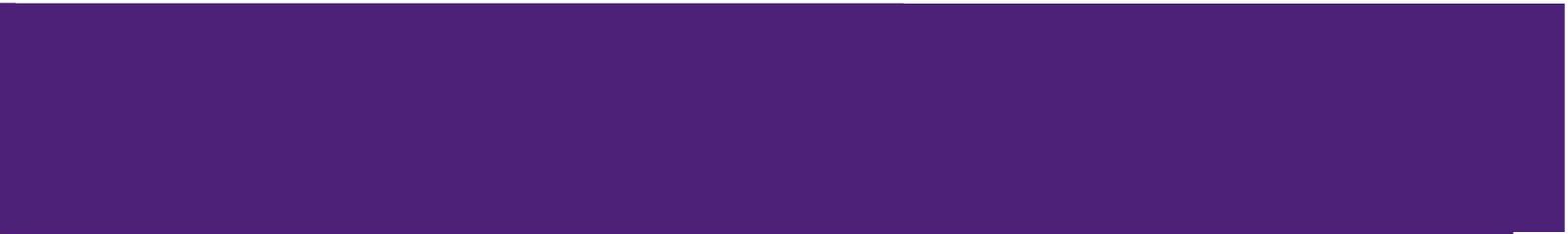# EXPLORER UNIT
development planning toolkit

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

RAG Review

Planning Matrix

Development Plan
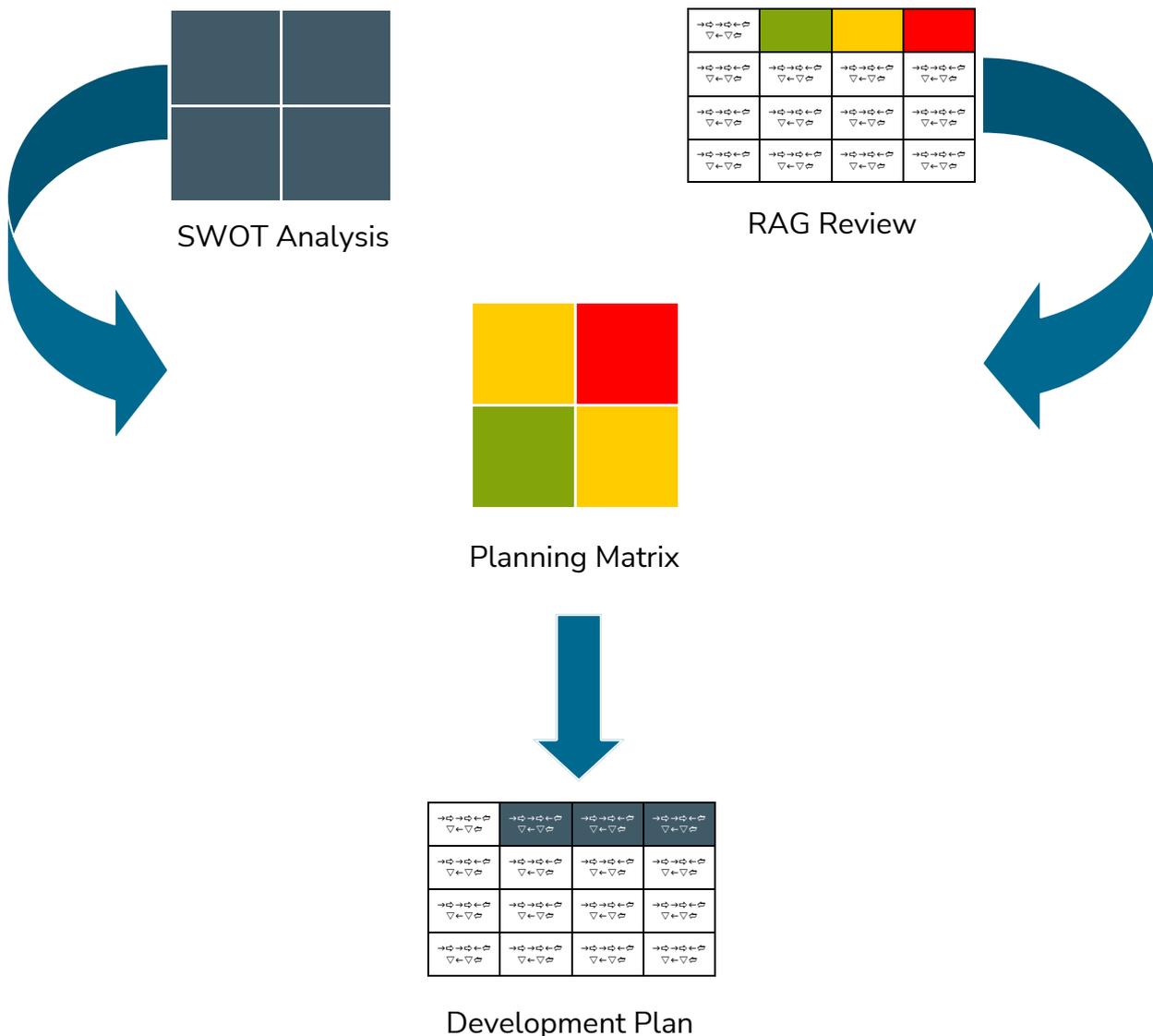
SWOT ANALYSIS

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

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 everyones 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 Unit. 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 Unit. 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 an Explorer Unit; it is simply a way for Groups, Districts & Counties to co-ordinate where they should support development. Your Group Scout Leader, and possibly your District Commissioner, may ask for your overall score, or a copy of your completed development pack. This will help them build the Group & District development plans, or just to make them aware of local issues.

PLEASE NOTE that this is a generic set of criteria and your Unit'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 Unit 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
Programme	Unit programmes are disseminated to all Explorer Scouts in the District and supplemented by District. Programme is delivered by a wide varietyof methods. Programme is activelymanaged by the DESC	Modest/ad hoc sharing of Explorer Scout Unit programmes. Unit programmes are generally balanced but not supplemented by District activities, and limited active management of programme by the DESC	Poor programme opportunities. Generally no balance and limited or few opportunities to share programme opportunities across the District. No active management of the programme	
Awards	All Explorer Scouts have the opportunity to gain at least Chief Scout's Diamond and DofE Silver Awards by the time they reach 18, and at least 50% do so	Over 50% of Explorer Scouts have the opportunity to gain at least Chief Scout's Diamond and DofE Silver Awards by the time they reach 18, and at least 25% do so	Less than 50% of Explorer Scouts have the opportunity to gain at least Chief Scout's Diamond Award by the time they reach 18, and less than 25% do so. There is no opportunity to complete DofE Awards	
Nights Away	Explorers are encouraged to have five or more nights away a year	Explorers are encouraged to have three to five nights away a year	Explorers are encouraged to have up to three nights away a year	
Forums	Termly Unit Planning Forums. Regular District Explorer Scout Forums. Regular opportunities to influence the programme and provide feedback. Feedback is acted upon.	Irregular Unit Planning Forums and District Explorer Scout Forums. Some opportunity to influence the programme and provide feedback. Feedback is sometimes acted upon.	No Unit Planning Forums or District Explorer Scout Forums. Rare opportunity to influence the programme and provide feedback. Feedback is occasionally acted upon.	

KEY	GREEN	AMBER	RED	OUR RESULT
Partnerships / Working links	Active partnerships in place between Explorer Scout Units and all Groups, whether providing direct physical support, or to promote transition from Scouts to Explorer Scouts	Limited working partnerships exist between Groups and District Explorer Scout Provision for supporting delivery of Explorer Scouting	Poor or non-existent partnerships in place	
Moving In	Effective strategy in place for Scouts moving into Explorer Scouts	Recruiting Explorer Scouts from Scouts proves hit and miss. No effective strategy exists	Very low or limited numbers move in to Explore Scout Units	
Moving On	Excellent retention percentage. Explorer Scout members effectively retained into Scout Network on reaching 18+	No effective strategy exists. Dedicated Explorer Scouts stay on into Scout Network	Explorer Scouts often don't follow up their Scouting post 18+	
Joining Lists (Eligible to join now)	Instant joining opportunities; joining list shared across the District/County No-one on the joining list	Joining list shared across the District/County 5 or less on the joining list	No management of joining lists 6 or more on the joining list	

KEY	GREEN	AMBER	RED	OUR RESULT
Representation	Every Unit runs a regular Unit forum. The District holds a regular District Explorer Scout Forum, and has Explorer Scout representation from every Unit. Good effective meetings with adequate frequency. Annual Explorer Scout meeting held	Some Units hold Unit Forums, not necessarily frequently. District Explorer Scout Forum meets infrequently and/or has patchy representation from the Units. Management of meetings erratic	No or very limited representation structures in place for the District Explorer Scout provision	
People / Team	The District has a full Explorer Scout team of DESC, Administrator, Unit leaders/ Assistants	The District has a Explorer Scout team, but with one or two positions vacant	The District has a limited Explorer Scout Team	
Female Membership	A growth against last year's census of over 5%	A growth against last year's census of between 3 & 5%	A growth against last year's census of less than 3%	
Training for roles	60% of Explorer Scout team members have completed or are working towards the appropriate training for their role (Wood Badge or specified Modules)	40% of Explorer Scout team members have completed or are working towards the appropriate training for their role (Wood Badge or specified Modules)	Less than 20% of Explorer Scout team members have completed or are working towards the appropriate training for their role (Wood Badge or specified Modules)	

KEY	GREEN	AMBER	RED	OUR RESULT
Structure of Provision	The local Explorer Scout Units meet all the local demands for Explorer Scout provision	The District delivers Explorer Scout provision across the critical areas only. Limited opportunity for smaller demand areas	Limited centralised Explorer Scout provision	
Management of Explorer Scouting	The District Explorer Scout Commissioner regularly attends the District Executive and provides evidence of sound management of the section	The District Explorer Scout Commissioner occasionally attends the District Executive, evidence of sound management is limited or absent	The District Explorer Scout Commissioner does not attend the District Executive and there is no evidence of sound management	
Administration of Membership	The District Explorer Scout provision has a clear method for registration of Explorer Scout members. This is supported and enforced by District Executive and District Commissioner	The District Explorer Scout provision has a basic limited method for registration of Explorer Scout members. Limited support is given by District Executive and District Commissioner	Registration of Explorer Scout members is hap-hazard, or non-existent	
Publicity	The District Explorer Scout provision has a publicity strategy which works both internally and externally	Publicity for District Explorer Scout provision happens on an ad hoc basis	None or very limited publicity in place	

KEY	GREEN	AMBER	RED	OUR RESULT
Parental Engagement	Parents are actively involved in, and informed about Unit activities		Parents are not involved in Unit activities in any way	
Growth - Young People	Against the last census data, a growth of over 5% in young people across the section	Against the last census data, a growth of between 3 and 5% in young people across the section	Against the last census data, a growth of 3% or less in young people across the section	
Flexible Volunteering	Flexible solutions are actively and easily implemented. There is a flexible or shared leadership team with parent/helper rotas, and volunteer pools being key to the section	Limited number of leaders but there is a parent/helper rota in place. Parents/helpers support by running games or supervising activities	Limited number of leaders and there are no flexible volunteering opportunities. Advice has not been sought on how to implement such a system	
Finance and governance	District Executive recognises its responsibilities and provides active support and guidance in the operat8on of the Explorer Scout provision (may delegate to a sub committee)	District Executive provides limited support and guidance in the operation of the Explorer Scout provision	District Executive occasionally realises or ignores its responsibilities regards to Explorer Scout provision	

KEY	GREEN	AMBER	RED	OUR RESULT
Equipment/ property	Equipment in place to support the operation of the Explorer Scout Programme. Appropriate risk assessments conducted. Equipment has adequate insurance in place	Equipment is in place to support programme. Little consideration has been given to ongoing risk assessment. Equipment has adequate insurance in place	Equipment is not adequately maintained. Resources may not be in place to support programme. Risk assessments are non-existent. No insurance in place	
Overall Score				

PLANNING MATRIX (factsheet fs310607)

Now that you've analysed the Unit, 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.

	PLAN TO DO	DO NOW
HIGH		
LOW		
	IN THE BIN	JUSTIFY

IMPORTANCE

LOW	HIGH

URGENCY

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

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.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN	UNIT:_____		DATE:_____		
AIM (WHAT WE NEED TO DO)	ACTION (HOW WE ARE GOING TO GET THERE)	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?	REVIEW DATE	ACHIEVEMENT DATE	OUTCOMES