimming Gala	996.00	526.52	469.48	0.00	0.00	0.00
Scout & Guide Challenge	706.00	615.87	90.13	160.00	213.25	(53.25)
Green Hat	920.00	842.66	77.34	520.00	581.04	(61.04)
Johnson Cup	0.00	44.00	(44.00)	0.00	15.00	(15.00)
Ready Steady Cook	0.00	25.84	(25.84)	0.00	0.00	0.00
	<u>71,507.47</u>	<u>68,295.24</u>	<u>3,212.23</u>	<u>29,548.82</u>	<u>18,016.77</u>	<u>11,532.05</u>
<b>Funds passing through Account on behalf of others</b>						
National & County Subscriptions	24,509.00	21,205.00	0.00	24,136.00	20,736.00	0.00
Surplus transferred as Admin subscriptions	(3,304.00)			(3,400.00)		
	<u>92,712.47</u>	<u>89,500.24</u>	<u>3,212.23</u>	<u>50,284.82</u>	<u>38,752.77</u>	<u>11,532.05</u>
1st Hertford Scouts Loan written off			0.00			0.00
Explorer minibus Loan written off			0.00			0.00
<b>NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS</b>			<u>£ 3,212.23</u>			<u>£ 11,532.05</u>
<b>OTHER GROUPS</b>						
<b>Hertford District Active Support Unit</b>						
Opening balance			1,298.83			1,580.18
Income for the year			0.00			210.00
Expenditure for the year			0.00			(491.35)
unpresented cheques written back			0.00			0.00
Closing balance at bank			<u>£ 1,298.83</u>			<u>£ 1,298.83</u>
<b>Hertford District Explorer Scout Unit - Istari</b>						
Opening balance - TSB Account			3,108.51			3,381.82
Income for the year			2,959.26			3,315.76
Expenditure for the year			(2,977.00)			(3,589.07)
Closing balance at bank			<u>£ 3,090.77</u>			<u>£ 3,108.51</u>
<b>Hertford District Explorer Scout Unit - Istari</b>						
Opening balance - CAF Bank			0.00			0.00
Income for the year			0.00			0.00
Expenditure for the year			0.00			0.00
Closing balance at bank			<u>£ 0.00</u>			<u>£ 0.00</u>
<b>Hertford District Explorer Scout Unit - Nomad</b>						
Opening balance - Lloyds Bank			6,829.35			11,109.96
Income for the year			8,439.29			11,278.91
Expenditure for the year			(7,785.71)			(15,559.52)
Closing balance at bank			<u>£ 7,482.93</u>			<u>£ 6,829.35</u>
<b>Hertford District Explorer Scout Unit - Nomad</b>						
Opening balance - CAF Bank			0.00			0.00
Income for the year			5,112.86			0.00
Expenditure for the year			0.00			0.00
Closing balance at bank			<u>£ 5,112.86</u>			<u>£ 0.00</u>