



# 14–24 Redesign Discovery

Full Report

# Contents

14–24 Redesign Discovery Report .....	0
Executive summary .....	3
14–24 Redesign Programme overview .....	6
Preface: Who are Generation Alpha? .....	7
Findings.....	9
1. Young people achieving skills for life through a quality programme.....	9
2. Structures, systems, principles and processes supporting the delivery of quality provision .....	16
3. Programme design and delivery is inclusive, and facilitates the participation of all young people in 14–24 provision .....	21
4. Improved awareness and perception of 14–24 Scout provision, both internally and externally .....	25
5. Recommendations .....	30
5.3 Recommendations: Explorer level provision (14–18) .....	31
5.4 Recommendations: Network level provision (18+) .....	34
5.5 Recommendations: A stronger identity for Explorers and 18+ provision.....	35
5.6 Organisational enablers .....	36
Next Steps.....	39

**Thank you** to the over 3,000 young people, Scout volunteers and youth sector professionals who have contributed to this report.

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# Executive summary

## Discovery overview

This report condenses 10 months of qualitative and quantitative research with over 3,000 young people, Scout volunteers and youth sector professionals as part of this Programme of Work's **Discovery phase**. In doing so, it proposes a set of recommendations to make sure a redesigned 14–24 Scout provision responds to the experiences, skills and aspirations of young people over the next twenty years.

Future project phases include the **Design phase**, where the project team will **come up with interventions and products**, which will then be **tested** with young people and volunteers. Then, selected interventions and products will be **trialled and assessed** in the **Prototype phase**, before **Scale out**.

## Recommendations

Recommendations have been organised under four cross-cutting programme objectives. When combined, these objectives will contribute to the overall goal of a future 14–24 provision of: **“More young people aged 14–24, including those from underserved communities, achieving skills for life.”**

The cross-cutting objectives are:

1. **Fun and impactful programme:** Young people are achieving skills for life through a quality programme.
2. **Flexible delivery:** Structures, systems, principles and processes support the delivery of a quality provision.
3. **Widening participation:** Programme design and delivery is inclusive, and facilitates participation.
4. **Stronger identity:** Improved awareness and perception of provision, both internally and externally.

The recommendations, as they currently stand, act as “prompts” for the co-design phase. **They will be prioritised and further built upon to develop product and intervention prototypes during the co-design phase.** Selected product and intervention prototypes will later be tested during the pilot phase.

## Explorer Provision 14-18 – Refresh and Strengthen

While the research found numerous examples of Explorers running effectively, it also identified obstacles to the successful delivery of Explorers in its current form. Contextual changes to the Explorer programme over the years, since its last re-design, also mean the programme isn't currently meeting the needs of all young people aged 14-18.

Learnings taken from engagement across the sector and a review of generational trends have highlighted **opportunities to refresh and strengthen the Explorer provision** to better meet the needs of young people. There's no proposed change to the **offer of a single provision for young people in this age group**.

### Fun and impactful programme:

- Embed new high-level programme outcomes in transferable skill development, mental health and wellbeing and civic participation into the provision through badges and awards.
- Identify and define core transferable skills that young people aged 14-18 today need to develop. Scaffold demonstration of these to support progression using a framework such as the Skill Builder Partnership.
- Strengthen Community Impact offer at 14-18 to support achievement of high-level programme outcomes.
- Build on strong track record in outdoor learning to support high-level skill development.
- Strengthen and modernise the Young Leaders Scheme to ensure its relevance for young people.

### Flexible delivery:

- Improve transition activities, sign-posting and information sharing to support the transition of young people from Scouts into Explorers.
- Amend POR to give the autonomy to run Explorers at Group level, while maintaining District Level governance.

- Design behaviour change interventions that improve the capability, opportunity and motivation of volunteers to set up new Explorer provisions and recruit new Explorer Leaders.

#### Widening participation:

- Make Explorer level badges more achievable and obtainable.
- Structure Explorer provisions in a way that responds to young people's priorities, responsibilities, and transition points between the ages of 14-18.
- Find and form local and national partnerships with organisations who have expertise in targeted youth work, supporting more underserved young people into the provision.
- All new design prototypes should address barriers to youth participation including cost, time and accessibility.

## Network Provision 18+ – Reform and Re-launch

During this research, discussions with young people and volunteers have indicated that, with a few exceptions, the Network programme isn't currently delivering a high-quality provision to members over the age of 18. This is despite a real and genuine need among this age group to continue to build skills for life. **Evidence also suggests that young people who maintain involvement across all Scout sections are more likely to go on to become longer-term volunteers with us, than those recruited through other pathways.**

This research therefore recommends **designing and re-launching a reformed Scout Network programme** to provide a more formalised post-Explorers programme focused on the continued **development of young people 18+ against high-level programme outcomes.**

#### Fun and impactful programme:

- Reform the Scout Network programme to be a more formalised post-Explorers programme focused on the continued development of young people 18+ against the same high-level programme outcomes, with additional stretch for the age group.
- Decide the upper age limit of a future 18+ provision, which will depend on early-stage planning and testing, during the co-design phase.

#### Flexible delivery:

- Explore and implement opportunities for offering flexibility around strict age cut-offs when transitioning from Explorers to Network.
- Allocate appropriate and adequate resource to more 'youth-led' section provisions.

#### Widening participation:

- Ensure 18+ provision responds to the increased geographic movements of young people in this age group.
- Seek partnership opportunities to empower young people to apply the skills gained from programme engagement to future pathways.

## A stronger identity for Explorers and 18+ provision

Recommendations which support improved awareness and perception of the 14–24 provision, both internally and externally, sit across both Explorer and 18+ provisions and are as follows:

- Reposition 14–24 branding to tackle perceptions and reflect new provision and programme outcomes.
- Explore effective marketing opportunities specific to 14–24 audiences.
- Increase the presence of 14–24 provisions in local communities.

**Changes to the programme offer for 14–24-year-olds won't happen without help. Additional organisational enablers that'll be critical in supporting the objectives of a new 14–24 design have been included in the Recommendation section of the report.**

## Next Steps

**Dissemination:** This report will be copy-edited by Scouts Communications Team before being sent to volunteers and young people. It'll be spread in part through attendance at regional and national forums, and will also be used to engage the movement in developing and prioritising recommendations for the co-design phase.

**Co-design:** As the 14–24 Redesign PoW moves into the design phase it'll split into two separate, but inter-connected project streams: **Stream 1:** Explorers and Young Leaders (14-18) and **Stream 2:** Network (18+).

In the coming months, each project stream will:

- a. Develop full project briefs and prioritise recommendations.
- b. Come up with and test approaches, interventions and products with young people and volunteers.
- c. Select the best approaches, interventions and products for the Prototype Phase.

For more information on the co-design please see Annex B: *14-24 Co-Design Phase Project Plan*

## 14–24 Redesign Programme overview

The Explorer Scouts (14–17 year olds) and Scout Network (18–24 year olds) provisions were established in 2001. 23 years on, there are 3,020 Explorer Units and 553 Networks, supporting 44,273 Explorer Scouts and 8,143 Network members. Pre-pandemic, both sections enjoyed continuous growth, reaching 46,000 Explorers and 16,000 Network members in January 2020. However, looking at retention, youth membership starts to decline after the age of 11.

Two thirds of Scouts don't become Explorers, and four fifths of Explorers don't become Network members. This jars with Scout Experience Survey<sup>i</sup> results in 2022 where 74% said they were likely to continue.

The Strategy and Delivery Committee (SDC) agreed a Programme Mandate, requesting that Scouts seek to understand how the experiences, skills, and aspirations of young people over the next twenty years will differ from those of twenty years ago, and adapt the programme as a result. This will ultimately lead to a change in the outcomes that Scouts achieves for young people of this age.

The following report responds to this Programme Mandate, detailing recommendations supported by detailed research findings. These findings and recommendations have been structured into four core objectives that a future 14–24 provision should seek to achieve:

1. **Fun and impactful programme:** Young people aged 14–24 are achieving skills for life through a quality programme.
2. **Flexible delivery:** Structures, systems, principles and processes support the delivery of a quality provision for 14–24-year-olds.
3. **Widening participation:** Programme design and delivery is inclusive, and facilitates the participation of all young people in 14–24 provision.
4. **Stronger identity:** Improved awareness and perception of 14–24 Scout provision, both internally and externally.

These objectives are mutually-supporting and sustaining. When the recommendations related to these objectives are met, they'll contribute to improved recruitment and retention of young people into the 14–24 provision and meet the desired goal of a redesigned 14–24 provision:

**“More young people aged 14–24, including those from underserved communities, achieving skills for life.”**

### Method

Between January 2023 and October 2023, Scouts carried out an in-depth consultation which adopted a mixed methods approach to research using both quantitative and qualitative methods.

- Quantitative approaches, such as surveys, were used to generate broad insights and trends in the attitudes and practices of young people, volunteers and actors, such as employers across the sector.
- To strengthen the quantitative element of this research, in-depth qualitative research was undertaken to gain a deeper insight into the experiences, preferences, values and beliefs of these stakeholders.

Over 3,400 people were involved in the research. This included:

- Over 850 young people not currently involved in Scouts, including from underrepresented groups.
- Nearly 1,200 young people involved in Scouts.
- Over 1,400 volunteers and staff involved in Scouts in the UK.
- Representatives from 28 other National Scout Organisations (NSOs) and the World Organisation of the Scout Movement (WOSM).

- Representatives from 22 other Youth Organisations.

Research methods included workshops, interviews, observations, surveys and 'volunteer or youth-led' activities.

In addition to primary methods, this research has also included an in-depth review of existing literature. This included insights from projects undertaken from other Scouts core programmes of work, including uniform review and EDI, alongside research from across the youth sector and academia. This has ensured the most effective use of the programme resources by building upon established insights and research.

This research has used a range of sampling techniques to identify respondents including snowball sampling and convenience sampling. To mitigate against bias, a tracker was set up to map the geographic and demographic characteristics of the organisations and individuals engaged with. This enabled the research to take a more purposeful approach to sampling, building a more representative picture of youth experience. The programme will further mitigate against bias through the methods selected to test the efficacy of interventions during the piloting phase – building in robust evaluation frameworks and where possible statistically significant tests to give confidence in the design interventions which are the most impactful.

## Preface: Who are Generation Alpha?

A newly launched Scout provision for young people aged 14–24 will draw its membership primarily from those born after the year 2010, or as they've come to be known: Generation Alpha. Generation Alpha are digital natives; born at the same time as the release of the first iPad in 2010<sup>ii</sup>, and technology will continue to dominate much of their lives<sup>iii</sup>. Generation Alpha's world is characterised by hyper-connectivity, exposure to technology and complex digital lives – much of which are lived behind screens<sup>iv</sup>. It's predicted that many of Gen-Alpha will surpass the technological skills of their parents by their eighth birthdays<sup>v</sup>. Generation Alpha's position as digital natives and early adopters of technological innovation means they've authority and influence in these realms and over other generations.

The impacts of global events including the COVID-19 pandemic, the climate crisis and international conflicts will also shape Generation Alpha's outlook on the world. Ipsos refer to this present context as a world of 'poly-crisis', where many interconnected issues prevent individuals from focusing on any one single thing<sup>vi</sup>. Technology will support the rapid dissemination of contested viewpoints in response to these crises. In the age of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and machine learning, individuals will be under increasing pressure to differentiate between what's true and what's not.

In this world of hyper-connectivity, new networks and connections are forming in the place of traditional political movements. Examples such as Big Six<sup>1</sup>, of which the Scouts (WOSM) is a member, demonstrate the potential of youth movements as a positive force for good in the world. Similarly, young people have been at the forefront of movements which seek to disrupt long-standing structural inequalities including systemic racism, such as the Black Lives Matter movement<sup>vii</sup>. However, the disenfranchisement of young people from traditional political participation, coupled with the rapid expansion of different forms of digital content, is contributing to disinformation and the dissemination of dangerous world views<sup>viii</sup>. It's therefore important that young people are given opportunities to build their capabilities in critical thinking and analysis so they're better equipped to navigate a world of digital information overload.

The possession and development of transferable skills will also help young people successfully navigate a changed world of work, where linear careers are being replaced by portfolio careers, where individuals move within and between

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<sup>1</sup> Six of the world's largest youth movements, including Scouts, have joined forces with the World Health Organisation to develop youth-led solutions for young people impacted by the Pandemic [Big 6 Youth Organizations | Global Youth Mobilization For Generation Disrupted \(bigsix.org\)](https://www.bigsix.org/)

professions. However, mental health factors are preventing rising numbers of young people from entering employment, while young people not in work, employment, education, or training (NEETs) are at a significantly higher likelihood of experiencing a mental health condition<sup>ix</sup>.

Despite these trends, young people play a powerful role in changing societal attitudes. Gen-Z's<sup>2</sup> increased openness to reporting mental health concerns itself has a destigmatizing effect on how we talk about mental health. In a world where definitions of gender and sexuality are becoming more inclusive, young people demonstrate significantly greater awareness of a range of identities than older generations with 48% of Gen-Z being able to define 'pansexuality', compared with only 5% of baby boomers<sup>x3</sup>.

**In a world of rapid change and complexity, the 14–24 provision must consider its role in preparing young people to navigate these challenges so they can become active, skilled citizens and leaders, connected to their communities and empowered to make a positive impact on society. Future provisions should be built upon a clearly defined set of programme outcomes which respond to the needs of these young people over the next 20 years and beyond.**

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<sup>2</sup> Gen-Z refers to individuals born between 1996 and 2010.

<sup>3</sup> Baby Boomers refers to individuals born between 1946 and 1964.

# Findings

## 1. Young people achieving skills for life through a quality programme

### 1.1 Programme outcomes

#### 1.1.1 A space for young people to develop key transferable and employability skills

Employers have recognised the importance of their workforce possessing 'foundational and transferable skills' as integral to adapting to the artificial intelligence (AI) era<sup>xi</sup>. Academics have suggested attention should be paid to building our capabilities in the things that machines don't yet have, such as interdisciplinary, social and meta-intelligence.<sup>xii</sup> Research from the Kingston University has highlighted the top 10 future skills that employers regard as the most important, these are: problem solving, critical thinking, communication, digital skills, analytical skills, adaptability, resilience, creativity, relationship building and initiative.<sup>xiii</sup>

Research undertaken by Demos and commissioned by Scouts found that 40% of 18–25-year-olds involved in the movement identified a lack of technical skills made them feel unprepared for work, compared to only 1% who said a lack of 'transferable skills' made them feel unprepared. The contrast here is starker when considering how employers cited a lack of transferable skills as a top reason they struggled to hire young people, rather than a lack of technical skills.<sup>xi</sup> These results could indicate an 'over-confidence' among young people in their level of transferable skills, which don't meet the level required by employers who have such rapidly shifting needs to fill. It could also indicate that young people aren't sufficiently skilled at identifying and communicating their transferable skills to employers.

Other findings from the Demos research suggested a positive relationship between the extracurricular opportunities provided to young people by Scouts, and the development of some of these transferable skills including teamwork, leadership, communication, and resilience. 59% of those who attended Scouts at least every week said their careers had benefited from the teamwork skills they gained, compared to 37% who attended at least every month. However, it's important to consider the extent to which characteristics, such as the socio-economic status of respondents, may have on compounding the Demos results. Additionally, these results reflect the experiences of those currently in employment and therefore may not align with the rapidly shifting landscape of work that's likely to be seen in the future.

During workshops conducted with 43 Explorer volunteers, respondents were prompted to reflect upon the extent to which they felt the current provision supports the achievement of outcomes in the Scout Theory of Change.<sup>xiv</sup> Numerous participants spoke positively about the way in which awards supported the development of skills, with particular emphasis placed on Duke of Edinburgh Award.

*"Scouts gives members some great skills that employers are looking for".*

**Workshop, Explorer Volunteer**

Similarly, across the global Scout movement, many felt Scouts had an opportunity to help young people in cultivating transferable skills that can be of value when applying for jobs or further education. Scouts could help tackle "unemployability levels among young people" and "National skill shortages".

*"Life skills developed in Scouts can be better translated in employment or entrepreneurial competences"*

**NSO Representative from Romania**

The achievement of this objective was reflected through desires expressed by young people who took part in self-led activities for this research. Young people from 32 Explorer Units cited 'improved life skills' as one of the outcomes they'd like a youth provision to support them to achieve. Through qualitative research conducted by the 14–24 Youth Panel, 450 young people involved in Scouts reflected that skill development was currently integrated into sessions, such as learning to cook, learning to kayak or campaigning for the community. However, less was expressed regarding the transferable skills these activities might support.

A survey about the Young Leaders' Scheme (YLS) with 500 young people and volunteers demonstrated that many participants felt the scheme supports the development of transferable skills. The majority (82%) of survey participants 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that the Young Leaders' Scheme effectively develops leadership skills for use in community, work, or personal life. When describing the scheme as a success, many who completed the survey said that being a Young Leader supports character development, and increases the confidence, independence and responsibility of the young person.

However, some felt these transferable skills were less obvious, perhaps influenced by varying quality of the provision:

*"I don't disagree that it provides them with leadership skills, but I don't see where it teaches them how these skills apply in work or life situations, and how transferable they are."*

**Survey respondent, Young Leaders' Scheme**

*"There is little cross linking or discussion that the skills they gain are transferable or even valuable outside of Scouts."*

**Survey respondent, Young Leaders' Scheme**

The project team also ran workshops, focus groups and surveyed over 800 young people from outside of the movement to further explore the outcomes that the 14–24 redesign should seek to achieve. Survey results indicated that young people wanted youth provisions to provide them with new life skills. Consultations with other youth organisations support this. The Prince's Trust focuses most of its programmes primarily on providing young people with skills and experiences that contribute to their ability to gain meaningful employment. The organisation offers schemes tailored to meet young people at different confidence and competence levels. Their approach combines real work experiences with targeted skill development through facilitated group projects. A 2016 review of The Prince's Trust indicated that three out of four young people who received support from the Trust transitioned into work, education, or training following their participation in its programme.

### **1.1.2 A space where young people can strengthen their mental health and wellbeing**

Young people's relationships with themselves and others evolves in response to the shifting context of their lives. The interrelated impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and cost-of-living crisis; the defunding of youth services since the 2009 financial crash and the growing mental health crisis continue to shape the experiences of young people across the UK.

Evidence from the Sutton Trust has shown the impact of the cost-of-living crisis in schools, with higher rates of poor behaviour, inattention, pupils not having adequate winter clothing and coming to school hungry.<sup>xv</sup> Youth violence has increased and 69% of young people report having to modify their lives to keep themselves safe.<sup>xvi</sup> 52% of 17–23-year-olds have experienced a deterioration in mental health in the last five years, with young women among the most likely to develop a mental health problem<sup>xvii</sup>. Eco-anxiety and concern about global crises, where globally three-quarters of young people are alarmed about their future due to climate change<sup>xviii</sup> alongside unmet social needs including income, employment, education and safety, are all associated with higher self-reported rates of behavioural-health conditions<sup>xix</sup>. All these factors will contribute to poorer outcomes for this generation of young people, especially those experiencing one or more forms of marginalisation.

Mental health factors are also preventing rising numbers of young people from entering employment, while young people not in work, employment, education, or training (NEETs) are at a significantly higher likelihood of experiencing a mental health condition<sup>xx</sup>. The economic barriers faced by young people are being played out in the lifestyle choices that many are making, including living at home with their parents for longer, marrying later and choosing whether to have children, all of which are trends set to continue.<sup>xxi</sup>

In workshops with 43 Explorer volunteers, gaps were identified around the extent to which the current Explorer provision supports positive mental health outcomes. Interviews conducted by the 14–24 Youth Panel with 450 Explorer and Network members supported this view, with respondents commenting they felt there wasn't enough specific training to support the 14–24 age range or for their leaders to be able to understand and offer them safe spaces. This includes mental health, disability awareness and inclusivity training for LGBTQ+.

Surveys conducted by the 14–24 Youth Panel with 800 young people outside of Scouts showed that making friends was of high importance to young people. During workshops with over 50 of these survey participants, young people referenced wanting to develop ‘a sense of belonging’ and find a space to ease feelings of loneliness and isolation. Young people also referenced improved wellbeing as an outcome they’d like to gain from participating in a youth provision. Young people who participated in a workshop with the DofE Award noted that “having confidence in myself and to not give up,” or “realising I’m stronger than I think,” were some of the most valuable skills they thought they’d developed after taking part in the youth award. One young person referenced they’d be likely to attend a youth provision to:

*“Meet people who are alike to me and feel less alone.”*

**Young person, 14–24 Youth Panel survey**

Through engagement across the sector, this research heard that many other youth provisions adopt a holistic approach that aligns various outcomes to create a virtuous cycle of growth and development for young people. A young person who’s mentally and physically healthy is better positioned to engage in education and employment opportunities. Simultaneously, active participation in social action and outdoor learning can enhance a young person’s sense of purpose, belonging, and resilience. For example, Historic England, where wellbeing is a strategic goal, seeks to not only enhance the population’s wellbeing, but also to tackle wellbeing inequality which disproportionately affects certain groups of young people, such as those classified as NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training).

Similarly, many organisations seek to form communities for young people which foster a sense of belonging. Suffolk Refugee Support run a successful provision via an evening club where boys seeking asylum and boys from a private school can come together. This was highlighted as a real success, ‘it works really well as they want to be with their peers.’

### **1.1.3 A place where young people can participate in issues which affect their lives**

A recent poll by Opinium showed that only 22% of young people in the UK believe the wants and needs of young people are considered by the UK government when making decisions. The poll also showed that nearly half of young people believe their vote doesn’t matter, and only 24% of young people surveyed trust the government.<sup>xxii</sup> In the context of Scouts, a recent YouGov poll showed that only 38% of 13-17 year olds and 42% of 18-25 year olds agree that young people’s opinions influence decisions in Scouts locally.

Despite this, 800 young people consulted via a survey by the 14–24 Youth Panel expressed a wish to “help and support the local community,” and to “be able to connect with people” when participating in youth provisions. This was supported by a workshop with youth participants from the charity ‘City Year UK’ regarding young people’s experiences and learning while acting as mentors in secondary schools. Participants reflected that their experience led to significant personal and professional development. They said social action projects helped them work out what they want to do as a career or a next step. During a workshop with youth ambassadors from DofE, one young person who was pursuing a career in law, explained he was unable to get closely related volunteer opportunities, but found that:

*“There are still lots of skills you learn from volunteering like teamwork and organisation that are applicable to all work settings.”*

**Young person, DofE workshop**

Many external organisations that this research engaged with aim to empower young people to take an active role in shaping their communities, fostering a sense of civic responsibility and enhancing their wellbeing through providing opportunities for youth social action. Young people are encouraged to become active citizens who create positive change and advocate for important issues in their local and global communities. Youth provisions also use youth social action to educate broader audiences while simultaneously providing young people with spaces to voice their needs and concerns. Appropriate guidance, training, and resources are essential for youth provisions to effectively empower young people as active citizens.

Youth Action Northern Ireland provides specific grants which give young people the means to run events and invest in their local communities. From this funding, young people have set up a homeless shelter to support and draw attention to the needs of homeless youth. Their young people also created and curated an art exhibition through this initiative,

which explored mental health and wellbeing. Local change makers, youth workers and the wider community were invited to better understand these topics from a youth perspective.

Consultations with numerous NSOs and NSAs also provided excellent examples using social action programming. The 'Compagnon' section (17–21) in The Scouts and Guides of France (SGF) NSA, which has recently been reviewed, encourages young people to become autonomous in their choices and decisions. To achieve this, they collaborate in groups with fellow members, sometimes from other Groups or Districts, for the duration of their time as a 'Compagnon'. In these groups, they undertake several social action and community impact 'Experiments', in topics such as Development, Health & Sport, Peace & Human Rights, Environment, Education & Childhood, Solidarity & Openness and Expression & Communication. They can choose their own 'Experiments', or the 'Compagnon' website advertises and regularly updates opportunities and partnerships that each group can get involved in for their 'Experiments'. Experiments are the central component of all 'Compagnon' provisions and form a mandatory part of the programme. Compagnon makes up 8.4% of Scouts total SGF membership, compared to Network's 2.1%.

In response to the war in Ukraine, The National Organization of Scouts of Ukraine (NOSU), and other members of WOSM, have been helping children and their families throughout the crisis, illustrating the collective impact that NSOs/NSAs can have when they combine forces. In Ukraine, Scouts and volunteers are involved in a range of efforts to offer support to those most in need, distributing warm clothes, food, medical equipment, and vital medicines. Furthermore, Scout leaders have continued to organise activities and camps, helping displaced children to make friends and feel safe.

In speaking with a representative from the Greek NSO, the 14–24 Design Team heard about the multitude of ways in which their volunteers and members of their Venture (15–18) and Network (18–26) Sections were adapting their skills for social action and emergency response. The representative shared how social action, for volunteers and members, was important for increasing the awareness “especially of older Scouts” and for keeping Scouts relevant:

*“We should do more of this. If we stay within our small Scouts bubble, we will shrink. We need to stay relevant and interesting to our children.”*

**Volunteer, Greek NSO**

In the UK, Social Action and Community Impact has a less prominent place in the programme compared to some other NSOs/NSAs. However, The Community Impact Staged Activity badge<sup>xxiii</sup> does encourage Scouts to participate in activities that can have positive community focused outcomes. Additionally, the A Million Hands programme helps young people to achieve the badge by providing “ready-made activities and programme ideas centred on six national themes.”<sup>xxiv</sup> Top Awards, such as the DofE Award, The King’s Scout Award and Scouts of the World Award (SOWA) also contain elements of volunteering and community impact.

Furthermore, well established Groups, Districts and Counties often have their own initiatives and events that take place regularly within their local community. Sometimes “this can be transactional. For example, we get the local fire service to come to our event, and in return we raise some funds for them. [...] Many do community impact – whether it’s for a badge or not.”<sup>xxv</sup> However, it’s unclear how widespread this practice is.

While Global Citizenship has less prominence in the UK’s programme compared to other NSOs / NSAs, there are several international opportunities that Explorers and Network members can benefit from. This includes being able to attend international events such as Youth Agora, Roverway, Jamboree, JOTA-JOTI, and World Scout Moot.<sup>xxvi</sup> Additional opportunities include completing the Explorer Belt award, the SOWA and volunteering abroad. International opportunities can also be organised at a Group, District or County level. In 2023, only 31 (0.4%) of eligible members completed the SOWA. 261 (2%) completed the Explorer Belt.<sup>xxvii</sup> Members who are in a position of financial hardship can apply for a UKHQ fund for taking part in international experiences.<sup>xxviii</sup> Some Counties and Districts also offer their own grants.

## 1.2 What is the role of badges and awards?

The Explorer programme has 25 bespoke Activity Badges, 15 Staged Activity Badges, three Top Awards, the Young Leader Award, the Explorer Belt, and recognition for the DofE Award scheme. Explorer programme related badge sales

made up only 0.4% of all badge sales in 2023<sup>xi</sup> despite Explorers accounting for 10% of Scouts youth membership in the same year.

The Network programme is based on virtual badges and as such there aren't any physical Network badges, other than Top Awards. Correspondingly, Network related badge sales are also very low, making up 0.02% of the total 2023 badge sales, while Network members accounted for 1.8%<sup>xxix</sup> of youth membership. However, there are very few Network related programme badges on sale. Virtual badges for Network do still appear on scouts.org.uk, but with no guidance on how to achieve them. They're mainly legacy content, following the demise of the Network website in 2021, which was shut down due to a combination of low use by members, technical and administrative issues.

Consultations with 32 Explorer Units delivered through self-led research activities provides some insight into the low levels of Explorer badge sales. 88% of participants were in favour of having badges and awards within the programme. The project team heard that it's "good to have something to aim for, it gives a sense of accomplishment" and "young people want to see their progress, to have a sense of achievement in their Scouting". However, there was a general sentiment among respondents that badges were too complicated. Consultations with 43 Explorer and Network volunteers revealed additional reasons why young people may not be obtaining badges, including: "badges need to be more achievable", the "badge scheme is too complicated, there's too much stuff" and "badges are separate to meaningful progression and achievement". These responses were also supported through the 14–24 Youth Panel's consultation with 450 young people, who reflected that badges for 14-18 are too difficult, too long to attain and not relatable enough to the current members.

Perspectives on the difficulty of the programme were also mirrored across responses from young people involved in other NSOs/ NSAs:

*"With Rovers we notice that the programme is too difficult to grasp and to implement."*

**Representative from Sweden**

Many of the Top Awards offered at Explorer and Network level were discussed favourably among volunteers and young people in terms of their effectiveness in supporting the young people to build skills.

*"I believe the Top Awards, King's Scout Award (KSA), really help achieve the majority of these (Scouts) outcomes through their completion."*

**Volunteer**

During research with 43 Explorer volunteers, questions were raised regarding the compatibility of undertaking DofE alongside other Scouts Top Awards. 450 young people consulted by the 14–24 Youth Panel referenced struggling to complete Top Awards with the time and resources available. Additional competition was referenced as coming from schools, especially at Bronze DofE level. Such variation in attitudes to Top Awards creates a challenge in ascertaining a consistent picture of their value to the movement. However, Scout census figures from 2023 showed that 9% of those eligible completed their Platinum Chief Scout Award in 2023, compared with 4% of those eligible completing a Gold DofE Award, suggesting DofE isn't responsible for the competition with other Scouts Top Awards. The low uptake of King's Scout Awards and Scout of the World Awards may be better explained through the challenges that young people face in achieving it and the high administrative burden in evidencing this achievement.

### 1.3 Accreditation and the 'fun gap'

During self-led activities with 43 Explorer Units, young people were presented with a choice between a youth provision which focuses on 'working towards skills and formal qualifications' versus a 'space to relax and have fun'. 71% of participants selected a 'space to relax and have fun' while the remaining 29% selected 'a mix of the two'. Further qualitative insights collected in response to this question emphasised that young people wanted "Explorers to be a fun place to acquire skills with friends without the pressure of formal assessments" and "qualifications are for school". One leader's reflection noted the contrast between a lack of appetite for qualifications and a desire for badges, suggesting that:

*"They like badges but not skills and qualifications. I think the critical factor is that it must be fun!"*

Further responses from one Explorer Unit drew this comparison out further:

*“Formal qualifications belong at school. We want Explorers to be a fun place to acquire skills with friends without the pressure of formal assessments. Badges prove we have learnt things and they don't have a minimum bar set by some remote faceless organisation - our leaders work with us to ensure all are equally challenged and rewarded.”*

**Young people, Explorer Unit**

A survey conducted with 800 young people from outside of Scouts, mirrored a desire for a youth provision to provide 'fun' and 'personal development' in a club or group setting.

The potential for accreditation was also raised during a survey completed by 500 young people and volunteers on the current Young Leaders' Scheme (YLS). Some survey participants shared ideas for how to improve recognition of the scheme, including offering accreditation. Respondents referenced that Scouts had previously offered this through accreditation from the Institute of Leadership Management (ILM), though were unsure of why this was no longer offered.

The research also heard about other Youth Organisations and NSOs that already offer accreditation for participating in similar schemes, such as Girl Guides and Scouts Australia. In Australia, Venturer and Rover Scouts members can gain employability and transferable skills, with the programme linking to vocational education and training and leading to formally recognised qualifications via The Scouts of Australia Institute of Training.<sup>xxx</sup> There are over 15 qualifications they can achieve, in topics such as Outdoors Industry, Business and Leadership Skills, Project Management, Creative Industries and Volunteering. For Venturer Scouts (14–18), they place emphasis on fun, friendship, adventure, personal challenge, and “picking up life skills along the way.” They acknowledge that, at this age, young people need breathing space and can be going through their “toughest years in school and making decisions about [their] future.”<sup>xxxi</sup>

Trials have also been taking place in Milton Keynes and Cheshire where formal recognition through CVQO of the skills gained through Scouts (and other uniformed organisations) in teamwork, leadership and community is offered through a BTEC Level 2 qualification for 16–19 year olds.

Consultations with other youth organisations who had trialled accreditation including The Prince's Trust and UK Youth, presented differing perspectives on their value and relevance. While many acknowledged the benefits of accreditation in ensuring programme quality, adding a layer of recognition and instilling trust; many also highlighted potential pitfalls citing a high administrative burden, a tendency to place limitations on programme flexibility and a general sense that they can remove a sense of fun from youth programmes. These issues have resulted in several organisations who have trialled accredited programme models then withdrawing them.

## 1.4 What activities do young people enjoy?

Self-led activities with 32 Explorer Units largely reflected a preference for the types of activities that Scouts currently offers. These included: camping, nature awareness, cooking, survival skills (including fire starting and shelter building), sports (including kayaking, archery and sailing), fundraising, wellbeing discussions and art. When compared against badge sales, these perspectives are broadly reflected, with Explorer badges which focus on 'traditional' outdoor skills and activities (such as Survival Skills, Camper, Pioneer etc.) sold more than less traditional badges such as Performing arts and Creative arts.<sup>xxix</sup>

The same research activities showed that young people were quite evenly split between wanting a space to learn new skills, and an opportunity to work on and master existing skills. Most of the Explorers felt they should have the opportunity to do both.

In a survey conducted with 800 young people from outside of Scouts, the most popular interests included sports activities (54%), gaming (40%), outdoor adventure activities (38%), travel and culture-related activities (39%), music-related activities (34%), and useful skills (34%). In subsequent focus group discussions with some of these survey

respondents, young people expressed interest in diverse activities, from adventurous pursuits to STEM activities and life skills, such as finances.

*"The Scouts group seems cool 'cause they're into the same stuff I am, like camping, hiking, and outdoor adventures."*

**Young person, Focus Group by the 14–24 Youth Panel**

It was also suggested it'd be beneficial to incorporate 'modern elements' such as technology and contemporary activities to make Scouts more appealing to young people today.

*"Scouts can keep their outdoor thing, but they should add some modern stuff too. Like, tech and cool activities."*

**Young person, Focus Group by the 14–24 Youth Panel**

A desire for modernisation was also reflected in consultations with young people from other NSOs/NSAs. Many felt the programme was "outdated" and "unattractive", with some saying it focused too much on the "outdoors" and not enough on the needs and desires of young people and the world today.

Young people also cited reasons such as personal development or to participate in specific experiences they can use when applying for their next steps in education or employment as things they'd like from a youth provision:

*"I would like to do activities that would take me outside of my comfort zone," and 'how will it impact my own self-development? What can I put on my CV?"*

**Young person, City Year UK Workshop**

## **1.5 The benefits of outdoor learning**

Analysis of desired programme activities has already indicated a strong want for an outdoor component to the provision young people engage in. As a core part of the existing programme and a renowned area of strength for the organisation, Scouts is well positioned to provide outcomes for young people through the delivery of outdoor and adventurous learning.

Through engagement with a range of other youth organisations, the immense value of outdoor learning was recognised as a powerful tool for fostering personal growth, creating meaningful connections between young people and the natural world, and nurturing physical literacy.

The shift from a classroom setting to the outdoors can be a profound turning point for young people who may have struggled with mainstream education. The project team visited Jamie's Farm during the delivery of their targeted programme for young people at risk of exclusion from school. For some of these young people, the conventional classroom environment was overwhelming and triggered stress responses. The change in environment and approach meant these young people took initiative, displayed leadership qualities, and engaged with the learning process in a more holistic and experiential way.

The Pendragon Project provide outdoor adventure-based activities to support and empower young people experiencing difficult transitions to adulthood and emphasise the therapeutic and mindful aspects of outdoor learning, leading to personal growth. Through their work, the organisation facilitate self-discovery and a return to simplicity through food and routine by taking young people outside their comfort zones and immersing them in a focused, distraction-free outdoor setting. For many participants who have faced complex challenges and trauma, this outdoor experience serves as a regulator and a "healing force."

UK Youth advocates for the principle of 'challenge by choice,' emphasising the importance of providing young people with opportunities to explore the outdoors and embrace challenges on their own terms. They're committed to integrating outdoor learning across all their programmes, recognising its potential to foster personal development and resilience. Success stories from their apprenticeship offers at their New Forest outdoor learning centre, Avon Tyrell, demonstrate the positive impact of outdoor learning on young people's confidence, skills, and wellbeing.

## 1.6 How can Scouts achieve clarity around programme outcomes?

Questions posed to internal young people, staff and volunteers regarding programme outcomes were often met with responses which reflected their opinions on badges and Top Awards, rather than on the outcomes these badges and awards seek to achieve. This indicates that outcomes may often be understood as the equivalent of a badge or award. In reality, badges and awards exist as umbrellas under which Scouts structures activities. Badges and awards also exist to provide proof that activities have been undertaken and as recognition of skills developed.

**This matters because without robust dialogue on desired programme outcomes, programme design practices won't include critical reflection on whether the programmes that Scouts offer young people are providing young people with what they want and need. Additionally, without clarity as to the outcomes a programme is seeking to achieve, it won't be possible to develop and implement robust practices for measuring the impact of our programmes on young people.**

## 2. Structures, systems, principles and processes supporting the delivery of quality provision

### 2.1 What are the opportunities and barriers for delivering Explorer provision?

Through numerous workshops and interviews, volunteers emphasised the critical need for more Explorer leaders and volunteers who have a balanced skill set, 'plan ahead' and have good links to Scout Troops. This could enable skill sharing and support with the promotion of Explorers. A lack of coordination between an Explorer Unit and other provisions within a District, for example local Scout Troops, often results in challenges around transition and recruitment from Scouts into Explorers. Anecdotal evidence from conversations with volunteers has indicated this is also sometimes impacted by Scout Troops retaining their older Scouts for longer than stated in the Policy, Organisation and Rules (POR) documentation.

There are several different transition points for young people on their journey into and through Scouts 14–24 provision, which include several 'pain points' highlighted through this research's online workshops with 43 Explorer and Network volunteers.

As young people grow older, they're more likely to have other conflicting commitments such as school, examinations, sports fixtures, or jobs. This creates a tension within programmes such as Explorers that's often referred to as having elements that are too difficult or take too long to complete. Offering flexibility in attendance was cited as one way in which Explorers might address these challenges.

The National Citizen Service (NCS) recently adapted their provisions by transitioning from seasonal residentials lasting three to four weeks to a year-round offering. NCS explained this shift was motivated by the desire to "put young people in control of their NCS journey". The programme now offers a range of options, including shorter residential experiences, community-based activities, and online learning. This flexibility in delivery serves to extend the reach of NCS, allowing more young people to participate closer to home. The motivation behind these changes was also influenced by reduced government funding, making cost reductions in their provisions necessary. NCS conducted a youth review before the redesign, however they reported this rapid shift meant limited meaningful co-design opportunities with young people.

Explorers can also feel very unfamiliar to Scouts. This experience is compounded for young people living in areas where limited previous relationships or joint activity have occurred between Scout Troop and Explorer Units. A District Explorer Unit is likely to be much further away than the local Scout Troop, due to Explorers being a District-level provision, which may cause travel difficulties and added expense, especially in larger Districts. Friendship groups often play a large role in a young person's decision to stay within Scouts, and the research repeatedly heard that moving to Explorers at a different time to peer groups caused a young person to leave Scouts entirely.

There are also unique barriers to opening new Explorer provisions highlighted through research with Scouts' Growth and Communities team members. The project team heard about confusion around the 'correct' structure of Explorer

Units sitting at a Group or District level. Additionally, a widespread lack of awareness of Explorers and Network and what they offer by both young people, schools, and other youth providers was cited as an additional factor hampering recruitment.

## 2.2 What are the opportunities and barriers for delivering Network provision?

Workshops and interviews with volunteers and Network members highlighted challenges in facilitating a smooth transition between Explorer and Network provisions. Upon turning 18, a young person is legally regarded as an adult. Transition into Network as soon as a young person turns 18 years old supports Scouts' safeguarding practices, by preventing young adults who haven't been through vetting processes (unless they're in another voluntary Scouts role which requires it) from having access to young people who are under 18 years old. This may feel sudden and juxtaposed to other life transitions, such as moving up an academic year, which supports the transition of a peer group all at the same time, and often results in friendship groups within Scouts being split, risking young people becoming isolated from their peers. As a result, many young people may choose not to transition to become Network members.

At Network age, many young people move away for work or further education. New commitments and responsibilities, such as starting full-time work may reduce a young person's free time, leading them to deprioritise leisure activities. Additionally, young people may move away from their 'home Network' to start university. This may result in many Network groups having a critical mass of active members outside of term time, or fading out completely as an active group of members leave the area. While the cost-of-living crisis may be resulting in more young people living at home while attending university, financial pressures are likely to mean that many will be required to spend more time in work when not studying, to supplement their income<sup>xxxii</sup>.

Many global NSOs shared similar challenges in encouraging young people to transition to the 18+ provision:

*"Keeping them motivated to stay in the Scout Movement when they graduate school and / or move because of work or university afterwards is a challenge."*

**Representative from a German NSA**

In response, some NSOs/NSAs have adapted their provision to be more flexible and less linear for this age range. In some, Scouts activities and events occur during the summer, when young people are less likely to be under pressure from school or have returned home. Furthermore, some NSOs/NSAs support members who relocate for studies to stay connected with their original group, receiving ongoing communications and event invitations, able to temporarily join other groups in their new location.

The research saw from successful Network models in the UK that their success may be enabled by clearly defining their aims and creating and maintaining good relationships with Explorer Units, to publicise Network and its activities. Having Network members take on de-facto leadership roles within the Network, driving activities and events, coupled with strong ties to the Scout District to access support around resources and Top Awards, can often enhance success. Filling relevant District volunteer roles with passionate and effective individuals is crucial.

Through research conducted with 450 young people involved in Scouts, queries were raised on the extent to which 'skills for life' were relevant to the age groups covered by Network sections. Many respondents reflected a desire to improve clarity on the purpose of Network to match the young people who are within it, both in programme, delivery, and expectations. Explorers expressed a need for being able to learn and socialise in a laid-back setting due to the high toll experienced in education and life. Meanwhile, Network members raised the gap in potential needs and context between someone aged 18 versus someone approaching their mid-twenties.

Focus groups and interviews conducted with these same youth respondents indicated that many didn't feel there's a well-developed baseline programme for the Network provision, nor a well-known resource in how support should be carried out in the structure of Network in Districts and Counties. Consequently, many saw Network as a high effort, low value provision. Network members also felt that more should be done to improve the function of the provision to act as a 'networking mechanism' for young people. Some expressed interest in developing an online space or hub to connect with other units, people, and spaces, to facilitate being 'part of something bigger'.

Upon reaching 25, another firm cut off forces members out of Network. This can lead to an underwhelming and blunt ending to a young person's Scouts experience, relying on local celebration or recognition to mark this occasion or transition, without formalised or central guidance. The research heard mixed views on the Network upper age limit, both from volunteers and from Scouts staff and their specific areas of work with volunteers.

*"An 18 year old doesn't want to go to a Network with 30 year olds"*

**Network Member**

*"Could Network not have an age limit? We have had more older members want to join Network than younger members"*

**Network Member**

This attitude was reflected across other NSOs/NSAs:

*"We have Rover and Ranger section aged 16 to 25. The age is in big range! We must think to split the section."*

**Representative from Nepal**

The structure, age range and naming of equivalent sections varies across NSOs. Some have maintained branding historically used by the UK Scouts such as 'Senior' and 'Rover Scouts' (discontinued in the UK in 1967) and Venture Scouts (discontinued in the UK in 2002).

## 2.3 Volunteering and establishing new section provision

This research has exposed specific challenges around recruiting volunteers for older Scout sections. Some respondents have cited a perception that volunteers need a higher level of technical skills when working with Explorers Units. Shifting needs among this age group might prompt some leaders to undertake additional training such as Mental Health First Aid, to better equip themselves to support adolescents. Additionally, an increasing emphasis on delivering a 'Youth-Shaped' programme or a need to facilitate the mastery of skills within badges and awards, may leave some volunteers feeling their skills are better suited to younger sections. In contrast, the research heard from two ex-Beavers volunteers, who now lead a growing Explorer provision, who claimed to not have these 'higher level' technical skills. They attributed this success to concentrating on allowing the young people to lead large elements of the programme planning and delivery themselves.

Despite these challenges, current census figures suggest that demand for Explorer provisions, as observed through the number of young people on waiting lists, doesn't currently outstrip supply. Waiting lists for places in Explorer Units are significantly lower as a proportion of the Section membership than other Sections. To grow the Explorer provision, steps must be taken to improve demand among young people while also ensuring that volunteers have the capability, opportunity, and motivation to establish new Explorer Units.

The YLS adds another layer to volunteering within this age range. Some volunteers will take on training and mentoring responsibilities in the delivery and support of Explorers participating in the YLS, and Explorers themselves will start to transition into the volunteering space, while still being a young person participating in the youth programme. Through a survey on the YLS, with 730 respondents, the research heard there's lack of a clear-cut link between the YLS and Adult Volunteer Training, and what Adult Training Advisers can accept as valid experience. Respondents commented the transition between YLS and Adult Training isn't seamless enough.

*"Young leaders are told what they do as a young leader will count towards some of their adult leader training. They get to 18 and then are told sorry that isn't the case and you can't even use anything as a YL towards – HQ fails to give any guidance on this and it needs to be better."*

**YLS survey participant**

In the case of Network, the research heard a desire for the existing Scouts Group Finder to include Networks, or for there to be an expansion to the existing digital systems to allow information sharing to support linking Explorer Units up with Networks. Additionally, Scouts UKHQ resource, sometimes driven by external funding priorities that hinge on

evidence of unmet need, has tended to focus on supporting the opening of younger sections where there are waiting lists of young people seeking provision.

## 2.4 Delivering a youth-shaped provision

Scouts' current Skills for Life strategy designates 'Youth-Shaped' as one of its four focus areas, outlining targets for an increase in young people "influencing what happens in Scouts locally" and "using their skills to run Scouts activities for other young people."<sup>xxxiii</sup>

To support this, Scouts offers the YouShape award for Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, and Explorers, while a Squirrels badge is in development. The award offers programme structure and activities to support young people to achieve these strategic aims. There's no YouShape award on offer for Network members, despite it being designed to be inherently youth-shaped. Scouts' Youth Commissioner roles are solely for Network age young people who hold responsibility for "driving youth shaped Scouts in their local area."<sup>xxxiv</sup>

Scouts measures the extent to which young people have opportunities to engage in youth shaped provision through the Scout Experience Survey. The 2022 Scout Experience Survey<sup>xxxv</sup> saw an increase of up to 65% in young people who reported using their skills to run activities compared to 2021. However, overall this has declined since pre-pandemic levels in 2018, which were 74%. The proportion of adult volunteers who reported that youth participants had used their skills to run Scouts activities was 28%, considerably lower than those reported by young people, indicating a discrepancy in perceptions around what might qualify as a youth-shaped activity.

Similar trends are true for the number of young people who believed their opinions influenced Scouts locally, however much higher numbers of volunteers believed this to be true.

Workshops and conversations with Scouts volunteers at Gilwell Reunion 2023 exposed a general consensus of eagerness towards being 'youth-led', but this was caveated by confusion of what this looks like in practice, or even what the term 'youth-led' meant. Terms such as youth-shaped, youth-led and youth-centred were heard and used interchangeably.

When looking at what volunteers understood by the term 'youth-shaped', the project team heard from one volunteer that "a successful programme is youth-led as much as possible, with leaders supporting Explorers to run programme activities". This statement was further expanded to conclude that a good programme was one "based on what the young people themselves want". This was the first explicit reference made to youth-shaped Scouts resulting in programme activities being selected based on the wants and needs of young people, and while this might be implied through Scouts' strategic aims, clarity in this area would likely be beneficial. When working with members of the 14–24 Project Board and Youth Panel, the team saw calls for better information and training in this space<sup>xxxvi</sup>, lending support to this need.

Several NSOs/NSAs expressed challenges around how to support genuine youth-shaped provision.

*"Young people were not being considered when organising events and one of our new directions is to get young opinions for all events."*

**Representative from Venezuela**

Some young people from other NSOs/NSAs felt their opinions and ideas weren't valued or listened to by leaders and volunteers:

*"It's hard sometimes to spread our ideas and to people accept them"*

**Youth member from an NSA in Portugal**

*"We have a National Assembly to solve problems, but some older people don't like change"*

**Youth member from North Macedonia**

Through consultations with other organisations, the research heard that involving young people in the design of education programmes can be challenging, leading many organisations to rely on their delivery staff or volunteers to advocate for young people's needs, rather than by creating opportunities to hear from young people directly. This is particularly prevalent within network organisations and franchise models as youth workers are viewed as their primary audience. UK Youth acknowledges the need to involve young people more directly and not just as co-designers, but as integral parts of day-to-day operations. WWF identified 'adults not fully understanding how young people think' as a barrier for building effective youth led provision. The Prince's Trust embarked on a significant project in collaboration with its youth insight team to understand how young people perceive themselves and found that once young people reach 15 years old, they no longer perceive themselves as 'young'. NCS conducted a survey involving over 1,000 16–19 year olds to understand their views and interests, revealing both their enthusiasm for contributing to projects and policies and their perception that their voices often go unheard in decision-making processes.

A recent DofE programme update places power back into the hands of young people. While it provides a framework with set categories, it doesn't prescribe specific achievements within each category, except for a commitment to self-improvement. This approach relies on the self-motivation and initiative of the young person. It allows them to take ownership of their personal development journey, fostering independence, and resilience. This programme structure reflects a recognition that young people aren't passive recipients, but active agents in their own growth and development.

### **2.4.1 Co-design and young people**

Many organisations acknowledged and embraced co-design as a fundamental approach to involving young people in decision-making processes. Effective co-design often follows appropriate investment in the young person to prepare them for the process. Youth Scotland acknowledges that preparing young people for involvement in decision-making takes time and resources, but it creates a virtuous cycle where youth engagement and youth-led initiatives enhance further engagement.

The National Trust recognises the importance of providing training and support to young people, particularly in research skills and data analysis, to foster their active participation in programme design, understanding the balance this creates between creative freedom and guidance. They also acknowledge the level of privilege that allows one the freedom to volunteer, and so are exploring ways to diversify their panel by considering financial incentives.

Youth Action NI empowers young people to co-design programmes, ensuring their voices are heard and represented in community decisions and strategic-level planning. They have successfully involved young people in community initiatives, most notably a peace summit which addressed the themes of difference, diversity, and community development in Northern Ireland, with their insights contributing to wider conversations and reports and helping shape the future of their programmes. This is a particularly powerful example of how meaningful co-design can have long-lasting positive impacts on wider society.

### **2.4.2 Mobilising young people and giving them power**

To better embed youth voice at an organisational level, many actively mobilise young people into groups and empower them with a significant voice in decision-making processes. This is exemplified in Youth Ambassador Programmes in various youth organisations, including WWF and DofE, which DofE proudly highlighted as a success within their organisation. Many youth organisations have established Youth Boards, such as Youth Link Scotland where all members are under 26 to ensure that young people have a prominent role in shaping organisational strategies and decisions. Youth Scotland sets a standard for best practices in harnessing youth voice on a national level. They involve their members in consultations, conduct focus groups with young people, and collaborate with the Scottish Youth Parliament, working to increase diversity and representation among their board members. Across these organisations, young people aren't just mobilised into groups, but given the power to influence and make decisions that impact their lives and communities.

## 2.5 The role of technology and digital

As good practice, organisations identified having a strong digital offering as a key method of engaging with current and future young people. One organisation offering targeted programmes for the LGBTQIA+ community uses digital tools, such as Padlet, to give clarity to their programme and its opportunities. This inclusive approach allows young people to plan their participation around their other life commitments, recognising the value of flexibility and convenience.

The Prince's Trust redesigned its education hub to improve user experience and update resources. They have also adopted innovative methods like 'game-based' surveys to gather feedback from young people. Youth organisations use digital tools to connect young people and create a sense of community. The Pendragon Project, for example, runs an Alumni Network through WhatsApp to help participants build and maintain connections, recognising that email may not be the best way to engage young people.

Poor or ineffective digital offerings can make the organisation harder for participants to reach or safely engage with. The Prince's Trust acknowledge limitations in their current digital offerings such as the way their programme offer is presented digitally can be confusing for young people. UK Youth responded to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic by developing a guide for Digital Youth Work in 2020.<sup>xxxvii</sup> This guide highlights the complexities of the digital landscape, emphasising the importance of managing risks, obtaining consent, and prioritising safeguarding while delivering youth work online. While the digital divide is slowly closing, digital disparities and exclusion as a result of socio-economic status will present some additional barriers, which should be addressed when designing digital provisions.

Consultation with NSOs/NSAs demonstrated how technology was also seen as an opportunity. The 'normalisation' of online video conferencing and other technologies advanced by the COVID-19 pandemic and national lockdowns have helped to create more flexibility in the way that programmes can be delivered, making it easier for young people and volunteers to connect, not just in their local area, but across the country, and internationally.

## 3. Programme design and delivery is inclusive, and facilitates the participation of all young people in 14–24 provision

Inclusion stands as one of the four pillars of the movement's 'Skills for Life' strategy (2018 - 2025)<sup>xxxiii</sup>. It states: 'We believe it's a priority to reflect the diversity of the communities we are in.' Young people, both internal and external to Scouts, engaged through focus groups led by the 14–24 Youth Panel emphasised the importance of making Scouts inclusive for individuals of all skill levels, backgrounds, and abilities.

### 3.1 Headlines from UK EDI Scout data

This research has used Scout Census data to frame the current headlines relating to diversity within Scouts, due to an absence of this data at Explorer and Network Section levels. This data provides important context to understand the cycle of cause and effect which leads to a lack of diversity across the full spectrum of protected characteristics within Scouts, an area which the organisation is investing significant resource to address through its EDI Programme of Work. While Scouts is doing better in certain areas, such as disability and LGBTQIA+ inclusion, there's still much to do to ensure fully inclusive growth through recruitment into Explorer and Network sections.

- Recent data from an internal EDI review demonstrated **ethnic and racial representation at a Scouts County level sits far below the equivalent proportional representation of the local population**. Data is unavailable to break down these figures by Section, therefore this research assumes levels of racial and ethnic diversity are consistent across all Sections including Explorer and Network.
- Scouts' figures on **youth and adult member religions aren't comparable to national statistics** due to the high number of respondents choosing "prefer not to say". However, 2023 census figures indicate likely underrepresentation of most religions outside of "Christianity" and "no religion".
- Census data shows there's **uneven gender distribution across senior or line management volunteer positions, which are still male dominated**. Roles that are stereotypically labelled as more 'feminine' such as secretarial

and administrative roles are extremely female dominated.

- There's an **uneven gender split of young people which currently sits at approximately 3:1 male to female**. This is likely due to several factors including historic perceptions, recruitment into Girlguiding, time-lag from accepting female youth members and a lack of female representation at a senior volunteer level.
- Scouts Census 2023<sup>xxxiii</sup> shows that **23.4% of young people and 33% of adults within Scouts report some form of disability**. This is very closely representative of the wider UK population at 24% of the total population.<sup>xxxviii</sup>
- Scouts currently doesn't hold any data on LGBTQIA+ representation and this has been identified as one area the Scouts EDI Programme of Work are looking to improve.

## 3.2 Barriers to inclusion

### 3.2.1 Accessibility barriers

Many young people face barriers that makes Scout provisions inaccessible to them. For example, young people with English as an additional language, such as refugees, may struggle to fully participate due to language barriers.

Some young people may not be able to participate in overnight events, and care-experienced young people may require additional adult support at meetings and events. Staff working at a children's care home explained how the young people they work with may find it harder than other young people to feel "safe and familiar in the environment," and that "having someone familiar around helps this." Consideration should be taken to ensure young people have encouragement and support from trusted adults in their lives throughout their first few weeks of attending a youth provision and to explore their options.

In addition, young people with disabilities, both physical and invisible, may encounter challenges when they lack necessary accessibility information. This lack of information can make it difficult for them to feel confident about attending Scout provisions. When looking at research which explored disabled students' experiences of university, young people identified "one of the key problems that we have is that none of our societies in the whole university, all 600 of them, provide disability information. So, we don't know if we can go."<sup>xxxix</sup>

### 3.2.2 Financial barriers

Finance was identified as a common barrier for young people wanting to access youth provisions. Although the research showed limited first-hand information on the personal financial challenges of young people being unable to join youth provisions, the topic was raised in many of the conversations had with young people about their peers. The personal nature of the topic of finance is likely to explain why young people weren't revealing that this was a direct barrier for them, but they'd talk passionately about it being a barrier for other young people. Young people have shown a clear understanding of the different financial positions peers can be in:

*"The costs for joining Scouts can be a bit much, and it's not doable for everyone,"*

**Young person, Focus Group by the 14–24 Youth Panel**

*"I wish it was more affordable."*

**Young person, Focus Group by the 14–24 Youth Panel**

Young people who travel long distances to reach District level Scout provisions face additional financial barriers. Other young people who may need to work to support themselves through further study or while living away from home for the first time may struggle to justify the personal time spent engaging in extracurricular activities when they could be working. Research from NCVO has indicated that similar barriers also exist for those who might otherwise consider volunteering.<sup>xi</sup>

For young people from lower socio-economic backgrounds the financial barriers are exacerbated. Care experienced young people, who are classed as no longer being within the care system upon turning 18, become fully dependant on their own income. Professionals within this sector explained this is often the “first time [young people] have financial independence” with “access to their own money, £60 per week, compared to much more money in a children’s home.” Some young carers and young adult carers are also more heavily impacted by their financial situation than before, with “56% saying that the cost-of-living crisis is either ‘always’ or ‘usually’ affecting them and their family.”<sup>xli</sup>

### 3.2.3 Time barriers

Another common barrier was a lack of time to invest in attending a youth provision. This, in a similar way to financial challenges, affects young people differently depending on their personal circumstances.

For example, young people who have caring roles are extremely low on time with “40% of young carers and young adult carers saying that caring ‘always’ or ‘usually’ affects how much time they can spend with their friends.”<sup>xli</sup> There’s also a general disparity in the amount of free time between men and women with data from the Office for National Statistics showing that “men in the 16-to-24-year-old age group took on average 6 hours and 27 minutes of leisure time per day compared to an average of 5 hours and 28 minutes for women in this age group.”<sup>xlii</sup> This is supported by data from the 14–24 Youth Panel’s survey showing that 63.45% of young people would prefer to join a club or group that’s flexible.<sup>xliii</sup>

### 3.2.4 Perception

Perception is an important determinant of diversity within Scouts. This emerged particularly powerfully through conversations surrounding barriers that young people with non-white racialised identities are likely to encounter when considering joining Scouts. Poor representation and potentially alienating cultural signifiers were identified as indicators to young people from non-white communities that Scouts isn’t a space for them. More discussion and evidence regarding the relationship between perception and diversity is discussed in the following chapter.

### 3.2.5 Variability of knowledge and experience among volunteers

Scouts is reliant on over 140,000 volunteers delivering large scale provision across the UK. In some cases, leaders may not be adequately prepared to support young people from underserved backgrounds or those with specific needs. This lack of preparation may stem from inadequate training and a lack of understanding about topics like bias, privilege, micro-aggressions, or making reasonable adjustments. Given the continued existence of prejudiced and divisive attitudes held within parts of UK society, a minority of Scouts volunteers may hold prejudiced or discriminatory attitudes, which can hinder their ability to create inclusive and supportive environments for all young people.

The mental health of young people is of increasing concern. Generation Z, those born between 1996 and 2010, reported poorer mental health compared to other generations.<sup>xix</sup> Recognising the link between leader expertise and the ability to reach and support young people, appropriate training becomes crucial. Well-trained staff are better equipped to understand and implement policies and procedures, fostering a consistent and safe environment. Specialised training on topics such as supporting SEND young people and promoting LGBTQIA+ inclusion enables staff to create inclusive spaces and tailor programmes to meet diverse needs effectively. To support volunteers in a Scouts context, staff will also need rigorous EDI training.

In contrast to Scouts, external youth organisations often have paid delivery staff and accreditation systems in place to ensure the training of delivery staff and the inclusivity of the meeting place, and many are delivering on a much smaller scale than Scouts. Access to well-trained staff and safe environments enhances young people’s trust and engagement in the programmes offered. The evolving landscape of youth engagement is closely linked to young people advocating for the disruption of systemic inequalities, such as systemic racism. If leaders fail to grasp the importance and sensitivity surrounding these issues, young people may not perceive Scout provisions as capable of serving them and their values effectively. Therefore, an informed and culturally sensitive leadership approach is essential to address these issues and meet the needs of diverse young people.

Five focus groups with young people living with mental health conditions, conducted by the 14–24 Youth Panel, highlighted the importance of therapy services, patience, and understanding from adults and peers. They emphasised the need for informed adults who could offer guidance and support. They also desired access to talk to someone trained and a space where they could calm down when feeling overwhelmed. Being treated equally, with open-mindedness and kindness, was regarded as crucial. Additionally, young people with disabilities highlighted how it's vital volunteers and youth workers possess awareness about their condition and its symptoms to ensure proper understanding and support.

### 3.3 Overcoming these challenges and extending reach

Youth organisations employ various strategies to extend the reach of their provisions and services, ensuring accessibility and inclusivity. NCS has restructured its offerings to be available throughout the year and closer to participants' homes. This adjustment considers the challenges posed by logistics, travel, and accommodating existing commitments, offering multiple sign-up opportunities to allow for flexible participation. Youth Scotland and Youth Link Scotland have taken steps to rewrite guidance and policies to promote an equitable approach, recognising that some groups may require additional support and resources to overcome barriers effectively. The importance of being open and transparent about the additional support available was highlighted by Youth Action NI as they experience parents and young people not communicating their additional needs due to a fear that they might be treated differently.

Many youth organisations have established referral pathways, leveraging community interventions such as job centres, local councils, and youth workers to connect with young people. The Prince's Trust, Jamie's Farm, and The Pendragon Project, among others, have embraced this approach, in an attempt to make it easier for young people to access their services. Ensuring diversity among delivery staff, mentors, and volunteers is another key strategy which may help young people from various backgrounds feel that these programmes are inclusive and welcoming spaces.

Place-based strategy is used by many organisations to extend reach, such as The Prince's Trust who are focusing on reaching areas categorised within the top three Indexes of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). On the other hand, The Pendragon Project's broad application criteria of "young people experiencing complex transitions to adulthood" also helps them extend reach by engaging with young people beyond fixed definitions of being disadvantaged. Youth organisations also utilise youth social action to extend their reach. For instance, young people from Youth Action NI organised a Pride breakfast to highlight LGBTQIA+ communities in rural areas, demonstrating the power of targeted events. Providing hot food and covering transport costs to provisions was highlighted by many as a way of extending reach and securing engagement.

#### 3.3.1 Targeted programmes

The project team spoke with a youth organisation that offers a targeted programme dedicated to supporting young people who identify as members of the LGBTQIA+ community. Their success is measured by the fact that young people who benefit from their services ultimately no longer require them, and approximately one-third of their service user's then return to work for the organisation. They emphasise personalised one-to-one support, where support workers help young people identify their personal interests and engage in relevant experiences.

Their approach is guided by a simple principle: "Just ask the young people what they need." Often, the answer is straightforward – they seek safety, a sense of belonging, joy, connections, and the opportunity to learn and grow. The organisation provides a safe space where LGBTQIA+ individuals can feel secure knowing they've properly trained staff and has established policies against harassment and bullying.

#### 3.3.2 The value of flexibility

Many youth organisations recognised the importance of embedding flexibility into the design and delivery of their programmes to ensure accessibility and inclusivity. Youth Action NI highlighted the nuances of political and religious tensions and demonstrates flexibility in choosing meeting places that accommodate these factors. Similarly, the DofE programme adopts an outcome-led approach, emphasising flexibility to increase accessibility. They believe that flexibility doesn't limit possibilities; instead, it broadens opportunities for more people to participate. By establishing a

baseline of requirements under general themes (skill, volunteering, physical and then a supervised expedition), DofE opens the door to greater flexibility beyond these initial parameters.

Through five focus groups with young people from marginalised communities, conducted by the 14–24 Youth Panel, participants highlighted the importance of flexibility in activities, understanding, patience, and the option for breaks as necessary things to accommodate their individual needs.

### **3.3.3 Collaborating with and improving support systems for young people**

Many youth organisations actively collaborate with and enhance wider support systems to ensure their provisions become more inclusive and accessible to young people. Often, this support starts at home. Beams Family Services recognises the significance of “parental buy in.” They provide support to families through building networks with like-minded parents and offer a family advice service, becoming a crucial resource for families following a medical diagnosis. This ranges from administrative support to providing direct payments to both families and young people along with care packages. However, The Pendragon Project acknowledges that the success of liaising with support workers and wider support systems can be challenging and variable, particularly when trying to assist young people in accessing provisions. Centralised youth services find it particularly challenging to maintain these levels of engagement with young people due to the impact of underfunding. As a result of statutory services being under-resourced they often approach young people's needs from a deficit and mandatory engagement model. This research has indicated that the key to high quality youth work is a strengths-based, non-mandatory model.

### **3.3.4 Understanding the local context**

The project team heard from volunteers about the importance of understanding local realities when setting targets around inclusivity, and the challenging nature of UK wide goals and targets. For example, leaders in Northern Ireland faced challenges to match the UK wide goals for racial diversity, despite the Northern Ireland population consisting of 96.6% people with a white ethnic group<sup>xliv</sup>, much higher than the figure for England and Wales of 82%.<sup>xlv</sup> However, their local provision was able to facilitate inclusion, which was representative of a range of religious and political identities of the young people within their communities, something which wouldn't necessarily have been picked up by national inclusion targets, but something which is likely to have a significant positive impact on the experience of being a young person living in Northern Ireland.

Understanding the unique needs and sensitivities of different nations is paramount when designing and delivering inclusive and accessible youth provisions. Organisations like DofE have recognised the importance of tailoring their offerings to meet the specific requirements of different regions. In Wales, they've developed Welsh language materials to ensure accessibility and inclusivity for Welsh-speaking young people.

## **4. Improved awareness and perception of 14–24 Scout provision, both internally and externally**

Recent polling undertaken by YouGov on behalf of Scouts demonstrates high levels of awareness of Scouts, with 98% of Gen X and Baby Boomers reporting awareness of the organisation, decreasing to 79% among Millennials. Levels of popularity, measured by how many respondents stated they 'liked' Scouts, were lower than levels of awareness, with 51% of Millennials saying they liked Scouts, rising to 63% among Baby Boomers. The data from YouGov suggests that both awareness and popularity of Scouts decreases with age. Additional polling undertaken by YouGov in 2021 showed that 36% of 14–18-year-olds believed Scouts played a relevant part in society, rising to 43% for 19–24-year-olds.

Awareness and perception of both Scouts and its 14–24 provision will be fundamental in influencing the growth of the membership within Explorer and Network provisions. While other more positive data from YouGov suggests an appreciation among young people aged 14–28 of the skills that Scouts might provide them with, the above polling from YouGov indicates

that a high proportion of young people don't feel that Scouts is relevant. Research undertaken by the 14–24 programme sought to shed some further light on why this might be the case.

## 4.1 Awareness of 14–24 Scout provision

A survey with 800 external young people, conducted by the 14–24 programme's Youth Panel, explored levels of awareness of Scouts 14–24 provision. Awareness of the provision available in respondents' local areas was relatively low, with only 14% being aware of them. Awareness of Scout opportunities for 14-17-year-olds and 18-25-year-olds was even lower at 8% and 4%, respectively. Additionally, only 12% of respondents were aware of some of the activities Scouts do in their programmes. Consideration of joining Scouts and having friends in Scouts stood at 9% and 11%, respectively.

Respondents demonstrated limited knowledge of Scout age groups. For Explorers (14-17), 65% had little or no understanding, with only 5% claiming to know a lot. Likewise, regarding Network (18-24), 80% lacked knowledge, and only 2% felt well-informed. These results underscore a prevailing lack of awareness among respondents about these age provisions at Scouts.

Participants were also presented with a request to 'summarise what you think Explorer Scouts is all about'. "Exploring" and "I don't know" were mentioned the most frequently, with 44 and 25 mentions respectively. Other frequent responses included "skills", "learning", "camping" and "activities" with around 20 mentions each. When asked the same question regarding Network, "I don't know" was by far the most frequent response with 77 mentions, "activities" was the second most common response, but with only 8 mentions.

When provided with additional information about the provisions, respondents' willingness to consider joining Scouts varied. Approximately 23% expressed a positive inclination, while 30.69% firmly declined, with a substantial portion (24%) indicating they'd require more details before making a decision, and 23% remained uncertain.

Similar challenges relating to awareness were expressed by other NSOs and NSAs:

*"There's an inadequate understanding of what Scouts is about versus a growing range of other activities."*

**Representative from Poland**

Throughout other research conducted with young people and adults external to the movement, there was a significant lack of awareness of Explorers and Network. During one workshop with approximately 30 participants, two had heard of Explorers and none had heard of Network.

Self-led research activities with current Scouts and Explorers revealed that "lots of young people didn't know what Network was" or that they "think Network is Explorers for old people". This lack of awareness of Network and its purpose mirrors similar narratives found through other areas of research and likely contributed to a reported disinterest in Network from current Scouts and Explorers.

This wasn't universal however, and the project team heard that while there was a "general lack of knowledge of what to expect", lots of internal young people were excited for new opportunities in the older sections and held expectations of being more self-led and involving larger scale or international activities. While many young people were unsure whether they would continue into the older sections, they said they were far more likely to do so if they could do it with their friends.

## 4.2 Perceptions of 14–24 Scout provision

### 4.2.1 'White and traditional': How do culture and diversity influence perception?

Data from the 'Diversifying Scout Membership' Report, published by The Unmistakables in May 2023, supported the first-hand insights that this research found, stating that "Scouts remains unfamiliar" to those from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds. One participant taking part in The Unmistakables research explained that they "would feel like an

outsider in those places (Scouts) as a dark skin African girl.”<sup>xlvi</sup> This was supported by statements from young people from the charity City Year UK:

*“All looks a bit white”.*

**Young person, City Year UK Workshop**

To improve awareness and perceptions, young people from the workshop with City Year UK recommended that Scouts should have “diverse representation across leadership in groups”, aligning with Scouts’ strategic objective of ensuring that 5% of leaders come from Black, Asian or minority ethnic backgrounds. Participants in The Unmistakables research “appreciated representative ambassadors with shared lived experiences” and “would like to see more stories of people that look like them and that they can relate to within Scouts.”<sup>xlvi</sup>

Some cultural elements within Scouts may be alienating or even harmful to racialized communities. The research identified that events like St George’s Day, where Scouts commonly parade in uniform in public spaces, were recognised by a parent of a member to potentially be a barrier to other communities (non-white) to want to get into Scouts.

*“My children were part of Scout Troops in a white working-class area. For the leaders, the St George’s Day Parade was a huge event that would go ahead come hell or high water. They had no sympathy that a St George’s Day parade would present a barrier to other communities to want to get into Scouts.”*

**Parent of Ex-Scout**

The Uniform Review undertaken by Populus in 2019<sup>xlvii</sup>, explained that Scouts are more likely to wear uniform when attending these formal, community events compared to when taking part in group sessions or camps. This might result in the general public getting an unrepresentative impression of what Scouts looks like due to groups displaying different behaviours when in these spaces. The research found that Scouts is perceived to be “one of the more traditional out-of-school activities,” reinforced by the uniform. Many external participants of the Uniform Review associated the uniform with ‘tradition’, with some finding that the uniform reminds them of military or regimented organisations.

Research undertaken by the 14–24 Youth Panel with young people both internal and external to Scouts found that for non-Scout members, uniform felt very ‘school’ and ‘academic’ rather than ‘youth friendly’. For members already in Scouts, they felt the main uniform was formal enough for annual events and parades, but too formal for weekly meetings. Reflecting this, most groups wear their local branded tops and hoodies during their group meetings. It was suggested there should be less pressure of uniform being used for weekly meetings, allowing accessibility and a sense of self-identity. The term ‘branded clothing’ was more appreciated along with more informal items such as T-shirts, polos, and hoodies.

Perceptions of uniform being aligned with a more antiquated and traditional version of Scouts were reflected in the words of one respondent who expressed what they’d want from a youth provision in the future:

*“No uniform. A group more specific to my age range. A more relaxing and flexible setting (less structured), led by people who are nearer to my age and therefore more capable of relating to me.”*

**External young person, 14–24 Youth Panel focus group**

Young people also explained that their perceptions of Scouts stemmed partly from the places they see in their communities. One young person from the workshop with City Year UK spoke about how their local group met near the Catholic Church in a “dilapidated” building, so their impression of the organisation stemmed from what they saw; that it was old-fashioned and related to Christianity.

Similar views were expressed by representatives of NSOs/NSAs across the global Scout movement, who shared interpretations of what external audiences might associate with Scouts in their national context:

*“It’s only extreme cases, but people might think that we are right-wing extremists and that we are royalists.”*

**Representative of a French NSA**

*“As a Catholic Scout, people think we live by the church and devote all of our Scout time to the church, others know we do a lot of community service.”*

**Representative from a Portuguese NSA**

*“Gets compared to another youth organisation “Jaunsargi” which is a government funded military training organisation for teens and young adults.”*

**Representative from the Latvian NSO**

Consultations with some external youth organisations drew these perceptions out further. These reflections, while not representing the views of external youth organisations as a whole, are important to consider as these sector professionals act as decision makers and hold power in the sector. These perceptions have the potential to influence how much cross-sector support and exposure they’re willing to share with Scouts and may influence youth workers not considering Scouts to be an appropriate provision to signpost young people to.

Some perceived the organisation as being primarily for children and for boys, with little awareness of existing 14–24 provisions, and some were still under the impression that women weren’t allowed to join the membership. Additionally, numerous respondents saw Scouts as an organisation that served young people from middle-class backgrounds and areas, and associated the organisation with the royal family, possibly due to historical ties or specific recent events. Some viewed it as a relatively rigid organisation with a formulaic programme and a sense of uniformity, which in addition to the persisting perceptions of what Scouts represents, this may feel exclusive to certain social groups.

#### **4.2.2 ‘Rural and for children’: How do age and geography influence perception?**

In consultation conducted by the 14–24 Youth Panel with young people external to Scouts, some respondents questioned the relevance of Scouts for the 18+ age group, perceiving it as potentially suitable only for younger children and not as a meaningful activity for their age range. Fear of peer judgment was cited as a significant barrier. Some potential members worried about what their friends might think if they joined Scouts, perceiving it as potentially uncool. Some participants expressed hesitation about joining Scouts because they lacked knowledge about what Scouts activities entail and didn’t see peers of their age involved in it. They required more information to consider joining. Not all young people felt this way though, with some young people reflecting on how Scouts appealed to them because it aligned with their own hobbies and preferences.

A schoolteacher, when asked if they’d heard of Scouts, Explorers and Network replied with “I think Scouts goes up to 18, right? I’ve never heard of Explorers and Network.” One could assume that this perception is linked to the brand of ‘Scouts’ having better recognition with more public awareness of the work with younger sections than older sections.

A perceived lack of promotion of city-based or urban groups may be a reason for why many young people have the perception of Scouts being for those who have access to green spaces and/or live in rural areas.

*“I live in the city, and work there, so I imagine there wouldn’t be Scouts here.”*

**Young person, 14–24 Youth Panel Survey**

#### **4.2.3 Knots and fires: How do ideas about skill relevance influence perception?**

Numerous external young people and organisations focused on Scouts’ emphasis on providing young people with practical skills. The skills associated with Scouts by young people from a City Year UK workshop included both the more traditional Scout skills like “knots” and “orienteeing” and more general “life skills.” The idea that the programme enables “progression” and is delivered in an “interactive” way was also recognised by these young people.

In workshops, young people could confidently attribute more of the traditional items, skills and values to Scouts than the varied programme that’s now on offer. Young people explained that Scouts to them meant “gaining badges,” “uniform,” “camping,” and the “outdoors.” They also gave a mix of attitudes towards Scouts from very positive attributes like “giving back” and “fun” to more negative ones like “discipline” and “lame.”

Reflections from other NSOs/NSAs mirrored this perception of Scouts being associated with more traditional activities.

*“Run around the wood hitting each other with sticks.”*

**Representative from an NSA in Denmark**

*“They think we are hardcore nature people.”*

**Representative from the Lithuanian NSO**

#### **4.2.4 How does peer and familial support influence perception?**

Research by the 14–24 Youth Panel with external young people found that in some cases, parental opinions played a role in discouraging participation in Scouts. Lack of exposure to Scouts during childhood contributed to this disinterest. Young people from economically disadvantaged backgrounds may lack this support network, making it less likely for them to participate in a Scout provision.

*“My parents aren't really into the idea of Scouts, I never grew up with it so I guess it just never crossed my mind as a possibility,” and that “mum thought I'd get bullied.”*

**Young person, City Year UK Workshop**

During a workshop with DofE Award ambassadors, many participants highlighted their friends and families: “peers,” “Mum (my biggest supporter)” and “my sister,” as the main factors that motivated them to undertake the award. However, as one might expect, not having support from friends and family put some young people off joining a youth provision.

*“I kinda wanna join Scouts, but I'm afraid of what my friends would think,”*

**Young person, 14–24 Youth Panel Survey**

*“None of my friends or family are really into Scouts, so I don't get much support or encouragement.”*

**Young person, 14–24 Youth Panel Survey**

# 5. Recommendations

## 5.1 14–24 Re-design North Star

The 'North Star' statement below is an unwavering, long-term vision for the full 14–24 programme and what it aims to achieve in the future. It's intended to provide direction and inspiration to all involved in shaping and delivering future 14–24 provision, ensuring designs and decisions are intentional and meaningful:

*All young people aged 14+ need new skills, support and opportunities to help facilitate their transition into adulthood. This will be especially true in 2024 and beyond as economic, technological and societal changes combine to create new and complex challenges that young people need to navigate. Among them, many young people face additional barriers to accessing skills, support and opportunities resulting in unequal outcomes and increased inequalities.*

*A new 14–24 provision will combine a fun, relevant and impactful programme offer with a delivery model that is flexible and responds to the changing needs of young people as they approach and enter adulthood. The programme will work to widen participation in Scouts by actively removing barriers that prevent some young people, particularly those from underserved backgrounds, from accessing and benefitting from being in Scouts. This will be enabled, in part, by making the delivery of 14+ provision easier, more attractive, sociable and timely for new and existing volunteers. All these changes will be used to build an even stronger identity for Scouts 14–24 provision, encouraging more young people to join and stay in Scouts.*

*As a result, many more young people aged 14–24, including those from underserved communities will gain skills for life, and achieve positive outcomes for their own lives and the lives of their communities.*

## 5.2 Cross-cutting objectives and recommendations

To achieve the North Star, this research has defined four 'cross-cutting objectives for all of 14–24 Scouts provision'<sup>4</sup>. Indicators for success will be defined in due course:

1. **Fun and impactful programme:** Young people aged 14–24 are achieving skills for life through a quality programme.
2. **Flexible delivery:** Structures, systems, principles and processes support the delivery of a quality provision for 14–24-year-olds.
3. **Widening participation:** Programme design and delivery is inclusive and facilitates the participation of all young people in 14–24 provision.
4. **Stronger identity:** Improved awareness and perception of 14–24 Scout provision, both internally and externally.

Redesign for both Explorer level provision (14–18) and Network level provision (18+) will respond to recommendations which cut across all four of these objectives. These recommendations have come from analysis of the projects' Discovery Phase findings. **To determine their efficacy, these recommendations must undergo further development and a period of shortlisting, testing and piloting through the subsequent stages of the 14–24 Redesign Programme, in collaboration with young people.** A thorough prototyping and piloting process is the only way in which certainty can be achieved about the effectiveness of these interventions in achieving desired programme objectives.

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<sup>4</sup> Each objective can also be broken down into sub-level outcomes. For a clearer view of the relationship between objectives and sub-level programme outcomes please see Annex A Design Approach Theory of Change.

The design and piloting of these recommendations will be led by the 14–24 Redesign team. While collaboration with other teams will support the achievement of these objectives, the impacts of these recommendations will be most felt within the parameters of a new 14–24 design.

Overall, this research has indicated the current provision for 14–24 is no longer based on sound and established principles of quality programme design. Addressing this by ensuring the technical knowledge, skills and experience of the 14–24 Programme Design Team is effectively deployed in collaboration with a broad group of engaged stakeholders, will have the single biggest impact on the quality of the final redesigns.

*For organisational enablers which will support the delivery of the new 14–24 programme, but reach beyond the remit of the 14–24 Programme Design Team, please see section 5.6.*

## 5.3 Recommendations: Explorer level provision (14-18)

While the research saw numerous examples of the effective implementation of Explorers, it also identified obstacles to Districts successfully delivering Explorers in its current form and found the Explorer programme isn't currently meeting the needs of all young people aged 14-18. Learnings taken from engagement across the sector and a review of generational trends have highlighted numerous opportunities to refresh and strengthen the Explorer provision to better meet the needs of young people without entirely removing the essences of this provision that have contributed to its success in some areas.

Additionally, the research saw no evidence to suggest the age parameters for this provision weren't appropriate.

**Therefore, the recommendation of this report is that Scouts continues to offer a single provision for young people aged between the ages of 14 and 18.**

The following recommendations have therefore been developed in response to the evidence collected.

### 1. Explorers: Fun and impactful programme

#### E1.1 Embed three new high-level programme outcomes in 14-18 provision, including through badges and awards.

To better respond to the needs of young people aged 14-18, three high-level programme outcomes have been identified. These outcomes should form the bedrock of future programme design and delivery. Young people will seek to achieve these through the design of badges and awards for Explorer level provision.

These outcomes are:

- **Outcome 1:** Young people (aged 14–24) are equipped with the **transferable skills** they need to navigate their lives and build fulfilling futures for themselves.
- **Outcome 2:** Young people (aged 14–24) have developed the competencies and have access to the support structures they need to build and maintain **good mental health and wellbeing**.
- **Outcome 3:** Young people (aged 14–24) **collaborate in and initiate decision-making** which has a positive impact on their own lives, their communities' lives, and their lived environment.

These outcomes have been identified to respond to the findings of this research, while aligning with the outcomes in the current Scout theory of change.

#### E1.2 Define and scaffold the transferable skills that young people aged 14-18 need to develop

The skills that young people need to demonstrate to meet Outcome 1 above should be identified and rigorously defined. Then, corresponding levels at which these skills could be demonstrated by young people aged 14-18 should be drawn out, establishing a framework through which young people can grow their competencies. This might be through an

existing skill framework, such as the one created by the Skills Builder Partnership<sup>xlviii</sup>, or through the development of a new one.

### E1.3 Strengthen Community Impact to achieve outcomes for young people

A renewed focus on high quality 14-18 Community Impact programme components should act as one vehicle for achieving the above outcomes for young people aged 14-18. This includes strengthening transferable skills and fostering greater support mechanisms between young people and their communities, additionally:

- **Community Impact initiatives should be identified and led by young people.** Guidance and resources should be provided to volunteers, so they're better equipped to support this.
- **Language that the movement uses should include the term 'youth social action'.** This will place greater emphasis on the agency of young people aged 14-18 to drive impact in their communities and broaden understanding of Community Impact activity as something beyond volunteering.
- **Encouragement and support should be given to Community Impact initiatives that operate at a grassroots level** to support community cohesion and improve the profile of Explorer Scouts. This in turn will positively impact growth, youth outcomes and inclusion in the 14-18 Scout provision.

### E1.4 Build on Scouts' track record in outdoor learning

The youth sector has a strong and evolving evidence base for the importance of outdoor learning in child and youth development. The future Explorer provision should leverage Scouts' organisational niche in outdoor education and adventurous activity to develop and strengthen a core methodology for supporting skill development and wellbeing through the outdoors; building further evidence of the relationship as proof of concept.

### E1.5 Iterate and expand the Young Leaders' Scheme

While the Young Leaders' Scheme is viewed positively, there are several ways the scheme could be strengthened to ensure its relevance and ability to achieve outcomes for young people:

- Address the gap between training and skills achieved within the Young Leaders' Scheme and the mandatory training for adult volunteers. Young Leaders' Scheme training should prepare participants for adult leadership roles, and this should be transferable as they then progress into adult roles.
- Improve understanding of the motivations of young people who join the scheme and the influence this has on them completing the award in full.
- Devise ways to increase the awareness and effective engagement of Section leaders in the Young Leaders' Scheme and young people participating.
- Refine the modules, missions, and wider remit of the scheme so it meets the desired outcomes for young people, beyond mobilising them to become adult volunteers in the future.

### E1.6 Make it fun

14-24 provision should be a place where young people can have fun, defined as 'enjoyment, amusement, and light-hearted pleasure'. Achievement of other programme recommendations should never be at the expense of ensuring an enjoyable experience for young people.

## 2. Explorers: Flexible delivery

### E2.1 Strengthen transitions between Scouts and Explorers

Improve activities, sign-posting and information sharing which supports the transition of young people from the Scouts section into Explorer level provision. This could in part be addressed by improving the systems which manage and support relationships between Sections, Groups and Districts.

## **E2.2 District level Explorers governance with flexible delivery**

Explorers should always be governed at a District level. However, the delivery of the provision should be flexible allowing for implementation at District or Group level, depending on local needs and context. Groups should be afforded the autonomy to make this decision, and this should be reflected in POR. This recommendation comes in response to many Explorer Units already being delivered, unofficially, in this way. Improved clarity and support should be provided by UKHQ to 14–24 District Teams, so they're better equipped to enable the smooth set up and running of Explorer Units.

## **E2.3 Youth-led options and choice**

Provisions should be structured in a way which enables young people to initiate and drive decision-making if they choose to, but also allows them to engage solely as a beneficiary of that decision making when this is their preference. 14-18 design and delivery should allow young people to select their chosen level of leadership engagement.

## **E2.4 Address barriers preventing volunteers from becoming Explorer leaders or setting up new Explorer Units**

Work with the Growth and Communities Team and volunteers to design behaviour change interventions that improve the capability, opportunity and motivation of volunteers to set up new Explorer provisions and recruit new Explorer leaders. This may provide a further opportunity to leverage the £5.8 million funding secured by the Growth and Communities Team from the Department for Media, Culture and Sport<sup>5</sup>.

## **E2.5 Work closely with new 14–24 District Teams**

Work with 14–24 District Teams as a platform for developing and sharing good practice for 'youth-shaped' programme provision. Provide training and support for volunteers in these roles for supporting leaders with themes such as establishing new Explorer provision and facilitation of young people from older age-brackets.

# **3. Explorers: Widening Participation**

## **E3.1 Make Explorer level badges more achievable and obtainable**

Explorer badges are currently difficult and time consuming to achieve and many come with a considerable cost to the young person. Undertaking a review of badge and award requirements in 14-18 provision followed by steps to simplify the requirements should make them more achievable and obtainable for young people. Aligning the badges with Programme Outcomes and shifting away from a focus on achieving a list of rigid outputs could help to achieve this.

## **E3.2 Prioritise flexibility in how the provision is delivered to 14-18 year olds**

From the age of 14, many young people's lives shift to incorporate new responsibilities and freedoms, including through exams, part-time employment and new autonomy over their social lives with peers.

Explorer provision must be structured in a way that responds to young people's priorities, responsibilities, and transition points between the ages of 14-18. This may include building in conscious flexibility around attendance, as well as establishing pathways for young people to re-enter Explorers if they need to step away for a period.

## **E3.3 Collaborate and partner to widen the participation of underserved communities in Explorers**

To improve the inclusivity of Explorer provision and to reach more young people who may not currently be benefitting from participating in it, local and national partnerships should be sought with organisations who have expertise in

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<sup>5</sup> This funding provides grants of up to £3,500 to support with setting up new Explorer Units until March 2025.

targeted youth work. Structured collaboration with these organisations will provide pathways and support systems which will enable more young people to access and benefit from participating in Explorers. There's also potential for targeted youth organisations to offer Scouts programming directly to their beneficiaries.

### **E3.4 Design an Explorers programme with inclusion embedded**

Redesigning the Explorers programme with inclusion embedded at every step will go a long way towards making the provision more inclusive overall. All new design prototypes should address barriers to participation including cost, time and accessibility.

## **5.4 Recommendations: Network level provision (18+)**

Consultations with young people and volunteers during this research have indicated that, with a few exceptions, the Network programme isn't currently delivering a high-quality provision to members over the age of 18. However, this research has shown there's a real and genuine need among this age group to continue building their skills for life and has provided examples of numerous organisations offering high quality youth-programme provision to young people over the age of 18.

Additionally, evidence held by Scouts suggests that young people who maintain a long-term involvement across all Scout sections are more likely to go on to become longer term volunteers for Scouts than those recruited through other pathways.

There's clearly a win-win rationale for establishing a more robust and responsive programme for young people over the age of 18 without losing the social benefits that many take from the current Network model.

This research therefore recommends that a reformed Scout Network programme be designed and re-launched to provide a more formalised post-Explorers programme focused on the continued development of young people 18+ against high level programme outcomes. The non-formal education component of this programme could serve a particularly valuable function in reaching and providing skills for life to young people who aren't currently in education, employment or training (NEET).

## **1. Network: Fun and impactful programme**

### **N1.1 Introduce a renewed provision for 18+**

Reform the Scout Network programme to be a more formalised post-Explorers programme focused on the continued development of young people 18+ against high level programme outcomes. The shape of this renewed programme, how it will sit alongside other existing 18+ offers is yet to be determined by the co-design phase of work, but early conversations suggest that:

- It should be treated and resourced on par with previous sections as a formalised continuation of the Scouts programme.
- It should have a clear and distinct purpose and visual identity which distinguishes members from adult volunteering roles.
- The new 18+ programme should be flexible and able to cater for young people who also hold volunteer roles in Scouts, responding to any implications this has related to safeguarding.

### **N1.2 The renewed provision will share the same high-level programme outcomes as Explorers**

The renewed provision will respond to the needs of young people 18+, enabling them to continue to engage in an outcomes-based programme provision where they're the main beneficiaries, if they choose to do so. The high-level programme outcomes will mirror those already identified in the Explorer recommendations to ensure synergy in the transition between the two provisions, with inbuilt stretch and challenge which will facilitate a higher level of

demonstration of some of these outcomes among young people. This will be supported by the work undertaken in 'Recommendation E1.2' to define and scaffold transferable skills.

### **N1.3 Conduct more exploration and testing to define the upper age limit of the future 18+ provision**

The upper age limit of a future 18+ provision is still to be decided and will depend on early-stage ideation and testing during the co-design phase.

Explorer recommendations [E1.3: Strengthen Community Impact to achieve outcomes for young people](#) and [E1.4: Build on the Scouts track record in outdoor learning](#) will also be applied to the reimagined 18+ provision.

## **2. Network: Flexible Delivery**

### **N2.1 Strengthen transitions**

Without the option to move into Network alongside their peers, many young people don't consciously choose to transition into Network provision as active members. Opportunities for offering flexibility around strict age cut-offs when transitioning from Explorers to Network should be explored and where possible implemented.

### **N2.2 Address barriers preventing young people from establishing and sustaining Networks**

Ensure that appropriate and adequate resource is allocated to more 'youth-led' section provision, particularly at 18+. This will ensure the provision is sustainably managed and supported to grow and will be a useful reframing of notions that 'youth-led' means entirely self-managed.

Explorer recommendation [E2.5 Work closely with new 14–24 District Teams](#) will also be applied to the reimagined 18+ provision, alongside an additional recommendation of encouraging more young people 18+ into a broader range of District and County level leadership roles, apart from Youth Commissioner positions.

## **3. Network: Widening Participation**

### **N3.1 Prioritise flexibility**

Establish flexible 'youth-centred' systems to support participation in the programme, taking account of 18+ young people's priorities, responsibilities, and transition points. In particular, ensure 18+ provision responds to the increased geographic movement of young people in this age group, who may at different times relocate in response to work and study commitments, relying on different peer groups and support systems depending on their location.

### **N3.2 Collaborate and partner**

Partnership opportunities should be sought with other organisations (training providers, employers and other youth organisations) to provide specialist support to young people 18+. Support will empower young people to apply the skills gained from programme engagement to future pathways.

Explorer recommendation [E3.5 Design an Explorers programme with inclusion embedded](#) will also be applied to the reimagined 18+ provision.

## **5.5 Recommendations: A stronger identity for Explorers and 18+ provision**

Recommendations which support improved awareness and perception of 14–24 provision, both internally and externally, sit across both Explorer and 18+ provision and are as follows:

### **I1.1 Reposition 14–24 branding to tackle perceptions and reflect new provision and programme outcomes**

Address the lack of awareness of 14–24 provision, alongside negative perceptions, by collaborating with young people and the Brand and Communications teams to reposition the provision in a more attractive and engaging way. Brand positioning should reflect the unique value and outcomes of the recommendations to make a 14+ provision more youth-shaped and more inclusive with a higher quality, more relevant programme for young people.

### **I1.2 Explore effective marketing opportunities specific to 14–24 audiences**

Collaborate with young people and the Brand and Communications teams to explore ways in which the new or updated 14–24 provision could be marketed both internally and to new audiences. Consider how marketing requirements for 14–24 target audiences might differ from younger Scout sections. For example, 14–24 year olds have more agency to make their own choices. This compares to younger sections where parents or carers have a more active role in deciding what their children do in their spare time. Further to this, consider how marketing requirements might differ in urban versus rural contexts.

### **I1.3 Increase the presence of 14–24 provision in local communities**

The research found that young people outside of Scouts often had a very low awareness of 14–24 Scout provision and options available to them. To address this, Scouts should draw together young people, local volunteers, and the Growth and Communities Team, to explore ways to increase the presence of 14–24 provision within local communities. This should consider:

- How renewed programme outcomes and activities might help to encourage this.
- Local opportunities to 'show' rather than 'tell', such as initiatives and events that give new audiences a 'taste' of the 14–24 Scout provision and what it has to offer.
- Alternative events and opportunities that Scouts could have increased presence at, that could reach new and diverse audiences.
- Barriers that prevent Groups and Districts from having more of a presence in their local community.

## **5.6 Organisational enablers**

Changes to Scouts' programme offer for 14–24-year-olds won't happen without help. Rather, they will be impacted by and reliant upon decisions taken in response to other Programmes of Work (PoWs) led elsewhere in the organisation. The following section therefore outlines the organisational enablers that'll be critical in supporting the objectives of a new 14–24 design. These enablers differ from the above programme level recommendations as their achievement will likely need to be realised through other PoWs, working concurrently to the 14–24 Redesign and will therefore have broader organisational impacts across the organisation.

## **1. Fun and Impactful Programme**

### **OE1.1 Establish a robust approach to measuring impact**

High quality programme development cannot be achieved without robust systems for measuring programme outcomes and impact. Monitoring, evaluation and learning systems should be established to verify the impact of a new 14–24 provision, supporting ongoing programme iteration and design to ensure it continues to meet young people's needs.

## 2. Flexible Delivery

### OE2.1 Define 'Youth-Shaped'

Develop a centralised and universally agreed definition of 'youth-shaped', which also addresses and defines adjacent terms such as 'youth-led' and 'youth-centred'. Communicate this definition across the movement so it's adopted and understood by all.

### OE2.2 Embed a commitment to be 'Youth-Shaped' in Scout culture

Identify and pursue opportunities to embed a 'Youth-Shaped' approach and philosophy into core components of Scout culture among staff and volunteers. This could include providing an optional objective to add to appraisals to encourage youth-shaped practice or exploring changes to core Scout beliefs such as the values or Promise to encompass a focus on being 'Youth-Shaped'.

### OE2.3 Develop the principles and behaviours that will enable Scouts to be 'Youth-Shaped'

Develop a set of underlying principles and behaviours that enable staff and volunteers to apply the solidified definition of 'Youth-Shaped' to their actions and practices within Scouts. Use these principles and behaviours to inform core training that all staff and volunteers are encouraged to undertake. Consider youth-shaped programming, specifically in the context of 14–24, and the extent to which power is redistributed to young people progressively throughout the Scout journey.

## 3. Widening Participation: Programme design and delivery is inclusive, and facilitates the participation of all young people in the 14–24 provision

### OE3.1 Collaborate closely with the EDI Programme of Work and the Inclusive Growth Team

With plenty of research and work taking place through the Scouts EDI Programme of Work and inclusive growth projects, it's crucial the 14–24 team works hand in hand with EDI and Inclusive Growth to ensure alignment in programme activities and cross team learning.

### OE3.2 Take a localised approach to inclusion support

UKHQ could work with Nations, Counties and Districts to learn from best practice and introduce inclusion approaches and targets that are relevant specifically to their locality. Understanding local realities and challenges and adapting efforts to promote inclusion accordingly are crucial. To support a localised approach, Scouts should also review the inclusion support available at a local level. This could include:

- Having a diverse youth panel in each District or County to support the Youth Commissioner and Assistant County Commissioner for Inclusion roles (or Inclusion Teams).
- Reviewing the Assistant County Commissioners for Inclusion role, ensuring every County has at least one inclusion officer, understanding how this role maps against Volunteer Experience role changes.
- Considering how paid EDI expertise could provide support, training and additional capacity to County and District EDI roles.

### OE3.3 Increase financial visibility

Review the financial support and guidance currently available for 14–24 young people, volunteers, and Explorer units. Understand what support is being offered by UKHQ and at a County or District level, awareness of said funding, and where there are gaps that could currently be preventing inclusive growth.

Alongside this, Scouts could increase the consistency and visibility of expected costs up front, for example around uniform, equipment, activities, trips, and subs. Communicate these in a transparent way, with opportunities to receive support or adjustments.

#### **OE3.4 Be transparent about accessibility**

Not knowing about accessibility barriers upfront can prevent young people from choosing to participate altogether. Therefore, accessibility requirements should be communicated as early as possible. For example, what information might someone with accessibility requirements need to know about their Scout meeting place, activities or trips? Staff, volunteers, and Scout members should be educated about different types of accessibility. Permanent, temporary, and situational scenarios should all be designed for and communicated by default.

#### **OE3.5 Better prepare volunteers, through additional training, support, and collaborations**

Volunteers may not feel adequately prepared to support 14–24 young people from underserved backgrounds or those with specific needs. When recognising the link between leader expertise and the ability to reach and support young people effectively, appropriate training becomes crucial. Specialised training on topics such as supporting SEND young people or young people experiencing mental health challenges would enable volunteers to create inclusive spaces and tailor programmes to meet diverse needs effectively. Whether the additional training is mandatory or optional should be explored. To support volunteers, staff will also need rigorous EDI training.

However, the complexity of specialised training and support, delivered to a vast volunteer workforce, shouldn't be downplayed. Outside of Scouts, many professionals and specialised youth provision providers spend years understanding how best to support young people in different ways. Expecting all volunteers to become “experts” after some training is unrealistic. Therefore, this recommendation should be paired with specialised support through District, County or UKHQ level roles (see 2.3), programme and support materials that are designed with inclusion embedded, and importantly, better relationships and collaboration with other specialised youth provision providers that Scouts can learn from.

### **4. Stronger Identity**

#### **OE4.1 Equitable approach to attracting new 14–24 members**

Scouts should take an equitable, localised approach to attracting new members that are currently under-represented. This could include outreach to where these young people already are, including other youth organisations and schools in the area, or through having more visibility at community events. The latter could lead to the creation of partnerships and referral mechanisms with other youth organisations, and an opportunity to share the value of 14-24 Scouts and to ‘myth-bust’ perceptions.

This recommendation also contributes to Design Objective 3: Widening participation.

#### **OE4.2 Work with perception and uniform programmes of work**

Collaborate with Uniform and Perception Programmes of Work to share research and further understand the ways in which attitudes and perceptions relating to Scouts and our visual identity could be contributing to negative beliefs and associations with the movement. Ensure future adaptations and changes to Scouts' identity are aligned and mutually supported across these Programmes of Work.

# Next Steps

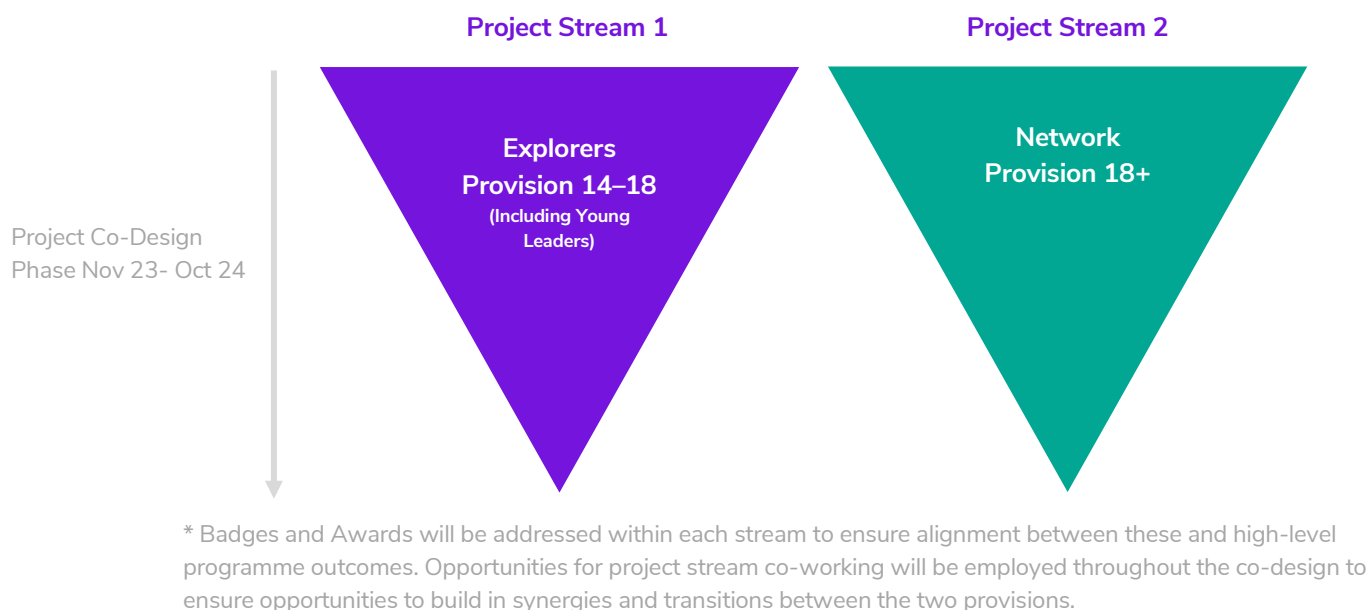
## Dissemination

The 14–24 Design Team will work with the Youth Panel and Scouts Communications Team to share the insights and recommendations captured in this report to members and volunteers across the organisation. To support this, the team and members of the 14–24 Youth Panel and Programme Board intend to present and run workshops at a number of online and virtual events around the UK in the coming months. Through this, they will share findings, and actively collaborate with young people (internal and external), volunteers, staff, and sector experts to further develop and prioritise the recommendations for the co-design phase.

The 14–24 Design Team will also importantly share findings, recommendations, work in collaboration with, and align with other Programmes of Work at Scouts, such as Perception, Uniform, Youth Management and Equity Diversity and Inclusion (EDI).

## Co-design

As the 14–24 Redesign PoW moves into the design phase, it'll split into two separate, but inter-connected project streams. These streams have been defined according to this reports' recommendation that two distinct provisions for 14+ are maintained and further developed. The initiation of two project streams will allow for any need of different pacing of these streams during the co-design phase.

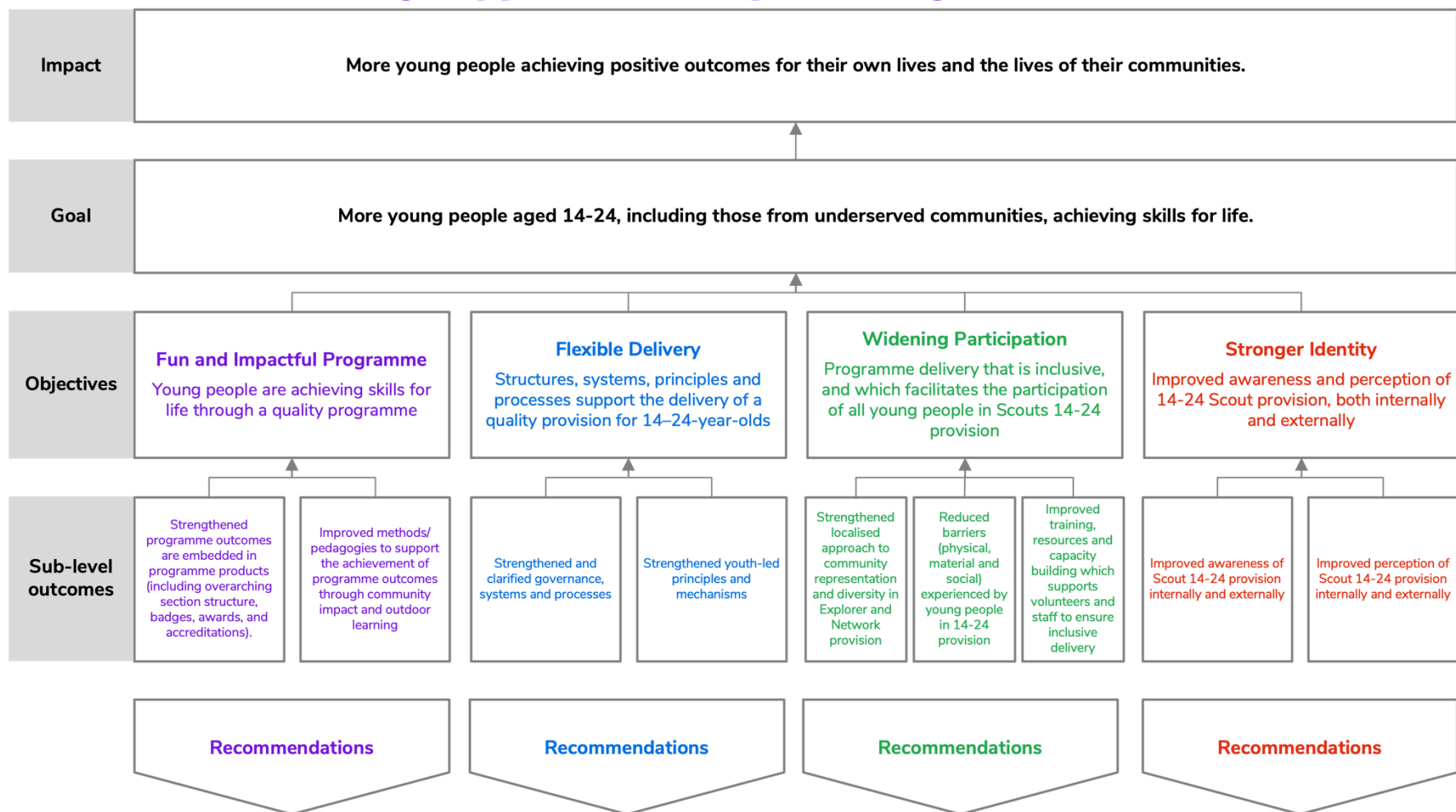


The recommendations, as they currently stand, act as “prompts” for the co-design phase. In the coming months, each project stream will:

- Develop full project briefs** and prioritise recommendations.
- Come up with, prototype and test approaches, interventions and products** that support the achievement of the four programme objectives within each project stream.
- Select the best approaches, interventions and products **for piloting**.

The Design Team will also work with other teams and projects across Scouts and externally to establish the ‘enablers’ at an organisational level that will enable the new 14–24 provision (and Scouts as a whole) to have the most impact. For a more detailed view of the proposed implementation schedule for the co-design phase, please see Annex B: 14–24 Co-Design Phase Project Plan.

## Annex A: 14–24 Design approach Theory of Change



## Annex B: 14-24 Co-Design Phase Project Plan

	Involved	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Augst	Sept	Oct
<b>Governance</b>													
Programme Board Review and Relaunch	Core Design Team												
Youth Panel Review and Relaunch	Core Design Team												
Advisory Group Formation and Launch	Core Design Team												
<b>Project Co-design</b>													
Full Design Team recruitment	Core Design Team												
Pilot recruitment	Broader Movement					Explorer Group Recruitment/ Establishment (with G&C Team)							
						Recruit Networks for co-design and pilot					Second round Network recruitment		
Prioritise and cluster recommendations	Core Design Team												
Develop project briefs	Core Design Team												
Identify full Design Team for each project	Core Design Team												
Develop experience principles	Full Design Team												
Programme Ideation (Objective 1 only)	Full Design Team												
Test (Objective 1 only)	Broader Movement												
Refine and prioritise (Objective 1 only)	Core Design Team												
Programme Ideation (Objectives 1-4)	Full Design Team												
Test (Objectives 1-4)	Broader Movement												
Refine and prioritise (Objectives 1-4)	Core Design Team												
Select products for prototyping (Objectives 1-4)	Core Design Team												
Prototype protocol developed	Core Design Team												
First draft materials for Prototype Phase drafted	Core Design Team												
Stage Gate: Approval to Prototype	Core Design Team												

<b>Key</b>	
<b>Core Design Team</b>	Staff Team + Programme Board and Youth Panel
<b>Full Design Team</b>	Core Design Team + defined sample of stakeholders (including volunteers and young people inside and outside of Scouts)
<b>Broader Movement</b>	Large representative group of stakeholders internal and external to Scouts. Engagement requires significant comms resource and exposure.
	Project 1: 14-24 Explorers
	Project 2: 18+ Network

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