Wiltshire Scout Council

Trustees Annual Report

& Accounts

for the year ending

31 March 2026

Scout Association Registration Number 10000120

Charity Commission Registration Number 1025277

Wiltshire Scout Council
Trustee Report
for the Year Ended 31 March 2026

Objectives and Activities

Summary of the purpose and objects of the charity as set out in its governing document	The objectives of the charity are as a part of The Scout Association. **The Purpose of Scouting** Scouting exists to actively engage and support young people in their personal development, empowering them to make a positive contribution to society. **The Values of Scouting** As Scouts we are guided by these values **Integrity** – We act with integrity; we are honest, trustworthy and loyal **Respect** – We have self-respect and respect for others **Care** – We support others and take care of the world in which we live **Belief -** We explore our faiths, beliefs and attitudes **Co-operation** – We make a positive difference; we co-operate with others and make friends **The Scout Method** Scouting takes place when young people, in partnership with adults, work together based on the values of scouting and: - enjoy what they are doing and have fun - take part in activities indoors and outdoors - learn by doing - share in spiritual reflection - take responsibility and make choices - undertake new and challenging activities - make and live by their promise
Summary of the main activities in relation to the purpose and objects	The County's main function is to support the seven Districts in achieving the strategic objectives of the Scout Association based on growth, inclusivity, community impact, youth-shaped Scouting and quality programme delivery. As a County, the main activities during the last twelve months have been: 1. Providing management, leadership, governance and support, in partnership with Headquarters and the South-West Region Growth and Communities Team, including our very own three locally employed Local Growth Officers, in ensuring that Scouting continued to grow throughout the County. The 2026 census saw a 3% increase (162) giving a total of 6,442 in 4-18 youth members, and a 38% increase (747) giving a total 2,722 in adult volunteers compared to last year's census outcome. This was once again significantly above national averages. 2. Supporting the development and delivery of quality programmes and activities to young people across the County and in the Districts and their respective Groups, including the provision of dedicated development and programme support. This support is aimed at increasing the number of adult volunteers, reducing waiting lists to join, growing small Groups, introducing new Sections to those Groups that do not have a full complement of Sections and reaching into areas where there is limited or no Scouting provision at present. 3. Providing County-run events for all those involved in Scouting, including activity days / County competitions for Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Explorer Scouts and Young Leaders. 4. Running a twice yearly, combined face-to-face and online trainer-led, modular based Section Leader, Manager and Supporter training programme for all adult volunteer members. Providing on-going bespoke online training and personalised support for County, District and Group Trustee Boards and their Sub-Teams. 5. Actively participating in Regional and Headquarters support meetings for County Chairs, County Lead Volunteers, County Youth Leads, County Programme, Volunteer Development and Support Team Leads, including County Growth Sub Team Leads and County Learning Team Leads.
Statement confirming the trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit	The Trustees confirm that the charity meets the Charity Commission's Public Benefit criteria under both the advancement of education and the advancement of citizenship or community development headings.

Achievements and performance

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year	The Wiltshire Scout Centre continues to be used for adult learning residential weekends, County Trustee Board meetings, Section-based activities and large scale, whole County events. It is also continued to be use by external agencies and organisations. During 2025/2026, a local Explorer Unit and Scout Group have made use of the centre and its facilities as their Headquarters. The Trustee Board undertook a strategic review of the Wiltshire Scout Centre and committed to a number of projects to upgrade the Centre and its infrastructure to be able to facilitate commercial letting opportunities. The upgrades undertaken also reflected the age of the Centre. This work is ongoing. Costs of repairs and renewals are taken from funds held for this purpose. This reporting period has seen a further increase in both national and international nights away experiences, whether this has been under canvas, in tented accommodation, or in the use of hotels or similar venues, particularly during abroad visits and expeditions. Scout Groups and their Sections are reaping the benefits of such experiences in the development and wellbeing of young people. Examples of home nights away experiences undertaken include Groups and Sections making use of Wiltshire Scout Centre or going further afield to venues in other Counties such as Woodhouse Park Scout Activity Centre in Bristol. Our annual Midwinter Expedition took place between Christmas and New Year, and lots of groups took part in Strategy & Evolution – an event specifically aimed at the Scouts, Explorers, Guides and Rangers age range, held in Cirencester, Gloucestershire. Examples of international visits abroad include Scouts from Wiltshire North visiting Iceland; Swindon Scouts went to the Netherlands; Salisbury district visited Kandersteg International Scout Centre in Switzerland. There were also winter trips to Norway and Andorra. Training for Adult Leaders, Managers and Supporters has been and continues to be successfully delivered using a combination of both face-to-face and online delivered training sessions by members of the County Adult Training Sub-Team and locally, within Districts, carried out by suitably qualified and experienced leaders. This training has included mandatory online safety, safeguarding, GDPR, Trustee Induction as well as First Response training. County-led face to face training has predominantly taken place at Wiltshire Scout Centre. As a result of the additional training and support offered, the number of those outstanding in safety and safeguarding training has significantly reduced to ensure that our membership remains compliant with our Policy, Organisation, Rules and The Scout Association requirements. In line with our growth and development over the reporting period, our Squirrel, Beaver, Cub, Scout, Explorer Scout and Network members from across the seven Districts continue to deliver exciting, challenging and fun-packed quality programmes and therefore meeting our 'Skills for Life' (now 'Place to Belong) objectives, including taking part in The Scout Association's national and international activities and events. The main focus continues to be on recruiting, inducting, training and retaining young people and adult volunteers, that will enable those young people currently on waiting lists to join Scouting and learn valuable skills for life. In support of this, the County has employed three Local Growth Officer, who are directly managed by the County Growth Team Lead and a Manager from the HQ Local Growth and Communities Team, who are contracted to work on specified and agreed projects across all areas, that is, Districts, Groups and Sections within the County to ensure that we continue to grow, year on year, as a youth organisation in Wiltshire and support District and Group leadership teams.

Finance review

Review of the financial position	The Total income for the year was £414,977 (2025 £384,852) and the total expenditure £450,468 (2025 £458,647). The income includes membership fees received from Districts and the costs the fees paid on to The Scout Association. The change in income and costs largely reflect the level of membership fees received, retained and paid, as well as receipts and payments made in respect of international events. For the current financial year the accounts have adopted the requirement to show membership fees received gross of membership fees paid on to The Scout Association. The comparative figures have also been restated. This in accordance with The Scout Association's updated Policy, Organisation & Rules, and the Statement of Recommended Practice for Charities. There has been a small increase in rental income for the Wiltshire Scout Centre following reviews and active management of lettings, this position continues to improve The operational costs of the Centre have reduced following renegotiations of costs, however there has been an increase in repair, renewals and maintenance as the Centre ages and the a number of issues came to light requiring remediation. The Development Costs show a reduction for the year, although we continued to receive the services of three Local Growth Officers, who in part this year were funded by short term grants achieved by The Scout Association. The total funds are £690,796 (2025 £726,305) of which £51,759 (2025 £69,239) are restricted for specific purposes. Of the total funds, £473,101 (2025 £488,166) are held as fixed assets (including the Wiltshire Scout Centre). At 31st March 2026 the charity had net unrestricted current assets of £165,936 (2025 £168,900) which includes deferred and amounts received in advance for future events. The net current assets at year-end were £217,695 (2025 £238,139).
Policy on Reserves, why they are held, and the amount of reserves	The policy on reserves is to hold sufficient resources to continue the charitable activities of the charity should income and fundraising activities fall short. The Trustee Board considers that the charity should hold a sum equivalent to a year's operating costs plus funds be able to continue with our development work on growing the movement. This equates to £75,000. As noted above, as at 31st March 2026 the charity had net unrestricted current assets of £165,936 against this. This is above the level required for operating expenses. Any additional funds will be to develop the activities offering made available to support development and Scouting across the County, including supporting Districts and Groups facing financial difficulties.
Policy on Investments and investment performance	The charity's reserves are held to support scouting in the County and as a consequence does not have sufficient funds to invest in longer-term investments such as stocks and shares. The charity has therefore adopted a low risk strategy to the investment of its funds. All funds are held in cash using only mainstream banks or building societies.
A description of the principal risks	The principal risk of the charity continues to be the recruitment and retention of volunteers to be able to provide the provision of quality scouting across the County. This risk is mitigated by active support and management of the County Team, including the work of the three Local Growth officers employed by the charity. The operations of Wiltshire Scout Centre also continues to be a key risk, in relation to both safe operations and financial stability. These risks are managed by an active Scout Centre Team with oversight from the Board to ensue compliant with relevant safety policies and active reviews of costs reduction and income generation opportunities.

Structure, governance and management

Type of governing document	The charity'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 (POR) of The Scout Association.
How the charity is constituted	The charity is a trust established under its rules which are common to all Scouts. It is constituted as an educational charity.
Trustee selection methods	The Trustees are appointed in accordance with the Policy Organisation and Rules of The Scout Association.
Policies and procedures for the induction and training of trustees	All Trustees complete The Scout Association trustee and mandatory learning within the first six months of joining the Trustee Board, they also complete other Scout Association mandatory learning periodically as required.
Additional governance issues	The charity is managed by the Trustee Board, the members of which are the "Charity Trustees". 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 Board, who meet 6 times a year, consist of 9 Independent members: • 4 Ex – officio (Chair, County Lead Volunteer, County Youth Lead Treasurer) • 5 Appointed Members Board is supported by a Board Administrator. The Trustee Board exists to support the Leadership Teams in meeting the responsibilities of their appointments and in supporting them to run high-quality and safe programs that give young people skills for life. The Trustee Board maintain appropriate governance policies and oversight. The Trustee Board is responsible for carrying out its purposes for the public benefit, complying with the charity's governing document and the law, and managing the charity's resources responsibly. The Trustee Board is responsible for ensuring the charity is well managed, risks are assessed and mitigated, buildings and equipment are in good order and everyone follows legal requirements and Scout Association Policy, Organisation & Rules. This includes responsibility for: • Promoting a positive image of Scouting in the community, as well as its development; • Developing, maintaining and regularly a risk register, including putting in place appropriate mitigations; • Ensuring that the finances are properly managed, and there are sufficient resources (and reserves) to deliver high quality Scouting; • Ensuring a system of internal controls is in place that is designed to provide reasonable assurance against material mismanagement or loss; • Ensuring that property is appropriately managed; • Maintaining appropriate insurance of persons, property and equipment; • Assisting in the recruitment of leaders and other adult support; • Having an open and transparent selection process for the recruitment of Trustees; • Appointing Advisors as required; • Ensuring effective administration is in place to support the Trustee Board; • Ensuring compliance with applicable governance and charity regulations, including in respect to safety and safeguarding; • Ensuring incidents are appropriately reported in line with regulation and policy;

	• Ensuring applicable policies and regulations are regularly reviewed and changes implemented as appropriate; • Ensuring transparency of operations, including in the preparation of accounts and holding and AGM; • Ensuring compliance with Data Protection legislation; Acting as a responsible employer for any employees, who are effectively managed.

Plans for Future Periods

Plans for future Periods	To ensure the continued support of Scouting and its growth in Wiltshire. To support the viability of the Wiltshire Scout Centre and to develop the offer of activities.

Reference and administration details

Charity name	Wiltshire Scout Council
Charity number	1025277
Charity's principal address	Wiltshire Scout Centre, Potterne Wick, Wiltshire SN10 5QT

The charity holds the title to the property belonging to it.

	Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity	**Office**	**Dates acted if not for whole year**
1	J Purkis	County Chair	
2	S Barley	County Lead Volunteer	To 31st August 2025
	D Jones		From 1st September 2025
3	M Nevill	County Youth Lead	To 28th February 2026
	H Turner		From 1st March 2026
4	R Holmes	County Treasurer	
	Appointed		
5	R Reeves		
6	T Roberts		
7	D Waspe		
8	T Dobson		
9	D Bavister		
	Co-opted		
	-		

Name and address of advisor

Type of advisor	**Name**	**Address**
Independent Examiner	James Gare, Monahans	Hermes House, Fire Fly Avenue, Swindon, SN2 2GA

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above. Signed on behalf of the trustees by:

Signature	Justin Purkis
Full name	**Justin Purkis**
Position held	**County Chair**
Date	**16th June 2026**