

This constitution describes the role, membership and operation of the Wedmore Scout Group and is founded on Rule 5.4 of The Scout Associations Policy, Organisation & Rules issued in April 2023.

In the interest of openness, especially for new members of the Scout Council, the Scout Council will re-adopt their constitution at each Annual General Meeting.

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** – Acting with integrity; and being honest, trustworthy and loyal.
- **Respect** – Having self-respect and respect for others.
- **Care** – Supporting others and taking care of the world they live in.
- **Belief** – Exploring faiths, beliefs and attitudes.
- **Co-operation** – Making a positive difference; by co-operating with others and making friends.

The Group

Wedmore Scout Group is a registered unit of the UK Scout Association. It renews this annually by submitting an annual registration and census return and paying a Membership Subscription based on the number of members it has.

It 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 is subject to the policy and rules of The Scout Association (POR) and has a principle of unrestricted recruitment when admitting young people to membership.

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.

The Group is led by a Group Scout Leader (GSL) and managed by a Trustee Board, 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.

The GSL is assisted by a Deputy GSL (if appointed) and supported by the Group Scouters in the delivery of the high-quality Programme for young people within the Group.

1. The Scout Council

- 1.1. The Scout Council is the body which has charity governance responsibility for Scouting in the Group. The Trustee Board is accountable to the Scout Council.
- 1.2. Membership of the Scout Council does not bestow membership of the Scout Association.

- 1.3. There are four categories of membership in the Scout Council:
- Ex officio
 - Nominated
 - Co-opted (only for the County Scout Council)
 - Right of attendance
- 1.4. A Secretary must ensure that nominated and co-opted Scout Council Members are recorded in the Scout Council meeting minutes, normally the Annual General Meeting. Nominated and co-opted Scout Council members will not be recorded on The Scout Association's membership system. Furthermore, Ex officio Scout Council members are not recorded as Scout Council Members on The Scout Association's membership system.

1.5. Membership

- 1.5.1. The ex officio members of the Group Scout Council are:
- all adult members of the Group (as defined in the Roles Table listed in Chapter 16 of POR)
 - all Patrol Leaders of the Troop(s) in the Group
 - parents or carers of Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts
 - Explorers, if so stated in a Partnership Agreement between the Unit and the Group
 - parents and carers of Explorers, if so stated in a Partnership Agreement between the Unit and the Group
 - the District Commissioner
 - the District Trustee Board Chair
- 1.5.2. The nominated members of the Group Scout Council are other supporters of the Group appointed by the Group Scout Council on the recommendation of the Group Scout Leader and the Group Trustee Board. The number of nominated members must not exceed the number of ex officio members.
- 1.5.3. A nominated member of the Group Scout Council must be appointed for a fixed period not exceeding three years. Subsequent reappointments are permitted.
- 1.5.4. The County Commissioner has a right to attend all Group Scout Council meetings in the County.
- 1.5.5. Membership of the Scout Council ends upon:
- the resignation of the Scout Council member
 - the member no longer qualifies as a member of the Scout Council
 - dissolution of the Scout Council
 - the termination of membership by UK Headquarters following a recommendation by the relevant Trustee Board.

1.6. Annual General Meeting

- 1.6.1. The Scout Council must hold an Annual General Meeting within six months of the end of the charity's financial year.
- 1.6.2. The Annual General Meeting must:
- Undertake governance oversight

- adopt (or re-adopt) the constitution of the charity [Group, District or County as appropriate]. See POR rule 5.3.
 - note the dates of the charity's financial year
 - agree on the number of members that may be elected to the Trustee Board
 - agree to the quorum for each of:
 - o meetings of the Scout Council
 - o meetings of the Trustee Board
 - o meetings of any sub-Committees
 - b) Review the previous year
 - receive and consider the Trustees' Annual Report and the annual statement of accounts prepared by the Trustee Board.
- 1.6.3. The accounts must have completed their examination by an appropriate auditor, independent examiner, or scrutineer (see Section 4.4).
- 1.6.4. The Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts presented to the Scout Council must include the formal report prepared by the auditor, independent examiner, or scrutineer.
- a) Make appointments
 - approve the Group Scout Leader's nomination of the Chair of the Trustee Board
 - approve the Group Scout Leader's nomination of members of the Trustee Board
 - elect a Secretary to the Trustee Board.
 - elect a Treasurer to the Trustee Board
 - elect Trustees to the Trustee Board
 - approve the appointment (or re-appointment) of any Presidents or Vice Presidents
 - appoint (or re-appoint) an auditor, independent examiner or scrutineer as required
- 1.6.5. Following each Annual General Meeting, the Secretary must ensure that:
- 1) all nominated or elected Trustees are recorded on the membership system, as required by POR Rule 16.1.3
 - 2) the Trustee's Annual Report and Accounts are filed as described in Section 4.3.

It is good practice for the Trustee Board to verify the draft Minutes of the Annual General Meeting at their first meeting following the Annual General Meeting, even though the minutes cannot be formally approved until the charity's next Annual General Meeting.

Governance roles must be distinct to help manage conflict of interest. This means that the roles of Chair and Treasurer must not be combined in any way.

2. Group Trustee Board

2.1. Purpose

This rule reflects the Trustee Board's responsibilities until the point of the County's transition (in February 2024). From the point of transition, some of the Trustee Board responsibilities transfer to the appropriate Support Team or function – these changes will show in the October 2023 edition of POR.

The Trustee Board is a team of volunteers who work together as charity Trustees to make sure the Scouting is run safely and legally. At the heart of their role is a focus on strategy, performance and assurance.

Effective Trustee support helps other volunteers run the Scout programme that gives young people skills for life.

2.1.1. Members of the Trustee Board must act collectively as charity trustees of their charity and in the best interests of the charity's members.

2.1.2. The Trustee Board must act in the charity's best interests, acting with reasonable care and skill and taking steps to be confident that:

a) The charity is:

- well managed
- carrying out its purposes for the public benefit
- complying with the charity's governing document and the law
- managing the charity's resources responsibly

b) the charity is operating compliant with POR, including effective management of the Key Policies listed in Chapter 2 of POR - The Equal Opportunities Policy, Privacy and Data Protection Policy, Religious Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Safety Policy, Vetting Policy, Youth Member Anti-bullying Policy.

c) Young people are meaningfully involved in decision-making at all levels

d) there are sufficient resources (funds, people, property and equipment) available to meet the planned work of the Group, including delivery of the high-quality programme and resource requirements of the training programme (POR Rule 4.2.2)

e) the Scouts have a positive image in the local community

2.1.3. The Trustee Board members must themselves collectively:

a) develop and maintain a risk register, including putting in place appropriate mitigations

b) ensure that the charity's finances are properly managed, including the development and maintenance of appropriate budgets to support the work of the charity

c) maintain and manage:

- a reserves policy for the charity (including a plan for the use of reserves outside the 'minimum')
- an investment policy for the charity

- a public benefit statement for the charity
- d) ensure that people, property and equipment are appropriately insured, and that any property and equipment owned or used by the charity is properly protected and maintained
- e) promote and support the development of Scouting in the local area.
- f) ensure the appointment and management, and operation of any sub-committees, including appointing a Chair to lead the sub-committee
- g) ensure that effective administration is in place to support the work of the Trustee Board
- h) appoint any Administrators, Advisers and co-opted members of the Trustee Board
- i) ensure transparency of operation, including:
 - prepare and approve the Annual Accounts and arrange their examination by an auditor, independent examiner or scrutineer as appropriate and as appointed by the Scout Council at their Annual General Meeting
 - prepare and approve the Trustees' Annual Report (which must include the Annual Accounts)
 - present the approved Trustees' Annual Report and Annual Accounts to the Scout Council at the Annual General Meeting (AGM)
 - following the AGM, ensure that a copy of the Trustee Annual Report and Accounts is sent to the District or County Trustee Board administration and, if a registered charity, is filed with the appropriate charity regulator (if the regulator's rules require it).
- j) take responsibility for adherence to Data Protection Legislation recognising that, dependent on circumstances, it will at different times act as a Data Controller and as a Data Processor
- k) individually and collectively maintain confidentiality regarding appropriate Trustee Board business
- l) where staff are employed:
 - act as a responsible employer in accordance with Scouting's values and relevant legislation
 - ensure that effective line management is in place for each employed staff member and that these are clearly established and communicated
 - ensure that appropriate specific personnel insurance is in place

2.1.4. A Group Trustee Board must also:

- a) provide any necessary support to the Group Scout Leader, when required, to assist in the opening, change, merging or closing of sections

2.1.5. A Trustee Board may create sub-committees to manage the work it deems necessary, ensuring that:

- a) the purpose of each sub-committee is clear and has been agreed by the Trustee Board

- b) each sub-committee of the Trustee Board consists of members approved by the Trustee Board
- c) the Chair of the Trustee Board is an ex officio member of each sub-committee
- d) the relevant Group Scout Leader, District Commissioner or Count Commissioner is an ex officio member of each sub-committee

Members of sub-committees are not Trustees unless they are members of the Trustee Board.

2.2. Membership

- 2.2.1. Subject to the conflict-of-interest rules (see POR Chapter 16 and the definition of 'conflict of interest' in the Definitions chapter), a Trustee may be a member of more than one Trustee Board.
- 2.2.2. Ex officio, nominated, elected and co-opted members of the Trustee Board are charity Trustees of the Group, District or County as appropriate.
- 2.2.3. People invited to attend, or with the right of attendance, may be present at the meeting but are not charity Trustees and have no voting rights.
- 2.2.4. Certain people are disqualified from being charity trustees by virtue of the Charities Acts. (See POR rule 16.1.1.5).
- 2.2.5. Some Groups, Districts and Counties may also need to register as a charity. (See POR Rule 13.1.2).
- 2.2.6. All Trustees must complete training as specified in the Roles Table in POR Rule 16.2.1.

2.3. The ex officio members of a Group Trustee Board are:

- The Group Chair
- The Group Secretary (if appointed as a Trustee)
- The Group Treasurer
- The Group Scout Leader
- The Deputy Group Scout Leader
- All persons with a Section Leader role in a Squirrel, Beaver, Cub or Scout section in the Group, subject to that Section Leader stating to the AGM (in writing or orally at the meeting) that they are willing to be an ex officio member of the Group Trustee Board.
- The Explorer Leader (if stated in a Partnership Agreement), subject to that Explorer Leader expressly indicating to the AGM (in writing or orally at the meeting) that they are willing to perform such a function.

Where there are joint role holders (e.g., Deputy Group Scout Leader), only one of the joint role holders should be an ex officio member of the Group Trustee Board. The role holders will decide this jointly in consultation with the Group Scout Leader and the Group Chair.

- e) The elected members of a Group Trustee Board are persons elected to committees and Scout Active Support Units by the Group Scout Council at the Group Annual General Meeting. The actual number of persons elected must be the subject of a resolution by

the Group Scout Council at their AGM. There must be a maximum of six elected members.

- f) The nominated members of a Group Trustee Board are persons nominated by the Group Scout Leader in consultation with the Group Chair. The nominations must be approved at the Group's Annual General Meeting. The number of nominated
- g) The co-opted members of a Group Trustee Board are persons co-opted annually by the Group Trustee Board. The number of co-opted members must not exceed the actual number of elected members.
- h) The District Commissioner, the District Chair and the County Commissioner each have the right of attendance at meetings of each of the Group Trustee Boards in the Districts in the County.

2.4. Conduct of meetings

- 2.4.1. Only members of a Trustee Board, as defined in Sections 2.2 and 2.3, may vote in meetings of the Trustee Board.
- 2.4.2. At its Annual General Meeting, the Scout Council must make a resolution defining a quorum for meetings of the Scout Council and the Trustee Board and its sub-Committees.
- 2.4.3. Decisions are made by a majority of votes cast by those present at the meeting. If an equal number of votes are cast on either side, the Chair does not have a casting vote, and the matter is taken not to have been carried.
- 2.4.4. In order to discharge their responsibilities, the Trustee Board may meet by telephone and/or video conference as well as face-to-face when agreed by
- 2.4.5. the appropriate Chair. This includes 'hybrid' meetings, where some members join by telephone or video.
- 2.4.6. Electronic voting (such as email) is allowed for the decision-making of the Trustee Board when deemed appropriate by the Chair (for example, when a pressing matter arises between meetings). In such instances, at least 75% of its members must approve the decision, and the outcome of the voting must be reported and recorded in the minutes at the next Trustee Board meeting.

3. Group finance

- 3.1. The Group is a separate charity and is under a statutory obligation to keep proper books of account as defined in the Charities Act 2011.
- 3.2. The Trustee Board ensures that proper financial planning and budgetary control is operated (see Section 2.1.3.) and must be consulted on the financial planning of the Group's activities.
- 3.3. All expenditures not specifically planned within the Trustee Board's budget must be approved by the appropriate Trustee Board to ensure that any financial liability incurred can be met.
- 3.4. 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 charity and not in a personal capacity.

3.5. Bank accounts

- 3.5.1. All monies received by or on behalf of the Group, whether directly or from supporters, must be paid into a bank account, National Savings account or building society account held in the name of the Group.
- 3.5.2. The account(s) will be operated by the respective Treasurer and other members authorised by the relevant Trustee Board.
- 3.5.3. A minimum of two unrelated persons authorised by the Trustee Board must approve all withdrawals and payments.
- 3.5.4. Under no circumstances must any monies received by a section or supporter on behalf of the Group, District or County be paid into a private bank account.
- 3.5.5. Cash received at a specific activity may only be used to defray expenses of that same specific activity if the relevant Trustee Board has so authorised beforehand and if a proper account of the receipts and payments is kept.
- 3.5.6. Funds not immediately required must be transferred into a suitable investment account held in the name of the Group and invested as specified by the Trustee Act 2000.

3.6. Payment of membership subscriptions

- 3.6.1. In order to meet the costs of UK Headquarters services to the movement and the costs of organising and administering The Scout Association, and to meet The Scout Association's obligations to World Scouting, the Board of Trustees of The Scout Association requires a UK Headquarters Membership Subscription to be paid for each member aged under 18.
- 3.6.2. The amount of the membership subscription is decided annually by the Board of Trustees.
- 3.6.3. In addition, to meet local costs, the Group, District and County may charge a membership subscription.
- 3.6.4. The Group is responsible for the collection and payment of the UK Headquarters membership subscriptions and any Country, County and District subscriptions in accordance with the numbers returned on the annual census return.
- 3.6.5. Payments should be remitted to the District Treasurer not later than the date annually notified locally.
- 3.6.6. Membership subscriptions may be collected from youth members or their parents by a method decided by the relevant Trustee Board.
- 3.6.7. The Group is encouraged to use the Gift Aid scheme for subscription payments.

3.7. Funds administered by Sections

- 3.7.1. Subject to approval by the relevant Trustee Board, any section, unit or other activity that is not a separate charity must administer sums approved and allocated to it by the Trustee Board.
- 3.7.2. Subscriptions paid by members of any section or other activity within a Group or on their behalf must be handed to the respective Treasurer or their nominee as soon as possible after receipt.

- 3.7.3. The receiving Treasurer should make the necessary records and pay the money into the Group, District or County bank account(s) as soon as practicable.
- 3.7.4. Each section or other activity must keep a proper cash account which must be produced, together with supporting vouchers and the cash balance, to the respective Group, District or County Treasurer at least once in each period of three months.

3.8. Fundraising

- 3.8.1. In order to maintain its work and to generate all that is needed to implement its training programme, the Scout movement has to support itself financially.
- 3.8.2. The Group is expected to generate sufficient funds to carry out its own programme of activities.
- 3.8.3. Fundraising carried out on behalf of Scouting must be conducted in accordance with the principles embodied in the Scout Promise and Law.
- 3.8.4. Within the provisions of this policy, the methods of fundraising may be chosen so long as they are consistent with the Movement's reputation and good standing.
- 3.8.5. Fundraising conducted on behalf of Scouting may be by any means not forbidden by law and which is acceptable to the local community, provided that:
 - a) the proceeds of the activity go wholly to the work of the Group, or, in the case of joint activities with other organisations, that part of the proceeds allotted to the Group, is wholly applied to the work of the Group
 - b) it does not encourage the habit of gambling.
- 3.8.6. Public collections of money are allowed provided that the legislation regarding age, action and location of collectors is complied with.
- 3.8.7. Collections may take place even though there is no visible reciprocal effort for the donation. Stickers and flags are appropriate. It is considered that the value of the donation has already been given to society through the work of the Scout Movement in and for the community.
- 3.8.8. Where the reason for the fundraising is stated, the proceeds must only be used for that purpose.

3.8.9. Fundraising and the Law

- a) All fundraising undertaken on behalf of the Movement must be carried out as prescribed by the law. This will include those regulations governing house-to-house collections, street collections, lotteries, gaming, children and young persons. Details can be obtained from the Fundraising Support section of the Scouts website.

4. Accounting and Audit

- 4.1. As the Group's annual gross income or total income is less than the £250,000 limit, and it does not have any assets which form part of a permanent endowment, an annual statement of accounts will be prepared in the Receipts and Payments format for a single fund unit, as there are no special funds whose use is restricted

- 4.2. If the Group is a registered charity, the Trustee's Annual Report and Accounts must include its charity number,

4.3. Statement of accounts

- 4.3.1. A statement of accounts must be prepared annually and scrutinised, independently examined or audited as appropriate per these Rules.
- 4.3.2. The Group Trustee Board must ensure that signed copies of the Trustees' annual report and accounts are sent to the District Treasurer within the 14 days following the relevant Annual General Meeting at which the annual report and accounts were received and considered.
- 4.3.3. If the Group is a registered charity, a copy of the annual report and accounts will also be sent to the appropriate charity regulator if the regulator's rules require it, within ten months of the financial year-end.
- 4.3.4. The annual statement of accounts must account for all monies received or paid on behalf of the Group. This includes all sections,

4.4. Independent examination of accounts

- 4.4.1. At each Annual General Meeting of the Group Scout Council, an auditor, independent examiner or scrutineer, as appropriate, must be appointed. The Group will decide if it needs an auditor, independent examiner or scrutineer by reference to Accounting and Audit Requirements for Group, Districts, Counties/Areas and Scottish Regions.
- 4.4.2. A report to the Trustee Board must be completed by a scrutineer, independent examiner or auditor in accordance with the appropriate model referred to in Accounting and Reporting.

5. Disposal of Group assets

5.1. Disposal of assets at amalgamation

- 5.1.1. If the Group amalgamates with one or more other Groups, the retiring Treasurers must prepare a statement of account at the date of the amalgamation.
- 5.1.2. The statement, together with all Group's assets supported by all books of account and vouchers, must be handed to the Treasurer of the Group formed by the amalgamation.
- 5.1.3. If the receiving Treasurer considers it necessary, after consultation with the Trustee Board, they may ask the Trustee Board to appoint an appropriate person to examine the accounts.

5.2. Disposal of assets at closure

- 5.2.1. If the Group is closed, the Treasurer must prepare a statement of account at the effective date of closure.
- 5.2.2. The statement, together with all assets, must be handed to the District Treasurer as soon as possible after the closure date and must be supported by all books of accounts and vouchers.

- 5.2.3. The Treasurer as appropriate, will ensure that the statement of account is properly scrutinised, independently examined or audited as appropriate.

5.3. Assets or liabilities remaining after closure

- 5.3.1. Any assets or liabilities remaining after the closure of the Group will automatically pass to the District Scout Council which may use or dispose of these assets at its absolute discretion.
- 5.3.2. If there is any reasonable prospect of the Group, being revived the disposal of these assets may be delayed for such a period as it thinks proper with a view to returning them to the revived Group.
- 5.3.3. The Trustee Board is responsible for preserving the statements of account and all accounting records of the Group.

5.4. Preservation of books of account

- 5.4.1. Statements of account and all existing accounting records must be preserved for at least 6 years from the end of the financial year in which they are made, or for such longer period as may be required by HMRC or other relevant body.