



**Progress Against the Scout Association's  
Commitments to the Prevention of Future Deaths  
Report in Relation to the Death of Ben Leonard**

**Update No.5 (May – December 2025)**

December 2025

## Executive Summary

On 18 April 2024, we (The Scout Association, TSA) responded to the concerns raised by HM Coroner in the Prevention of Future Deaths (PFD) Report issued following the inquest into the death of Ben Leonard. Within that response we set out 24 specific commitments with an undertaking to publicly update on our progress in all areas every quarter within the first year, and then annually within a new Safety Report from 2025 onwards.

In addition, 48 hours after the conclusion of the Inquest we commissioned a Fatal Accident Investigation and an internal Rapid Assurance exercise to assure ourselves of compliance with existing safety rules across the Movement. Both have now concluded. Commentary on our Rapid Assurance exercise, which formed the basis of new Assurance function can be found in our previous quarterly reports. The independent Fatal Accident Investigation Panel produced two reports which contained further recommendations beyond those in the Coroner's PFD Report. These have been scrutinised by the dedicated Board Sub-Committee we established to monitor the delivery of our PFD commitments, our Safety Committee and our full Board of Trustees. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the Fatal Accident Investigation Panel for their work. We have published a separate update on progress against these recommendations on our website.

Following the approval of our Board Sub-Committee, this report represents the final update against the commitments we made. Details of many of the commitments are included in previous quarterly updates, however our Board of Trustees agreed to extend the original timelines for a small number of our commitments, with these extensions shared with our regulator, the Charity Commission for England and Wales. This report goes beyond our original commitment to produce reports quarterly for the first year (April 2024 – April 2025) to cover our final commitments. It is not a reflection of the volume of work we have undertaken since the tragedy itself or the 2024 Inquest. In addition to the Fatal Accident Investigation and our Assurance work, since April 2024 to deliver against our commitments we have also:

- Revised and updated our approach to Critical Incidents
- Published and updated our Duty of Candour Policy
- Commissioned a strategic partnership with the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) who also supported, via RoSPA Qualifications, the development of new safety learning for all our volunteers and volunteer leaders
- Updated our safety rules, including terrain definitions, first aid kit contents
- Undertaken a movement-wide review of first aid training undertaken by our volunteers
- Implemented new systems (Adult Membership and Learning Management) to enable training delivery and compliance monitoring
- Expanded the size of our volunteer and staff safety team
- Published four previous quarterly updates on progress against our commitments and our first Annual Safety Report.

While this is the final PFD response report, our work to improve our safety culture at Scouts continues. As a movement we are now in a very different place and we are committed to continually improve, adopting an approach which is constantly seeking to learn and evolve. We will share the progress we make and the improvements we implement going forward via our Annual Safety Report (PFD Commitment #2). The first of which was published in September 2025 as part of our Annual Review.

As outlined in our original response to the Coroner's PFD Report,

All commitments which were 'in progress' in our quarter four report are now addressed.

As this is the final progress report it is structured slightly differently to previously. The report provides:

(1) An update against the commitments we delivered against between May 2025 and December 2025. These include:

- Following the work we undertook in 2024 to improve our Critical Incident and Investigation Policy and the launching of a Duty of Candour Policy, we have now introduced a new critical incident policy
- Training packages to support the delivery of our new approach to a critical incident
- Enhanced supplementary training and validation completed by all 145,000 volunteers
- Independently led review of our permit scheme for both adventurous activities and nights away
- The work we have undertaken and commended to address all recommendations from the Fatal Accident Investigation panel

(2) An outline of some of the future work we are seeking to progress next.

(3) An appendix providing an overview of all the commitments in the response to the PFD we have completed since April 2024.

Several of our PFD commitments resulted in our commissioning external reviews of our approach to safety. For example, having appointed the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) as our strategic safety partner, they conducted a comprehensive independent review of our safety practices (PFD Commitment #4). In addition to the matters covered in this report, we will outline how these reviews and their recommendations are taken forward in our subsequent Annual Safety Reports.

Our response to this tragedy has been a significant moment in our history. It has rightly led to a significant period of reflection, and an overhaul of much of our culture and systems, to enable our thousands of volunteers to continue delivering Scouting safely. However, we do not stop here. Our commitment to a journey of learning and continuous improvement remains.

We would like to end by restating our wholehearted apology to the Leonard family, and thank them for their engagement with us as we worked to respond to the PFD.



Craig Dewar-Willox

**Chair of the Board**



Aidan Jones

**Chief Executive**



Carl Hankinson

**UK Chief Volunteer**

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## Section 1: Commitments delivered in this period (May - December 2025)

<b>Commitment 9</b>	<b>Date for completion</b>	<b>Status</b>
Introduce a new Critical Incident & Investigation Policy	Phase 1 July 2024	Phase 1: Complete
	Phase 2 January 2025	Phase 2: Complete
<b>Details:</b> The Board approved a new Critical Incident Policy in October 2025. Our updated approach to investigations is included in the underlying procedures associated with the Critical Incident Policy.		

<b>Commitment 10</b>	<b>Date for completion</b>	<b>Status</b>
Develop training packages to support our new approach to Critical Incidents.	Phase 1 July 2024	Phase 1: Complete
	Phase 2 May 2025	Phase 2: Commissioning Complete
<b>Details:</b> Training and policy implementation support materials have been developed concurrently with updates to the Critical Incident Policy.  To ensure our training package and support materials are delivered to the highest standard, the UK Resilience Academy has been commissioned to provide additional rigour through external delivery of this training to all UK Headquarters staff and volunteers involved with critical incident management for TSA. Due to the additional commissioning process for this, the UK Resilience Academy Training will take place by March 2026.  While the full delivery plan for this commitment is now enacted, with training delivery due to take place by March 2026, we have marked this section as <i>Commissioning Complete</i> for accuracy.		

<b>Commitment 11</b>	<b>Date for completion</b>	<b>Status</b>
Conduct a yearly Critical Incident scenario exercise (independently reviewed and assessed).	December 2024	Commissioning Complete
	Revised date: By the end of 2025	
<b>Details:</b> Following engagement with Essex Fire and Rescue in early 2025, we have considered various options for TSA to implement scenario exercises into the measures we use as an organisation to prepare ourselves for an incident.  Quarterly internal scenario-based review sessions are planned for all TSA 'On-Duty Officers', a role which provides front line emergency support to local Scouting. A first independently		

reviewed scenario exercise for critical incidents has been commissioned with The UK Resilience Academy and scheduled to take place by April/ May 2026.

While the full delivery plan for this commitment is now enacted we have marked this section as *Commissioning Complete* for accuracy.

Commitment 12, 16 & 19	Date for completion	Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commission enhanced supplementary training and validation process for all 145,000 volunteers.</li> <li>• Create new additional mandatory safety training and support that is level/role specific and appropriate for our senior District and County/ Area/ Region volunteer levels.</li> <li>• We will enhance our online training for volunteers to provide specific guidance on first aid kit suitability and terrain guidance.</li> </ul>	<p>Training content available by November 2024 with target completion by all volunteers by July 2025.</p>	<p>Complete</p>

**Details:**

The RoSPA Qualifications assured suite of new Safety Learning, including content specific to first aid kits and terrains (addressing all the above commitments) was launched on our new learning management tool in December 2024. Eligible volunteers were required to complete the mandatory learning modules by July 2025 (or their existing Safety learning expiration date if earlier), with lead volunteers completing additional modules (commitment 16). In January, we launched a direct communications campaign with our volunteers to drive and support completion. We closely monitored uptake to support completion by the deadline. At the end of July 97% of volunteers had completed the learning. Restrictions were placed on those who hadn't, and 100% of active volunteers had completed the learning by the end of August.

Alongside launching the new learning content, we also implemented stronger analytics to collect data on how well volunteers understood the learning, how realistic and applicable they found it, and how it benefited them in their roles. This data will better allow us to develop future learning to ensure it has a positive impact on volunteer behaviour. Approximately 75% of volunteers completed the optional post course survey and the results have been very positive:

- 91% of volunteers understood the topics covered.
- 89% of volunteers are likely to apply what they have learnt from the learning to their role.
- 90% of volunteers felt the scenarios used in the learning were realistic to them.
- 86% of volunteers felt the learning prepared them for their role in Scouts.

We will continue to develop the learning, and our volunteers are required to renew the learning every three years.

<b>Commitment 24</b>	<b>Date for completion</b>	<b>Status</b>
Undertake a full independently led review of our Permit Scheme (s).	Original date - October 2024, Revised date - Spring 2025	Complete
<p><b>Details:</b></p> <p>As reported previously, the external review of our permit schemes was split into two parts, recognising the distinct remits and content of our Adventurous Activity and Nights Away Permit Schemes, and mindful of the imperative to engage suppliers with appropriate subject matter expertise in each area.</p> <p><u>Part 1: Adventurous Activities Permit Scheme Review</u></p> <p>As reported in our last update, we commissioned Adventure RMS to review our Adventurous Activity Permit Scheme. The report was endorsed by our Safety Committee in July 2025.</p> <p><u>Part 2: Nights Away Permit Scheme Review</u></p> <p>Following a competitive procurement process we commissioned a team of skilled consultants to undertake the independent Nights Away Review. The report was received and formally endorsed by our Safety Committee in August 2025.</p> <p>There were consistent themes in respect of both reports which identify areas where improvements can be made. To take these findings forward, a Project Team has been established charged with ensuring the required changes are made and embedded within the movement. The Project has a clear Terms of Reference which has been endorsed by the Strategy and Delivery Committee, Safety Committee and the Project board is co-chaired by our Executive Director of Operations and the UK Lead Volunteer for Programme. Delivery of improvements to the two schemes (Adventurous Activities and Nights Away) has begun and will continue into 2026/27.</p>		

<b>Commitment</b>	<b>Date for completion</b>	<b>Status</b>
Fatal Accident Investigation of the death of Ben Leonard.	July 2024- Phase 1 (investigation into the fatal incident)	Phase 1- Complete
	August 2024- Phase 2 (investigation into key decisions after the fatal incident)	Phase 2- Complete
<p><b>Details:</b></p> <p>The report of the first phase of the independent Fatal Accident Investigation was completed in July 2024. The Scout Association (TSA) accepted all recommendations and the actions arising are either completed or in progress. The independent panel has reviewed evidence of those actions and has provided constructive commentary.</p>		

The second phase of the investigation was a wider review of the key decisions made by TSA immediately following the fatal incident, through to the conclusion of the inquest in February 2024. The final report's recommendations have been accepted by our Safety Committee who commissioned the investigation, and its findings discussed by the Board of Trustees in October 2025 and work to address them progressed.

## Section 2: Future work

The Scout Association will continue to focus on safety, putting it at the heart of all we do. We're committed to building our collective capability to deliver Scouts safely for young people.

Specifically, going forward we will:

- Keep seeking input from independent experts as we drive transparent, continuous, improvement in Scouts' safety practices.
- Review and learn from the recommendations in independent reports, while continuing to embed what we have delivered against all our PFD commitments.
- Refine our policies and practices around safety. We'll make changes in our approach to risk assessment, as highlighted by RoSPA's review, and develop the Adventurous Activities and Nights Away Permit Scheme in response to the independent reviews we commissioned.
- Review our approach to incident management, making it easier for local teams to report incidents and receive the support they need.
- Make sure our practices are fit for purpose and the movement is following them effectively, providing dedicated safety learning for senior volunteers and staff.
- Improve safety management systems and how we provide effective guidance for volunteers.
- Support volunteers in involving young people in safety decision making. This will make safety and risk more youth shaped and enable young people to develop safety awareness as a skill for life and further embed the culture of safety within Scouts.
- Continue to report on our progress via our annual report focused on safety and what we're learning. We'll publish our next report in 2026, and this will detail our progress as a continuation of our commitment to transparency around safety.

## Appendix A: Summary of Commitments Status to Date

<b>Commitments Completed to date</b>	23
<b>Commitments In Progress</b>	0
<b>Commitments Yet to Start</b>	0
<b>Total Commitments</b>	23*

\*Formally 24, PFD commitment 6 was incorporated into PFD 24

### Completed Commitments

#	Commitment	Stated Date for Completion	Status
1	Develop and adopt a new Duty of Candour Policy which will be published by July 2024.	July 2024	Complete
2	Create and publish an Annual Safety Report	August 2025	Complete
3	Commission a new strategic partnership with a nationally recognised organisation that is a leader in safety to review our current safety practices, and act as a third-party reviewer.	May 2024	Complete
4	Working with our strategic partner, undertake a comprehensive independent review of our current safety practices with clear recommendations for action. To include: -The review of all existing and proposed safety training and seeking of external accreditation.	October 2024	Complete
5	Working with our strategic partner, undertake a yearly review and audit of all safety policies and processes at TSA, like the work already undertaken by the NSPCC on our safeguarding policies and procedures.	September 2024	Complete
7	Establish the Assurance function	November 2024	Complete
8	Introduce the new Adult Membership System (AMS).	December 2024	Complete
9	Create a new Critical Incidents and Investigations Policy.	January 2025	Complete
10	Develop training packages to support our new approach to Critical Incidents	May 2025	Commissioning Complete
11	Conduct a yearly Critical Incident scenario exercise (independently reviewed and assessed).	End 2025	Commissioning Complete
12	Develop supplementary training for all 145,000 volunteers (relating to safety) and then ask them to complete it and validate their learning. Launch the training by end of September and ask volunteers to complete within 6 months.	December 2024	Complete
13	Introduce the new Learning Management System (LMS).	December 2024	Complete
14	Create new automatic suspension powers for those involved in Critical Incidents or significant near misses.	May-Oct 2024	Complete

15	Increase the capacity of the safety team immediately and propose a new permanent structure to introduce additional staff in the areas of safety and training support.	October 2024	Complete
16	Create new training for District Commissioners and County Commissioners (now District and County Leads) in relation to risk assessments (writing, checking, signing-off of risk assessments).	December 2024	Complete
17	The Board of Trustees will receive the first of regular reports on safety suspension data alongside heat maps of UK-wide compliance data relating to training completion, safety and safeguarding suspensions and complaints.	July 2024	Complete
18	Ongoing support to ensure Greater Manchester East has the correct volunteers and support in place to deliver effective training.	September 2024	Complete
19	Update our safety training to provide specific guidance on First aid kit suitability and Terrain guidance.	December 2024	Complete
20	Ensure that the reviewing of first aid kit guidance & contents is part of the annual review cycle for The First Aid Working Group.	May 2024	Complete
21	Change our processes so volunteers who use a First Aid at Work certificate as the basis for their First Response accreditation must meet with a qualified trainer and demonstrate practical skills face-to-face.	June-August 2024	Complete
22	Ask all volunteers, who have already used First Aid at Work as the basis for their First Response, to undertake a face-to-face re-validation meeting.	November 2024	Complete
23	Undertake the Rapid Assurance Exercise.	April 2025	Complete
24	Undertake a full independently led review of our Permit Scheme (s) - Adventurous Activity - Nights Away	April July	Complete Complete
N/A	Commission and conduct a Fatal Accident Investigation of the death of Ben Leonard	July 2024	Complete