

Annual General Meeting 2026

Sunday July 19th 12:00 to 12:45
Staplehurst Scout Centre, Nicholson Walk

1. Introduction and welcome

Bill Best, from the Chair, welcomed members of the Group Scout Council and guests. The Chair then outlined the role of the Scout Council for this meeting and reminded adult attendees to sign the register. Evacuation procedures were noted. The Chair then introduced Dan Everest, District Lead Volunteer for Maidwest West.

2. Apologies for absence

The Chair had received apologies from Chris Hutchinson - Treasurer, Warren Carter and Sue McLaughlin (Trustees), for their absence. The meeting accepted these apologies and the above were duly added to the Scout Council. The Chair noted the Group Scout Council can admit other people to membership. The Chair advised that those invited guests listed at the end of these minutes were nominated as Group Scout Council members for the purpose of this meeting only. These are to be admitted as members of the Group Scout Council as well as the ex-officio list in POR Rule 5.4.4

Noting the meeting was quorate, the Chair opened the meeting.

3. Governance topics

The Chair explained that the purpose of the first part of the meeting was to make sure the charity's foundations are in good order. The annual report from the Trustee Board to the Scout Council had been posted on the group's website with a link to this included on the agenda.

3a. Approve the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 13th July 2025

The Chair informed the meeting that the Trustee Board had reviewed the minutes of the previous AGM at their Trustee Board meeting held on 26th August 2025. The Chair proposed that these minutes be taken as read and asked the Group Scout Council to agree to them as a true record of that meeting.

On a show of hands, the Scout Council then approved the minutes.

3b. Adopt the model constitution from Policy, Organisation and Rules (POR)

The Chair explained to the meeting that it was considered good practice to confirm adoption of the group's constitution. In line with the recommendation from The Scout Association, the Group Trustee Board proposes that we adopt the model constitution from Chapter 5c of Policy, Organisation and Rules. A link to the relevant part of the document is available on the Scout Association website and the Staplehurst Group website.

On a show of hands, the constitution was approved.

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3c. Note the Group's financial year (April 1st to March 31st)

The Chair asked the Group Scout Council members to please note our charity's financial year is 1st April to March 31st. The Chair told the meeting that the Trustee Board have an ongoing review in place to see if it would be beneficial to align the financial year to the Group's term calendar. Any proposed change would be brought to the Scout Council next year. No vote was required on this matter.

3d. Agree the number of members that may be appointed to the Trustee Board

Following good practice recommendations from the Charity Governance Code, POR states Trustee Boards should have a minimum of five, and no more than twelve Trustees in total. This includes ex officio and co-opted Trustees.

The Group Scout Council must agree on the number of people to be appointed to the Trustee Board. This currently stands at six. The Trustee Board recommends that a change to nine Trustees will help the Group administration to be more effective. The Chair proposed that the Group Scout Council approve the recommendation to increase the Trustee Board to a maximum of nine members. The Chair explained that the Scout Association was keen for Groups to encourage young people to become Trustees and this headroom in the number of Trustees would allow for the appointment of new Trustees.

On a show of hands this was approved by the Scout Council.

3e. Agree the quorum for future meetings of the Group Scout Council (excluding this AGM)

The Chair explained that the Group Scout Council must agree to its quorum – this is the minimum number of Group Scout Council members that must be present at a Group Scout Council meeting for it to be quorate. The current quorum is set at fifteen people. The Trustee Board recommends no change to this.

4. Review of the previous year

4a. The Group Lead Volunteer's review of Scouting Year in Staplehurst.

It would normally fall upon the Group Lead Volunteer to give a review of the past year to the meeting. Since the end of the reporting period, the Staplehurst Scout Group has moved from the Weald District to Maidstone West District as part of a major reorganisation of District structures in Kent. One of the consequences of this is that the DLV from the Weald (our acting GLV) was unable to be with us today to give a report. The Chair told the meeting that our annual report contains a good and thorough review of the progress being made by the Group in each of its sections and the Chair encouraged members to read this if they had not already done so.

The meeting expressed their appreciation and thanks to the section leaders with a well deserved round of applause.

4b The District Lead Volunteers address

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Dan Everest welcomed the Staplehurst Scout Group to the District and outlined some of the benefits to the Staplehurst Group. The Group has gone full circle in returning to Maidstone District after 15 years in the Weald. Dan told the meeting that he has appointed Frances Best as Group Lead Volunteer for a six month period. The meeting wished Frances well and showed their appreciation with a round of applause.

The Chair responded by saying the section leaders were all excited about joining the Maidstone West district and looked forward to participating in the many programmes available to us. The Trustees believe this move will benefit our Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts as we will have access to many more activities at District Level. And that is what really matters!

4b. Receive and consider the Annual Report of the Group Trustee Board, including the annual Statement of the Accounts

The Chair noted that as previously mentioned, the Group Trustee Board has prepared the Group's Annual Report which includes the statement of accounts. The Trustee Board has received and considered the report on the accounts from the Scrutineer. The Chair reminded the meeting that the Annual report is still available on the Staplehurst Scouts web site.

The Chair read through a written report produced by the Treasurer.

hi to all parents and trustees and firstly I do apologise for being unable to give this report in person but I am afraid family matters have precedence.

Looking at last year's accounts it shows that the funds are quite healthy

This is much to do with decisions taken by the trustees before I came on board and this stopped the deficit of previous years and this year was a good surplus and would have been more so but for a badly attended cub camp last summer

But we were aided greatly by the donation from the (Weald) District of ten thousand pounds but this must only be spent on capital projects and not day to day expenses and for this reason, for the first time, you will see two reserves in the accounts one for day to day and the other for projects (restricted funds)

We have also switched a large sum to interest bearing bank accounts and in this new year could well provide an income of near enough £500 towards the running costs

So to repeat: healthy funds.

Turning to this year, the first term has started well and with hard work done by the cub leaders, the camp looks to be well funded this year and currently our reserves have increased by 3,000 pounds but many of the expenses do come in the final term i.e. the capitation charge.

But my working suggests that we will have a surplus this year and monies available from the new capital reserve to fund some well needed capital projects whilst keeping a healthy cash balance

Here is to next 12 months well done everybody

Chris

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The Chair recapped some of the headline numbers.

Our unrestricted income for the year to March 31 2026 amounted to £14,873 (£13,286 in 2025). Our expenditure was £14,475 (£18,022 in 2025). The seemingly unending increases in rent, energy, and capitation charge costs continue to put pressure on our finances. Nonetheless, the Group is able to report a slight surplus on unrestricted funds over the period of £398.

During the period, the Group was in receipt of a conditional grant from the Weald District Scouts of £10,000. This is included as restricted funds in our accounts as the money must be used for project improvements to our facility and not for the running costs of the Group.

Unrestricted cash in our current account at the end of the reporting period stood at £5,468 (£10,366 in 2025) and our savings account after interest stood at £27,347 (£12,072 in 2025). The Treasury has made better use of the interest account in this period adding £279 in interest payments to our funds. The savings account also includes £9,850 of restricted funds.

Our total cash balance at the end of the period stood at £32,840 (£22,592 in 2025) including £25 cash in hand.

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 Trustee Board considers that the Group should hold a sum equivalent to 12 months' running costs of approximately £12,000.

5. Making appointments

The Chair moved the meeting on to organise the setup of the charity until the next AGM. The Trustees appointed at the AGM in 2024, William Best, Warren Carter, Martin Ralph, Martin Heasman and Serena Hoadley have all agreed to continue as Trustees under their three year term of appointment. Christopher Hutchinson and Sue McLaughlan were appointed in 2025 and have a further two years of their term to serve before seeking re-election. William Best will continue for a further year as Chair of the Trustee Board. The Chair notes that the Group Lead Volunteer, Frances Best is an ex-officio member of the Board of Trustees.

The Chair thanks the members of the Trustee Board for their work during the year.

Bill Best announced that this would be his last year as Chair of the Group and that the Scout Council will need to appoint a new Chair at the in before the AGM in 2027. It is hoped to find a new recruit who could work hand-in-hand with Bill for the rest of this year to achieve the best transition.

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5c. Appoint the Scrutineer for 2025/26

The Trustee Board confirms that Karen Sheppard has been proposed, seconded and is qualified for the role of Scrutineer and is willing to undertake it.

On a show of hands this was approved.

6. Closing remarks

Before closing the Chair opened the meeting to any final comments or questions from those in attendance. None were received.

The Chair expressed his personal thanks, and that of the Trustee Board for all the work done by our leaders and their assistants and their helpers over the last year. Scouting in Staplehurst just would not happen without them. Their work extended to 'above and beyond' and included raising money for children's local charities. This summer the Squirrels and Beaver raised over £1,500 for the KSS Air Ambulance. Parent help in supporting these fund-raising activities was also much appreciated.

The Scout Council gave a round of applause in appreciation to the commitment of all the section leaders and their teams in making scouting fun for all the young people who attend.

The Chair also thanked our unpaid cleaners and those who help in fixing things in and around the Scout Centre, whose work is often under-appreciated. Thanks were recorded to Lindsay for organising the refreshments and to Dave Burgess for baking the scones.

And with that, the Chair closed the meeting.

On formal close of the meeting Donna Elliott and Lindsay Oakes presented the cheque of £1,558 to Warren Porritt from the KCC Air Ambulance charity. Warren thanked all the Squirrels, Beavers, parents and guardians, and people who donated on Just Giving for their generosity and remarked it was the amongst the largest donation they had received from a single volunteer group.

And to end on another positive note, the Squirrels and Beavers received their end of year badges and awards.

Signed.....

Chair and Trustee, Staplehurst Scout Group.

Find our annual report at
<https://staplehurstscouts.org.uk/about/annual-reports>

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2026 - Scout Council

	Name	Section, guardian of: Scouts/Cubs/Beavers/Squirrels or VIP Guest
1	William Best	Trustee
2	Dan Everest	Maidstone West District Lead Volunteer
3	Martin Ralph	Trustee
4	Serena Hoadley	Trustee
5	Martin Heaseman	Trustee
6	Frances Best	Cub leader
7	Vanessa Johnson	Cub leader
8	Lindsay Oakes	Squirrel and Beaver Leader
9	Donna Elliott	Squirrel and Beaver Leader
10	Edwin Burnham	Scout leader
11	David Burgess	Squirrel and Beaver Adult Helper
12	Julia Burgess	Squirrel and Beaver Adult Helper
13	Martin Elliott	Adult Member Helper
14	Jordan Halls	Squirrel and Beaver Adult Helper
15	Charlie Halls (Sami)	Squirrel and Beaver Adult Helper
16	Andy Oakes	Guest
17	Clare Griffiths	Squirrels
18	Kayley Rampton	Squirrels
19	Amber Tully	Squirrels
20	Carly McClelland	Beavers
21	Gary Yearly	Beavers
22	Stevie Webster	Squirrels
23	Eli Jordan	Beavers
24	Abi Wheeler	Squirrels
25	Tori Harrison	Squirrels
26	Kerry Williams	Squirrels
27	Sherrie Delahunty	Squirrels
28	Charles Culshaw	Beavers
29	Wendy and Martin Hockaday	Beavers and Squirrels
30	Lawrence Jones	Parent Beaver
31	Hannah Matthews	Squirrels
32	Chris Hutchinson	Treasurer & Trustee (with apologies accepted)
33	Sue McLaughlin	Trustee (with apologies accepted)
34	Warren Carter	Trustee (with apologies accepted)
35	Adam Best	Cub leader (with apologies accepted)
36	Mark Jeffery	Scout leader (with apologies accepted)
37	Neil Emberly	Scout leader (with apologies accepted)

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38	Warren Porritt	Invited guest speaker KSS Air Ambulance
	Henry Elliot	Explorer helper (non voter)
	William Oakes	Explorer helper (non voter)
	Amie Mills	Explorer helper (non voter)

Awaiting adoption