
Ajax Sea Scout Group and Explorer Sea Scout Unit

Annual Report and Accounts
for the year ended 31st March 2026



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GROUP CHAIR'S REPORT

As Group Chair, I am pleased to present this report on behalf of the Trustee Board for the year ended 31 March 2026.

Ajax Sea Scouts continues to provide fantastic opportunities for young people through adventurous, educational and fun activities. None of this would be possible without the commitment of our volunteers, leaders, trustees, instructors, parents and supporters.

In 2025, there were genuine concerns that a shortage of volunteers could force us to close some of our sections. I am delighted to say those fears did not materialise. Throughout the past year, parents and supporters have stepped forward, with new volunteers giving their time and existing volunteers taking on additional responsibilities. Thanks to their commitment, not a single session was cancelled, and our young people have continued to enjoy a wide range of engaging and challenging activities.

On behalf of the Trustees, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to everyone who has contributed their time, energy and enthusiasm to the Group over the past year. Your support has ensured that we continue to thrive.

The Financial Report for the year ended 31 March 2026, on page 19, outlines the Group's strong financial position. Thank you to our Group Treasurer, Peter Drysdale, for preparing the report and managing the Group's financial records throughout the year.

Our Annual Report also highlights activities from across the Group. I hope you enjoy reading the reports from each Section Leader.

Below I am pleased to outline the management of the Group's facilities, equipment, fundraising, and volunteering since the AGM on 21 September 2025.

Facilities:

- Our facilities remain a key enabler of the wide range of activities enjoyed by our young people.
- Looking ahead we have many projects planned to improve the WAC including electrical, insulation and roofing works. If there are any parents with experience in these areas we'd appreciate any advice or support.
- We continue to rely on the support of volunteers during the maintenance days that are frequently run. These include various activities such as painting, cleaning, gardening, tidying and organising.

Equipment:

- This year has seen significant investment in our water activities programme. We were delighted to purchase a new RIB, Ripple and 12 replacement kayaks with partial funding from a Royal Navy grant.
- In the coming months we plan to replace Connie West's engine and return the vessel to full operation, providing further opportunities for all sections and groups to enjoy activities on the water.
- I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Alex Soden for his dedication and hard work in helping to secure and deliver these important improvements.
- We have also undertaken a number of repairs to our minibus during the year. With the ULEZ charity grace period ending in October 2027, the Trustees will assess the vehicle's long-term viability and whether a replacement is needed to continue supporting the group's activities effectively.
- Over the past year, we also invested in the Group's fundraising equipment, upgrading our EMF sound system and bar equipment to support successful events for years to come.

Fundraising:

- Fundraising plays a vital role in supporting the programme offered by Ajax and helping us maintain our facilities and equipment.
- I am delighted to report that Ajax enjoyed another successful fundraising year, generating more than £22,000 net of costs, in line with the excellent result achieved in 2025. This achievement would not have been possible without the dedication and hard work of our volunteers, parents and supporters. A huge thank you to everyone who helped organise, staff and promote these events. We are incredibly grateful for the time, skills and energy contributed by so many people.

- The funds raised during 2026 came from four key events:
 - Ajax Plant Sale, 2-3 May 2026: ~ £3,500
 - Esher May Fair, 16 May 2026: ~ £12,300
 - Tea Tent, National Sea Scout Regatta, 4-5 July 2026: ~ £250
 - Bar, Claygate Flower Show, 11 July 2026: ~ £6,000
- As with our sections, we are seeing a number of long-standing volunteers and parents moving on as their children leave Ajax. While we are extremely grateful that many continue to support the Group, we are always looking for new parents and supporters to ensure our fundraising events remain successful. We will be sharing information soon about how parents and supporters can help with planning and coordination of these events.

Volunteering:

- Once again, my sincere thanks go to all the leaders, trustees, parents and supporters who have contributed to the Group over the past year.
- Although we are fortunate to receive excellent support, we always welcome more parents and volunteers who can help regularly. Each new volunteer shares the workload and helps our existing team continue delivering high-quality Scouting experiences. If you can help or would like more information, please contact the relevant Section Leader.
- We encourage every family to contribute where they can, whether by volunteering regularly, helping at fundraising events or section activities, or sharing a particular skill. Every contribution, large or small, makes a real difference.
- Finally, I would like to remind families of the parent commitment that forms part of membership of the Group. We ask everyone to consider how they can support Ajax and help us continue to provide exciting opportunities for young people for many years to come.

Parent Commitment:

- Assist at the Group's principal fund-raising event, currently the Esher May Fair
- Assist at a minimum of one other fund-raising event as requested.
 - Claygate Flower Show
 - Plant Sale
 - Regatta Tea Tent
 - AGM BBQ
- Assist at a minimum of one Maintenance Day
- Provide help when the leaders ask for special events, for example lorry loading for summer camp or setting up for Cub camp.

And finally...

- Take on a 'Personal Parental Responsibility' from a list provided or as otherwise agreed – these include uniform shop seller, key role in a fundraising committee, group admin role etc.

Or, if you cannot take on a specific responsibility from above

- Attend 1 additional fund-raising event AND 1 additional maintenance day throughout the year.

Nicola McCrossan

Group Chair, Ajax Sea Scouts

nicola.mccrossan@ajax.org.uk

07734 190427

GROUP LEAD VOLUNTEER'S REPORT

Group Lead Volunteer Chris West writes:

One more packed year of Scouting adventures has passed, and I'm thrilled to say the Group is thriving. I wrote last year that it might be my last report as GLV; well, not quite, but this year will be. I have spent the past year, since the last AGM, handing over jobs, tasks and responsibilities to various people, from willing parents to members of the Group Leadership Team. Only a few weeks ago, at Summer Camp, a few leaders decided they wanted to take on the responsibility of jointly becoming the new Group Lead Volunteers, meaning I could finally fully step down.

By the time you read this, the process will have been completed, and I will leave the new GLV team to introduce themselves separately.

Before I go through some of the highlights of this year, I want to say that, with my intention to step down fully known last year, there was a collection organised to buy me a gift in recognition of my work in Ajax. This was presented at the leaders' New Year's drinks in January. I want to say a massive thank you to everyone who contributed, in particular to Nicola McCrossan for arranging it, and, of course, to the leaders who thoroughly embarrassed me on the night, namely Diane and Robert. There was a large sum of money in there, which has been saved, and I'm looking forward to spending it next year, after some rain, on a day driving a steam engine — a long-standing dream of mine.

Since my last report, the main event, after the AGM, for the Group has been, as always, Remembrance Sunday. Like last year, we had our road closure in place, and we marched down the main road to the Green. We never do an exact headcount, but Suzan, GLV of The Dittons and co-organiser, and I both felt this was the best attended we'd seen in a long time, showing how important this event is for the community.



2026 started quietly for me, as, with me stepping back, I found myself with less to do, which was a nice feeling after 18 years. I focused a lot of my time on recruiting new adults into the Group to support the Teams in their jobs. The more adults we can get on the system and able to help, the easier it is for everyone. Whilst that task was pretty successful, we always need more help, in particular with practical work around the building. So, if you are a hands-on, practical person, we need your help. Please sign up to help with the Buildings and Facilities Team!

A particular highlight for me in the spring term was being asked by the Cub team to join them for their weekend away, as they needed somebody qualified to oversee a night away. This particular trip was a sleepover in Legoland, what could be more fun than getting to sleep in a theme park overnight. The Cubs and our small team of leaders have endless fun riding coasters over and over again.



The summer term, of course, saw the return of water activities, and it was nice to see the river not flooding this year, giving the young people plenty of time on the water to enjoy. In early July, we held the usual National Pulling and Kayaking Regatta at KGS boathouse, just upriver from our base. This year was the most well-attended event we've had in many years and, as such, it was packed full of races. I want to thank Richard Hunt for his hard work in helping organise this event. And, of course, thank you to Dan Callaghan, who, like me, was enjoying his last regatta, as he hands over spreadsheet control of the event to someone else next year.

The end of the summer term was, of course, the huge Troop and Unit Summer Camp at Roadford Lake in Devon. You will read about some of the activities in the section reports, but I just want to say a massive thank you to the team that made it happen. I'm pleased to say this was the biggest camp since Covid, with our numbers steadily climbing year on year to the size of camp we used to have in the past.



Lastly, I want to tell you about a particular highlight of Summer Camp this year. It was my great pleasure to present Diane Davison with the Award for Merit, for outstanding service to Scouting. Not only has Diane been a Beaver, Cub and Scout leader, resulting in her running the Scout section for many years, she is also the leader of our pulling (rowing) training, a DofE assessor, a powerboat instructor and an invaluable part of the Group Leadership Team. Not to mention my second-in-command when it comes to the massive task of organising the annual Troop and Unit Summer Camp. Diane gives endlessly to Scouting and, even after "retirement", still gives more. Diane, your award is well deserved, and thank you for everything you do!



I want to thank every team member, trustee, instructor and helper for all their amazing hard work in making Ajax the amazing Group it is. And thank you to everyone who has made my stepping down a little easier by taking on some of the jobs. This is not goodbye: I'll be running Summer Camp again next year, and I'll be around to help when I have time. But for now, I leave you in very capable hands.

Chris West

Group Scout Leader (retired)

BEAVER SCOUT COLONY

(For young people aged 6 to 8)

Beaver Scout Leader Jane Ruiss writes:

It has been such a great year for the beavers. We have had so much fun getting to do lots of creative activities as well as completing lots of badges!

A personal highlight of mine was getting to see the beavers complete their builder badge by making sandcastles. This was such a fun activity for our colony to get creative and build big castles, but also just have some fun! Our leaders have also loved getting to see the beavers get on the water. At the end of the summer term, we always try and get the beavers on the water and this year we were able to carry on the tradition of using the starfish boats. These tiny boats allow the beavers to experience being on the water on their own and using the oars to paddle about whilst being tied to the pontoon. It is such a fun activity for the beavers and seeing them cheer on their friends from the pontoon is so heartwarming. We were also able to get our beavers involved with the community by going on a litter pick. This is such a great opportunity for them to help clean up spaces they love going to and getting them off site is always so exciting. We finished the year with what I think was the highlight for all of us, a huge water fight! This was an amazing way to kick off the summer heatwave and just let the beavers have some fun getting to target their leaders as well!



Thank you

I would like to say a special thank you to Rebecca, Michael, Simone and Barbara who stepped in and helped ensure our beaver group has thrived this past year. There has been a huge group effort to plan and carry out each muster every Tuesday, and it would not be possible without this fantastic team. We have also had amazing help from Oscar and our two young leaders Lucas and Elodie. They all are amazing young adults who lead great games for the beavers and are exceptional Ajax role models for them. We would also like to thank the parent helpers who come by and help out whenever its needed. Without this support we wouldn't be able to run our musters so thank you very much!

What's Next

Our team is working hard to try and get the beavers off site for some of our musters, with plans to run a session at jump in, holding a beaver sleepover and trying some sport sessions at the local cricket field. We can't wait to hold some really exciting musters and look forward to seeing everyone for our first muster back.

CUB SCOUT PACK

(For young people aged 8 to 10½)

Cub Section Leader Edward Thackrey writes:

A year of change, and a year of adventure. We said goodbye to a much-loved leader midway through, welcomed a rebuilt team, and still managed to fill the calendar with camps, water, woods and wide games.

Highlights from our Autumn Term:

- We opened the year with a **moving-up muster and archery** in September, welcoming a new intake from Beavers and waving off six Cubs to Scouts, each of them collecting their Chief Scout's Silver Award on the way out.
- A fortnight of **fire safety** in November took us outside for fire lighting and sparklers in the cold and the dark. Twenty-five Cubs earned their Fire Safety badge — our single biggest badge haul of the year.
- **Tobogganing at Sandown** on 1st December was the highlight of the term: a floodlit evening session on the slope, helmets on, and a great deal of shrieking.
- We invested our new Cubs at an **October quiz night**, and ran **Cubs in Charge** again — now a fixture of our programme, and still the evening the Cubs plan hardest for.



Highlights from our Spring Term:

- Our **Legoland Windsor Sleepover** in February was the standout event of the term. We travelled up by minibus, spent two full days in the park, had the LEGO Studios 4D theatre to ourselves for a private screening, built and programmed in a LEGO robotics workshop, and spent the night on the floor of the Learning Academy — which, we are pleased to report, everybody survived.
- A **night hike** around Stokes Field nature reserve in January, by torchlight and in the mud.
- A visit from the **Kent, Surrey & Sussex Air Ambulance** team, who gave the Cubs a genuinely memorable insight into what they do.
- Our **Cubs Going Up ceremony** in February, where we celebrated another cohort moving on to Scouts and presented four more Chief Scout's Silver Awards.

- A three-week **cooking and culture rotation**: lighting fires and cooking sausages and chocolate bananas in the embers outdoors; omelettes, salad prep and — crucially — the washing-up indoors; and a Hanami blossom festival of origami, Japanese games and a picnic for our World Badge work.



Highlights from our Summer Term:

- Summer term took us **back on the water**, with kayaking, a boating rotation through June and a great haul of Nautical Skills, Paddle Sports and Time on the Water badges. This remains the thing our Cubs talk about most, and it is only possible because of the boating centre team and our parent helpers.
- We joined Cubs and Brownies from across Surrey for **SCRAM 2026** at Apps Court Farm on 20th June — the 25th SCRAM, in a new venue, and the first to be run jointly with the Brownies. Twenty of our Cubs went, and Ajax ran an escape room as one of the day's activity bases.
- **Summer Camp 2026 — Shipwrecked! Survive on Treasure Island** took 22 Cubs and 6 leaders to Polyapes for the last weekend of June. We pitched teepees, ran a candle-lit treasure hunt, laid trails, learned to tie and lash and used those knots to build shelters to eat lunch under, explored the cave bus for treasure maps, designed an obstacle course across the island's quicksand, and sang round the campfire. On the Sunday we followed the maps out to Oxshott Heath and found a chest full of treats and some very welcome cold drinks — the weekend was hot, hot, hot, and we were very glad we went ahead.
- An evening of **adventure golf** in Hersham drew our biggest turnout of the year, with 29 Cubs on the course.





Those are the big set-pieces, but the weekly musters were busy too. Over the year we shot archery, trained our Sixers, looked at the history and values of Scouting, played Halloween games, walked a penny hike, put on a drama night, cooked, and closed the autumn term with a Christmas minute-to-win-it. In the spring we tried judo, made bird feeders and held two Cub Forums. In the summer we walked in Bushy Park with parents alongside us, played wide games at Long Ditton Rec and Hurst Park, navigated Horton Country Park by compass, learned nautical skills and storytelling, practised pitching tents until we could do it properly, marched at the St George's Day ceremony, and finished the year at Colets with badge presentations, water games and a water fight.



Congratulations to all of our Cubs on what you have achieved. Across the year we awarded 370 badges to 48 different young people, including ten Chief Scout's Silver Awards, 110 challenge badges, 111 activity badges and 114 staged badges — nights away, time on the water, paddle sports, nautical skills and joining in. For a good number of you this was your first night away from home, and for others it was the first time taking the lead in your six.

Parent involvement in Cubs deserves a thank you of its own. We are a small leader team running a busy programme, and there were several evenings this year — the night hike, orienteering, the Bushy Park walk, getting Cubs on the water — that simply could not have run without parents signing up to come along. A particular thank you to everyone who helped set up, cook and clear up at Summer Camp. We know the volunteer emails feel never-ending, but many hands genuinely did make light work, and we were extremely grateful.

On the team: we said a very sad goodbye to Dan in December. Dan took on Cubs alongside Beavers when Ruth stood down, and over 7 years he brought a calming presence, endless variety and a great deal of fun to the pack. Nobody much wanted to believe it was actually happening, and it was a real pleasure to have him back with us at Summer Camp, keeping us permit-compliant and passing on years of experience along the way. We also said goodbye to parent helpers Claire Marstin and James Taylor, with thanks for everything they gave. In their place a new team — with some familiar faces — has pulled together: Lucy, Annette and Adrian, and we were delighted that Marina swam up from Beavers to join us. Summer Camp was the team's first big test and it showed what they can do: Lucy's shipwrecked theme tied the whole weekend together, Annette planned every menu and ran the shop, Adrian handled the logistics and kit and kept us fed and equipped, and Marina who wrote up the numerous risk assessments, held the activity programme together and kept everyone smiling. Thanks also to Chris for his guidance in the background, for joining us at Legoland, for help with training our Sixers, and with packing, loading and unloading for Summer Camp.

Here's to a new year, new adventures, and a whole lot of fun.

SEA SCOUT TROOP

(For young people aged 10½ to 14)

Sea Scout Team Leader Robert Elliott writes:

Summer term 2025:

Our summer term for Scouts is spent out on the Thames as much as possible, improving our pulling and kayaking skills. For sailing, we had the weekends at Cobnor Activity Centre near to Chichester. Unfortunately one was cancelled due to bad weather.

In the annual Sea Scout Regatta the under 12.5 crew came third in the double dinghy class – well done.

The highlight of the year was our summer camp close to the Cobnor Activity centre where we go for our sailing weekends. This was a great week with many varied watersport activities including kayaking, sailing our Gig and enjoying the Giant Sup. Individually, each of the patrols were dropped off camp to hike to a in a farmer's field shore the of camp we organised night hike starting hours.



away from local Scout group where they camped and then hiked back to camp along the following morning. Towards the end at 22:00 and finishing in the small

Autumn term 2025:

Shout out to the Gig crew taking part in the Great River Race. Five of our older Scouts took part in the Great River Race in mid September – 21 miles rowing from Docklands to Ham House – a fantastic achievement.

During the term we enjoyed visiting Esher Fire station and perfecting cooking and pioneering skills, which were put to good use by a team of four Scouts who came 3th in the District cooking competition. Night hike on Esher common.



We held our annual carol evening for local residents and parents in early December. Thank you to the Explorers for their homemade mince pies and to Felix Elliott for accompanying the Scouts on the piano.



We ended the term with a Christmas party and a variety of different games including donut eating without licking your lips, drawing a snowman blindfolded, biscuit icing, giant jenga, and balloon races.

Spring term 2026



We started the year with our annual trip to Sandown for an exciting high ropes and ski session, followed shortly after by one of the highlights of our Spring term, the return of ElmbridgeCAN, a local refugee charity supporting young families. The Scouts collected donation packs that could be given to new mothers including chocolates, colour books, pens and scarves. It was sobering to hear from one of the young people they helped who had to leave their country taking nothing but the clothes they wore.

One evening saw us on a history walk around Thames Ditton, learning about former industries and areas of industry by the river.

We visited the RNLI station at Thames Ditton with one of the Scouts completing the fastest change into the protective clothing the crew wear whenever they go out on the river. Thanks to the station for hosting us and providing an informative muster over two weeks. Those not at the RNLI spent the evening making pancakes. And whilst one half of the Troop visited the RNLI, the other were scaling the walls of Whitespider climbing.

Every year we do a Winter Camp at the start of March, typically in the New Forest. One year hiking and one year cycling. This year we stayed at the Tile Barn Outdoor Centre in Brockenhurst, a council run site with Scout friendly accommodation and an extensive kitchen enjoyed by our resident chef Ger.

After an aborted start down a very wet bridle path we had a great day on Saturday cycling round a 32k course through the New Forest. We stopped for lunch in Lyndhurst for our obligatory visit to a traditional sweet shop. We were very lucky with the weather, forecast to be raining, but in the event turned out to be sunny, if a little windy. Sunday morning was spent playing lazertag in the drizzle. The Scouts thoroughly enjoyed themselves, though came back very muddy.



At the end of the Spring term we spent two weeks looking at community, reflecting on the Scout promise, drawing posters for recycling and learning about disabilities. We learnt about non-visible disabilities and played a game making shapes with a rope wearing blindfolds.

In early March a number of Scouts took part in the annual District Cross Country races, supported by some parents who acted as marshalls. Without your support these activities would not be possible.

None of the above would be possible without the considerable time given by our adult volunteers. Thank you to Alex Thurgood, Andy Rowan, Andy Hunt, Chantal Pilbrow, Diane Davison, Ger Foley, Jason Midgley, Phil Shortman, Rod Frupp, Scott Harverson and Tracy Keohane.

SEA SCOUT EXPLORER UNIT

(For young people aged 15 to 17)

Explorer team leader Jan Harley writes:

The last 12 months have been a very active time for our Explorer Unit, which has continued to grow to 28 active members at the end of the Summer Term (up from 24 in the prior year).

The year started off with our "Pizza Paddle-Row" – where the Explorers paddle in kayaks and rowed in the gig to Hampton Court to earn a pizza on the beach.

September 2025 saw six of our Explorers (along with six scouts) taking part in The Great River Race, rowing almost 22 miles from Canary Wharf in London's docklands to Ham – just North of Kingston. As well as performing brilliantly the combined teams (Explorers and Scouts) raised £748 of sponsorship Ajax.

Training, skills and awards:

2026 was a good year for training and awards. Six of our Explorers took part in successful dinghy sailing weekend trips to Cobnor, in September 2025, followed by further trips in May and June 2026.

Six of our Explorers complete their Bronze DofE training Expedition hike with Ajax in May 2026 and then completed their expeditions at Summer Camp in July 2026. We are now working with them to get their Bronze DofE's signed off.

We have four Explorers now actively pursuing their Gold DofE Awards. This culminated in a training expedition trip to Dartmoor and a combined qualifying / training expedition to the Peak District this summer.

2026 was also the first time in many years that our explorers took part in an Explorer Belt Expedition. The Explorer Belt is one of the highest awards in Scouting with only about 400 Explorer Belts awarded to scouts across the UK every year. It involves an international expedition where you travel to another country in a small team and complete challenges that help you learn about the country, its people, culture and history. Three of our intrepid Explorers (Eben, Belle and Oliver) set off this summer for Bavaria teaming up with three other Explorer from different groups around Surrey. They took part in a 10-day adventure interacting with German culture, exploring nature and hiking over 150km. They presented their findings to a panel of assessors in early September who confirmed that they had each achieved their explorer belts.

November saw eight of our Explorers taking part in a "Discover Scuba Diving" PADI open water diving taster session. Such was the popularity of this event that five explorers went on to complete a full PADI Open Water Diving qualification. The final open-water dives are due on the 5th and 6th of September 2026.

Other Activities:

Other memorable activities during the year included; our November 25 Fireworks Night Hike along the embankment (although we saw surprisingly few actual fireworks); we also participated in the district Speed Painting competition, where we won awards for our work; and our night navigation exercise in Princes Coverts in November 25. We ended the year with a trip to Hampton Court Palace to go Ice skating, as well as hosting our traditional Christmas event for the community.

2026 started with a visit to Laser Quest to say goodbye to Daisy who was turning 18 and leaving Explorers. During the 2026 Spring Term we focussed on boating, powerboating, and First Aid training. The term ended with a hugely popular Go Karting trip where we said goodbye to Axel.

In the summer term National Sea Scout Regatta was a highlight for the Explorer Unit. Other highlights included a coastal powerboating trip to practice high speed boating in Southampton Waters. The term ended with a trip to Thorpe Lakes where we had a go at wakeboarding, and said goodbye to Zac, Will, Ethan and Amalia who were all turning 18 and leaving Explorers.

Summer Camp was a major highlight for the Unit. This year we had a record 16 Explorers taking part in our 10-day camp at Roadford Lake in Devon. The week was filled with sailing, hiking, paddleboarding, kayaking and trips to the beach. Operation X was a particular highlight for most Explorers, who hiked through the night before embarking on an early morning paddle on a giant SUP across Roadford Lake.

OUR FLEET

This year we purchased a new rib, Ripple, for the Group and a number of replacement kayaks. There are further plans to improve our fleet with the purchase of a new engine for Connie West planned for late 2026.

WATER ACTIVITIES TRAINING

Ajax and Warspite continue jointly to operate a Royal Yachting Association 'Recognised Training Centre' at the Water Activity Centre in Thames Ditton, which delivers valuable training synergies for both Groups. This year we have trained adults in Power boating, Paddle sport instructors, Paddle sport safety and rescue and offered training to issue Pulling Permits.

RONA SAILING PROJECT

(For young people aged over 14)

Rona Sailing Project (RSP, www.ronasailingproject.org.uk) is a registered charity which provides affordable sail training on purpose-built yachts. Their stated aim is to provide opportunities for young people to develop a sense of responsibility, resourcefulness and teamwork which will help them throughout their lives. Anyone over the age of 14 can apply for a place and we strongly recommend all Ajaccios to do so. In fact, a number of the volunteer Skippers, Mates and Watch Officers serving with RSP are current volunteers or were part of the Ajax group when younger!

We encourage our Explorers to get involved and take advantage of this amazing opportunity.

DUKE of EDINBURGH AWARDS

(For young people aged over 14)

This year we have had six Scouts and Explorers participating in their DofE bronze awards, and have five members actively pursuing their DofE Gold several scouts achieving their bronze awards. We also had three Explorers complete their Explorer Belt, which is one of the highest awards available in scouting.

We are keen to expand our ability to support young people but we can only do this by growing the support team led by Jan Harley our Explorer team Lead.

We are looking for volunteers to help support the delivering of DofE going forwards. Training can be done in as little as a day. Please let us know if you are interested or able to help us grow this program. Please think about it ... working with our young people on this programme is incredibly rewarding.

ROYAL NAVY RECOGNITION

Ajax is one of just 105 Sea Scout Groups in the UK to be officially recognised by the Royal Navy and we have held this recognition continuously from the inception of the Group. Beyond the prestige of RN recognition, there are a number of tangible benefits including access to Grant Aid. We are utilised this grant earlier this year in the purchase of 10 new kayaks.

Following a relaunch of the scheme some years ago, all RN Recognised Groups are now affiliated with a local RN Unit. Together with nine other Groups in the London area, we are affiliated with the London University Royal Naval Unit. To maintain RN recognition, all Groups are regularly reviewed to ensure the required standards are maintained. Due to changes in the operation of the scheme, we have not had an inspection for some time, and we await further information on the relaunch of the review scheme.

THANKS

As ever there have been numerous activities undertaken by the group this year, mentioned in the section reports, giving our young people many wonderful experiences that they will remember for many years. Again, I want to echo the repeated comments that we are short on leaders, we need more volunteers and anything you can do to help will be appreciated.

For child joining or adult volunteering, go to: www.ajax.org.uk/join

Lastly, I once again wish to give my heartfelt thanks to all the Leaders, Trustees, Instructors and helpers who volunteer so much time to make Ajax happen, thank you all!

ABOUT 4TH THAMES DITTON 'AJAX' SEA SCOUTS

In common with all Scout groups, the 4th Thames Ditton 'Ajax' Sea Scouts (the "Group" or "Charity") is a charity established under the Royal Charter granted to The Scout Association dated 4th January 1912 as amended by supplemental charters dated 28th March 1949, 18th February 1959, 5th May 1967 and 19th July 1991. Trustees are appointed in accordance with the Policy, Organisation and Rules of the Scout Association.

GROUP INFORMATION AS OF 31ST MARCH 2026

Charity Registration Number:	303764
Scout Association Registration Number:	25880
Honorary Roles:	
Group President	Mrs Marguerite Rollason MBE
Group Vice Presidents	Mrs Janet Barber Mrs Doreen Neal
Trustees Ex-Officio (Principal Officers):	
Group Chair	Nicola McCrossan
Group Treasurer	Peter Drysdale
Trustees Ex-Officio (Leadership Roles):	
Group Lead Volunteer	Chris West
Trustees Nominated:	
Group Advisers	George Barber Mark Faulkner Mark Marriott
Youth Adviser	Alex Soden
Supporter	Raymond Mears
Trustees Elected:	Anjani Srivastava Peter Lloyd-Jones Adrian Smith Andrew Rowan Heather Ryder
Special Projects Advisor	Andrew Roberts
Custodian Trustee:	The Scout Association Trust Corporation
Independent Examiner:	Barry Hitchens
Contact Name and Address:	Chris West 4 Hartford Road Epsom KT19 9JD

TRUSTEES' REPORT

The Trustees present their report and the financial statements for the 4th Thames Ditton 'Ajax' Sea Scout Group for the year ended 31st March 2026.

Review of Activity of the Charity

The Group currently has an active Beaver Scout Colony, Cub Scout Pack and Sea Scout Troop and a partnership agreement with the Ajax Explorer Sea Scout Unit. Key details of each Section are as follows:

- The Beaver Colony is for boys and girls aged 6 to 8 years. The Colony meets once a week and as at 31st March 2026 had 23 members (2025: 26).
- The Cub Scout Pack is for boys and girls aged 8 to 10 ½ years. The Pack meets once a week and as at 31st March 2026 had 30 members (2025: 33).
- The Sea Scout Troop is for boys and girls aged 10 ½ to 14. The Troop normally meets twice a week and as at 31st March 2026 had 41 members (2025: 38).
- The Explorer Sea Scout Unit is for boys and girls aged 14 ½ to 18. The Unit normally meets once a week and as at 31st March 2026 had 29 members (2025: 26)

All Sections have continued to work in accordance with the progressive training scheme as laid down by the Scout Association.

The Group has continued to operate a Royal Yachting Association Training Centre based at the Water Activities Centre and operated jointly with Warspite Sea Scouts. The RYA Centre's Principal is supported by a team of RYA Instructors with qualifications covering sailing, power boating, VHF communications and first aid.

The Group is one of just 105 Sea Scout Groups in the United Kingdom recognised by the Royal Navy. This prestigious and beneficial recognition is subject to regular inspections at approximately 18-month intervals. To retain recognition, the Group must demonstrate that it continues to achieve the standard required, in appearance, dress, bearing and badge work, as well as showing progress in efficiency.

Group's Purpose

The purpose of the Group is to actively engage and support young people in their personal development, empowering them to make a positive contribution to society. The Group aims to achieve this by providing an enjoyable and attractive scheme of progressive training based on the values of scouting, the Scout Promise and the Scout Law, and guided by trained adult leadership.

Public Benefit

The Group meets the Charity Commission's public benefit criteria under both the advancement of education and the advancement of citizenship or community development headings.

Responsibilities of the Trustees

Charity law requires the Trustees to keep accounting records and prepare annual statements of account for the Charity which must be audited or independently examined and provided to the Charity Commission. In preparing the annual statement of accounts the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- Comply with applicable accounting standards subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the annual statement of accounts; and
- Prepare the annual statement of accounts on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume the Charity will continue its operations.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and are responsible for safeguarding its assets and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Reserves

The Trustees have adopted a formal policy on reserves which is reflected in these accounts. The policy provides that reserves be maintained at a level which has regard to:

- The risks associated with each stream of income and expenditure varying from that budgeted
- The planned activity level
- The Group's commitments

- The need for adequate readily realisable resources to meet the Group's commitments (after subscriptions and camp fees) for the coming twelve-month period.

Readily realisable resources are defined as the balances at the bank less current liabilities and the balance on designated funds for WAC building development.

As at 31 March 2026, the Group held reserves of £30,000 (2025: £30,000), which is the minimum level of reserves required under the policy.

Investment Policy

The Group does not have sufficient funds to invest in longer term investments. All funds are held in cash or "at call" short term investments with The Scout Association, Skipton Building Society and Cambridge & Counties Bank.

Governance

The Group'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 (POR) of The Scout Association.

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

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.

The Trustee Board is responsible for ensuring the charity is well managed, risks are assessed and mitigated, buildings and equipment are in good order and everyone follows legal requirements and Scout Association Policy, Organisation & Rules.

This includes responsibility for:

- Promoting a positive image of Scouting in the community, as well as its development;
- Developing, maintaining and regularly a risk register, including putting in place appropriate mitigations;
- Ensuring that the finances are properly managed, and there are sufficient resources (and reserves) to deliver high quality Scouting;
- Ensuring a system of internal controls is in place that is designed to provide reasonable assurance against material mismanagement or loss;
- Ensuring that property is appropriately managed;
- Maintaining appropriate insurance of persons, property and equipment;
- Assisting in the recruitment of leaders and other adult support;
- Having an open and transparent selection process for the recruitment of Trustees;
- Appointing Advisors as required;
- Ensuring effective administration is in place to support the Trustee Board;
- Ensuring compliance with applicable governance and charity regulations, including in respect to safety and safeguarding;
- Ensuring incidents are appropriately reported in line with regulation and policy;
- Ensuring applicable policies and regulations are regularly reviewed and changes implemented as appropriate;
- Ensuring transparency of operations, including in the preparation of accounts and holding and AGM;
- Ensuring compliance with Data Protection legislation.

Risk Assessment

The Group Trustee Board has identified and assessed the major risks to which it believes the Group is exposed as follows:

Injury to leaders, members and helpers: The Group, through the capitation fees, contributes to The Scout Association's national accident insurance policy. Risk Assessments are undertaken before all activities. In addition, the Trustee board has a standing item on their meeting agenda to consider any safety issues and any mitigating action required to address reported incidents.

Damage to buildings and equipment: The Group would request the use of buildings and equipment from neighbouring organisations. The Group has sufficient buildings and contents insurance in place to mitigate against permanent loss.

Reduced income from fund raising: The Group is primarily reliant upon income from subscriptions and fund raising. The Group does hold a reserve to ensure the continuity of activities should there be a major reduction in income. The Committee could increase the level of subscriptions to increase the income to the Group either temporarily or permanently.

Reduction or loss of members: The Group provides activities for young people aged 6 to 18. If there were a reduction in membership of a particular Section or of the Group as a whole then there would have to be a contraction, consolidation or closure of a Section, or in the worst case scenario, the complete closure of the Group.

Reduction or loss of leaders: The Group is totally reliant upon volunteers to run and administer the activities of the Group. If there were a reduction in the number of leaders to an unacceptable level in a particular Section or the Group as a whole then there would have to be a contraction, consolidation or closure of a Section, or in the worst case scenario, the complete closure of the Group. To mitigate this the Group encourages all new parents to assist in whatever way they can.

The Group requires two signatories for all payments to provide reasonable assurance against material mismanagement or loss of money and holds comprehensive insurance policies to ensure that insurable risks are covered.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

4th Thames Ditton Ajax Sea Scouts Charity Number 303764

Report of the Independent examiner to the Trustees of 4th Thames Ditton Ajax Sea Scouts

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above Charity for the year to 31st March 2026 that are set out on the pages attached.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 (the Act).

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent Examiner's statement

I have completed my examination.

I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination that gives me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- a) the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act or
- b) the accounts did not comply with the accounting records or
- c) the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of the accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a "true and fair" view which is not a matter considered as part of the independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Barry Hitchens- Australian Society of Accountants
24 Effingham Road, Long Ditton, Surrey, KT6 5JY



7/10/26

FINANCIAL REPORT - YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2026

Prepared By Peter Drysdale, Group Treasurer

Ajax Sea Scout Group remains in good financial health. Cash balances at the end of the year were slightly up on last year. We continued to invest in our boats and facilities - which are after all our whole raison d'être. Next Year (2027) we plan to buy a new (to us) minibus. In addition, we really need a new heating system and new doors for the WAC, new engine for Connie West and more.

Operating Highlights

The accounts below are laid out according to the Charity Commission's format. The numbers in this commentary are taken from our management accounts which give a more meaningful narrative. In particular for example payments for activities are included in Income, but from an operating point of view they are not income.

In round numbers, cash in the bank as at the year-end stood at £85,500 - a net increase of £3,000 over 2024.

Operating income compared with last year was flat at £31,500. Membership fees (including Gift Aid) were £4,000 up at £29,200. but bank interest decreased from £4,400 to £2,400 and our additional sundry one-off income went from £1,700 to nil.

Operating costs at £37,500 were £1,000 less than last year. No one particular item stands out. Total maintenance (£7,000) was down £3,000 (£1,300 on power boats, £900 on trailers, £500 on minibus). Overheads, WAC (heating, lighting, cleaning, bin waste), Insurance, Subscription, Rent are very similar to last year at nearly £20,000. The bulk of the rest was fees to District at £6,500.

In summary then, our operating costs exceeded our income by £6,000. Fundraising is critical. Fortunately, we had a good year. The Esher May Fair was outstanding netting over £15,000, nearly £4,000 more than last year. The Plant Sale and Claygate Flower Show realized nearly £6,500 between them – similar to last year.

There were a large number of activities, total income was nearly £40,000 with an unplanned overall surplus of £3,000

Net expenditure on major items was £15,000, being: 12 new Kayaks (£6,000 less £2,500 grant from the Royal Navy), Replace RIB (Ribble - £13,000 less sale of Stokes (£5,000), New sound system for EMF (£1,500) and various camping items (tents, cool boxes etc) £1,200.

Notes to the financial statements 31 March 2026

1 Basis of preparation of accounts

1.1 Basis of accounting

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s) to these accounts. The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (the Charities SORP) and with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102). The Charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

1.2 Going Concern

The Trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

2. Accounting Policies

2.1 Income recognition

All regularly recurring income is recognised in the period in which it is received. This applies to Subscriptions, Gift Aid on subscriptions and Investment Income.

Donations are recognised once received. In the event that a donation is subject to conditions that require a level of performance before the Charity is entitled to the funds, the income is deferred and not recognised until either those conditions are fully met, or the fulfilment of those conditions is wholly within the control of the Charity and it is probable that those conditions will be fulfilled in the reporting period.

Any Gift Aid amount recovered on a donation is considered to be part of that gift and is treated as an addition to the same fund as the initial donation unless the donor or the terms of the appeal have specified otherwise. It is recognised in the period in which it is received.

Restricted donations and grants will be recognised in the period in which the associated costs are incurred and until then will be treated as creditors.

Income from Fundraising and Activities is recognised in the period in which the fundraising event or activity takes place. Deposits received in prior periods will be deferred until the period in which the activity takes place.

All other income is recognised in the period in which it is received.

2.2 Expenditure and liabilities

A liability exists where there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the Charity to that expenditure, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. All such liabilities will ordinarily be discharged as soon as possible. Only material liabilities not discharged by the end of the period will be accrued.

Some annual costs eg Insurance, Subscriptions, Rent and other similar dues which extend beyond the current period and which on a strict accruals basis would to that extent ordinarily be accrued, will be recognised in full in the period in which they are paid.

All expenses including support costs and governance costs are allocated or apportioned to the applicable expenditure headings.

The classification between headings is as follows:

- Expenditure on fundraising includes all expenditure associated with raising funds for the charity.
- Expenditure on charitable activities of the Group includes all costs associated with furthering the charitable purposes of the Group through the provision of its charitable activities.

All expenditure on fundraising events or activities is recognised in the period in which the fundraising event or activity occurs. Prior period deposits will be treated as prepayments.

Materiality: Accruals of expenditure other than that for Fundraising or Activities will only be made where they exceed £500 individually or £1,000 in total.

3 Land and buildings at Ditton Reach

The property comprising land and buildings at Ditton Reach that are occupied jointly by Ajax Sea Scouts and Warspite Sea Scouts is held by the Scout Association Trust Corporation (SATC) as tenant under a lease granted on 2 February 2024 by Elmbridge Borough Council as landlord. SATC holds the lease as custodian trustee on behalf of both Groups as beneficiaries. The Groups are responsible for the performance of the tenant's obligations under the lease, which expires on 6 December 2078.

The rent under the lease, which is currently £250 per annum, is subject to indexation adjustment on 6 December 2028 and on every fifth anniversary of that date. The lease contains restrictive covenants that among other things (1) prohibit the assignment or transfer of the lease, or the grant of a security interest in the lease, and (2) govern the permitted subletting, hire, occupation and use of the property.

As a consequence of the restrictive covenants in the lease, Ajax considers that its beneficial interest in the lease does not have any market value.

The Groups have entered into a formal agreement between themselves to govern the management and administration of the leased property, and to coordinate the performance of the tenant's obligations. Among

other things, this intergroup agreement (1) allocates parts of the leased property to each Group for that Group's exclusive use, and (2) establishes a joint liaison committee between the Groups

4 Funds

Unrestricted General Funds are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the Charity. Designated Funds are funds set aside out of unrestricted General Funds for specific purposes or projects. Restricted Funds are funds subject to specific restrictive conditions imposed by the donors or by the purpose of the appeal.

5 Insurance Policies

The entire WAC building occupied by Ajax and Warspite is insured for a reinstatement cost of £1,500,000 under a joint insurance policy. The premium for buildings insurance cover is allocated 75% to Ajax and 25% to Warspite, which reflects the respective areas of the building occupied by each Group. Ajax has also insured the Group's building contents and equipment for a replacement cost of £123,000 and its boats for a replacement cost of £104,500 in aggregate.

<u>Income & Expenditure 2025 - 2026</u>	<u>Notes</u>	<u>2026</u>	<u>2025</u>
		£	£
Income from			
Donations, Legacies. Subscriptions and similar income	1	37,716	28,881
Camp fees		39,306	35,529
Other activities in furtherance of the Charities objects			
Fundraising		43,837	35,027
Investment Income		2,375	4,432
Total		123,234	103,869
Expenditure on:			
Fundraising Costs		21,040	15,361
Expenses of the activities by the Group		97,728	83,178
Total		118,768	98,539
Net Income		4,466	5,330

<u>Balance Sheet</u>	<u>Notes</u>	<u>2026</u>	<u>2025</u>
Reconciliation of Funds			
Total Funds Brought Forward		83,302	77,973
Total Funds Carried Forward		87,768	83,302

<u>Current Assets</u>			
Cash at bank and in hand	2	85,471	82,390
Debtors	3	6,158	6,796
Stock of Uniform		2,985	3,032
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	4	(6,846)	(8,916)
Net Assets		87,768	83,302

<u>Represented by:</u>	<u>2026</u>	<u>2025</u>
Restricted Funds	500	500
Designated Funds	57,268	52,802
Unrestricted Funds	30,000	30,000
	87,768	83,302

Notes to the Accounts

1	<u>Analysis of Donations etc</u>	<u>2026</u>	<u>2025</u>
	Subscriptions	29,258	25,218
	Donations and Legacies	140	1,870
	Grants	2,871	0
	Covid Grant		
	Other	5,447	1,792
	Total	37,716	28,880

2	<u>Cash at bank and in hand</u>	<u>2026</u>	<u>2025</u>
	Current Accounts - HSBC		
	Camp	3,087	6,827
	Main	1,434	938
	Nr 3	0	0
	Bmm	7,192	1,878
	Soldo	0	0
	Subs	1,116	2,179
	Expense Card	806	925
	Total	13,634	12,747
	Investment Accounts		
	Scout Association	0	0
	Skipton	19,302	18,788
	Cambridge & Counties	52,534	50,855
	Total	71,837	69,644
	Total	85,471	82,390

3	<u>Debtors & Prepayments</u>	<u>2026</u>	<u>2025</u>
	Cobnor	5,498	5,676
	Activities	660	
	Gift Aid		
	Other		1,120
		6,158	6,796

4	<u>Creditors</u>	<u>2026</u>	<u>2025</u>
	Regatta JV	3,045	3,207
	Summer Camp Deposits	332	2,890
	Esher May Fair Deposits	190	1,330
	Cobnor Deposits		919
	Trade Creditors	3,279	570
		6,846	8,916

5	<u>Designated Funds</u>	<u>Op Balance</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Redesignated</u>	<u>Cl Bal</u>
	Building Development	20582	1,972		-2,225	20,329
	Building Repairs	8392		1,161		7,231
	Fundraising Equipment	0	1,622	1,622		0
	All Craft	5000	19,233	19,233	4,000	9,000
	Tentage	828		1,120		-292
	Minibus	7000	5,000		3,000	15,000
	HQ Security	6000				6,000
	New Lease & Trailer Park	5000		225	-4,775	0
	Total	52,802	27,827	23,361	0	57,268

These accounts for the year ending 31 March 2026 were approved by the Group's trustees at a meeting of the Group's Trustee Board held on 1 September 2026.

Authorised signatories for and on behalf of the Group's trustees:



Chris West, Group Scout Leader



Peter Drysdale, Group Treasurer



Nicola McCrossan, Group Chair

Ajax Sea Scout Group and Explorer Sea Scout Unit

KEY CONTACTS

Group Lead Volunteer	Chris West	07967 806818	glv@ajax.org.uk
Beaver Colony	Jane Ruis/Rebecca Middleton		beaver@ajax.org.uk
Cub Pack	Dan Callaghan	07840 290044	cubs@ajax.org.uk
Sea Scout Troop	Robert Elliott	07896 518604	troop@ajax.org.uk
Explorer Sea Scout Unit	Jan Harley	07801 135289	explorers@ajax.org.uk
Group Chair	Nicola McCrossan	07734 190427	nicola.mccrossan@ajax.org.uk
Group Treasurer	Peter Drysdale		treasurer@ajax.org.uk

For more information about this report or membership of Ajax contact:

Chris West

Email: glv@ajax.org.uk

For child joining or adult volunteering, go to: www.ajax.org.uk/join

Ajax Sea Scout Group and Explorer Sea Scout Unit

The Chiefy Sharman Water Activities Centre

19a Ditton Reach

Thames Ditton

Surrey KT7 0XB

(No facility to receive mail at this address)

Telephone: 020 8398 4777

Website: www.ajax.org.uk

Ajax Sea Scouts is a Registered Charity No: 303764