

Scouting in Wedmore

Wedmore Scouting exists to prepare young people with the skills needed for life; by encouraging its young members to do more, learn more and be more.

This is done by encouraging them to adopt the values of Scouting; while actively engaging and supporting them in their personal development and empowering them to make a positive contribution to society. These values are:

- **Integrity** – To act with integrity; to be honest, trustworthy and loyal.
- **Respect** – To have self-respect and respect for others.
- **Care** – To support others and take care of the world in which they live.
- **Belief** – To explore faiths, beliefs and attitudes.
- **Co-operation** – To make a positive difference; by co-operating with others and making friends.

1. The Group

- 1.1. Wedmore Scout Group is an 'Open Scout Group' with no formal relationship with any other party. It is an autonomous organisation and an educational charity, which holds its own property and equipment. It has, subject to the policy and rules of The Scout Association, a policy of unrestricted recruitment when admitting young people to membership.
- 1.2. Primarily it serves the communities in and around Wedmore, in the county of Somerset. This includes the villages and hamlets of Bagley, Blackford, Clewer, Cocklake, Crickham, Heath House, Latcham, Mark, Mudgley, Panborough, Sand and Theale; as well as the remainder of the BS28 postcode area. It has a headquarters building in Combe Lane, in Wedmore, located on land belonging to Wedmore Parish Council.
- 1.3. The Group is led by a Group Scout Leader (GSL) and managed by a Group Executive Committee, which is accountable to the Group Scout Council for the satisfactory running of the Group. The Group Scout Council is the electoral body, which supports Scouting in the Scout Group.
- 1.4. The GSL is assisted and supported by the Group Scouters in the delivery of the Balanced Programme for young people within the Group.

2. The Group Scout Council

- 2.1. Membership of the Group Scout Council is open to Scouters, Group Scout Active Support members (including the Group Scout Active Support Manager and Group Scout Active Support Co-ordinators – if appointed), Colony, Pack and Troop Assistants, Skills Instructors, Administrators, Advisers, Patrol Leaders, all parents of Beaver Scouts, Cub Scouts and Scouts, any other supporters including former Scouts and their parents who may be admitted by the GSL, the Group Executive Committee or the Group Scout Council, and to the Leaders of the local Explorer Scout Unit (if stated in a Partnership Agreement). The District Commissioner and District Chair are ex-officio members of the Group Scout Council.
- 2.2. Membership of the Group Scout Council ceases upon the resignation of the member, the dissolution of the Council, or the termination of membership by Headquarters following a recommendation by the Group Executive Committee.

2.3. The Group Scout Council must hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) within six months of the financial year end to:

- receive and consider the Annual Report of the Group Executive Committee, including the annual statement of accounts;
- approve the GSL's nomination of the Group Chair and nominated members of the Group Executive Committee;
- elect a Group Secretary and Group Treasurer;
- elect certain members of the Group Executive Committee;
- appoint an independent scrutineer to check the Group's Annual Accounts.

3. The Group Executive Committee

3.1. As the Group is an educational charity, members of the Group Executive Committee that are aged 18 and over, are the Charity Trustees of the Scout Group; and as such, are responsible for complying with all the legislation applicable to charities. Certain people are disqualified from being charity trustees by virtue of the Charities Acts.

3.2. Only persons aged 18 and over may be full voting members of the Group Executive Committee because of their status as Charity Trustees (however the views of young people in the Group must be taken into consideration).

3.3. The Committee supports the GSL in meeting the responsibilities of their appointment, and must act collectively as charity trustees of the Group, and in the best interest of its members, to:

- comply with the Policy, Organisation and Rules (POR) of the Scout Association, and all relevant legislation, including the General Data Protection Regulations and the Data Protection Act;
- protect and maintain any property and equipment owned and/or used by the Group, including the insurance of persons, property and equipment;
- manage the Group's finances;
- ensure that there are sufficient resources for the Group to operate in a safe and effective manner, so as to develop and promote a positive image of Scouting locally. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - raising funds (in keeping with Rules 3.55, 3.56, 3.57, 3.58, 3.59 and 5.60 of POR)
 - supporting the recruitment of Leaders, and other adult support;
 - ensuring that young people are meaningfully involving in decision making at all levels;
- the opening, closure and/or amalgamation of Sections in the Group;
- appoint administrators, advisers and/or co-opted members of the Committee;
- appoint, manage and control the operation of any sub-committee;
- approve the Group's the Annual Report and Annual Accounts after their examination by an appropriate auditor, independent examiner or scrutineer; and;
 - present these to the Scout Council at the Annual General Meeting;
 - file a copy with the District Executive Committee; and if a registered charity, to the charity regulator if the regulator's rules require it.
- maintain confidentiality with regard to appropriate Executive Committee business.

3.4. The Group Executive Committee consists of:

3.4.1. Ex Officio Members

- The Group Chair;
- The Group Secretary;
- The Group Treasurer;
- The GSL, and Assistant GSL (if appointed)
- The local Explorer Scout Unit Leader (if stated in a Partnership Agreement and subject to that Explorer Scout Leader expressly indicating to the AGM in writing or orally at the meeting) that they are willing to perform such a function);
- All Section Leaders (i.e. individuals holding a Beaver Scout Leader, Cub Scout Leader or Scout Leader role) subject to that Section Leader expressly indicating to the AGM (in writing or orally at the meeting) that they are willing to perform such a function.

3.4.2. Elected Members

- persons elected at the Group Annual General Meeting;
- these should normally be four to six in number;
- the actual number must be the subject of a resolution by the Group Scout Council.

3.4.3. Nominated Members

- persons nominated by the Group Scout Leader;
- the nominations must be approved at the Group Annual General Meeting;
- the number of nominated members must not exceed the number of elected members.

3.4.4. Co-opted Members

- persons co-opted annually by the Group Executive Committee;
- the number of co-opted members must not exceed the number of elected members.

3.4.5. Right of Attendance

- the District Commissioner and the District Chair have the right of attendance at meetings of the Group Executive Committee.

3.5. Ideally, between the nominated members, elected members and co-opted members, the Group Executive should include a parent of at least one Member of each of the Sections in the Group.

3.6. The Group Executive Committee may establish any sub-Committees that it deems necessary. The Group Scout Leader and the Group Chair will be ex-officio members of any sub-Committee of the Group Executive Committee. Any fund raising committee must include at least two members of the Group Executive Committee, in addition to the ex-officio members. No Section Leader, Assistant Leader or Section Assistant may serve on such a fund raising sub-Committee.

4. The Group Scouters' Meeting

4.1. Membership of the Group Scouters' Meeting consists of the GSL as Chair, all Section Leaders and Assistant Leaders and the Group Scout Active Support Manager. Somerset Explorer Scout Unit Leaders may be included, if stated in the partnership agreement.

4.2. The role of the Group Scouters' Meeting is to:

- consider the well-being and development of each Member of the Group;
- ensure the progress of each Member through the programme;
- plan and co-ordinate all the Group's activities;
- to keep the Group Executive Committee advised of the financial and other resource requirements of the training programme.

5. Conduct of Meetings in the Scout Group

5.1. Only members, as defined sections 2 and 3 above, may vote in meetings of the Group Scout Council and the Group Executive Committee.

5.2. Decisions are made by a majority of votes cast by those present at the meeting. In the event of an equal number of votes being cast on either side the Chair does not have a casting vote and the matter is taken not to have been carried.

5.3. The Group Scout Council must make a resolution defining a quorum for meetings of the Group Scout Council and the Group Executive Committee and its sub-Committees.

6. Administrators and Advisers in the Scout Group

6.1. Appropriate enquiries must be made about Members of the Executive Committee, particularly those with any responsibility which involves the handling, or management of funds. These must include a Personal Enquiry to Headquarters, as certain roles require a disclosure as part of the Personal Enquiry process (including where relevant a criminal records disclosure check). When completing a Personal Enquiry the fullest possible information must be given. An Enquiry is not necessary if the individual is simply moving from one appointment to another, provided the procedures have been followed for the initial appointment, and the person's service has been continuous.

6.2. The Group Chair must be able to work in partnership with the GSL. To assist the formation of this partnership the Group Chair is nominated by the Group Scout Leader. The appointment should not be held by a Scouter. Only in extreme circumstances may the GSL act as Group Chair for a short period.

6.3. The appointment of the Group Chair is approved by the Group Scout Council at its Annual General Meeting.

6.4. The Group Secretary and Group Treasurer are elected by the Group Scout Council at the AGM every year. Neither appointment may be held by a Leader, Manager or Supporter. No individual should hold more than one of the appointments of Group Chair, Secretary or Treasurer. Neither can these appointments be combined in any way.

6.5. No individual may hold more than one of the appointments of Group Chair, Secretary or Treasurer of the same Executive Committee. Neither can these appointments be combined in anyway.

6.6. Other Administrators and Advisors may be appointed by the Group Executive Committee, if it so wishes, subject to the approval of the GSL. The appointment and termination of all Group Administrators and Advisors should be reported to the District Secretary who keeps a record of them.

- 6.7. The appointment of Administrators and Advisors may be terminated by the resignation of the holder, the unanimous resolution of all other members of the Group Executive Committee, the expiry of any period of appointment, or conformation by the Scout Association of the termination of the appointment in the event of the cancellation of the registration of the Group.

7. Group Finances

- 7.1. The Group is a separate educational charity and is under a statutory obligation to keep proper books of account. Therefore, the Group Executive Committee must ensure that proper financial planning and budgetary control is operated within the Group.
- 7.2. When entering into any financial or contractual obligation or commitment with another party, the persons concerned should make it clear to the other party that they are acting on behalf of the Group and not in a personal capacity.
- 7.3. All expenditure not specifically delegated to the Group Scouters' Meeting or Section Leaders must be approved by the Group Executive Committee to ensure that the Group can meet any liability so incurred.
- 7.4. All monies received by or on behalf of the Group either directly or via supporters, must be paid into a bank account held in the name of the Group. Under no circumstances must any monies received by a Section or supporter on behalf of the Group be paid into a private bank account.
- 7.5. Monies received at a specific activity may only be used to defray expenses of that same specific activity if the Group Executive Committee has so authorised beforehand, and if a proper account of the receipts and payments is kept.
- 7.6. The account(s) will be operated by the Group Treasurer and other persons authorised by the Group Executive Committee; with a minimum of two signatories being required for any withdrawals.
- 7.7. Each Section must itself administer sums allocated to it by the Group Executive Committee, and must keep a proper cash account; which must be produced, together with supporting vouchers and the cash balance, to the Group Treasurer at least once in each scouting term (i.e. Spring, Summer & Autumn/Winter).
- 7.8. A statement of accounts must be prepared annually and be independently scrutinised to check that the accounts are in accordance with the records produced by the Treasurer and that they comply with this Constitution.
- 7.9. The statement of accounts must account for all monies received or paid on behalf of the Group, including all Sections, Committees and the Group Scout Active Support Unit; and include a report to the trustees (the Group Executive Committee), in accordance with the factsheet "Accounting and Audit Accounting and Audit Requirements for Group, Districts, Counties/Areas and Scottish Regions".
- 7.10. The Scrutineer must carry out an external examination of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 1993, and issue a report to the trustees (the Group Executive), when the examination is completed. To assist in this task, the bank(s) where the Group's account(s) are held must be instructed to certify the balance(s) at the end of the financial period direct to the Scrutineer.

- 7.11. Signed copies of the annual report, accounts and Scrutineer's Report must be sent to the District Treasurer within the 14 days following the Group's Annual General Meeting, at which they were received and considered.
- 7.12. Statements of account and all existing accounting records must be preserved for at least six years from the end of the financial year in which they are made, or for such longer period as may be required by H.M. Revenue and Customs.
- 7.13. If the Group ceases to exist, the Group Treasurer must prepare a statement of account at the effective date of closure: then hand this together with all Group assets, to the District Treasurer as soon as possible after the closure date. These must be supported by all books of accounts and vouchers.

8. Responsibilities of Group Administrators

- 8.1. The **Group Chair** must function in partnership with the GSL. The Group Chair acts as Chair of the Group Council and the Group Executive Committee. The function of both bodies is to create the best possible circumstances and facilities for the delivery of the training programme to Members of the group. The Group Chair should therefore take all possible steps to ensure that there is an effective Executive Committee and that it provides effective administration and financial support for the Group. Another duty is to ensure that new Group Secretaries or Treasurers are appointed they are fully briefed to administer, with the Group Chair, the affairs of the Group efficiently and to comply with all statutory requirements.
- 8.2. The **Group Treasurer** is elected to advise the Group Executive Committee on financial control and expenditure; and to produce an annual budget for approval by the Group Executive Committee. Money should be paid out only as authorised by the Group Executive Committee; and such bank accounts, as may be necessary, should be maintained in the name of the Group, as set out in section 7 above; with any accumulated funds that are not immediately required being invested. Another responsibility is to receive all monies from Sections and to ensure that funds allotted to Sections in the Group are properly accounted for. The Group Treasurer must ensure that Membership Subscription from all members of the Group who are liable for its payment are sent to the District Treasurer by the due date.
- 8.3. The Group Treasurer should work closely with the Group Executive Committee and the District Treasurer in all matters related to the raising of funds, supervise the administration of the Group's property and equipment and ensure that proper inventories are maintained and proper insurance arranged. Finally, the Group Treasurer must comply with all rules relating to finance that are contained in Rules 3.48 through to, and including 3.55, of the Scout Associations "Policy, Organisation & Rules"; or as required by the Law of the land.
- 8.4. The **Group Secretary** is elected to act as Secretary of the Group Council and the Group Executive Committee. He/she should keep such records concerning the administration and training in the Group as the GSL and Group Chair may require, and should make available to members of the Group information and advice received from the Scout Association, County HQ, The Scout County and District or from any outside source as may be appropriate.