

Brickhill Scout Group Board of Trustees

Trustee Meeting Minutes

Date: 3 March 2026 7:30PM

Location: Brickhill Scout Hut

Next Meeting: 5 May 2026, same time and location

Attendees

- Andrew Picles (Chair)
- Sophie Constant (Treasurer)
- Dawn Stapleton (GSL)
- Chris Abri (Cub Section Leader)
- Gareth Scorer (Beaver Section Leader)
- Aleksandr Zabolotnov (Trustee)
- Janet Dickinson (DLV)

Apologies: Eamon Donnelly, Nick Merryweather, Steve Hensen (Scout Section), Raj Gill-Mehmi, Zoe Zelik, Enrico Corti,

1. Safeguarding & Safety – Standing Items

No safeguarding concerns to report.

No safety incidents to report.

2. Prevention of Future Deaths (PFD) / Risk Management Review

The meeting dedicated significant time to a structured review of the group's risk management framework, following circulation of PFD documentation prior to the meeting.

Trustees confirmed that they have already read the PFD Documentation before the meetings.

2.1 Risk Assessments – General

- The group holds a general risk assessment for the Hut, accessible on the group website under **Policies and Documents**.
- External hirers (e.g. Salaam Bedford) are expected to produce their own risk assessments, using the group's risk assessments as guidance only. This distinction is deliberate: if the group's risk assessment is used exclusively and something is missed, liability could fall on the group.
- Documents currently on the website include: expenses policy, lone working risk assessment, social media policy, anti-bullying and complaints policy, waiting list and attendance policy, premises usage risk assessment, fire risk assessment, and a certificates sub-page holding insurance documents and PAT testing records.
- Activity-specific risk assessments are logged in **Online Scout Manager (OSM)**, with pre-built templates for recurring activities (e.g. cooking, naked flames). Leaders add appropriate templates ahead of each session; new activities require a new risk assessment to be written in advance.
- DBS checks are confirmed for camp Adult attendees, trustees, help us and leaders.
- Safeguarding and safety training is reported to be at 100%.

Action:

Each Section Leader - to review and update their standard risk assessments templates on OSM within the next term. Ensure risk assessments are

- Clearly named
- Meet the needs of the activity and the current cohort of young people and adults.
- Consistently organised and shared with all involved.
- Reviewed by a second leader.

2.2 Risk Assessment Process at Sessions

Concern was raised that risk assessments are sometimes uploaded to OSM at short notice, meaning other leaders may not have read them before a session begins.

Agreed process:

- Section leaders are responsible for ensuring that the risk assessment for any session or camp is uploaded at least a week before the event / session.
- Section leaders should ensure verbally check that all leaders have read The risk assessments for that session before the start of the session/event.

- The session leader should share the risk assessment with the young people and any helpers- this may be summarised verbally in an age appropriate manner.
- Where a new or unusual activity is planned, a message should be sent via the section WhatsApp chat the day before, directing leaders to review the new risk assessment on OSM and provide any insight or additional risk information.
- For risk assessments uploaded late, a printed copy should be brought to the session so leaders can review it on arrival.
- This process will be documented in the minutes and reviewed at each trustee meeting. Section leaders will be asked to confirm they have been following the process and highlight any feedback.

Action: Section leaders: to confirm and embed the above process with their leadership teams.

2.3 Permit-Holder Verification for Activities

- Certain Scout activities require specific permits (e.g. nights away, archery, shooting). It is the responsibility of the organising Scout leader — not the venue — to verify that the permit holder's qualification is current.
- It was agreed that the names, membership numbers, and permit expiry dates of activity leads should be logged in the OSM event/session for reference.

Action: Section leaders: When booking or arranging permitted activities, leaders to log the activity lead's name, membership number, and permit expiry date in OSM event/session.

2.4 Visitor / Public Liability Insurance

It was identified that the group's current insurance — both the Scout Association policy and the group's own insurer — does **not** cover non-members. This includes:

- Parent helpers and their accompanying siblings
- Young leaders / DofE Helpers who are not registered members
- Visitors at public events such as Bonfire Night

This cover was previously held but appears to have lapsed at some point during renewal. This is considered a high priority issue.

Action: Chair of Trustees/ Treasurer: contact the group's insurer to arrange reinstatement of public liability / visitor insurance for non-members as a matter of urgency.

2.5 Young Leaders – Safeguarding Briefing

- When young leaders or Explorer-age volunteers attend, the section leader provides a safeguarding briefing on their first night, covering reporting responsibilities and appropriate behaviour. An "orange card" framework is used.
- This process is in place but is not currently documented.

Action: Section leader: document the young leader safeguarding briefing process so that it can be evidenced.

2.6 Hut Usage Agreement – External Hirers

- The group has an existing hut usage agreement, though it was noted this was written primarily with long-term regular users in mind and may need updating.
- Other Agreement templates Jordans Close and Sharnbrook will be used as comparison. These include additional clauses such as a £150 deposit, condition sign-off on return, and a requirement for hirers to supply their own risk assessments.
- Agreement should include a clause on risk exposure and confirmation that hirers are responsible for their own risk assessments (with the group providing relevant premises guidance but not the assessments themselves).
- **Children's parties** were discussed and the trustees agreed the group should avoid hiring to children's parties, given the difficulty of ensuring the venue is safe for that use case and the increased risk exposure.
- A standard general agreement will be developed, with customised versions for specific regular hirers (e.g. Salaam Bedford).

Action: Dawn (GSL/Trustee): to draft an updated general-purpose hire agreement and a separate tailored agreement for Salaam Bedford, incorporating risk guidance and deposit conditions. The Jordans Close and Sharnbrook agreement to be used as a reference.

Action: Dawn (GSL/Trustee): Minibus usage policy to be added to the group website. Section 19 permits requirements to remain documented in OSM.

2.7 Premises Signage – Right of Way

- It was noted that members of the public regularly cut through the Scout land as an informal shortcut.
- As this appears to have occurred for many decades, a formal right of access may have been established in common law. The land belongs to Bedford Borough Council; the group holds a lease.
- Trustees agreed that a small, non-prohibitive sign indicating the land is private Scout property would be appropriate. This would not prevent access but would clarify that passage is at the user's own risk, reducing potential liability.

Action: Chair of Trustees: to arrange for a suitable sign to be erected on the access route.

2.8 Informing Visitors and Parents of Expected Behaviour

- Current practice includes pre-event emails, on-site signage (no smoking etc.), and verbal briefings at the start of sessions.
- Concern was noted regarding parents dropping children off without handing over to a leader, and other safeguarding-adjacent behaviours.

Agreed:

- Parent-facing communications should include a reminder of drop-off and collection procedures, particularly at the start of each term.
- The group's behaviour policy for parents/visitors should be reviewed and reissued.

- A QR code to be displayed on the Hut noticeboard linking to all relevant policies and documents.

Action: Section leaders: to include drop-off/collection reminders in regular parent communications and at least termly.

Action: Dawn (GSL/Trustee): Behaviour policy (for parents and visitors) to be reviewed and updated.

Action: Dawn (GSL/Trustee): QR code linking to group policies to be created and displayed in the Hut.

2.9 Members with Additional Needs

- The group collects information on additional needs at the waiting list stage and again on joining, and this is recorded in OSM.
- Individual considerations are factored into activity risk assessments; formal individual risk assessments are produced where needed (e.g. for camps or off-site activities).
- A parent attendance / rota system is used to ensure adequate adult support at sessions where there are members with higher support needs.
- It was noted that the group is seeing an increasing number of young people with additional needs, particularly in Cubs and Beavers, and that this requires proportionate adult support ratios.
- The group does not currently have a formally documented policy for managing members with additional needs.

Action: Dawn (GSL/Trustee): to draft a formal written policy for the inclusion and management of members with additional needs, covering information gathering, risk assessment, parent involvement, and the group's approach to reasonable adjustments.

Action: Section leaders and Board of Trustees: Review Inclusion Policy

2.10 Storage Areas

- The external gas cage, container, and internal storeroom were reviewed as potential risk areas.
- The storeroom in particular was noted as in need of a tidy-up, having accumulated clutter over many years.
- The kitchen under-sink cupboard (containing cleaning chemicals) should have a coded lock fitted to prevent access by young people, particularly relevant when the Hut is hired out.

Action: Chair Board of Trustees: to organise a working party to clear and tidy the storeroom.

Action: Chair Board of Trustees: to organise a coded lock to be fitted to the kitchen under-sink cupboard.

2.11 Fire Pit

- The fire pit is cleared of nails and debris regularly. No additional actions required at this time.
-

3. Finance Report (Treasurer – Sophie)

- **Current balance (end of February 2026):** £29,400
- **Balance at start of financial year (April 2025):** approximately £24,800
- **Net increase in year to date:** approximately £4,600

Outstanding amounts:

- Salaam Bedford owes approximately £300, outstanding since approximately November 2025. Further chasing in progress.
- £20 received via EasyFundraising this month.

Water bill: Increased from £18/month to £31/month in February. Ned to be made aware to query with the water provider. Previous leak may be a contributing factor.

Action Sophie/Ned: Query Bill

Gift Aid: Paperwork submitted; awaiting response. Additional information required from some trustees to complete sign-up for Gift Aid portal access.

Annual report: It was noted that a more comprehensive annual report needs to be produced. Treasurer to review requirements.

Independent examiner: A suitable individual has been identified — a former accountant, independent of the group — who has agreed to act as independent examiner / scrutineer for the accounts. She will need to be formally appointed at the next AGM.

Action: Treasurer: to formally appoint the independent examiner and ensure she is proposed at the next AGM.

Bonfire Night / AGM income split with Sharnbrook: Sausages were partially supplied by Sharnbrook. The agreed split was discussed but not confirmed from notes.

Action: Gareth/Sophie to contact Sharnbrook treasurer directly to confirm the amount spent on food and agree a final settlement figure. A 70/30 split of net proceeds was referenced as the likely basis.

Floor repair quotes: Two companies have provided rough estimates of approximately £4,000 to repair/replace the hall floor. Both indicated they would need to attend to give a firm quote.

Action: Andrew: to arrange for contractors to attend and provide firm quotes, including options for repair (lifting and resetting) vs full replacement.

4. Section / Volunteer Updates

- Chris announced he will be moving into a new work role in April and will be stepping back from cub section leader duties, though they will continue as a helper and attend camps.
 - Two potential section leader successors were identified: Tony (currently attending meetings as a helper) and two newly joined volunteers (a couple who joined while going through the adoption process).
 - It was noted that volunteer numbers are currently healthy, with several parents actively helping at sessions.
-

5. Collaboration with the PTA / Sharnbrook

- The PTA is organising a Big Top circus event at Sharnbrook as a replacement for the traditional summer fair. Potential for the Scout group to participate with a stall, marshals, or car parking support.
- Seven Scouts attending the Jamboree are fundraising and available to assist with marshalling / car parking duties at such events.

Action: Gareth to confirm details of the circus event and whether collaboration with the Scout group is feasible.

6. Any Other Business

None raised.

7. Summary of Actions

PFD

Action	Owner
Review and update standard risk assessments templates on OSM within the next term.	Section Leader
Confirm and embed the risk assessments process with their leadership teams.	Section Leader
When booking or arranging permitted activities, leaders to log the activity lead's name, membership number, and permit expiry date in OSM event/session.	Section Leader
Contact the group's insurer to arrange reinstatement of public liability / visitor insurance for non-members as a matter of urgency.	Chair of Trustees/ Treasurer
Document the young leader safeguarding briefing process	Section Leader
Draft an updated general-purpose HQ hire agreement	Dawn (GSL/Trustee)
Arrange for a suitable sign to be erected on the access route.	Chair of Trustees
Include drop-off/collection reminders in regular parent communications and at least termly.	Section Leader
Behaviour policy (for parents and visitors) to be reviewed and updated.	Dawn (GSL/Trustee)
QR code linking to group policies to be created and displayed in the Hut.	Dawn (GSL/Trustee)
Action: Dawn (GSL/Trustee): draft a formal written policy for the inclusion and additional needs guide/policy.	Dawn (GSL/Trustee)
Review Inclusion Policy	Section Leaders/ Board of Trustees
Organise a working party to clear and tidy the storeroom.	Chair of Trustees
Organise a coded lock to be fitted to the kitchen under-sink cupboard.	Chair of Trustees

Other

Query water bill increase with Anglia Water / provider	Treasurer/Ned
Formally appoint independent examiner and ensure proposal at next AGM	Treasurer
Confirm Bonfire Night food costs with Sharnbrook treasurer and agree settlement	Treasurer/Gareth (TBC)
Arrange floor repair contractor visits and obtain firm quotes	Andrew
Confirm details of circus event and potential Scout group involvement	Gareth

8. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 5 May 2026 – same time and location.

Minutes prepared from audio recording. To be reviewed and approved at the next meeting.

Signed: _____ (Chair) Date: _____