

SCOUT GROUP

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 Group’s future, you need simple and realistic targets to ensure the Group 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 Group. 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.

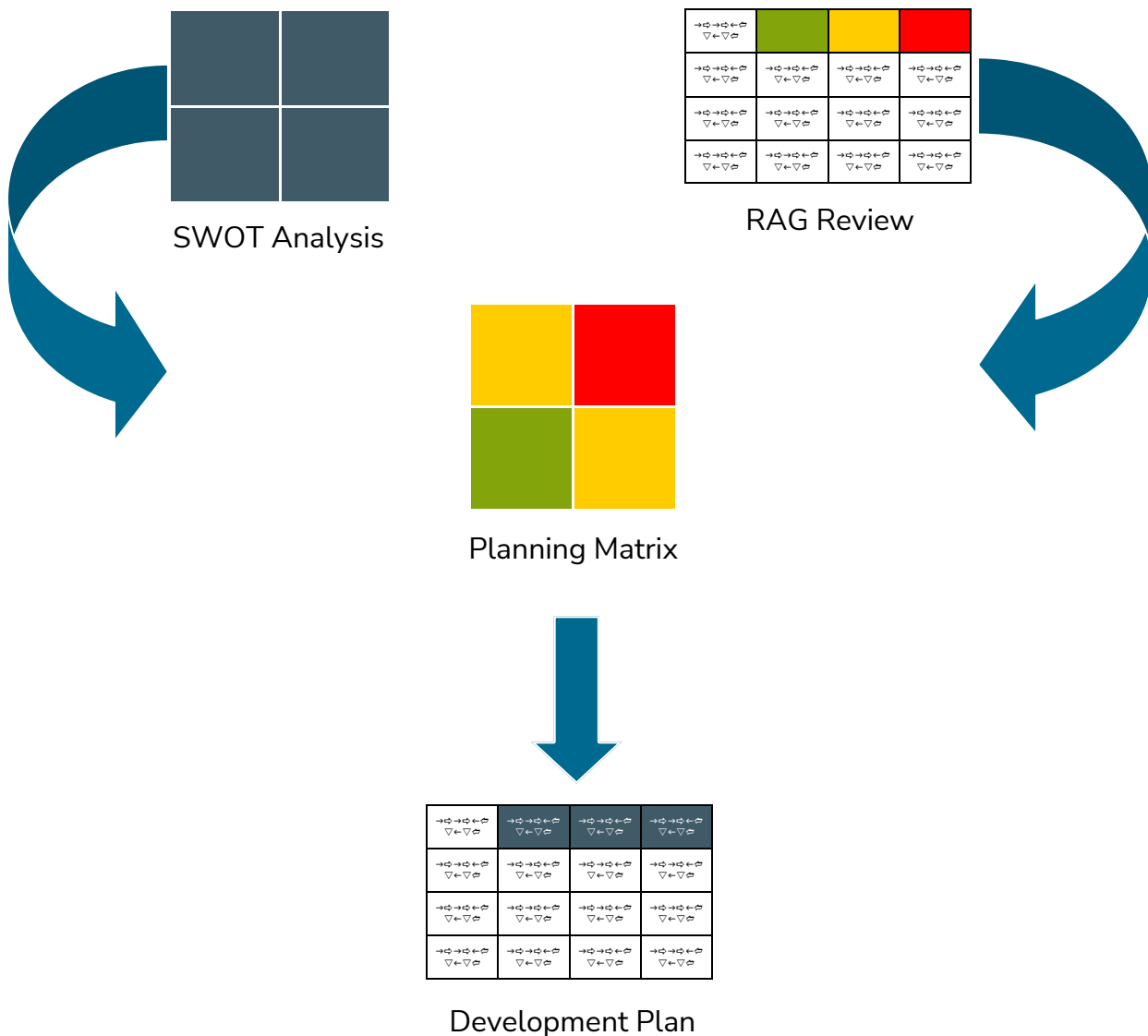
(We use this SMART mnemonic in a development context - to encourage the linking of objectives across the whole of Scouting)

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

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 Group. 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 Group. The last row is for your overall score; this is simply the RAG colour your Group got the most of. This is not an indication of how 'good' you are as an Scout Group; it is simply a way for Groups, Districts & Counties to co-ordinate where they should support development. 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 Group'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 colony 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
Group Scout Leader	An effective Group Scout Leader leads the Group and has a good working relationship with leaders		No Group Scout Leader in post	
Group Leaders Meetings	Meetings are held once per school term (Three Months}	Meetings are held less than once per school term (Three Months}	Meetings are not held	
Executive	Chairman/Treasurer/and/or Secretary all in post with minimum of four other Executive members. Regular planned meetings	Minimum of two Officers in post with a minimum of two other Executive members. Irregular meetings held	Chairman/Treasurer/and/or Secretary not in office. No meetings held	
Equipment	Good equipment to support balanced and progressive programme. Well maintained and tidy stores	Adequate equipment to support balanced and progressive programme, with some items in need of repair/ replacement. Well maintained and tidy stores	Inadequate equipment to support a balanced and progressive programme. Disorganised stores and no maintenance or inspection scheme	
Finance	Appropriately signed off annual accounts submitted to District on time. Up to date financial reports given to Group Executive. No outstanding invoices to leaders. Agreed operating reserves for twelve months	Appropriately signed off annual accounts submitted to District on time. Regular financial reports given to Group Executive. Some outstanding invoices to leaders. Little in the way of reserves	Little or no financial reporting given to the Group Executive. Invoices outstanding and no reserves or reserves policy	

KEY	GREEN	AMBER	RED	OUR RESULT
Fundraising	Fundraising committee in place with regular annual events and initiatives. Leaders are not responsible for fundraising	Fundraising committee in place with some annual events and initiatives. Leaders are occasionally responsible for fundraising	No Fundraising committee in place. Leaders have to be responsible for fundraising events	
Gift Aid	Group claims Gift Aid and all claims up to date	Group is applying for Gift Aid	Group not claiming Gift Aid	
Mandatory Training	All leaders within the group are up to date with their mandatory training, including First Response	75% of leaders within the group are up to date with their mandatory training, including First Response	Only 50% of leaders within the group are up to date with their mandatory training, including First Response	
Group Events	One family group event plus two other events or social activities	One event or social activity per year	No group events, no parent camps or evenings per year	
AGM	AGM is comprehensive with full reports from all sections, Group Scout Leader and 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
<p>Venue</p>	<p>The Group have use of an excellent building, adequate in size for their needs, which is in a good state of repair</p>	<p>The Group makes best use of the building, which may impose limitations on programme, Group size, and is in some need of repair/ modernisation</p>	<p>The Group have use of a building which is in poor condition and in need of major repair or renewal</p>	
<p>Joining Lists (Eligible to join now)</p>	<p>Instant joining opportunities; joining list shared across the District No-one on the joining list</p>	<p>Joining list shared across the District Five or less on the joining list</p>	<p>No management of joining lists Six or more on the joining list</p>	
<p>Moving-on (See Sectional RAGs)</p>	<p>All members complete Moving-on Award, moving into sections when mutually agreed</p>	<p>Some movement, either with or without Moving-on Award</p>	<p>No movement between sections, no Moving-on Awards</p>	
<p>Parental Engagement</p>	<p>Group Scout Leader actively engages with young people and their parents upon joining, and throughout their Scouting life</p>	<p>Group Scout Leader meets young people and their parents when they join the Group</p>	<p>Group Scout Leader rarely engages with young people or their parents</p>	
<p>Growth - Young People</p>	<p>Against the last census data, a growth of over 5% in young people across the youth sections</p>	<p>Against the last census data, a growth of between 3 and 5% in young people across the youth sections</p>	<p>Against the last census data, a growth of 3% or less in young people across the youth sections</p>	

KEY	GREEN	AMBER	RED	OUR RESULT
Growth - Adult	Against the last census data, a growth of over 5% in adult volunteers in the Group	Against the last census data, a growth of between 3 and 5% in adult volunteers in the Group	Against the last census data, a growth of 3% or less in adult volunteers in the Group	
Review Process	All leaders annually reviewed as per the Review Process		Annual Leader Reviews outstanding	
Permits	One or more Nights Away Permit holders within each Section, and a wide range of Activity Permits	Two Nights Away Permit holders within the Group and a limited number of Activity Permits	One or less Nights Away Permit holders within the Group and no Activity Permits	
Royal Navy Recognition (Sea Scout Groups)	Recognition Achieved	Actively working towards Royal Navy Recognition	No Royal Navy Recognition	
Royal Air Force Recognition (Air Scout Groups)	Recognition Achieved	Actively working towards Royal Air Force Recognition	No Royal Air Force Recognition	

KEY	GREEN	AMBER	RED	OUR RESULT
Reasonable Adjustment	We routinely meet with Disabled Young People and those with additional support needs, alongside their parents/carers, to agree on reasonable adjustments, which are recorded and reviewed regularly	We take actions to make reasonable adjustments to support participation if a parent/carer asks us to	We have never made a reasonable adjustment to support the full participation of a member	
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%	
Co-education	All sections in the Group are open to both males and females equally		Not all sections in the Group are open to both males and females equally	
Group Culture	Behaviours, attitudes or language that is exclusionary or offensive is always challenged	Behaviours, attitudes and language that is exclusionary or offensive is sometimes challenged	Behaviours, attitudes and language that is exclusionary or offensive go unchallenged	
Diversity of Volunteers	Leadership provides diverse role models regarding gender, ethnicity, disability, age, faith, sexual orientation and socio-economic status	Leadership is diverse in one or two area e.g. age and gender	Leadership lacks diversity regarding gender, ethnicity, disability, age, faith, sexual orientation and socio-economic status	

KEY	GREEN	AMBER	RED	OUR RESULT
Diversity of Young People	Membership provides diversity regarding gender, ethnicity, disability, faith, sexual orientation and socio-economic status	Membership is diverse in one or two area e.g. age and gender	Membership lacks diversity regarding gender, ethnicity, disability, faith, sexual orientation and socio-economic status	
Beaver RAG Score				
Cub RAG Score				
Scout RAG Score				
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.

IMPORTANCE	HIGH	PLAN TO DO	DO NOW
	LOW	IN THE BIN	JUSTIFY
		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.

