

1st Caythorpe and Dukes Covert Scout Group

Annual General Meeting

5th March 2026
Caythorpe & Frieston Village Hall



MINUTES

In Attendance – Tim Giles (Chair), Amy Kirk (Treasurer), Marie Hall (Group Lead Volunteer), Peter Bonner (Trustee, Cub Team Leader), Sam Bennett (Scout Team Leader), Adam Russell (Beaver Team Leader), Polly Bowman (Beaver Team Member), Eileen Booth (Grantham District Lead Volunteer), plus five Beaver/Cub/Scout parents.

1. **Introduction and welcome** - Tim welcomed everyone to the meeting and formally opened the AGM at 19:03.
2. **Apologies for absence** – Apologies were received from Jenny Higgs (Trustee) and Mark Poucher, Sarah Poucher & Gary Swift (Scout Team Members).
3. **To approve the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Thursday 5th March 2025** – Nominated for approval by Sam Bennett; seconded by Allan Graham
4. **Group Governance**
 - a. Adopt the introduction of the following policies into the Constitution; Attendance, Expenses and Subscription Payments
Tim had pre-circulated the proposals to parents; changes included 'no-show / no-notification', and 'non-payment' clauses. No questions were raised. This was proposed by Sam Bennett and seconded by Peter Bonner.
 - b. Adopt the changes to the Constitution from Policy, Organisation and Rules
There was nothing to add here.
 - c. Note the Group's financial year.
Amy provided a summary of the Group's financial year (a full report is available below); income totalled £18,779.37 whilst expenditure was £17,637.98. It was proposed that, knowing that additional grants and funding are not guaranteed income, we may need to review subs in the near future.

5. **Review of the previous year**

- a. The Group Lead Volunteer and Section reviews are included in Appendix 1.
- b. To receive and consider the Annual Report of the Group Trustee Board including the annual Statement of the Accounts. Deb Tomblin has acted as the independent Scrutineer for the accounts. Proposed for acceptance: Sam Bennet; seconded: Alan Graham (See Appendix 2.)

6. **Making appointments**

- a. To note any other supporters who may be admitted to membership of the Group Scout Council, including former Scouts and parents, by the Group Lead Volunteer, the Group Trustee Board or the Group Scout Council.
 - No volunteers
- b. To approve the Group Lead Volunteer's nomination of the Group Chair:
 - Tim Giles confirmed he was happy to remain as Group Chair
Proposed: Marie Hall, Seconded, Peter Bonner
- c. Election of the Group Treasurer
 - Amy Kirk is happy to remain as Treasurer
Proposed: Sam Bennett Seconded –Eileen Booth
- d. Elections of members to the Group Trustee Board
 - Mark Poucher had previously confirmed that he would be standing down in July
 - Other members of the Group Trustee Board were all happy to continue in post (Genevieve Scullion, Peter Bonner and Jenny Higgs) and were nominated as a block. (Note: 8 March update: Gen has now stepped down as a Trustee)
 - Adam Russell, Polly Bowman and Charlotte Roe offered to join the Trustee team
Nominated: Amy Kirk, Seconded Eileen Booth
- e. To approve the Group Lead Volunteer's nominations to the Group Trustee Board
 - No further recommendations were received.
- f. To appoint the Independent Scrutineer
 - Deb Tomblin confirmed that she was happy to continue acting as the Independent Scrutineer
Nominated: Eileen Booth, Seconded: Polly Bowman

7. Volunteer Recruitment (See below, Group report)

- a. Beaver Team Leader
- b. Scout Team Leader
- c. Scout team volunteers
- d. Group Lead Volunteer

8. Closing Remarks

The GLV's speech had focussed mainly on volunteer recruitment and the now-urgent need to find a new Scout leadership team and new GLV from August. There was a discussion around how best to recruit; agreement that we need to focus on parents of older members (mainly Scouts) and that we should consider attending Caythorpe 'Chill & Chat' sessions and also holding a Parents' Meeting for Scout parents. There are also options to advertise via our social media and website. Tim reinforced these messages and the sense of urgency.

Eileen Booth gave thanks to all volunteers, both leaders and Young Leaders for their efforts in continuing to run the Group.

AGM concluded 19.44

Appendix 1: The Group and Section reviews

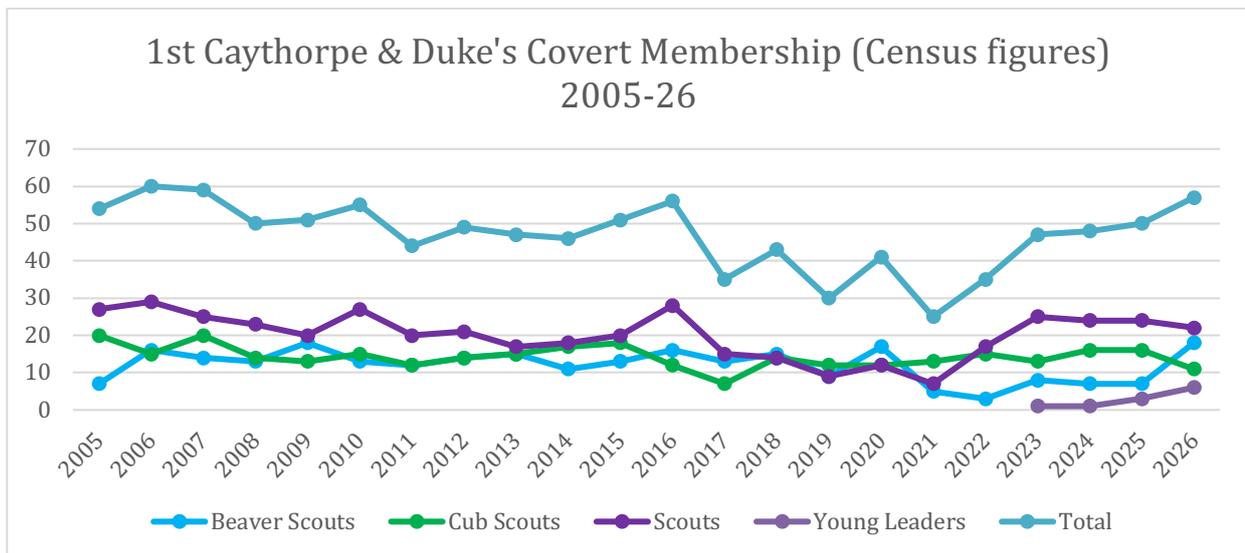
Group Lead Volunteer's Report

2025 was another busy year for our Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and volunteer Leaders.

Membership

Our membership (based on the data submitted every January for The Scouts annual census) shows that our numbers continue to rise following the significant dip we experienced during the pandemic. Indeed, with 57 Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Young Leaders, we're at the highest since 59 in 2007 and 60 in 2006 – a time when there was an awful lot of national publicity around the Centenary of Scouting.

This is great news as we're creating more opportunities of fun, friendship and skills for life for more local young people than we have in a long time, and we believe those young people are also bringing along their friends!



Volunteers

This is the tricky bit. More young people need more volunteers, and Scouting simply can't happen without a team of dedicated volunteer leaders, both at our weekly meetings and behind the scenes.

Beavers

The great news is that Adam (Rusty) and Polly (Chatter) picked up the baton from Tic Tac last Easter and really hit the ground running! They've stormed through their mandatory training and we have a wonderfully active Beaver Colony with a great, balanced programme of weekly meetings and events. It's been wonderful to help and support them both as they've joined the world of Scouting, got to grips with the rules we have to follow and are both working incredibly proactively to create some wonderful opportunities for our youngest section.

Danny was supporting them both as they learnt the ropes, which was brilliant as he had the relevant training meaning as a team they could run meetings without relying on other section

leaders, or me, having to be there every single week. But Danny's heart really lies in the great outdoors and more bushcraft-y activities, so before Christmas he transferred to Scouts. Danny – they couldn't have done it without you!

Beaver numbers have gone up from 7 at the January 2025 census to 18 for this January's census, meaning I've had to put a cap on numbers and Rusty's had to create a waiting list. Which is, I guess, great news....

We've had a couple of parents offer to support them – thank you both - one on a regular basis and one as an ad-hoc helper for events and trips. Once the regular helper is confirmed and training complete, we can look at potentially raising the cap on numbers.

Thank you, Adam and Polly. It's been a brilliant year working with you and getting to know you both, and I know our Beavers appreciate you!

Cubs

This time last year I was letting you know that Rachel had left. Well, she's back! So Peter (Akela) now has Rachel, Gwen (work shifts permitting) and Carla (a new recruit and mum to Poppy, thanks Carla) in his team. So, once again, we're currently OK for Cub volunteers, although any offers of support would be gratefully received.

Scouts

Last year we announced that Sam, Mark and Sarah would be stepping down from July '26. This hasn't changed, apart from July '26 is now only four months away, not 16 months away.

Their reasons for leaving their roles are completely understandable; Sam's boys have already left Scouts. Mark & Sarah's son leaves this summer, and they all have other pressures on their time.

So this leaves us with Gary – who is by far our most experienced leader with nearly 36 years of Scouting service under his belt – and Danny – as our Scout volunteers, with Zoe at weekends when she can. Both Gary and Danny love Scouting and have loads of skills to share with our Scouts, but neither has the desire to take the role of Team Leader.

Please, do think about this seriously. Talk to me or Sam to find out more about the role and what it really entails. Other than the Scouting policy and rules around safety, safeguarding, ratios etc, it really is up to the Leader how they want to manage and run the Troop and the Team.

One thing to note – our Scouts are already being asked to commit to events including the Caythorpe Fireworks night and Caythorpe Gala, which obviously we can't do, until we know we'll have a Leader in place. Also, there are potentially joint international opportunities for older Scouts in 2027 – although nothing concrete yet. Sign-up would be required soon-ish, so if there isn't a Leader, Caythorpe Scouts simply can't be invited.

And now onto our Young Leaders...

We now have six Young Leaders across the Beaver and Cub sections – doubling our numbers since last year. They're all ex-Caythorpe Scouts, some are working through the Scouts Young

Leader scheme, some are Explorers elsewhere, some are volunteering as part of their Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Either way, it's a great opportunity for them to develop their leadership skills, team working skills, and give a little bit back to the Scout Group. And it gives parents of younger children a bit of visibility of what's coming down the line. Thank you all!

Group Lead Volunteer – my role

I've been in this role for five years, both my girls have moved on to Explorers and, as with the Scout volunteers, I confirmed at last year's AGM that I'd be moving on as and when my girls left the Group.

But I'm still here!

However, I have to draw a line in the sand, so will be stepping down after the Lincolnshire Poacher camp in August. I'm happy to help as a 'deputy' for a year's transition, taking whoever takes over through the annual cycle of camps, activities, Christmas, census etc.

I have to say, this role is great; there isn't a weekly commitment as such, which has worked well for me, especially now that I'm not ferrying my children to Caythorpe every week or two. There's a lot of behind-the-scenes 'checking and doing', but in all honesty it could be shared amongst a willing few – for example sorting out insurance, attending District meetings, checking that volunteers have completed mandatory training (and chasing as deadlines approach), ordering hoodies etc.

I'm happy to talk through what I do with anyone who'd be interested in thinking about it.

In Summary

So as you can see, there's change on the horizon and we need as many parents as possible to step up to keep the Group running.

The Scouts offer full, free learning for all roles. Initially you just need to be over 18 and motivated to help. You'll need to complete a Scouting DBS and Safety and Safeguarding training pretty quickly, then you'll be guided through a tailored learning package. Most training these days is online, though it's always good to do an in-person course to meet with other Scouters from across Grantham District and Lincolnshire County.

And – it looks great on your CV!

So, I've talked about volunteering, but what does that deliver? What does it actually mean? Well – here's a summary from each of our Section Leaders so you can see just how varied and broad the range of stuff that you can be involved in is.

As a Group we joined forces for a number of activities and events throughout 2025. Highlights were St. George's Day Parade (in Grantham), our annual Messy Night at Duke's, helping out at Caythorpe Gala, Remembrance Parade in Caythorpe and the Panto in Grantham.

I'll now pass to the Section Leaders for their reports:

First of all, Adam – Rusty – for Beavers

2025 has been a fantastic year for Beavers, and one of change too. We have had two new-to-Scouting leaders join the team, Adam and Polly, with the support of other leaders in the group. A special mention goes to Marie and Danny, who have been fantastic with both initial and ongoing support. On top of this, we have three fantastic young leaders, who have been brilliant in helping to run Beavers, and their support each week is greatly appreciated.

Badges-wise, we handed out 177 badges in 2025. Since 1st May 2025, when Adam and Polly took over, we have handed out 145 badges, including 13 Builder and Cyclist badges, 8 Adventure badges, 10 Faith badges and 8 Joining In badges. We have also welcomed 10 new Beavers in this period.

We have been fairly busy throughout 2025, including the following activities: a hike around the village, a two-night camp at Walesby, Messy Night, helping at Caythorpe Gala, the Scarecrow Festival at Caythorpe Church, Remembrance Day, and of course the panto. The Beavers also visited the church for some cleaning and met Reverend Geraldine Pond, who is a member of the King's Chaplaincy.

So far this year (2026), we have invested two new Beavers and have another two who have recently started their Scouting journey. We have awarded one Chief Scout's Bronze Award, with another due to be awarded soon, and a further Beaver close to achieving theirs. To date, we have handed out 61 badges, including 12 Health and Fitness badges, 10 Space badges, and of course 17 Beavers 40th Birthday badges (and that doesn't include our awesome leaders!).

We are always looking for new leaders and would welcome anyone interested in joining our team, as we currently have 17 Beavers.

Cubs - Akela

I'm pleased to say that the Cub Pack has continued successfully in 2025, ending the year with a great group of Cubs, especially in the Sixers and Seconders (peer leaders). As part of this we were able to join with other Cub Packs from the Grantham area and take part in a training day last June, and we hope to have another one shortly.

The leadership team has moved around again, we are delighted that Carla is now a full leader and Rachel has returned permanently, with Gwen still attending whenever work permits. The Young Leader team is very strong, with Whitney joining Thomas and Belle in the year.

During the year we were able to join with the Beavers for a weekend away at Walesby, and are planning another event this summer. Other activities included a night hike, Rivers Day at Belton House, cricket, athletics, lots of cooking and a focus on teamwork and practical skills. We did this whilst ensuring that the leadership team weren't too overwhelmed, limiting our events to Thursday evenings and the targeted 12 additional activities per year.

Finally, I want to say how pleased I am to see the growth in maturity of our current Cubs, and the progress of those who stay on into Scouts and longer. I'm also grateful for all the support I get from the direct Cub team and the wider volunteer team at Group and District level. Thank you.

And finally, Scouts – Sam

What a year it has been for our Scouts. We began 2025 with 22 Scouts and, despite the usual comings and goings of busy young people, we proudly finish the year still 22 strong. A steady crew; boots muddy, spirits high.

Adventures & Events

2025 has been packed with challenge, service and just the right amount of woodsmoke.

Highlights included:

- Cooking Camps
- Rotary Swimathon
- District Night Hike
- Monopoly Run Live in London
- St George's Day Parade
- Rivers Academy Day
- Survival Camp and Expedition
- Hillwalking Camp
- Messy Night
- Summer Camp in Scotland with Foston, featuring boating, canoeing, hillwalking and an expedition to a WWII aircraft crash site
- Rabbit Run
- Caythorpe Gala
- Splash! Adventure Day
- Supporting Caythorpe Fireworks, raising £300 for the Group
- Caythorpe Remembrance Parade
- Christmas Party at the bowling alley

In total, the Scouts achieved up to 12 nights away, building independence, resilience and friendships that last well beyond campfire embers.

Already in 2026...

The momentum hasn't slowed. So far this year, Scouts have completed an environmental project including litter picking and tree planting, and once again took part in the Swimathon.

Still to Come

The calendar remains full, with:

- District Night Hike
- St George's Parade
- Survival Camp
- Hiking Camp
- Summer Camp – Poacher
- Remembrance Parade
- Fireworks

Badges & Achievements

From 1 January to 31 December 2025, an incredible 142 badges were awarded.

Highlights include:

- 5 Adventure badges
- 4 Creative badges
- 8 Expedition badges
- 3 Outdoors badges
- 15 Survival Skills badges
- 15 Hikes badges
- 15 Nights Away badges

And the headline achievement... five Chief Scout's Gold Awards. A fantastic accomplishment and a real testament to the effort, determination and teamwork shown by our Scouts.

Thank you to all our volunteers, parents and supporters who make these opportunities possible. Here's to another year of challenge, growth and plenty of time under canvas.

Appendix 2: Annual Report of the Group Trustee Board including the annual Statement of the Accounts.

REASURER

Treasurer's Report - Financial Year: 1st January – 31st December 2025

Detail	Value (£)
Opening cash balance 01/01/2025	£11,373.94
Total Income	£18,779.37
Total Expenditure	-£17,637.98
Net Income	£1,141.39
Cash at bank 31/12/2025	£12,515.33

Accounts independently examined by Debbie Tomblin – Thank you Debbie

Capital Expenditure

- £524.77 – Equipment purchases (tables, camping equipment for inventory refresh, laptop for finance & administration)

Significant Expenditure

- £3,000 – Census (Scout Insurance and Membership) – 2024 was £2,597.
- £10,690.85 - Across the Group on events and activities: £9,148.04 received: net £1,542.81. This includes several smaller camps for Scouts including a trip to Scotland, and also multiple events held for both Beavers and Cubs combined.
- Plus general running costs: Village Hall hire, materials for meetings, OSM and bank account fees

Income variance

- Gift Aid: £1,329.22- A comparable figure the previous year (£1,335.80). This is expected to be at a similar level for the claim submitted in 2026 (for 2025).
- Donations are at a slightly lower level than last year: £1,240.50, compared to 1,652.70 (2024). As noted previously, last year's figure was a significant amount but cannot be relied upon to repeat for future years.
- No equipment has been sold during this year.
- A decrease in income from events and activities during the year, primarily due to the smaller Scout camps and events, however also a subsequent decrease in costs for such events (as would be expected).

Projected Finances

At present, the Subscriptions and the donations/grants just ensure the Group reserves are kept at the present level.

The donations/grants are not a guaranteed income and running costs are increasing.

A reserve is required to ensure Events can be paid in advance, to provide emergency assistance if an issue occurs while on a long-distance event/camp, e.g. Hotel accommodation for the young people if tents are storm damaged whilst camping.

To also provide financial support to families, so Scouting is available for all.

Proposal: Keep the Subscription rate at £12.50 but keep under constant review.

Appendix 3: 2025 Account

Category	2025 (£)	2024 (£)
Summary		
Account balance brought forward	11,373.94	7,429.00
Total income	18,779.37	27,335.58
Total expenditure	17,637.98	23,390.64
Net income	1,141.39	3,944.94
Account balance carried forward	12,515.33	11,373.94
Income Breakdown		
Clothing	65	504
Donations	1,240.50	1,652.70
Events (General)	1,535.00	1,679.00
Events - Beavers	275.71	120
Events - Cubs	35	647
Events - Scouts	7,302.33	13,883.10
Fundraising	356.34	492.48
Gift Aid	1,329.22	1,335.80
Membership Fees	6,411.06	6,962.50
Uniform and Neckers - All Sections	229.21	59
Expense Breakdown		
Activity Equipment	524.77	773.13
Admin & Bank Fees	626.1	940.76
Badges (All Sections)	729.99	463.73
Clothing	303.5	819.45
Events (General)	2,762.78	2,809.12
Events - Beavers	240	160
Events - Cubs	0	313.74
Events - Scouts	7,688.07	12,262.05
Insurance	414.24	374.5
Meetings (All Sections)	177.22	286.65
Membership Costs	3,000.00	2,597.00
Rent	949	1,405.50
Training	0	52
Uniforms, OSM & Maintenance	222.29	133.01
Account Balances		
Unity	12,515.33	11,373.94

