



Scouts Race Equity Review

Findings and recommendations



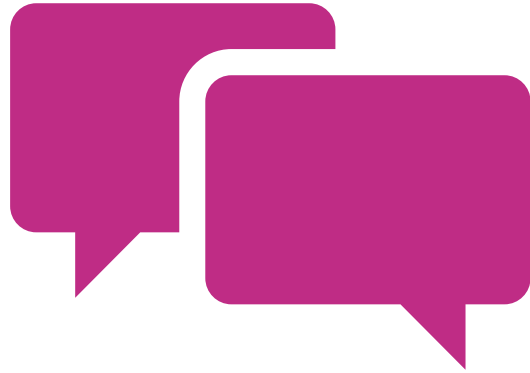
About the report

The Scouts has ongoing work and objectives to embed equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) throughout the organisation. As part of the commitment to the long-term work required to embed race equity, an exploratory audit was required to understand the lived experience of Black, Asian and minority ethnic people as well as race equity issues within organisational practices.

Hayley Bennett from HTVB Consulting Ltd carried out an independent race equity review between December 2020 and June 2021, providing an explanation of key findings alongside recommendations to address concerns raised by staff and volunteers.



Components of the review



13 group listening sessions and 11 one:one interviews:

26 volunteers

45 staff

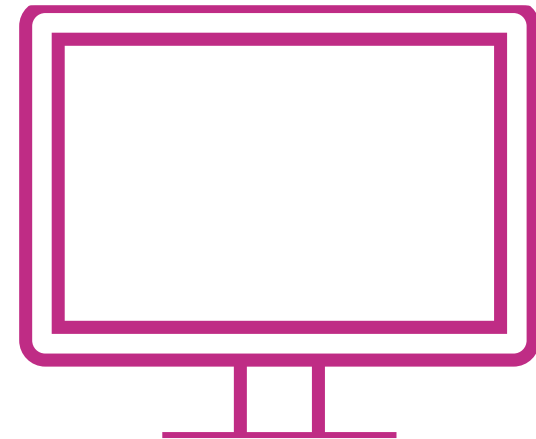
20 Trustees/Team UK



Surveys:

59 volunteer responses

58 staff responses



Document and communications analysis

Organisational priorities

This report presents the findings of the race equity review, outlining the feedback and analysis from qualitative research across the following organisational priorities:

1. Developing a clear vision to highlight our commitment to race equity
2. Building and raising awareness of race and racism across Staff and volunteers
3. Identifying opportunities to improve diversity within Staff recruitment, development and progression
4. Embedding race equity in how we attract, recruit and develop our volunteers
5. Addressing and eliminating inappropriate behaviour and discrimination
6. Creating opportunities in leadership and identifying Role Models

The findings within each priority are supported with directly quoted verbatims sourced from the listening sessions and surveys conducted. Corresponding recommendations are also presented under each priority's findings.

1. Developing a clear vision to highlight our commitment to race equity

- Staff and volunteers see a clear link between race equity and Scouts' mission and values, but a concise and appealing vision is needed for this work.
- The feedback from staff and volunteers was very mixed about whether the organisation's commitment to race equity is genuine. Some perceive it as "tokenism" and "lip service" due to not being able to see this commitment in day-to-day actions. Staff and volunteers felt that the visibility of Scout's commitment to increasing racial diversity is being demonstrated in external communications.
- Numerous negative responses to the race equity review have been shared by members. There is a perceived desire not to disenfranchise current members through race equity work.
- Race equity work should be the responsibility of all rather than the remit of passionate people who often have a lived experience of racism. These individuals and groups, including the Community of Practice and The Muslim Scouts Fellowship (MSF) must adequately supported and recognised.

Direct quotes:

"Organic hasn't worked"

"Although we have made changes the reality is they haven't been fast enough or at the right time"

"It's a top three priority with survival of the charity being one of the most important thing"

"It feels like a workstream rather than strongly connected to the values"

"Treating everyone the same isn't enough"

"It feels like we are still afraid"

"It will be cool to see more people seeing people they can relate to!"

"This should be a shared responsibility for everyone"

"To compare it to snails pace would be an insult to a snail"

Recommendations for developing a clear vision to highlight our commitment to race equity

- a. Create a clear and coherent vision for race equity:** This should be done in consultation with staff and volunteers and reference the values of Scouts as well as the ambitions for growth.
- b. Review governance of race equity work:** Ensure that race equity work across Scouts is the responsibility of all through objectives and responsibilities for staff, the Board and Team UK, Senior Leadership Team and volunteer leaders.
- c. Improve Team UK and Inclusion Team's representation:** Ensure that Team UK has increased racial diversity in the next cohort. The makeup of Team UK should aspire to match the representation of ethnic minorities within the UK. The current Inclusion Team should also include a wider range of people from under-represented racial backgrounds.
- d. Create opportunities to recognise Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff and volunteers:** Use awards and recognition to compensate people going above and beyond to progress race equity within Scouts.
- e. Enable the growth of community-led networks:** Support the new Community of Practice and MSF through deliberate allocation of resources, staff time and access to funding.

2. Building and raising awareness of race and racism across Staff and volunteers

- Language and terminology is a barrier for white staff, with many fearing saying 'the wrong thing'. Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff felt that generally white staff feel that they know more than they actually do.
- Consultation with volunteers from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds could be more efficient and impactful, ensuring a wide range of views are considered but that people are not tokenised.
- A stand-out issue for volunteers from racially diverse backgrounds, who also practice faith, is that there is a lack of understanding and support around religious and cultural customs.
- Due to the current lack of awareness internally and the external perception outside of Scouts, Muslim Scout Groups are needed and have been successful.
- Very few volunteers had positive perceptions of existing inclusion training and information available from HQ.

Direct quotes:

"There's an element of white privilege and lack of understanding of why it's important"

"At HQ, there is awareness but we do not act on the awareness"

"We like to think we are aware at HQ but that isn't the case"

"There are a lot of closed narrow minds regarding what constitutes racism - white people need to really hear what racism is and why it needs to stop"

"I have mixed feelings about organisations like MSF: they do great stuff but I wish it wasn't necessary"

"People think I am being woke"

"Leader training is important - but we do not have the time to read through everything"

"Districts aren't supported in understanding differences"

"Black History Month events were poorly attended. The engagement is disheartening in itself."

Recommendations for building and raising awareness of race and racism across Staff and volunteers

- a. Provide training for staff:** All staff should be given the opportunity to take part in challenging training on the topic of race and be provided with tools and resources to build personal awareness. Training should be done regularly, and induction training should include reference to race equity.
- b. Create race-specific training and resources for volunteers:** This should not be mandatory as it may impede effectiveness, however awareness of the race equity action plan and commitments should be part of all future onboarding. A particular focus should be on micro-aggressions and cultural awareness.
- c. Review existing volunteer EDI training for effectiveness:** Current training should be engaging and practical to enable volunteers to apply EDI principles to their roles. Bitesize and accessible training should be designed to be role-specific.
- d. Create practical guidance on race equity:** Engaging, informative and empowering content should be made available to all volunteers. This should cover how to proactively promote race equity, as well as how to respond to challenges. It is essential that this is easily searchable on the website.

Recommendations for building and raising awareness of race and racism across Staff and volunteers (cont.)

- e. **Create language guidance:** The communications team should support the creation of language guidance and 'a tone of voice' for talking about race in the context of Scouts.
- f. **Clarify alignment with MSF:** Governance should ensure that MSF is perceived as in line with the essence of Scouting and a key part of the growth of the Movement.
- g. **Pilot the creation of new community-centred Groups or networks:** Use existing networks and work in collaboration with charities and community initiatives that cater to the needs of racially under-represented communities across the UK.
- h. **Maximise existing opportunities to raise awareness:** Communications should ensure that opportunities like the World Scout Jamboree are used as tools to raise cultural and racial awareness through communications about the events. Work in consultation with race equity experts and Members to design unique badge that explores championing inclusion from a race equity lens.

3. Identifying opportunities to improve diversity within Staff recruitment, development and progression

- There were some examples of bias highlighted by staff who had been involved in hiring. These examples included people recruiting in their own image (affinity bias) and relying on cultural fit when selecting candidates.
- Staff shared that they desired greater transparency on the promotion process, as well as how to access courses to help with their development. Pay is one significant barrier to retention.
- Throughout the listening sessions, the lack of racially diverse senior staff representation was flagged as a barrier to attracting, developing and retaining staff – as well as volunteers.
- The culture and environment at Gilwell Park was described as inclusive by most staff. Some staff felt they would benefit from having a better support network but Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff identified they do have people within the EDI team to talk to alongside other allies.
- Reviewing the Scouts website showed that EDI is not as visible as it should be. There are opportunities to include more information about the EDI commitments and policies.

Direct quotes:

"Senior leaders need to play a role in getting to know people of colour"

"People are recruiting in their own image"

"I have seen leadership at The Scouts demonstrate unconscious bias with appointments being made because they will "fit well with the team" and be a "better fit for the organisation" - this irrespective of qualifications and challenge from the other person involved in the interview panel."

"I have heard "I went for candidate x because I think they will be the best fit for the team""

"If they are not able to attract volunteers from under-represented groups then it impacts young people and then staff too"

"It's the nicest place I've worked"

Recommendations for identifying opportunities to improve diversity within Staff recruitment, development and progression

- a. Review current talent management processes:** A review using a racial equity lens will help Scouts see where gaps exist that could be creating disadvantage. Within recruitment and promotion. Policies and processes should be accompanied by guidance for line managers to have more inclusive recruitment as well as impactful career conversations with Black, Asian and minority-ethnic co-workers.
- b. Update the Jobs page on the website:** Create a 'best in class' jobs page which provides transparency about Scouts' EDI commitments and policies as well as contains stories and blogs by staff from a wide range of backgrounds.
- c. Use external support to deliver recruitment change:** Where diverse and representative panels are not possible, use external representatives to ensure there is racial diversity independence. Continue to use recruiters to source a diverse range of candidates.
- d. Carry out pay reviews:** Ensure that Scouts remains attractive and competitive within the charity sector by regularly reviewing pay. Commit to yearly equal pay audits to determine and correct where staff from under-represented groups may be being paid less than their peers.
- e. Create development programmes for Black, Asian and minority-ethnic staff:** Support Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff to navigate barriers to leadership positions through a programme of professional development, peer-support, training and skills advice. As much as possible, engage senior leaders with the programmes, providing opportunities for them to take part in sessions so that this leads to more racially diverse sponsorship

4. Embedding race equity in how we attract, recruit and develop our volunteers

- Many volunteers and staff shared that they believe Scouts appears as a middle class, white and Christian organisation, despite many efforts to change this image.
- The current onboarding process is inconsistent which can lead to some new volunteers feeling unsupported. Proactively reaching out and giving additional support and encouragement during the onboarding process has been important to volunteers from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds.
- Better data is needed to understand the makeup of the Movement.
- A standout barrier to volunteer recruitment that was shared by some volunteers was the nature of the appointments committee. Cost also remains a barrier.
- The current process for setting up new Scout Groups is not conducive to growth or a positive experience due to the complexity of the process and the time it takes.

Barriers to volunteer progression and development include:

favouritism with many sharing anecdotal stories of seeing people's friends being recruited for progression opportunities.

perceptions from more "traditional" adults in believing that as an ethnic minority they were not suitable to be a Section leader or Youth Commissioner.

recruiting from outsiders for senior roles is frowned upon culturally

length of service is equated with suitability for higher roles

Direct quotes:

"We've always done it this way"

"Once you're hooked, you're hooked for life"

"Since I became RC it has made me want to leave Scouting"

"I really do still feel like I don't fit"

"I have never come across a DC that is not white"

"The 4 week challenge is really really good"

"The difference it makes you can't find anything else"

"Having been in scouting for such a long time i had just accepted how things are but now I am a bit noisier"

"I didn't think the job was for me"

Recommendations for embedding race equity in how we attract, recruit and develop our volunteers

- a. Provide more support for inclusive recruitment and communications:** Collect good practice case studies on what is being done to increase racially diversity at District and County/Area/Region level. Support the existing Diversity RAG Assessment by offering more tangible pieces of advice. Ensure contact centres can offer practical tips and good practice when asked.
- b. Design onboarding opportunities for volunteers from under-represented groups:** Build a race equity lens into the new volunteer journey. Collect and monitor the diversity data of new joiners. Where possible, offer regional or national networking and support systems where local support may not exist.
- c. Introduce a support model for new Groups:** Put in place specific outreach and support to Groups who are being set up by Black, Asian and minority ethnic people or are being proposed in areas of high racial diversity.
- d. Improve data collection and analysis:** Collect better data on young people and adults through the Census and enabling data collection when people join as members. Create factsheets breaking down how to retrieve and analyse local ethnicity data from the UK government to enable volunteers to see the work that is needed at local level.

Recommendations for embedding race equity in how we attract, recruit and develop our volunteers (cont.)

- e. **Review appointments committee:** Carry out a review of how appointments committees are run and assembled to determine how they can be improved for all new volunteers.
- f. **Continually review the funding and support needed for units in racially diverse areas:** Distribute additional funding and staff support for units and ensure funding is made available for individual members, volunteers as well as units.
- g. **Require more transparency in volunteer appointments:** Require feedback for volunteers and allow volunteers to appeal decisions via a more independent route. Practical guidance on positive and proactive inclusive recruitment for volunteers should also be made available.
- h. **Promote national roles to people external to Scouts as standard:** Open roles to individuals with less or no experience of Scouts. When unable to source diverse candidates from within Scouts, ensure external candidates have been encouraged to apply even if it requires a longer recruitment process.
- i. **Create pathway programmes for volunteer progression:** Run volunteer networking and leadership development events for volunteers from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds.

5. Addressing and eliminating inappropriate behaviour and discrimination

- The most common examples of racism shared relate to exclusion Black within their Groups or Districts. It was a common experience for Black, Asian and minority ethnic volunteers to have felt that they had been treated differently.
- Volunteers shared how failing to accommodate their dietary requirements could be “make or break” in determining whether the young people could attend opportunities.
- Most staff shared that they would not be confident to speak up if they witnessed or experienced racism. However, some people felt more comfortable speaking up about issues impacting others.
- Mistrust in reporting exists for volunteers and staff due to ‘cliques’. Some staff felt that when reporting issues about managers the process will not be followed fairly. Volunteers from all backgrounds are aware of the relationships and “do not want to rock the boat”.
- Allowing strong views (including responses to the review and BLM) as well as unreported behaviours to go unchecked could present a risk of young people being exposed to micro-aggressions and racism.

Direct quotes:

"Scouting values apply when we want them too"

"People think things should be done a certain way and can exclude people"

"Someone might make a flippant comment and it gives an image that this represents Scouting"

"I don't think people do it on purpose"

"If this was in the workplace would you be accepting this?"

"It is still easier for someone to leave Scouting than to have a complaint dealt with properly"

"There are the really overt indicators that some colleagues and members hold prejudices or anti-Blackness"

"It can feel like a double burden. You experience the negative impact, need to call it out and are then held responsible for improving the situation."

"If you are not Christian it is exclusive"

Recommendations for addressing and eliminating inappropriate behaviour and discrimination

- a. Offer practical guidance and expectations around cultural and religious inclusion:** Use the Faiths and Beliefs page on the website to provide useful guidance and policy expectations for dietary requirements and scheduling around religion.
- b. Analyse and record stats relating to racism reported by staff and volunteers:** On an ongoing basis, monitor incidents of complaints by demographic groups and schedule an annual review of all incidents of discrimination at Board level.
- c. Establish a zero-tolerance approach to racism:** Review current reporting mechanisms by ensuring policies and processes for speaking up do not penalise individuals who raise concerns. Discrimination complaints from volunteers should be escalated to HQ. Embed a zero-tolerance message across all documentation relating to policies. Feedback should be anonymously collected following all reports of racism made. This should be independently assessed to monitor how staff, members and volunteers are finding the process.
- d. Include racism and discrimination in whistleblowing procedures:** Offer additional or revised routes for volunteers wanting to report discrimination where it has not been dealt with at District level.
- e. Create a communications campaign:** Educate everyone involved in Scouts about what is unacceptable and what constitutes a micro-aggression, as well as how to report issues in order to increase reports and accountability.

6. Creating opportunities in leadership and identifying Role Models

- Volunteers recognise that leadership (HQ and leaders on both Team UK and the Board of Trustees) cares about race equity but that this does not trickle down to District and local level. There was acknowledgement that there has been some progress made with Board recruitment.
- Where senior volunteers from Black, Asian and minority-ethnic backgrounds do exist, this has had a positive impact with regard to accessing opportunities such as mentoring. There were calls for recruiting young trustees from racially diverse backgrounds in order to bring about true representation and change.
- There is a specific challenge of a lack of Black representation in management and leadership positions for both staff and volunteers.
- Staff, Board members and volunteers feel that role models are not visible enough. People struggled to name role models beyond a few regular names.
- A number of white volunteers were namechecked as 'allies' who should be highlighted within the Movement.
- Staff leaders surveyed overwhelmingly feel empowered to influence change when it comes to race equity.

Direct quotes:

"When Matt speaks I hear his heart and admire his efforts in it"

"It's clearly not filtering through the organisation and that's a problem"

"Culture is set by the leadership; without the top level demonstrating true diversity, how will groups follow?"

"A good DC can make a world of a difference"

"I do think that it would be helpful if there was a drive from County and District level to have training"

"On Team UK we can have a frank conversation about it"

"I have been in the Scouting magazine three times. I do not want to be the poster girl for inclusion"

"I don't think there is a lack of will, there is a lack of how"

Recommendations for creating opportunities in leadership and identifying Role Models

- a. Identify role models and case studies of good practice:** Discover and collate a range of examples of inspiration work or people who are advancing race equity. Encourage people to nominate role models and share their successes to accompany the race equity action plan.
- b. Carry out succession planning:** Identify key individuals from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds who could be potential leaders. Encourage existing leaders (including staff, the Board and Team UK) to mentor and actively 'sponsor' people to climb. Offer shadowing opportunities such as attending leadership events and meetings.
- c. Creating opportunities for allies amongst staff and volunteers:** Support white people wanting to play a role in advancing race equity through equipping them with skills and resources for allyship. Collate examples of allyship actions amongst staff and volunteers that can be shared widely as educational materials.
- d. Empower Black, Asian and minority ethnic young leaders:** Including young people from underrepresented racial backgrounds in decision making is important for Scouts to focus on as an organisation. Scouts should create opportunities to include Black, Asian and minority ethnic young people's voices in programme design and decision making opportunities (such as on advisory boards or committees). Scouts needs to provide space for the young people to influence the governance of the organisation to both drive the effectiveness of the programme, but also to create important developmental opportunities for youth and young adults.

Action planning and next steps

To support the effective use of this report consultation and feedback will take place to identify the priority actions to take forward. The above recommendations and further discussion will lead to the development of a race equity action plan with tangible commitments and objectives.

Embedding race equity practice requires the ongoing review of experiences, processes, policies and activities to mitigate against barriers. Further opportunities to source to the views and experiences of Black, Asian and minority ethnic volunteers should be encouraged to ensure that volunteers feel heard and given the opportunity to shape the work of Scouts.