



Creating brighter futures

Annual Report 2024-25



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Group Lead Volunteer's Report

Reflecting back to the April 2024-March 2025 year I see another huge range of scouting activities, at section and group level, plus a huge list of behind the scenes changes!

- We held our "Wild West" themed Family Camp at Templars which included memorable fun during the "Trading Post" challenges
- Scouts from Germany undertaking their Explorer Belt visited Westhill, camping by the Scout Hall.
- Remembrance Sunday service at Skene Kirk
- Tea With Santa's Elves, which was a successful and fun fundraiser
- 2025 Christmas tree Collection
- Gang Show – "Game On" 68 on the bus, 5 in the show. **B -R -A -V -O!**
- Key fundraising for our solar panels (*Mears, National Lottery, and Just Transition*)
- And the sustainability project started with loft insulation/roof replacement.



Successes too by our young people, with many Bronze, Silver and Gold Chief Scout Awards. Programmes that have resulted in an impressive range and number of challenge badges, activity badges for specific personal skills, and staged activity badges for progressive achievements. Arms full of badges!

There is a huge power of work being done by the teams supporting and leading sections. Big **THANKS** to Section Leaders Alastair/Iain, Stewart, Garry, Rae, Birgit, Jane and Peter who continue to lead their sections. And on the Parents' behalf, I wish to acknowledge the tremendous work that our Leadership teams do and the generous gift of their time. On leadership changes we welcomed Danielle, Laura, Atul, Louise, Richard B and Richard R.

The Executive Committee became a Trustee Board in May 2024 at our Templars Camp. Thanks to Chloe our outgoing Secretary, and Jackie who had been our Waiting List coordinator for many years. and to the Section Leaders who stepped off the Exec, Birgit, Garry, Rae, Stephen and Jane. Particular '**Thanks**' to Jesse, Vivian, Loraine, Dineke for their key work on the Trustee Board continuing to manage our business and the Scout Hall.

Well done and thanks to the Explorers as Young Leaders and DoE service volunteers for all their help. **Thanks** to all for your efforts - past and future! These folk are creating a **better future** with our youngsters, as seen in the **amazing** reports that follow! Well done everyone, Westhill Group is in fine order and thanks for your efforts. So, another super year in the life and development of Westhill Scout Group!

Chris Pinnell, Group Lead Volunteer.

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Group Event 2025 – Family camp at Templars



We had a terrific Wild West Family Camp at Templars in May 2024.

Over 150 adults and children joined us for an action packed weekend of wild West themed activities such as target shooting, archery, tomahawk throwing, back woods cooking, problem solving activities, paracord crafting, woggle making, other crafts plus campfires.

Our four sub camps were also challenged to earn the most Scout Dollars in a series of challenges. Designed to engage families and encourage team working it certainly brought out the competitive spirit in a many of our attendees.

Despite heavy rain on Sunday morning, which brought an early end to the camp, the weekend was a great success.



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Amazon Beavers



We've had a busy year at Amazon Beavers - with all the beavers who have moved up to Cubs in that time achieving their Bronze Award to reflect all they have learnt and participated in during their time with us, so a huge 'well done' to all of those kids!

We've done an awful lot of badge work this year, been learning some new games (and doing the old favourites too!) and have had some really good trips and visitors for the beavers.

Some of the highlights have been visits to the Anderson Drive Fire Station, a Footgolf evening at Hazlehead, a Lawn Bowls taster session, a cycle to Skene and a hike up Brimmond Hill.

Some new badges we did this year involved learning more about music, expanding our first aid knowledge - thanks to paramedic and local defib group visitors - and doing some community engagement and learning.



We had a trip to SensationALL to see more about the services they provide, and we helped to support a food drive at Tesco on behalf of the local C-FINE charity who came in to speak with us, and the beavers even designed the posters that they used for that event!

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Redwood Beavers

Redwood beavers have enjoyed a varied and fun packed year of activities.

We have worked on a range of activity badges and also challenge award badges to ensure Beavers have attained their Chief Scout Bronze Award.

The activity badges Beavers have completed included the gardening badge, money skills badge, cycling badge, book reader badge, photography badge, experiments badge, safety badge and disability awareness badge.



We also paid visits to a number of interesting places and took part in fun activities including the climbing wall and bouldering room at RGU, North Anderson Drive Fire Station, the grounds at Castle Fraser, Carnie Woods, Aberdeen Science Centre and Kingshill Parish Church at Kirkton of Skene.



We also learned lots from some very special 4 legged visitors. Nelson the therapist dog and his owner and Police Scotland's specialist detection dogs and their handlers. They were paw-some!

The highlight of our year however is quickly becoming the Beaver Sleepover! This year's sleepover was space themed and saw Beavers gain their Nights Away badge, their Cooks badge and space badge by attending. Beavers made 'dwarf planet' pizzas, star biscuits, and fruit rockets, they went on a torchlight walk to look for planets and stars, and they did space themed activities and crafts. The beaver sleepover cinema showed the movie 'Home' which beavers really enjoyed. It was out of this world!

We are looking forward to another exciting year at Redwood, helping our young people start to become more independent and give them #SkillsForLife.

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Kaa Cubs



It was another busy year for Kaa Pack and the cubs were busy working on their World, Navigator, Naturalist, Pioneer and Environmental Conservation badges. In addition the cubs spent time trying their hands at orienteering, paracord crafts, shelter building and Airfix modelling.

Outside of the Scout Hut, the cubs made the most of the local geography with hikes up Barmekin and Kirkhill, cycling in Dunecht estate, fishing at Lochter, sailing on Loch Skene and a paddle boarding session at Granite Adventures.

Those weren't the only offsite activities, the cubs also visited the local Buddihst temple, had a tour of Forest Farm, explored the changes in Arnhall Moss

throughout the seasons and improved their local area with a litter pick.

This year we were also involved in a national cubs event "The Howling" that saw 13 cubs from Kaa Pack attend a weekend camp at Fordell Firs with 500 cubs from around Scotland. It was an activity packed weekend for all involved including a campfire and nighttime fun fair. A truly memorable experience for all involved.

Finally, this year saw some changes to our volunteer team with Nial and Stuart moving on from Kaa to take up positions with Westwood Scout troop. Our loss is Westwood's gain and I'd like to thank them for their support to Kaa over the years.

This year is shaping up to be another action packed extravaganza and I'm looking forward to expanding our cubs skills and experiences with new adventures.



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Shere Khan Cubs

2024/2025 has been a great year for Shere Khan, we awarded **390** badges: 5 Chief Scout Silver Awards, 36 Chief Scout Challenge Awards and 349 Activity & Staged badges.

Over the 4 terms we have invested 21 new cubs and have maintained a consistent volunteer team with 2 team leads, 3 team members and 1 young leader. We ended the year with 27 cubs, and we aim keep our numbers at 27 for the next couple of terms to ensure we have spaces for the Beavers who will swim up later this year. We are forecasting being back to 36 by March 2026.

Major activities (in addition to our normal programming for the year) were, a night hike up Tappie Tower, a pack visit to the Fire Station, 10 pin bowling, a cyclists badge camp at Lochter Activity Centre, a visit to the Gang Show and our Family Camp at Templars Park



Our camp at Lochter was a huge success, the cubs had a great time and all who attended managed to gain the cyclists badge by the end of the weekend along with nights away badges. The cubs had fun cycling round the go-kart track and I don't know where they got the energy!

A huge thanks to our parent volunteers who have helped us run these diverse activities. Without your assistance we wouldn't be able to plan some many fun activities and it's great for the cubs to see parents getting involved and having fun! Some have volunteered so frequently we think they want to become a team member, fingers crossed. To all our parents, think about your family background and personal skills.



We had a fantastic couple of evenings this year thanks to a parent who helped us by talking about Up Helly Aa and bringing along costumes for our cubs to try on. A truly memorable evening for the cubs culminating in the burning of cardboard longships they had made. Memories that they will have for life and only a couple of hours of effort from a parent!

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Westwood Scouts

The 2024-25 year for Westwood Troop saw a transition of leadership as we welcomed Niall and Stewart while seeing Garry step up to Explorers. It has also seen the Troop grow to 24 members, moving from two to four patrols. This gives a wider range of opportunities for our older Scouts to step up and take on Patrol Leader and Assistant Patrol Leader positions.



We continue to have a dynamic and adventurous program woven in with building traditional scouting skills and resilience within our young people.

We also organised our first Expedition in over 2 years, taking 13 Scouts to Jock Neish Scout Centre down in Tayside alongside the Keir Troop, packing them off in independent groups of 4-5 Scouts to complete routes they had previously helped plan in our preparatory weeks.

Many of the Troop were represented at our Wild West-themed family camp back in May and we look forward to doing many more camps going forward.



And while the traditional Scouting skills are great, we also found plenty of time for some fun challenges like toilet-paper mummies at Halloween, cycling, fishing, climbing, and completing Taskmaster challenges!



Collectively, the Troop earned a total of 158 badges over this period, including 2 Chief Scouts Gold awards which is the highest available in Scouts.

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Keir Scouts

Our summer 2024 program involved preparation for the adventure camp at Craufurdland Castle, Kilmarnock. We practiced cooking meals on trangias, tent pitching and brushed up on our first aid skills. We had 10 scouts joining this camp and they had a blast! Other activities included navigation skills and working on the You Shape badge.

After the summer we kicked off the program with paint balling and completing the dragon boating badge on 'dry land'. The scouts built really good dragon boats and their teamwork was excellent.



We finished the year in preparing for our Christmas market and invited families and friends to join us for our last evening of the year. Two scouts - Henry and Oscar - achieved their Chief Scout's Gold award and we were delighted to present them their well-deserved award.

2025 started off with attending a Warhammer event, celebrating Burns night, we prepared for our Exploration camp to Jock Neish and had a fantastic (nearly dry) weekend with the Westwood Scouts exploring the area around Abroath. We finished the term with exploring space and building some excellent space constellations and designing a rover.

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Pink Panther Explorers

Westhill Explorers has gone from strength to strength during the year.

There have been campfires, cooking, baking, building, learning, camping, walking, culture, dancing and singing to name only a few! Explorers are given the freedom to plan their own evenings.



With the help of a parent volunteer and district representatives, Westhill Explorers offers our young people the opportunity to complete



Duke of Edinburgh awards. We are the only DoE provider in Westhill and many of our Explorers have completed Duke of Edinburgh awards. We have had bronze and silver success within some now working on their gold. Well done to those who have completed or progressed their awards.

The DoE volunteering criteria has seen a number of Explorer undertake Young Leader training and help out at other scouting

sections. This sees the Explorers develop their leadership skills and is often a welcome help for our adult volunteers.

Explorers have also enjoyed fun activities and meeting other explorers from across Scotland at the Woolly Jumper Explorer camp at Templars, Cally Rally camp near Inverness and also the satellite weekend camp/ full Blair Atholl international jamborette.



The 2024 Westhill family camp was a great success due to a lot of help provided by the Explorers. They helped with the activities and also with the catering, which was very much appreciated. The camp would not have been as successful as it was had it not been for their help.

We look forward to further developing the Explorer unit to be a fun activity that expands the skills base of our young people and helps prepare them for life beyond school.

Make all the difference.

Help young people
in Westhill step up
and dream big.



Scouts
1st Westhill