

# Scouts

Croydon District

District Annual Report  
Croydon District Scout Council  
to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025

**Squirrels** **BEAVERS**

**cubs** **SCOUTS**

EXPLORERS **network**

*#YouShape*



**One District One Movement**

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### **Provided as a separate document:-**

- **Trustees Annual Report and Accounts (Separate booklet)**



## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF CROYDON DISTRICT SCOUT COUNCIL

TO BE HELD ON FRIDAY 12<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2026 AT 7.30 P.M.

VENUE: THE CHURCH HALL OF OUR LADY OF THE ANNUNCIATION,  
BINGHAM ROAD, CROYDON, CR0 7EN.

## AGENDA

1. Welcome and Introduction.
2. Apologies for absence.
3. Housekeeping, including noting the voting members of the District Scout Council\*

### Governance:

4. Approve the minutes of the 2025 Annual General Meeting.
5. Approve and adopt the District Constitution
6. Approve the quorum for future meetings of the District Scout Council
7. Approve the maximum number of members that that may be appointed to the trustee board.

### Appointments:

8. Appoint the proposed District Chair
9. Appoint the proposed District Treasurer
10. Appoint the members of the Board of Trustees.
11. Accept the District Vice Presidents nominated by District Board of Trustees
12. Appoint two representatives of the District Scout Council to represent the District at the meeting of the County Scout Council.
13. Appoint a representative to serve on County Board of Trustees
14. Appoint the Independent Examiner

### Review of the Previous Year:

15. Receive and consider the Annual Report of the District Board of Trustees including the annual statement of accounts.
16. District Lead Volunteer's remarks
17. County Lead Volunteer's remarks
18. AOB (all items to be notified to the District Secretary prior to 31<sup>st</sup> May otherwise they may not be considered)
19. Presentations
20. Close

*\*NB: all members and supporters of Croydon Scouting are welcome and encouraged to attend our AGM, however voting is restricted the members of the District Scout Council as set out in POR Chapter 5b.*

# MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF CROYDON DISTRICT SCOUT COUNCIL

HELD ON FRIDAY 27<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2025 AT 7.30 P.M.

VENUE: THE CHURCH HALL OF OUR LADY OF THE ANNUNCIATION,  
BINGHAM ROAD, CROYDON, CR0 7EN.

## 1. Welcome and Introduction

Bernie Farrell as the interim chair presided over the meeting.

He welcomed everyone to the meeting especially Cllr Richard Chatterjee (Civic Mayor) Col. Ray Wilkinson (Rep Deputy Lieutenant for Croydon). Clinton Riley (RFCA/YOU London); Bernie also congratulated Steve French on his 65<sup>th</sup> birthday.

14 Scout Groups were represented and 39 people attended.

## 2. Apologies for absence

These had been received from Owen Purcell; Alex Swain; Julie Findlay; Cllr Lynne Hale; Chris Dean; Tony Rowland; Peter Palmer; Dave Rixson; Yorkie; Richard Carrau; Jay Warden; Chris Sinclair; Fiona Hodgkinson; Russell Priestley; John Edwards; Martin Greenwood; Hallam Carter Pegg; Kirsten Eeles.

3. Minutes of the 2024 Annual General Meeting – were agreed unanimously and signed. The Treasurer has resigned and John Seaton replacing him as from this AGM.

4. Receive and consider the Annual Report of the District Board of Trustees including the annual statement of accounts. Proposed by Bernie Farrell. Seconder John Seaton. Agreed unanimously.

5. Approve and Adopt the District Constitution which had been updated. The Policies have also been updated and will be adopted at the next meeting of the Board of Trustees.

Agreed unanimously.

6. Appoint the proposed District Chair – Ant proposed that Bernie Farrell has confirmed that he will continue as Chair unless we have a volunteer to do the job.

7. Appoint the proposed District Treasurer – John Seaton was confirmed . Agreed unanimously.

8. Appoint the members of Board of Trustees – Theresa Jeffery (willing to continue for another year); Richard Goad; Beth Peters (Vice Chair); Bernie Farrell (Chair); John Seaton (Treasurer) Secretaries/administrators Karen Purton and Pam Grogan – non voters (presented with flowers). We can appoint between 7-12 members . We require younger member. Open to offers. Agreed unanimously..

9. Appoint the District Vice Presidents nominated by District Board of Trustees. Steve French; Tony Grogan; Lynne Hale; Theresa Jeffrey ; John Seaton.

Agreed unanimously.

10. Appoint a representative to serve on the County Board of Trustees – Bernie Farrell

Agreed unanimously.

**11.** Appoint two representatives of the District Scout |Council to represent the District at meetings of the County Scout Council. Bernie Farrell.

**12.** Appoint an Independent Examiner – Ian Rowe prepared to continue. Agreed unanimously.

**13.** District Lead Volunteer – Ant Eeles

First AGM as DLV. Transformation is with us and slowly being sorted. We need to liaise with each other so that we can go forward. GLV's have to get up and running with the new system. New Welcome process has improved.

Change of Management:-

Joint Programme Lead – Mandy Giles and Chris Dean

14 – 21 Richard Goad

Development Team Lead – Kate Balzer

Youth Lead – Aiden Neal

Squirrel to Scouts programme – assist with programme and problems. There have been challenges over the year but gradually being sorted.

Great Orme is still with us – the reason training is so important so that the same thing does not happen again.

Safety training 120 left to do by end of July – Gilwell will suspend and no comeback – any suspensions to do training even if waiting for DBS.

YP to be asked what they want District sub teams to put onto District run events. Relaunch of Network.

NAN form has to be approved as part of the preparation for camp. If someone in your group has not completed their training check and make sure they are going to continue with your group.

Events have been programmed until September – will go ahead. The group have been contacted and requested to suggest events for the coming year very little response.

Support Team- still to be up and running.

Network still to be up and running.

Recently the Croydon District had received a Certificate of Recognition for service including the period during COVID in recognition of all we do for the YP - each group to receive a copy of the award as it belongs to the whole District.

**14.** CLV - apologies. Theresa Jeffery (County President) step in .

Anthony Eeles – 25<sup>th</sup> year Service

Ron Broom – Silver Acorn.

Richard Goad presented Aiden Neal with his Duke of Edinburgh Silver and he is well on his way to Gold.

**15.** Cllr. Richard Chatterjee – He mentioned that he had been a Cub at 68<sup>th</sup> Croydon (St Albans) when he was young. Good work by the District and the award from the Mayor was well deserved. He had also attended the GLSW Jack Petchey awards evening.

Cllr. Chatterjee had also attended the VE Day evening at Bears Wood but was unable to stay until the end. 10<sup>th</sup> Croydon had been to the Town Hall and were given a look into the workings of the Council. Thank you for all your hard work.

**16.** Col Ray Wilkinson (Rep DL for Croydon)

Steve French was awarded a medallion for his service to Croydon. The Col said he awards no more than two or three of these every year as they are very special. Scouting is on the major stage – so thank you. The Col also attended several activities run by the District and was very impressed.

Once a Scout always a Scout . Thank you for the invite. Scouting is really a community of people. We should have a smile on our faces as it makes other people know we are happy.

**17.** There had been no notification of any other business

Steve requested that you take a copy of the annual report with you.

Bernie thanked everyone for coming and thanked Mandy and her team for the refreshments. Invited those present to help themselves to food and drink.

Next year will be at the same place on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2026 please make a date

The meeting closed at 20.30 hrs

## Croydon District Trustees Report 2025

First of all **WELCOME** to this the second of the transformed AGM and yes I'm still in the chair. We are still learning

Year two has not been such an interesting time as the first because we have had the expert and ever diligent John Seaton as Treasurer and so I have not had to get involved in financial matters of state.

Probably not surprising, we as trustees still have to get involved in direct scouting matters and a good proportion of our agendas lean that way. That may change over time as we adapt to the new roles. However, our finances are sound, our two super sites are developing well, and we are getting on top of most other areas.

As a result of the scouting disaster a year ago next year will see a greater emphasis of the legal responsibilities of the Trustee Board and us individually. This will also percolated down to every group trustee so watch out for the info as it comes.

I would like to personally thank my colleague Trustees and to Ant our DLV for their continued forbearance and support during this last two year period and special thanks to Theresa who like me wanted to stand down at the last AGM but a lack of more youthful members stepped forward to take on the good work of supporting the youth in our movement in Croydon so as you are aware we both stayed.

I really feel that it is time for younger blood to move us forward, and I am more than happy to revert to just Properties and Premises which age gently with time and usage as one of the not so few octogenarian volunteers

Yours in Scouting

Bernard Farrell

Chair of District Board of Trustees

Email: [chair@croydonscouting.org.uk](mailto:chair@croydonscouting.org.uk)

## District Lead Volunteer Report 2025

It's no exaggeration that 2025 flew by. We began in the middle of the Volunteering Experience transformation, adopting new teams, titles and ways of working. The new system "hangover" and settling into the structure affected the early months, so thank you to everyone for sticking with it and to the district team for helping me smoothing out the kinks in the structure. From the 2026 vantage point, the membership system is markedly better (though not perfect) and HQ continue to improve it.

2025 also started with the sad news that Margaret Tyler MBE, a stalwart of Croydon Scouting and its precursor districts, had passed away. Many scouting friends attended her remembrance service, and Margaret is sorely missed. I know several groups also had members "gone home" too and we remember their service to Scouting with gratitude.

In the first half of the year, the July "Safety Training" deadline was a source of concern, but over 95% of our adult volunteers completed the updated training on time – so thank you everyone for making the time, and thanks to the DLT for the support and encouragement to get this done.

There were some changes to the district team in 2025: Mandy Giles (co-Programme Lead and former ADC Cubs) moved to a scouting role closer to home in Sutton, and we welcomed Aiden Neal as District Youth Lead and Kirsten Eeles as Support Team Leader.

In November we held "Croydon Scouts: Connect", welcoming 100+ volunteers to an afternoon of sectional sessions, interest workshops and a busy marketplace. Huge thanks to everyone who made it happen. We plan three adult events each year: a spring skills day, a summer social, and Connect each autumn.

You'll read below about the fantastic activities across our groups, units and district teams, so I won't repeat them here, but a personal highlight was our first district Squirrels event – a brilliant Neverland-themed day. Two new Squirrel dreys started in '25 (and more to come in '26). The programme team built a strong base in '25 and are now delivering a fantastic '26 programme.

Our membership increased in '25, with youth membership up 3% (mainly Cubs and Scouts). Explorers held steady, whilst our 14–24 team revived the "Romans" Network unit, leading to their first camp at the start of '26. Beavers is currently down, the second year in a row – this is a concern, but reflects a national trend. Squirrels grew by a whopping 40% (but from 48-67!)

As you can see, we have built momentum in 2025, but this is still being delivered by a small number of people. The "District" is not a separate, distinct body of people: almost everyone on our district teams also holds at least one, and often more, group or unit role(s) – and so we need more district volunteers. We'd particularly welcome new members in the programme team, and we also have two specific roles in our support team – a marketing coordinator, and a district quartermaster. Please do speak to Chris or Kirsten if either of these roles would interest you or you'd like to suggest someone else, or any of the district team about how you could be involved.

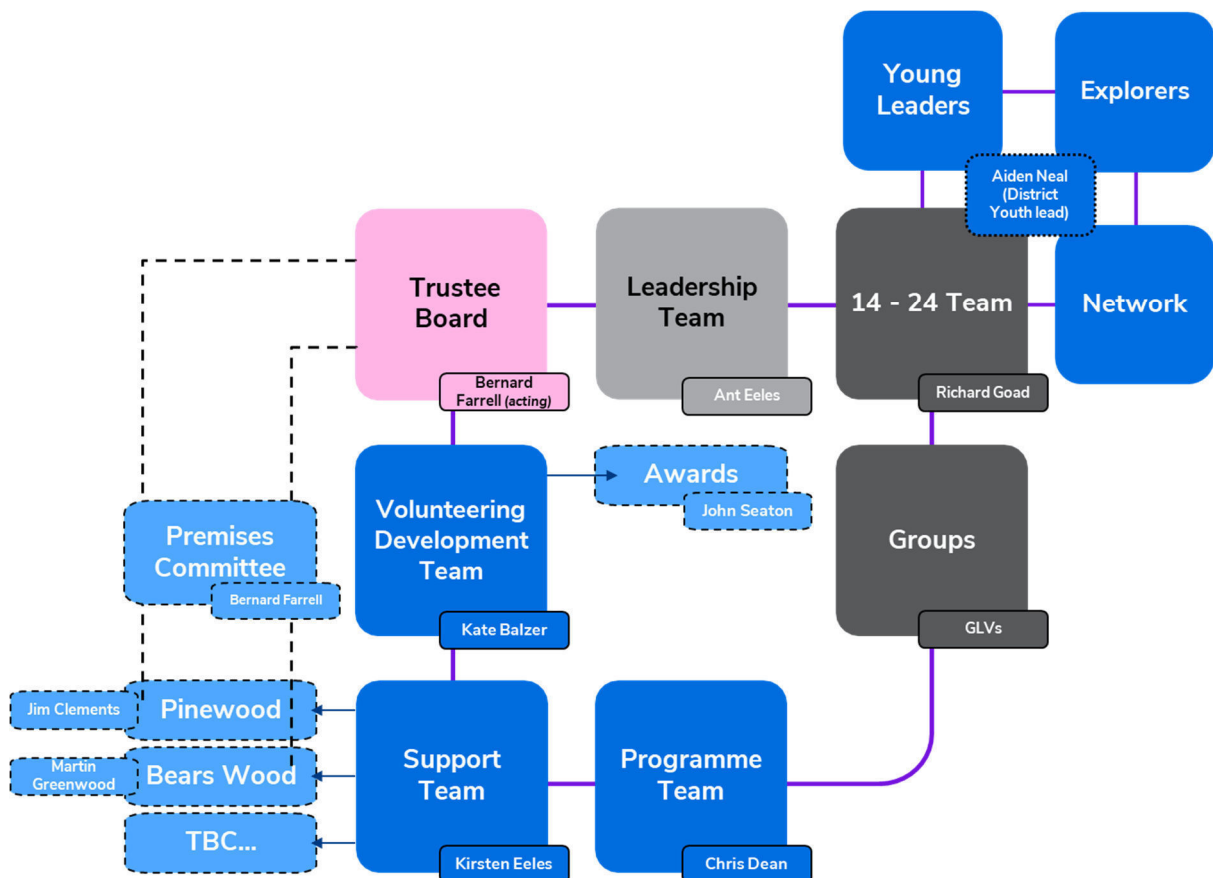
I want to end with a huge thank you to every adult volunteer and young leader in our District. You **create safe spaces for young people in a world of unsafe ones**, with **skills and experiences at Scouts staying with them for life**. Your service is meaningful and appreciated – **thank you!**

Ant Eeles  
 District Lead Volunteer  
 Croydon Scouts

Email: [dlv@croydonscouting.org.uk](mailto:dlv@croydonscouting.org.uk)

**District Senior Leadership Team:**

- Ant Eeles – District Lead Volunteer
- Aiden Neal – District Youth Lead
- Chris Dean – Programme Team Leader
- Richard Goad – 14-24 Team Leader
- Kate Jones – Volunteering Development Team Leader
- Kirsten Eeles – Support Team Leader



## District Youth Lead Report 2025

I took on the role of District Youth Lead in June 2025 and have since focused on supporting and strengthening youth involvement across Croydon Scouts. Over the past year, I have worked to build connections with different sections and better understand how young people are currently engaged within the District.

A key part of this has been attending and supporting a range of district events. This has included visiting Patrol Leader Training, where it was encouraging to see young people developing their leadership skills, and the Adkin Challenge, which showcased teamwork, resilience, and the enthusiasm of our members. These visits have provided valuable insight into the strengths of our current provision and opportunities to further embed youth-shaped Scouting.

Looking ahead, my focus for the coming year is to continue increasing youth voice across all sections, ensuring that young people are given meaningful opportunities to shape their Scouting experience. This will include further engagement with section events, supporting youth forums, and building on the momentum created through the relaunch of the Network.

Overall, the second half of 2025 has been a positive start in the role, with strong foundations in place to continue developing youth-led Scouting across Croydon in the year ahead.

Aiden Neal  
District Youth Lead  
Email: [youth@croydonscouting.org.uk](mailto:youth@croydonscouting.org.uk)



## District Programme Team Report 2025

The past year has been one of adjustment to the new District Team structure, which in some respect is still work in progress and ongoing. The Team has 15 members, many of whom were part of the previous District Team. Adapting to the new world of Transformation has been a major challenge and perhaps not entirely to everyone's taste.

Early on the Team decided to adopt a cluster system in which several Groups are supported by two or three Team members. For some clusters this is working well but for others not so well and we are aware of this. As our DLV has requested it would really help if all sections of all Groups could send us their termly programmes regularly. Email: [programme@croydonscouting.org.uk](mailto:programme@croydonscouting.org.uk)

The Team has met broadly every other month. From January through to September the focus was on delivering the programme of District activities agreed before Transformation leaving the last four months of the year for us to plan ahead for 2026. This has been quite challenging for us too as we try to introduce new activities for all sections without canning the old favourites. We have tried to provide more for the Squirrels, Beavers and Cubs, but we really need input from section leaders in order for this to take hold. As mentioned above there are only 15 of us and 11 have other roles in Scouting. If in reading this you think you can help please speak to me. 2026 will be our busiest year yet so it will be all hands on deck.

I am sure that our DLV will wish to comment on the Census results. Overall, youth membership is up by 1.6 % which is good news. Conversely the drop in Beaver numbers and the persistently high numbers on waiting lists are causes for some concern.

Finally, may I thank all of my Team for their diligence and commitment sometimes under a certain amount of stress.

Chris Dean

Programme Team Lead

Email: [programme@croydonscouting.org.uk](mailto:programme@croydonscouting.org.uk)

## Squirrel Section Report 2025

This year has been another exciting and developmental period for the Squirrel Scout section across Croydon District. As the youngest section in the Scouts, Squirrels (ages 4–6) continue to provide an engaging introduction to Scouting, helping young people build confidence, friendships, and foundational 'Skills for Life' and 'A Place to Belong'.

### Growth and Membership:

The District currently supports 6 Squirrel Dreys and another about to open imminently! Total youth membership stands at approximately 86 Squirrels, showing steady growth over the past year with waiting lists remaining in most groups, demonstrating a strong demand for places. We are pleased to see increased interest from new families and improved retention as young people transition into Beaver Scouts.

### Programme Highlights:

Over the past year, Squirrel Dreys across Croydon have delivered a varied and engaging programme aligned with the Squirrel Scout Award Scheme.



Highlights include:

- District-wide Squirrel Fun Day event (pictured above)
- Visit to Airport House
- Learning kayaking skills in a local school's pool
- Indoor tent pitching & toasting marshmallows on a fake campfire
- African drumming sessions, Guide dog visits
- Creative sessions focusing on teamwork, storytelling, and crafts

These activities have supported badge work while fostering teamwork, curiosity, and resilience.

### Leadership and Volunteers:

The success of the Squirrel section continues to rely on the dedication of our volunteers. Several new volunteers have joined this year, strengthening delivery capacity

Ongoing training and support have been provided by TSA ensuring safe and high-quality programmes.

We thank all volunteers for their enthusiasm and commitment.

### Achievements:

- Successful launch of 2 new Squirrel Dreys within the district within the last year
- Increased visibility of the Squirrel section within local communities
- Positive feedback from parents and carers regarding the impact on young people

The Squirrel Scout section in Croydon District continues to grow in strength and impact. With continued support from volunteers, leaders, and the wider district team, we are confident in delivering a fun, safe, and inspiring start to Scouting for our youngest members.

Email: [programme@croydonscouting.org.uk](mailto:programme@croydonscouting.org.uk)

## Beaver Section Report 2025

I'm not sure whether to start with good or bad news.

Lets get the bad news out of the way first. The census in 2025 showed a decrease in numbers of Beavers but oddly perhaps there was a drop in the number of boys but an increase in the number of girls attending Beaver Colonies however overall numbers fell from a total of 481 to 465 between 2024 and 2025.

The main event of the year was the Cub / Beaver fun day on June 7th last year. A total of 470 Cubs and Beavers attended the event at Frylands Wood Scout Outdoor Centre. Any rain held off and everyone seemed to have a great time. Just under 20 activities were put on with little doubt that the inflatables were the favourite to most who went. A big thank you to Frylands Wood team, to Mandy Giles and all helpers who together made the day a huge success.

Looking forward to 2026 the Beavers will be attending the Gilwell Fun day in June 2026.

Andrew Davies

District Programme Team Member – Beavers

Email: [programme@croydonscouting.org.uk](mailto:programme@croydonscouting.org.uk)

### The lull before the storm of Beavers



# BEAVERS

## Cub Section Report 2025

The Science Museum Trip in February, was enjoyed by all that attended and everyone enjoyed the various Science Experiments etc. in the WonderLab and for many this day led to gaining their Science Badge.

March saw the Cubs taking part in 2 Events - the Emergency Badge Day - those who attended had a great time and learnt how to use an AED as well as getting a Certificate to say that they are now a Mini Medic. Also, on the same day - was the annual Cub/Scout Linking Day at Bearswood. This is where older Cubs and younger Scouts meet to learn various skills including axe and saw, knife skills, fire lighting, backwoods cooking and ever essential team building. Again, this was enjoyed by all those who attended.

In June, the District Cubs joined with the Beavers for the annual Fun Day at Frylands Wood. Well over 400 Cubs enjoyed a day of fun and adventure. Various activities including inflatables of all kinds. Air rifle shooting, archery, tomahawks, climbing wall to pond dipping. Of course the most important activity of all was the on site providore.



Generally during the rest of the year and right across the District our Cub Packs have been busy on Camps at Broadstone Warren; Hillside Scout Camp; Blacklands as well as their own HQ's and of course Bears Wood, Pinewood and Frylands Wood Camp Sites.

The numerous activities have included Kenley Aerodrome visit; Croydon Sailing Club; A quiz in Wickham, visiting our local Campsites for activity days and evenings and a host of other exciting challenges including visiting Police or Fire Stations and even popping down the Croydon



Town Hall to see the Civic Mayor. Many of our Cub Packs annually engage throughout the year with their local parish or local communities supporting food banks or visit local nursing homes etc.

Debbie Jeffries / Linda Ford / Marina French  
District Programme Team Members - Cubs  
Email: [programme@croydonscouting.org.uk](mailto:programme@croydonscouting.org.uk)



## Scout Section Report 2025

The Scout section enjoyed another very busy and active year in 2025.

In March, 8 troops from Croydon took part in the **County Night Hike**. It was an incident night hike starting and finishing at Bentley Copse. Congratulations to 16th Purley and 7th Purley who jointly took 2nd place. With 42 teams from across the County this was a great result.

Also in March, we had our **Cub/Scout Linking Day** at Bears Wood. The aim was to give older cubs a taster of what to expect when they go up to the Scout Troop. 102 young people took part. Everyone seemed to have a great time taking part in the activities of knife skills, axe and saw skills, task master, pioneering chariots, fire lighting and 1st Aid.

We had a full 25 teams for **Checkpoint Challenge** on 18th May. Teams navigated their way around a 7-mile course, starting and finishing at Bears Wood. There were 8 checkpoint incidents to challenge their teamworking and scouting skills. Incidents included a non-verbal communication challenge, constructing a free-standing flagpole, identifying smells, a logic puzzle, fire lighting to burn through string, the ball in the bag game, a 'radioactive' ground problem solving challenge and a blindfolded minefield teamwork challenge. Teams also had a photo quiz and earned bonus points for carrying a Ryvita biscuit throughout the hike, unbroken. Final scores were very close-1st 11th Purley; 2nd 7/12th Croydon B; and 3rd 1st/27th Croydon.

**Adkin 100 - the Adkin Camping Challenge.** This was a highlight of the year. Over the last weekend in June, 12 teams from across the district took part in the Adkin Camping Challenge at Bears Wood. 2025 marked 100 years of Adkin. The trophy was first presented in 1925, and has run every year since, apart from 2 years of Covid lockdowns. They even ran it during the wartime years. It's a Patrol camping challenge for Scouts of all ages and abilities and challenges them to develop their patrol camping skills. The Patrol is provided with a camping area. They pitch their tents, cook for themselves, including sorting out their own cooking fires, and take part in some fun challenges. Each team were assessed against the Adkin bronze, silver and gold standards. 9 out of 12 teams achieved the gold standard and the rest got silver. Results were as follows: Adkin Trophy (Overall winner) 7th Purley Kestrels; Hicks Trophy (Team spirit) 11th Purley; Brass Peg (Most improved) 7/12 Croydon Birdwatchers and Golden Duck Trophy (Duckmaster Challenge) 1st Purley The un-named



In October a record 46 PLs and APLs attended the **PL Training Weekend** at The Fort in Dulwich. They learnt about what makes a good Patrol Leader, instructing others, teamwork, risk assessing activities and programme planning, running games amongst other things. Each of them took a turn at leading the Patrol they were in on an activity which included knife skills, fire lighting, making a promotional video and various teamwork challenges.

In September we ran a '**Little Camp**' at **Bears Wood** for those troops that don't manage to do much camping on their own. 3 troops took part in a back-to-basics weekend camp and enjoyed pioneering, axe and saw skills, games and some on-site activities.

Our annual **Wide Game** at Shirley Hills was due to be held in November but sadly, with a forecast of persistent heavy rain, it had to be postponed until March 2026. It's very rare that we need to postpone events but, as always, the safety of our young people and volunteers must come first.

None of these events would have been possible without lots of planning and organisation from our District Programme Team members and the help of the Troop Leaders and Young Leaders. A big thank you to all who helped at our events and to those scouters who give up their time every week providing valuable skills for life and lots of fun for the young people in the scout troops.

Richard Carrau and Dawn Lockyer  
District Programme Team Members – Scouts  
Email: [programme@croydonscouting.org.uk](mailto:programme@croydonscouting.org.uk)



## Explorer Section Report 2025

Croydon Explorers maintained our membership numbers similar to last year with 223 explorers, this consolidates the previous years increase with numbers not seen since 2014. Thank you to all the Explorer team for doing something right with our exciting and active programme.

Our numbers are reflected by a very active programme of activities. In February Explorers from Croham Valley, Kenley Aces, Seahorses and Young Leaders entered the Southern 50 competition with more teams entering the 50Km class, but unfortunately this year we didn't have any class winners, maybe next year.

In March Explorers from Kenley Aces, Seahorses and Croham Valley joined around 8000 other Explorers at the Monopoly Run, always a popular event with the young people. On a bitterly cold March evening most Croydon Units entered teams in Red Flare the overnight hiking/activity competition, but this time the cold was the biggest challenge, so congratulations to Seahorses coming 2<sup>nd</sup>.

In April the focus turns to Duke of Edinburgh and practice expeditions, all units had teams involved at all levels whether that was in North Wales for Gold or the Surrey hills for Bronze and Silver.

May/June we enter exam season with less trips but more activities such as wide games, make-up evenings, axe throwing or pizza making. Croham Valley did manage a weekend sail with the Discovery Project in late June on the Solant. And Kenley Aces had 2 evenings climbing near Forest Row. Seahorses made use of the long days (or short nights) for their regular sunset to sunrise walk.

July brings Camp preparation and opportunities for longer evenings. Seahorses and Kenley had a fantastic day at the Royal International Air Tattoo (RIAT) at RAF Fairford. And Kenley made contact with some Explorers from Quebec, undertaking volunteering with them on the City Commons, rowing the Queens barge Jubilant on the Thames and hosting them at the Military Music Spectacular at Horse guards along with Croham Valley and Seahorses. This year there was only 1 Croydon Explorer on the Explorer belt to Poland, hopefully more next year in Galica.

August saw Kenley and Croham Valley join for summer camp In the Lake District with 50 of us in 4 minibuses and van, having a fantastic time despite storm Floris delivering us some very strong winds putting a real strain on our tents. Purley Cross joined with the 29<sup>th</sup> Purley Troop for a trip to Alderney and seemingly had much more better stable weather.

September started off with thrills and spills for Seahorses who took part in the Theme Park Camp, always a tough one to get tickets for, lucky them.

October Croydon scouts were the main attendees on the GLSW hillwalking and climbing weekend in North Wales, we were blessed with some really good weather with all having a great day walking on the 1<sup>st</sup> day and for the 2<sup>nd</sup> day most having a fantastic day climbing on natural rock and others electing to walk again on a more challenging hill.

November and December all units tend to have activities in their HQ, with most getting into London to see the Christmas Lights, then finishing off the year with meals and parties.

We continue to be active with top awards with 1 Seahorse gaining their Explorer belt with a joint GLSW/Surrey team to Poland. The Explorer belt is a 10-day unsupported expedition to a foreign country undertaking tasks to learn about the land they travel through.

For Duke of Edinburgh in 2025 we gained 7 Bronze awards, 7 Silvers, but unfortunately no golds this year although some are very close, so 2026 hopefully will bring more.

The Young Leader unit has continued to run the YL training scheme with every session well attended. 3 Young Leaders completed their YL Missions to achieve their top award of the YL Belt.

A very well done to all in gaining these top awards, with thanks to the leaders who put in so much time and energy supporting the Explorers for their awards and activities.

Richard Goad  
14-24 Team Leader  
Email: [explorers@croydonscouting.org.uk](mailto:explorers@croydonscouting.org.uk)

# EXPLORERS



## Network Section Report 2025

Over the course of 2025, Croydon Network Scouts has undergone a successful relaunch, marking a significant and positive step forward for the section. Following a period of reduced activity, the Network has been re-established with renewed energy and purpose, resulting in a growing and engaged membership.

The relaunch has been well received, with a strong number of members now actively participating in the programme. Those involved have been enjoying a variety of activities that have been both delivered and planned throughout the year. The focus has been on creating opportunities that balance adventure, social connection, and personal development, in line with the wider aims of the Scout Network section.

A number of key events have been organised as part of this revitalised programme. These include the “Never Too Old” camp, which provided an opportunity for members to take part in traditional scouting experiences, as well as a Network camp planned for the New Year period leading into 2026. In addition, members have been encouraged to engage in social events, both within the district and across the wider region, helping to strengthen connections between Network Scouts and the broader scouting community.

Looking ahead, there are already plans in place for further camps and activities over the next 12 months. These plans aim to build on the momentum established in 2025, ensuring a continued programme of engaging and inclusive opportunities for all members.

Overall, 2025 has been a highly successful year for Croydon Network Scouts. The relaunch has laid a strong foundation for future growth, with an enthusiastic membership and a clear programme of activities that will continue to develop in the year ahead.

Aiden Neal & Richard Goad

Network Leads

Email: [network@croydonscouting.org.uk](mailto:network@croydonscouting.org.uk)



**network**

## Volunteer Development Team Report 2025 / 26

The role of the Volunteer Development Team is to ensure that volunteers have a positive experience by welcoming and supporting new and existing members. To that end we aim to facilitate learning, development, and training opportunities, ensure proper onboarding and recognition, and work with the DLV and the rest of the District to foster a strong, inclusive volunteering culture across the District. In our relatively short existence this has meant supporting the introduction of Welcome conversations and new introductory training, endeavouring to align first aid records (an ongoing process), exploring the District's training needs and the provision available (hoping to work alongside our neighbouring Districts on this) and running an inaugural (although not really the first for any of us) a Leader Skills Day (in early 2026) alongside the programme team (see pictures below)



The Volunteer Development team includes myself and various other volunteers from different areas of experience and interest, including Tony Crackett, Theresa Jeffrey, Russell Priestly, Chris Sinclair and Jon Slade. We do however work with other teams and pull people, and ideas in wherever we can.

Kate Jones (previously Balzer)  
Volunteer Development Team Lead  
Email: [volunteering@croydonscouting.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@croydonscouting.org.uk)

### **Below is a list of awards given during 2025**

#### **Medal for Meritorious Conduct**

Matthew Benn - 1st Purley

#### **Award of Merit**

Ann McCarren - 19th Purley / Elaine Cauthery - 19th Purley

#### **Chief Scout's Commendation for Good Service**

Ellen Tilbury - 19th Purley / Kirsten Eeles - 29th Purley / Richard Alderton - 1st Purley

## District Support Team Report 2025

The Support Team is a new structure for Scouts, and can help with all the behind-the-scenes activity which goes in to scouting – including elements of the previous “Active Support” teams, some of the tasks previously done by the old “exec committees” roles, premises teams, and quartermaster and webmaster. So, it’s challenging to bring these different things and teams together into a single team.

I joined the District team in late 2025 and fortunately for me (!), many of these things are in great hands already – Martin Greenwood, Jim Clements and Bernie Farrell act as our District premises team, ensuring good communication between our Trustees and our fantastic campsite teams –both are well established with some superb facilities and ongoing renovations and upgrades at both sites (covered in their own reports). Saiqa Asqhar works with the trustees to support our finance operations, whilst Pam Grogan and Karen Purton support our trustees and District leadership team with administrative support, and finally John manages enquiries from across the District. Thanks to all of these volunteers for all they do!

We do have some gaps, and these are where the focus is, primarily around communication and marketing / social media. We’ve made improvements to the website, slimming down the site, removing some out of date content and providing useful information for volunteers around our activities processes, first aid etc. We now have a District tech team, and I’m grateful to Louise Green, Sam Linley, Richard Goad and Aiden Neal for helping us bring improvements to these areas. Moving forward Aiden will be working with Scout Content to ensure our social media pages are full of engaging content.

**You can help – mention or tag @croydonscouting on Facebook or Instagram from your own social media pages, and we’ll share or use your content to publicise your Group or Unit on the District page.**

We’ll also be launching a modernised newsletter over the summer and again we’ll try to use content you’ve already produced on your social media pages and similar to populate this. More detailed articles can always be emailed to [support-team@croydonscouting.org.uk](mailto:support-team@croydonscouting.org.uk).

We have a particular need for one or more volunteers to join the team:

- If you enjoy **marketing**, maybe graphic design, networking and relationship building, we’d like someone to take the lead on supporting our Groups and the wider District with marketing presence in their areas.
- If you love being organised, enjoy a spreadsheet, but also enjoy locating, maintaining and storing Scout equipment, we’d like to appoint a **District quartermaster**. We’re expecting some changes in guidelines from HQ around improved asset management and we want to be in a good shape when this happens, as well as making it easier to locate, book and use equipment held in our District stores.

If either of these roles sound like you, please let me know

We can also field general enquiries around social media, tech, GDPR, administration, OSM etc – just drop the team an email at [support-team@croydonscouting.org.uk](mailto:support-team@croydonscouting.org.uk) and we’ll get back to you!

Kirsten Eeles

Support Team Leader

Email: [support-team@croydonscouting.org.uk](mailto:support-team@croydonscouting.org.uk)

## Property and Premises Report 2025

This is probably the first report in this form covering the main areas above in our District

Elsewhere in the annual report you will read detailed reports on Bears Wood and Pinewood and you will see for yourselves what fantastic strides have been made at both sites.

I would like to touch on the work of the two crews who give up so much of their time and effort and in many cases their own finances to ensure that we in Croydon have two exceptional sites at our disposal. So to each and every one of you, many thanks on behalf of us all.

Our youth have access at much reduced rates than outside Scout Groups and a fraction of what non Scouting youth groups have to pay. The sites success can be measured in the level of usage from those prepared to pay a premium beyond the Croydon Rate in order to have some time at either.

The year (that's 2025) has seen a number of upgrades. Bears Woods traversing wall is a fantastic replacement for use of the old mobile climbing wall, and Pinewood is almost unrecognisable. Next year has a number of major upgrades in the pipeline.

Leases have been an issue and with Croydon Council holding seven and the Council parlous financial state. We have the Pinewood lease due for renewal and Bears Wood currently being held over and others in various states of time sensitivity.

Two leases we are trying to sort involve Groups which are either closed, closing, absorbed with and without tenants etc., etc. We are also involved with developers, builders and the Council over new builds and non-conforming built structures.

We promoted the Premises work book during the year to help Groups look at their own buildings, whether rented, leased or owned to make sure that the fabric was safe and it's use was in compliance. We will probably replay that again next year.

Meanwhile if you fancy a dabble in bricks, mortar and leases then join the group, no experience required, training given, effort expected.

Yours in Scouting,

Bernard Farrell

Property and Premises Chair

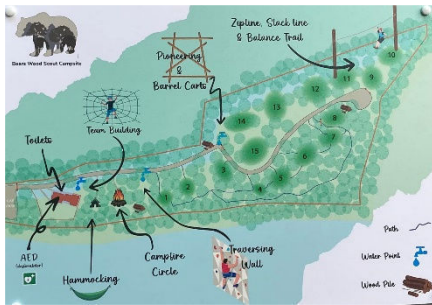
Email: [support-team@croydonscouting.org.uk](mailto:support-team@croydonscouting.org.uk)

## Bears Wood Scout Campsite Report 2025

As I'm sure you can imagine running a site like Bears Wood is no easy task and each year we have to carry out all the same tasks as previous years. Some things never change, cleaning after groups have stayed, all the mowing of sites, trimming of hedges, cutting back of undergrowth etc. All this is carried out tirelessly by our regular volunteers Danny Curnyn, Brian Young, Richard Carrau, Steve French, John Seaton & Sean Weston, all of whom you probably know from many years of service to Croydon Scouting, along with Brian Smith and Dave Spaughton who come from outside of Scouting, but just want to give a little back to the community (and of course enjoy our company!!)



We can also call upon others when required, such as Leo Hawkins, who are always willing when not too busy working, to carry out specialist tasks. We also have very good relations with Howden Tree Care who look after our tree stock and help us with our Woodland Management Plan. Those of you who follow us on Facebook will no doubt have seen many of these tasks, and more, reported on as they get carried out.



The other contributors to the maintenance of the site, to whom we are very grateful, are the volunteers from Harold Stiles Williams who were on site for the third year running and helped to fully dismantle the old derelict archery range and clear the site; Pinewood Seahorses who carried out their annual leaf clearance and gutter cleaning amongst other tasks and Croydon Network who helped by moving hundreds of tyres from around the site down to the car park ready for collection by a specialist

disposal company.

The main reason we all do this is to make sure we have a great facility for the young people to take advantage of and it is great to report that Bears Wood is continuing to prove very popular, with bookings still very positive both in the indoor accommodation and groups camping. Not only local scout groups but many from further afield and numerous DofE groups stay overnight on expeditions. What is extremely encouraging is that not only are we getting many repeat bookings (which means we must be doing something right!!) but we continue to get enquiries, and subsequently bookings, from new groups, many of which are from further afield due to recommendations via word of mouth.

We have had the usual local scout groups along with ones from Dartford, Camberwell, Tadworth, Barnehurst to name just a few. Numerous school DofE bookings, school residentials, CCF Cadets and events for District Squirrel, Cub & Scout sections have been hosted too.

We had the pleasure of hosting the national SASU "Bush Scout" for their annual training weekend of Outdoor Practical Skills and Tomahawk Throwing again this year and will be doing so again next year.





In May we hosted a VE 80 Beacon ceremony which proved very successful with numerous dignitaries, MP Natasha Irons, Councillors Richard Catterjee and Lynne Hale and the Deputy Lieutenant Col. Ray Wilkinson in attendance showing their support for Bears Wood and Croydon Scouting.



So, as you can see Bears Wood continues to thrive and go from strength to strength, and long may it continue. My grateful thanks to all who make it possible (and popular) by their tremendous hard work and dedication.

Martin Greenwood – Team Leader (Bears Wood)

Email: [bearswood@croydonscouting.org.uk](mailto:bearswood@croydonscouting.org.uk)



## Pinewood Scout Centre Report 2025

Pinewood continues to transform and the past year has seen huge improvements that have included most significantly, the conversion of the old, end of building tool and kayak stores into new year round, indoor bunk room accommodation that provides 28 x heavy duty, adult rated bunks across four rooms. Out in the grounds we have built new secure storage for the boats and equipment and opened up previously unused areas through the removal of invasive rhododendron that has enabled us to create a new natural pond, create boundary dead hedging and new wildlife habitat, plant new indigenous trees and significantly improve the biodiversity of the site. This work has continued with the lake which continues to improve in quality, but last summer saw four consecutive heat waves that seriously lowered the levels of water in the lake to a level where unfortunately we had to suspend water activities. We're in regular dialogue with our neighbouring golf courses to consider ways to improve ground water levels but are reliant on rainfall so hopefully last year was the exception and not our new norm!



In addition to all the structural transformations, the past year saw us start a supporting communications push, to significantly increase awareness of Pinewood and its facilities across the Region and wider community. This has complimented the District Support Team social media work and has directly seen an increase in inquiries and bookings from Groups from outside District. This increased awareness has also led to the increase in interest in volunteering on our Thursday team days and a dedicated effort to engage the District Network members, to support Explorer Belt and other community based projects, alongside providing a purposeful way to continue with the Scouting movement.

This approach has also led to the commission of a highly successful Prisons & Probation Service Community Pay Back Project. This Project is onsite on a Wednesday and provides free, essential labour to accelerate many of our projects across the site, most notably the clearing of rhododendron, construction of dead hedges, indoor painting, relocation of stores and the paving of the archery range to make it wheelchair accessible. The feedback from the Project has been incredibly positive and seen the Project evolve into a weekly event that the participants actively look forward to as it provides meaningful, purposeful work, while supporting the mental and physical health of the participants through immersion in nature and experiencing the unique environment that Pinewood provides.

These transformations form part of a structured five year programme, that is, thanks to the Community Payback and voluntary efforts, ahead of schedule and as we move into year five, we aim to create new woodland camping areas and improve the facilities around the lake. There's still much to do but the team continues to grow in size, enthusiasm and capability and is always happy to accommodate new joiners regardless of experience or ability.



Pinewood is an amazing District asset that has special rates for Croydon Groups, so if you've not experienced it or seen what we've done get in touch and come along as we think that you'll be impressed.

Jim Clements – Team Leader (Pinewood)  
Email: [pinewood@croydonscouting.org.uk](mailto:pinewood@croydonscouting.org.uk)



## SCOUT GROUPS

### 1st COULSDON SCOUT GROUP

Richmond Hall, Fourth Drive, Coulsdon, CR5 3BD  
(Access from rear of Lion Green Road car park, CR5 2NL)

### 1st / 27<sup>th</sup> CROYDON SCOUT GROUP

Beverley Hall, Grant Road, Croydon, CR0 6PJ

### 2nd CROYDON SCOUT GROUP

The Den – 3 Rama Lane, Cintra Park  
Upper Norwood. SE19 2LJ (Paused Meetings)

### 3<sup>rd</sup> CROYDON (Legacy) SCOUT GROUP

(Paused Meetings)

### 6th CROYDON SCOUT GROUP

11-13 Bynes Road, South Croydon, CR2 0PY

### 7th/12th CROYDON SCOUT GROUP

Rear of 35 Birdhurst Rise, South Croydon, CR2 7EJ

### 10th CROYDON SCOUT GROUP

113-115 St James's Road, Croydon, CR0 2UW

### 23rd CROYDON (1st South Norwood) SCOUT GROUP

The Den, 30 Love Lane, South Norwood, SE25 4NG

### 26th CROYDON (St Andrew's) SCOUT GROUP

St Andrew's Church Hall, Quadrant Rd, Thornton Heath, CR7 7NG  
St James the Great School, Windsor Rd, Thornton Heath, CR7 8HJ

### 28th CROYDON (Our Lady of the Annunciation) SCOUT GROUP

Rear of 20-22 Craven Road, Croydon, CR0 7JH

### 29th CROYDON (St John's) SCOUT GROUP

Behind Shirley Parish Hall, 81 Wickham Road, Croydon, CR0 8TB

### 31st CROYDON (2nd Shirley, St George's) SCOUT GROUP

Pinewood Scout Centre - CR0 5AJ

### 39th CROYDON SCOUT GROUP

The Quest, 105-107 Beulah Road, Thornton Heath, CR7 8JG

### 44th CROYDON (Air Scouts) SCOUT GROUP

Ad Astra, Hythe Road, Thornton Heath, CR7 8QQ  
(Currently meeting in Salvation Army Building – CR7 8LF)

### 61st CROYDON (St Oswald's) SCOUT GROUP

The New Enterprise, Biggin Hill, Upper Norwood, SE19 3HT

### 63rd CROYDON (4th South Norwood) SCOUT GROUP

(Closed During 2025)

### 67th CROYDON SCOUT GROUP

The Endeavour Halls, 273 Norbury Crescent, Norbury, SW16 4LF

### 1st PURLEY (Princess Christian's Own) SCOUT GROUP

53-55 Purley Park Road, Purley, CR8 2BW

### 7th PURLEY (All Saints, Kenley) SCOUT GROUP

All Saints Church Hall, Church Road, Kenley, CR8 5DU

### 9th PURLEY (St John the Baptist) SCOUT GROUP

St John the Baptist Parish Centre, Dale Road, Purley, CR8 2EF

### 11th PURLEY (St James) SCOUT GROUP

St Edmunds Church, 51 Mitchley Avenue,  
Purley, CR8 1DN

### 16th PURLEY (7th Sanderstead, All Saints) SCOUT GROUP

Cranleigh Close, South Croydon, CR2 9LH

### 17th PURLEY (St John's, Old Coulsdon) SCOUT GROUP

Rear of St John's Church Hall, Marlpit Lane, Old Coulsdon,  
CR5 2HD (top of Marlpit Lane)

### 18th PURLEY (Sanderstead URC) Scout Group

Farm Fields, South Croydon, CR2 0HQ

### 19th PURLEY (Riddlesdown) SCOUT GROUP

Dunmail Drive, off Mitchley Hill, South Croydon, CR2 1EX (Access  
from bottom of Mitchley Hill, CR2 9HJ)

### 21st PURLEY (St Barnabas ) SCOUT GROUP

St Barnabas Church, Higher Drive, Purley, CR8 2HR

### 25th PURLEY (St Mark's) SCOUT GROUP

Scout Hut, Rear of St Mark's Church Hall, Church Road, Purley,  
CR8 3QQ

### 29th PURLEY (Purley Baptist) SCOUT GROUP

Purley Baptist Church, Banstead Road, Purley, CR8 3EA

### 30th PURLEY MASJIID SCOUT GROUP

Rear of Hillars Heath Road, Coulsdon, CR5 2JP  
(path between numbers 28 & 29)

### 1st SELSDON & ADDINGTON SCOUT GROUP

Rear of St John's Hall, 7a Upper Selsdon Rd, South Croydon,  
CR2 8DD

### 2nd SELSDON & ADDINGTON SCOUT GROUP

(Group merged with 5<sup>th</sup> S&A Scout Group)

### 5th SELSDON & ADDINGTON SCOUT GROUP

Addington Methodist Church, Huntingfield, Addington, CR0 9BA

## EXPLORER SCOUT UNITS

### AL-AYYUBI EXPLORER SCOUT UNIT

Rear of Hillars Heath Road, Coulsdon, CR5 2JP  
(path between numbers 28 & 29)

### CROHAM VALLEY EXPLORER SCOUT UNIT

Rear of 35 Birdhurst Rise, South Croydon, CR2 7EJ

### KENLEY EXPLORER SCOUT UNIT

21st Purley HQBP Hut, St Barnabas Church, Higher Drive, Purley,  
CR8 2HR

### LEGACY EXPLORER SCOUT UNIT

(Paused Meetings)

### PINEWOOD SEAHORSES EXPLORER SCOUT UNIT

St. Mary's Church Hall in Addington Village. Croydon. CR0 5AS  
(Opposite the Harvester Restaurant)

### PURLEY CROSS EXPLORER SCOUT UNIT

Purley Baptist Church, Banstead Road, Purley, CR8 3EA

### YOUNG LEADERS EXPLORER SCOUT UNIT

No regular meeting place

## SCOUT NETWORK

### CROYDON (ROMANS) SCOUT NETWORK

No regular meeting place

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