

Our Organisation

Structural Review 2026



Building a Stronger Future Together

Who and What?

The Structural Review Subcommittee was established by the Board of Directors in July 2023 to conduct a root-and-branch review of Scouting Ireland's organisational structures.

The review examines the effectiveness of Scouting Ireland's structures at every layer: Group, County, Provincial, National, and Board.

The review has been guided by a small number of principles: that the young people and volunteers who deliver scouting come first; that change should be evidence-led; that no constitutional change is imposed without member consultation; and that any structure must work for both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland areas.



Put young people and volunteers first.

How we did it ...

**National
Survey
2024**

**Provincial
Conference
Workshops**

**National
Assembly
Cross-
Reference**

**International
Benchmarking**

**Board
Survey**

**Interim
Report
2025**

**Focus
Groups**

**Youth
Members**

**Staff
Consultation**



THIS WAS A LISTENING EXERCISE AT SCALE

The report combines survey evidence with workshops, focus groups, youth consultation and benchmarking.

A simple picture of the current layers

GROUP

Working

COUNTY

Mixed

PROVINCIAL

Highly variable

NATIONAL

Significant concern

BOARD

Limited direct contact

The Group layer is the anchor. The review's concern is how support, communication and accountability flow through the layers above it.

Findings

Layers

Group – Working

The layer members consistently value; the place scouting happens.

County – Mixed

Valued where Commissioners mentor well; overstretched elsewhere.

Provincial – Highly variable

Bimodal / Varying, strong in some areas, less in others, delivery supports & structure inconsistent

National – Significant concern

The layer drawing the most negative feedback across all sources. Disconnect

Board / Sub-Committees – Limited but critical

Little direct member contact; role poorly understood. Disconnect

Themes

Staff-Volunteer relationship - Mixed

Who does what; the felt sense that “volunteer-led, staff-supported” has invert

Communication & Transparency - Negative

Information does not flow; decisions are perceived as made without membership consultation.

Provincial /County Structure – Mixed

Contested: Respondents seeking removal, improvements and some lack of understanding of role,

Board Role clarity – Constructive

Constructive Consensus that the Board should oversee, not operate.

Bureaucracy & Administration – Negative

Paperwork and compliance load falling on volunteers

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- Group-level scouting works and is valued — the core of the organisation is sound.
- Safeguarding has improved and is taken extremely seriously.
- The PSO model, where well implemented, demonstrably works.
- Training content quality is rated highly when members can access it.

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- The National layer draws consistent, cross-source negative feedback.
- Administrative and compliance burden falls heavily on volunteers.
- County and Provincial roles bundle three distinct functions into one, creating conflict and confusion.
- Youth voice at every layer has weakened, with several youth roles effectively demised.

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- The Digital Strategy can remove admin friction and enable direct member communication.
- Unbundling the three functions resolves the structural conflict at the middle layers.
- A 32-county model gives Northern Ireland structurally equitable treatment.
- Peer national Scout organisations offer tested models worth learning from.

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- New zones simply become the old provinces under a different name.
- “National” continues to be experienced as “Dublin” by members from outside Dublin.
- A representative body drifts into a shadow board with its own agenda.
- The transition exhausts an already-stretched volunteer pool.
- Northern Ireland needs remain designed-around-last rather than designed-in.
- The digital backbone arrives late, so structural change launches without its foundation.

Unbundle. Focus. Support.

1

SERVICE & SUPPORT

Keep delivery close to Groups and Counties.

2

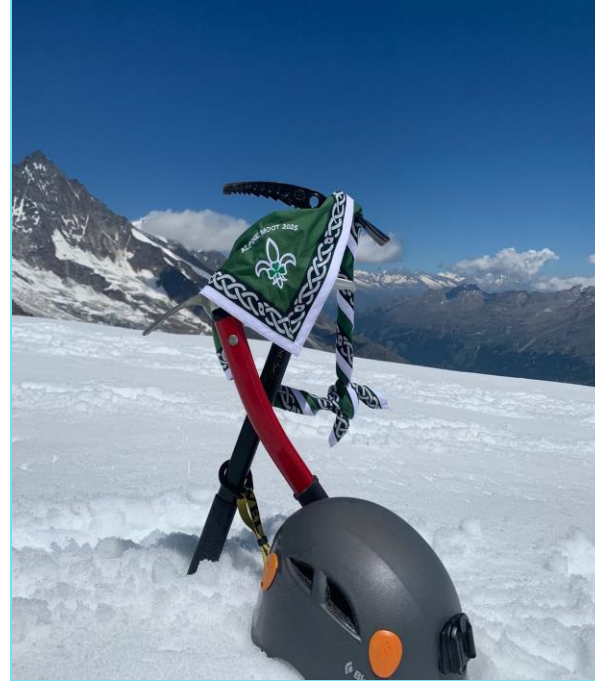
REPRESENTATION & VOICE

Use Membership Pulse to carry member voice.

3

RESOURCE ALLOCATION

Make allocation transparent and accountable nationally.



Three high-priority moves

01

DIGITAL STRATEGY

2026–2028

Foundation for communication, training, administration and organisational visibility.

02

NATIONAL TRAINING

2026–2027

Consistent access to quality training regardless of geography.

03

STREAMLINED STRUCTURE

2027–2028

Retire provincial governance; organise service delivery around 32 counties.

2026 → 2028: decide, build, transition

2026 / 27

DECIDE

- Board decision in principle
- prepare motions where needed
- establish change management

2027 / 28

TRANSITION

- Phased rollout
- grace periods
- continuous member communication
- avoid peak season

2027

BUILD

- Establish national functions
- pilot one or two zones
- digital backbone first

The review describes the shape of the path; detailed execution belongs to a dedicated implementation team.



Membership Pulse

Not a new council. A continuous feedback system.

01

SQS

A refreshed quality picture across Groups.

02

QUARTERLY

Joint function reporting: Core Team + youth + staff.

03

ANNUAL

A national survey that turns member experience into action.



STRONGER TOGETHER

Keep what works.
Fix what gets in the way.

For our members, For our communities, For the future.

