

# ADULT VOLUNTEERS BRIEFING



## Beyond 2018

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

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

This briefing outlines the main points made by members through the Adult Volunteers Survey circulated in autumn 2016. It's part of a series of weekly briefings sharing the research and insights we have collected in shaping our next strategic plan, which you can find at [scouts.org.uk/beyond2018](http://scouts.org.uk/beyond2018).

## Methodology

The aim was to engage with volunteers on their views of how successful the current strategic plan has been and what they think should be prioritised for the next five years.

The survey included questions on how familiar volunteers were with the current plan, how much it influenced their work, how difficult the objectives were to deliver, how supported volunteers felt in delivering them, and to what extent the objectives should continue into the next plan.

The survey also included questions on what volunteers felt were the strengths and weaknesses in Scouting, the threats and opportunities to Scouting today, as well as what they would prioritise over the next five years.

The survey was circulated to all volunteers UK wide by email and social media. Over 5,000 responses were received.

For the purpose of this research and report the following terms should be interpreted as:

Line manager – includes Group Scout Leaders and Area/Region/County/District Commissioners

Volunteer – includes all adult volunteers

Section leader – includes section leaders and assistants and occasional helpers

## Summary

- Most volunteers are aware of the strategic plan, Scouting for all, and the four objectives
- Just over 50% of line managers said it influenced their work
- Under 50% of volunteers said the four objectives were difficult to deliver
- Two thirds of volunteers feel there is not enough support to deliver the four objectives
- The majority of volunteers think all four strategic objectives should continue into the next plan
- The top three priorities according to volunteers are facilities, recruitment and support for leaders.

## Review of Scouting for All

TSA's current strategic plan concludes in 2018. Launched in 2014 and known as Scouting for All, it outlined the strategic priorities of Growth (reaching 500,000 young people), Inclusivity (our membership reflecting the diversity of the local community), Youth Shaped (increasing instances of young people shaping their Scouting experience) and Community Impact

(increasing the quality and quantity of youth social action projects delivered by Scouting).

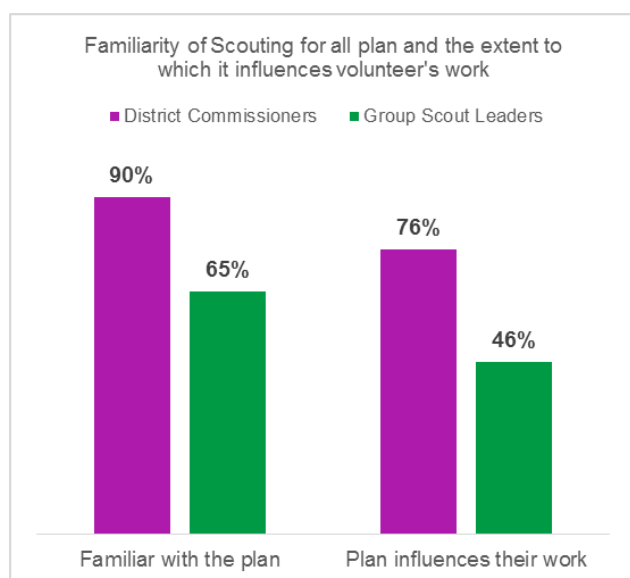
## Familiarity with Scouting for All

The majority of volunteers are familiar with Scouting for all, which includes a total of 72% of line managers. When broken down into roles this increases to 90% of District Commissioners compared with 65% of Group Scout Leaders.

When asked about the four strategic objectives 78% of section leaders are familiar with all four.

## Influence of Scouting for All

Just over 50% of line managers say that the current strategic plan influences their work. When broken down into roles this increases to 76% for District Commissioners compared with 46% of Group Scout Leaders.



## Review of the strategic objectives

A review of each objective gives an insight into progress to date and how volunteers perceive the objective.

### Growth

TSA have achieved 154,000 adult volunteers and 457,000 young people, a 52% increase in adult membership and a 7% growth in youth membership since 2013. However Explorer numbers are down by 0.9%.

Growth Strategic Objective			
	Difficult to deliver	Enough support available	Objective should continue
Section leader	42%	33%	70%
Line manager	48%	36%	76%

- When volunteers were asked how successful they thought this objective was, line managers said they found growth most difficult to deliver.
- At Summit17, of those delegates asked whether it is getting easier or harder to recruit leaders, 33% thought it was getting easier whilst 67% thought it was getting harder.

## Inclusion

Female membership has grown from 22.5% to 27%. Scouting is now present and sustainable in 237 of the most deprived wards in the country. We have delivered projects involving Scouting and schools in areas of deprivation, partnerships with Scope to involve more disabled young people, and targeted communities such as Roma families in Sheffield and Muslim young people through the Muslim Scout Fellowship. However we still have very little black and ethnic minority members.

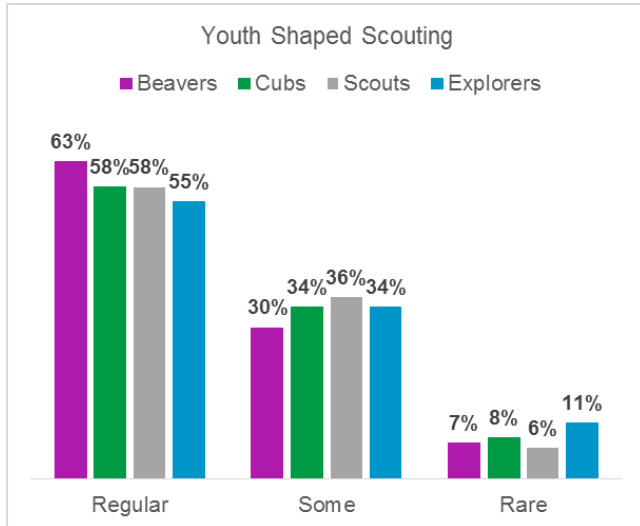
Inclusion Strategic Objective			
	Difficult to deliver	Enough support available	Objective should continue
Section leader	42%	26%	71%
Line manager	37%	31%	83%

- When section leaders were asked how successful they thought this objective was, Inclusion appeared to be the least supported compared to other the objectives
- When delegates at Summit17 were asked if Scouting had become more or less inclusive, 95% thought it had become more inclusive whilst 5% though it had become less so.

## Youth Shaped

Over 150 District and County Youth Commissioners have been appointed, 6,300 young people have fed into the next strategic plan and 56,000 YouShape badges have been earned.

We asked volunteers whether young people were regularly shaping their experience by asking them how often young people were participating in forums, influencing the programme and giving feedback.



According to section leaders 60% of sections have young people regularly shaping their Scouting experience.

Youth Shaped Strategic Objective			
	Difficult to deliver	Enough support available	Objective should continue
Section leader	25%	44%	76%
Line manager	31%	38%	74%

- Volunteers thought Youth Shaped was the least difficult objective to achieve and had the most support.
- When asked at Summit17 if they felt that young people were shaping their Scouting experience, 87% of delegates thought more young people were, compared with 13% who disagreed.

## Community Impact

TSA launched A Million Hands which has reached over 4,000 Groups and 200,000 young people, winning the Charity Times 'Cross Sector partnership of the Year'. Fifty thousand Community Impact staged activity badges have been earned and 43 million people have seen our young peoples' achievements through 400 media outputs.

Community Impact Strategic Objective			
	Difficult to deliver	Enough support available	Objective should continue
Section leader	42%	28%	73%
Line manager	44%	25%	70%

- When asked how successful they thought this objective was, 33% of section leaders said that their young people had been involved in a Community Impact project in the last year
- Of the Community Impact projects undertaken 48% of these were through A Million Hands
- At Summit17, 75% of delegates thought Scouts were changing the lives of others in local communities while 25% did not think so.

## Support for leaders

Adult volunteers were asked how valued, empowered and proud they felt over the past four years.

Valued, Empowered and Proud			
	2014	2015	2016
Empowered	73%	69%	76%
Valued	65%	63%	74%
Proud	94%	90%	94%

The results were consistent across most demographics, roles, sections and regions. However, the younger age ranges (84% of 18-24 and 83% of 25-34) seem to feel more empowered than the middle age range (71% of 45-54, 72% of those with 10-20 years' service). There was small difference between roles where 82% of District Commissioners felt more empowered compared to 77% of Group Scout leaders and 76% of section leaders.

## SWOT

We asked volunteers what they felt were the strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) to Scouting as we consider the next strategic plan.

### Strengths

The following 12 themes emerged as the biggest strengths of Scouting when looking at the future of the Movement.

- Inclusion** (being open to all, diversity)
- Leaders** (dedicated, good volunteers)
- Reputation** (well-known brand and heritage)
- Adventure** (challenging experiences)

- **Programme** (activities, variety, badges)
- **Outdoors** (camping and outdoor activities)
- **Fun** (enjoyment, exciting)
- **Community** (belonging, community engagement)
- **Friendships** (working together, making friends)
- **Young people** (youth led)
- **Forward thinking** (moving with the times)
- **Life skills** (personal development)

## Weaknesses

Volunteers thought the following 12 themes were the biggest weaknesses of Scouting that could limit our success in the years to come. Lack of leaders appeared to be the main area, with over 30% of volunteers expressing this.

- **Lack of leaders** (lack of recruitment and retention)
- **Red tape** (bureaucracy, too much admin)
- **Image** (negative press and stereotypes)
- **Lack of support** (lack of or poor training)
- **Attitudes** (internal politics, cliques, bullying, apathy)
- **Management** (the structure, poor/lack of leadership)
- **Programme** (resources, changes, poor quality)
- **Cost** (cost of activities and fees to people)
- **Funding** (lack of money, poor facilities)
- **Communication** (lack of, poor, too corporate)
- **Technology** (not keeping up, poor IT/data systems)
- **Diversity** (religion, lack of diversity)

## Opportunities

The volunteers provided 13 themes they thought were the opportunities that Scouting should use to its advantage.

- **Media** (social media, advertising, TV, reputation)
- **Digital** (technology, internet, data systems)
- **Adventure** (outdoors, activities, camping)
- **Community** (belonging, spirit, engagement, projects)
- **Young People** (young leaders, youth led)
- **Training** (resources, adult support)
- **Programme** (more skills, challenge, badges)
- **Recruitment** (more leaders)
- **Inclusion** (immigration, open to all)
- **International and Events** (trips, stronger relations)
- **Funding** (grants, lottery, government)
- **Schools** (stronger links, Scouting in schools)

- **Chief Scout** (Bear Grylls, strong ambassador)

## Threats

We asked volunteers what they thought were the biggest threats to Scouting that we should take action to avoid. These responses have been categorised into threats inside of Scouting and external threats which could impact on Scouting.

### Internal threats (within Scouting)

- **Lack of leaders** (aging leaders, waiting lists)
- **Lack of support** (training, communications, programme support, lack of time of volunteers)
- **Funding** (lack of money, facilities, equipment)
- **Stagnation** (inward looking, complacent, not keeping up to date)
- **Red tape** (bureaucracy, too much admin, rules)
- **Losing heritage** (too much change, lack of discipline, losing uniform)
- **Safeguarding** (controversy, safety, litigation)
- **Culture** (internal politics, seen as religious, bullying)
- **Leadership** (poor/bad leaders, quality)
- **Digital** (our current IT/Data systems)
- **Uniform** (cost of, outdated)

### External threats (to Scouting)

- **Costs** (rising costs of activities, facilities, equipment cost to young people)
- **Perception** (bad press, lack of awareness by public)
- **Disinterest** (of Scouting by young people and parents, public apathy)
- **Competition** (by other clubs and organisations)
- **Technology** (social media, gaming, computers of more interest than Scouting)
- **Political trends** (division, social problems, government)
- **Young people** (pressures, issues they face)

# Priorities for the next plan

We asked volunteers what they would prioritise in the next plan, and the most quoted ideas came under the following 12 themes.

- **Facilities** (venues, meeting places, equipment)
- **Support for leaders** (development, no bureaucracy)
- **Recruitment** (retention of volunteers)
- **Training** (quality, skills, leadership)
- **Activities** (outdoor, adventurous, camping)
- **Programme** (resources, quality)
- **Advertising** (promote benefits, relevance)
- **Young people** (recruitment, youth shaped, leaders)
- **Inclusion** (socio-economic, diversity, accessibility)
- **Events** (International trips, District/County/local)
- **Fundraising** (cost of scouting, subsidies)
- **Community** (projects, engagement and impact)

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

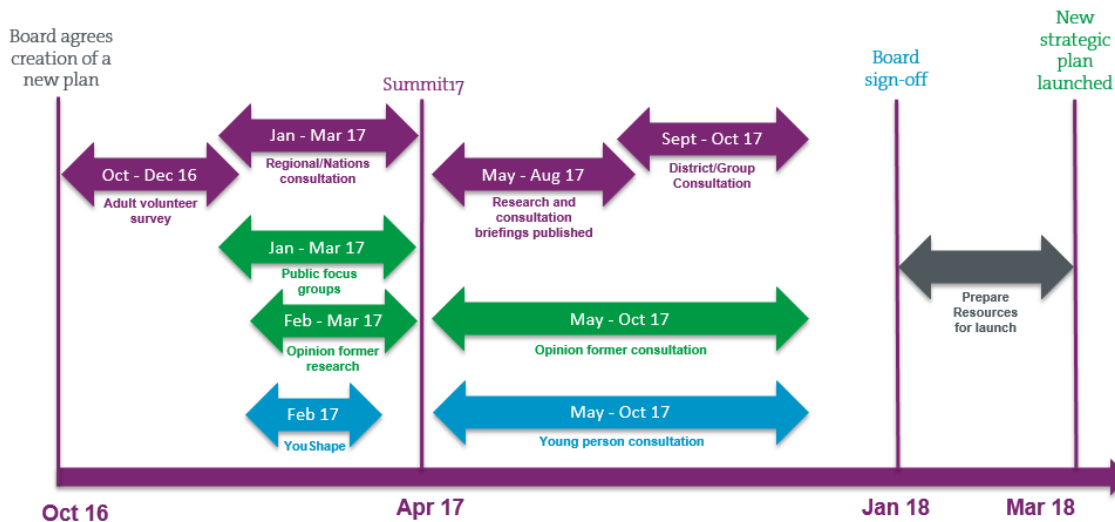
In early August 2017, we will release a toolkit to support consultation on a District and Group level, with views being fed back nationally. Make sure you've made time at a County or District level to take part in September or October 2017.

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# BEYOND 2018

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

## Beyond 2018 | Consultation timeline



### Schedule for publication of briefings and resources

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

- Briefing 1 – Summit17
- Briefing 2 – #YouShape Beyond 2018
- Briefing 3 – Perceptions of Scouting
- Briefing 4 – Adult volunteers survey
- Briefing 5 – Regional and National consultation
- Briefing 6 – Decision maker research
- Briefing 7 – Impact of Scouting on young people

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

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

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

### Future conversation resources – Summit17 in a Box

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

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