

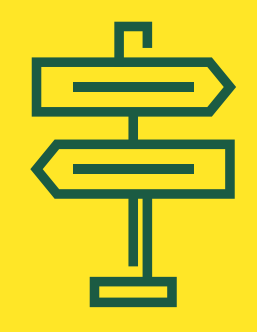


# Place to belong

Our Strategy to 2035

Scouts





# A look ahead



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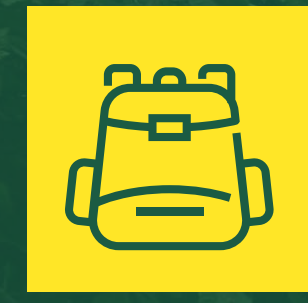


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# Why young people need a place to belong

**This generation has so much promise. But so much pressure too.**

Many feel isolated and lonely. Nearly half don't have a trusted adult they can talk to. Nearly 40% don't have the chance to make new friends. More than 7 in 10 spend most of their free time on screens.

Nature and the outdoors can feel remote and inaccessible. School can bring pressures and expectations too.

For our young people, it feels like the world is tearing itself apart – with a deepening climate crisis; damaged further by conflict and division. Extreme voices seem to drown out the rest, amplifying fear and distrust.

**That's why young people need a third place – somewhere that isn't school or home where they can find themselves and be themselves. Where they can be seen, heard and accepted for who they are. It's a safe place with trusted adults.**

Young people need a place they can express themselves without fear of judgement or embarrassment.

Scouts is that place: a community of kindness, where fun and friendship run through everything. A local community that also connects you internationally, to a movement of more than 60 million Scouts. Where standing on the podium isn't the be all and end all. Scouts is a place to do your best, not be the best.

**This strategy is about helping young people find that place.**

# 40%

of young people don't have the chance to make new friends

# 7 in 10

young people spend most of their free time on screens.

## Scouts is a community of kindness where fun and friendship run through everything.





# Why now?

There is a crisis, not just of mental health and loneliness among young people, but of anxiety about the future too. That's why young people need a place to belong more than ever.



**Nearly half (44%) of young people surveyed aged 11-18 regularly feel lonely.\***



**53%** of young people say they're worried about their mental wellbeing.\*

**45%** worry about their physical wellbeing.\*

**63%** are worried about finding a job. \*



Though the digital world offers endless connections, sometimes I feel a strange, quiet loneliness. What really stings is the lack of places to just be. Outside of school, there isn't much for my mates and I to do in person. We need spaces to just hang out, make friends, and frankly, just have some fun... that in-person community factor is lost.



– Young person from Hastings\*



When young people feel like they've got a place they belong, they act like they belong.



– Young person from Newcastle\*



\*DCMS Youth Matters: State of the Nation report 2025, from a survey of 25,000 young people.

\*The Children's Society's Good Childhood Report (from a survey, including 2,000 UK children and young people aged 10 to 17).



# A strategy for a brighter future

**Our Strategy to 2035 will help us keep the focus on what we do best – giving young people a place to belong and the skills to thrive.**

It's shaped by 28,000 people inside and outside Scouts, this includes supporters, volunteers and members. Including more than 3,000 young Scouts who made their voices heard, especially in the UK Youth Forum 2025. It's a strategy for young people, shaped by young people.

Young people have told us they want our support to empower them to navigate an unpredictable future. This is a time to look wider too, responding to the needs of an ever-changing world and increasingly polarised society. We need to prepare young people for a world with less stable

geopolitics and rapid changes fuelled by tech like AI. More than ever, young people need the courage to learn and adapt when they need to.

**The sense of belonging Scouts gives has never been more important. We're proud to welcome all young people regardless of gender, race, background or religion. We stand for unity, togetherness and believe our differences make us stronger.**

Above all, we need to keep young people at the heart of everything we do. We need to listen and respond to their needs.

We're proud that we're a movement for young people – this is a strategy for a brighter future shaped by them.

Turn to page 25 to hear from some of our young people.



**This is a strategy shaped by 28,000 people in Scouts and beyond, including more than 3,000 young Scouts who made their voices heard.**





# Empowering young people

**Scouts supports nearly half a million people each week. It's a place to be yourself and be part of something. Our new strategy is about helping even more people find a place to belong.**

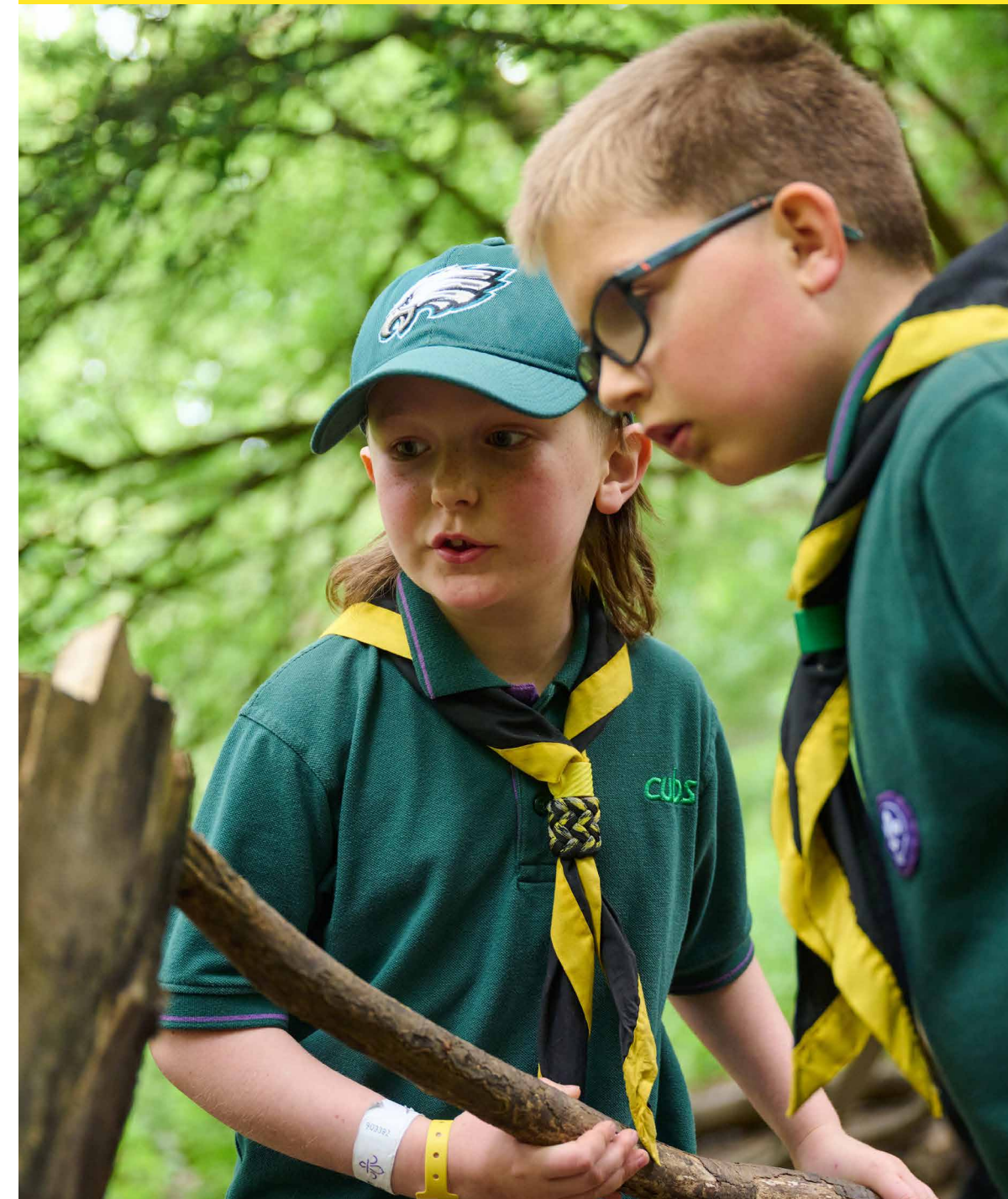
As Scouts, we're at our best when we work together. We've proved this with our last strategy, Skills for Life. By supporting each other as a team, we've grown, become more inclusive, more youth shaped and made a positive difference in our communities.

Across the UK, in the Nations, and Overseas, we've achieved so much - from navigating the challenges of the pandemic of 2020-21, launching Squirrels (now supporting more than 25,000 young people) to improving the way we welcome and support our volunteers. Since 2018, the start of the last strategy, we've supported well over a million young people.

We've also learnt a great deal. Change needs time, patience and support, balanced with the need to keep delivering an excellent Programme week to week. We need to keep safety as our highest priority and leave space for the unexpected.

**Vitality, we need to double down on the support we give to our volunteers who make Scouts possible.**

Scouts is widely admired and respected, with over 85% trust among UK adults (YouGov 2025). Not only for the way we bring people together and champion the next generation, but also for being bright beacons for hope and unity in our communities. We're proud of the values of Integrity, Respect, Care, Belief and Cooperation that bind us. And we're proud to pass these on from one generation to the next.





# How Scouts changes lives

## Why

### Young people join...

From all backgrounds seeking a place to belong, friendship and connection. They're welcomed into:

- Squirrels
- Beavers
- Cubs
- Scouts
- Explorers
- Network

## How

### Experience...

Our Programme for 4-24 year olds

- Fun
- Friendship
- Adventure
- Teamwork
- Helping others
- A global community
- Volunteering
- Belonging

### Supported by...

Brilliant volunteers

Our Values of Integrity, Respect, Care, Belief and Cooperation

## Our impact

### Gain...

A place to belong

Skills for life

### Become...

Happier, kinder, more connected, empathetic, resilient, more employable

Active citizens

Inspiring volunteers

### Contribute to...

Closer communities

A kinder, more cohesive society



**Scouts supports young people in 7,000 communities across the UK, including the most deprived.**



# Across our communities

We're renewing our commitment to social action and making a difference, both for the young people taking part in our projects and the communities they help. Helping our communities is a huge part of what Scouts does.





## How to use this strategy

Think of our strategy as a compass, guiding us into the future. It's made up of our Vision, Purpose, Pillars and Outcomes. Let's explore how these elements work together.

### Our Vision

This paints a picture of where we want to be and the impact we want to make. Our Vision is ambitious, inspiring and provides a clear direction for everything we do.

### Our Purpose

If our Vision is what we want to achieve, our Purpose is why we exist. It's the driving force that energises our entire movement.

### Our Pillars

These are the core of what Scouts is all about. These two pillars, 'Delivering an adventurous and inclusive Programme' and 'Supporting our volunteers', represent the very core of what we do in Scouts, and what we need to work on to deliver on our Purpose and achieve our Vision. They are linked and must be as strong as each other to succeed.

### Our Outcomes

Outcomes focus on the impact and change we want to see. They describe what will be different as a result of our work. We measure progress towards these outcomes using clear indicators, helping us track how effectively we are advancing and allowing us to adapt as needed.

### How Vision, Purpose, Pillars and Outcomes work together

Our Vision sets our destination, our Purpose fuels our journey, our Pillars keep us on track, and our Outcomes describe the changes we expect to see along the way. Together, they tell us where we're going, why, and what will be different as a result.

**Our Vision sets our destination, our Purpose fuels our journey, Our Pillars keep us on track and our Outcomes describe the changes we expect to see along the way.**



# Place to belong: **Our Strategy to 2035**



## **Our Vision**

To empower more young people through adventure, teamwork and shared values, to take the lead on making a positive difference in the world.

## **Our Purpose**

To actively engage and support young people in their personal development, empowering them to make a positive contribution to society.

## **Our Pillars**

### **Programme**

Delivering an adventurous and inclusive Programme.

### **Volunteering**

Supporting our volunteers

## **Our Outcomes**

By 2035 we will have:

1. A growing and inclusive movement
2. More young people gaining skills and leading change
3. Volunteers who feel confident, supported and valued
4. Stronger and better connected communities
5. A safe, inclusive and sustainable movement

**Our Values** Integrity, Respect, Care, Belief, Cooperation



# Our Vision

To empower more young people through adventure, teamwork and shared values, to take the lead on making a positive difference in the world.



# Our Purpose

To actively engage and support young people in their personal development, empowering them to make a positive contribution to society.



# Our Pillars

## Pillar 1

### **Delivering an adventurous and inclusive Programme**

When young people experience belonging, they're more likely to grow, participate and stay engaged. An inclusive Programme rooted in the outdoors, filled with adventure and grounded in community, connects young people locally and globally, offering them experiences that enable them to thrive.

## Pillar 2

### **Supporting our volunteers**

Our volunteers are brilliant, and we need more of them - well trained, confident and supported - to bring our Vision to life. When our leaders feel prepared and motivated, they're better able to empower young people to take the lead.





By 2035 we'll have...

## Our Outcomes

# 1. A growing and inclusive movement

Scouts is welcoming more young people and adults, especially from communities underrepresented in our movement. We offer a safe, inclusive space where everyone feels they belong. Growth is meaningful and sustained, reaching new communities, retaining members and reflecting the diversity of society.



**By 2035 we'll have...**

## Our Outcomes

# 2. More young people gaining skills for life and leading change

Every young person in Scouts is building the skills, character and confidence they need to thrive. Through adventurous experiences, global awareness and meaningful opportunities to lead, they develop a strong sense of identity and purpose. Young people are not just shaped by Scouts; they are shaping it.



**By 2035 we'll have...**

**Our Outcomes**

### **3. Volunteers who feel confident, supported and valued**

We attract and retain more volunteers by making the experience inclusive and rewarding. They feel equipped and confident to contribute in flexible, fulfilling ways. Volunteering in Scouts strengthens their own personal growth, builds community and supports long-term affinity with the movement.





By 2035 we'll have...

Our Outcomes

## 4. Stronger and better connected communities

Scouts plays a visible and positive role in communities across the UK. Locally, Scouts builds bridges between people of different backgrounds, promotes civic engagement and creates spaces where everyone can belong and make a difference. Through local action, Scouts contributes to a more compassionate and cohesive society.



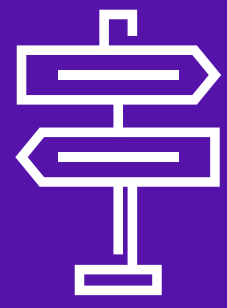
By 2035 we'll have...

## Our Outcomes

# 5. A safe, inclusive and sustainable movement

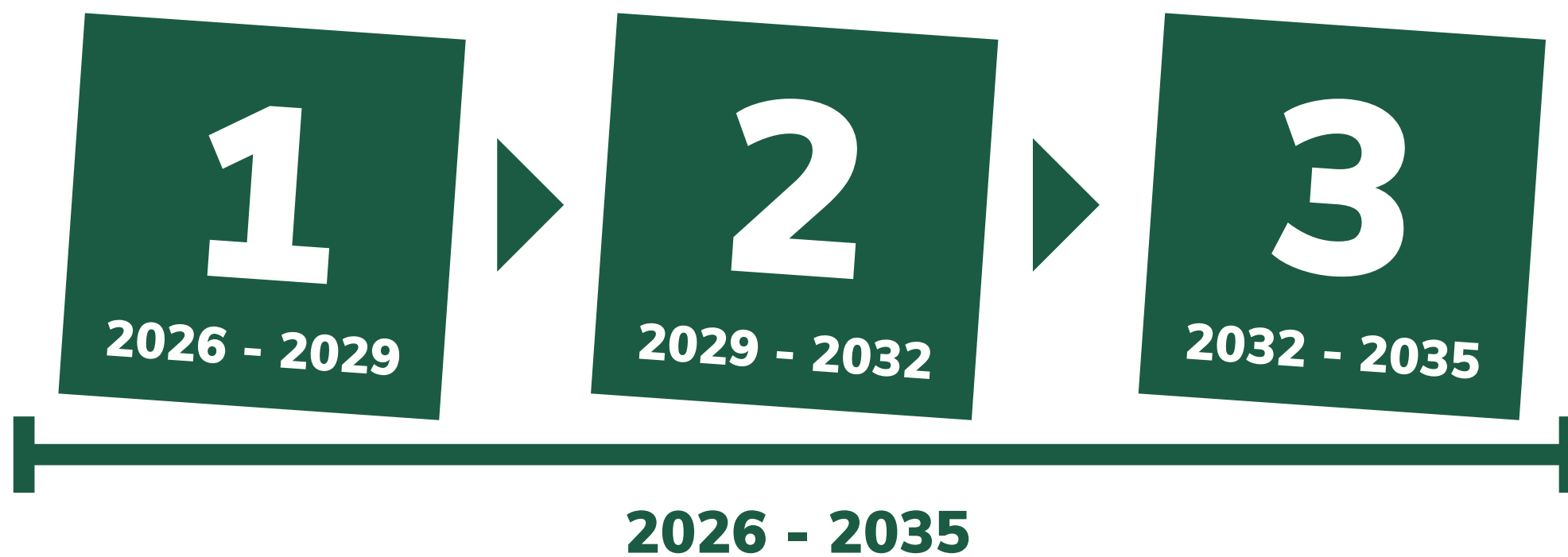
Scouts is built on strong, stable foundations. It is safe for every member, actively inclusive and resilient by design. With careful planning, good governance and sound resource management, we adapt to change and deliver consistently well.





# The path ahead: Shaping the next nine years

To turn strategy into delivery, we have three plans. These will take us on a journey through the nine-years of the strategy to achieve our Vision.



The first of our plans will give us three focus areas for our movement over the next three years: **Programme, Volunteering and Support.**

This strategy provides a direction of travel. But success will not come from words alone. It will come from what we choose to do, together, nationally and locally. Every small leap in the quality of our Programme. Every opportunity we give to young people. Every decision to support volunteers better. That collective effort will achieve our Vision.

## Our focus 2026-2029

### Programme

To safely deliver a fun, relevant and inclusive Programme for all.

### Volunteering

To improve volunteering, making sure our people feel valued, supported and motivated.

### Support

To be a growing, sustainable and effective movement.



# Across our Nations and Overseas

We're proud to help young people find a place to belong across our UK Nations and Overseas. Our dedicated teams meet the needs of young people in the Nations and Overseas. All of us celebrate our local differences while being part of the UK Scouts family

We believe that the strength of our Scouts family lies in its diversity and the way it's embedded in local communities.

From helping Scouts reach the summit of Yr Wyddfa in Wales, to attending the International Jamboree at Blair Atholl, Scotland, Crawfordsburn in Northern Ireland, visiting Gilwell Park in England, or celebrating the handover of the International Peace Light in Austria, we provide opportunities to all.

**“The strength of our Scouts family is in its diversity and the way it's embedded in local communities.”**





# Part of a global family of Scouts

**We're part of a global family of over 60 million Scouts. Together as World Scouting, we make up one movement, committed to working towards:**

**A peaceful and inclusive world**

Scouting will work to create a peaceful and inclusive world, eliminating discrimination and ensuring safe and equal opportunities for everyone.

**A world shaped by youth**

Scouting will work to create a world shaped by youth who are barrier-breakers, bridge-builders, informed decision-makers and responsible active citizens, empowered by core competences and values developed through Scouting.

**A sustainable world**

Scouting will work to build resilient communities by educating and empowering young people to adapt, mitigate, and take action on climate change, pollution, and biodiversity conservation, balancing economic development, social improvement, and the environment.



**'Together, we're working towards a peaceful and inclusive world.'**





# We're a place to...

**'Scouts is a place to do your best, not be the best.'**

- learn
- grow**
- explore
- discover**
- thrive
- find friends**
- find yourself
- be you**
- belong





# This is a time to...

- **Empower**  
young people with skills to thrive and a place to belong.
- **Champion**  
and support our volunteers.
- **Get outdoors**  
and enjoy adventure.
- **Work together**  
as a team to achieve more than we can alone.
- **Make a positive difference**  
in the world.
- **Celebrate**  
young people, their promise and achievements.
- **Help other people**  
and make a positive difference in our communities.
- **Feel good**  
about ourselves.



Ayesha Karim, our UK Youth Lead from 2023-2026



# How young people shaped our strategy

## Speaking up, sparking change.

The UK Youth Forum 2025 was led by our UK Youth Team to make sure young people's voices shaped our strategy.

Through local self-led activities and four in-person events held during March and April 2025, young people shared ideas, aspirations, and concerns for the future, building on the 'Skills for Life' strategy and advancing our commitment to youth-shaped Scouting.

Over 500 young people aged 10–24 years attended the in-person events, with delegations representing almost every County, Area, or Region across all four Nations, as well as Overseas, reflecting a strong balance of sections, ages, and genders.

A further 1,000 young people aged 4–24 contributed to the self-led activities. They showed they're exceptional problem-solvers, offering fresh insights to deliver our new strategy.

The Forum revealed a vision for Scouts as safe, adventurous, practical, inclusive, and youth-led, supported by committed volunteer leaders.

Outdoor activities, life skills, and youth leadership emerged as key priorities, with some delegates viewing these as enablers to strengthen mental well-being, boost community impact, and attract new members.

They also wanted to see easier volunteering, stronger community connections, and a balance between tradition and progress.

Looking ahead to 2035, their top goals for Scouts were:

- developing awards and life skills,
- promoting inclusivity and accessibility,
- expanding youth-led initiatives,
- encouraging growth,
- fostering stronger connections; and
- viewing Scouts as a launchpad for ambitions.

Our young people wanted safe, judgement-free spaces supported by trusted, well-trained volunteers.

The UK Youth Forum 2025 confirmed our future is challenging but bright, driven by passionate young people eager to shape it.



Scouts taking part in the UK Youth Forum 2025





# Young people's voices



**'Success is becoming who I want to be and making little me proud.'**

**'I need a place to escape to when life gets hard.'**

**'Scouts builds my confidence and my belief in myself.'**

**'Scouts gives me a sense of community and belonging, support and guidance, and the skills I need to succeed.'**

**'My leaders keep telling me I can do it, even if I say I can't. They believe in me. They're there when I need someone to pick me up.'**

**'Success is being happy and comfortable in life, with knowledge of your own self-value.'**



Quotes from Scouts' UK Youth Forums, 2025



**'Give us the skills, the space, and the belief — and we'll do the rest!'**





# Sustainability

We're committed to:

## Environmental sustainability

Reducing our environmental footprint, promoting climate awareness and action, and modelling responsible stewardship of the planet.

## Social sustainability

Ensuring inclusivity, equity and wellbeing within Scouts and in the communities we serve, creating a movement where everyone feels welcome, safe and empowered to thrive.

## Economic and organisational sustainability

Making sure our finances, structures, volunteer base and delivery models are resilient, well-supported and fit for the future.

We believe in building a movement that endures, is able to adapt to change, contributes to a better world and provides consistent, high-quality experiences for generations to come.





**This is a strategy for young people,  
shaped by young people.**





**Help us give more young people a place to belong.**



[scouts.org.uk/strategy](https://scouts.org.uk/strategy)

