

# **SCOUT COUNTY** development planning toolkit



# 'Those who never make any plans never make any progress either'

- Baden-Powell

Or to put it another way, 'Those who fail to plan, plan to fail.' It is an old adage, but very true, especially in Scouting. Whether planning a programme, a camp or the County's future, you need simple and realistic targets to ensure the County doesn't eventually shrink and close. This toolkit is yours to use, to help you plan and review the quality of your programme and to plan the continued success of your County. There is also help available in your area and from the Scout NI Team.

## BE SMART

Before we look at how to put a development plan together, let's ensure the targets we reach for are as realistic as possible; this makes the whole process much easier in the long term. Make your targets:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Aligned
- Relevant
- Time-bound

We need a new Assistant Explorer Leader	
S	We will recruit one new adult for the Explorer Unit
M	When their Access NI is returned and they have received their appointment, the target is reached
A	The task is linked to one of the Movement's National Objectives
R	The new adult will help us meet the future of young people, identified by the joining list
T	We will run this task for eight weeks, with a deadline of XX/XX/XXXX

If you use this system for setting targets, you are far more likely to succeed. Because you have clearly identified when the target is reached, you know exactly when to close the task and not waste extra resources by keeping it open for longer than normal. By making it time-bound you also know when to stop if you are not having any success, so the task can be reviewed and a new approach taken. Crucially, you are not pressing on with something that might never work, and wasting your time.

(We use this SMART mnemonic in a development context - to encourage the linking of objectives across the whole of Scouting)

# DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

Development plans do not need to be long, complicated documents that go on for pages and pages. Some of the best and most effective plans are the short and simple ones. Be realistic; what can you achieve this year?

## WHAT GOES INTO A DEVELOPMENT PLAN?

There are two main sources that can contribute to a development plan, one is a SWOT analysis of your County and the other is the RAG review. Elements are taken from both, prioritised, and then some items are placed on your development plan.



# SWOT ANALYSIS

The SWOT analysis helps you analyse the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats to your County. Strengths and Weaknesses are internal factors - things you have some control over, whereas Opportunities and Threats are external factors - things happening outside your County. All of these can influence the future of your County.

For a SWOT analysis to be effective you need to include your entire team of leaders and occasional helpers. Set aside 5 - 10 minutes and give everyone some post it notes to jot down their ideas. This prevents group thinking and ensures everyone's voice is heard. You can then assign each of these to its corresponding quadrant.

## **STRENGTHS**

(Things you are good at now, and need to be maintained and built upon)

## **WEAKNESSES**

(Things that are not good right now, that need to be remedied, changed, or stopped altogether)

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

(Things that are good for the future that need prioritising.  
They need to be identified, built upon and optimised)

## **THREATS**

(Things that are not good for the future that need  
to be planned for and countered)

## RAG REVIEW

The RAG review is a tool designed to help you plan and review the quality of your programme, making sure you are delivering quality Scouting for the young people you work with.

**A Quality Programme is Challenging, Relevant and Rewarding for every young person.**

What we mean by challenging

- More opportunities for outdoor and adventurous activities in safe environments
- Gaining confidence by participating in new or less familiar activities and stepping out of their comfort zones
- All young people regardless of their abilities, can enjoy and achieve

What we mean by Relevant

- Young people shape the programme based on what they want to learn and explore
- Ensure the needs of every young person are met
- Responding to what young people are currently inquisitive about and reflecting this in the programme

What we mean by Rewarding

- Developing skills for life, including teamwork and leadership
- Supporting young people with their progression through the sections
- Young people are excited about Scouting, having fun and increasing in confidence

Read the statements in each of the three categories and decide which one is the closest match to your County. Put the corresponding colour in your result column. At the end there are some blank areas, giving you the flexibility to add in local, specific issues that may affect your County. The last row is for your overall score; this is simply the RAG colour your Unit got the most of. This is not an indication of how 'good' you are as a Scout County; it is simply a way for Groups, Districts & Counties to co-ordinate where they should support development. The NI Chief Commissioner, may ask for your overall score, or a copy of your completed development pack. This will help them build the Regional development plan, or just to make them aware of local issues.

***In the RAG document 'District' is used as a generic term. Please replace 'District' with 'County' as appropriate for your area***

**PLEASE NOTE** that this is a generic set of criteria and your County's particular circumstances may alter slightly after the results for one or two elements. If you can't decide which statement is the closest match for your County try one of the following:

- Repeat the exercise, either independently or as a group, and find out what the consensus of opinion is.
- Speak to a member of the Scouts NI Team.
- Always err on the side of caution, only choose a statement if your group meets it entirely, or you could meet it quite quickly.
- Remember - Red isn't a sign of failure, merely an honest opinion of where you are now, and a good opportunity for development.

KEY	GREEN	AMBER	RED	OUR RESULT
Adults	Correct number of adults for positions within District's and Group's. Very few holding two appointments, the County Team has limited vacancies	Most appointments filled, although additional adults would make a difference, many adults holding multiple appointments, the County Team has some vacancies	Insufficient adults in post to support the Group's. The County Team has many vacant roles	
County Training Provision	County Training Manager and Local Training Managers appointed, and 60% of adult appointments hold the correct Wood Badge for their role or are working towards their completion within stated timeframe	County Training Manager and some Local Training Managers appointed and 40% of adult appointments hold the correct Wood Badge for their role or are working towards their completion within stated timeframe	No County Training Manager and some Local Training Managers appointed, and less than 20% of adult appointments hold the correct Wood Badge for their role or are working towards their completion within stated timeframe	
Safeguarding	An active Safeguarding Awareness Co-ordinator is appointed and is providing training and resources where needed	A Safeguarding Awareness Co-ordinator is appointed but is inactive, training and resource needs are not being met	There is no Safeguarding Awareness Co-ordinator appointed	
Co-education	100% of Districts are open to both male and female members	Less than 75% of Districts open to both male and female members	Less than 50% open to both male and female members	
Female Membership	A growth against last year's census of over 5%	A growth against last year's census of between 3 and 5%	A growth against last year's census of less than 3%	

KEY	GREEN	AMBER	RED	OUR RESULT
Diversity	County is fully representative of the diversity of the local community	County is actively working towards being representative of the diversity of the local community	County is not, and is not working towards being representative of the diversity of the local community	
Joining Lists	Joining lists managed by 100% of Districts that link in some way to Group joining lists	50% or more Districts with centrally managed joining lists	Less than 50% of Districts with centrally managed joining lists	
Moving On (Explorers - Network) (Young Leaders -Adult Leaders)	Good communication links exists between relevant sections, moving on is planned before 18th birthdays. Young people fully informed of the options open to them	Some lines of communication exist between relevant sections. Young people have an idea of the options open to them but usually all end up in just one section	There are no lines of communication between sections, young people are assumed to only be in one section	
ADCs	Members of the County Team co-ordinate effective Assistant District Commissioner meetings	Assistant District Commissioner meetings are not well co-ordinated	No Assistant District Commissioner meetings	
Beavers (Refer to Section RAGs)	Good programme support, Assistant District Commissioners working together effectively. Innovation within the County and District programmes	Modest programme support, occasional inter-Group and District events/programme, certain Districts regularly missing	Limited opportunity for support and development of the sectional programme within the Districts	

<b>KEY</b>	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>AMBER</b>	<b>RED</b>	<b>OUR RESULT</b>
<p><b>Cubs</b></p> <p>(Refer to Section RAGs)</p>	<p>Good programme support, ADCs working together effectively. Innovation within the County and District programmes</p>	<p>Modest programme support, occasional inter-Group and District events/programme, certain Districts regularly missing</p>	<p>Limited opportunity for support and development of the sectional programme within the Districts</p>	
<p><b>Scouts</b></p> <p>(Refer to Section RAGs)</p>	<p>Good programme support, ADCs working together effectively. Innovation within the County and District programmes</p>	<p>Modest programme support, occasional inter-Group and District events/programme, certain Districts regularly missing</p>	<p>Limited opportunity for support and development of the sectional programme within the Districts</p>	
<p><b>Explorer Scouts</b></p> <p>(Refer to Section RAGs)</p>	<p>Explorer Scout provision is in place, provides good opportunities for a progressive, good quality programme. Unit meets demand of young people and sufficient adults are in place to operate. Local representation of members</p>	<p>Explorer Scout programme exists. Modest opportunities for a good quality progressive programme exists. Supply of units/structure copes with demand but needs additional adult support to work more effectively</p>	<p>Small Explorer Scout Units, good opportunities are limited, Explorer Scout Leaders are in short supply</p>	
<p><b>Young Leaders' Scheme</b></p>	<p>Module A completed by all Young Leaders in all Districts. High number of Young Leaders completing other modules, and over 25% achieving 'Missions'. Complete programme of Young Leader training and supporting programme</p>	<p>Module A completed by all Young Leaders in some Districts, but very few completing 'Missions' or further training</p>	<p>Limited or no Young Leader training available in the Districts</p>	
<p><b>Young Leader Section Growth</b></p>	<p>Against the last census, a growth in Young Leaders of over 15%</p>	<p>Against the last census, a growth in Young Leaders of 15%</p>	<p>Against the last census, a growth in Young Leaders of less than 15%</p>	



KEY	GREEN	AMBER	RED	OUR RESULT
Scout Network	Network provision exists, good links with Local Networks and Explorer Units. Active programme, which links with other Networks. Local representation of members	Network Provision exists but programme and links are patchy. Poor representation	No Network provision, or no links with local Networks	
Scout Active Support	Actively supporting County and/or District activities and events, actively recruiting new membership	Only recruiting retiring Scouts etc from within the County; low level of support for County and/or District events and activities	Unit either doesn't exist or has little or no contact with the County. Many positions need filling, little or no growth in membership, no recruitment initiative and no support to the County or Districts	
District Engagement With County	100% of Districts engage with the County	50% or more of Districts engage with the County	Less than 50% of Districts engage with the County	
Nights Away Permits	Good balance of Nights Away Permits for each District, covering the full spectrum where possible. Nights Away Adviser in every District	Nights Away Permits are available in some Districts, 50% or more Districts with a Nights Away Adviser	Inadequate number of Nights Away Permits, limited or no scope of opportunities for young people, less than 50% of Districts with a Nights Away Adviser	
Adventurous Activity Permits	Training for and recording of permits is active and encouraged. Adviser and assessor training provided at the County level	Limited use of a small number of available permits, permit records not up to date. Limited adviser and assessor training provided at the County level	No permits available or used, no opportunity to gain new permits, no adviser or assessor training provided at the County level	

<b>KEY</b>	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>AMBER</b>	<b>RED</b>	<b>OUR RESULT</b>
Executive Committee	Executive Committee working as per POR and County constitution. Meeting regularly and fully attended. Contains young person representation. Governance support is fully cascaded to Districts	Executive Committee is in place but not representative of the wider County, young people available but not used. Some governance support is cascaded to Districts	No Executive Committee, functions accomplished by ex-officio members, young people available but not used. No governance support is cascaded to Districts	
Safety and Assets	Equipment and property in place to support the operations of the County. Appropriate risk assessments conducted. No outstanding Health and Safety or security issues. Appointed and active Safety Co-ordinator	Equipment is in place, but little consideration has been give to ongoing risk assessment, property may have issues. Appointed but inactive Safety Co-ordinator	Equipment/property is not adequately maintained. Resources may not be in place. Risk assessments are non-existent. No appointed Safety Co-ordinator	
Finance	Appropriate signed off annual accounts submitted for audit. Reserves level maintained. Operational plan and budgets in place	Appropriately signed off annual accounts submitted for audit on time. Little regard given to reserves, operational plan or budgets	Annual accounts not submitted, insufficient reserves to maintain property/ equipment as assessed by County Treasurer	
Fundraising	Plan and Policy in place to cover the required income to maintain the operation of the County, reserves managed appropriately	Modest fundraising in place, only by levy/membership fee. Limited opportunities for additional funding sources	Income from levy/membership fee does not meet current requirements and there is no other funding in place	
AGM	There are comprehensive AGMs with full reports from all Assistant County Commissioners, County Commissioner and County Treasurer, well attended by stakeholders	There is a form of AGM with limited reporting; attendance is patchy	There is no AGM	

KEY	GREEN	AMBER	RED	OUR RESULT
Appointments Process	Appointments Advisory Committee and effective Chairman and Secretary. Process is smooth and efficient. Supports new adults throughout the process. Training Advisers available	Chairman and Secretary in place, mixed level of commitment, meetings are irregular and Training Advisers not assigned	Process not in place, no meetings held and a lack of Training Advisers	
Growth - Adults	Against the last census data, a growth of over 5% in adult volunteers in Scout Groups	Against the last census data, a growth of between 3 and 5% in adult volunteers in Scout Groups	Against the last census data, a growth of 3% or less in adult volunteers in Scout Groups	
Growth - Young People	Against the last census data, a growth of over 5% in young people across the youth sections	Against the last census data, a growth of between 3 and 5% in young people across the youth sections	Against the last census data, a growth of 3% or less in young people across the youth sections	
Youth Forums	Planned and well attended Youth Forums across the County	Youth Forums planned but there is no direct feedback	No Youth Forums operating across the County	
Parental Engagement	All District Commissioners encourage Group Scout Leaders to actively engage with young people and their parents upon joining, and throughout their Scouting life	Some District Commissioners encourage Group Scout Leaders to actively engage with young people and their parents upon joining, and throughout their Scouting life	No District Commissioners encourage Group Scout Leaders to actively engage with young people and their parents upon joining, and throughout their Scouting life	

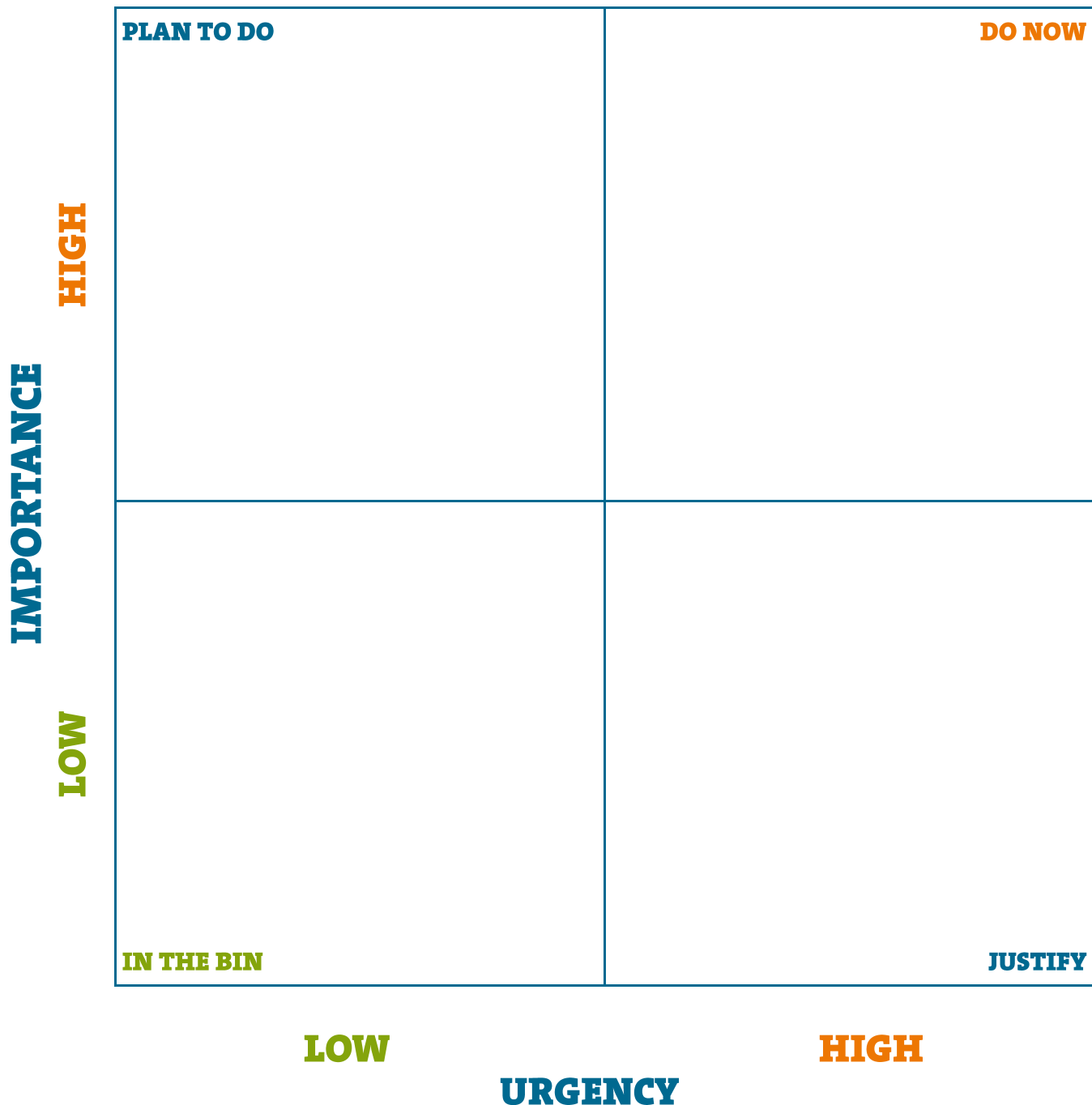
<b>KEY</b>	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>AMBER</b>	<b>RED</b>	<b>OUR RESULT</b>
Flexible Volunteering	All Districts encourage flexible volunteering. Best practice is shared to enable Groups to implement parent rotas, parent/helper rotas, volunteer pools and flexible or shared leadership teams and shared Executive Committees.	Some Districts encourage flexible volunteering. Best practice is shared to enable Groups to implement parent/helper rotas, volunteer pools and flexible or shared leadership teams and shared Executive Committees.	No Districts encourage flexible volunteering. No advice has been sought on how best to implement such a system.	
Overall Score				

## PLANNING MATRIX (factsheet fs310607)

Now that you've analysed the County, you will have a better understanding of which elements could do with some support, but which ones do you prioritise? You can use a 'Planning Matrix' to chart where you should focus your efforts. It may be worth putting the elements that you are going to work on from the RAG and SWOT analysis onto small sticky notes as they are likely to be moved around the windows until everyone is happy. You may also want to draw the matrix on a bigger piece of paper.

Discuss with your team where they think items should be placed in the matrix, and how urgent and important it is. Make sure there is a consensus over where items have been placed and that everyone's view has been discussed and not ignored.

It is **SOME** of the items in top right hand box, the high importance, high urgency box, that will be carried forward into the development plan.



# DEVELOPMENT PLAN

As mentioned before, development plans do not need to be huge, they need to be simple. Most Group development plans should not have more than four to five targets, although you can review these targets, perhaps annually. Take some of the elements from the high importance, high urgency box in the Planning Matrix, and as a team decide which ones you could work towards this year. If this is your first development plan go for the 'quick wins'. You can progress across the RAG chart from say red to amber and amber to green quite quickly, therefore your overall development plan gets smaller and you can see good progress is being made.

Also remember to make any targets SMART! A blank Group development plan template is at the back of this document. You may wish to photocopy it a couple of times as it might take one or two attempts to put together a SMART development plan.

Support is always available from Scouts NI who can be contacted by telephone or by email:

t: 028 9049 2829

e: [info@scoutsni.org](mailto:info@scoutsni.org)

My local development contacts are:

Although in some parts of the British Isles, Scout Counties are known as Areas or Islands – and in one case Bailiwick – for ease of reading this resource simply refers to County/Counties. In Scotland there is no direct equivalent to County or Area. In Scotland Scouting is organised into Districts and Regions, each with distinct responsibilities. Some 'County' functions are the responsibility of Scottish Regions, whilst others lie with Scottish Districts. The focus of responsibility is outlined in Scottish Variations from POR.

*Adapted for Northern Ireland by Scouts NI from the original Scout County Development Planning Toolkit (TSA)*

