

North Devon Scouts  
Annual Report 2025



**Scouts**  
**North Devon**

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# 2024 AGM Minutes.

**Date:** 12<sup>th</sup> September 2024

**Venue:** Rock Park Bowling Club, EX32 9AH

**Attendees:** As per signing in sheets.

## Welcome

Daniel (Chair) welcomed all and gave thanks to everyone for attending.

## **Governance: Approval of the minutes of the previous AGM of the District Scout Council**

Approval proposed by Alison Homa and seconded by Phil Gladwin.

## **Governance: Adopt the model constitution from Policy, Organisation & Rules (POR)**

The District Trustee Board Constitution had been made available in advance and was approved by the District Scout Council.

## **Governance: Note the District's financial year**

The District's financial year was noted as 1<sup>st</sup> April – 31<sup>st</sup> March.

## **Governance: Agree the number of members that may be appointed to the Trustee Board**

As per the approved constitution, the number of members that may be appointed to the Trustee Board was set at a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 12, to include ex officio members.

## **Review of the previous year**

Mark Etheridge directed members of the District Scout Council to the numerous reports provided in the Annual Report.

## **Making Appointments**

The outgoing District Trustee Board proposed the appointment of the following Trustee Board for 24/25:

Jack Tighe (DLV Ex Officio); Dan Smith (Chair); Matt Lavercombe (Treasurer); Mark Etheridge; Phil Gladwin; Alison Homa; Norman Rider; Matt Cole

This proposal was approved by the District Scout Council.

It was proposed that John Rendle be re-elected as District President – this was approved by the District Scout Council.

Glover Stanbury was proposed by the Treasurer, and this was confirmed by the chair. A show of hands to approve this nomination was requested and received.

### **Next Trustee Board Meeting**

To be arranged.

### **AGM Closing Remarks**

The Chair closed the AGM, thanking everyone for attending and outlined arrangements for the rest of the event.

## District Chair – Annual Report.

I am delighted to extend my warmest welcome to each one of you as we stop to reflect upon another remarkable year of Scouting in North Devon, and my second year as Chair.

We continue to move in the right direction to ensure our Charity is built on strong foundations and robust governance, enabling us to thrive and support Scouting in North Devon.

Looking back over the past year, I'm reminded just how much we can achieve when we work together as a Scouting family. North Devon Scouts has been through a year of real change – not always easy, but full of progress and promise for the future.

At our campsite, we've seen some exciting developments. The refurbished toilet block is now open – a big step forward in making the site more welcoming and practical for everyone. We also said goodbye to the climbing towers in their current iteration, clearing the way for the next chapter in the site's story. Work is moving steadily towards the deal with the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway, which will open new possibilities for the site.

We remain committed to continuing the development of Collard Bridge as one of our main assets. It is more than just a campsite – it is a place where young people discover adventure, teamwork, and resilience. In the coming year, we will focus on making further improvements to the site's facilities, access, and sustainability, ensuring that it can serve our members for generations to come. This investment in Collard Bridge is an investment in the future of Scouting in North Devon.

Change hasn't just been physical. As a district, we've embraced new ways of working, adjusting how we plan, communicate, and support each other. It hasn't all been straightforward – transformation rarely is – but the determination and creativity I've seen from our teams has been inspiring.

I want to say a heartfelt thank you to our trustees, whose hard work and steady leadership keep the district moving forward, and to every single leader and volunteer who gives their time, energy, and passion to make Scouting thrive in North Devon. You are the reason our young people can take on adventures, learn new skills, and build memories that last a lifetime.

Together, we've laid strong foundations this year. I'm excited to see where the next 12 months will take us. Here's to a future filled with even more adventure, learning, and memorable experiences.

*Dan Smith (dan.smith@nndistrictscouts.org.uk)*

*Chair, North Devon Scouts*

## District Lead Volunteer – Annual Report.

As we close out another remarkable year for our district, I wanted to take a moment to reflect on our journey and offer my deepest thanks. Your energy, your passion, and your unwavering commitment are the very bedrock of our success, and for that, I am truly grateful.

This past year, our district has not just continued to operate; it has thrived, thanks to your tireless efforts. Every week, you step up to nurture the potential of our young people, guide them through adventures, and create memories that will last a lifetime. Whether you are leading a section meeting, supporting a camp, or simply being there with a word of encouragement, your impact is immeasurable.

As a district, we know the greatest impact we can have on a young person's Scouting journey comes from two things: a full calendar of events and a home base to run them from. Thank you to Chris Palethorpe and his team for their incredible work in ensuring that our calendar remains packed with opportunities. And thank you to everyone who has invested their time and resources into our campsite at Collard Bridge, a place we can all be proud to call our home.

This year also saw us coming to grips with a new digital system and updated training. While these changes brought challenges, they also enabled us to create more focused teams with specific objectives to support our programs. I encourage you to look at the district vacancies and consider what teams you might like to be involved in. Teams like Gang Show, Target, Hillwalking, Campsite, and Young Leader Support would all welcome extra hands. These roles offer a great opportunity for personal development and satisfaction.

The biggest barrier to providing the level of program support we wish to provide is not financial, nor is it a lack of equipment; it is simply the need for more volunteers.

I want to take a moment to address a significant change for our district. This year, we have seen our original District Commissioner team step down, and I want to express my sincere thanks to them for their tireless work and dedication. Their contributions have provided a strong foundation for us to build upon. I am now honoured to be taking the helm as your District Lead Volunteer, supported by the tireless Margaret Jarvis. Together, we are committed to ensuring a smooth transition and a bright future for our district.

In closing, my heartfelt thanks once again to every one of our dedicated volunteers. Your passion, commitment, and hard work are the driving force behind everything we achieve. As we step into a new year filled with growth and innovation, I am confident that, together, we will continue to make a profound and positive difference in the lives of young people across our district.

With Gratitude,

*Mark Etheridge (mark.etheridge@nndistrictscouts.org.uk)*

*Margaret Jarvis (margaret.jarvis@nndistrictscouts.org.uk)*

*District Lead Volunteer Team, North Devon Scouts*

## Programme – Annual Report.

First, I would like to thank Matt Cole for all he achieved in the role – I aim to continue his great work.

The Programme Team includes the District Events Team, Gang Show Team, Walking Team, Archery & Shooting Team, and the District Water Team. Over recent weeks I've met with several of these teams for a catch-up and check-in.

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### Lake Team

Phil Gladwin (Team Lead) reported an excellent response from Groups wanting water activities this year, with nearly every section from almost every Group booking one of the many dates offered. From Squirrels to Explorers, young people enjoyed a full summer term of sessions.

Phil is looking for someone to help manage the booking system for next year, and the District Team is actively seeking a volunteer for this role. The team also needs more instructors to expand opportunities for Groups. Many current instructors have given several evenings a week to make these sessions possible.

A huge thank you to Phil and the Lake Team for delivering kayaking, canoeing, raft building, and paddle boarding to so many young people.

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### Archery & Shooting Team

Although I haven't yet caught up with the team in person, they continue to run monthly Sunday shooting sessions, helping young people develop their skills.

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### Walking Team

I met with Justin, Roy, and Helen in Cornwall at the end of their DofE Silver practice walk. The team has delivered Bronze, Silver, and Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Awards this year, and entered a team in the 45-mile Ten Tors event.

An idea is also being developed to offer an expedition-style event for older Scouts to help Troops achieve the Scout Expedition Award. This is something I'm keen to progress.

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### Gang Show Team

As a member of the Production Team, I can confirm plans for the 2026 show are well underway. Thomas Hearn is the new Team Leader, with roles allocated to his team.

I attended the Governance Team meeting in July, led by Norman Rider. This team will remain in place for a five-year term, giving stability and allowing for long-term planning. Their vision includes the possibility of one day returning to the Queen's Theatre in Barnstaple – a more central location for the District.

Applications for the 2026 show have been sent to all Brownie, Guide, Ranger, Cub, Scout, and Explorer groups, and responses are already coming in. Auditions and the taster evening will take place in early October.

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## Events Team

The new Events Team is adapting to working as one unit rather than section-based teams. Helen Hearn continues to lead Cub events, and Gwen focuses on Beaver events.

Some events were postponed this year, including District Football, which has been hampered by venue cost and availability. The District Fun Day was moved to 1st November due to a shortage of leaders to run bases.

Successful events have included:

District Games Day (March, Petroc College Sports Hall) – Beavers, Cubs, and Scouts learnt and played a wide range of games to take back to their Groups.

District Camp at Woodhouse Park (May) – Squirrels to Explorers enjoyed a huge range of activities, with sections mixing freely and the District coming together.

Worm Charming (September) – Well attended, followed by a campfire.

Moonlight Challenge 2024 – Won by 1st Marwood. The 2025 challenge will take place on 15th November, run by North Devon Network with District support.

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## Upcoming Events

- 2026 – 40 years of Beavers: a series of special events throughout the year.
  - Early May Bank Holiday 2026 – District Scout Camp at Collard Bridge.
  - February 2026 – Gang Show at the Landmark Theatre, Ilfracombe.
  - 1 November 2025 – District Fun Day at Arlington Court.
- 

This year has been full of achievements and activity across all programme areas. With more volunteers and continued teamwork, we can build on this momentum and offer even greater opportunities for young people in North Devon Scouting.

Chris Palethorpe ([chris.palethorpe@nddistrictscouts.org.uk](mailto:chris.palethorpe@nddistrictscouts.org.uk))

*Programme Team, Team Leader*

## 14-24 – Annual Report.

### Taw Explorers

Taw Explorers meets over two evenings each week – Thursdays and Fridays – in Barnstaple, at the campsite, and in Ilfracombe. We regularly welcome around 50 young people on a Thursday and 10 on a Friday.

In addition, we have 14 Explorers who serve solely as Young Leaders, supporting sections across the district and gaining valuable leadership experience.

Our team currently has 10 committed leaders who give their time week after week. As our numbers continue to grow, we are keen to welcome more support – even if it's just running a badge or skill session for a few weeks once a year. Every bit of help makes a difference.

This year we have celebrated many badge awards, including Young Leader Belts, Diamond, Platinum, and King's Scout Awards. Our Explorers have also participated in Bronze and Silver Duke of Edinburgh's Awards, with plans underway for a Gold expedition.

We were especially proud of our Ten Tors success, with the 45-mile team finishing strongly. Behind every expedition is a dedicated group of leaders training Explorers in navigation, campcraft, first aid, and hillwalking – their hard work truly pays off.

Throughout the year, our programme has been packed with variety: climbing and bouldering at different venues, paddling on the lake, cooking, creative projects, knot tying and pioneering, whittling, games, and of course – fire lighting.

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### Torrige Explorers

Torrige Explorers meet on Friday evenings in Bideford, with 15 members in total, including Young Leaders. The group is supported by four leaders, although we will soon be saying goodbye to Carl. We thank him sincerely for his time, energy, and dedication.

This year, activities have included geocaching, bouldering, crafting, camping, building cardboard boats, walking, games, and plenty of fun.

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### Network

Our small but active Network group continues to thrive. They enjoy socialising, camping, climbing, walking, and contributing as leaders in younger sections. Their willingness to “get stuck in” is a real asset to the district.

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### Leaders

Across all groups, we are looking for more support. This doesn't have to be a weekly commitment – we know there's a huge wealth of expertise across the district, and we'd love parents and other volunteers to come and share their skills. Even a short-term project, such as running a badge linked to your own passion, can make a big impact.

Finally, my heartfelt thanks go to every leader who gives so much time, energy, and care to our young people. You make Scouting possible, and your dedication is truly appreciated.

*Alison Homa ([alison.homa@nddistrictscouts.org.uk](mailto:alison.homa@nddistrictscouts.org.uk))*

*14-24 Team, Team Leader*

## **North Devon Gang Show – Annual Report.**

The 2025 show was, as always, an excellent production. This year we underwent an assessment, and overall, the feedback was very positive, with just a few areas for improvement. These will be addressed as we prepare for the 2026 show.

Since Covid, and following our move to the Ilfracombe Theatre, ticket sales have dropped by around 500 seats compared to pre-pandemic numbers. This decline is putting pressure on ticket prices and increasing the amount we need to raise to keep the show running.

The recent addition of part of Torridge District into North Devon has also created challenges. For some, the journey to and from Ilfracombe – particularly at night – is long and difficult. This distance seems to be a factor in the reduced support from that end of the district.

As part of our five-year plan, the Governance team is creating an action plan to address these issues. Our aim is to ensure every young person in Scouts and Guides across the district has the opportunity to be part of the Gang Show – whether on stage, behind the scenes, or in the audience. We want to make it as accessible and inclusive as possible for all.

As always, we are keen to welcome new members from Scouting to join the Gang Show. There are roles available both on stage and in the many departments that work hard behind the scenes. If you'd like to get involved, please do get in touch – we'd love to have you on board.

*Norman Rider ([norman.rider@nddistrictscouts.org.uk](mailto:norman.rider@nddistrictscouts.org.uk))*

*Team Leader, Gang Show Governance*

# Collard Bridge Scout Campsite – Annual Report.

## Site Growth & Usage

The campsite continues to thrive, and booking revenue for 2025 has shown further growth in revenue. Our heartfelt thanks to Denise Pike who organises these bookings on our behalf.

## Improvements & Projects

Safety is always our primary concern, and tree work continues to be at the forefront of our task list. This year saw a Team from Perrigo visit and help finish the final parts of the Assault course. We have broken ground on a toilet refurbishment project, revamped the problem solving, and created a social campfire area. We have also had the climbing towers removed, unfortunately there was no path through which we could achieve accreditation for their construction and that left them. New self-led activities have been added, like; Lawn games, Frisbee golf, Crazy golf, Catapults. We will also be looking to add Fencing to the list of activities.

## Paddle Sports

33 bookings and 850 young people.

Thanks to the incredible commitment of our paddle sports team, a full program was made available to all our groups this year. Their effort gave our young people fantastic opportunities on the water. A special note of thanks must go to Judy and her family; their generosity in providing access to the lake is what makes this entire program possible.

## Target Activities

Air-Rifles: 25 bookings, 470 young people. Archery: 24 bookings, 500 young people. Tomahawks: 19 bookings, 300 young people.

Our target activities are as popular as ever, thanks to our incredible team of instructors who dedicate their time to running these sessions. If you're interested in joining this team, we'd love to have you. We'll even cover the cost of your certification to get you started.

## Conclusion

Thanks to the hard work and dedication of the sub-committee and volunteers, the Collard Bridge Campsite is an ongoing asset for our district. We encourage you to get involved and lend a hand. We need a wide range of skills to keep things running smoothly, from administrative support to operating mowers and chainsaws.

## Finance & Accounts.

**NORTH DEVON DISTRICT SCOUT COUNCIL  
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

	Note	Unrestricted £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
<b>Receipts from:</b>				
Donations and legacies		2,013	2,013	19,145
Charitable activities		84,125	84,125	66,905
Membership subscriptions		19,449	19,449	15,596
Investment income		1,233	1,233	1,935
Other income		4,887	4,887	1,682
Total income		<u>111,707</u>	<u>111,707</u>	<u>105,263</u>
<b>Payments:</b>				
Raising funds		(384)	(384)	(2,231)
Charitable activities		<u>(100,252)</u>	<u>(100,252)</u>	<u>23,603</u>
Total expenditure		<u>(100,636)</u>	<u>(100,636)</u>	<u>21,372</u>
Net movement in funds		11,071	11,071	126,635
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>				
Total funds brought forward		<u>525,878</u>	<u>525,878</u>	<u>399,243</u>
Total funds carried forward	8	<u>536,949</u>	<u>536,949</u>	<u>525,878</u>

**NORTH DEVON DISTRICT SCOUT COUNCIL  
(REGISTRATION NUMBER: 290640)  
ASSET AND LIABILITIES AS AT 31 MARCH 2025**

	Note	2025 £	2024 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>			
Tangible assets	5	305,000	305,000
<b>Current assets</b>			
Investments	6	85,000	85,000
Cash at bank and in hand	7	<u>146,949</u>	<u>135,878</u>
		<u>231,949</u>	<u>220,878</u>
Net assets		<u>536,949</u>	<u>525,878</u>
<b>Funds of the charity:</b>			
<b>Unrestricted income funds</b>			
Unrestricted funds		<u>536,949</u>	<u>525,878</u>
Total funds	8	<u>536,949</u>	<u>525,878</u>

# Treasurer Report.

## BACKGROUND

The charity is made up of 5 operational areas: District, Campsite, Gang Show, Explorers and Scout Shop.

### DISTRICT

Receipts - £48,024  
Payments - £43,283  
Surplus - £4,741

### CAMPSITE

Receipts - £29,292  
Payments - £23,510  
Surplus - £5,782

### GANG SHOW

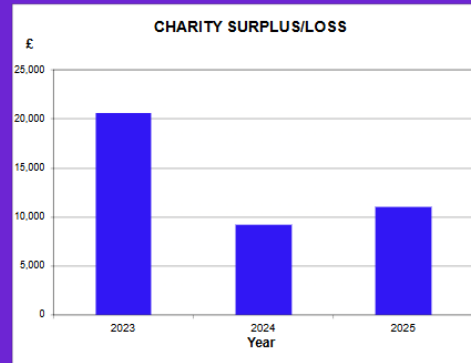
Receipts - £14,999  
Payments - £14,094  
Surplus - £905

### SCOUT SHOP

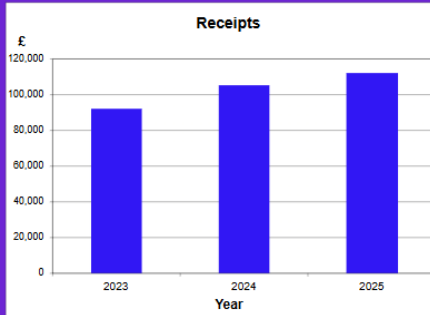
Receipts - £1,130  
Payments - £384  
Surplus - £746

### EXPLORERS

Receipts - £18,262  
Payments - £19,365  
Loss - £1,103  
Remediation plan for 2026 in place



## 2025 OVERVIEW



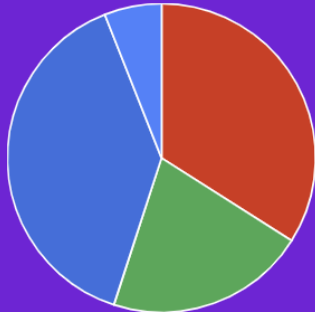
- First year with new Independent Examiner – moved from Smarter Accounting to Stephens & Willey
- 2025 accounts are prepared under new cash basis, agreed by the Trustees.
- Matt & Andrew Kennard (Accountant) identified material errors in previously filed accounts – charity commission agreed and we are in process of re-doing 2024 and 2023 accounts, although error dates back to 2016.
- Additional accountancy cost paid in 2026 due to the errors identified by previous accountants. Still in communication with Smarter Accounting regarding correction of the 2023 and 2024 accounts.
- Cash basis means the charity recognises income on a receipt and payment basis.
- Income for the charity has increased over the last 3 years due to the increase in activities that the charity has undertaken.



# DISTRICT

## Expenditure

### Expenditure excl Events



Admin Awards Programme support Activity equip

£2.02 £1.28 £2.34 £0.36  
 (£1.77) (£0.49) (£2.45) (£1.28)

Breakdown of how District Levy of £6 spent in 2025 (2024)

The District purchased the following from Reserves in the year:

- Initial Toilet block works
- Safety kit for wild camping
- Fencing equipment
- New troop shirts
- Expedition tents

Activity equipment equates to 6% of District Expenditure. Scout groups can hire district equipment which includes, marquees, recruitment kit and catering equipment via the District Website.

Programme support of 39% includes National Trust membership, old ADC funds and MPLC license.

Awards at 21% relates to chief scout certificates and woggles.

Admin at 34% includes Accountancy cost, AGM, website and bank fees.



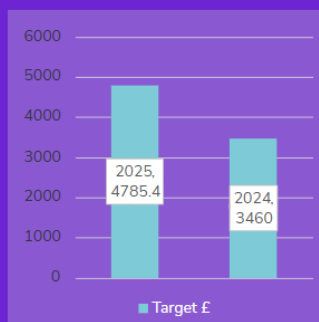
# CAMPSITE

## Paddle sports



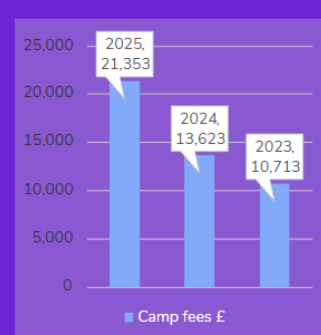
Paddle sports is £30 a session during the summer at Judy's Lake, who the Trustees are very thankful for allowing us to use the site and give the young people water sport activities.

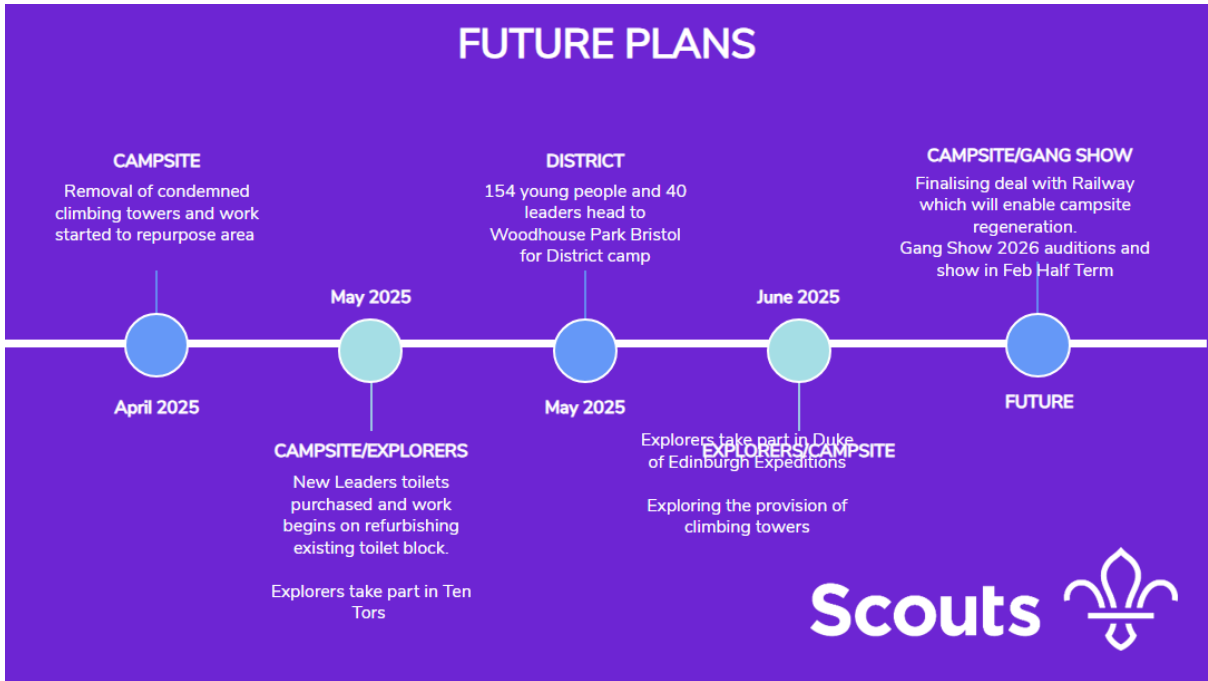
## Target



Target includes Archery, Shooting and Tomahawks both self led and with Target team.

## Camp Fees





Matt Lavercombe ACA ([treasurer@nddistrictscouts.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@nddistrictscouts.org.uk))

Treasurer, North Devon Scouts

# 2025/2026 Trustees.

## Ex-Officio Trustees

Ex-Officio Trustees are automatically members of Trustee Boards because of their role in Scouts.

- District Lead Volunteer: Mark Etheridge
- District Youth Lead: Jack Partridge

## Appointed Trustees

The Chair, Treasurer and Trustees are all appointed at the AGM by the District Scout Council.

- District Chair: Dan Smith
- District Treasurer: Matt Lavercombe ACA
- Appointed Trustee: Phil Gladwin
- Appointed Trustee: Alison Homa
- Appointed Trustee: Oliver Hamley
- Appointed Trustee: Matt Cole
- Appointed Trustee: Margaret Jarvis
- Appointed Trustee: Martin Bray

## Co-Opted Trustees

Trustee Boards can also co-opt members throughout the year. Co-opted Trustees may be chosen to do a particular task, or to bring new skills to the mix.

The proposed Trustee Board for 2025/2026 allows two spaces for co-opting additional Trustees throughout the year if required.

## Term

Trustees can be appointed for a period of between 1 and 3 years. For the 25/26 Trustee Board, the outgoing Trustee Board have agreed all appointments will be on a term of 1 year, as they feel this best serves the interests of the charity.

# Thank You.

## **Board of Trustees**

Thank you to those who have served on the Board of Trustees over the last 12 months, your input and support has been invaluable. I am confident that North Devon Scouts is in a better position because of you.

Special thanks to those who have decided the time is right to take a step back, we hope you remain part of the wider North Devon Scouts family.

## **Leaders**

The Leaders make North Devon Scouts work week in, week out and do all the 'stuff' that makes things happen. You all bring a fantastic range of experience and deliver skills for life – thank you.

Special thanks to those who have decided to step back over the last 12 months, we hope you remain part of the wider North Devon Scouts family and would gladly welcome you back.

## **Families, Friends, & Supporters**

North Devon Scouts simply could not operate and deliver fantastic experiences without the help of families, friends, and supporters. To you, we are incredibly grateful for your continued support and say thank you.

## **Young People**

The reason we are all here – the young people. Their positive, inquisitive, and enthusiastic nature is why we all continue to work hard behind the scenes to deliver the best possible experiences and opportunities.

Thank you for turning up each week and bringing your best self, ready to learn and grow.