



MALLING DISTRICT SCOUT COUNCIL

Annual General Meeting
Blacklands Scout Hut – 28th June 2025

MEETING MINUTES

Present: Aaron Divall, Adam Ray, Alyssa Ellison, Angela Hadfield, Bob Mallett, Caroline Crittenden, Craig Worcester, Dave Norris, Denis Spiller, Des Harris, Dylan Carlton, Elaine Greenwood, Helen Povey, Izzie Warrington, Jacqueline Smith, James Price, Joanne Coombs, Karen McCloy, Kenneth Sharp, Maria Ellison, Mark Gordon, Mark Price, Matt Paramor, Paul Gladwell, Peter Townsend, Rob Price, Sandra Finch, Scott Ker, Stephen Allen, Steven Perry

Apologies: Adam Makewell, Alan McGill, Alex Dunn, Ali Gibbs, Andy Edwards, Ann Hart, Ashley McCulloch, Avril Castle, Becca Morsman, Charles Copping, Chris Trollope, Colin Chambers, Darren Morris, Darren Palmer, Emily Bulford, Fiona Roscoe, Georgina Edwards, Helen Snowden, Jack Bezant, Kate Shuttleworth, Kathryn Frankling, Ligita Nociute, Lisa Richardson, Liz Ralph, Louisa Metcalf, Louise Hyde, Martin Willgoss, Matt Biddiss, Matt Sharp, Michelle Brennan, Nathan Lee, Nirav Patel, Penny McCulloch, Purdey Brown, Sophie Sarchet, Sue McGeorge, Susan Lyons, Tamira Mander-Lynskey, Tom Llewellyn, Tony Shaw, William James, Zoe Gascoine

1. Introduction and Welcome

Denis welcomed attendees to the meeting. Denis thanked Blacklands for the use of their facilities today, and officially welcomed all members of the District Scout Council, and guests, parents and supporters. He also provided a special welcome to the Kent County Chair Des Harris and County Programme Team Leader (Adventure) Dave Norris.

2. Apologies for Absence – please see above

3. Governance

- a. **Approve the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 14 July 2024:** The District Trustee Board have reviewed these minutes and recommend that they are accepted.

All in favour: Minutes accepted.

- b. **Note the District's financial year:** The charity financial year is the 1st April to 31st March.

4. Review the previous year



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a. The District Lead Volunteer's review of Scouts in Malling, 2024-25:

I am delighted to report that Scouting in Malling has had another excellent year. In the census at January 2025, we did see a slight decrease in our overall youth membership of just over 3%, but our adult volunteer numbers increased this year by just short of 5%, leaving us overall with a very tiny dip in membership. The team have reviewed the census this year with the group lead volunteers and have no specific concerns for reasons for a slight drop. We're looking ahead to 2026 where we expect to grow again due to further expansion of Squirrels sections opening in more groups across the district.

At this stage last year, we were looking forward to many things. Scouts transformation happened in late November, and this was the official start of changing our approach to volunteering in teams, learning, welcoming adult volunteers and using new digital tools. Whilst the digital tool launch might not have gone as smoothly as headquarters may have liked, things are progressing and beginning to embed in the way we volunteer in and operate at Scouts. Part of this has been a refocus on safety and compliance and with the requirement for every full member to complete updated mandatory safety learning, the District has supported volunteers in completing this, with just a couple of weeks to go until the deadline, we're nearly there.

One of the things we were looking forward to most, and what we would say was our major achievement in the year was taking over 200 people to Kandersteg International Scout Centre, in Switzerland, for the adventure of a lifetime. We explored the country, took part in adventurous activities and made new friends. With representation of both adults and young people from right across the District, this was the standout event of the year and my thanks go to the entire team that worked tirelessly for over 18 months before the trip for all the planning and preparation that went into it to make it the success it was.

Our Programme Team began delivering events for young people from across the Malling area with events including the District coming together to celebrate St George's Day at the Friars in Aylesford, as well as events for Squirrels and a silent disco for Beavers, Cubs and Scouts. Our 14-24 team also completed the opening of a new Explorer Unit, Phoenix, to increase capacity within the 14-24 provision, and look forward to seeing how this grows in the years to come. Our Campsite Support, Management and Development Teams continue to work on maintaining and



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developing Comp Wood, which includes construction of a new building and refurbishment of existing facilities. We are excited to watch the new building and facilities take shape.

Young people remain at the heart of everything that we do in Malling, shaping the activities we offer which gives them opportunities to take on leadership roles. The Youth Team has been at the heart of this, holding a youth forum for Scouts and Explorers to share their thoughts, and a youth panel being instrumental to decision making as part of the trip to Kandersteg.

All Groups across the District continue to offer brilliant programmes and activities for young people and we are working with groups to identify opportunities to grow where there are signs of waiting lists. Some of our Groups are facing some challenges without a lead volunteer, and so we're continuing to work with the Groups, the county Growth and Development officers and others across the District to support and identify teams of people to work together in leadership teams. If anyone is looking for a new and exciting challenge, please do get in touch for a chat.

As we look forward to Malling's future, exciting plans are already in place for events such as Quest 9 in 2027 and many other incredible opportunities. By the time we get to next year's AGM, the wheels will be in motion to find my successor to lead Malling into its next chapter as my tenure as Lead Volunteer will end at the end of 2026.

I'd like to say thanks to my entire District Leadership Team, the wider District Teams and the Trustee Board for their support during what has been another busy year. Finally, I'd like to thank every adult volunteer, parent, young person who has been involved with Scouts. You're all fantastic. Remember, we're better off when we achieve together. Scouts really does make an impact and continues to deliver Skills for Life

- b. Receive and consider the Annual Report of the District Trustee Board, including the annual Statement of the Accounts:** The District Trustee Board have approved the accounts, which were scrutinised by and Independent Examiner, Ben Hibben.

Denis invited any questions from the floor regarding the Trustee Annual Report or Accounts – none asked.

5. Making appointments



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Denis commended the Trustee Board's performance and focus on governance. Denis noted that he is entering the final year of his two-year term. He highlighted the success of the open selection process and encouraged continued participation.

Denis ran through the following appointments:

- a. **Appoint members of the District Trustee Board, following recommendations from the open selection process initiated by the District Trustee Board:** Mark Gordon for a three-year term.
All in favour: Appointed
- b. **Re-appoint District President:** Martin Willgoss has stepped down as President, and Denis thanked Martin for his support over the years. No president was re-appointed for this year.
- c. **Appoint the Independent Examiner:** Ben Hibben was proposed as a suitably qualified examiner.
All in favour: Appointed
- d. **Nominate representatives of the District for the County Scout Council:** Adam Ray and Paul Gladwell were proposed.
All in favour: Appointed

6. Closing remarks and County statement

Des Harris as County representative, gave a short speech, and thanked the volunteers for their hard work for the young people. He emphasised the importance of support, encouragement, and creating opportunities for young people to thrive.

Denis thanked both Des and Dave for attending the meeting on behalf of County.

7. Awards

Des and Dave presented the following awards:

Growth: 1st St Mary's Platt, Blacklands, 1st Borough Green, 1st Leybourne, 1st Snodland and 1st West Malling.

Length of Service awards were also presented to Scott Ker for 15 years, Karen McCloy for 25 years and Peter Townsend for Chief Scout's Commendation for Good Service.

8. Close



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Denis thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

Confirmed District Trustee Board members (Trustees) 2025/2026

Craig Worcester	District Lead Volunteer
Denis Spiller	Chair
Izzie Warrington	Treasurer
Tom Llewellyn	District Youth Lead
Adam Ray	Trustee Board Members
Deborah Hadley	
Matt Paramor	
Mark Gordon	