



**Progress Against the Scout Association's
Commitments to the Prevention of Future Deaths
Report in Relation to the Death of Ben Leonard
Quarterly Update No.4 (February - April 2025)**

May 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, we commissioned a Fatal Accident Investigation and an internal Rapid Assurance exercise to assure ourselves of compliance with existing safety rules across the Movement.

This report includes a comprehensive update against each of our PFD commitments, where completed or in progress. This Executive Summary highlights some of the key activity over the past three months.

To date we have delivered 19 of our 24 original commitments (with two of those remaining commitments now being combined into one). In March we shared our progress with The Charity Commission, and we continue to have regular and constructive engagement with them.

Annual Safety Report

We have been preparing to move to reporting annually via our new Annual Safety Report. This will form part of The Scout Association's Annual Review going forward. Good progress has been made in developing the Annual Safety Report and we expect to publish this at our Annual General Meeting in Summer 2025. We are also committing to publishing a further quarterly report (Q5) which will show progress and delivery against the four commitments which we continue to work on.

Critical Incident Management

Our policy drafting is now virtually complete. Procedures, tools and training are in development to support the policy implementation.

Internal Rapid Assurance Exercise

This work to assure ourselves of compliance with existing safety rules across the Movement was not originally a PFD Commitment, but felt vital to carry out as we started work on the PFD commitments. The exercise has now concluded with a learning review, which was considered by our Board of Trustees in April 2025. Learning from this work is being fed into the development of our permanent Assurance function at Scouts.

External Reviews and Recommendations

Having reviewed the first draft of the second Fatal Accident Investigation Panel (FAIP) report at the end of the last quarter, we expect to receive the Panel's final report in May 2025. Its recommendations will be reviewed by our Safety Committee ahead of action being taken. This quarter we also received the final report from Adventure Risk Management Services (RMS) who were appointed to review our adventurous activity permit scheme. Their report and proposed action plan are due to be reviewed by our Safety Committee for scrutiny in May 2025. We continue to work with our external provider on their independent review of our Nights Away Permit Scheme, which we expect to report on in the next quarter.

Introduction

This is the fourth instalment in our series of quarterly reports, representing a full year of progress against the commitments made to HM Coroner in April 2024. In this progress report, we outline the work completed during Quarter Four (Q4, February - April 2025), highlight ongoing activity, and outline our priorities for the next quarter - referred to here as Quarter Five (Q5), covering May to July 2025. Our focus on delivering on our commitments remains consistent, supported by close collaboration with volunteers, staff from across the organisation, and a range of external experts and partners. Insights and learning from previous quarters continue to shape our approach and will inform the development of future activity to support a culture of continuous learning and improvement.

Throughout this reporting period, we have maintained momentum in meeting the outstanding commitments set out in response to HM Coroner's Prevention of Future Deaths Report. Since April 2024, we have successfully completed 19 of the original 24 commitments, with the remaining four (two commitments have been combined) on track for completion in 2025. For any commitments still in progress, or where our approach has evolved, we have explained the reasons and set out our plans to ensure they are delivered.

During Q4 we initiated work to establish publicly accessible safety reporting, that extends beyond the duration of reporting against our PFD commitments. This will be done through the introduction of an Annual Safety Report. Integrated into our Annual Review, the new Annual Safety Report, will be available in August 2025. Combining quantitative and qualitative information, the report will detail our actions to keep Scouting safe for all those involved, as well as our ongoing priorities to develop, learn and lead in respect to Health and Safety.

We have continued to develop our approach to Critical Incident Management, collaborating with external agencies such as the Fire and Rescue Service and Voluntary and Community Sector Emergencies Partnership to develop a new Critical Incident Policy and suite of accompanying operational procedures. The new Policy will be tested in May and June, with plans for formal adoption after Board approval in July 2025.

Although not formally included in Scouts' response to the PFD Report, our Board of Trustees recognised the importance of providing current assurances that local Scouting activities are being conducted safely for young people. Through the Rapid Assurance workstream, we have engaged extensively with volunteers across the movement over the past year to support self-certification across key control areas. The project was completed in April 2025. The insights gained from this work are informing the work of our newly established Assurance function.

In December, we launched new digital tools for our 145,000 volunteers, including a new adult membership system and a new learning management system. These developments enabled us to rollout the new suite of mandatory Safety Learning, which has been externally assured by RoSPA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) Qualifications. Since January, we have been actively supporting volunteers across the movement to complete the learning ahead of the 14 July completion deadline. Feedback to date indicates that volunteers find the training relevant and applicable. We will continue to proactively support movement-wide completion of this learning in the coming months.

During Quarter 4, we received the first independent review of our Permitting Schemes. Independent experts Adventure Risk Management Services (Adventure RMS), completed their review of the Adventurous Activity Permit Scheme, focusing on its design and structure. The review assessed how the scheme functions, the minimum competency standards in place, our processes for evaluating and authorising activities, and our engagement with external regulators and National Governing Bodies for Sport. We have received Adventure RMS's report and are

currently reviewing its findings. Our response will be considered and formally approved by the Safety Committee in May/June 2025.

Following a year of concerted activity, work is progressing across all remaining PFD commitments, with completion scheduled during 2025. Our collective efforts have generated a wealth of insight and a substantial number of recommendations. In line with our ongoing commitment to continuous improvement, we are actively reviewing these findings and developing plans for continued action beyond the scope of our original PFD response.

In March 2025, members of the Scout Association's Board of Trustees, staff and volunteer leadership teams met with representatives of the Charity Commission to update them on the progress we have made against our commitments.

Structure of this report

This report is structured in the following way:

- Section 1: Commitments that we sought to complete in this quarter (February 2025 - April 2025).
- Section 2: Commitments which we commenced within the first year (April 2024 - April 2025).
- Section 3: Commitments which are due to start or conclude within the next quarter (May 2025 - July 2025).
- Appendix A: Provides a summary of all commitments delivered to date, including those featured within our Quarter 1 (May – July 2024), Quarter 2 (August - October 2024) and Quarter 3 (November 2024- February 2025) Progress Reports.

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Section 1: Commitments Due from February to April 2025 (Q4)

Commitment 2	Date for completion	Status
Create and publish an Annual Safety Report.	Original date: April 2025 Revised date: August 2025	In Progress
<p>Details: In addition to our public reporting on the commitments made in our response to the Prevention of Future Deaths Report, we will publish an Annual Safety Report to further strengthen a culture of increased candour and transparency. The Annual Safety Report, aimed at both internal and external audiences, will provide a combination of quantitative and qualitative data to detail our actions to keep everyone in Scouting safe. It will also report on how we're developing, learning and leading in respect to Health and Safety. To build consistency across years and drive maximum engagement, the Annual Safety Report will form part of our existing Annual Review. Covering the period April 2024 to March 2025, content is in development for publication in August 2025.</p>		

Commitment	Stated date for completion	Status
Rapid Assurance.	April 2025	Complete
<p>Details: Although it wasn't formally included within Scouts' response to the PFD Report, our Board of Trustees agreed it was vital to provide current assurances that local Scouting is delivering safe activities for young people. Over the past year we've undertaken substantial engagement with volunteers across our movement to support their self-certification within five core control areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Nights Away 2) Training 3) Safety 4) Visits Abroad 5) Adventurous Activities <p>The project is now complete and key learnings and observations have been shared in a closing report.</p>		

Commitment 24	Date for completion	Status
Undertake a full, independently led review of our Permit Scheme (s).	Original date - October 2024, Revised date - Spring 2025	In progress - on track
<p>Details: As reported previously, the external review of our permit schemes was spilt into two parts.</p> <p><u>Part 1: Adventurous Activities Permit Scheme Review</u> Our Adventurous Activity Permit Scheme is the internal qualifications frameworks which enables volunteers to deliver adventurous activities for young people. As experts in adventurous activity, Adventure RMS were appointed to carry out this work. Adventure RMS are</p>		

the inspectorate for the Adventurous Activities Licencing Authority (AALA) and have brought significant skills and experience to this important piece of work.

Adventure RMS have completed their review of the current scheme’s design and structure. They assessed how it operates, the minimum competency requirements we have in place, our approach to assessing and authorising activities, as well as our engagement with external regulators and National Governing Bodies for Sport. We are in receipt of Adventure RMS’ report and are considering our response. This will be reviewed and formally endorsed by our Safety Committee in May/June 2025.

Part 2: Nights Away Permit Scheme Review

Recognising the distinct remits and content of our Adventurous Activity and Nights Away Permit Schemes, and mindful of the imperative to engage suppliers with significant subject matter expertise, we separated the independent review of each scheme. Following a competitive procurement process we have commissioned a team of skilled consultants to undertake the independent Nights Away Review. We anticipate this review will be completed in July 2025.

Commitment	Date for completion	Status
Fatal Accident Investigation of the death of Ben Leonard.	July 2024- Phase 1 (investigation into Ben’s death)	Phase 1- Complete
	May 2025- Phase 2 (investigation into key decisions after Ben’s death)	Phase 2- In progress

Details:

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.

As part of the second phase of their investigation the independent panel has reviewed evidence of those actions and has provided constructive commentary.

The Panel have shared a draft report from the second phase of their investigation with TSA. The report examines key decisions made by TSA immediately following Ben’s tragic death and relevant matters up until the conclusion of the inquest in February 2024. The draft report has been presented at the TSA Safety Committee who commissioned the investigation. It is anticipated that the final report will be completed in May 2025. The report contains further recommendations and, working with the independent panel, TSA has provided evidence to show work already being done in response. The panel has reviewed this evidence and provided a commentary on actions from both this and their earlier phase 1 report.

Section 2: Commitments Started Within the First 12 Months, April 2024-April 2025 (Q1-4)

(but due for later completion or not yet completed)

Commitment 9	Date for completion	Status
Introduce a new Critical Incident & Investigation Policy, that includes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fatal Accident investigation Automatic neutral suspensions Viewing incidents through the safeguarding framework 	Phase 1 July 2024 Phase 2 January 2025 Revised Phase 2 date: July 2025	Phase 1: Complete Phase 2: Complete (subject to policy approval)
Details: TSA continue to work with external agencies, including the Fire and Rescue Service and the Voluntary and Community Sector Emergencies Partnership, to develop a new Critical Incident policy and supporting operational procedures. The Policy will undergo testing in May/June and is due to be formally adopted, following Board approval in July 2025.		

Commitment 10	Date for completion	Status
Develop training packages to support our new approach to Critical Incidents.	Phase 1 July 2024 Phase 2 May 2025	Phase 1: Complete Phase 2: In progress
Details: Training and policy implementation support materials continue to be developed and tested concurrently with updating the Critical Incident policy itself. Training will continue to be developed iteratively working with subject matter experts within the movement and externally.		

Commitment 11	Date for completion	Status
Conduct a yearly Critical Incident scenario exercise (independently reviewed and assessed).	December 2024 Revised date: By the end of 2025	In progress
Details: TSA engaged in a Critical Incident exercise with Essex Fire and Rescue Service in February 2025, working with emergency and other statutory agencies. Our plans are to build an adapted version of this 'rising tide' style scenario for use in a Scouting context. We will run such an exercise before the end of 2025.		

Commitments 12, 16 & 19 (amalgamated)	Date for completion	Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission enhanced supplementary training and validation process for all 145,000 volunteers. • 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. • We will enhance our online training for volunteers to provide specific guidance on first aid kit suitability and terrain guidance. 	<p>Training content available by November 2024 with target completion by all volunteers by July 2025.</p>	<p>Training Launch- Complete</p> <p>Training Completion- In progress</p>
<p>Details:</p> <p>The RoSPA Qualifications assured suite of new Safety Learning was launched on the new learning management tool in December 2024. Eligible volunteers are required to complete the mandatory learning modules by July 2025 (or their existing Safety learning expiration date if earlier). In January, we launched a direct communications campaign with our volunteers to drive and support completion. We are closely monitoring uptake to support completion by the deadline. At the end of April reporting period approximately 35% of volunteers have completed the learning early with our forecasting model indicating near full completion by late summer.</p> <p>Alongside launching the new learning content, we have also implemented stronger analytics to collect data on how well volunteers understand the learning, how realistic and applicable they find it, and how they find it benefits them in their roles. This data will better allow us to develop future learning to ensure it has a positive impact on volunteer behaviour.</p> <p>Of the volunteers who have completed the learning to date, approximately 75% have completed the optional post course survey. The data from this survey has been positive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 91% of volunteers understood the topics covered. 9% remained neutral and less than 1% didn't understand. • 90% of volunteers are likely to apply what they have learnt from the learning to their role. 9% remained neutral and only 1% felt they were unlikely to apply what they learnt. • 90% of volunteers felt the scenarios used in the learning were realistic to them as a Scout volunteer. 9% remained neutral and only 1% felt they were unrealistic. • 87% of volunteers felt the learning prepared them for their role in Scouts, with 12% remaining neutral. • 73% felt the learning was engaging and easy to follow with 22% remaining neutral. <p>We will be actively supporting uptake over the coming months, providing resources and support for completion, and capturing learning for the continued development of future learning.</p>		

Section 3: Commitments Due from May - July 2025 (Q5)

PFD Commitment No.	Commitment	Due date	Status
PFD response 12, 16 & 19	New Safety Learning. Content launched November 2024 with uptake deadline of July 2025.	July 2025	In progress
PFD response 10	Develop training packages to support our new approach to Critical Incidents.	January 2025 Revised: May 2025	In progress
PFD response 11	Conduct a yearly Critical Incident scenario exercise (independently reviewed and assessed).	December 2024 Revised: By the end of 2025	In progress
PFD response 24	Undertake a full independently led review of our Permit Scheme (s).	Adventurous Activity: April 2025 Nights Away: May 2025, Revised to July 2025	Complete In progress

A further progress update will be provided in August 2025 outlining continued progress on all actions listed within this report.

Appendix A: Summary of Commitments Completed to Date (April 2024-April 2025, Q1-4)

Commitments completed to date	19
Commitments in progress as of January 2025	4
Commitments yet to start	0
Total Commitments	23*

*Formally 24, PFD 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
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 The Scouts, like the work already undertaken by the NSPCC on our safeguarding policies and procedures. For 2024, this review will form part of the comprehensive independent review by RoSPA above and be repeated annually.	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 (subject to formal approval)
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 six months.	December 2024	Complete (Volunteer completion ongoing to July 2025)
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 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 - 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 In Progress
N/A	Commission and conduct a Fatal Accident Investigation of the death of Ben Leonard	July 2024	Part 1 Complete, Part 2 In Progress

*24 is not included in the completion count when the Nights Away review is completed.