

Trustee Board Report:

The Charity's Objective

The objective of the 1st Weald Brook Scout Group is to promote and support the development of Scouting in the Brentwood area.

The purpose of Scouting 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 their local, national and international communities.

Trustee Board Chair Report

The role of the Trustee Board is to make sure the funds, equipment and building are available for the adult volunteers to carry out their activities in a safe manner and to ensure the group complies with charity law.

Financial:

As you'll see from the 2025 accounts later in this document, the Group's finances remain in a healthy position, although, our income for 2025 was around £200 less than our spending.

The Group's policy on reserves is to hold sufficient resources to continue the charitable activities of the Group should income and fundraising fall short. The Trustee board considers that the Group should hold a sum equivalent to 6 months running costs plus an additional £2000 in case of any unexpected building repair costs, in total this amounts to approximately £10000. Any surplus amount will be allocated to a Hall Rebuilding Fund to support the future rebuilding, refurbishment, or major improvement of the Scout Hall and associated facilities.

Premises:

There were no significant changes to our premises in the last year.

Adult Volunteers:

The Trustee Board would like to express sincere thanks to all our volunteers—without them, Scouting simply couldn't happen. We're incredibly fortunate to have a committed team of adult volunteers who lead our Beaver, Cub, and Scout sections, delivering a varied, exciting, and challenging programme that helps young people build skills for life.

Every member of our core team completes essential training in safety and safeguarding, with regular refreshers to ensure all our activities are run safely. We're extremely grateful to them for giving their time and energy to make this possible.

We also deeply appreciate the many parents who lend a hand on a more occasional basis—whether that's helping at weekly meetings, weekend events, or with maintenance jobs around the hall. Their support is vital and enables us to offer the full range of Scouting experiences.

Group Lead Volunteer Report

A year ago the Trustee's report highlighted that we had been short of leaders but luckily, following a leaflet campaign, we had three new volunteers helping out. We are very grateful to the hard work and time all the volunteers put in but many of the team have been doing this "Scouting thing" for many years. The dedication has meant that sometimes the Group has come before other family activities and free choice of holiday dates.

By September 2025 it was clear that we needed to recruit more team members so that they could complete the training and be ready to take over in 2026. Letters and emails were sent out to all parents with other social media posts, etc. to try and find support. (Counting up, the current team have a combined experience of over 160 years helping in Scouting and for many of them it is now time to pass the knowledge and enthusiasm onto newer leaders). So what were the sections up to in 2025?

Beavers

Shaping the Future, One Adventure at a Time

As we look back on 2025, it has been a year defined by growth, curiosity, and incredible dedication from our youngest Scouts. From exploring the stars to mastering new skills, our Beavers have shown that "big things come in small packages."

The Pinnacle of Achievement: The Bronze Chief Scout's Award

The absolute highlight of our year was celebrating the highest honour a Beaver can achieve: **The Bronze Chief Scout's Award**. This award represents the culmination of hard work, perseverance, and a commitment to excellence.

We would like to extend a massive congratulations to: **Jenson, Jan, Luke, Jessica, and Phoebe**

In 2025, these five amazing young people earned the privilege of wearing the prestigious Bronze Award. Together, they have been awarded **over 180 badges!** By demonstrating a "dedication to perfection" and tackling every challenge one step at a time, they are truly shaping a bright future for themselves and our community. We are incredibly proud of you!

Major Events & Educational Adventures

Our Beavers took their learning beyond the scout hut this year with some truly memorable trips:

- **A Journey Through the Stars:** We visited the **Peter Harrison Planetarium** and the **Royal Observatory Museum**. The Beavers marvelled at the night sky and learned the history of the Meridians. A particular highlight was the opportunity for everyone to stand directly on the **Prime Meridian Line in Greenwich**—standing in two hemispheres at once!
- **Space Camp at the Hut:** To bring our star-gazing journey to life, we held a themed **Space Camp**. The hut was transformed as our Beavers dressed as astronauts and learned the fascinating details of how people live, eat, and sleep aboard the International Space Station (ISS)

A Year Full of Action

Our weekly program was packed with variety, ensuring every Beaver found something to spark their interest. Highlights from our seasonal calendar included:

- **Winter & Spring Skills:** We kicked off the year with cooking, pioneering, and communicator badges. We celebrated Chinese New Year, enjoyed a puppet show, and learned about kitchen safety and healthy eating.
- **The Great Outdoors:** As the weather warmed up, we hit the ground running! The Beavers enjoyed navigation at Warley Place, cricket, kayaking, and a bike ride through Thorndon Country Park.
- **Thriftwood Adventures:** Our trips to Thriftwood were a huge hit, featuring pedal cars, the cave bus, zip-lining, climbing, archery, and the ever-popular water rollers!
- **Creative & Scientific Minds:** From making Mother's Day hampers and natural wreaths to conducting "Rain Jar" and "Storm Jar" experiments, our Beavers showed off their creative flair and scientific curiosity.
- **Community & Tradition:** We practiced the Green Cross Code, enjoyed a Paper Mills hike, celebrated with "human fireworks" for Guy Fawkes night, and ended the year with a classic Panto trip and Christmas cooking.

A Final Note of Thanks

None of these achievements would be possible without the hard work of our volunteers and the support of our parents. By providing these "little people" with the tools to succeed, we are helping them build the confidence to lead in the years to come.

Congratulations to all our Beavers for an outstanding 2025. We can't wait to see what 2026 brings!

Cubs

Another busy year for the Cubs with Tuesday night activities including Chinese New Year, Mothers Day, Chip Shop Survey, Bouldering, Shelter Building, Coracles, Archery and Petanque. In March cubs earnt their Road Safety, Personal Safety and Home Safety badges during a sleepover – 47 badges were given out in 1 day!

Time to look to the skies in May with Cubs taking a trip to Hendon Air Museum to earn their Air Activities 2 badge. June saw the Cubs going back to Nature during a soggy camp in Thriftwood. In September the sixers and seconders slept under the stars before being joined by the rest of the cub pack for a day of rifle shooting, darts and pioneering.

In October, Cubs went on a night hike from Benfleet to Leigh-on-Sea and catching the train back home, with the rain holding off until we got home.

Activity badges given out last year included Home Help, Swimmer, Communicator, Chef, Emergency Aid 2, Artist, Book Reader, Gardener and Navigator 2, a total of 140 activity badges over the year!

Cubs have also earnt many challenge awards and 9 Cubs were presented with their Chief Scouts Silver Award in 2025 – well done to you all.

Thank you to all the parents that have supported us over the year. Special thanks goes to Raksha who stepped down as a cub leader in July. Also thanks to Rikki and Kestrel, who joined us in October, for their time, support, ideas and enthusiasm.

Scouts

The Scout section began the year with 6 volunteers, unfortunately one volunteer had to step away at the end of the summer and despite an appeal for more support, no new volunteers have come forward. BB raised the idea with GLV to share leadership team between Cubs and Scouts to provide more nights away opportunities for young people of both sections, while also allowing leaders to gain or re-new Nights Away permits. The year ended on a bit of a low as the Scout Team Leader reaffirmed they were leaving at the end of the academic year.

Close to Home: The section made excellent use of our hut for activities both inside and out; Scouts completed the DIY Skills badge trying their hand at plumbing, wallpapering, painting, changing a plug and learning about DIY safety and hazards. They also completed the Money Skills badge learning about in-game currency and purchases, and budgeting. Of course, we also had cooking nights, with menus including pancakes, omelettes and nutritious meals using food available during WWII (tinned fruit was a hit, once they worked out how to open the tin!). We also practised out saw & axe skills and fire lighting skills. We used the outdoor space for rifle shooting and ended the summer term with silly water games. We also introduced some Scouts In Charge meetings to encourage the scouts to play an active part in planning their own meetings. While engagement has been slower than hoped, the Scouts have led a Hobbies night which included a fascinating presentation about keeping Ants, and a Spooky Night. We hope to see confidence and enthusiasm for this initiative continue to grow next year.

Out & About: We visited Thriftwood a few times using the space there to celebrate VE Day with some wide games, and we did some kayaking. We also carried out a Chip Shop Survey in Brentwood (Ongar Road Fish & Chip Shop retained the title of Best Chip Shop) a Scavenger Hunt in the High Street, a very long hike from the hut, up to Bentley, into Pilgrims Hatch then returning to the hut, the 1st Weald Brook Monopoly Run in London, Dragon Boat Racing on the Thames and competed in the County Backpack Event in Chelmsford, and our end of year treat was at Flip Out! in Lakeside.

We feel it's important to show scouts they are part of a wider community so we are pleased to be able to give them the opportunity to help another charity in the community, but unfortunately nobody attended this event. Later in the year, some scouts helped to sell poppies again in November.

Congratulations! One scout was awarded the Gold Chief Scout's award, this scout had taken every opportunity we were able to give them and was fully engaged in the programme joining all meetings, hikes and overnight events whilst acting within Scout Values and being a great role model to others. This is the sort of scout that inspires the leaders to turn up every week both mentally and physically. This attitude has been recognised in others, as two other scouts were successful with their applications for International opportunities in 2027. We wish them well with their journeys.

The year ended with the section having 16 scouts, and our leaders team being made up of Bernadette, Bernard, Andrew, John S and Steve. As always, a massive 'Thank-you' message must go to the leaders team who support the running of the section, the parents who support our activities and ethos, and the Scouts who engage and act within our Scout Values.

Looking Forward to 2026

2026 will see an unusually large number of our volunteers stepping back from their Scouting commitments. Some retiring after many years of dedicated service, while others are planning to move away from the area. As a result, we have a number of important roles that need to be filled. All sections would benefit from additional support, with the Scout section currently the most vulnerable to closure.

Volunteering is not just in leading or helping to lead sections, there are support roles which make it possible for Scouting to happen. In particular the Trustee Board is seeking a new Chairperson, along with additional Trustees. But there are also opportunities for people to help with cleaning, maintenance and managing the vegetation.

At the end of the Summer Term the following volunteers will be stepping down from their roles at the 1st Weald Brook:

- John Alexander - Group Leader Volunteer (GLV)
- Rosemary Dandridge – Team Leader (Cubs)
- Kate Alexander – Team Member (Cubs)
- Bernadette Bateman – Team Leader (Scouts)
- Bernard Manktelow – Group Team Member and Trustee
- Andrew Beadle - Team Member (Scouts)
- Lucy Young - Trustee
- Martin Bateman - Group Chair and acting Treasurer

We are really pleased that Mauro will be taking over the leadership of the Group and we wish him and his team well.