

Annual Report & Statement of Accounts

For the financial year ending 31st December 2020

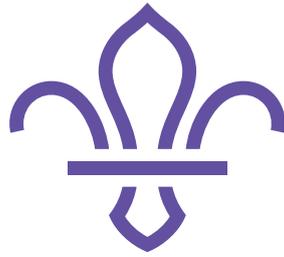


Scouts

11th Folkestone

2nd Virtual AGM-Monday 21st June 2021

Registered charity in England & Wales No. 285558



Scouts

11th Folkestone

Annual General Meeting

for the financial year 2020

Agenda

Key business

1. Welcome & Introductions from the Chair
2. Apologies for absence
3. Minutes of the previous meeting of the Group Council
4. Receive & approve the annual report for the 2020/21 year
Members of the Group Executive Committee are available to answer questions on the report.
5. Receive & approve the Financial Statement for the 2020 financial year
Members of the Group Executive Committee are available to answer questions on the financial statement

Appointments and elections

6. Approval of the Group Scout Leader's nomination Chair of the Executive Committee
7. Election of Group Officers
 - i. Group Treasurer
 - ii. Group Secretary
8. Election of members from the Group Scout Council to the Group Executive Committee
9. Appointment of Independent Examiner for 2021 accounts
10. Receive & approve any recommendations to changes in governance made by the Executive Committee
11. Closing remarks from the Group Scout Leader & District Commissioner
12. Close of business

Reporting on the 1st January 2019 to 31st December 2019 financial year

Meeting held on 12th May 2020 via Microsoft Teams from 11th Folkestone Scout Centre, Shepway Close

1. Welcome and introductions from the chair

The Chair welcomed everyone to the virtual meeting, including members, leaders and other Group volunteers as well as the trustees for the 2019/20 period.

In a change to normal proceedings, all members and attendees were emailed and asked to vote for each item before the meeting via an online form. All items were explained on the form and were already proposed and seconded. Anyone who wasn't able to vote beforehand were able to vote during the AGM.

The AGM 2019 was quorate.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from:
Abbey Sutton – Trustee

3. Acceptance of the minutes from the previous meeting.

Proposed: **Steve Fairfax**

Seconded: **Craig Ward**

The motion was carried by majority vote of the Council.

4. Receive & adopt the annual report

Proposed: **Steve Fairfax**

Seconded: **Craig Ward**

The motion was carried by majority vote of the Council.

5. Receive & adopt the financial report

Proposed: **Maïté Last**

Seconded: **Steve Fairfax**

The motion was carried by majority vote of the Council.

Group Chair and all trustees retired from post at this point. GSL assumed chair.

6. Approval of the GSLs nomination for Group Chair: **Steve Fairfax**

Nominated: **Craig Ward** (Group Scout Leader)

Approved (show of voting slips): **Majority of meeting voted in favour. No objections raised.**

The motion was carried by majority vote of the Council.

Group Chair reappointed and resumed chairing of AGM.

7i. Election of Group Officers: **Maïté Last** (Treasurer)

Proposed: **Steve Fairfax**

Seconded: **Craig Ward**

The motion was carried by majority vote of the Council.

7ii. Election of Group Officers: **Chloé Last** (Secretary)

Proposed: **Alistair Sutton**

Seconded: **Steve Fairfax**

The motion was carried by majority vote of the Council.

8i. Election of Group Trustees:

Amanda Sutton
Karen Ingelbrecht
Sarah Marshall
Abbey Sutton
Peter Woodsford

Proposed: **Craig Ward**

Seconded: **Alistair Sutton**

The motion was carried by majority vote of the Council.

8ii. Election of Group Executive Deputy Chair and Chair of the Group Council: **Amanda Sutton**

Proposed: **Craig Ward**

Seconded: **Alistair Sutton**

The motion was carried by majority vote of the Council.

8iii. Election of Group Trustees (ex-officio):

Section Leaders who have opted in: **Ian Marshall, Catherine Ward**

Group Executive Committee 2020/21

12TH May 2020 – 21ST June 2021

Ex-Officio Members:

| | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Chair | - Steven Fairfax | Centre Manager (AGSL) | - Edward Hogben |
| Secretary | - Chloé Last | | |
| Treasurer | - Maïte Last | Cub Scout Leader | - Ian Marshall |
| Group Scout Leader | - Craig Ward | Scout Leader | - Catherine Ward |
| Deputy Group Scout Leader | - Alistair Sutton | | |

Elected Members:

| | | | |
|---------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|------------------|
| Group Council | - Sarah Marshall | Group Council | - Abbey Sutton |
| Group Council | - Karen Ingelbrecht | Group Council | - Pete Woodsford |
| Group Council | - Amanda Sutton (Deputy Chair) | | |

Bankers: - Barclays Bank

Registered Address:

The Scouting Centre, Shepway Close, Folkestone
CT19 5SJ

Group Leadership Team as of 5th June 2021, listed alphabetically by section

BEAVERS

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| Assistant Beaver Scout Leader | - Rob Penter |
| Scout Active Support | - Clare Taylor |
| Assistant Beaver Scout Leader | - Holly Taylor |
| Beaver Scout Leader | - Jacqui Ward |

cubs

| | |
|----------------------------|----------------|
| Active Support Member | - Russ Bell |
| Cub Scout Leader | - Ian Marshall |
| Assistant Cub Scout Leader | - Andy Sutton |

SCOUTS

| | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| Assistant Scout Leader | - Beckie Ingelbrecht |
| Active Support Member | - Jenny Ingelbrecht |
| Assistant Scout Leader | - Gregor Lewis |
| Assistant Scout Leader | - David Sutton |
| Scout Leader | - Catherine Ward |
| Section Assistant | - Pete Woodsford |

EXPLORERS

| | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Explorer Scout Leader | - Tara Dunleavy |
| Explorer Scout Leader | - Ben Marshall |
| Active Support Member | - Andrew Sutton |

Scouts 
11th Folkestone
Active Support

| | |
|----------------------------|---------------------|
| Active Support Coordinator | - Peter Ingelbrecht |
| Active Support Manager | - Jane Lambert |
| Active Support Member | - Chloe Last |
| Active Support Member | - Kaz Goldsack |

Scouts 
11th Folkestone

| | |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Centre Manager (AGSL) | Ted Hogben |
| Deputy Group Scout Leader | Alistair Sutton |
| Group Scout Leader | Craig Ward |

Structure, governance and management

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 of The Scout Association. The Group is a trust established under its rules which are common to all Scouts. The Trustees are appointed in accordance with the Policy, Organisation and Rules of The Scout Association.

The Group is managed by the Group Executive Committee, the members of which are the 'Charity Trustees' of the Scout Group which is an educational charity. As charity trustees they are responsible for complying with legislation applicable to charities. This includes the registration, keeping proper accounts and making returns to the Charity Commission as appropriate.

The Committee consists of three independent representatives, Chair, Treasurer and Secretary together with the Group Scout Leaders, individual section leaders (if opted to take on the responsibility) and members' representation and meets every 4 months.

Members of the Executive Committee complete 'Essential Information for Executive Committee' training along with regular refreshers in Safety and Safeguarding.

This Group Executive Committee exists to support the Group Scout Leader in meeting the responsibilities of their appointment and is responsible for:

- The maintenance of Group property;
- The raising of funds and the administration of Group finance;
- The insurance of persons, property and equipment;
- Group public occasions;
- Assisting in the recruitment of leaders and other adult support;

- Appointing any sub committees that may be required;
- Appointing Group Administrators and Advisors other than those who are elected.

Risk and Internal Control

The Group Executive Committee has identified the major risks to which they believe the Group is exposed, these have been reviewed and systems have been established to mitigate against them.

The main areas of concern that have been identified are:

Damage to the building, property and equipment. The Group would request the use of buildings, property and equipment from neighbouring organisations such as the church, community centre and other Scout Groups. Similar reciprocal arrangements exist with these organisations. The Group has sufficient buildings and contents insurance in place to mitigate against permanent loss.

Injury to leaders, helpers, supporters and members. The Group, through the membership fees payable annually, contributes to the Scout Associations national accident insurance policy. Risk Assessments are undertaken and approved by the Group Scout Leader on behalf of the District Commissioner before all activities.

Reduction or loss of leaders. The Group is totally reliant upon volunteers to run and administer the activities of the group. If there was 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. In the worst-case scenario the complete closure of the Group.

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

Risk and Internal Control of Finances

The group has in place systems of internal controls that are designed to provide reasonable assurance against material mismanagement or loss; these include clear budget setting, two signatories for all payments, a robust finance policy with spending authorisation schedule and well considered and scoped comprehensive insurance policies to ensure that insurable risks are covered.

Reduced income. The Group is primarily reliant upon income from membership subscriptions. The group does hold a reserve to ensure the continuity of activities should there be a major reduction in income. The Committee could raise the value of subscriptions to increase the income to the group on an ongoing basis, either temporarily or permanently. The Committee's primary plan for meet any short fall is through the hiring of the Shepway Close Centre as one of our biggest assets.

Objectives and activities

The Purpose of Scouting

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

The Values of Scouting

As Scouts we are guided by these values:

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

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

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

Belief - We explore our faiths, beliefs and attitudes.

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

The Scout Method

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

- enjoy what they are doing and have fun
- take part in activities indoors and outdoors
- learn by doing
- share in spiritual reflection
- take responsibility and make choices
- undertake new and challenging activities
- make and live by their Promise

Financial Review

The Group's policy on reserves is to hold sufficient resources to continue the charitable activities of the group should income and fundraising activities fall short. The Group Executive Committee considers that the group should hold a sum equivalent to 12 months running costs, designating £2000 to this purpose. This was reviewed in May 2019, affecting the 2019 accountant period. The 2019 accounting period set the designated reserves fund at £3600. This was to include the reserves fund as set above with an additional 2 months' worth of loan repayments.

At the end of the 2020 financial year, the Group held £24,263 cash with unallocated reserves of £4,467 held in the Group's current account against this at year end.

This is above the level required for operating expenses. However this can be explained by:

- the Committee's continued works on the redevelopment of the Shepway Close Centre Project to complete the project.
- the continued works required to the upstairs areas of the centre after the building work.
- ensuring sufficient operating funds to cover all eventualities of the coronavirus pandemic.
- to fully fund the Group's ambitious 2018-2023 growth and development plan.

Investment Policy

The Group's Income and Expenditure is relatively small and as a consequence does not have sufficient funds to invest in longer-term investments such as stocks and shares. The Group has therefore adopted a low risk strategy to the investment of its funds. All funds are held in cash using only mainstream banks

or building societies or The Scout Association's Short Term Investment Service.

The Group Executive regularly monitors the levels of bank balances and the interest rates received to ensure the group obtains maximum value and income from its banking arrangements. Occasionally this may involve using an account that requires a period of notice before funds may be withdrawn, before doing so the Group Executive considers the cash flow requirements. The annual budget setting process takes this into consideration as well as continuing to invest heavily in Scouting and the assets the Group has available to it.

Public benefit statement

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.

Group Chair's Statement

What a strange year we have seen. While listening to the Prime Minister back in March 2020 I assumed that Scouting would to all intents and purposes have stopped and I'd have a quiet time. How wrong I was!

This year has been a challenge, but not in the negative way many people talk about. Yes, it is sad we've missed so much face to face Scouting, however I am amazed and in awe of our leaders, volunteers and members for making sure there was something on offer for our young people and that they took to virtual scouting so well.

The Executive Committee haven't been sitting idly by either and this has perhaps been one of the busiest in terms of decision making that we've ever had. Making sure the Group remained financially viable was out first and immediate concern as the centre closed and the usual income that it generated dried up. With our major redevelopment work being completed the year before and the loan we took out to cover the cost being the biggest immediate pressure, we were very aware of the need to make sure funds were available. That said, we were also

aware of the financial pressures on our members (parents!) as well with many people being put on furlough and possibly no longer having a job at all. I'm proud to say and firmly believe the committee acted decisively on all counts, adjusting subs for our members – and a huge thank you to the many parents that contacted us to say they were very happy to continue to pay full subs, we were touched by this gesture and fortunately it was not necessary – and taking steps to safeguard the centre by meeting loan repayments from other sources of income.

When we did the initial risk management plan for the building works and considered loss of income, at no point did we envisage the events of the past 12 months!

Still, after some great and quick grant applications, the committee had it covered.

We've continued to plan in detail for the return and have taken the opportunity afforded by the empty to get quite a few things done.

The Executive Committee continues to be fully committed in supporting the Group leadership team develop the Skills for Life growth and development plan to lay out the roadmap for the future of our Group and Scouting locally. This exciting plan includes all our hopes and aspiration for our Group and one we believe will make Scouting even more fantastic. The trustee's highest priority element of the plan is the continued renovations of the centre and access to high quality equipment and resources to enable our leaders to deliver great programmes to our young people – week in, week out. This year we have:

- Replaced the old inefficient gas boiler with a brand new, designed for purpose combi boiler.
- Replaced all the plastic 15mm heating piping with a professionally installed 22mm run of copper piping to all radiators, lagged it and boxed it all in.
- Replaced the mismatched domestic radiators with commercial high heat safety radiators.
- Re-painted the whole hall and installed hygienic plastic trim to the bottom third of the hall walls.

- Had the second 'Pod' built off the main hall for chair and table storage and a new workshop.
- Had the electrics at the centre professional tested to ensure it is completely safe and compliant with regulations as some of it is 30 years old.
- Purchased PPE/resources as necessary for our return to face to face Scouting.

I'm really pleased we've been able to push on with these important projects and hope we can make the last push in the next few years to get the outside space fully usable.

As always, I'd like to thank my fellow trustees for their continued support and enthusiasm in the stewardship of the Group and of course, our thanks to Craig, Alistair and the leadership team for their hard work and dedication in giving our young people the opportunity to learn skills for life.

11th Folkestone Awards Gala

For all members of the Group and their parents

Tuesday 7th September

Keep the date free and join us to celebrate all the amazing Scouting that's been going on over the past 18 months.

Receipts and Payments Accounts for 11th Folkestone (St. John's) Scout Group

For Period: 01/01/2020 to 31/12/2020

Registered Charity No. 285558

Unrestricted funds
to nearest £

Restricted funds
to nearest £

Last year 2019
to nearest £

| | Unrestricted funds to nearest £ | Restricted funds to nearest £ | Last year 2019 to nearest £ |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Receipts | | | |
| 4000 General Sales | 459 | - | 1,297 |
| 4010 Membership Subscriptions | 7,428 | - | 11,676 |
| 4011 Residential Experiences Income | 2,015 | - | 1,850 |
| 4012 Minibus Income | - | - | 500 |
| 4013 Shepway Close Centre Income | 5,466 | - | 14,102 |
| 4015 Fundraising Income | 347 | - | 301 |
| 4017 Activities/Events Income | 560 | - | 466 |
| 4014 Donations | 4,731 | 800 | 1,580 |
| 4016 Grant Income | 16,608 | - | - |
| 4022 Solar Panel Feed In Tariff | 2,525 | - | 1,606 |
| 4900 Bank Interest Received | 10 | - | 64 |
| 4906 Gift Aid Claim | 2,306 | - | 1,900 |
| Miscellaneous Income | | | |

| <i>Receipts</i> | | 42,456 | 800 |
|------------------------|--|---------------|---------------|
| <i>Total receipts:</i> | | 43,256 | 35,342 |

| | | | | |
|-----------------|--|-----------------|---|-----------------|
| Payments | 5000 General Purchases | - | - | (38) |
| | 5001 Annual Membership Fee (AMS) | (5,040) | - | (4,576) |
| | 5010 Group Development | (3) | - | - |
| | 5011 Capital Equipment | (1,642) | - | (410) |
| | 5012 Programme Expenses | (1,055) | - | (1,789) |
| | 5013 Capital Projects | (14,021) | - | (62,435) |
| | 5014 Activity/Event Expenditure | (172) | - | (523) |
| | 5015 Residential Experiences Expenditure | (1,904) | - | (1,705) |
| | 5017 Community Engagement | - | - | - |
| | 5202 Badges & Sundries | (509) | - | (691) |
| | 6200 Marketing and Sales Promotions | - | - | (340) |
| | 7102 Water Rates | (285) | - | (499) |
| | 7104 Premises Insurance | (1,048) | - | (1,103) |
| | 7300 Fuel and Oil (MOTOR) | - | - | (151) |
| | 7302 Licences | (532) | - | (224) |
| | 7303 Vehicle Insurance | - | - | (46) |
| | 7502 Telephone and Mobile Charges | (12) | - | - |
| | 7506 Hosting Fees and IT | (98) | - | (621) |
| | 7601 Audit & Accountancy Fees | (55) | - | (55) |
| | 7603 Professional Fees | (450) | - | - |
| | 7701 Office Machine Maintenance | (480) | - | (474) |
| | 7800 Repairs and Renewals | (161) | - | (123) |
| | 7801 Cleaning | - | - | (425) |
| | 7803 Premises Expenses | (1,106) | - | (727) |
| | 7907 GoCardless Processing Fee | (216) | - | (405) |
| | 8200 Donations | (80) | - | (500) |
| | 8201 Subscriptions | (71) | - | 0 |
| | 8203 Training Costs | - | - | (190) |
| | 8205 Refreshments/Volunteer Welfare | (19) | - | (96) |
| | 8207 AGM & Trustee Expenses | - | - | (542) |
| | 8208 Coronavirus costs/losses | (649) | - | 0 |
| | Loan Repayments | (7,915) | - | - |
| | <i>Payments:</i> | (37,523) | | (78,689) |
| | <i>Total payments:</i> | (37,523) | | (78,689) |

Receipts and Payments Accounts for 11th Folkestone (St. John's) Scout Group

Notes:

4000 Printing/copying for County Training reduced
4010 Reduced subs charged from April 2020.
4011 Cuboree refunds from Kent County Scout Council. Include some income from late payments of new years eve sleepover 2019.
4012
4013 Centre closed from April
4015
4017
4019
4020 Includes Hospitality & Retail Grants, Tier 4 grants, Sport England funding & donation to the Penticost fund from an individual
4022
4900
4906 Early claim made to ensure sufficient cash available to support Group in April 2020. Will be reflected in lower income in 2021

5000
5001 Group was at it's largest size ever on 31st January!
5010
5011 Work continued on studio project
5012 Online zoom account purchased (before national 'free' one) and resources posted to all members + Christmas present for all
5013 Includes 6000,6001,6002
5014 Jan/Feb/Mar activities
5015 Cuboree refunds.
5017
5202
6200
7102 Impact of the new taps and refurbished plumbing
7104 Reduction negotiated by SF with and increase in cover
7300 Minibus sold
7302 PPL licence based on centre and subs income from previous year
7303 Minibus sold
7502
7506 OSM purchased by the District on our behalf
7601
7603 Structural engineer required for planning permission & building regs
7701 Photocopier repair
7800
7801 Cleaning done by volunteers/no use of the centre for 8 months
7803 Inc. cleaning products, sanitising stations, etc.
7907 Reduced due to reduction in Subs
8200 Donation for large screen TV for studio
8201
8203
8205
8207 No trophies/refreshments required!
8208 Fees lost for Cub international trip. Additional PPE/First Aid supplies/bubble bags
12 months repayment for F&D loan and 8 months for Co-op

Receipts and Payments Accounts for 11th Folkestone (St. John's) Scout Group

For Period: 01/01/2020 to 31/12/2020

Group Year End Balance Sheet

| Current Assets | | Unrestricted | Restricted | Total |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------|------------|------------------|
| 1200 | Current Account | 4,467.42 | | 4,467.42 |
| 1201 | Reserve Account | 6,053.38 | | 6,053.38 |
| 1203 | Barclays Penticost Fund | 1,004.80 | | 1,004.80 |
| 1204 | Barclays Restricted/Designated | 10,657.96 | 1,500.00 | 12,157.96 |
| 1230 | Petty Cash | 50.00 | | 50.00 |
| 1232 | Equals Corporate Card | 529.71 | | 529.71 |
| Total Current Assets: | | | | 24,263.27 |

| Current Liabilities | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|--------------------|
| 1254 | Co-Operative Foundation Community Loan | | (11,121.92) |
| 1255 | Folkestone & Hythe District Loan | | (12,951.02) |
| Total Current Liabilities: | | | (24,072.94) |

Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of year (recording purposes only)

| | 2019 | 2020 |
|--|---------|----------------|
| Land & buildings (estimated insurance value - 4% increase based on area average) | 700,000 | 728,000 |
| Motor vehicles | - | - |
| Scouting equipment, furniture, etc... (estimated insurance value) | 75,000 | 85,000 |
| Badge Stock | 650 | 600 |
| | | 813,600 |

The above receipts and payments accounts and statement of assets and liabilities were approved by trustees at the Group Executive meeting held on 10th May 2021. Presented to the Group Council at the Annual General Meeting on 21st June 2021.

| | | |
|--|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| Signature | Print Name | Date |
| <u>Signed & dated on file</u> Group Treasurer | <u>Steve Fairfax (Chair)</u> | <u>10/05/2021</u> |
| <u>Signed & dated on file</u> Group Chair | <u>Maite Last (Treasurer)</u> | <u>10/05/2021</u> |

Amanda Campbell Bookkeeping Services



Bookkeeping and Payroll Services

11th Folkestone Scouts
The Scouting Centre
Shepway Close
Folkestone
Kent
CT19 5SJ

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of 11th Folkestone (St Johns) Scout Group.

I report on the accounts of the Trust for the year ended 31 December 2020. The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees have requested an independent examination of the accounts.

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act
- To follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act
- To state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act.

have not been met.

Amanda Campbell MICB PM Dip

9 Charles Crescent, Folkestone, Kent CT19 4NF

14 June 2021

Proprietor: Mrs Amanda Campbell MICB PM.Dip
9 Charles Crescent, Folkestone Kent CT19 4NF

Tele: 01303 647674

Email: amanda@acbookkeepingsvcs.co.uk
www.acbookkeepingsvcs.co.uk

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Group Scout Leader's Report

2020 was quite obviously a year of firsts and a year to remember, but not necessarily for the reasons you might think. While events in the world were terrible, our little pocket of Scouting thrived as young people jumped into a new type of Scouting and taught many of our leaders a thing or two about the virtual world.

I was (and am!) incredibly proud of the way everyone in the Group adapted to virtual Scouting – the range of different activities that we all tried, the level of communication outside of the usual section evenings we saw and the huge increase in badges being achieved by young people during the lockdown period was phenomenal. It has also been a delight to get to know parents and families throughout the Group a little more than I usually would and must admit, I did look forward to penning my weekly email update and even more so to the responses I always got from different families. Your kind and generous words were a constant source of support and I thank everyone for that. It has been a pleasure and privilege to steer this Group through new waters, supported as always by the great team of volunteers we are lucky to have at 11th Folkestone.

Congratulations and thank you to all our young people, their families and our volunteers for persevering and excelling over our move to online. Well done everyone.

With the arrival of September we were able to get back to some form of face to face Scouting and even though it was still very different with bubbles and being outside all the time, everyone once again adapted well and got on with just making it a work. Thank you again to the leaders that waded through the copious paperwork, preparing return risk assessments, updating training with new ways of working and making sure everyone was as safe as possible. While a mammoth task, I'm sure leaders would agree it was worth every minute once we were back with the young people.

The ever changing situation didn't phase the team or young people when once again we headed into lockdown after the October break, with the team making an early decision to provide certainty with the decision not to try to go back to face to face for the few sessions we were allowed before the Christmas holidays, a decision that was hard to make, but I still firmly believe was right – especially with the benefit of hindsight and the continued lockdown after the festive holidays.

As a Group, we provided online sessions for all sections, supported transition as best we could and managed to keep almost all our members entertained and engaged with a very different kind of Scouting programme.

That said, we were all very happy and relieved to get back to a more normal programme of activities in and out (although still mostly out) of the centre after Easter. It's great being out and about with the young people and even better with the strong numbers that returned and massive intake of new members we've seen this last term. As of today, we're actually back up to pre-covid numbers in the Group and as I write this, another three joining requests have just popped up on my screen!

I am also pleased to report that several of the parents that helped and joined in with online activities enjoyed themselves so much, they have been spotted helping out now we're back to face to face and continue to enjoy themselves. Welcome to you all!

I'm keeping it very short and sweet this year, I'll end with a heartfelt thank you to each and every one of the fantastic team we have here at 11th Folkestone Scouts who give up their time so freely to support Scouting. It is fun most of the time (promise!) and seeing the young people and Group as a whole achieve so much is so rewarding. Thank you.

Craig Ward Group Scout Leader