



DLV's Review of Scouts in Grafton 2024-25

It's been another great year for Scouts in Grafton.

As always, we start the new financial year by hearing about what's happened in the previous year when attending Group AGMs and it was great to get to as many as we could to see and hear what the young people of Grafton have got up to in the last 12 months and to say a huge thank you to the volunteers who make it happen.

We had the D-Day 80 celebrations in June, and it was brilliant to see Groups get involved in their local communities to celebrate such a moment.

It's been a year of Growth for the District. We've welcomed a new Squirrel Drey at Pattishall which is really exciting to see, the Beaver Colony at Deanshanger has re-opened which is amazing and following a number of taster sessions that ran for the first part of the year, we welcomed a new Group to the District in 1st Grafton (SEND) in September so a massive thank you to all of the volunteers who got this project off the ground and who keep it going today. We did however have to review our 14-24 provision and due to leader and young people numbers, we unfortunately had no option but to close Tunnel Rats ESU.

We've also seen a number of new task appointments to the District, most notably the appointment of a District Youth Lead in September who is working on plans to bring youth shaped Scouting to life in Grafton. We've also welcomed volunteers to both our support and volunteering development teams to help us focus on our background tasks.

We have however seen some leavers and changes of roles too. We thank Sandra O'Connor for all of the work she has done for the District over the years, most recently as chair of the Appointments Committee, and a thank you to Anne Oram as she takes a step back from her Cub role but does remain on the District Programme Team.

It would however be remiss of me not to mention Transformation as the biggest change of the year – whilst it is of course taking time for us to get our heads around the new role titles and ways of working, my heartfelt thanks go to all volunteers in the District for working through the challenges in order to continue to provide great the great Scouts experience to our young people, who haven't really noticed that anything has happened!



January brings the annual census, and I'm pleased that we did grow as a District, albeit by 0.9%. We did lose young people but I'm delighted the share that our adult volunteer number grew, hence the overall growth for the District.

It's been an active year for the District Programme Team with events put on for Beavers, Cubs and Scouts. Beavers enjoyed a hike from Milton Malsor to Blisworth in November, finished off with a campfire, before putting their glad rags on for the annual Beaver Party in February. The Cubs got their thinking caps on for the quiz in February before getting their practical skills out for the Totem Pole Competition in March. Scouts put their hiking boots on and completed their Expedition Challenge Award by hiking from Middleton Cheney to Horley and back again (a different route each day!)

Plans are now underway for the few next financial years with District Scout Camp planned for September 2025 and a Whole District Camp in the works for May 2026.

We've also seen investment in equipment to support the day to day programme, and I'm delighted to share that we now have the equipment to deliver the Digital Staged Activity Badges to all sections and we're also in the process of setting up a mobile shooting range that can visit each Group. More information on these activities will be shared soon.

Our small but mighty support team has been keeping the District's operations going in the background having provided bookkeeping support to the trustee board this year and looking after things like the websites and email system.

Our Badge Shop continues to provide an invaluable service to the sections and groups within the District at Spotley Wood Campsite is running well bringing people to the area.

The Volunteering Development Team has lead on our transformation work having put on a number of trustee workshops to support the move from Executive Committees and have started to design our new ways of working with the welcome conversations when new adults join us. We're also continuing to look at what support our Awards and Recognition team can provide.