

SCOUT DISTRICT

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 your District's future, you need simple and realistic targets to ensure the District 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 District. 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.

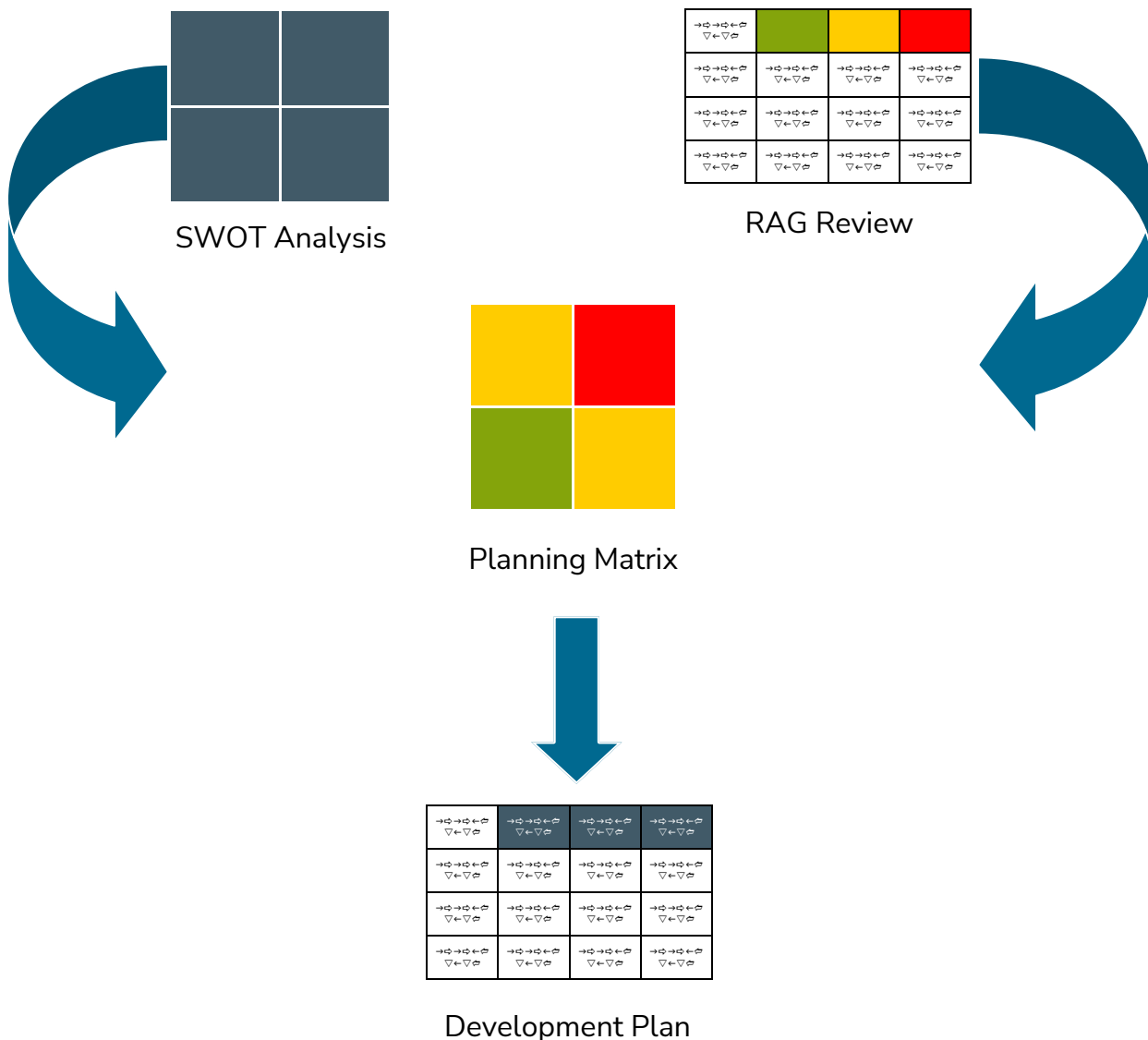
(We use this SMART mnemonic in a development context - to encourage the linking of objectives across the whole of Scouting)

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 District 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 District. Strengths and Weaknesses are internal factors - things you have some control over, whereas Opportunities and Threats are external factors - things happening outside your District. All of these can influence the future of your District.

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 presents 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 District. 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 District. The last row is for your overall score; this is simply the RAG colour your District got the most of. This is not an indication of how 'good' you are as a Scout District; it is simply a way for Groups, Districts & Counties to co-ordinate where they should support development. Your County Commissioner may ask for your overall score or a copy of your completed development pack. This will help them build the County development plan, or just to make them aware of local issues.

PLEASE NOTE that this is a generic set of criteria and your District'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 District 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 and Groups. Very few holding two appointments	Most appointments filled, although additional adults would make a difference, many adults holding multiple appointments	Insufficient adults in post to support the District and Groups. Many roles vacant	
Adult Training	Sufficient Training Advisers appointed and active. 90% of adult appointments hold the correct Wood Badge for their role or are working towards completion within stated timeframe	Few Training Advisers appointed and active. 60% or more adult appointments hold the correct Wood Badge for their role or are working towards completion within stated timeframe	No Training Advisers appointed and less than 60% of adult appointments hold the correct Wood Badge for their role or are working towards completion within stated timeframe	
Young People	All Groups have three sections with viable numbers in each	One or two Groups have less than viable numbers and/or sections missing	Three or more Groups have less than viable numbers and/or sections missing	
Co-education	All Groups in the District are open to both males and females equally		Not all Groups in the District are open to both males and females equally	
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
<p>Diversity</p>	<p>The District is fully representative of the diversity of the local community</p>	<p>The District is actively working towards being representative of the diversity of the local community</p>	<p>The District is not, and is not working towards being, representative of the diversity of the local community</p>	
<p>Joining Lists (Eligible to join now)</p>	<p>Instant joining opportunities; joining list shared across the District</p>	<p>Joining list shared across the District</p>	<p>No management of joining lists</p>	
<p>Moving On (Explorers - Network) (Young Leaders - Adult Leaders)</p>	<p>Good communication links exist between relevant sections, moving on is planned before 18th birthday. Young people fully informed of the options open to them</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>There are no lines of communication between sections, young people are assumed to only be in one section</p>	
<p>ADC's (Where appropriate)</p>	<p>Members of the District Team co-ordinate effective section leader meetings</p>	<p>Section leader meetings are not well co-ordinated</p>	<p>No section leader meetings</p>	
<p>Beavers (Refer to Section RAGs)</p>	<p>Good programme support, section leaders working together effectively. Innovation within the District programme</p>	<p>Modest programme support, occasional inter-group events/programme, certain groups regularly missing</p>	<p>Limited opportunity for support and development of the sectional programme within the District</p>	

KEY	GREEN	AMBER	RED	OUR RESULT
<p>Cubs</p> <p>(Refer to Section RAGs)</p>	<p>Good programme support, section leaders working together effectively. Innovation within the District programme</p>	<p>Modest programme support, occasional inter-group events/ programme, certain groups regularly missing</p>	<p>Limited opportunity for support and development of the sectional programme within the District</p>	
<p>Scouts</p> <p>(Refer to Section RAGs)</p>	<p>Good programme support, section leaders working together effectively. Innovation within the District programme</p>	<p>Modest programme support, occasional inter-group events/ programme, certain groups regularly missing</p>	<p>Limited opportunity for support and development of the sectional programme within the District</p>	
<p>Explorer Scouts</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>Young Leaders Scheme</p>	<p>Module A completed by all Young Leaders. 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, but very few completing 'Missions' or further training</p>	<p>Limited or no Young Leader training available in the District</p>	
<p>Scout Network</p>	<p>Local Network exists, good links with County and Explorer Units. Active programme, which links with other Networks. Local representation of members</p>	<p>Local Network exists but programme and links are patchy. Poor representation</p>	<p>No local Network, or if County based, no links with County Network team/members</p>	

KEY	GREEN	AMBER	RED	OUR RESULT
Scout Active Support	Actively supporting District and/or Group activities and events, actively recruiting new membership	Only recruiting retiring Scouts etc from within the District; low level of support for District and/or Group events and activities	Unit either doesn't exist or has little or no contact with the District. Many positions need filling, little or no growth in membership, no recruitment initiative and no support to the District or Groups	
Group Engagement With District [Attending & Participating in Meetings, Activities & Events]	100% of Groups engage with the District	50% or more of Groups engage with the District	Less than 50% of Groups engage with the District	
Nights Away Permits	One permit per Section, per Group	Less than one permit per Section per Group	One or more Groups with no permits	
Adventurous Activity Permits	Training for and recording of permits is active and encouraged	Limited use of a small number of available permits, permit records not up to date	No permits available or used, no opportunity to gain new permits	
Executive Committee	Executive working as per POR and District Constitution. Meeting regularly and fully attended. Contains young person representation. Governance support is fully cascaded down to Groups	Executive Committee is in place but not representative of the wider District, young people available but not used. Some governance support is cascaded down to Groups	No executive committee. Functions accomplished by ex-officio members, young people available but not used. No governance support is cascaded down to Groups	

KEY	GREEN	AMBER	RED	OUR RESULT
Safety and Assets	Equipment and property in place to support the operations of the District. Appropriate risk assessments conducted. No outstanding Health and Safety or security issues. Appointed and active Safety Coordinator	Equipment is in place, but little consideration has been given to ongoing risk assessment, property may have issues	Equipment/property is not adequately maintained. Resources are not in place. Risk assessments are non-existent	
Finance	Appropriately signed off annual accounts submitted for audit. Reserves level maintained. Operation 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 District Treasurer	
Fundraising	Plan and Policy in place to cover the required income to maintain the operation of the District, reserves managed appropriately	Modest fundraising in place, only by levy membership fees. Limited opportunities for additional funding sources	Income from levy membership fees does not meet current requirements and there is no other funding in place	
Appointment Process	Appointments Advisory Committee and effective Chairman and secretary. Process is smooth and efficient. Supports new adults throughout the process. Training Advisers available	Chair 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 5% or more in adult volunteers in Groups	Against the last census data a growth of between 3% and 5% in adult volunteers in Groups	Against the last census data a growth of 3% or less in adult volunteers in Groups	

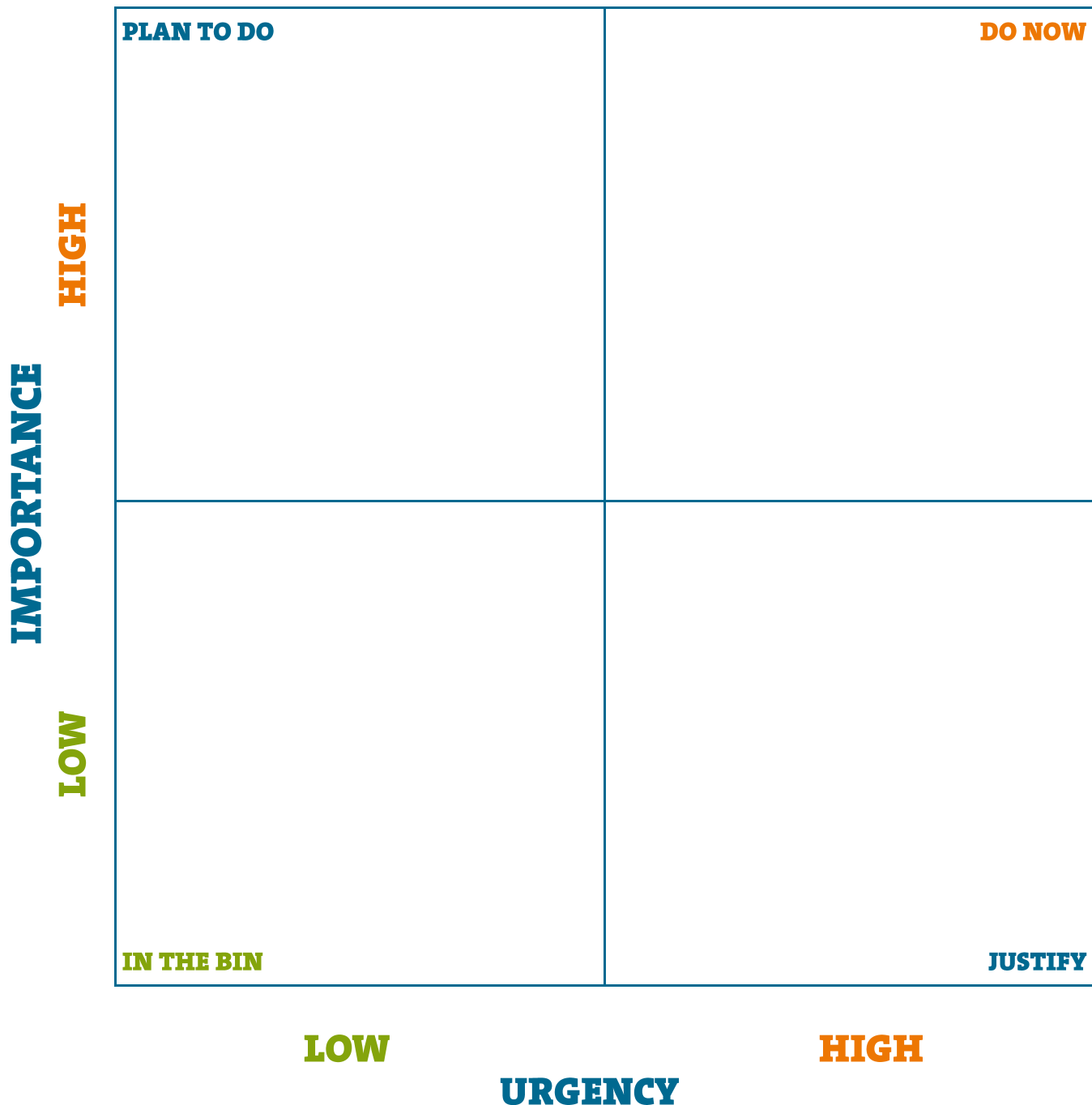
KEY	GREEN	AMBER	RED	OUR RESULT
Growth - Young People	Against the last census data a growth of 5% or more in young people across the youth sections	Against the last census data a growth of between 3% and 5% in young people across the youth sections	Against the last census data a growth of 3% or less in young people across the youth sections	
Youth Forums	Planned and well attended Youth Forums across the District	Youth Forums planned but there is no direct feedback	No Youth Forums operating across the District	
Parental Engagement	Group Scout Leaders are encouraged to actively engage with young people and their parents upon joining, and throughout their Scouting life	Group Scout Leaders encouraged to meet young people and their parents when they join the Group	Group Scout Leaders not encouraged to meet with young people or their parents	
AGM	There are comprehensive AGM's with full reports from all sections, Group Scout Leader & Treasurer, well attended by stakeholders	There is a form of AGM with limited reporting; attendance is patchy	There is no AGM	
Overall Score				

PLANNING MATRIX (factsheet fs310607)

Now that you've analysed the District, 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 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

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.

