
Skills for Life

**Our plan to prepare better futures
2018-2023**

Group Scout Leader Guide

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Welcome to Scouting's future!

Thank you for the time you put into managing and making Scouting happen. Because of you, more young people take part in an inspiring programme that gives them skills to thrive and develop.

Our new strategy lays out a plan for the next five years so that we can support even more adults and young people as we develop Scouting's future together. With this plan we're building on the successes of our last plan, by continuing to focus on **Growth, Inclusion, Youth Shaped and Community Impact**.

During the development of this plan you told us you needed more support to deliver an inspiring programme and more support recruiting, retaining and training volunteers. We believe that the initiatives planned under the pillars of Programme, People and Perception will help deliver this support. At UK headquarters we will focus our work on these initiatives.

We hope this guide helps you and your Group¹ to understand what the Skills for Life plan means for you locally and how to access relevant resources to roll out the plan.

In summary, this guide will support you to:

1. explain the Skills for Life plan to members in your Group
2. take action that will help contribute to the vision and objectives of the Skills for Life plan
3. understand what UK headquarters is going to do to better support volunteers as part of the Skills for Life plan

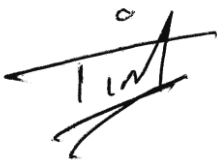
After more than a year of consultation with volunteers, young people, the public and decision makers, we know the vision and goals in the Skills for Life plan resonates well and that it's something we can all unite around. We also know that Scouting achieves amazing things.

We have put together a checklist of actions that you can take as a Group that will work towards achieving our shared goals. The focus of Groups is on delivering a great programme for young people and the actions reflect this. We know that by delivering a fun and adventurous programme we will attract and retain young people.

We recognise that each Group is at various stages of development and each has a different context to consider. We hope this guide and the checklist of actions will provide tips on how you can deliver a great programme giving young people the skills they need to succeed.

It's important that your Group team understands and supports the delivery of this Skills for Life plan and the associated actions, and therefore this guide is for your whole team.

Looking forward to working together to achieve our goals. With your support, I believe we're well on our way.



Tim Kidd

UK Chief Commissioner

¹ Please note that there is a specific guide for Group Scout Leaders in Scotland which is available on scouts.scot/strategy on 15 May 2018. Group Scout Leaders in Scotland should refer to their guide for what actions to take and support resources.

Skills for Life strategic plan

We believe that skills for life can prepare better futures

Our vision

By 2023 we will have prepared more young people with skills for life, supported by amazing leaders delivering an inspiring programme.

We will be growing, more inclusive, shaped by young people and making a bigger impact in our communities.

Our objectives

In 2016 we asked volunteers what should be prioritised in the next strategic plan and the majority of volunteers said we should keep working towards the same four strategic objectives.

- Growth
- Inclusivity
- Youth Shaped
- Community Impact

Our goals

These are the goals we aim to achieve by 2023:

- 50,000 more young people
- 5,000 more Explorer Scout Young Leaders
- 10,000 more Section Leaders
- Our volunteers reflect the demographics of our society
- 500 more sections in areas of deprivation
- 250,000 young people shaping their Scouting experience
- 250,000 young people making a positive impact in their communities
- 50% of young people achieving the top awards

A better future for young people, giving them the character, practical and employability skills they need to succeed

Our pillars of work

At UK headquarters we have a plan of action to improve our support for volunteers, to make life easier so that more time can be spent on delivering an inspiring programme and to help recruit and retain more leaders.

We will focus this work under these pillars:

- Programme
- People
- Perception

A full version of the plan, including a full list of initiatives under the three pillars of work, is available on www.scouts.org.uk/ourplan

Whilst UK headquarters starts work on these initiatives there are actions you can take to help our movement achieve our stated goals by 2023.

A better future for volunteers by equipping them with better skills, tools and support to deliver inspiring programmes

Actions for volunteers

We have created a checklist of practical actions volunteers can take to contribute to the delivery of the four strategic objectives.

We have chosen actions that are specific and already have supporting resources in place. We understand that many of you will be working towards some of the actions already and we encourage you to continue to do so and to use this guide to build on what you're doing.

There are actions for sections, Youth Commissioners, Groups, Districts and Counties/Areas/Regions and there are guides to explain this all in more detail. We encourage you to read the guide closest to your role.

For a full list of suggested actions for all volunteers see Appendix 2.

Plan of action to support you

Pillars of work

What UK headquarters will be doing over the next five years to support you:

Programme

A fun, enjoyable, high quality programme consistently delivered and supported by simple (digital) tools

We will ensure the programme experienced by every young person is shaped by young people (Youth Shaped), more relevant and accessible for young people from diverse backgrounds (Inclusion), and enables social action (Community Impact). The programme should attract and retain young people (Growth) because it's fun, adventurous and supports young people to develop life skills.

Our plan of action is to support volunteers with delivering a **high quality programme** and we will review the provision of the **14-25 year old programme** so that we continue to attract and retain young people and give them the skills they need to succeed in life.

We have committed to these initiatives:

Support quality programmes

- Develop amazing Section Leaders
- Digital programme planning
- 'Off the shelf' programmes
- Digital tools to track progress

Provision for 14-25 year olds

- Review provision for 14-25 year olds
- Links to employability skills
- Partnerships to enhance the programme

People

More, well trained, better supported and motivated adult volunteers, and young people, from diverse backgrounds

Our work will ensure that there are more young people taking part in Scouting, with more volunteers to deliver a quality experience (Growth). We will ensure that young people are more likely to shape their Scouting experience (Youth Shaped); that young people and volunteers from diverse backgrounds join, stay, lead and mix in Scouting (Inclusion) and support high quality social action projects (Community Impact).

Our plan of action is to improve the **volunteer journey**, to make life easier for volunteers. Our plan also includes projects that will help us **extend our reach** to new audiences.

We have committed to these initiatives:

Improve the volunteer journey

- Transform adult recruitment
- Simpler training (focused on practical skills)
- Better online resources

Extend our reach

- Improve the joining process for young people
- Reach underrepresented communities
- Scouting in schools
- Explore early years provision

Perception

Scouting is clearly understood, more visible, trusted, respected and widely seen as playing a key role in today's society

Our communications and membership engagement will ensure more young people and adult volunteers from more diverse backgrounds join, stay, lead and mix in Scouting (Growth, Inclusion, Youth Shaped), celebrating the social action our young people undertake (Community Impact) and the skills for life that they learn through the Scout Programme.

To help us attract and retain more people we need to be seen as a modern, relevant organisation that gives young people skills for life. Our plan is to **transform our image** so that we communicate a clear and consistent message to potential new members.

We have committed to these initiatives:

Transform our image

- Brand roll out
- Resources to promote the benefits of Scouting
- Uniform review

Sharing the vision and plan

Skills for Life: our plan to prepare better futures is the Scouts plan for the next five years.

Once the plan has gone live there will be opportunities that come up where it will feel relevant to share the vision and Skills for Life plan with members, whether that's through your regular meetings, an AGM or online.

Understanding the context

To help explain the Skills for Life plan to members it's important to understand where it's come from.

The vision and Skills for Life plan is the result of a collaborative process, both in formulation and action as we move into its delivery. It only succeeds if we deliver it together, by working in partnership.

It only succeeds if we deliver it together, by working in partnership

Over 5,000 adult volunteers have helped review our objectives and consider our strategic priorities. This included volunteers across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. There was a clear steer by volunteers to keep the four strategic objectives of the *Scouting for All* plan.

During YouShape month in 2017, over 6,000 young people shaped the plan by telling us what was most important in Scouting.

We also consulted members of the public, politicians and key influencers.

Our consultation began in 2016 and culminated in our national conference, Summit17, in April 2017. 600 adult volunteers and young people attended and shaped the direction of the plan. There was strong support to focus on areas of work under Programme, People and Perception.

In August 2017 we circulated a draft of the proposed plan and asked volunteers and young people (14+) to take part in consultation meetings to discuss the proposals, give feedback and help prioritise what we should do. Over 5,000 volunteers and young people shaped the final version of the plan that was approved by The Scout Association board in January 2018.

Over 15,000 people have been involved in shaping the plan. A summary of the research from the consultation can be found at www.scouts.org.uk/beyond2018

Celebrate achievements

Scouting achieves remarkable things. This is because of the dedication, enthusiasm and time given by volunteers. Our previous plan, *Scouting for All*, inspired 834 new sections to start in areas of deprivation since 2013. We now help 462,000 young people aged 6-18 (including 102,000 girls) get the best possible start in life. Thank you for your role in achieving this. Whilst sharing the new vision and plan it's important to take time to celebrate and thank volunteers for their contribution.

Top tips for sharing the vision

This guide will help introduce the plan and engage members locally with what everyone can do to contribute. We have created a series of resources and tips on how best to share the plan with members in your Group. A full list of the resources and where to find them can be found in Appendix 4.

Here are some tips on how to use the resources to share the vision and plan with members.

- Use the Skills for Life strategy explainer video at the start of a presentation or share the video in any Group Facebook groups or other volunteer facing social media.
- Use the Skills for Life PowerPoint presentation for your Group meetings, such as the AGMs, forums or events. You can edit the PowerPoint to make it relevant to your Group.
- You can circulate the Skills for Life booklet as a PDF to volunteers or you can order printed copies from the Scout brand centre to use at a meeting or event you host.
- There are guides to the strategy for sections as well as Groups, District and Counties/Areas – make sure they are aware of them.
- There are also external facing materials you can use to help explain the vision, mission, values and plan for the next five years to an audience such as your local MP, councillors or potential funders.

Group actions

Communicate the Skills for Life plan

To help members in your Group understand what the new plan means for them, share the Skills for Life vision and plan.

Action

- Follow up from the UK headquarters communication with an email (or other form of communication) to Group members to explain that the new Skills for Life plan is now live.
- Share the Skills for Life explainer video on any Group social media and guide members to www.scouts.org.uk/ourplan for more information.

Support

- There is a series of resources you can use to help explain the Skills for Life plan including a video, presentations and booklets. See Appendix 4 for a handy list of where to find all the resources.

Roll out the updated brand

One of the pillars of work, Perception, is about helping to effectively communicate the role and impact of Scouting in young people's lives and wider society. This will help both attract and retain more young people and volunteers.

Action

- Help the Group to roll out the updated brand, explaining the benefits.

Support

- Use the activation guide to understand how and when to roll out the brand.
- Use the Scout brand centre to find the updated collection of resources and templates. Use www.scouts.org.uk/brand

Focus on the programme - developing Section Leaders, giving them the skills and support needed to deliver a high quality programme

Growth

A great programme delivered well attracts and retains more young people. We know that to help us grow we need to ensure that all Scout Groups are complete, with no missing sections, to retain young people.

We believe that the earlier a young person starts their Scouting experience the longer they will stay. We also know that a young leader is more likely to stay on as an adult volunteer in Scouting.

A great programme delivered well attracts and retains more young people

To help us grow we need to continue to:

- focus on the programme - developing Section Leaders, giving them the skills and support needed to deliver a high quality programme
- open new sections where there are large waiting lists or no provision
- open missing sections in Groups and Districts
- support and grow sections that have fewer than 12 young people

Action

- Ensure that all Section Leaders and Assistants have completed the training on planning and delivering a great programme (Module 12 A and B).
- Work with the District team to ensure all Groups are complete (ie have no missing sections).

Support

- Work with the Training Advisors to ensure Sections Leaders and Assistants complete Module 12 A and B.
- Use the Guide to Opening a New Section resource and work closely with the District lead for growth (or District Commissioner).
- There is an action to encourage Counties or Districts to run a quality programme and practical skills event for Section Leaders each year to help build up the knowledge and confidence of practical Scouting skills.

Inclusivity

We want to ensure that Scouting is open and welcoming to young people and volunteers from all backgrounds. To ensure Scouting continues to thrive, our membership should be diverse.

We want to make our processes more inclusive and accessible to encourage people to join, stay and thrive.

We also want our Section Leaders to be better equipped with skills, knowledge and confidence to meet the needs of all young people and ensure Scouting is open to all.

We have designed a self-assessment tool using a red, amber, green (RAG) system that can be used at a District, Group or section level. The tool is designed to understand how you are doing in relation to being open to all and what actions you could take to develop further.

Action

- Use the Inclusivity RAG Assessment for your Group.
- Encourage all sections to use the Inclusivity RAG Assessment and to work towards getting green in all areas.

Support

- Use the new resource, the Inclusivity RAG Assessment.
- Take actions from the toolkit to improve how you do in future.
- For support and guidance on inclusion we provide further information on the Scouting for All pages on www.scouts.org.uk/diversity

Youth Shaped

Involving young people in decision making is essential for our governance structures to stay informed and responsive to the fast-paced changes facing young people today. By encouraging a mixture of experiences and ages on our executive committees and leadership teams, we are more likely to encourage healthy debate and make better decisions that are relevant to the lives of young people in society today.

The more we involve young people in our decision making structures the more they are able to influence decisions.

The more young people are involved in shaping their programme the more they will get out of it, and the more likely they are to stay, do well and achieve their top awards.

The more we involve young people in our decision making structures the more they are able to influence decisions

Action

- Support two 18-24 year olds on the Group Executive Committee working closely with the Group Chair.

Support

- Use the Young People on Committees_resource to understand how best to support 18-24 year olds on executive committees
- Use the Executive Committees for Young People resource for 18-24 year olds who have just been appointed or are interested in an executive committee position.

Community Impact

Core to Scouting is young people making a positive contribution to society. It's a fundamental part of being a Scout and has been central to the purpose of Scouting from the very beginning. We know it takes time to plan a high quality community impact project and that more support is needed to deliver the Community Impact Staged Activity Badges.

A Million Hands is a project designed to help leaders run community impact projects that help young people identify and plan action on an issue they choose. The project brings together our A Million Hands charity partners resources and is designed to support leaders deliver the Community Impact Staged Activity Badges. Currently there are four issues that young people can choose from and resources now include support to run a project on any issue.

Action

- Ensure all sections have run an A Million Hands project, or organise it as a Group, to ensure that all sections are achieving the Community Impact Staged Activity Badges.

Support

- Use the A Million Hands website designed to support delivery of quality community impact projects. Resources now include support to run a project on any issue.
- Counties/Areas are encouraged to run a community impact support day. Contact your County/Area Commissioner to express interest.

Appendices

Appendix 1 | Group Scout Leader checklist

We want to continue working towards the same four objectives and we already have a great foundation to build on. This checklist is a summary of the actions you could take to contribute to the Skills for Life plan. To find the links to resources to support these actions visit www.scouts.org.uk/ourplan and actions for volunteers.

Group Scout Leader action checklist

Communicate the Skills for Life plan

- Follow up from the UK headquarters communication with an email (or other form of communication) to Group members to explain that the new Skills for Life plan is now live.
- Share the Skills for Life explainer video on any Group social media and guide members to www.scouts.org.uk/ourplan for more information.

Roll out the updated brand

- Help the Group to roll out the updated brand, explaining the benefits.

Growth

- Ensure that all Section Leaders and Assistants have completed the training on planning and delivering a great programme (Module 12 A and B).
- Work with the District team to ensure all Groups are complete (ie have no missing sections).

Inclusivity

- Use the Inclusivity RAG Assessment for your Group.
- Encourage all sections to use the Inclusivity RAG Assessment and to work towards getting green in all areas.

Youth Shaped

- Support two 18-24 year olds on the Group Executive Committee working closely with the Group Chair.

Community Impact

- Ensure all sections have run an *A Million Hands* project, or organise it as a Group, to ensure that all sections are achieving the Community Impact Staged Activity Badges.

Appendix 2 | Action for volunteers

Growth

There are support resources available for each action. To access the resources view the actions for volunteers on www.scouts.org.uk/ourplan

Role(s) most related to the action	Action
Young Leader	<input type="checkbox"/> Recruit a friend to join the Young Leaders' scheme
Section Leader	<input type="checkbox"/> Use the Quality Programme checker
Group Scout Leader	<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure all Section Leaders and Assistants have completed their training on how to plan and deliver a quality programme
District Commissioner / Assistant District Commissioners	<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that a quality programme and practical skills event is provided for Section Leaders each year (could be run at a District or County/Area level)
District Commissioner	<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure all Groups are complete (ie have no missing sections)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Appoint a District growth and development lead
	<input type="checkbox"/> Develop and implement a District growth strategy (development plan) and set goals (based on the Census results)
Youth Commissioner (District or County/Area)	<input type="checkbox"/> Encourage young people to take on a Section Leader or Assistant role (particularly Explorer Scout Young Leaders once they complete the scheme)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Develop Young Leader provision in the District/County/Area by collaborating with your local Explorer Scout Leader (Young Leader) to implement the updated Young Leaders' resources.
County/Area Commissioner	<input type="checkbox"/> Appoint a County/Area growth and development lead
	<input type="checkbox"/> Develop and implement a County/Area growth strategy (development plan) that includes goals for each District, identifying opportunities based on the Census results and local population.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Work with your District teams (including Assistant District Commissioners) to ensure that a quality programme and practical skills event is provided for Section Leaders each year.

Inclusivity

There are support resources available for each action. To access the resources view the actions for volunteers on www.scouts.org.uk/ourplan

Role (s) most related to action	Action
Young Leader	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete Module F, Making Scouting Accessible, of the Young Leaders' Scheme
Section Leader Group Scout Leader District Commissioner	<input type="checkbox"/> Use the Inclusivity RAG Assessment at a section, Group and District level
Youth Commissioner (District or County/Area)	<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure all District/County/Area projects are developed and delivered in partnership with young people
County/Area Commissioner / County/Area lead for growth	<input type="checkbox"/> Start sections in areas of deprivation and under-represented communities (as part of your County/Area growth strategy (development plan)
County/Area Commissioner	<input type="checkbox"/> Encourage all Districts, Groups and sections to use the Inclusivity RAG Assessment Checker and to work towards getting green in all areas

Community Impact

There are support resources available for each action. To access the resources view the actions for volunteers on www.scouts.org.uk/ourplan

Role (s) most related to action	Action
Young Leader	<input type="checkbox"/> Lead an AMH project with a group of young people in Scouting (this could be part of the Young Leaders' Scheme Mission 4, Duke of Edinburgh or Queen's Scout Award)
Section Leader	<input type="checkbox"/> Run an <i>A Million Hands</i> project in your section or join together and run it as a Group to ensure that all young people are achieving their Community Impact Staged Activity Badges
Group Scout Leader	<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure all sections have run an <i>A Million Hands</i> project, or organise it as a Group
Youth Commissioner (District / County/Area)	<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure all District/County/Area <i>A Million Hands</i> projects are chosen and delivered in partnership with young people
District Commissioner	<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure all Groups have run an <i>A Million Hands</i> project, or organise it as a District
County/Area Commissioner	<input type="checkbox"/> Run a community impact support day to inspire sections, Groups, Districts to deliver quality community impact projects

Youth Shaped

There are support resources available for each action. To access the resources view the actions for volunteers on www.scouts.org.uk/ourplan

Role (s) most related to action	Action
Young Leader	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete the Young Leaders' Scheme with emphasis on completing Mission 3 - to take the section's programme ideas to a programme planning meeting
	<input type="checkbox"/> Champion the voices of young people in the programme planning process for your section
Section Leader	<input type="checkbox"/> Hold termly Log Chews, Pack Forums or Patrol Leader Councils, Explorer Forums (at least three a year)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Deliver the Teamwork (Beavers, Cubs, Scouts) and Team Leader (Cubs, Scouts) Challenge Awards
	<input type="checkbox"/> Implement a progressive peer leadership system within your section
Group Scout Leader	<input type="checkbox"/> Support at least two 18-24 year olds as members of the Group Executive Committee working closely with the Executive Chair
District Commissioner	<input type="checkbox"/> Support a District Youth Commissioner to develop and deliver a Youth Shaped Scouting action plan for the District.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Support at least two 18-24 year olds as members of the District Executive Committee working closely with the Executive Chair.
Youth Commissioner (District or County/Area)	<input type="checkbox"/> Develop and deliver Youth Shaped Scouting action plan for your District/County/Area
County/Area Commissioner	<input type="checkbox"/> Support a County/Area Youth Commissioner to develop and implement a Youth Shaped Scouting action plan for the County/Area
	<input type="checkbox"/> Support at least two 18-24 year olds as members of the County/Area Executive Committee working closely with the Executive Chair

Appendix 3 | Frequently used terms

Terms	Meaning
Skills for Life: our plan to prepare better futures 2018-2023	Full title for the Scouts strategic plan.
Skills for Life plan	Short title for the Scouts strategic plan.
Strategic plan	A strategy is a plan of action designed to achieve a long term aim or statement of intent. In the Scouts strategy our long term aim is our mission and vision. These terms all refer to the Skills for Life plan. Different terms are used depending on the audience.
Strategy	
Our plan	
Skills for Life plan	
Skills for Life strategy	
Our plan to prepare better futures	
Vision	A statement of what we aim to achieve by 2023. Our vision is practical and speaks to the role of volunteers in delivering a great programme for young people.
Mission	A statement of our overall purpose. Our mission is the purpose of Scouting (why we exist), part of the fundamentals of Scouting.
Objectives (strategic objectives)	A result we are aiming to achieve. We have four objectives: to grow, become more inclusive, shaped by young people and make a bigger difference in our communities.
Goals	We have set targets for each objective. These are statements we can measure or count which will show how well we are doing, eg we want to grow by 50,000 young people by 2023. Other similar terms include Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), targets, and outputs.
Actions for volunteers	We have created a series of actions volunteers can take under each of the four objectives that will contribute and help us achieve our stated goals.
Call to action	
Pillars of work	These terms refer to the plan of action of proposed initiatives under the areas of Programme, People and Perception. These initiatives will be the main area of work for UK headquarters to better support volunteers and to help us achieve our stated vision and objectives.
Our plan of action	
Local action plan (eg District action plan, County/Area action plan)	Every District and County/Area/Region (Scotland) is encouraged to create an overall action plan that aligns to the Skills for Life vision and objectives.
Growth strategy (development plan)	Every District and County/Area/Region (Scotland) is encouraged to create a specific plan for growth and development. Most will already have one in place and use a range of terms such as growth strategy or development plan.
Youth Shaped Scouting action plan	Every Youth Commissioner is encouraged to create an action plan to build on the Youth Shaped strategic objective.

Appendix 4 | Links to resources

There are a number of resources that support this guide. These can all be found on the Scout brand centre www.scouts.org.uk/brand or on the sections of the website that covers actions for volunteers.

- Resources that explain the Skills for Life plan for members

- Skills for Life plan booklet (for members)
- Skills for Life PowerPoint template (for members)
- Skills for Life explainer video
- County/Area Guide
- County/Area action plan template
- District Guide
- District action plan template
- Youth Commissioner Guide
- Group Scout Leader Guide
- Section Leader Guide
- Webpages www.scouts.org.uk/ourplan

- Resources that explain the Skills for Life plan to an external audience

- Skills for Life booklet (external audience)
- Skills for Life PowerPoint template (external audience)