

**Scouting Ireland issues Organisational Apology to victims and survivors of sexual abuse in scouting who were failed.**

**Mr Ian Elliott's 'Historical Sexual Abuse in Scouting: A Learning Review' documents catastrophic failings in the protection of children in legacy organisations.**

**Scouting Ireland's new Governance and Safeguarding Structures put the welfare of children 'front and centre' in the organisation.**

**Thursday, 14<sup>th</sup> May 2020.** Scouting Ireland today issued an [Organisational Apology](#) to victims and survivors of sexual abuse in scouting who were failed.

Mr Adrian Tennant, Chair, Board Scouting Ireland made the Organisational Apology saying "As Chairperson of the Board of Scouting Ireland, as an adult volunteer and as a father, I wish to make an organisational apology to the victims and survivors of historical sexual abuse in Scouting who were failed.

"On behalf of Scouting Ireland, I unreservedly apologise to you. We are sorry for the hurt caused to you and the legacy of that hurt which many of you still live with today. We know we cannot take away that hurt. But we do want you to know that you have been heard. We want you to know that you are believed. We want you to know that we will support you." (Full text of Organisational Apology [here](#))

Determined to learn from the mistakes of the past; to understand what occurred so that we can do all in our power to make sure this never happens again, Scouting Ireland commissioned Mr Ian Elliott to undertake an independent Learning Review into Historical Sexual Abuse in Scouting. Mr Elliott's Report '[Historical Sexual Abuse in Scouting: A Learning Review](#)' is published by Scouting Ireland today.

The Report is accepted in full by Scouting Ireland who have committed to implementing the recommendations made by Mr Elliott. Scouting Ireland's [Response to Mr Elliott's Learning Review](#) outlines the progress made and future actions to be taken on these recommendations.

**Mr Adrian Tennant, Chair of the Board of Scouting Ireland** said: "This Learning Review is a milestone in Scouting Ireland's determination to search for the truth. It exposes past failings, particularly in our legacy organisations. It enables us to learn from an appalling backdrop of abuse which was ignored and unfortunately, in some cases, actively covered up.

“We are determined that there is no place in Scouting for anyone who, by design or by omission, harms a child. Cronyism, looking away and covering up are not victimless crimes. They are enabling actions.

“We pledge to adopt and deliver the Learnings and Recommendations of this Report. It is a light pointing into a very dark corner but it is also a beacon for the standards, culture and structures we must have, and which must be resourced to ensure that Scouting is a safe place for young people”.

**Anne Griffin, CEO, Scouting Ireland said;** “As CEO of Scouting Ireland, I want to assure all our members and the wider public that Scouting Ireland is a very different organisation today. Bad culture, as described in Mr Elliott’s Learning Review, thrives in poor structure and poor governance. Over the past three years we have implemented new governance and safeguarding structures which I believe, help us to stamp out any lingering elements of this damaging behaviour. I am determined to ensure that we continue this work so that we become an organisation that is the standard bearer for best in class safeguarding and governance”.

**Gearoid Begley, Safeguarding Manager, Scouting Ireland said;** “We know that safeguarding is a continuous and ever evolving issue. We have to continually review our processes and procedures and as our understanding and knowledge of perpetrators evolve and as new dangers emerge, we must be ready to meet them. There will never come a time when we can rest on our laurels. We are committed to making Scouting Ireland as safe as it can be for our young people and to ensure there is no hiding place for those who do wrong”.

**Mr. Tennant added,** “Scouting is a youth movement and our young people are at the centre of everything that we do. The development of young people to be the leaders of tomorrow is what we, as adult volunteers, sign up to facilitate. To be a volunteer in Scouting Ireland is a privilege, not a right. Cultural change requires we constantly re-centre ourselves on the young people we exist for”.

“To the victims and survivors – you, by your bravery in speaking out, have helped to uncover the truth. Your legacy now is to have helped to make Scouting Ireland a safer place for young people; to have reminded us of why we exist – to support and cherish our young people through their scouting experience”.

The Scouting Ireland Helpline is open Monday – Friday 9.30am – 5.00pm. Freephone 1800 221199 (ROI) and 00353 87 0934403 (NI).

**Ends.**

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