Leander Sea Scout Group

Trustee Board Annual Report

For the year ended 31 March 2026

Introduction

This report summarises the Trustee Board's work during the year ended 31 March 2026. It covers governance, safeguarding, finances, premises and safety, and wider Group activities.

Governance and Policies

The Trustee Board met six times during the year, with attendance consistently strong across Andrew Jackson, Penny D'Souza, Paul Lomas-Clarke, Tim Pullen, Russell Constable, Samantha Sing, Robin Burr and Cathy Johnson.

A more formal, criteria-based process for appointing new Trustees was agreed in October 2025, including a standard set of interview questions, a requirement for candidates to meet with two Trustees, and a published timeline consistent with the Group's POR and AGM obligations. Interviews with two prospective Trustees were subsequently initiated, with one concluded.

The Board reviewed and ratified the Scout Association's eight Key Policies (Duty of Candour, Equal Opportunities, Data Protection, Religious, Safeguarding, Safety, Vetting, and Anti-Bullying and Harassment), which are now published with supporting procedures on the Group intranet. The Reserves Policy and the Policy on Recreational Use of Leander Boats were also due, and remain, for review by all Trustees and the Group Leadership Team (GLT).

Tim Pullen was appointed Data Lead, with responsibility for updating the Group's Privacy Policy. The Expenses Policy and Procedure was reviewed, updated and formally approved in July 2025.

Safeguarding

The Board dealt with a safeguarding matter during the year arising from a parental complaint about a Leander volunteer. In keeping with Scouts process, the matter was escalated to the Scout Association's National Safeguarding Team.

Trustees reviewed the Regulatory Advice Note issued during the year and confirmed they were satisfied that the Group is taking all reasonable steps on safety and safeguarding, evidenced by leader training and permit records, premises and boat inspection logs, and regular safety inspections. Trustees were also given access to the digital incident log to provide ongoing assurance that incidents are being properly recorded.

Finances

The Group's finances remained healthy throughout the year. Bank balances were reviewed at each meeting. Overall, income exceeded expenditure in the financial year although this was partly the result of one-off donations and grants.

The Cambridge interest-bearing savings account continued to perform well, generating around £2,500 interest in the year to January 2026 compared with roughly £500 in the prior year. £50,000 of reserves was allocated to the Galley Fund in July 2025 to support the planned refurbishment.

Capitation paid to the Scout Association amounted to £6,000 - around 9% higher than the previous year; capitation represents approximately 10% of the Group's annual turnover. A trial section-based activity budget of £25 per head per term was introduced, giving Section leaders clearer visibility of funds available and enabling them to submit structured requests for activity spend. A modest increase in subscriptions was discussed and referred to the GLT.

Administration of Gift Aid claims transferred to the Treasurer. Signatory arrangements on the main and petty cash accounts were also updated during the year.

Volunteering, Activities and Young People

Volunteer recruitment was a significant focus, with Beavers and Cubs healthy and Scouts and Explorers more in need of additional adult support; using the waiting list to recruit parents willing to volunteer in a different section from their own child produced some success.

Volunteers completed a comprehensive programme of training and adventurous activity during the year, including Nights Away, Paddle Sport Safety and Rescue, kayak and pulling permit training, and the Group's first-ever hiking permit. Highlights for young people included successful Cub and Beaver camps (Bournemouth and Legoland), a Scouts night hike in Richmond Park, and an archery competition in which Scouts won medals and were commended for their conduct.

The Group again supported the Kingston Dragon Boat event as part of Explorer camp fundraising, and a dinghy sailing weekend for Cubs, Scouts and Explorers was arranged using legacy funds, run with Portland Sailing Centre instructors. Trustees approved the purchase of ten replacement oars (c. £1,500) for the smaller coypu rowing boats.

To mitigate the risks of polluted river water, the Group undertakes citizen-science water quality testing and the data recorded is now published online and shared with other river-based Scout groups and local boating clubs.

Premises, Safety, Boats and Risk

A structural engineer was commissioned to advise on the gig pulleys, following an extended investigation into the falls, which were replaced with a maximum 12mm width. Regular HQ safety inspections continued and fire extinguishers were weighed and recalibrated.

The riverbank/deck area was identified as being at risk of flooding at high spring tides; Kingston Council applied a temporary fix to reduce trip and entrapment risk following representations from local Councillor. Two of the Trustees continued to engage with the Thames Landscape Strategy and local Council's Voice of the River meeting to stay abreast of and contribute to dialogue and action on the River Thames. A letter of support was sent to the local safe bathing consultation.

The galley refurbishment planning continued during the year. Having established a costed 'middle-ground' wish list, the Board resolved in March 2026 to proceed with quotations for a 'silver' specification refurbishment (new cookers, shutters and countertops, estimated at £40,000–£50,000) alongside a three-phase power upgrade, which would allow a move to electric cooking with gas retained as a fallback; grant funding will be sought for both elements. Quotations are being sought for hall repainting (c. £10,000–£12,000) and a robot vacuum cleaner.

Looking Ahead

Priorities for the coming year include: finding ways to expand the fun and adventurous experiences for young people we deliver (e.g. sailing); completing Trustee recruitment; committing to the galley refurbishment subject to grant funding; completing the gig pulley and hall repainting works; reviewing the Reserves and Boat Use Policies; embedding the digital incident log and monthly safety inspections.

Approved on behalf of the Trustee Board

Andrew Jackson, Chair — Leander Sea Scout Group