



Honorary Chairman: H.M. The King of Sweden

Mr Adrian Tennant
Chair, Scouting Ireland
Ms Anne Griffin
CEO, Scouting Ireland

Geneva, 19th May, 2020

Dear Adrian and Anne

The team at the World Scout Foundation – our Honorary Chairman, the Swedish King, the Board and the staff have been at your side for the last few months and years as you tackled the challenges facing your organization. Personally, I should say “our” organization, as I speak, as you know, as a former volunteer in CBSI, and staff member in both CBSI and SAI.

We have greatly admired your work to tackle two major challenges you faced – child safety and governance. The two recent reports – on governance and safety – have shown that your work has been successful.

Scouting Ireland over a number of decades now, has instigated some of the best child protection policies and practices of any organization anywhere in the world. You should be very proud of that. I have very fond memories of some of the most amazing leaders – men and women – who inspired young people in their local communities back when I was there – Scouting Ireland has been blessed with these heroes – right through its history. And the recent reports of amazing Scouts doing great things throughout the country during the COVID days shows that this generation of leaders is equally inspiring and amazing – we should all say a big “thank you” to them for their work!

But one of the hardest things to tackle for any organisation is to get its governance right. And we have been so impressed with your work to do this. What you have now in Scouting Ireland is a state-of-the-art system of governance with fine, qualified people, chosen for the skills, not their popularity, who can carry out a real job of oversight – ensuring that volunteers and staff are held to account. What you have achieved is wonderful.

I am very proud to say I was an Irish Scout in the 1970s and 1980s. The training and leadership opportunities it provided, opened the world to me. And I can never thank Irish Scouting enough. But I can also say I am so proud to share with the Swedish King, and my Board, the story of Scouting Ireland *today*. You have done what many institutions in Ireland and abroad have failed to do – you identified major problems, you tackled them head on, and you solved them.

As you know we were due to come to Dublin with the King and many other business leaders last month, but COVID put a stop to that. We will be back in April 2021. It will be my pleasure and honour then, to showcase Scouting Ireland as a model for others in the World Scout Movement to follow.

Every one of your local leaders should be really proud of who you are, and what you do in Scouting Ireland – your work every week, to inspire young people in cold and draughts scout halls around the country produces amazing results. Each of you know about best practice Child Protection because of your training, and you are a huge asset – not only for your Scouts, but also for their parents, and for other youth leaders, teachers, and sports coaches. Share your good practice!
Share your enthusiasm.

And, maybe they won't say this for twenty or thirty years, but on behalf of every Scout, Cub, Beaver and Venturer (if that's what you still call them) that you inspire every week, THANK YOU!

You all – throughout all the levels of Scouting Ireland – from the VIPs (the local leaders in groups) to the supporters in regions or national level – are doing a wonderful job. These past months have been difficult, but looking in from where we sit, we can say that you have done yourselves proud!

We are with you all the way!

With kindest regards



John Geoghegan
Director