



# Summit25 Report

A summary of Summit25-  
The Scout's National Conference

**January 2025**

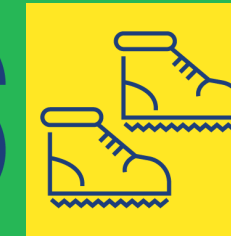
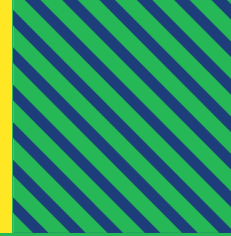
**Reflect. Refocus. Renew.**





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# Report Summary

## About this slide deck

This slide deck has been created to provide an easily accessible and digestible report about Summit25 – The Scout's national conference that took place in January 2025. It provides information on what happened over the weekend, who attended, and the key themes and insights gathered across the event.

### Key Points

- Summit25 was intended to be a **key moment of consultation and sharing** on the journey to developing a new strategy for The Scouts. The conference objectives are outlined on slide 5 of this report.
- The conference built on **consultation with the movement** throughout 2024 consisting of over **26,800 separate responses from surveys, workshops and focus groups**
- The conference was **attended by 683 key volunteer** leaders from across the UK. 20.57% of attendees were aged 18-25 years old.
- 90% of delegates were from local leadership teams (Region, County, Area, District).

- **Summit25 has been followed by four National Youth Forums, held across the UK** and attended by nearly 400 young people. These forums will help to ensure the development of our future strategy is further shaped by young people.
- **Nine external guests** attended Summit25, and **offered challenge, support and new perspectives to delegates.**
- **Summit25 is not the end of consultation on our next strategy.** This report outlines what will happen next as we continue to develop a new strategy for Scouts. A first draft of the new strategy will be provided to The UK Board of Trustees in July 2025.

## Where can I find out more?

You can find out more about our new strategy, or access slides and videos, click here: [LINK](#). or by emailing [strategy@scouts.org.uk](mailto:strategy@scouts.org.uk)



# Summit Event Overview

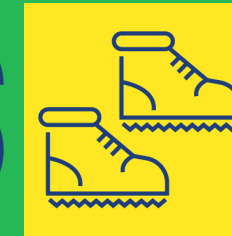
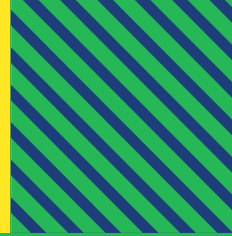
## Summit25

The National Scout Conference **Summit25** was held from 24th to 26th January 2025 at the Hilton Birmingham Metropole. It brought together **683** key leaders, staff and volunteers from our Movement to **reflect, refocus** and **renew** our strategies and goals.

## The event objectives

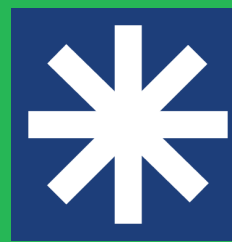
The event had five **key objectives**.

1. To critically assess and celebrate the 'Skills for Life' strategy, identifying key learnings and areas for further development.
2. To showcase the accomplishments of our Movement.
3. To inspire and mobilise key leadership through provocative plenary sessions and workshops.
4. To explore global trends and the evolving needs of young people, skills development, education, and communities towards 2035.
5. To collaboratively



# Summit25: Event Overview

Event Objectives and programme



# Event Programme



## Saturday 25 January

### Day 1 Programme

- **Session 1:** Skills for Life: Successes, Challenges and Learning. A session exploring the journey we've been on since 2017 and thinking about what lessons we should learn from our previous strategy.
- **Session 2:** What Young People will need from Scouts over the next 10 years – A Keynote speech from Mark Russell, CEO The Children's Society followed by panel of external commentators.
- **Session 3:** Creating The Future: A session exploring the opportunities and threats to Scouts in the next decade – A chance to reflect on what we learned from the consultation process with the movement during 2024.
- **Saturday Workshops:** A choice of 8 different workshops exploring the key themes that emerged from consultation with the movement.
- **Session 4:** The Young Person's Consultation: What did we learn? A chance to hear about the insights from consultation with 3,500+ young people.
- **Dinner and After Dinner Speech:** Darren Edwards, Adventurer, Scout and inspirational speaker.

## Sunday 26 January

### Day 2 Programme

- **Session 5:** The Youth Panel: Reconnecting with our purpose as an organisation 'for young people', not 'with young people.' A chance to hear from a panel of internal and external young people, reflecting on their experience of Scouting and its relevance to young people today.
- **Sunday Workshops:** It Starts Here: Shaping our Future Strategy. A chance to discuss some of the big questions that will shape the next strategy.
- **Session 6: Sunday Workshops:** It Starts Here: Shaping our Future Strategy Feedback Session
- **Sunday Keynote Speech:** Dwayne Fields, Chief Scout. A chance to hear from our Chief Scout.



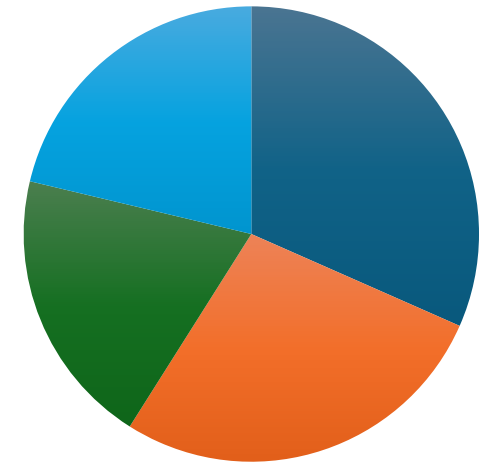
# The Delegation



## Who Attended Summit25?

- The conference involved 727 people in total, with 683 delegates signed up. There were nine guest speakers, and a backstage/ host team of 49 staff and volunteers. The majority of delegates were key leaders from local Scouting.
- Delegations were asked to carefully consider the diversity of their delegations and to ensure they were reflective of their membership.
- 20.57% of all attendees were under 25 years old (6.02% unknown).
- 62% of attendees were male, 31% female, 1% preferred not to say and 6% unknown
- 84% of delegates told us they were of *Christian denomination*, 32% *no religion or agnostic*, and 1% *Hindu, Muslim and Buddhist* respectively. 1% told us they didn't know, 8% were recorded unknown and 8% preferred not to say.
- Of all attendees, participants told us they were 84% *White – English, Welsh, Northern Irish or British*, 2% *White any other background*, 1% *Asian or Asian British – Indian*, 1% *White Irish*, 1% *Mixed or multiple ethnic group*, 2% *prefer not to say* and 8% were *unknown*
- Unfortunately, due to red weather warnings for Storm Éowyn, 71 delegates were unable to attend. A streaming service was set up with a zoom link of all plenaries and an online interactive strategy workshop.

## Key Delegate Breakdown



- County/Area/Region Team Member
- District Lead Volunteer
- County/Area/Region Youth Lead

# The Saturday Workshops



- 1. Young People in a Digital World:** This workshop explored key emerging technology trends and their impact on young people. The key messages focused on leveraging digital identities, data, AI, and global networked communities to inform digital strategy and youth engagement.
- 2. Future-facing Volunteering:** This session examined current and future trends in volunteering, emphasising the need to adapt to broader volunteering trends. The application of these insights aimed at enhancing volunteer recruitment and retention strategies.
- 3. EDI: Making Everyone Feel Welcome:** Reflecting on successes in Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) and identifying areas for improvement, this workshop highlighted the importance of integrating EDI into existing practices to inform EDI strategy and local implementation.
- 4. Safe to Scout:** This session focused on improving support for delivering a safe programme, with key messages on enhancing safety standards and support structures. The insights were intended to inform safety policies and volunteer training.
- 5. Design & Delivery of the Programme:** Concentrating on programme objectives and delivery, this workshop emphasised ensuring programme relevance and effectiveness, with the aim of informing programme development and delivery.
- 6. Youth Data - the Opportunities:** Exploring the importance and benefits of youth data, this session highlighted leveraging data for programme improvement to inform data strategy and youth engagement.
- 7. Delivering Change at The Scouts:** This workshop explored opportunities to evolve change delivery, with key messages on improving change management processes to inform change management strategy.
- 8. Youth Shaped:** Focusing on creating a youth-shaped movement, this session emphasised ensuring youth involvement in decision-making throughout all levels of Scouting.



# Keynote Speakers

Over the weekend, we invited three keynote speakers to challenge and inspire delegates...



**Mark Russell:** CEO – The Children’s Society

Mark was appointed as Chief Executive of The Children’s Society in 2019 and leads a team of 750 staff and 6,000 volunteers. He is passionately committed to social justice and fighting for children and young people to feel hopeful and happy.

At Summit25, Mark presented the findings of The Good Childhood Report 2024 which found the UK the most unhappy children in Europe. He also said...

- Organisations like Scouts, providing safe spaces for young people are more important now than ever
- That Scouts is part of the solution
- That being able to evidence your effectiveness is key. How do you evidence the impact you make?  
That all good strategy needs a healthy dose of positivity and optimism



**Darren Edwards:** Adventurer

Darren is the world’s leading adaptive adventurer, record-breaking explorer (and proud Scout as a young person). Darren has faced life’s greatest uncertainties head-on, drawing from his experience leading record-breaking expeditions and overcoming a life-changing injury. He shares how to conquer fear and thrive in the face of challenges.



**Dwayne Fields:** Chief Scout

A Cub Scout in north London as a child, Dwayne was a highly engaged Scout Ambassador for seven years before becoming Chief Scout in September 2024. He’s supported hundreds of Scout events - locally, nationally and internationally, from County Camps to the 25th World Scout Jamboree in Korea.

# Keynote Speakers

Over the weekend, we invited three keynote speakers to challenge and inspire delegates...



**Tristram Mayhew:**  
Founder Go Ape and NCS  
Advisory Board Member



**Rylie Sweeney:**  
Youth Ambassador –  
Children’s Commissioner  
for England



**Honor Wilson Fletcher:**  
Chief Executive Officer –  
The British Exploring Society



**Chrissy Polithy:**  
World Scout  
Committee Member



**Rachael Oloyede:**  
Co-Chair National  
Citizen’s Service



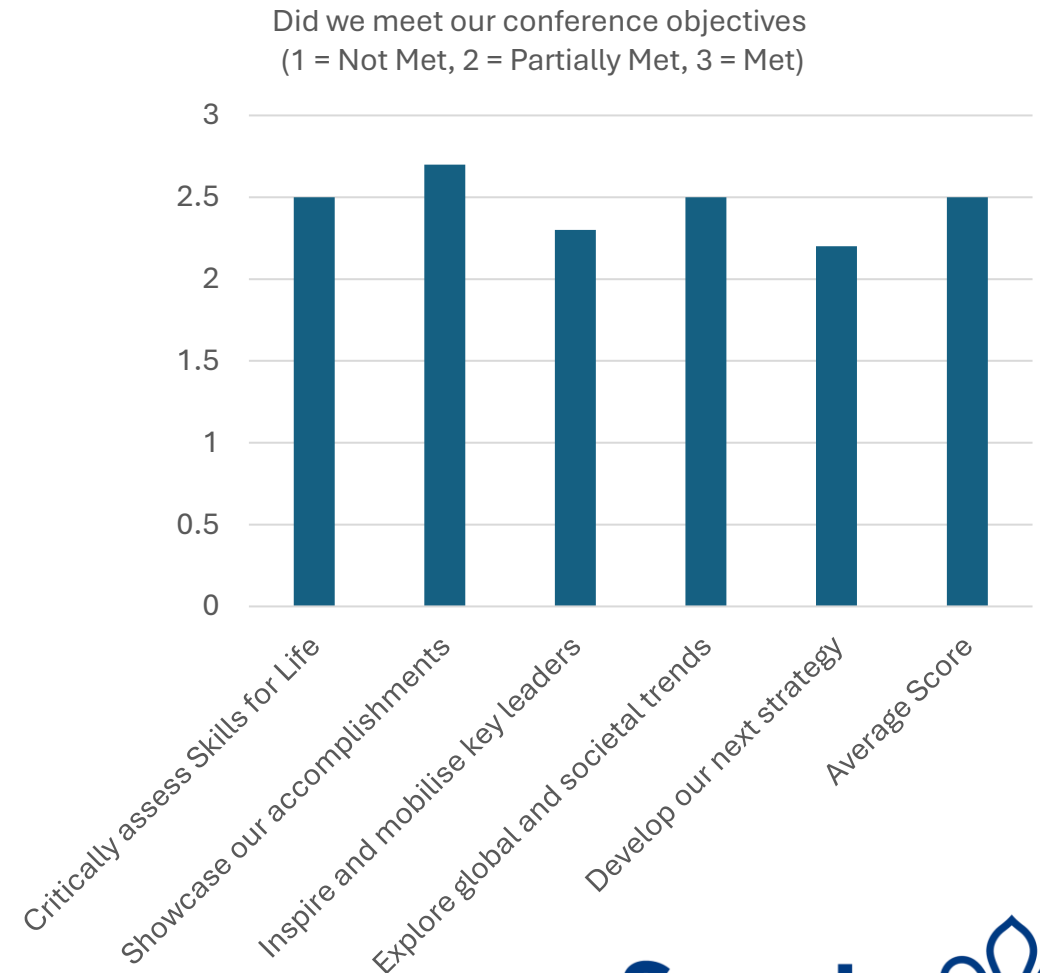
**Huda Mohamud:**  
Youth Ambassador:  
Duke of Edinburgh’s Award

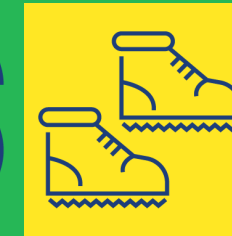
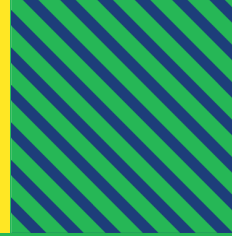
# Event Evaluation Summary

Over the weekend, we invited three keynote speakers to challenge and inspire delegates...

## Key Insights

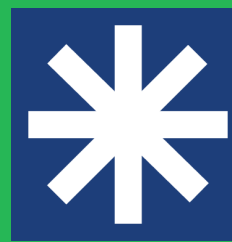
- 1. The Programme:** The programme elements of guest speakers, engaging content, and well-organised structure of the event were well received, though some expressed a strong desire for more interactive sessions, increased youth involvement, and better representation and inclusivity.
- 2. Branding:** Participants overall felt the branding was clear, professional, and visually engaging, though some concerns were raised about the accessibility, sustainability, and cost of the branded elements.
- 3. Inclusion and Accessibility:** Participants appreciated the inclusive and accessible nature of the event, though with some concerns about mobility and space issues, as well as sensory and attention considerations.
- 4. EventsAir:** The app's convenience, ease of use, and informative nature was positively received, though there were some issues with its functionality and user experience. With some users reporting problems with bugs, non-intuitive interface, and inconsistent notifications, which hindered their overall experience.
- 5. Venue/Food:** Participants, on the whole, felt the venue was convenient with a central location, and the quality of the venue's facilities and service were positive. Some concerns were raised about the high costs of food/drink and meal organisation.
- 6. Entertainment:** The variety of activities and networking opportunities were positive though there is a need for better promotion and more entertainment options to enhance participation and enjoyment.





# Key themes and discussions

What were the emerging themes and points of discussion over the weekend



# Learning from Skills for Life

During the course of the day, delegates and panellists reflected on the key lessons that should be taken from the Skills for Life strategic period (2017-2025).

Conference were reminded of the goals we set in our previous strategy, and discussed what we thought we had completed, and where there was still work to be done.

## Things we could have done better

- We probably tried to do too much at once, and wanted to do everything as quickly as we could
- We didn't leave space for the unexpected events such as The Jamboree in Korea and COVID-19
- We didn't leave enough space to support day-to-day Scouting, or underestimated the amount of support it would need
- We didn't match resource and planning with our ambitions – we were too optimistic about what we could achieve, and how quickly
- In our next strategy we need to remain laser-focused on our beneficiary – young people


## Things we did well

- We were able to take on major challenges and move at pace when we needed to
- Skills for Life has simple, clear goals
- We achieved some major change e.g. delivered Squirrel Scouting across more of the UK

## Four Strategic Goals

Strategic Goals	KPIs (2023)	
We aimed for ...	<b>Grow</b>	We will have <b>50,000</b> more young people aged 6-18 in Scouting We will have <b>10,000</b> more Section Leaders (including ASLs) We will have <b>5000</b> more Young Leaders
	<b>Become more Inclusive</b>	We will have started Scouts in <b>500</b> more areas of deprivation Our volunteers <b>reflect</b> demographics of society
	<b>Be More Youth Shaped</b>	<b>250,000</b> young people shape their Scouting experience each year <b>50%</b> of our young people will be achieving their top awards
	<b>Be making an impact on our communities</b>	At least <b>250,000</b> young people will be making a positive impact in their community each year <b>50%</b> of young people will be achieving the top awards

Programme		People	Perception	
<b>Support Quality Programmes</b>	<b>Review the offer for 14-25 year olds</b>	<b>Improve the Volunteer Journey</b>	<b>Extend our Reach</b>	<b>Transform our Image</b>
Develop amazing section leaders	Review provision for 14-25 year olds	Transform adult recruitment	Reach under-represented communities*	Brand roll-out
Digital programme planning	Links to employability skills*	Simpler training	Scouting in schools*	Resources to promote the benefits of Scouting
Off the shelf programmes	Partnerships to enhance the programme*	Better online resources	Explore early years provision*	Uniform review
Digital tools to track programme			Improve the joining process for young people	



# Learning from Skills for Life continued...

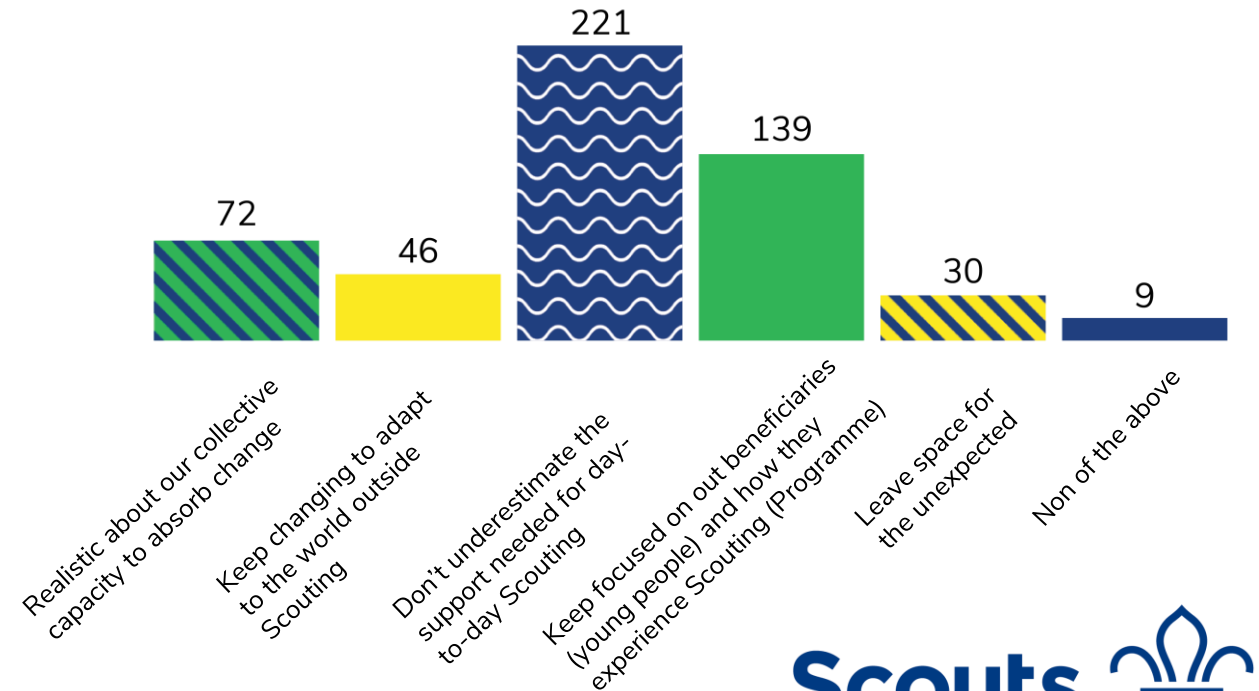
## Key Question 1

We asked delegates to consider strategic priorities still being worked on as part of 'Skills for Life' and to indicate how much time The Scouts should spend on them in a future strategy



## Key Question 2

We asked delegates to consider which of the 6 key lessons from Skills for Life was the most important. Delegates selected 'Don't underestimate the support needed for day-to-day Scouting' as the most important lesson.





# Sunday

## Our seven questions

# On Sunday we asked seven questions

## Sunday Workshops

On Sunday, delegates were divided into nine different groups and asked to discuss seven provocative questions. The questions were based on themes that had emerged in consultation with the movement, and conversations emerging over the course of Saturday at Summit25. Feedback from the discussions was entered onto an online form, and a summary of the results was played back and discussed with delegates in plenary.

- **Question 1:**  
Do we really drive high growth with targets and clear goals, OR do we just create the right conditions for organic growth?
- **Question 2:**  
Do we really push hard to grow in Diverse Communities OR should we focus on broad growth with no special target groups?
- **Question 3:**  
Do we invest more time and energy in Youth-shaped as central to everything we do OR do we keep a steady state - our current position is fine?



- **Question 4:**  
Do we have a big focus on support for young people's Mental Health OR do we just assume Scouting as an activity is enough to help?
- **Question 5:**  
Do we invest more to boost our Digital Tools and skills, especially to track youth data OR do we just maintain what we have and slowly improve?
- **Question 6:**  
Do we have a movement who are equipped to lead adventurous activities OR have we lost some of our skills and confidence through the pandemic?
- **Question 7:**  
Do we put the Environmental sustainability at the centre of everything we work on OR do we keep it as one theme among many?

The following 8 slides summarise the feedback from delegates in relation of each of the seven questions.

## Question 1: Growth

**Do we really drive high growth with targets and clear goals,  
OR do we just create the right conditions for organic growth?**



### Key Insights

- Create the Right Conditions for Growth:**  
 Focus on creating an environment that supports organic growth. This includes providing the right support for existing groups, improving programs, and ensuring that volunteers have the resources they need to succeed.
- Focus on Volunteer Retention and Support:**  
 Prioritise the retention and support of adult volunteers. Without a strong base of volunteers, it will be challenging to achieve growth in the number of young people involved.
- Set Realistic and Achievable Targets:**  
 Ensure that growth targets are realistic and relevant to different areas. High targets can lead to undue pressure and a focus on numbers rather than quality.
- Adopt a Localized and Flexible Approach:**  
 Growth strategies should be tailored to the specific needs and conditions of different areas. A one-size-fits-all approach is unlikely to be effective.
- Improve Program Quality:**  
 Focus on delivering high-quality programs that naturally attract growth. A strong program will lead to organic growth and help retain both young people and volunteers.
- Communicate Effectively:**  
 Ensure that targets and growth strategies are communicated clearly and are part of a wider conversation. This will help align efforts and ensure that everyone is working towards the same goals.

## Question 2: Diversity

**Do we really push hard to grow in diverse communities OR should we focus on broad growth with no special target groups?**



### Key Insights

- Adopt a Hybrid Approach:**  
 Focus on both broad growth and targeted growth in diverse communities. This approach ensures inclusivity and representation while also promoting overall growth. Specific funded initiatives should remain part of a general growth strategy.
- Localise Targets and Strategies:**  
 Each locality should have its own open-door policy and regional targets relevant to the demographics of the area. This ensures that the growth strategy is tailored to the specific needs and characteristics of each community.
- Provide Support and Resources:**  
 Ensure that support and resources are available for deprived communities, but not as the sole focus. This includes providing leaders with relevant experience and background, and making funding available for all children, giving equal opportunities for everyone.
- Utilise Data and Measurement:**  
 Spend more time looking at the data to ensure representation and measure progress against diversity targets. This will help in understanding how diverse the organisation is and in setting ambitious data targets for diversity.
- Promote Inclusivity and Representation:** Ensure that the organization represents the community it operates in. This includes focusing on diversity based on the area, not national standards, and avoiding positive discrimination by reflecting local demographics.

## Question 3: Youth Shaped

Do we invest more time and energy in Youth-shaped as central to everything we do OR do we keep a steady state - our current position is fine?



### Key Insights

- Define and Communicate:**  
 Clearly define what youth-shaped means for different roles and sections. Develop a shared understanding and framework to ensure consistency and clarity.
- Training and Support:**  
 Provide comprehensive training for adult leaders and support for local youth leads. Implement mentorship programs and offer resources and guidance for volunteers.
- Youth Leadership:**  
 Encourage and support youth leadership at all levels. Involve young people in decision-making positions and ensure they have the necessary support and mentorship.
- Embed Initiatives:**  
 Focus on embedding youth-shaped initiatives into everyday practice and strategy. Ensure consistency in implementation across all areas and make youth-shaped mandatory and part of top awards.
- Address Challenges:**  
 Tackle the issue of tokenism and ensure genuine youth involvement. Provide stronger guidance and definitions for youth leads and address the disconnect between UKHQ practice and local groups.

## Question 4: Mental health

Do we have a big focus on support for young people's mental health OR do we just assume Scouting as an activity is enough to help?



### Key Insights

- Integrate Mental Health Support**  
 Embed mental health support into the Scouting program and encourage wellness activities such as time outdoors, nature, yoga, and reflection.
- Provide Training and Resources**  
 Make mental health first aid training mandatory and financially supported by the organization. Equip volunteers with basic skills and understanding of when professionals are needed.
- Support Both Young People and Adults**  
 Ensure that both young people and adult volunteers receive mental health support. Create a culture of awareness and provide appropriate tools for leaders to support and signpost.
- Promote Scouting as a Supportive Environment**  
 Portray Scouting as a supportive environment for mental health nationally. Include mental health skills and programs to support both adults and young people.
- Leverage External Organizations**  
**Partner with external organizations (e.g., MIND) to create training and provide additional resources for mental health support**

## Question 5: Digital

**Do we invest more to boost our digital tools and skills, especially to track youth data OR do we just maintain what we have and slowly improve?**



### Key Insights

- Fix and Optimize Current Systems:**  
 Focus on fixing and optimizing the current systems before making new investments. This includes providing training and support for users.
- Invest in Youth Data**  
 Once the current systems are optimized, invest in tools to track youth data. This will help in targeting support and improving KPIs.
- Collaborate with Existing Tools**  
 Consider partnerships with existing tools like OSM as a short-term solution.
- Improve Digital Literacy**  
 Provide training to improve digital literacy among volunteers and leaders.
- Cost-Benefit Analysis**  
 Conduct a thorough cost-benefit analysis before making any new investments to ensure feasibility and sustainability.

## Question 6: Adventurous Activities

Do we have a movement who are equipped to lead adventurous activities OR have we lost some of our skills and confidence through the pandemic?



### Key Insights

- Enhance Training Programs**  
 Develop comprehensive training programs to upskill leaders and build confidence. Focus on practical skills and ensure training is accessible and affordable.
- Simplify Permit Process**  
 Make the permit process more accessible and less intimidating. Provide clear guidelines and support to help leaders navigate the system.
- Financial Support**  
 Address financial barriers by providing funding for training and equipment. Offer grants and subsidies to make activities more inclusive.
- Promote External Partnerships**  
 Partner with external adventure providers and national governing bodies to enhance training and permit accessibility.
- Support and Mentorship**  
 Establish mentorship programs to support new leaders and share expertise. Encourage cross-area collaboration and succession planning.

## Question 7: Sustainability

Do we put environmental sustainability at the centre of everything we work on OR do we keep it as one theme among many?



### Key Insights

- Embed Sustainability**  
 Integrate environmental sustainability into all programs and activities as a core value, similar to safety and safeguarding.
- Youth Leadership**  
 Encourage youth to take the lead in sustainability initiatives and provide platforms for them to advocate and campaign.
- Practical Steps**  
 Focus on practical, achievable steps to reduce waste, improve recycling, and partner with other organizations for greater impact.
- Education and Awareness**  
 Raise awareness about sustainability through education and positive messaging, avoiding scare tactics.
- Resource Allocation**  
 Provide toolkits, resources, and support to help implement sustainable practices at the local level.

# Summary of the seven questions



Question 1: Growth

Do we really drive high growth with targets and clear goals, OR do we just create the right conditions for organic growth?



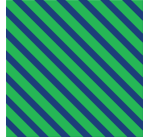
Question 2: Diversity

Do we really push hard to grow in diverse communities OR should we focus on broad growth with no special target groups?



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Question 7: Sustainability

Do we put environmental sustainability at the centre of everything we work on OR do we keep it as one theme among many?

## Growth

2.4

Organic growth

Targeted growth

## Diversity

3.0

Broad growth

Targeted diverse communities

## Youth Shaped

3.6

Stay as we are

Invest more time

## Mental Health

3.6

Scouting is enough

Big focus

## Digital

3.4

Maintain & slowly improve

Invest more in digital

## Adventurous Activities

2.5

Not equipped

Highly equipped

## Sustainability

2.8

One theme among many

Central to what we do

# Sunday Workshops:

# What else is on your mind?

At the Sunday workshop, and throughout conference, there was the opportunity to submit feedback about topics delegates didn't feel that had the chance to discuss.

## Theme 1: Volunteer Support.

- We need better, more responsive, and country-specific support from Gilwell.
- Recognition of adults should be easier as adults like being rewarded too.
- We need more development for leaders, including coaching and mentoring support.
- We need more adult support and resolution management, with more care for 25+ adults.
- Focus more on recruitment.

## Theme 2: Communication

- The communication structure within the organisation, through the federated structure needs improvement.
- Make communications from HQ more focused, consistent and timely.
- Transparency with results of reviews and research is essential.
- Communication and connectivity for young people should be enhanced.

## Theme 3: 14-24 Programme Development

- Greater support for the 14-24 programme.
- The change from Explorers to Network needs work.
- The 14-24 programme review is needed to support growth and stop the loss of young people.

## Theme 4: Governance and Structure

- The federated charity structure should be reviewed to see if it is the best way to run or if it wastes volunteer hours.
- Governance for standalone campsites needs support and stability.
- Assurance is necessary to understand the effectiveness of our rules and policy
- We need to make our rules simpler to understand

## Theme 5: Inclusivity and Diversity

- Support mental health of volunteers
- Address attitudes surrounding misogyny.
- Tackle discrimination within the LGBTQ+ community.
- Support young people with additional needs
- Ensure equal nation representations at big events.

## Theme 6: Managing Budgets and Cost

- Provide better support for financial management, especially for low-income or small groups
- Address the cost of Scouting to ensure it's affordable

## Theme 7: Developing and Engaging Young People

- Create leadership and mentoring opportunities for young people, especially those aged 14-24
- Ensure Scouting is genuinely youth-led
- Provide more support for the 18-24 age range



# What happens next?

## The road to our next strategy



## Summit to the new strategy

Summit was a **key moment at the start of the process to develop our next strategy**. Although key themes had been identified through consultation with the movement, a draft strategy had not been written.

As part of the consultation process, **Summit25 has been followed by four UK Youth Forum events**, due to conclude in April 2025. The insights from these will also be used to shape our next strategy.

Following Summit, the insights gained over the weekend will be considered by Strategy Working Group (delegated by The UK Board of Trustees to develop the next Strategy) and used to help shape a first draft of the next strategy. **This first draft is expected to be presented to the UK Board of Trustees for consideration in July 2025.**

There is still a considerable amount of consultation to do. **The building blocks for the next strategy will be shared more widely with key volunteer leaders across the UK** for feedback in late April, early May 2025.



**Thank you**