

MODULE 13

Growing the section workbook



Note: 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 publication 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, while others lie within Scottish districts. The focus of responsibility is outlined in Scottish variations from Policy, Organisation and Rules (POR).

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WHO IS THIS WORKBOOK FOR?

This module is aimed at section leaders, assistants and supporters working towards their wood badge. It provides information and practical advice on how to grow the section in their area of responsibility.

WHAT DOES THIS WORKBOOK INCLUDE?

This workbook is a method of completing the learning necessary for Module 13: Growing the Section. By the end of this workbook you should be able to:

- value the importance of growth within scouting
- identify tools and support available to help sections and/or groups develop and grow
- understand the reasons why young people and adults join scouting
- describe effective ways to recruit and retain young people
- describe effective ways to recruit and retain adults.

While using the workbook you will see a number of symbols and terms:



Information – these sections give you the background knowledge required for the exercises or an introduction to the discussion points.



Exercise – these sections are for you to complete and discuss with the person validating your learning.



Example – these are examples for you to study and relate back to an exercise.



Discussion point – the discussion points highlight areas you may wish to consider or explore further once you have completed the exercise, or discuss in more detail with other volunteer colleagues, your line manager or the person validating your learning.

Some discussion points also have additional information that can be found in the workbook appendices which are available in the [Module 13 Learners' Resources](#) area of www.scouts.org.uk. You can use these to support your learning after you have completed the exercises and discussions.

Throughout this workbook you will be undertaking practical exercises, making notes and considering questions relevant to the role you have taken on. We hope that the workbook and the notes you make provide you with a useful reference guide for any future activities you undertake as part of your role.

The workbook will also provide a structure for the validation discussions you will have later with your training adviser. Therefore, we would encourage you to make notes throughout this workbook and record your thoughts and ideas fully.

HOW TO COMPLETE THIS WORKBOOK

Read through the workbook carefully, right to the end before starting to complete sessions. Start again at the front and complete as many sessions as you can. If you are unsure of a session, leave it and arrange to discuss the content with your line manager, training adviser or another person who has an understanding of this training material. Then go back and complete the workbook.

This workbook is a self-contained learning method and can be completed either on your own or as part of a small group. However, we would encourage you to discuss your learning with other volunteers and share good practice and ideas. This will help support your learning and understanding of your role.

WHAT RESOURCES DO I NEED TO ACCOMPANY THIS WORKBOOK?

Many resources are included within this workbook and you will find others on the learners' resources area of www.scouts.org.uk

The lists are not exhaustive and if you are not familiar with other Scout Association resources, you may find it useful to familiarise yourself with what is available to volunteers on the website.

WHAT HAPPENS ONCE I HAVE COMPLETED THIS WORKBOOK?

You will need to validate your learning once you have completed this workbook. Validation is the process of demonstrating that you can put the learning into practice within your role and is usually achieved with your training adviser.

VALIDATION

Explain to your training adviser the role you play in the recruitment and retention of young people and adults, and the importance of growth within your section and Group. In addition, complete two of the following:

1. Work with others to produce and implement a development plan for your section or group.
2. Identify new members (adults or young people) who have joined scouting as a direct result of action you have undertaken. Explain the steps you took to enable this to happen.
3. Describe how you are being flexible and meeting the needs, wants and time commitments of adults when recruiting them. Explain the benefits that this has given your section or group in recruiting and retaining adults.
4. Explain the transfer methods between sections, your role in moving on, membership awards and age-range flexibility, and how you could improve the methods of transfer of young people from one section to the next.
5. Any other ideas, subject to the agreement of your training adviser.

For further information about validation and the next steps, contact your training adviser. If you do not have a training adviser, please contact your training manager.

SESSION 1: OPPORTUNITIES TO GROW



UNDERSTANDING WHY YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS JOIN SCOUTING

People join scouting for a number of reasons and these reasons may differ for youth members and adult volunteers. This section explores your understanding of why people join scouting and what we mean by the growth of scouting.



EXERCISE 1

Think back to when you first joined scouting as an adult or as a young person. What made you join?

Why do you think other people, adults or young people, join scouting?

You may want to ask other leaders or the young people in your section so you get a wider range of responses. Are their answers the same or different?

Write these down.

Adults join scouting for:

Young people join scouting for:



EXAMPLE

You can find out more information about why people join scouting on our website. Explore the following pages and consider whether you identified the same reasons for people to join scouting.

[Adults in scouting](#)

[Benefits of scouting](#)

[Young people in scouting](#)

[Case studies](#)



WHY DOES GROWTH MATTER?

For over 100 years, scouting has been making a real contribution to creating a better world by helping young people to develop their full potential as individuals and to play a constructive role in society. However, scouting can only continue to have a real impact on the lives of young people if it is able to continue to attract and retain them and the adults who support them.

As a voluntary movement, adults and young people must make a conscious decision to join and to stay. It is therefore unrealistic to assume that scouting will appeal to all. The growth of scouting is about giving more adults and young people the opportunity to enjoy the experience of scouting. Sustainable growth includes retaining our current members – that is, keeping them involved in scouting – as well as recruiting new adults and young people.

Growth is important because:

- it is a visible sign of success
- it means that we are doing more and achieving our mission
- it generates a feel-good factor.

Growth is important because adults and young people join scouting primarily for the adventure, fun and friendship, and they leave if they don't get it. If scouting is growing, it means that more young people and adults are joining than are leaving.

Growth enables scouting to do more – to provide a better scouting experience to more young people. More people enable more ambitious camps and more adventurous programmes, and additional revenue enables more investment in equipment and resources.

Also, being part of a growing organisation creates a buzz – the feel-good factor. Everyone wants to be part of something successful and this attracts new members as well as making existing members feel good.

Growth is often a good indication of the improvement of the quality of scouting on offer to young people and adults. Growth can be fostered by:

- creating opportunities for more young people to be involved in scouting
- improving or maintaining a good quality programme that gives young people opportunities for adventure and residential experiences
- improving the retention of young people moving between sections
- recruiting more young people and adults
- appreciating adults and working with them in a flexible way
- understanding parents better and forging active partnerships with them
- making scouting flexible and open to all
- having a positive impact on the local community
- being more representative of the local community.



DISCUSSION POINT 1

While you are reflecting on growth, it might be useful to talk with others about their understanding of it. Often we think about growth in terms of increasing numbers, but sustainable growth requires more than simply getting people through the door.

Consider how you might promote growth in your section. If you had a hat that you could magically pull things out of, what would you want for your section or group to promote recruitment and retention? You may also want to find out if your section or group currently has any development plans. You will return to this list later and you can compare how your responses may have changed.

SESSION 2: RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF ADULTS



ACTIVELY RECRUITING ADULTS

The first activity looked at the reasons adults join scouting. Adults get involved in scouting for a variety of reasons and some are the same as for young people – fun, friendship and adventure. There is also the chance for adults to see young people develop and grow, and know they have contributed to it by investing their time and passing on skills and abilities and investing time in them.

When more adults are involved in scouting, the time commitment required by people already involved is less. Getting a bit of extra help to improve the quality of the scouting you deliver, or to lessen the amount of commitment required by individuals, is what is often wanted. It can also mean that more time can be spent putting in place some of the things you may have written from the 'magic hat' session (that is, improving the programme, investigating adventurous activities or investing time in other adults). Sometimes these are the things that fall to the bottom of the priority list when there are not enough adults to help.

Recruiting adults to take on the wide range of tasks and responsibilities that scouting offers is something that everyone can support. Although you may think that it is your manager's responsibility, you will find that you are often better placed or presented with more opportunities to recruit for your section than your manager or others in the district.

Research shows that adults with a current or a previous connection to an organisation are more likely to volunteer with that organisation.

In section-based roles:

- 40–45% are parents of youth members
- 40–45% 'came through the movement'
- the remaining 10–20% come from a wide variety of sources, but the majority have or have had or have some connection with scouting, whether in the past, or from work colleagues, friends or neighbours involved in scouting
- very few come from advertising campaigns or the national website.

The majority of new volunteers in scouting are either parents of youth members or have come through the movement themselves (that is, they were youth members or young leaders). With parents, you are likely to be one of the first people they speak to about scouting and, therefore, you could be the prime recruiter.



EXERCISE 2

Actively recruiting people requires thinking about who they might be and how to approach them. Below are a series of statements that potential volunteers have made about why they are not involved as a volunteer in scouting.

Think about how you can engage with these potential volunteers, particularly if they are parents and former youth members. What can you say or do to make them change their perceptions and consider giving their time? What could you do in the future to ensure that potential volunteers do not give these reasons for not volunteering?

'No one asked me.'	
'I've spoken to people who just moan about volunteering.'	
'Scouting doesn't look like much fun.'	
'I don't have the time to help out.'	
'I'm not needed.'	
'I don't have the skills to help out.'	
'I don't understand scouting.'	
'I don't really see myself in the leader's shoes.'	
'Nobody explained I could be a volunteer at 18.'	
'I don't want to be a leader.'	
'I left and went to university elsewhere.'	



DISCUSSION POINT 2

When you have completed this exercise, spend some time discussing it with fellow leaders, your line manager or the person validating your learning. Then take a look at the list in [workbook appendix 1](#) and compare it with your ideas. There are no right or wrong answers, but if there were any areas you hadn't thought of, take some time to think about them.



The focus of Exercise 2 was on parents and former members as they are the majority of new volunteers, but there are other ways of recruiting people without direct connections to scouting. Students, members of the public and members of other voluntary organisations could all be potential recruits. Local scouting events, presentations in schools or community work could attract new adults to scouting. Local recruitment campaigns in papers, on websites or through community noticeboards can reach adults who would not normally have any contact with scouting.

If you decide to recruit in this way, ensure that raising awareness of scouting is the focus. Make sure your messages are relevant to your target audience and that you are promoting scouting activities that engage with the local community and develop young people.

Recruitment should be active. Don't just expect people to know that you need help. Generally people worry that they don't have the time or the skills. This is why it is important to be flexible.



DISCUSSION POINT 3

Reflect on what you currently do and how you might want to include new recruitment activities in the future. Could you use one of these approaches in your own section?

More information can be found on the following pages of the members resources area of www.scouts.org.uk

- [Recruiting students](#)
- [Recruiting members of the public](#)
- [Recruiting parents and relatives](#)
- [Recruiting former members](#)
- [Recruiting members of voluntary organisations](#)
- [Recruiting employers and employees](#)
- [Recruiting adult volunteers](#)

[Involving parents](#): These resources aim to demystify scouting and to give parents the facts. Along with a leader's guide, it's a valuable tool to use when thinking about how to engage with parents. The recruiting parents web pages provide numerous resources, from activity ideas to guides supporting step-by-step planning, which can be used to support recruiting adults in this way.



BEING FLEXIBLE

Research has identified that the largest barrier to volunteer recruitment is the time pressure on adults, coupled with concern over the demands placed on new recruits. Nearly 60% of non-volunteers say 'lack of time' is the main reason they do not volunteer.

Being flexible is about meeting the needs and wants of volunteers in terms of time, what they want to get out of scouting and what they feel comfortable in taking on. This can encourage them to stay in scouting for longer, as the likelihood is they will be happier in their role. Research shows that the main reason volunteers leave scouting in the first 12 months is because they realise that the scale and scope of the role they have taken on is too much.

So how does this work in practice? How do they make sure they are not just replacing the existing roles, but are focused on finding out what the real needs of the group or section are, and whether there is a fit with the skills new volunteers might have or activities they want to develop?

The first step is to find out some information from the volunteer, particularly:

- their skills
- their availability
- what they want from a volunteering role
- what they are able/willing to do.



EXERCISE 3

Consider the following volunteer recruitment examples:

Example 1

After coming along and helping on camp, Johnny (a parent) approaches you and says that he would be happy to help out, but he can only offer limited and irregular time each week. When he does help out, he wants to be spending a bit more time with his child.

What options are available to him?

Example 2

Mandy is a young leader who is heading to university in September. She has said that while she is unable to help out regularly each weekend, she would be happy to give one weekend every six weeks or so to scouting. Mandy is studying accounting at university.

What options are available to her?

Example 3

Ed is interested in becoming a section leader but has a young child who he cannot arrange childcare for. He seems to think that some other parents feel the same – that is, that they would like to volunteer but don't feel able to offer their support for the same reasons.

What options are available to him?

Example 4

Sheila is interested in helping out but she doesn't want to work directly with young people. She thinks she can probably give two nights a month.

What options are available to her?



DISCUSSION POINT 4

When you have completed this exercise, spend some time discussing it with fellow leaders, your line manager or the person validating your learning. Then take a look at the list in [workbook appendix 2](#) and compare it with your ideas. There are no right or wrong answers, but if there are any areas you hadn't thought of, take some time to think about them. [workbook appendix 3](#) contains real volunteering case studies so you can see how people have been flexible in real life.



Being flexible is about:

- Tailoring volunteering opportunities around the availability, needs, wants and skills of the volunteer, – that is, remembering that not everyone wants the same thing out of volunteering. If volunteers are supported and happy with their roles, they are more likely to stay.
- Offering opportunities that meet the needs of all potential volunteers – removing the 'invisible barriers' like the need to attend every meeting, to wear a uniform or take the scout promise, or having to work with young people when they could take on a task like working with adults or administration.

RETAINING ADULT VOLUNTEERS



EXERCISE 4

Following successful recruitment, induction, support and review are the keys to retention.

Think about your experience in scouting. When you started in your own role:

- Did you feel welcomed and supported?
- What were you told and who did you meet?
- Did you receive any training and did it come at the right time?
- Do you still feel supported in your role now and what makes you feel like that?

Use the space below to write down your thoughts.



EXERCISE 5

It is the group scout leader, district explorer scout commissioner or county scout network commissioner's responsibility to make sure that effective processes are in place for ensuring that a new volunteer is supported in their role. As section Leaders and supporters, you are the people with whom new volunteers will interact with on a regular basis, so you will probably be asked to be part of this process.

With this in mind, think about how you could help new volunteers within your sections in their first few months. Think about what a new volunteer would need to know, why they need to know it and who else could be involved in supporting them. Use the space to write this down.



DISCUSSION POINT 5

When you have completed this exercise, spend some time discussing it with fellow leaders, your line manager or the person validating your learning. Then take a look at the list in [workbook appendix 4](#) and compare it with your ideas. There are no right or wrong answers, but if there were any areas you hadn't thought of, take some time to think about them. You could also explore some of the resources highlighted in the information that follows.

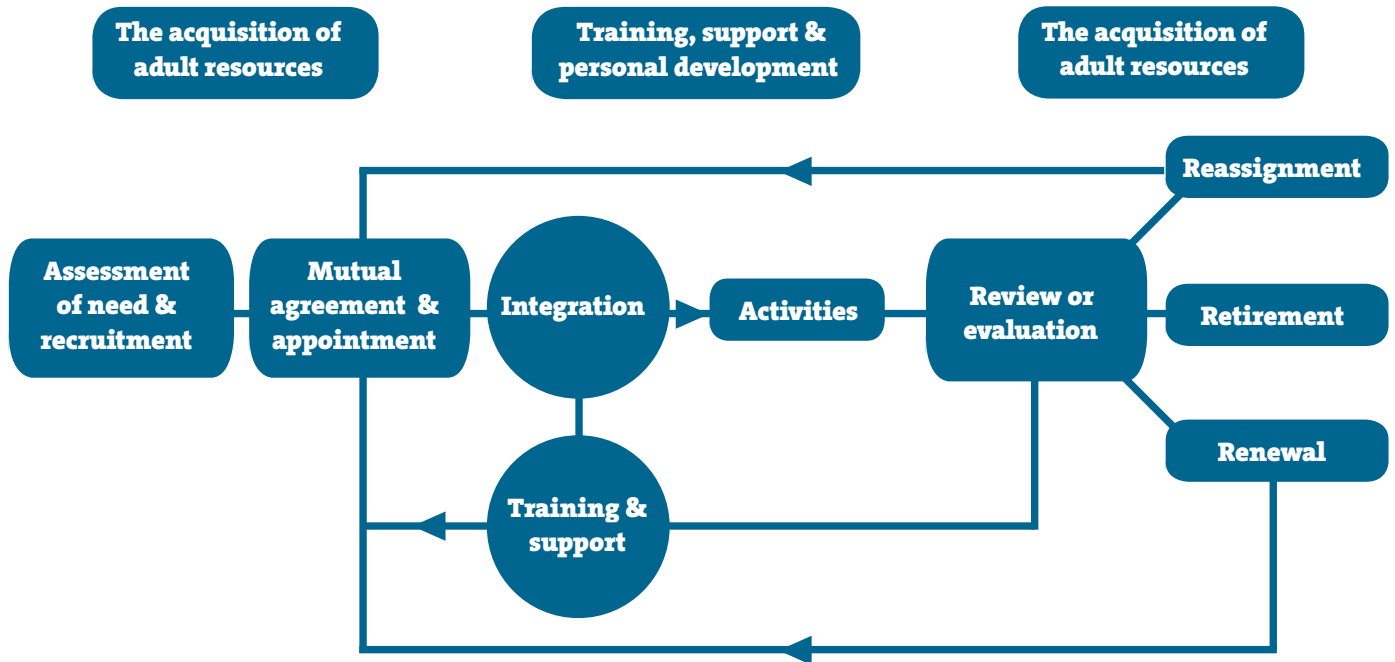
The support that an adult needs will depend on the individual but this should give you an idea of the kinds of things that you may need to think about.

Remember to:

- be open and accessible so that people can ask questions if they want to, especially if they need to find out about what scouting is or how things are done
- provide practical support, which could mean uniforms, expenses, buddies for training, or meetings
- give them opportunities to meet and spend time with others to ensure that they start feeling part of a team.



ADULTS IN SCOUTING MODEL



Do you remember the Adults in Scouting model? The steps can be looked at as individual tools which, if used effectively can, help to recruit and retain adults. This is a process all adults should follow throughout their time in scouting; each time a new appointment is agreed, the adult restarts the process at the beginning.

Find out more about each of the stages by looking at the following pages on the member resources area of www.scouts.org.uk:

- [Recruiting adult volunteers](#)
- [Integration and induction plans](#)
- [Training for adults](#)
- [Support within scouting](#)
- [Review process](#)

Appointment process



There are four stages to the adult appointment process:

- **Application:** where a line manager agrees to support an adult applying for an appointment.
- **Approval:** where independent checking concludes that this person is suitable for an appointment and includes agreement from the relevant commissioner or body, successful outcome of the personal enquiry and (where appropriate) two references.
- **Appointment:** where the relevant commissioner or body makes the appointment.
- **Induction:** where the line manager ensures that the adult receives a high-quality induction.

All adults, no matter what their role, will go through the four stages of the appointment.

Support for volunteers

Retention, or keeping adults in scouting, involves making them feel welcomed, valued and motivated throughout their time in scouting. This isn't just about the induction at the start, but the continued support that they receive.

It is also important to recognise that one of the key reasons adults stay in scouting is the close bonds of friendship and interdependence that builds among teams working together. You should also remember that it is important to retain volunteers for the right reasons. Sometimes, it is the right time for someone to move on or to take more of a back seat. Sections should plan for succession in volunteer roles – it is healthy to have some turnover and they should plan for this as part of their development.

Retention resources

There are a number of tools available to support you in the retention of adults.

[Induction toolkit and group and district induction packs](#): There are several resources available to help in planning inductions, including a group scout leader and district commissioners and templates for use at group and district level. The templates are designed to create induction packs for new volunteers.

Support within scouting:

Factsheets and guides are available in the member resources area of www.scouts.org.uk

SESSION 3: RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF YOUNG PEOPLE

RECRUITING YOUNG PEOPLE



EXERCISE 6

Although many young people come to scouting through word of mouth from parents and friends, there are a number of other ways you can promote scouting in your section and local area and actively recruit new members.

What practical steps can you take in your role to recruit young people into your section?



EXAMPLE

Explore some of the following examples and consider the question again. How could you use some of these approaches?

Word of mouth/referrals

Talking to the existing youth members and their parents is a great way to encourage more young people to join scouting. Young people are much more likely to respond to a personal invitation from their friends than to posters or letters.

Parents can be effective ambassadors for scouting and represent a large proportion of our volunteer recruitment. They can encourage other parents and recruit young people through word of mouth.

Former members

You could consider contacting those youth members who may have left the previous sections when they reached the core age of their own section. While the previous section might not have been to their liking, they could be encouraged to experience the next section. It may be the case that they now have more time for scouting or have a greater interest in the new section's activities, or that the day the section meets is more convenient. Simply offering them the opportunity to experience scouting again may be all the encouragement they need.

School assemblies/presentations at local schools

Creativity is the key to providing a stimulating experience for up to 300 young people in one short time period. You can explain what scouting members do every week, the kind of games they play and the type of activities they do. Make sure it is as interactive as possible – young people remember more by doing.

The important thing to remember is that anything illustrating scouting must impress and create a 'wow' factor. Ensure that the assembly presentation you prepare is appropriate to the age range you are targeting – for example, an activity that requires singing may be more appropriate when recruiting beaver scouts than explorer scouts.

Open events and scouting showcases

These events focus on allowing young people to have a go at scouting. Open events, such as taster days, allow young people the opportunity to experience scouting with no strings attached. Events could be held at the weekly meeting venue or a public location such as shopping area, local open space, park, community fair or school.

Local media

Many schools, community centres or places of worship have newsletters that could include an article about your section and/or group.

General public

There are many different methods of recruiting from the general public, however, most of them involve creating awareness and having a local presence via:

- using leaflets and posters
- creating your own website
- helping out at local events.

Local community

Scout groups serve their local community. By becoming an integral part of the community, scouting can contribute to a wider range of activities and organisations, which, in turn, is a perfect advertisement for what scouting does.

Community relations is about making contacts, meeting people and getting involved in the community. Useful starting points include:

- community groups (residents' associations, environment groups, Citizens Advice Bureau)
- community sponsorship
- places of worship
- minority communities
- local government
- education
- youth services
- local free newspapers.

The most effective way of recruiting new young people is to go out and give them the opportunity to experience the adventure of scouting, so that they can find out for themselves what scouting is about. However, before embarking on any youth recruitment campaign, there are a few things to remember:

- Ensure the programme is consistently exciting and challenging. This will help retain the interest of new joiners.
- Focus on the aim of recruiting young people. For example, do not try to raise funds at the same time, however tempting this may be. Some people might be put off by fundraising stalls and it will confuse the overall message.
- Involve the group scout leader, district commissioner or county commissioner or local supporters or development teams.
- Ensure there is adequate adult support for any successful recruitment drives.

BARRIERS TO RECRUITING YOUNG PEOPLE



EXERCISE 7

This exercise looks at the potential barriers to recruiting young people – you may have heard some of these reasons before!

Work through the list below and suggest some appropriate actions that could be taken to overcome the barriers. You may want to speak to others in your section to help you out.

Potential barrier to recruitment	What actions could you take to overcome this?
Young person doesn't know anyone in the section	
Unaware of what scouting has to offer	
Busy with other extracurricular activities	
Better things to spend money on	
Feel that scouting doesn't represent their background/interests or cannot accommodate their needs, such as a physical disability	
Past experience of scouting	
Stereotypical/outdated image of what scouting is	
Not enough volunteers to run the section	
Attitude of current volunteers	
Must wear a uniform	
Venue/time/day of meeting	



DISCUSSION POINT 6

When you have completed this exercise, spend some time discussing with fellow leaders, your line manager or the person validating your learning. Then take a look at the list in [workbook appendix 5](#) and compare it with your answers.

Don't worry if you couldn't think of actions for all of them. Overcoming barriers can sometimes mean changing attitudes or developing the section to meet the needs of young people and their parents. This may take time and needs a team approach.



Waiting lists and registers of interest

There may be times when a place is not available for a young person to join a section. Waiting lists will include anyone who has already reached the core age of your section and waiting for a place to become available. It also includes those in a previous section who may wish to join the next section. When creating waiting lists, it is important to manage them properly – see [Guidelines for managing registers of interest and waiting lists: \(FS155058\)](#) which can be found on the member resources area of www.scouts.org.uk

A joining list shouldn't be regarded as a badge of honour; it means that young people are not getting to experience scouting, and development plans should be put in place to improve this. A register of interest will include anyone under the core age range who wants to join the section. These can be useful when looking at recruiting new young people and planning, but be aware of its potential limitations

When sections, groups and districts work together, there are more opportunities for young people to get involved in scouting, which is why planning recruitment activities across all three is important. Your section may not have the resource to recruit any more young people but the group next door might. The important thing is that young people get to experience and join in scouting.



RETAINING YOUNG PEOPLE

Why do you think young people leave scouting? Some of these reasons may be the same as the barriers to recruitment.

There are a number of factors that can influence whether young people join and stay, including the programme itself, the attention paid to welcoming and integrating new members, the activities and development available and the appeal and relevance of the subsequent age section.

The programme

An exciting, balanced and challenging programme is crucial to retaining existing youth membership. The majority of young people who join scouting are seeking challenge, adventure and excitement. Therefore, this needs to be provided from the youngest section all the way through to the final section. The youth programme must be progressively challenging as young people move through the sections. This means ensuring that the activities are appropriate for the age range while always offering something to look forward to. If the programme is not challenging, or is too easy for them, young people will walk away.

The youth programme needs to be periodically reviewed to ensure that it is attractive and relevant to young people in the societies in which they live. Offering a top award with clearly thought-out objectives for young people to work towards can give the youth programme greater focus and motivate more young people to continue through the final age section.

Keeping young people engaged and interested is the key to long-term development and growth within their sections. Module 12: Providing a Balanced Programme and Module 14: Young People Today cover this in more detail.

Movement between the sections

Moving from one section to another is a key period for the retention of young people. Basic things such as the next section meeting being a different time, place or day can mean it clashes with other activities. It is really important to encourage interaction and participation between sections to promote excitement through activities and joint programmes or events. Interaction and co-ordination with other groups is also important, as their sections may meet on more suitable nights.

Retaining young people between sections relies on good communication and planning between the section or group the young person is joining and the one they are leaving. Developing group awards and attending district or county events as a group encourages the sense of belonging and participation.

Good links generally occur in groups/districts/counties where section leaders meet regularly and work together. The best way to retain young people in scouting at this important milestone is to provide support for them to join the next section – for example, by linking young people to the next section in small groups or with a close friend rather than as individuals moving on alone. It is also worth planning to send groups of peers up to the next section together so they have friends who are experiencing the same changes.

Youth involvement

One of the challenges of scouting's mission is to actively involve young people in matters that concern them, and to take responsibility for doing so. This means consulting them, helping them to make decisions and to become involved in the scouting they do, both individually and collectively. Active youth involvement (in the sections, in decision-making bodies in the movement and in the community) helps to create a sense of ownership and a greater capacity for action, while providing essential feedback to ensure that scouting remains attractive and relevant to its young members.

SESSION 4: PLANNING FOR GROWTH



ENSURING CONTINUOUS GROWTH

You started this workbook by looking at growth and its importance in creating a feel-good factor, focusing on achieving our mission and showing visible signs of growth.

You need to know how to take practical steps and to use the support, tools and resources available to you to ensure that scouting continues to grow within your section.

You may wish to recap on the previous sessions covered and the areas of growth you have looked at (for example, session 2 looked at practical ways to actively recruit adults and how you can integrate and support new adults to help them stay. Session 3 looked at overcoming barriers to help recruit young people and the different aspects that you need to consider to encourage them stay).

Growth starts with knowing where scouting is at the moment and recognising its strengths and weaknesses. You can then look at where you want to be and how you are going to get there. Whether planning a programme, a camp or a section's future, simple and realistic targets are needed to ensure the section doesn't eventually shrink and close.

Step 1 – Where are we now?

Step 2 – Where do we want to be?

Step 3 – How are we going to get there?



EXERCISE 8

Understanding where you are now is a way of health checking your section. Below are a number of health check statements. Consider the situations in your section or group. Are they good or do they need improvement? If you think a statement is good then you should assign it a green status. If you think it's good but that it could be better, assign it amber. If you think it definitely needs improvement, you should assign it red. Write comments on why you have chosen each category in the comments box.

Statements	Status			Comments
	GREEN	AMBER	RED	
Some sections have no girls	GREEN	AMBER	RED	
There are 15 young people in each section	GREEN	AMBER	RED	
50% of young people achieve their chief scout award before moving on to the next section	GREEN	AMBER	RED	
All young people in sections have a chance to provide input on and discuss the programme	GREEN	AMBER	RED	
50% of young people go from beavers to cubs	GREEN	AMBER	RED	
There are young leaders in each of the sections	GREEN	AMBER	RED	
All sections have one residential experience a year	GREEN	AMBER	RED	
There are no young people on waiting lists	GREEN	AMBER	RED	
No increase on last year's census figures	GREEN	AMBER	RED	
All leaders and assistants are reviewed at the review date set	GREEN	AMBER	RED	
Programme-planning meetings are held once a year	GREEN	AMBER	RED	

Leaders leave out the programme zones they find difficult to deliver	GREEN	AMBER	RED	
Young people play their favourite games every week	GREEN	AMBER	RED	
Five of the parents are involved in helping the section	GREEN	AMBER	RED	
The section attends district and county-run termly activities and residential experiences	GREEN	AMBER	RED	



DISCUSSION POINT 7

When you have completed this exercise, spend some time discussing it with fellow leaders, your line manager or the person validating your learning. Then take a look at the list in [workbook appendix 6](#) and compare it with your answers.

You may want to ask other leaders or the young people in your section so you get a wider range of responses. Are their answers the same or different?

Different people may have different perceptions as to the health of a section or a group, which is why it is important when planning to involve as many people as possible and be realistic about 'where we are now'.

Where do we want to be?

For section leaders and supporters this means:

- ensuring the delivery of a balanced programme through good practice at all levels
- identifying issues with recruitment and retention
- assisting with development planning
- encouraging reviews at all levels
- identifying areas where further support or training is needed.

How are we going to get there?

Once you have identified which areas are going well, you can focus on the areas that need more work – the development plan. A development plan enables sections to grow in a constructive way and highlights issues and areas that may need working on in order to reach 'where we want to be'.

Decide what the priorities are and then break them down into what needs to be done, by whom and when. It's important that targets you are aiming for are as realistic as possible; this makes the whole process much easier in the long term.

A development plan should:

- be devised by everyone in the scout section or group so that ownership is shared
- focus on improving the quality and/or growth of your section
- include realistic targets and timescales
- be simple.



EXERCISE 9

Development plans are best done with others in your section, but that doesn't mean that you can't make your own personal action plans.

Spend five minutes thinking about the key messages you have picked up throughout this workbook.

What are the most important things you have learned?

What will you do with the knowledge you have attained?

Write down three actions that you will take now. They should be things that you can personally complete (for example, planning to find out more about three parents).

Write down your three actions here:

1.

2.

3.



DISCUSSION POINT 8

By taking it one step at a time, a section or group will get results and be motivated to move on to other areas. Do not forget to meet regularly to see how the action plan is going.

If you haven't already, you should share what you have done with others in your sections or groups in the district and county.

Thank you for completing this workbook. Growing your section is an important part of ensuring scouting remains relevant and will help you contribute to enabling more adults and young people to experience the adventure of scouting. Hopefully this workbook will have helped you to understand how you can make a difference.

Don't forget that you now need to validate your learning with a training adviser. The criteria were stated at the start of the workbook.

Good luck!