

**1st Forres Scout Group
Trustees' Annual Report
Year Ended 31 March 2026**

Reference and Administrative Details

Charity Name: 1st Forres Scout Group

Charity Number: SC043071

Operating Address: Scout Hall, Bank Lane, Forres, IV36 1NU

Trustees

The following individuals served as Trustees during the reporting period:

- Michael Rhind – Chair of the Board of Trustees
- Louise Barron – Treasurer
- John Innes – Group Lead Volunteer and Trustee
- John Davies – Trustee
- Ewan Rhind – Trustee

The Trustee Board met regularly throughout the year to oversee governance, financial management, safeguarding compliance, risk management, strategic planning and the long-term sustainability of the charity.

The Board recognises the importance of maintaining a broad range of skills, knowledge and experience. Opportunities to join the Trustee Board continue to be promoted throughout the year and the Group actively welcomes expressions of interest from parents, former members, local professionals and members of the wider community.

Structure, Governance and Management

The Group operates in accordance with the Policy, Organisation and Rules of The Scout Association and Scottish Charity Law.

Following the introduction of The Scout Association's new governance framework, the Trustee Board and Group Leadership Team structure has now been fully embedded within the Group.

The Trustee Board is responsible for:

- Governance and compliance
- Financial oversight
- Risk management
- Property and asset management
- Strategic planning
- Supporting the delivery of Scouting through effective governance

The Group Leadership Team, led by the Group Lead Volunteer, is responsible for the delivery of Scouting programmes, volunteer support, youth engagement and the day-to-day operation of the Group.

The Trustee Board and Leadership Team continue to work closely together whilst maintaining clear separation between governance and operational delivery.

How the Trustee Board Operates

The Trustee Board exists to ensure that the charity remains safe, financially sustainable and compliant with all relevant legislation and guidance.

The Board meets regularly throughout the year and is responsible for:

- Acting in the best interests of the charity
- Managing finances and approving budgets
- Maintaining appropriate policies and procedures
- Managing risk and safeguarding oversight
- Supporting the strategic development of the Group
- Ensuring the effective use of charitable resources

Trustees are appointed through the Annual General Meeting process and are selected based upon the skills, experience and commitment they can bring to the charity.

The Board remains committed to continuous improvement and the ongoing recruitment of individuals who can strengthen governance and support the future development of Scouting within Forres.

Charitable Purpose

The purpose of 1st Forres Scout Group is to actively engage and support young people in their personal development, empowering them to make a positive contribution to society through the values and methods of Scouting.

The Group delivers programmes to young people aged 6–18 through Beaver Scouts, Cub Scouts, Scouts and Explorer Scouts.

Volunteers

The Group continues to be entirely volunteer-led.

The Trustees wish to record their sincere thanks to all leaders, assistant leaders, occasional helpers, parent volunteers and supporters who have contributed their time and expertise throughout the year.

Without this commitment, the opportunities offered to local young people would not be possible.

Financial Review

The Group remains in a strong financial position.

The Trustee Board continues to maintain an appropriate reserves policy to safeguard the long-term future of the charity and to ensure the continued operation and maintenance of the Scout Hall and associated assets.

Throughout the year, expenditure continued to focus on delivering high-quality programmes, maintaining facilities, supporting volunteers and investing in equipment to improve the experience offered to young people.

Achievements, Performance and Outcomes

Looking Back on 2025/26

The year ending 31 March 2026 has been another successful and progressive year for 1st Forres Scout Group. Membership reached its highest recorded level in recent years, volunteer numbers continued to grow, and significant progress was made in strengthening governance, developing

facilities and investing in equipment and resources to support the continued growth of Scouting within Forres.

Demand for Scouting within Forres remains exceptionally strong. Membership levels continue to grow across all sections and the Group remains committed to ensuring as many young people as possible have access to Scouting opportunities.

Young people participated in a wide range of activities throughout the year including camps, overnight experiences, outdoor adventure activities, badge work, leadership opportunities, community service projects and District events. These experiences continue to provide valuable opportunities for young people to develop confidence, resilience, teamwork, leadership skills and independence.

The Group maintained a strong presence within the local community through participation in the annual Remembrance Parade and a number of fundraising and community engagement initiatives. A particular highlight of the year was our involvement in the annual M&C Christmas Market events, where volunteers, young people and supporters represented the Group across several weekends. These events not only raised valuable funds but also helped raise awareness of Scouting within the local community and promote future volunteer recruitment.

The Trustee Board was particularly pleased to see a number of young people progress through the sections during the year and continue their Scouting journey into Explorer Scouts and adult volunteering roles. This demonstrates the lasting impact that Scouting continues to have within the community.

Membership Growth and Reach

The Group continues to experience strong and sustained growth in both youth and adult membership.

The 2026 Scout Census recorded a total membership of approximately 120 members, representing the highest membership level recorded by the Group in recent years and demonstrating significant growth compared to previous census returns.

This growth reflects the continued demand for Scouting within Forres and demonstrates the commitment of volunteers in providing high-quality programmes for young people.

Particularly encouraging has been the growth in adult membership. The Group recorded approximately 40 adult volunteers and trustees during the reporting period, representing the highest adult membership figure in the Group's recent history.

The Group now benefits from a broad mix of leadership, support and governance volunteers, helping to strengthen resilience and sustainability across all sections.

Demand continues to exceed available places in several sections. At the time of the census, waiting lists remained in operation across multiple age groups, with over 50 young people registered on waiting lists seeking opportunities to join Scouting within Forres.

The Trustee Board recognises both the opportunities and challenges created by this demand. Increasing capacity, recruiting additional volunteers and progressing the Scout Hall Extension Project remain key priorities to ensure more young people can access Scouting in the future.

The census also demonstrates continued progress towards inclusivity and diversity within Scouting, with female membership continuing to increase across both youth and adult sections.

The Board remains proud that Scouting in Forres continues to attract new members, retain volunteers and provide life-changing opportunities to an increasing number of young people from across the local community.

Volunteer Growth and Development

The Group continues to benefit from a dedicated and growing volunteer team.

During the year we welcomed several new adult volunteers who have relocated to the Forres area and wished to continue their Scouting journey. These individuals have brought with them a wealth of experience, enthusiasm and knowledge gained from previous Scouting roles elsewhere in the United Kingdom.

Their arrival has strengthened programme delivery, increased resilience within sections and helped ensure the continued growth and sustainability of the Group.

The Group remains committed to recruiting and supporting volunteers and continues to actively promote opportunities for adults to become involved in Scouting.

Investment in Equipment and Resources

The Trustee Board continued to invest in equipment and resources that directly enhance the experience offered to young people.

During the year the Group expanded its camping infrastructure through the purchase of additional bell tents and patrol tents. These investments have significantly increased the Group's camping capacity and now allow up to 66 young people to participate in camping activities simultaneously.

This increased capacity provides greater flexibility when planning camps and events and ensures more young people can benefit from outdoor experiences without limitations caused by equipment availability.

Additional investment was made in camping equipment, activity resources, cooking equipment and programme materials to support the continued delivery of safe, high-quality Scouting experiences.

The Trustee Board remains committed to maintaining and replacing equipment where necessary and investing in resources that support the delivery of Skills for Life.

Governance and Strategic Development

The year has seen the successful continuation and embedding of Scouting's new governance framework.

The Trustee Board and Group Leadership Team have continued to develop their respective roles and responsibilities, providing greater clarity around governance, operational delivery and decision-making.

During the coming year, further improvements to the Group's management structure will be introduced through the implementation of agreed devolved powers and delegated budgets. These arrangements will empower volunteers and section teams to make operational decisions more efficiently whilst ensuring appropriate governance oversight is maintained by the Trustee Board.

The Board continues to actively advertise opportunities for new trustees to join the charity and remains committed to broadening the skills, knowledge and experience available within its membership.

Scout Hall Extension Project

One of the most significant strategic projects undertaken by the Group continues to be the proposed extension and improvement of the Scout Hall.

Following almost two and a half years of planning, consultation and development work, the Group successfully secured planning permission for the project during the reporting period.

A dedicated working group continues to progress the development of the project and investigate funding opportunities, partnerships and delivery options.

The project aims to:

- Significantly increase the capacity of the Scout Hall
- Improve accessibility and facilities
- Provide additional flexible meeting and activity space
- Support future membership growth
- Enhance opportunities for wider community use

The extension project remains a key strategic priority for the Trustee Board and represents an important investment in the future of Scouting within Forres.

Subscription Review

To ensure the long-term financial sustainability of the Group and to respond to increasing operational costs, the Trustee Board undertook a review of membership subscriptions during the year.

Following careful consideration, it was agreed that subscription rates would increase from the start of the 2026/27 financial year. This decision was taken to ensure the continued delivery of high-quality programmes, maintain facilities and equipment, support volunteer development and safeguard the future financial stability of the charity.

The Trustee Board remains committed to ensuring that Scouting remains accessible to all young people and continues to operate financial support arrangements where required to remove barriers to participation.

Plans for the Future

The Trustee Board has identified the following priorities for the coming year:

- Progress the Scout Hall Extension Project towards fundraising and delivery phases
- Continue growing youth membership opportunities
- Recruit and develop additional adult volunteers
- Continue to strengthen the Trustee Board through active recruitment
- Implement devolved budgets and delegated authority arrangements between the Trustee Board and Leadership Team
- Maintain strong governance and financial management
- Continue investing in equipment and facilities
- Strengthen community partnerships and fundraising activities
- Ensure Scouting remains accessible to all young people regardless of background or circumstance

Statement of Trustee Responsibility

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

The Trustees confirm that they have approved this report and believe it provides a true and fair summary of the activities and achievements of the charity during the year ended 31 March 2026.

Signed on behalf of the Trustees

Michael Rhind

Chair of the Board of Trustees

1st Forres Scout Group