

Preparing Better Futures, Delivering Skills for Life

Across generations, Scouting has proved a powerful force for good, bringing communities together and contributing to society. But it has always had one aim above all others: to prepare young people for the future.

Society is changing. In often fragmented communities, the pressures and expectations on young people are increasing. The future is uncertain. Scouting has never been so important in helping young people get on by developing the skills they need to succeed in a changing world.

Each week we offer a unique mix of fun, friendship and outdoor adventure that appeals just as much to a young person now as it did in 1907. A strong sense of optimism, duty and cheerful self-reliance still defines a Scout now as it did then. The values we instil; the character, leadership and teamworking skills we deliver have never been more highly prized by employers and wider society.

There is perhaps a reason so many of the Gold Medal winners at the London and Rio Olympics were Scouts. We gave athletes like Helen Glover, Victoria Pendleton and Joe Clarke the confidence to dream big and the determination and drive to realise them.

The same could be said for millions of others who have gone on to excel in their chosen field. It has raised their aspirations (literally so, in the case of astronaut and Scout, Tim Peake). As Scouts we reach for the stars while keeping our feet on the ground.

But building on our successes of recent years we know we can make an even bigger impact. And to do that we need to focus on overcoming some of the challenges we face. Our volunteers do not always get the support they need and not every young person has access to the same consistently excellent programme. Our benefits are not fully understood by the public and we are not seen as relevant or open enough. Our 110 year heritage is something to be proud of, but it also means there are outdated perceptions. While Scouting is well known, it is not always known well.

In changing times, our new strategy needs to be bold enough to face up to these realities. We need to have the courage to change to meet the needs of society, volunteers and young people.

Scouting achieves remarkable things. Our previous plan, *Scouting for All* inspired new groups and sections to start in over 460 areas of deprivation and we now help over 457,000 young people (including 100,000 girls) get the best possible start in life. It inspired our social action campaign, *A Million Hands*, helping over 200,000 make a positive contribution in their local communities. Our adult volunteer numbers are at record levels. And we have empowered young people to shape their movement, with the UK Youth Commissioner leading much of this work and 136 youth commissioners appointed.

But now we want to go further. This is a strategy for an ambitious and determined movement. It is a strategy that supports and empowers our volunteers. It is a strategy that shows our clear intention to contribute to a better society. But most of all it is a strategy for young people. They deserve the best skills, the best support and in short, the best possible start in life.

The journey so far...

This strategy is a collaborative process, both in its formulation and delivery. It only succeeds if we deliver it together, working in partnership.

Over 5,000 adult volunteers have helped review our objectives and consider our strategic priorities. This included over 200 people in Regional/County/Area/District roles, including those in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. We also spoke to over 6,000 young people; members of the public and scores of politicians and key influencers.

Our consultation began in 2016 and has been gathering pace, culminating in our national conference, Summit17, which was attended by 600 adult volunteers and young people in April 2017. Research and blogs from the consultation can be found at www.scouts.org.uk/summit17

This document incorporates the best ideas from members in every part of Scouting, as well as insights from the national debate. Most importantly, it balances the needs of young people and volunteers while addressing key issues facing society.

The world around us...

Following the UK's decision to leave the EU in 2016, as well as major shifts in local, national and global politics, society has rarely felt more polarised. The effects have been felt in local communities, affecting those especially on the fringes of society. When the world feels more inward facing, Scouting has a more powerful role to play than ever in bringing communities together.

On an individual level, there is a perceived crisis of wellbeing, with the associated dangers of digital isolation and alienation. At its best, Scouting responds by bringing young people together and giving chances for them to shine regardless of background, providing continuity and practical support.

In challenging times	Scouting offers	Better futures
Social and generational divisions	Community, shared experiences and social mixing	Better social integration
Lack of opportunity and social mobility	Character, practical and employability skills	Better social mobility
A crisis of wellbeing	Fun, happiness and friendship	Better wellbeing
Desire for more civic participation	Opportunities for social action	Better civic participation

What this strategy means for...

Young people

By 2023 young people will be better equipped with skills for life, including the character, practical and employability skills they need to succeed. They will be able to articulate these skills, ensuring better prospects in work and education, as well as enjoying better wellbeing by taking part in Scouting activities that help them Keep Learning, Be Active, Take Notice, Connect and Give¹ They will make a positive contribution to their local communities and play an active part in wider society.

Volunteers

By 2023 our volunteers will feel more supported, have access to better tools, particularly digital support, so that Scouting is easier and more enjoyable to deliver. Training will be less time consuming, more useful and easier to complete.

Society

By 2023, Scouting will be seen as making a significant and relevant contribution to wider society. Nationally, we will have a strong voice on issues that affect young people. We will bring people together, help break down social, ethnic and generational divides and improve the lives of those in our communities. Scouting cannot exist in isolation – our impact is only felt if we work closely with partners and at the heart of our communities.

Our promise to the future

By 2023 Scouting will have helped:

- bring communities closer together (social integration)
- more young people to get on in life (social mobility)
- more young people to feel better about themselves (wellbeing)
- more young people to play a full part in their communities, making a positive contribution to society (civic participation)

By 2023 we will have:

- **50,000** more young people aged 6-18 in Scouting
- **10,000** more section leaders (including section assistants)
- **10,000** more Young Leaders
- Started Scouting in XX new settings reaching young people who could benefit the most
- At least **250,000** young people each year making a positive impact in their community
- At least **250,000** young people each year shaping their Scouting experience

¹ The five steps to wellbeing identified by the New Economics Foundation, 2008

PREPARING BETTER FUTURES

Our vision

By 2023 we will prepare better futures by equipping 510,000 young people with **skills for life** (character, practical and employability skills). They will enjoy better wellbeing and play a full part in their communities.

Our mission

Scouting actively engages and supports young people in their personal development, empowering them to make a positive contribution to society.

Our values

We act with care, respect, integrity, cooperation, exploring our own and others' beliefs.

Our strategic objectives

As a movement we aim to **grow**, become more **inclusive** and **youth shaped**, while making a **positive impact** in our communities.

Our pillars

To achieve these objectives we will focus on three pillars of work:

Programme

A fun, enjoyable, high quality programme consistently delivered and supported by simple (digital) tools

People

More, well trained, better supported and motivated adult volunteers, and young people, from diverse backgrounds

Perception

Scouting is clearly understood, more visible, trusted, respected and widely seen as playing a key role in today's society.

Our plan of action

Specifically, we believe that this is the work we should prioritise to achieve our objectives:

Programme

Support delivery of a quality programme

Review the offer for 14-25 year olds

People

Improve the volunteer journey

Extend our reach

Perception

Transform our image

Our outcomes

By delivering this strategy we will achieve the following outcomes against the strategic objectives:

Growth

KPI (50k more young people, 10k more section leaders including section assistants and 10k more Young Leaders)

Inclusion

KPI Demographic of adult volunteers reflects society, Introduction of provision in X settings

Youth shaped

KPI (Impact survey shows young people shaped their Scouting, % young people achieve top awards)

Community Impact

KPI (Impact survey shows young people undertook social action, % young people achieve top awards)

DELIVERING SKILLS FOR LIFE

What will continue...

While introducing new ideas and new ways to support both members and wider society, *Preparing Better Futures* also builds on key aspects of our previous strategy:

- **Safeguarding:** We will invest resources to ensure we continue to lead the way in keeping young people safe
- **Digital:** We will invest in infrastructure and services to improve support for volunteers, especially our leaders
- **Governance:** We will ensure the individual charities that comprise The Scout Association are well governed with all boards and executive committees exemplifying the Good Governance Code
- **A Million Hands:** We will improve our innovative approach to community impact to ensure that the Movement continues to help other people. We'll continue *A Million Hands*, with a new set of issues, and partners, chosen by young people, while also supporting those who tackle issues chosen locally.
- **Key events:** We will actively participate in UK, European and World events, including World Scout Jamborees, Blair Atholl International Jamborette, World Scout Moots, Roverway and the Centenary of Gilwell Park in 2019.
- **Staff development:** We will continue to develop The Scout Association's staff team to provide the highest level of practical support to volunteers, building on our Investors in People Silver status and working towards Investors in People Gold by 2019 and Platinum by 2023

PROGRAMME

Our aim: A fun, enjoyable, high quality, impactful programme, consistently delivered programme, supported by simple (digital) tools.

We will ensure the programme experienced by every young person is shaped by young people (Youth Shaped), more relevant and accessible for young people from diverse backgrounds (Inclusion) and enables social action (Community Impact).

Supporting delivery of a quality programme

Young people develop their skills through the programme. We need to support the delivery of high quality, consistently delivered programmes that are challenging, relevant and rewarding for every young person from Beavers and Cubs onwards, with a focus on helping them achieve their top awards. We will build on the momentum generated by our Cubs100 celebrations to maintain a high degree of energy, support and engagement within our sections. The key to delivering our programme are amazing section leaders who need to be supported at every step.

Major digital investment to aid programme planning

By 2023: We will ensure young people receive a fun, enjoyable, quality, high impact consistently delivered programme that takes less time for leaders to plan and deliver. We'll make it easy for people to find programme ideas relating to all aspects of the programme. We will ensure programme resources and games can be easily found and shared. We won't reinvent the wheel and we'll work with others to achieve this, so programme planning is as easy as possible.

Ready-made programmes 'off the shelf'

By 2023: We will ensure more young people experience a balanced programme helping them achieve their top awards, realise their potential and become global citizens by producing ready-made programmes that can be used by leaders.

Digital tools to help keep track of Scouting progress, capture and measure impact

By 2023: We will ensure volunteers can more easily keep track of a young person's achievements in Scouting. This will help us to understand the impact we are making on young people's lives.

Focus on developing amazing section leaders with practical Scouting skills

By 2023: We will help equip section leaders with the skills and learning they need, making it more likely that all young people will receive a challenging, relevant and rewarding programme. Throughout our consultation our volunteers said we needed to equip adult volunteers (particularly those new to Scouting) with practical skills knowledge. Young people told us what they felt made an amazing section leader and that will guide our work.

Review the offer for 14-25 year olds

Across the UK our membership numbers start to decline after the age of 11 as young people cope with new pressures at secondary school. We also know 14-18 year olds want more support connecting their experiences to employability and further education, being able to articulate the skills they have learnt in Scouting, especially from the advanced skills acquired during international expeditions including global awareness, responsibility and independence.

Review provision for 14-25 year olds

By 2023: We will review the Explorer Scout and Scout Network programmes so that there is greater retention of young people at key transitions, growing our numbers, with more young people being successful in education, careers and life opportunities thanks to a relevant programme delivered by amazing leaders. We will also ensure that 14-18 year olds who choose to become Young Leaders are well supported, recognised and can articulate the benefits from their experience of volunteering and leadership.

Ensure clearer links to employability skills

By 2023: We will work with employers and education agencies (such as UCAS) to improve their understanding of what Scouts achieve. The programme will help young people to better understand and better articulate the skills they have developed.

Explore partnerships that enhance the programme

By 2023: We will work with partners such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award programme, Curriculum for Excellence (In Scotland) and the National Citizen Service (NCS) (in England) so that young people and young adults achieve the highest awards in Scouting as well as other awards along the way. Young people won't have to choose between competitors because they can seamlessly acquire the broader experience, accreditation and external recognition through Scouting.

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PEOPLE

Our aim: More, well trained, better supported, motivated adult volunteers from different backgrounds, delivering Scouting to more young people from different backgrounds.

Our work will ensure that young people are more likely to shape their Scouting experience (Youth Shaped); that young people and volunteers from diverse backgrounds join stay, lead and mix in Scouting (Growth, Inclusion) and support high quality social action projects (Community Impact).

Improve the volunteer journey

Transform adult recruitment

By 2023: We will improve the recruitment process to ensure we can recruit more adults from a more diverse range of backgrounds. Volunteers will be recruited quicker and retained longer, with the right people in the right roles to make the most impact on young people. During the consultation our volunteers told us that we could improve the joining process for adults, helping them to progress quickly and seamlessly from enquiry to recruitment to training.

Make training simpler using digital tools to enhance the experience

By 2023: We will ensure our training is simpler, aided by digital tools, and with better training for trainers. We will attract people who see the value of volunteering and acquiring transferable skills from good quality training, and our leaders will feel more empowered to deliver a good quality programme. We're doing this because although we've ensured greater flexibility within the training scheme over the years, for many it is complex and overwhelming.

Clearer, more accessible, self-service online member resources and information

By 2023: We will ensure that volunteers can find the right information quickly via various channels, so they can spend more time delivering safe, high quality activities. Our members currently find it difficult to access relevant, accurate, up to date information and member resources online.

Extend our reach

Scouting does not always reflect the make-up of our local communities and does not reach all the young people it should. We need to proactively engage groups we are not currently reaching and identify where we can make the biggest difference.

Explore early years provision (under 6)

By 2023: We will explore bringing Scouting to younger ages, introducing us to new young people and adults. At our Summit 17 event in April 2017 we heard about the impact of successful provision for under 6 year olds in some areas. Independent research suggests that the earlier a young person accesses non-formal education, the more positive the impact on their prospects. We want to make the biggest difference to young people's lives and society. To do this we need to recruit more young people and volunteers from a wider range of backgrounds. There are currently 30,000 young people on Beaver Scout waiting lists, including those younger than six who we believe would benefit from this work.

Extend Scouting in Schools

By 2023: Scouting will be running in more schools. For decades Scouting has been delivered in school settings allowing us to reach different people and extend our impact. Schools offer resources, space and volunteers enabling us to deliver the Programme to more young people from different backgrounds, while still ensuring quality and integration with community-based Scouting.

Reach more underrepresented communities

By 2023: Scouting is now present and sustainable in 460 more areas of deprivation than it was at the start of our last strategy, *Scouting For All*. We will meet the local demand for Scouting in every District by ensuring every Scout Group is complete with enough sections. We will continue to open new sections, ensuring that every Group offers provision across the full 6-14 age range, and Districts across the 14-25 age range. We re-commit to growing Scouting in areas of deprivation, as well as focusing on communities that are under-represented in the movement. A diversity and inclusion working group will report later this year producing recommendations to steer this work. This will

ensure we have a more diverse membership, improved public perception of our diversity and better links with community leaders.

Improve the joining process for young people

By 2023: We will make the joining process easier so that we can improve the experience and support those from backgrounds less likely to be successful because of the current joining process. Parents tell us the current joining process for young people is clunky and outdated and needs improving.

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PERCEPTION

Our aim: Scouting is clearly understood, more visible, trusted, respected and widely seen as playing a key role in today's society (improved reach, relevance and reputation).

Our communications and membership engagement will ensure more young people and adult volunteers from more diverse backgrounds join, stay, lead and mix in Scouting (Growth, Inclusion), celebrating the social action our young people undertake (Community Impact) and the skills for life that they learn through the Programme.

Transforming our image

Brand review focussed on providing skills for life

By 2023: An updated brand will ensure the public better understands the benefits of Scouting (skills for life) and recognises our positive impact on society, increasing our relevance. Decision makers will better understand our impact, leading to increased support. Having undertaken extensive research on what the public thinks of Scouting today we found that while there is great brand recognition and a willingness for Scouting to succeed, many people believe we are outdated and still only for boys.

Provide tools and resources to promote the benefits of Scouting

By 2023: Scouting will be visible in our communities and seen as a modern, relevant organisation, that gives young people skills for life. For the updated brand to be successful we will ensure that volunteers have the tools and resources needed to communicate the benefits and diversity of Scouting in a consistent way, resulting in higher local awareness and engagement.

Uniform review by 2023 (starting with Explorers)

By 2023: We will have reviewed our uniform, exploring how it impacts on perception, inclusivity and relevance, reinforcing pride and a sense of belonging without acting as a barrier to young people and adults otherwise wishing to join. We will phase our review starting with the Explorer Scout uniform. Many views about uniform have been expressed throughout the consultation. Our uniform was last reviewed in 2001 and it's time to review it again.

COST AND CAPACITY

We believe this is an ambitious, but achievable plan. However between now and April we will carefully review costings and resourcing to ensure it is deliverable and that we do not overpromise.

The proposed strategic plan covers five years. We could not, and do not wish to, commence all activity in 2018. The Group/Section level consultation will help identify the most important, useful and urgent projects.

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

This document is the result of our consultation to date with many thousands of young people and adults, but we want to check that these are the right areas of focus. The next step is to ask Group/Section volunteers what they think of the proposed strategic plan. We would like District Commissioners (or County Commissioners) to provide an opportunity for volunteers to take part in a meeting or event to tell us what they think.

Next Steps²

- Research and consultation briefings on what we've learnt so far are available on www.scouts.org.uk/beyond2018
- This proposed draft strategic plan, alongside a consultation guide and resources will be made available from 7 August 2017
- District Commissioners (or County Commissioners) are encouraged to hold consultation meetings or events in September or October to gather feedback from volunteers on the proposed plan
- The feedback gathered from volunteers should be submitted via an online form following the meeting or event by 27th October 2017

Action now - Schedule a meeting (at least 1 hour) or your own local event (half day, evening or full day) to give volunteers the opportunity to contribute their views on the proposed plan. This proposed draft strategic plan sits alongside a consultation pack (due to be released on 7 August) which will help District or County commissioners to run their consultation meeting or events, recommending activities to use and ways to gather feedback to submit back to HQ.

If you have any questions on the proposed strategic plan or the consultation process please email info.centre@scouts.org.uk citing 'Beyond 2018' in the email title.

Following the consultation in September and October the final strategy will be written up and agreed by the Board in January 2018 and communicated to the membership in April 2018. That document will include details on how the various programmes of work will impact on local Scouting over the coming years.

² Please note Scotland will be running a separate consultation and should refer to SHQ on next steps