

# **SCOUT TROOP**

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 Troop's future, you need simple and realistic targets to ensure the Troop 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 Troop. 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 Scout Leader	
S	We will recruit one new recruit for the Scout Troop
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 ??/??/??

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.

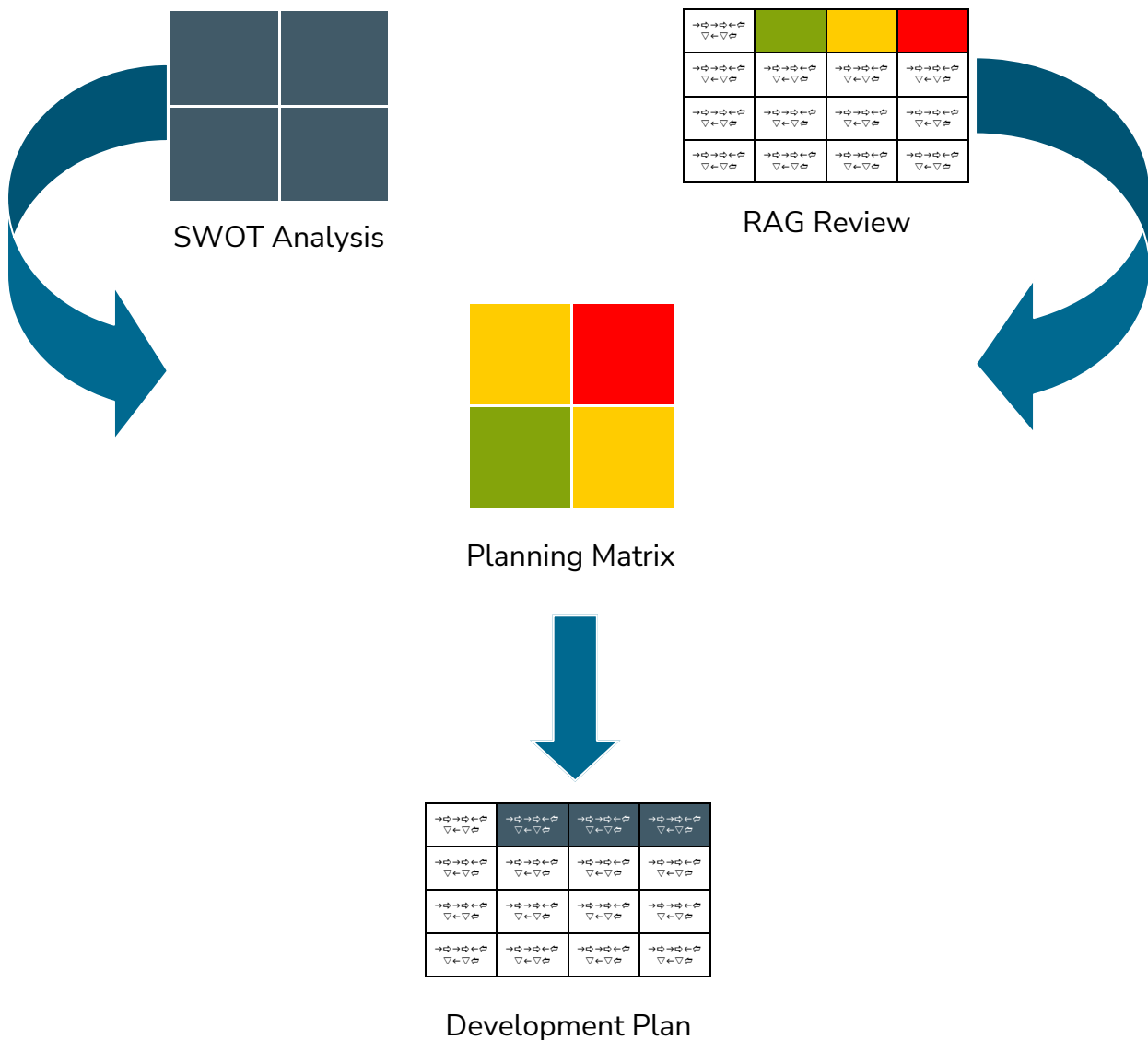
We use this SMART mnemonic in a development context to encourage the linking of objectives across the whole of Scouting

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

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 Troop. 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 Troop. The last row is for your overall score this is simply the RAG colour your Troop got the most of. This is not an indication of how good you are as a Scout Troop 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 Troop'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 Troop 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.

<b>KEY</b>	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>AMBER</b>	<b>RED</b>	<b>OUR RESULT</b>
<p><b>Troop Size</b></p> <p>although allow for demographics/ geography</p>	18 - 24 plus	12 - 18	Less than 12	
<p><b>Female Membership</b></p>	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%	
<p><b>Stakeholder Support</b></p> <p>Any adult who supports or benefits from the Scout Group</p>	All events are well supported by stakeholders	Stakeholder support is inconsistent	Support from stakeholders for the Troop is very limited	
<p><b>Programme</b></p>	Always well planned balanced programmes that explore all the programme zones. Feedback gathered from young people is positive	Balanced programme, normally well planned that explore most programme ones. Feedback gathered from you young people is normally positive	Poor programmes rarely planned and covering few programme zones. Feedback gathered from young people is mixed	
<p><b>Chief Scout's Gold Award</b></p>	90% or more of Scouts gain the Chief Scout's Gold award before moving on	50% - 90% of Scouts achieve the Chief Scout's Gold Award before moving on	Less than 50% of Scouts achieve the Chief Scout's Gold Award before moving on	

<b>KEY</b>	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>AMBER</b>	<b>RED</b>	<b>OUR RESULT</b>
<b>Activity &amp; Challenge Badges</b>	Most Scouts achieve 30 or more badges before moving on	Most Scouts achieve between 25 and 29 badges before moving on	Most Scouts achieve 24 or less badges before moving on	
<b>Forums</b>	Termly Troop Forums/Troop leadership Forums. Regular opportunities to influence the programme and provide feedback. Feedback is always acted upon	Irregular Troop Forums/Troop Leadership Forums. Some opportunity to influence the programme and provide feedback. Feedback is sometimes acted upon	No Troop Forums/Troop Leadership Forums. Rare opportunity to influence the programme and provide feedback. Feedback is occasionally acted upon	
<b>Nights Away</b>	Scouts are encouraged to have two or more nights away per year	Scouts are encouraged to have one night away per year	Scouts are not encouraged to have any nights away	
<b>Leader Training</b>	Scout Leader holds Wood Badge. All other appointed adults are in training, have a training plan and a Training Adviser for support, training is up to date	Some leaders are trained, but new appointed adults have no Training Adviser support and are not completing training	None of the adults involved have completed appropriate training and no adults have Training Adviser support. No training opportunities are planned.	
<b>Young Leaders' Scheme</b>	All Young Leaders in the Troop are included in planning and delivery of the programme, and are progressing through the Modules and Missions	Young Leaders not involved in planning and only supervise games. Young Leaders have only completed Module A and no Missions	What is the Young Leaders' Scheme?	

<b>KEY</b>	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>AMBER</b>	<b>RED</b>	<b>OUR RESULT</b>
Moving In	Instant access to Membership	Delayed access of up to one school term  Up to three months	Delayed access of longer than one school term  More than three months	
Moving On	All members complete Moving on Award, moving to Explorers when mutually agreed	Movement to Explorers, either with or without Moving on Award	No movement to Explorers, no Moving on Awards	
Joining Lists  eligible to join now	Instant joining opportunities, joining list shared across the District  No one on the joining list	Joining list shared across the District  Five or less on the joining list	No management of joining lists  Six or more on the joining list	
Adult Leaders	An appointed leader plus one other appointed assistant and some parental help	An appointed leader plus one other appointed assistant	An appointed leader and other non uniformed assistants	
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	



KEY	GREEN	AMBER	RED	OUR RESULT
Section Links	One link activity per school term	Less than one link activity per school term	No link activities	
Programme Planning Meetings	Minimum of one planning meeting per school term, involving all Troop leaders to create and review terms programmes	Less than one planning meeting per school term, involving some Troop leaders to create and review terms programmes	Planning not shared with leadership team	
AGM	The Scout Leader has the opportunity to make a full report at the AGM	The Troop is represented at the AGM, but is not given the opportunity to make a full report	There is no AGM, or it is not attended by a representative of the Troop	
Parental engagement	Parents are actively involved in, and informed about section activities		Parents are not involved in section activities in any way	
Overall Score				

# PLANNING MATRIX (factsheet fs310607)

Now that you've analysed the Troop, 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.

<b>IMPORTANCE</b>	<b>HIGH</b>	<b>PLAN TO DO</b>	<b>DO NOW</b>
	<b>LOW</b>	<b>IN THE BIN</b>	<b>JUSTIFY</b>
		<b>LOW</b>	<b>HIGH</b>
		<b>URGENCY</b>	

# 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.

