

Last chance to take part in the Scouts consultations on the Promise

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The UK Scout Association's consultation on the 'Promise' closes on 31 January. Please add your voice to ensure scouting is open to non-believers.

Despite describing themselves as "open and inclusive" organisation the Scouts currently insist that new members take a 'Promise' that includes a religious oath. With your help, this could all be about to change.

The [consultation](#) asks their members, and the wider public, whether an alternative non-religious version of the Promise should be developed for those who feel unable to make the existing commitment.

We have longed campaigned for an end to the exclusion of the non-religious in the Scouts. Finally, it appears public pressure is paying off.

We argue that the current wording acts as a religious barrier to full membership to a significant proportion of young people – and potential volunteers.

The recent [case of George Pratt](#) from Somerset highlights the unfairness of the Scout Association's current position. Despite attending the local Scout troop that meets opposite his home for the past ten months, 11-year old George was barred from full membership because he does not believe in God and didn't want to make the Scout Promise in its present form. He was told that, in view of his atheism, he would not be welcome to join or even continue attending meetings.

The Scout Association has made efforts to accommodate followers of many different religions, and we argue that they should now do the same to welcome people of no religion.

If you agree that the Scouts should be welcoming to non-religious — and not expect young people to lie about their beliefs in order to join — [please take part in this consultation](#).

The NSS's written response can be found [here](#) (PDF).

The Girl Guides [consultation](#) to discuss the wording of their Promise closes on 3 March . This consultation is also open to the general public and they're particularly keen to hear from parents, potential members, volunteers and supporters.

Below: Wayne Bulpitt, UK Chief Commissioner explains why UK Scouting has launched a survey to ask whether an alternative version of the Scout Promise should be developed for atheists and those unable to make the existing commitment.

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