

## Beyond 2018

Locally and nationally, Scouting continues to deliver our 2014-18 Strategic Plan, Scouting for All. As a movement, we are proud that we are growing, becoming more Youth Shaped and inclusive while making a positive impact in our communities.

The Scout Association (TSA) is now planning Scouting's future beyond 2018, thinking about our priorities, the work we wish to continue and any new areas where we can make a difference, all to answer the question: how can we improve the life chances of young people and better support our volunteers? We want as many members as possible to have the opportunity to contribute to this important process.

This briefing outlines what we found following conversations at a Country/Region/County level engaging with questions that came out of the adult volunteer survey. It's part of a series of weekly briefings sharing the research and insights we have collected in shaping our next strategic plan, which you can find at [scouts.org.uk/beyond2018](https://scouts.org.uk/beyond2018).

## Methodology

The aim was to meaningfully engage with Country/Region/County Commissioners on the next strategic plan by focusing on reviewing the current plan and considering to what extent it should continue. Discussions also focused on what support would be needed for volunteers to help deliver the next strategic objectives and what should be prioritised in the next five years.

The conversations were underpinned by the results of an adult survey of over 5,000 volunteers.

Three key questions were asked:

- to what extent should the current objectives remain and how could they be progressed further?

- what support do volunteers need to help deliver the strategic plan and objectives?
- what would volunteers prioritise and what are the most important ideas for progression over the next five years?

The method used in this phase of consultation was for Country/Regional or County Commissioners to facilitate conversations among County/District volunteers by presenting the results from the survey of adult volunteers, and asking key questions for feedback to be collated and sent to The Scout Association headquarters. This report outlines a summary of the key themes recognised from the consultation forms submitted by County/Region/Country Commissioners.

The feedback presented in this report represents input from over 40 County Commissioners and over 200 District/Area Commissioners or other District/County roles across the whole of the UK.

## Existing Strategic Objectives

We asked Regional/County Commissioners to what extent the current objectives should remain, how they could be progressed further and what support volunteers would need to deliver them.

Overall the majority felt all four strategic objectives should remain, reflecting findings from the adult survey where 76% of line managers and 73% of section leaders felt they should remain.

Where there were challenges to the continuation of the current strategic objectives, there were also suggestions to rectify perceived problems and find ways to progress.

### Growth

Where Growth was challenged in terms of it continuing to be a strategic objective, it was in the context of a

perceived tension between quality of delivery and retention and increasing new provision. Some felt that Growth does not need to be sought explicitly but would come as a result of the quality of programme and the leaders who deliver it. Other themes that emerged were recruitment and retention of volunteers, improved training to support leaders and good quality programme.

**'Faster training for those who are able to work at pace and want to fast-track through training. Many adults are only around for a couple of years, so by the time they can earn Wood Badges, they've gone.'**

Volunteer, West Midlands

Some of the suggestions on how to progress Growth:

- clearer advice and re-education on the reasons and benefits for Growth
- employ more development staff locally
- keep the different methods of Growth
- recruitment to focus on the fun of volunteering
- more practical resources and learning from other successful areas
- better metrics and data tools
- support with accessing funding
- help section leaders grow their leadership teams
- focus on succession planning
- bring Beaver age in line with Rainbows (5-7)
- national advertising campaign
- support section leaders with tools and skills needed to deliver a good programme

**'Programme is so important that it should run as a thread through everything.'**

Volunteer, East Midlands

## Inclusion

Where Inclusion was challenged on whether it should remain as a strategic objective, it was because volunteers felt it was a value all agreed with, and now needed time to embed. It was also suggested that Inclusion and Growth go hand in hand.

Common themes of discussion included linking inclusion to the role of Scouting in society, clarity on

what we mean by inclusion, and improved training and resources for volunteers.

**'We need to aid understanding that inclusivity is about building society as well as the Movement: perhaps currently too internally focused?'**

Volunteer, East England

Some of the suggestions on how to progress Inclusion:

- improve data on demographics
- need for more practical resources, for example, alternative languages, autism
- increased diversity of Scout ambassadors
- strategy on Scouting for refugees
- need for more girls and women and ethnic diversity
- training and support for volunteers to talk about sexuality, ethnicity, gender, religion
- make Scouting more inclusive for those who cannot afford it

**'The focus needs to be more local, with HQ helping local Scouting to access resources and leverage tried and tested methods (and contacts) from other parts of the country.'**

Volunteer, North East

## Community Impact

The majority of volunteers felt Community Impact should remain a strategic objective. Where this was challenged, it was in the context of integrating it more into the programme, suggesting that community work is something Scouting has always done. During discussions it was noted that there needed to be clarity on what is, and is not, included in the meaning of Community Impact.

Emerging and common themes of discussion included making it relevant to local communities' needs, stronger partnerships with local councils and organisations and highlighting good practice and achievement through media.

Some of the suggestions on how to progress Community Impact:

- support with building partnerships with local councils and organisations

- improved clarity on what Community Impact is and how to monitor and measure this
- use of A Million Hands - make it more local
- running a county theme with support from local charities
- sharing ideas will help stimulate more contribution
- set standards of what is a good citizen

**‘More support is needed to help leaders and young people identify, plan and support local community impact projects.’**  
Volunteer, North East

## Youth Shaped

Much of the discussions on Youth Shaped reflected the success of this objective to date rather than perceived challenges to the strategy. It was felt we should now focus on the next steps to take this further.

The top themes that came through the conversations were to provide more support for the Youth Commissioner roles, give time for this to embed throughout all age ranges, and support for volunteers to integrate this across all Groups.

**‘It is paramount for young people to be at the heart of everything we do, empowering them to shape their Scouting experiences – this work must be continued.’**  
Volunteer, West Midlands

Some of the suggestions on how to progress Youth Shaped:

- focus on 14-18 engagement
- Limit length of service in any one role
- survey young people more
- mentors for young people
- measurable purpose for Youth Commissioners
- Youth Shaped training for adults
- involve peer leadership by taking Patrols/Sixers into the strategy
- a succession plan for over 25-year-olds and those in Youth Commissioner roles
- improve the link between District Commissioner and District Youth Commissioner to work together more
- improved resources with more activity suggestions

# Priorities for the next plan

We asked volunteers what should be prioritised nationally and to suggest ideas to be considered for the next strategic plan. The discussions generated themes in five areas; programme, training, leader support, recruitment and retention (both of young people and volunteers), and improving perception.

## Programme

Focusing on the programme was seen as a priority and that it aligned directly to the current strategic objectives. This included increasing the quality of the programme and providing practical, adaptable and affordable resources.

It was suggested that the programme should include more adventurous, outdoor activities and awards should be recognised externally and be nationally accredited.

**‘More alignment with national, external qualifications to further enhance the public profile and show relevance to modern society.’**  
Volunteer, Wales

It was noted that more support was needed to develop Explorers and the Young Leaders Scheme and that the programme should be more Youth Shaped.

## Training

Training was the theme that emerged in discussions as a reoccurring request under each of the four strategic objectives, such as improving the training on Inclusion and Youth Shaped. There was particular emphasis on practical training in delivering a good quality programme including skills training, attaining permits, and delivering outdoor activity.

There also needs to be an emphasis on personal development through training aligning it with national and external qualifications.

**‘Promote NVQ accreditation of Leader Training.’**

Volunteer, North West

It was suggested that training should make use of technology, such as online learning platforms like those used in further education, and should be relevant to the volunteering roles.

**‘Use technology to provide national training with consistency and clear message (virtual classroom) then validated locally’**

Volunteer, South East

## Leader support

Some suggested that there needs to be support in building relationships with local government, schools, charities and other organisations. This was felt to be important for improving the relevance of Scouting, making use of shared space and equipment, and progressing the Inclusion and Community Impact strategic objectives.

**“Working with national organisations so that their members better understand and can practically support Scouting locally e.g. Local Government Association (to help with meeting places), Association of British Climbing Walls (to accept Scout AAPs).’**

Volunteer, North East

A priority mentioned by many was to improve digital systems used in Scouting, including data management and analysis tools. It was suggested that systems needed to be more automated to make things simpler and reducing paperwork for leaders. There were also requests for improved electronic resources, making better use of websites and videos rather than emails.

Further support for Commissioners to deal with complex issues, safeguarding, HR and accessing funding was highlighted as a need.

It was suggested that there should be a review of County, District and Group level roles, including empowering more volunteers with increased decision making abilities by flattening the line management structure. Some suggested consideration of more locally paid positions.

**‘Consider flattening hierarchical structure and allow groups to come together for administrative matters (e.g. GSL, Chair for several groups).’**

Volunteer, Wales

## Recruitment and retention

This theme emerged from discussion around Growth and Inclusion. It was suggested that to recruit more leaders, there needs to be honesty about what is involved, emphasis on fun, and on what an adult gets out of volunteering. Suggestions included securing paid volunteering leave from employers and targeted recruitment in businesses for secondment opportunities for aspiring managers and leaders.

There were calls for better succession planning in place to ensure that the right leaders are in the right roles, which would have a positive impact on the quality of delivery, retention and enjoyment of volunteers.

For recruitment of young people, it was noted that Scouting needed to be made more relevant to different communities. Suggestions included expanding Scouting in schools, lowering the age range of Scouting, increasing the number of girls, grants for those who require financial help and bringing Scouting to different communities.

**‘Removing barriers to joining – offering more Scouting through schools, hospitals, prisons etc. – bringing Scouting to where people are.’**

Volunteer, Scotland

Developing a national solution to retaining young people as they move between sections was suggested, for example, when they move to university, move home or return as an adult volunteer having previously left Scouting as a young person.

## Perception

This theme was tied strongly to the recruitment of young people and leaders (Growth), improving the perception of Scouting as open to all (Inclusion) and involvement in the community (Community Impact).

It was suggested that Scouting should be made more relevant to today's society, get greater recognition from government and prove it can make a difference, for example improving exam results and reducing the attainment gap.

'Despite great progress Scouting still unfortunately has as 'geeky' image among young people.'

Volunteer, North East

Suggestions to achieve this included more advertising to show Scouting as being both adventurous and practical, and the use of television advertising. A review of the uniform for the Scout section upwards was also suggested, and the introduction of a woman Chief Scout, promoting openness to all and breaking down traditional stereotyping.

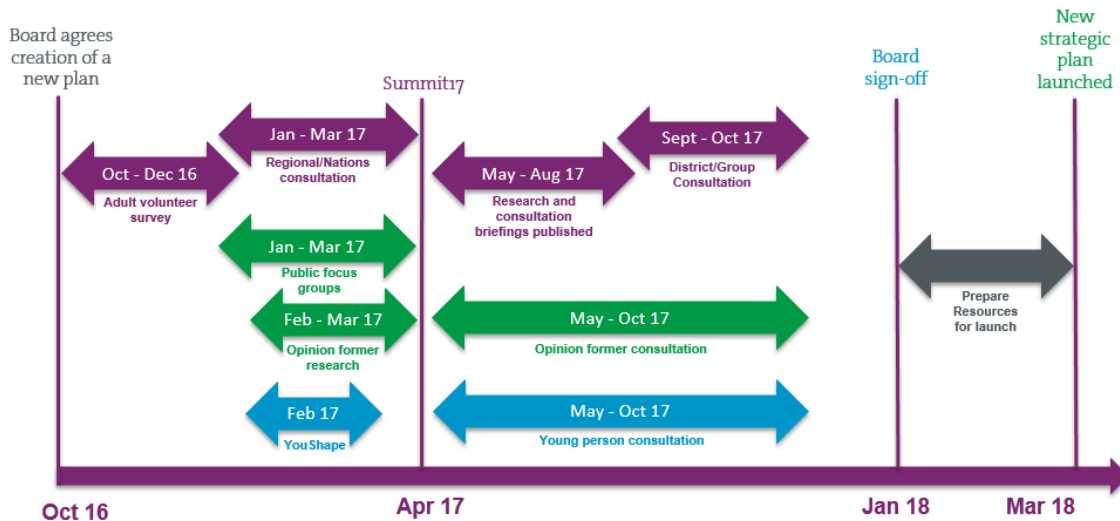
This piece is part of a series of contributions intended to stimulate discussion and debate as we create a new strategic plan for Scouting between 2018-2023. You can find all resources at [scouts.org.uk/beyond2018](https://scouts.org.uk/beyond2018)

In early August 2017, we will release a toolkit to support consultation on a District and Group level, with views being fed back nationally. Make sure you've made time at a County or District level to take part in September or October 2017.

# BEYOND 2018

To inform the decisions made for Scouting's future beyond 2018, we have asked for views from volunteers, young people, opinion formers and the general public. Over the next two months we will be publishing the reports from this research and consultation to help stimulate conversations in the Movement about the future.

## Beyond 2018 | Consultation timeline



### Schedule for publication of briefings and resources

The following briefings will be published in April – June on [scouts.org.uk/beyond2018](http://scouts.org.uk/beyond2018) and circulated to members through Scouting+. These will summarise key insights from the research and consultation to date and are intended to stimulate discussion and debate.

- Briefing 1 – Summit17
- Briefing 2 – #YouShape Beyond 2018
- Briefing 3 – Perceptions of Scouting
- Briefing 4 – Volunteer survey
- Briefing 5 – Regional/Nations consultation
- Briefing 6 – Opinion former research
- Briefing 7 – Impact of Scouting on young people

In August, we will publish resources to be used at District and Group level for consultation with volunteers on the next strategic plan, with a method to feedback views nationally.

In September and October, volunteers are encouraged to feedback their views on the draft strategic plan through County/District level meetings or events.

The Board will discuss a final draft of the next strategic plan based on volunteer feedback in January and will aim to launch the new plan in spring 2018.

### Future conversation resources – Summit17 in a box

To help support the consultation on the next plan, the toolkit will include resources to help you run your own Summit17 event if you wish to or to have a conversation as part of a meeting or event you may already have scheduled. These resources will include presentations, suggested session plans and activities as well as how to submit your feedback.

Make sure you've made time at a County or District level for volunteers to take part in discussions from September to October on the future of Scouting and what we as a Movement should prioritise in the next five years.