



**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.3 (November 2024-Jan 2025)**

February 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.

### Assurance

This quarter we have launched our new, permanent Assurance function. This is part of our ongoing commitment to review our Safety practices, ensure they are fit for purpose, ensure the Movement are effectively following them, and that we continually learn and improve. This new function has been shaped by learning from our Rapid Assurance project, which was a self-assessment in Safety practices completed across the entire Movement. While its focus will be broader than Safety, our Safety Committee are actively engaged in identifying its priorities based on a robust understanding of risk across the Movement.

### Safety Learning & New Digital Tools

New, mandatory safety learning for our entire volunteer base, including enhanced training for senior volunteers, was developed with and assured by RoSPA (RoSPA Qualifications). This training went live in November 2024, in line with the launch of our new digital tools for volunteers. This training incorporates learning from Ben's tragic death alongside external best practice and has already been completed by over 10,000 volunteers.

### Critical Incident Management

Despite having updated many of our procedures relating to critical incidents we have undertaken a more substantive review of our approach in this area. We have been working with external partners in the wider voluntary and community sector and emergency services, to draft a new Critical Incident Policy. We have begun the development of the supporting procedures for this policy. Again, working with emergency services training providers we have begun scoping the training content, facilities and scenario exercises suitable for a Scouting context.

### External Reviews and Recommendations

We have now received the first draft of the second Fatal Accident Investigation Panel report relating to Ben's tragic death. We have already previously received and accepted the recommendations from the first report. These are two of several reports and sets of recommendations generated through our PFD commitments. In addition, we committed to conducting an independently led review of our Permit Scheme and in October we completed the tendering process for the adventurous activity element of this work, appointing Adventure RMS. Their report is due later in 2025 alongside a separate report into our Nights Away scheme. We are committed to continuous improvement and change, beyond that of our PFD commitments. Consequently, we now have a new piece of work underway to review all the recommendations

we have received and ensure that we have a robust mechanism for assessing them and the action we should take as a result.

This is the penultimate quarterly update report as per our commitment to update on progress. We will produce further quarterly updates in 2025 until our commitments are completed and begin the development of our first Annual Safety Report. The programme that has enabled the delivery of our PFD commitments will also be reviewed to ensure learning can be captured and embedded in future ways of working.

## Introduction

This is the third of our quarterly reports outlining progress in delivering the commitments we made to HM Coroner in April 2024. In this report we cover the progress achieved during Quarter 3 (Q3) November 2024 - January 2025; detailing the work completed, ongoing activity and our forward plans for the Quarter 4 (Q4) February - April 2025 period. We remain committed to fulfilling our promises and delivering quality outcomes by engaging extensively with both volunteers and staff across the Scout movement and a range of external partners and experts. Lessons learned from the first and second quarters continue to inform our delivery and the development of our future plans.

During this reporting period, we have made significant progress towards delivering the 24 commitments outlined in response to HM Coroner's Prevention of Future Deaths Report. Eight commitments were completed with two ongoing for completion in Q4. Since April 2024, we have delivered 18 of our 24 commitments and are actively working on the remaining five (note the amalgamation of two commitments). Where we have yet to deliver against a commitment, or been required to amend our approach, we have provided a clear explanation and outlined our plans to ensure delivery.

During this quarter specifically, our new permanent Assurance function came into existence, a key milestone in both our PFD commitments and our Assurance Programme. This new function considers learning from our Rapid Assurance (self-assessment) project which formed a key part of our PFD response.

In December we launched our new digital tools for our 145,000 volunteers. This included our Adult Membership and Learning Management systems, which are specifically relevant to our PFD commitments. Delivering against these commitments has meant that we have been able to launch a new suite of Safety Learning. We have launched new Safety Learning for every volunteer, which has received external assurance from RoSPA (the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) Qualifications. We have also launched additional Safety training for those who manage other volunteers and updated content relating to first aid kits and terrain. From December 2024 to January 2025 over 10,000 volunteers have completed this new learning and we will continue to support Movement wide completion over the coming months. We have also implemented a process to ensure that all holders of externally accredited First Aid certificates have covered the necessary content to apply First Aid in a Scouting context.

We have also made good progress on our commitments relating to refreshing our approach to Critical Incident management, engaging with external partners to learn from best practice both within the Voluntary and Community sectors, and from the Emergency Services. While existing procedures were refreshed in previous quarters, our current work will see us take new approaches aligned with joint emergency services (JESIP) doctrine, tailored for a Scouting, federated context. Our new draft policy is currently being reviewed and is due to go before Board for approval in the coming months.

Work is now underway on all our remaining PFD commitments including the external review of our Permitting schemes and development of our first Annual Safety Report. Activity is also due to complete on many of our remaining commitments in the next quarter. The past 9 months have produced many reports and significant numbers of recommendations. As part of our ongoing commitment to change and improving and transforming Safety at The Scout Association we are

now actively considering all these recommendations, formulating plans for their delivery which will go beyond our original PFD commitments.

Finally, we are continuing to work closely with our regulator, and we have met four times with the Charity Commission since the conclusion of the Inquest. In December 2024 a Charity Commission team also visited TSA Headquarters to review incident reporting practices, learning gained and actions taken following incidents. We will continue to meet and regularly update them on our progress against the commitments we have made, and the future work we are planning as part of our commitment to continually learn and improve.

### **Structure of this report**

This report is structured in the following way:

- Section 1: Commitments that we sought to complete in this quarter (November 2024 – January 2025).
- Section 2: Commitments which we commenced within the first nine months (July 2024 – January 2025), including our approach to *Rapid Assurance*- our means of assessing the movements compliance with existing rules and practices.
- Section 3: Commitments which are due to start or conclude within the next quarter (February 2025 – April 2025).
- Appendix A: Provides a summary of all commitments delivered to date, including those featured within our Quarter 1 (May – July 2024) and Quarter 2 (August - October 2024) Progress Reports.

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## Section 1: Commitments due from November 2024 to January 2025 (Q3)

Commitment 7	Date for completion	Status
Introduce a new internal assurance function consisting of staff and volunteers, to monitor and audit at local level all our 8,000 charities and provide reporting nationally to the Board.	April to November 2024	Complete
<p><b>Details:</b> We have a dedicated strategic programme of work focused on building an Assurance Framework, recruiting an Assurance Team, and applying the Assurance Framework to our federated structure. Progress to date includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our new Head of Assurance has now started at Scouts and is working to establish a permanent Assurance function. Further recruitment will take place during 2025-2026 to continue to grow the team and capability.</li> <li>• Further development of our assurance processes has been completed, with draft structures and process flows developed. Pilots with Counties are due to commence in April – June 2025.</li> <li>• Working with the Safety Department, key areas for assurance activity in 2025 have been identified based on risk data and departmental knowledge.</li> </ul>		

Commitment 8	Date for completion	Status
Introduce the new Adult Membership System and associated improvements to managing safety compliance.	December 2024	Complete
<p><b>Details:</b> New Digital tools, including a new Adult Membership System, designed to transform the Volunteering experience were launched to the Movement in December 2024. The Membership System underpins a new volunteer journey, simplifying volunteer recruitment, improved training, and record-keeping (including for safety training). As the new system beds in its functionality will increase providing real-time data on compliance reporting at local and national levels.</p>		

Commitment 9	Date for completion	Status
Introduce a new Critical Incident & Investigation Policy, that includes	Phase 1 July 2024	Phase 1: Complete
	Phase 2 January 2025	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fatal Accident investigation</li> <li>• Automatic neutral suspensions</li> <li>• Viewing incidents through the safeguarding framework</li> </ul>		Phase 2: Complete (subject to policy approval)
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**Details:**

TSA completed an update to our Fatal Accident (now Fatal Incident) Investigation procedure looking at investigations through a safeguarding framework in July 2024. In September 2024 the Safety Committee approved updated investigation procedures to further improve our investigation processes. New suspension powers were implemented in May 2024 and formally included in the Autumn 2024 update of POR (Scouts’ Policy, Organisations and Rules) which launched in November 2024.

TSA have worked with external agencies, including the Fire and Rescue Service, Voluntary and Community Sector Emergencies Partnership and their members to develop a new Critical Incident policy. The Policy is due to be formally adopted, following Board approval within the first half of 2025. Following its adoption all previously improved/ updated incident investigation procedures will be refreshed and brought into a single suite, including supporting guidance/ action cards.

The new policy includes an approach to continuous review and improvement to ensure that there is a continuous learning approach, and that policies and procedures are appropriately updated following any incident or practice scenario(s). TSA commits to providing further updates on learning from incidents and subsequent changes to policies/ procedures in annual safety reports.

Commitment 10	Date for completion	Status
Develop training packages to support our new approach to Critical Incidents.	Phase 1 July 2024 Phase 2 January 2025	Phase 1: Complete Phase 2: In progress

**Details:**

Work is underway to develop training appropriate for TSA with the Fire and Rescue Service. TSA has explored the use of JESIP (Joint Emergency Service Interoperability Programme) training and will be attending joint emergency services training sessions in a purpose built major/ critical incident scenario facility in early February. TSAs partnership working with the emergency services is enabling the Scout Movement to draw on subject matter experts in the development of both training and critical incident scenarios.

Commitment 11	Date for completion	Status
Conduct a yearly Critical Incident scenario exercise (independently reviewed and assessed).	December 2024	In progress

**Details:**

The delivery of an independently reviewed and assessed critical incident scenario exercise will be informed by the new Critical Incident Policy and accompanying training. We will provide an update on the timeline for delivery within our next progress report.

<b>Amalgamated Commitments 12, 16 &amp; 19</b>	<b>Date for completion</b>	<b>Status</b>
<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>Training Launch- Complete</p> <p>Training Completion- In progress</p>

**Details:**

Following a process of quality assurance to ensure accuracy of information, accessibility and alignment with Scouts rules and policies, the four RoSPA Qualifications assured components of our new Safety Learning have been finalised and were launched on the new learning management tool as part of our launch of new digital tools in December 2024.

- **Safety Learning for all volunteers**

Policy and Rules, Assessing and Managing Risks, and Managing and Reporting Incidents now form our ongoing mandatory Safety Learning for all volunteers. All existing volunteers have been given until July 2025, or their expiration date based on current records (whichever is sooner), to complete this new course. In January 2025, we began active communication and monitoring to support uptake and ensure that volunteers are compliant by the deadline.

- **Safety Learning for Lead Volunteers**

Leading on Safety is the fourth component of our new Safety Learning. This component has been integrated into the new “Leading Scout Volunteers” course, which is mandatory for all new Lead Volunteers and Team Leaders at the Group, District, County, Region and National/UK levels. It has also been assigned as mandatory learning for all existing Lead Volunteers at District and County levels to be completed by July 2025.

As for Safety Learning for all volunteers, active communication, tracking and follow-up commenced in January 2025 with approximately 40% of the required cohort having passed the course to date (16/01/25).

- **Additional Learning on First Aid Kits and Terrain**

In addition to the mandatory learning detailed above, we have also launched two pieces of additional e-learning with further detail on the topics of First Aid Kits and Terrain rules. The basics of each is covered in the mandatory content, and the additional pieces are meant as deeper dives to ensure we have up to date and clear learning available on these important topics.

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.

Of the approximately 10,000 volunteers who have completed the learning to date, 90% of those who have completed the Learner Survey have identified that they found the course content realistic and that it prepares them well for their role at Scouts. The remaining 10% generally responded “Neutral” to the question. Work is ongoing to analyse received feedback, and make sure the course is continually improved to ensure the best possible impact.

<b>Commitment 13</b>	<b>Date for completion</b>	<b>Status</b>
Introduce the new Learning Management System to improve management and oversight of safety training.	December 2024	Complete
<b>Details:</b>		
As part of the launch of a new Digital infrastructure for volunteers, a Learning System was included in the package. This system is integrated with our new Adult Membership System detailed in commitment 8.		
The Learning System (named My Learning) has been configured to automatically track and enrol people into the learning they are required to do for their roles at any given time. As the system beds in, it will begin to provide detailed tracking of compliance and engagement, as well as reliable management of volunteers engaging with our required learning.		

<b>Commitment 22</b>	<b>Date for completion</b>	<b>Status</b>
Ask any volunteer who has already used a First Aid at Work certificate as the basis for their First Response accreditation to undertake a face-to face re-validation meeting with a qualified First Aid Trainer.	May- November 2024	Complete
<b>Details:</b>		

As outlined in our Q2 response to commitment 21, since 1 August 2024 no volunteer has been permitted to use an external First Aid course as the basis for their First Response Accreditation unless it has been converted and validated by a trainer.

We identified a potential of 41,858 volunteers who may have previously used a First Aid at Work certificate as the basis for their First Response Accreditation. This cohort of volunteers were contacted and asked to undertake a face-to-face revalidation meeting. By the 30 November 2024 deadline 93.1% of volunteers were fully validated, and the outstanding volunteers have not been allowed to act as First Aid cover since the deadline. Due to the complex nature of First Aid qualifications overseas, British Scouting Overseas were granted an extension of 31 January 2025 for re-validation.

## Section 2: Commitments Started Within the First 9 Months April 2024 – January 2025 (Q1-3)

(but due for later completion)

Commitment	Stated date for completion	Status
Rapid Assurance	April 2025	In progress
<p><b>Details:</b></p> <p>While this was not included within our response to the PFD Report, the Board of Trustees agreed it was vital that we could provide assurances now that local Scouting are delivering safe activities to young people. Over the past 9 months we have undertaken substantial engagement with volunteers across the Scout movement to assess and increase compliance across 5 core areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Nights Away</li> <li>2) Training</li> <li>3) Safety</li> <li>4) Visits Abroad</li> <li>5) Adventurous Activities</li> </ol> <p>Five technical teams, consisting of volunteer and employee subject matter experts, were established to lead the process which has incorporated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of self-assessed compliance questionnaires across the 5 control areas. A total of 7470 questions were asked and responded to across 89 Scout Counties (or equivalent for the different geographic areas in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland)</li> <li>• Categorisation of compliance prioritised into high (P1), medium (P2) and low (P3) groupings</li> <li>• Bespoke support provided across Counties/Areas/Regions to increase compliance and mitigate any identified risks</li> <li>• Completion of P1 (high prioritisation) closure meetings</li> <li>• Dip sampling of P1 responses to validate evidence provided</li> <li>• Identification of learning and best practice from the Counties will inform the introduction of Scouts new Internal Assurance Function (see comment 7 above).</li> </ul> <p>The project is approaching completion. Three priority 2 questions remain outstanding, and 46 priority 3 questions are due for completion by the end of February.</p> <p>Following completion of the remaining P3 actions, a Learning Review will be completed capturing key reflections in relation to the Rapid Assurance approach, process and outcomes. The findings will be considered as the permanent internal Assurance function is further established through 2025.</p>		

Commitment 24	Date for completion	Status
Undertake a full independent led review of our Permit Scheme (s).	Original date - October 2024, Revised date - Spring 2025	In progress- on track

**Details:**

Following a competitive open market procurement process, Adventure RMS have been appointed to conduct the independent review of our Adventurous Activity Permit Scheme. This scheme is the internal qualifications frameworks which enables volunteers to deliver adventurous activities for young people. As experts in adventurous activity, Adventure RMS are the inspectorate for the Adventurous Activities Licencing Authority (AALA) and bring significant skills and experience to this important piece of work.

The full independent review will be conducted in two phases with Phase 1 underway and due for completion in March. In line with the interactive approach adopted for the review, Phase 2 scope will be refined following a process of Phase 1 review and is expected to complete in late Spring 2025.

**Phase 1**

- Review of the current scheme design and structure; assessing how it operates, the minimum competency requirements we have in place, our approach to assessing and authorising activities, engagement with external regulators and National Governing Bodies for Sport.

**Phase 2**

- Review of the effectiveness of the implementation of the scheme; our internal compliance with existing rules and requirements, critical assessment of the extent to which our current scheme is understood and effectively implemented through our federated structure of local Scouts.

As part of our review of compliance with existing rules, we will incorporate learning and insight from our ongoing Rapid Assurance work alongside review findings.

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 have separated the independent review of each scheme. Following a process of consultative project scoping, during which we engaged with our volunteers and sector stakeholders, we have undertaken a further competitive procurement process for the Nights Away Permit Scheme review and are in the process of appointment. We anticipate the Nights Away review will be completed in late Spring 2025.

<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 Ben's death)	Phase 1- Complete
	August 2024- 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. The independent panel has reviewed evidence of those actions and has provided constructive commentary.

The second phase of the investigation is broad ranging and 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, and it is anticipated that the final report will be completed in April 2025. The report contains further recommendations and working with the independent panel TSA has provided evidence that shows work already being done in response.

### Section 3: Commitments Due from January - April 2025 (Q3)

PFD Commitment No.	Commitment	Due date	Status
PFD response 2	Create and publish an Annual Safety Report.	April 2025	Yet to start
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: May 2025	In progress
PFD response 23	Undertake the Rapid Assurance Exercise (testing 6 areas of operations across 4 online form returns from every County or equivalent).	April 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	In progress  In progress

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

## Appendix A: Summary of Commitments Status to Date (April 2024 – January 2025 Q1 – 3)

<b>Commitments Completed to date</b>	18
<b>Commitments In Progress as of January 2025</b>	4
<b>Commitments Yet to Start</b>	1
<b>Total Commitments</b>	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 6 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 DCs and CCs (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 - 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
N/A	Commission and conduct a Fatal Accident Investigation of the death of Ben Leonard	July 2024	Investigation commissioned, second report pending