



Gloucestershire County Scout Council
Annual Report and Financial Statements
For the year ended 31st March 2026

Charity Registered in England and Wales Number: 302129

Gloucestershire County Scout Council

Legal and Administrative Information

Registered Charity No: 302129

Registered Office: Cranham Scout Centre, Cranham, Gloucestershire. GL4 8HP

Patron of The Scout Association: His Majesty, The King

Officers April 1st 2025 to March 31st 2026:

Board of Trustees

Ex Officio:

County Lead Volunteer: Carole O'Donnell

Elected Members from 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026:

County Chair: Dan Seamarks

County Treasurer: Yvonne Bunce

Ryan Hawkins

Colin Steward

David Hall

Lewis Dangerfield

Ash Freeman – resigned Sept 2025

Mark Spiller – resigned Sept 2025

Tony Dover – resigned Sept 2025

Co-opted Member:

Callum Johnston – appointed Nov 2025

Right of Attendance: Graham Brant, Regional Lead Volunteer, South West England

Meeting notetaker: Louise Little as an employee

Bankers: Lloyds Bank plc, National Westminster Bank plc.

Gloucestershire County Scout Council

Trustees' Report

The Trustees (who are also the Directors for the purpose of Company Law) have pleasure in presenting their annual report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2026.

Objectives and activities

The objectives of the Gloucestershire Scout Council are as a unit of the Scout Association.

Type of governing documents

The County's governing documents are those of The Scout Association. They consist of a Royal Charter, which in turn gives authority to the Bye Laws of the Association and The Policy, Organisation and Rules of The Scout Association.

How the charity is constituted

The County is a trust established under its rules which are common to all Scouts. It is constituted as an educational charity.

Trustee selection methods

The Trustees are appointed in accordance with the Policy, Organisation and Rules of The Scout Association. All Trustees complete The Scout Association trustee and mandatory learning within the first six months of joining the Trustee Board, they also complete other Scout Association mandatory learning periodically as required.

Additional governance information:

The County is managed by the County Trustee Board, whose members are the Charity Trustees of the Scout County, an educational charity. As Charity Trustees, they are responsible for complying with all legislation applicable to charities, including registration, maintaining proper accounts and submitting returns to the Charity Commission as required.

For 2025/26, the Trustee Board consisted of the Chair, Treasurer and five Trustees, meeting every two months to oversee the effective governance of the County.

The Trustee Board exists to ensure that the charity is well-managed, that risks are assessed and mitigated, that buildings and equipment are maintained in good working order and that legal requirements and organisational policies and rules are followed. Their work provides the essential foundation that enables volunteers across Gloucestershire to deliver high-quality, safe programmes that give young people skills for life and a Place to Belong.

Risk and Internal Controls

The Trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure that appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error.

The County maintains systems of internal control designed to provide reasonable assurance against material mismanagement or loss, supported by comprehensive insurance policies that ensure all insurable risks are covered.

The Board of Trustees and the Leadership Team conduct an ongoing review of the risks that members of the Association in Gloucestershire may encounter and systems have been established to mitigate those risks. Risks are minimised through clear procedures for the authorisation of all projects undertaken by members and these procedures are periodically reviewed to ensure they continue to meet the needs of Scouting in Gloucestershire.

The Board of Trustees follows, without exception, the policies issued by The Scout Association relating to the safe operation and administration of all activities involving youth and adult members, in accordance with Policy, Organisation and Rules.

The Board also keeps under regular review all insured risks and the policies maintained by the County Administrator to ensure that cover remains appropriate and sufficient. In addition, all payments require two authorised signatories, providing an additional safeguard within our financial controls.

Safeguarding

The safeguarding of young people in our care remains our number one priority. We look to ensure that we have a continued culture of openness and transparency vital in having an effective safeguarding system. Our Yellow Card Code of Conduct is embedded in everything we do and makes clear to young people and parents/carers the behaviour expectations of our volunteers. All Adults in Scouting regularly working with young people will have been subject to a disclosure and barring service review at least every 5 years. Safeguarding training is mandatory for all volunteers and is refreshed every 3 years. The levels of mandatory training carried out by adult volunteers across the County are regularly reviewed at County Trustee meetings. Notifications of near end or lapsed checks are sent to individuals and the CLV.

The Purpose of Scouting

Scouting exists to actively engage and support young people in their personal development, empowering them to make a positive contribution to society.

The Values of Scouting

As Scouts we are guided by these values:

Integrity – We act with integrity; we are honest, trustworthy and loyal.

Respect – We have self-respect and respect for others.

Care – We support others and take care of the world in which we live.

Belief – We explore our faiths, beliefs and attitudes.

Co-operation – We make a positive difference; we co-operate with others and make friends.

The Scout Method

Scouting takes place when young people, in partnership with adults, work together based on the values of Scouting and:

- Enjoy what they are doing and have fun
- Take part in activities indoors and outdoors
- Learn by doing
- Share in spiritual reflection
- Take responsibility and make choices
- Undertake new and challenging activities
- Make and live by their Promise.

The Trustees confirm that the charity meets the Charity Commission's Public Benefit criteria under both the advancement of education and the advancement of citizenship or community development headings.

Strategic Direction

At its core, we believe that Scouting offers life-changing adventure to young people through its programme. Our aim is for as many young people in Gloucestershire as possible to benefit from high-quality Scouting experiences and the opportunities for growth, challenge and adventure that they provide.

The County meets the Charity Commission's public benefit criteria under both the advancement of education and the advancement of citizenship or community development headings. Our programme, leadership training and community engagement all contribute directly to these charitable purposes, ensuring that Scouting continues to make a meaningful and positive impact across Gloucestershire.

Achievements and Performance

Growth

At the January 2025 census, we recorded **78 groups across 9 Districts**, with a total of **5,162 young people** aged 4 to 18. Our Squirrel Dreys reported **256 members** in the 4–5 age range, and numbers continue to grow as more Dreys open across the County – with some groups already establishing a second Drey to meet demand.

Our **Young Leader** numbers also stood at **256**, reflecting the continued strength of youth leadership and the enthusiasm of young people stepping forward to support the programme.

Programme

Young people join and stay in Scouting because of the way the programme is delivered. Three of the key factors that underpin high-quality programming are the ability to:

- Take part in adventurous activities
- Take part in residential experiences
- Achieve top awards

These elements remain central to what makes Scouting engaging, challenging and rewarding for our young people and they continue to shape the experiences we offer across the County.

It is truly uplifting to reflect on a full year of activity across the County, where our young people have been inspired, challenged and supported to achieve their very best.

We now have over 300 leaders holding activity permits across a wide range of disciplines, including Nights Away, Water Sports, Mountain Activities and Archery – and not forgetting the significant number of leaders who hold shooting qualifications as well. This breadth of expertise is one of our greatest strengths and enables us to offer safe, high-quality adventurous experiences throughout the year.

To support the Adventurous Activity Permit Scheme, we continue to undertake moderation to ensure that permits issued to adults are based on appropriate levels of experience and clearly demonstrated competence. In 2025/26, we once again passed the National Moderation Scheme, reaffirming the robustness and integrity of our processes.

We remain extremely proud of the achievements of our young people in gaining their Top Awards. Based on census data, where we are asked to report on these accomplishments, we can share the following:

- 81 (39% of eligible) Squirrels achieved the Acorn Challenge
- 286 (37% of eligible) Beavers achieved the Bronze Chief Scout Award
- 239 (39% of eligible) Cubs achieved the Silver Chief Scout Award
- 120 (36% of eligible) Scouts achieved the Gold Chief Scout Award
- 14 (4% of eligible) Explorers and Network members achieved the Platinum Chief Scout Award
- 4 (1% of eligible) Explorers and Network members achieved the Diamond Chief Scout Award
- There were 23 Bronze, 10 Silver and 7 Gold Duke of Edinburgh Awards presented
- 15 Young Leader Belts were presented
- 4 King Scouts Awards were presented

None of this would have been possible without the tremendous time, energy and commitment given by every team lead, team member, helper, parent and carer who has

supported our young people to achieve so much. To each and every one of you, we offer a heartfelt **thank you**.

Cranham Scout Centre

Our biggest investment – and undoubtedly our most significant resource – continues to be Cranham Scout Centre, situated in the heart of the Cotswolds. Cranham remains a fantastic site that benefits not only our own Scouting community but a wide range of external organisations as well.

Following the overwhelming support from members, who made it clear that Cranham is a valued asset of the County, the Trustee Board has ringenced £50,000 for Cranham's future development as part of the creation of a strategic business plan. This will focus on refurbishing and enhancing the site grounded in the views our members gave in our 2025 consultation

From 2025, the Trustees have made a 10-year commitment to the site, which includes an ambition to reduce operational losses.

The Cranham Management Board (CMB) has now been reformed with a clear focus on delivering improvements and shaping a long-term vision for Cranham's future.

Recent improvements include:

- Additional parking in the Grove and at the top of the main site
- Installation of a Cavebus
- Upgrades to the shooting range
- Introduction of a new online booking system
- The relaunch of our refreshed brand: **Cranham Outdoors**

As always, our sincere thanks go to all users of the site and to the dedicated team of volunteers who help maintain Cranham throughout the year, under the guidance of Brandon, our Operations Manager.

Highlights

A few of the many fantastic achievements not previously mentioned:

- Excellent **service team weekends** at Cranham
- An amazing **BEAST weekend**, bringing Explorers together from across the County
- A wonderful **S&E and Discover** event celebrating 12 years, where Cubs, Scouts, Explorers, Guides, Brownies, Beavers, Squirrels and Rainbows from across the County and the UK enjoyed two weekends of activities and fun
- Continued achievement of **Wood Badges** by our adult volunteers
- District-led events including the **Gloucester Gang Show**, **Cotswold Marathon**, **Stomp** and **Farriers Challenge**

Our thanks go to everyone who has contributed to making these successes possible.

Financial Review

The trustees consider that the financial position of the County is such that the operation of the County is sustainable in the long term.

Reserves Policy

The policy on reserves is to hold sufficient resources to continue the charitable activities of the charity should income and fundraising activities fall short.

The Trustee Board recognises that there are currently two primary sources of income available: County membership subscriptions (£15.50 per young person in 2025) and the Cranham income.

To that end:

- The Board of Trustees operates a bottom-up annual budgeting process that aligns spending with the objectives of Scouting and supports development against our strategic priorities. The primary focus continues to be the **quality of programme delivery** and **reaching more young people**, under the guidance of the County Lead Volunteer and in discussion with the County Chair and the Board of Trustees.
- The Board considers membership subscriptions to be a stable source of income. As such, general undesignated reserves are set at around 50% of Cranham income, recognising this as the least guaranteed income stream.
- The Board intends to seek grants and other external income sources to supplement both membership subscriptions and income generated through Cranham.
- The Board will undertake an annual review of designated and restricted reserves to ensure they remain appropriate for the development of Scouting and that they are being effectively utilised to support that purpose.

The County has four funds:

- Property and Equipment Fund
- International Fund
- Other designated Funds
- Other unrestricted Funds

Investment Policy

The charity's reserves are small and as a consequence does not have sufficient funds to invest in longer-term investments such as stocks and shares. The charity has therefore adopted a low-risk strategy for the investment of its funds. All funds are held in cash using only mainstream banks. The Trustee Board regularly monitors the levels of bank balances, and the interest rates received to ensure the charity obtains maximum value and income from its banking arrangements. Occasionally this may involve using an account that requires a period of notice before funds may be withdrawn, before doing so the Trustee Board considers the cash flow requirements.

Future Plans

The County will continue to progress the new Strategy of The Scout Association (*Place to Belong*) and ensure that our County Vision aligns closely with this and with any future strategic developments from Headquarters.

Our current *Vision 27* will be reviewed in 2027 and we will share updates as this work unfolds. Please look out for further information as we move forward with our plans.

DECLARATION

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England & Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the income and expenditure of the charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements, and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for maintaining proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the trust deed/constitution.

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Signed and approved on behalf of the charity's trustees:

Signature.....

Full Name.....

Position (Chair)..... Date:.....