

There is much to do to oversee the operations of a busy Scout Group. The following pages may serve as a reminder of the main items you should be focussed on during each month of the year.

It is not an exhaustive list and you are encouraged to add to it to suit your own needs. We would be pleased to include improvements in future editions so if you think of anything which should be amended or added please drop us a line at adultresources@scouts.ie.

Good luck with it...

Group Leader Calendar - January

The start of a New Year is a good time to review all that's taken place over the past few months and to tighten up on plans for the coming months. Here is a list of some of the tasks you should look at during January.

- Host a Group Council Meeting and use it as an opportunity to update your Group Development Plan as appropriate.
- Discuss National Council and prepare any motions, suggested rule changes, etc. for submission. Submit nominations in plenty of time and watch out for National Mailings in relation to deadlines.
- Check with all the Programme Sections that they have their programme in place and that plans for camps and expeditions are well underway.
- Highlight the Code of Good Practice and Scouter responsibility, check vetting is up to date for all Scouters and complete any outstanding Mutual Agreements.
- Revisit Scouter training needs and get bookings to National Office in plenty of time.
- Complete an audit of all equipment especially adventure activity gear (tents, boats, safety equipment, etc.) - arrange to repair and replace as necessary. It would also be a good time to review the Scout Group's insurance policies to cover new equipment which was purchased since last year. Don't forget travel insurance if your Scout Group is planning to travel abroad for their Annual Camp.
- If not already done you must complete your census and submit it and your membership fees to National Office.
- Complete applications for any grant aid which is available in your area, Scouting Ireland Support Staff should be able to assist with this.
- Finally, Founders Day is only a few short weeks away, if you haven't already got plans for an event now is the time to do develop them. Make it something memorable and worthwhile.

Group Leader Calendar - February

Founders Day is on 22nd February and is celebrated by Scout and Guides worldwide, Guides refer to Founders Day as Thinking Day. It is a celebration of the birthdays of Lord Robert Baden Powell and his wife Olave. This is a time for special occasions and events and an ideal opportunity to get out in the community and showcase Scouting. Millions of Scouts and Guides the world over renew their promise and take part in events at local, national and international level.

Some activities you might consider:

- Get the Programme Sections / Scout Group to organise a Founders Day event locally. Use it to recognise the contribution of individuals and businesses that have assisted you over the years; present Scouting Ireland Community Awards. Publicise your event, get local media involved. Send out press releases to local and national media before the event and invite them to send a photographer.
- You could also consider presenting awards and badges to youth members and to adult members of your Scout Group.
- Organise a special Investiture or a Sunrise Hike or better still combine both activities.
- Attend Scout County, Provincial or National celebrations as appropriate.

Other items for February

Meet with the Parents and Friends Support Group to discuss any fund raising events which are imminent.

- Ensure all equipment is ready for the camping/sailing season, check that all repairs have been carried out and new that equipment which may have been purchased is delivered and fit for purpose.
- Review the waiting lists and take in new members if possible. It would be a good idea to contact parents of those on the waiting list to let them know how things are progressing and approximately when they can expect to get their child into the

**Reminder: Deadline for applying for Adult Awards is
31st March**

Group Leader Calendar - March

St. Patrick's Day on 17th March will be the focus for a lot of Scout Groups all around the country. Many towns and cities hold parades and these provide an ideal opportunity for Scouts and Scouters to get out and be involved in the local community. If your Scout Group decides to take part in the festivities you need to agree what you will do. For example will the Scout Group march together or may you will consider entering a float. A float will take time to prepare and you will need to consider the well-being and safety of all those taking part very carefully.

- Hold a Group Council; use it to discuss National Council elections and motions

Below are some additional items which might be included in the Agenda:

- St. Patrick's Day preparations - are you entering a float, have you considered all the safety aspects of this plan?
- Discuss and evaluate the Group Development Plan. At this stage you should have put some of your plan into action and should be seeing some results. Review what has taken place and what is left to achieve.
- Get updates from all Programme Sections regarding their plans for Annual Camps and Expeditions or any sectional weekend camps or slumber nights. Ensure that each Section is aware of the forms, procedures and other requirements for overnights.
- Consider holding a Group Open day in the Community, this could be done in tandem with St. Patrick's day celebrations or as a separate event.
- Decide who will be representing the Scout Group at National Council. Each Group can send 4 delegates, one of whom must be a registered as a youth member of Scouting Ireland. Each Scout Group should ensure they are fully represented. National Council is your chance to have your say in the running of the Association. It is also a great opportunity to meet people and to network with other Group Leaders and Programme Scouters.

Visit all Programme Sections, discuss plans for programme, camps and overnights for the coming months with each section and check training requirements for Scouters. Ensure that all Scouters are registered and have completed the necessary training for their roles.

Group Leader Calendar - April

REMINDER: DEADLINE FOR APPLYING FOR ADULT AWARDS IS 31ST MARCH

Easter is just around the corner and so camping and water activities will be in full swing again very shortly.

Below are some ideas for April

- If the Scout Group is taking part in an Easter Parade ensure all safety precautions are taken.
- Have a Group Easter Egg Hunt; it's a great way to get the whole Scout Group out together including parents, brothers, sisters, aunts and uncles etc. You could also use it as a recruitment exercise by opening it up to the community.
- Carry out a check of adventure activity equipment (such as camping, boating and safety gear). Time is running short if you need to get repairs done.
- Update Charge Certs and Boat Certs for Sea Scouts.
- Check that first aid certificates are in date, arrange refresh training as required.
- Encourage all Sections to complete their Overnight & International Approval Forms (SIF 26/11), get them to the County Programme Coordinator (CPC) in plenty of time to ensure all goes smoothly. Allow plenty of time to avoid disappointment especially if you are travelling abroad.
- Follow up on any outstanding grant applications.
- Check that any members who will turn 18 over the camping season have completed vetting and the relevant training (see GL Handbook item "090 Training").

Group Leader Calendar - May

After all the excitement of the past few months, St. Patrick's Day, National Council and Easter, it is now time to prepare for the Summer in earnest. Here are a few things to consider during the month.

- Have another look at your Group Development Plan; you can never spend too much time on it. Are there any targets or milestones which you want to achieve over the summer months?
- If there are any repairs to be carried out on the Scout Den or your grounds now is a good time to plan these with the good weather approaching (we all hope).
- Make sure you have copies of every Programme Section's forms for their Overnights and Camps (SIF 26/11 Overnight & International Approval Forms), ensure all adults are vetted and have completed the required training.
- Ensure the forms reach National Office or the County Programme Co-Ordinator (CPC) as required in plenty of time.
- Complete final checks for camps/expeditions, equipment, budgets, travel arrangements, Scouters, etc.
- Why not have an open day for parents and the local community? You could even throw in a recruitment drive while you are at it. Invite local radio and newspapers to come along.
- Parents always like to know what is happening in their children's lives and with all the camps/expeditions, events and activities that will be happening over the summer you should consider putting together a Group Newsletter. Get all the youth members involved, they could do interviews, drawings, take photographs and even write some of the articles. Include a calendar of events for all Programme Sections over the summer months.
- Make the most of good weather and encourage all Programme Sections to use the outdoors as much as possible.

Group Leader Calendar - June

With summer and the camping/expedition season fast approaching it's time to ensure that all Programme Sections have completed their planning and have prepared programme, menu, etc. for their Annual Camps / Expeditions and Overnights and have submitted them to the County Commissioner and to National Office as appropriate.

It is also a good idea to start planning in June for a fresh programme in September.

- You should review your waiting lists bearing in mind how many Scouts will be transferring from one Programme Section to another. Contact parents/guardians of potential new members to confirm they are still interested and let them know when you are starting up again.
- Meet with Scouters to check their availability for the next Scouting year. Carry out Mutual Agreement and Review so you have everything in place for September.
- This is also the time to review your Scouter numbers to ensure you can accommodate any new intake of young people and cover for any Scouters who may have left or will be leaving to go off to college or work outside of your area.
- Check out local events; get involved in these as it is a great way to promote Scouting in your Community.
- Begin the process of recruiting new Scouters if necessary. Getting involved in community events and getting out and being seen during the bright fine evenings is a good way to attract new members.
- Ensure all Programme Sections carry out a One Programme review before they finish for the summer.
- Ask all Programme Sections to complete a broad outline of their plans for the next Scouting year over the summer months.
- Have a Scout Group BBQ, invite parents, members and Scouters and just have FUN.
- GET OUT - hold your meetings outside, have a treasure hunt around your local area, visit the local park and make use of any natural amenities to put the OUT in Scouting.

Group Leader Calendar - July

Overnights, Annual Camps, Expeditions and other outdoor activities are now in full swing with the good weather. Don't forget to carry out a safety review of all upcoming activities, events and overnights.

- Check that all appropriate forms have been completed and submitted as required.
- Remind Scouters to ensure that all emergency contact details for Doctors, Hospitals, Dentists etc. for camp and their locations and have been double checked and that all details are current and up to date.
- If Activities Consent Forms (SIF 11/05) have already been completed remind parents that they should inform the relevant Scouters of any changes in their child's healthcare needs. If they haven't been returned, now is the time to chase them. Ensure that all forms include an alternative emergency contact number.
- Don't forget to get involved in local community events, show off your Scouting skills; bring recruitment leaflets and Adult Application Forms too (see GL Handbook item 040). Be Prepared.
- Visit as many of the summer Camps, Expeditions, and Overnights as you can.
- Don't forget to hold a BBQ or other FUN day for all the members of the Scout Group and their families.
- GET OUT - Hold your meetings outside, be seen in the community. Encourage all Programme Sections to do as much as possible outside. Put the OUT in Scouting.

- HAVE FUN, ENJOY THE SUMMER AND BE SAFE.

REMINDER: DEADLINE FOR APPLYING FOR ADULT AWARDS IS 31ST AUGUST

Group Leader Calendar - August

It might seem like you have just started the summer season but now is the time you should be looking forward to the new Scouting year.

Just a few things you need to consider for August to get things in place and moving as soon as possible when you start into the new Scout year.

- Contact all the Scouter teams and other adult members of the Scout Group, try to organise a get-together prior to starting back.
- Liaise with Scouters regarding their availability for the new Scouting year.
- Discuss future section plans with Programme Scouters. Get each Programme Section to put their own annual plan together before the September meeting of Group Council where the Group Calendar will be drawn up.
- Contact all parents and communicate arrangements for the new Scouting year to them, especially date, time and place for first meeting in September.
- Set a date for your September Group Council and advise Group Council members.
- Continue to GET OUT as much as possible... the good weather won't last forever.

September is looming large and with all the excitement of the summer over it's time to get things moving again at Group level.

Group Leader Calendar - September

Some of the jobs which need to be carried out by the Group Leader and Group Council during September:

The first thing you need to do is set a date for and hold a Group Council in September, you should consider including items below.

- Review Annual Camps and Expeditions (including accounts) and summer programme with all Programme Sections.
 - Review the Group Development Plan and amend it as appropriate to meet your ongoing needs as a Scout Group (see GL Handbook item 130).
 - Prepare a Scout Group budget for presentation at the Group Council AGM and the Parents & Friends AGM (see GL Handbook item 180). Don't forget to include training, awards, ceremonies, any maintenance work required to your premises as well as your day to day running costs.
 - Depending on your budget outcomes Group Council may need to discuss annual membership fees; do they remain the same? If an increase is deemed necessary, you should be able to justify and stand over it. Does the current method /system of payment (weekly, term or annually) suit both you and your families?
 - Prepare your Group Calendar for the year, ensure that you check out County, Provincial and National meetings and events as they may impact on dates you choose. Encourage each Programme Section to compile their own calendar of events such as Award Ceremonies, Investitures, etc. **Set dates for Group Councils, the AGM of Group Council and the Parents and Friends AGM.**
 - Plan the links between the Programme Section; how long? when? which Scouters are involved and responsible? Decide on intake of new members; how many youth members can each Programme Section take based on current numbers, Scouter ratios, space and resources?
 - Update the database accordingly.
- As Group Leader you will need to carry out a "Scouter Audit". Do you have enough Scouters? Are they all in the best role for them / for the Scout Group? Are there plans in place to backfill for any who are thinking of leaving us or moving on to another role in Scouting?

This will be greatly assisted by ensuring that all Adult Members participate in the Mutual Agreement and a Review process (see GL Handbook item 080). The Mutual Agreement and Review should incorporate training needs, further development, level of commitment and any supports that are required. Distribute the Training Calendar to all Scouters.

Group Leader Calendar - October

Your list of things to do for October should include the following:

- Carry out a Risk Assessment of your meeting place (see GL Handbook item 200). Is there any essential maintenance or development required? If so have they been included in your annual budget?
- Complete a stocktake of all equipment and carry out a review of future equipment requirements with the Group Quartermaster/Bo'sun.
- Ensure Scouters are booked on relevant training courses; include Parents & Friends Support Group members as appropriate.
- Encourage Scouters to attend and participate in meetings with the County Programme Coordinator (CPC).
- Review the Group Calendar to ensure all dates have been included, in particular investiture dates for each Programme Section.
- Start discussions for next year's Annual Camps, Expeditions and Overnights. Consider possible destinations, estimate of costs etc.
- **HOLD THE AGM OF YOUR GROUP COUNCIL**, agenda as set out in the Rules.
- **HOLD YOUR PARENTS AND FRIENDS AGM** - recruit members for Parents and Friends Support Group (PFSG).
- Appoint 3 members of the PFSG to your Group Council.
- Meet with the Parents and Friends Support Group regarding the Scout Group budget and other needs, include National Fundraising (the 12 days of Christmas Draw) and other fundraising events.
- Invite your Group Support Facilitator and/or Provincial Support Officer your next Group Council meeting.

**SAMPLE AGENDA
1ST LARCH HILL SCOUT GROUP
PARENTS & FRIENDS AGM - 18TH OCTOBER 2014**

1. Welcome - Opening thought or reflection
2. Programme Section Reports
3. Group Leader's Report
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Training Report
6. Quartermaster/Bo'sun's Report
7. Parents and Friends Support Group (PFSG) Report
8. Recruitment of members for PFSG if required
9. Appointment of members of PFSG to Group Council
for coming Scouting year
10. Thank you's
11. Meeting Close

Group Leader Calendar - November

You should hold a Group Council in November to discuss the following:

- Review your Group Development Plan and discuss whether it needs to be updated prior to meeting the County Commissioner to prepare for the annual QSE review (see GL Handbook item 130). Agree any changes at Group Council and amend accordingly.
- It is also the ideal time to visit the Programme Sections to review their programme for the Scouting year, their implementation of ONE Programme, and their readiness for the annual QSE review.
- On an administration level you must ensure that the database is updated, Review all "Pending" adults and check that all Scouter vetting is up to date. Distribute Garda/Access NI Vetting Forms to those who need to renew. While updating the database it would also be a good time to check what adult awards are due and get nominations in as soon as possible (see GL Handbook item 110). Don't forget those who have helped the Scout Group out during the year.
- You should also ask all Programme Sections to let you know when their investitures are taking place so you can plan to attend them.
- Encourage all Programme Sections to try out fire drills; it might be an idea to appoint a Fire Marshal in each Programme Section. Try out the drill at Group Council or at least discuss an evacuation plan.
- Provincial Support staff will be able to give you some advice on grants such as those provided via the Education and Training Boards, Library Boards (NI) and other agencies, so have a chat with your Group Support Facilitator or Provincial Support Officer to see what is available in your area.
- Christmas is just around the corner and there are a few things you should discuss for the upcoming festivities.
- Consider holding a Christmas fund raiser. If you are using 12 days of Christmas, remind all sellers of the date for returning tickets, allow sufficient time to get them to National Office on time.
 1. A Christmas good turn in the Community would be an ideal event to organise (e.g. Carol singing at a local nursing home, helping another organisation with a flag day or event, visiting a local hospital, putting on a Christmas show in your Scout Hall and inviting other youth groups).
 2. Discuss the possibility of holding a Scouters Christmas social evening. The social aspect is very important for all adult members from a team building and morale point of view.

REMINDER: DEADLINE FOR APPLYING FOR ADULT AWARDS IS 31ST DECEMBER

Group Leader Calendar - December

Christmas is always a good time to say thank you and to remember people who have helped you throughout the year.

- Send Christmas cards to local Councillors, TDs, other community groups, ETBs, don't forget your own Scouters.
- Finalise Group Scouter social night in early December.
- Attend Programme Section Christmas parties; it is a good opportunity to meet youth members and Scouters on a less formal basis than usual.
- Check holiday period arrangements with each Programme Section so you know when meetings and activities are happening over Christmas and the New Year.
- Contact Programme Sections for an update on the plans for next year's Annual Camps, Expeditions and Overnights.
- Make sure all 12 Days of Christmas tickets have been returned to National Office in time for the first draw.
- Ensure all arrangements are in place for Christmas Good Turn, carry it out and review it.

HAVE A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR.