

## Early Years – learning from our history

### Summary:

The Scout Association (TSA) is currently researching, piloting, and evaluating different models of reaching young people under 6. The Board of Trustees will take a decision on whether to commit to early years provision in July 2020.

Our pilots are designed to test:

- *Impact:* Do we develop young people, from all backgrounds?
- *Programme Quality:* Would we have a programme that feels like Scouting, is respected by external experts and is appropriate for 4/5 year olds?
- *Feasibility:* Can we attract young people and new adult volunteers, does the Movement support the concept and can we resource delivery locally and nationally?

We have reviewed our archives and spoken to key individuals on significant events in Scouting that have required review or consultation of the whole organisation.

### Key insights to consider if early years scouting is taken to scale:

- The important of defining volunteer roles to support a new section.
- Consider the financial model particularly for new models of delivery.
- Importance of co-designing the opening of pilots alongside the District and Counties.
- Having a clear exit strategy for the pilots once the project ends.
- Consulting our members to generate ideas, lived experience and insight.
- If the programme is age appropriate, balanced and leading to Scouting outcomes then young people and adults will join.
- By targeting a new age-range you open up new opportunities to recruit adults and young people who have never been involved with Scouting before.
- Recruitment of adult volunteers was not a significant issue.
- Importance of a symbolic framework.
- Scouting has to be 'Caught not Taught'.
- Parents and guardians to be engaged to support their child to achieve badge work.
- Implementation of minimum standards – numbers and programme.

### Reports researched:

- Appendix 1 - The Advance Party Report – 1966
- Appendix 2 - Design for Scouting – 1966
- Appendix 3 - Under Eight Activity Report – 1975
- Appendix 4 - An investment for the future – April 1979 to April 1982
- Appendix 5 – Scouting and education – March 1984
- Appendix 6 – Into the Future – 1989
- Appendix 7 – Preparing for Change ( Programme Review) - 2000
- Appendix 8 - Under 6 working group – February 2010

## Appendix 1

### The Advance Party Report – 1966

The work began on the Advanced Party in January 1964 when the Chief Scout brought together 24 Scout Leaders under the age of 45 to study all aspects of the future of Scouting and to make recommendations, after consultation with the Movement, to the Chief Scout as to the development of the Movement, both in the immediate future and for the 1970's.

The Chief Scout sent out an invite in 1964 to the Movement asking for feedback. The Advance Party met collectively for six weekends and a number of sub-committees held 166 meetings. Interviews were carried out with 223 leaders of industry, youth service, education officers, headmasters and leading members of Scouting.

During this time a Cub Scout trial was carried out by eight packs, and six Districts in different parts of the country. The University of Manchester, Nottingham University and Leeds University also gave the Advance Party invaluable help.

### Age ranges

The Advance Party felt that the minimum age for joining Scouts would be eight years old. The reason for this was that lowering the age further would require a more juvenile programme. It was also felt that 'Scout burnout' could be an issue and caution was given on confusing child care with 'boy training.'

The age range for the Cub Section was capped from eight to eleven years old. The reason for this was because the Department of Education and Science stated that 'the average age at which boys transfer from Primary School to Secondary School is 11 years 3 months.' Therefore the Advanced Party supported the policy of no boy attending a Secondary School should be a Cub Scout.

One final point around ages ranges was that the report recommended that there be some flexibility in the age that they could join a section or move up into the next section i.e. You had to be 11 to become a Scout but could move up from Cubs at any point from 10 years and 9 months up until 11 years and 3 months depending on the individual and the section.

### Home learning

The report highlights early evidence suggesting activities at home. One of the recommendations to come out of the report was that parents of Cubs Scouts '*be encouraged to assist in the passing of their child's tests.*' Each Cub had to pass an initial test to become a members of the Cub Pack and it was suggested that parents assist with these tests ideally at a Pack Meeting but if not then do this with their child at home.

### Ratios

The report recommended for Cubs that at least two adults were present at a meeting (one of whom must hold a Warrant) and then one adult for every 6 Cub Scouts present.

Despite the minimum age for joining Cubs was 8 years old, Cubs Scout were only allowed to camp from the age of 9 1/2.

It was proposed that a cap on leaders be put in place and the table below highlights this:

	Maximum of
Cub Scout Pack (under 20 Cubs)	3 leaders
Cub Scout Pack (over 20 Cubs)	4 leaders
Scout Troop (up to 4 Patrols)	3 leaders
Scout Troop (up to 6 Patrols)	4 leaders

Scout Troop (over 6 Patrols)	5 leaders
Venture Scout Unit (up to 20 members)	3 leaders
Venture Scout Unit (over 20 members)	4 leaders

There was no restriction placed on the number of Instructors present at a Section Meeting. In 2019 a Section Assistant would be the equivalent of an Instructor.

### Minimum standards

The Advanced Party felt the need to recommend the introduction of minimum standards to each Section. The idea of this was due to a number of poorly run groups that did 'little real Scouting' but were able to remain open.

Groups would therefore be reviewed every year by the District Commissioner at the annual census. If they did not meet the criteria then they would support assistance for that Section to bring them up to the appropriate standard or potentially amalgamate them with another Section. If a group fell below minimum standard for two consecutive years then a report would be filed to the County Commissioner with a view to closing the Section. If a Section fell below minimum standards for three consecutive years then they would be closed.

Minimum standards recommended by The Advance Party:

	Cubs	Scouts	Venture Scouts
<b>Young people numbers</b>	Not less than 12.	Not less than 12 and made up of two patrols.	Not less than 9 members.
<b>Leaders</b>	At least two adults (one of whom is a Leader Warrant Holder or Leader Permit Holder) plus a second such Leader of Instructor.	At least two adults (one of whom is a Leader Warrant Holder or Leader Permit Holder) plus a second such Leader of Instructor.	At least two adults (one of whom is a Leader Warrant Holder or Leader Permit Holder) plus a second such Leader of Instructor.
<b>Progress</b>	At least one-third of the member must have achieved one training stage during the year.	At least one-third of the members must hold the Scout Standard.	At least one Venture Award must be gained during the year.
<b>Programme</b>	At least one whole day Pack expedition during the year.	Each member must have had the opportunity to attend at least one Patrol or Troop camp during the year.	N/A
<b>Patrol System (Scouts only)</b>	N/A	The Troop must operate the Patrol System and have held frequent meetings of the Patrol Leaders' Council during the year.	N/A
<b>Method (Ventures only)</b>	N/A	N/A	The Executive Committee must function and satisfy the District Commissioner that it has organised a worthwhile programme throughout the year.

Special dispensation was recommended for rural and thinly-populated areas. The recommendation put forward was that Sections from these areas should make arrangements to meet 6 times a year (bi-monthly) with another Section locally and this would therefore make them exempt from the requirements as to numbers. The County Commissioner would determine which Groups in their County are deemed as being in a rural or thinly-populated area.

### **Diversity and Inclusion**

Pre the Advance Party Report, Scouting had a Handicapped Branch within the Structure that catered for children who were handicapped (disabled, special or additional needs). As part of the report, it was suggested that the Branch be renamed as the Extension Branch. In modern day terms this was the equivalent of a Diversity and Inclusion Team / Advisors who would support with training and resources for providing Scouting to those with additional needs.

A fascinating recommendation was around the introduction of a 'Post Section'. This was designed for 'home-bound' boys and those in institutions without Scouting. The idea was that eligible members would be sent Scouting meetings which they could do whilst at home as they were unable to access a local group.

### **Uniform**

It was recommended that no attempt to be made to monopolise the manufacture and supply of uniform. Once a uniform was agreed then a specification was agreed with the Institute of Manufactures so it is widely available for manufacturing.

It was suggested that all uniform be reviewed regularly, with 'lady scouters' uniform to be reviewed every 3 to 4 years and all other uniform every 6 to 8 years.

### **Scouting in Schools**

The report suggests that was more Scout Groups set-up in schools than people may have thought. In addition to this, the quality of Scouting being delivered in schools was very high. Despite this the model for Scouting in Schools was the same as group outside of school. The same governance and structure had to be adhered to.

In comparison the report did recommend that more schools should be encouraged to set-up Scout Groups and that the possibly of opening Venture Scout Units in senior high schools and sixth form colleges should be explored.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Design for Scouting – 1966**

The Design for Scouting document was a follow on from the Advanced Report. It detailed which recommendations The Scout Association would implement and any amendments to the proposed recommendations.

In addition to this it included a five year implementation plan that detailed which recommendations would be prioritised and what time scale they would follow.

One key point from this document that was raised was the need to for an initial financial outlay in order to deliver on the priorities in particular with the creation of the new section Ventures. They added that this expenditure could be recovered with the sales of uniforms, handbooks, camp fees etc

## Appendix 3

### 1. Under Eight Activity Report – Andrew Wellbeloved

In October 1975 Andrew Wellbeloved compiled an in-depth investigation into many aspects of under eight activity with particular reference to a possible future involvement by The Scout Association. Andrew carried out his research over an eighteen week period and consisted of questionnaires and visits and discussions with similar or existing provisions.

Andrew commented that previously this subject had been termed 'pre cub.' He found this term to be increasingly embarrassing and misleading and instead he used the term 'under eights'. This compliments what Kerry said to us in Kent (Kerry runs an unofficial Squirrel unit) when she said 'do not assume they are small Beavers'.

He set himself five questions to answer during his research:

1. What is the nationwide demand for some form of under eight Scout activity and, is any demand that might exist, justified?
2. What are the consequences for The Scout Association?
  - Financial
  - Leadership
  - Training
  - Image
  - Promise and Law
  - Legal aspects
  - Social aspects
3. What has / is happening in The Scout Association?
4. What is happening in Scouting abroad?
5. What is happening in other UK youth organisations?

#### General comments on the report

- The main message that Andrew conveys throughout his report is that under eights Scouting has to be caught not taught.
- Important that we do not expect existing leaders to run any potential new section we open. There are untapped sources available to us due to the time the section may meet, the age of the young people, involvement and the commitment required of them. We believe this is still relevant today.
- At this time Andrew commented that if the Cub Section age range was extended it would have a huge effect on the existing section as more adults would be required instantly.
- In 1976 children didn't have the opportunity to attend pre-school it was just an idea at this point. Because of this it was felt 6 years of age was the best age to start a new section as young people will have experience one year of socialisation through school. Andrew felt starting at 5 years of age was possible but more leaders would be required to deal with their attention needs.
- If you compare the above thoughts of Andrew to 2019. Every 3 and 4 year old is entitled to 15 hours free childcare with working families entitled to 30 hours free childcare. As a result socialisation of young people is happening sooner so it can be argued that 4 and 5 year olds is the right age to start a new section.
- Andrew felt it is not a baby-sitting service as the programme would be far too active.
- Ask parents the question of 'Would they take their child to Early Years Scouting?'
- Encourage others to see a section in operation, in particular people who are unsure of whether this would work.

**Research:**

**Scotland**

Scotland had a very complex situation as they had over a dozen under eight groups operating under a variety of names i.e. Panthers, Beavers, Chimps, Sparks, Mini Cubs, Acorns (A Cub or Nearly so). Some of these groups fed into existing Cub Packs with Tenderpads being the forerunner.

**Acorns**

Acorns was formed in Coatbridge on the outskirts of Glasgow. This came about due to a parent who wanted his child to join Cubs but couldn't because he was not old enough. As a result this parent set-up the provision himself and was assisted by several young female assistants.

- The Section Leader felt that Venture Scouts (Young Leaders now) are not suited to working with this age group due to the tasks involved.
- No uniform is worn.
- The programme consisted mainly of games with a little simple 'achievement' work.
- No law or promise or any type of ceremony is used.

Acorns wanted to have recognition from The Scout Association but rather be affiliated than a full member as they wanted support to be available, but they did not want them dictating policy and laying down strict guidelines.

**Tenderpads**

The Tenderpads is the group that Andrew enjoyed visiting the most.

- They have a law, promise and aim.
- There are ceremonies.
- Maximum of 24 young people.
- Each group is known as a Den (Similar to Beaver Colony, Cub Pack etc)
- The Dens are divided into Tribes (Similar to Sixes in Cubs and Patrols in Scouts)
- Each Tribe is named after an animal and will usually have a young leader (older Scout in this case) looking after it.
- The meetings are story based

A Den Leader must be at least 35 years of age. Their assistant also has to be at least 35 years of age but other helpers may start from 14 onwards. This age limit was chosen because it was found by personal experience to be the best age for caring for the young boys and also it was found that Scouters who gave up Scouting for family reasons when younger often feel that they would like to re-join the movement but find the Cub section has changed too much in their absence, yet they feel that they can still contribute something, particularly in this young section.

In Tenderpads there were no formal tests, but rather achievements when the boys' knowledge and ability can be noted i.e. ability to tie own shoe lace; know the green cross code; recognise the value of coins. I believe this is very similar to the programme that has been put together for Hedgehogs. After each achievement was completed it was marked on a board or a ribbon and put on show.

On Andrew's visit to Tenderpads he noted that half of the boys came from an affluent area of Dundee with the other half coming from a deprived area of Dundee. Andrew commented:

*'There can be no doubt that this socialisation through the under eight organisation between the two groups with different social background could be of the greatest significance. If at this early stage Scouting could help to break down the all too clear social barriers which still exist in our society, it will have achieved something magnificent. What a tremendous thing it would be if an under eight section could in any way contribute to the changing of attitudes and prejudices which we are told are often formed in early childhood.'*

We believe the above statement strongly reflects the impact that Early Years Scouting could have on young people and society.

## **Northern Ireland**

### **Beavers**

Beavers officially became part of Scouting in Northern Ireland in 1975. It had been in existence for over ten years unofficially at this point. One of the main reasons Northern Ireland decided to look into under eights Scouting was due to the Boys' Brigade operating units at this age group. As a result of this the number of Cub Scouts in the country was falling and they believe that the Boys Brigade was the catalyst for this.

In 1965 unofficial under eight groups began to operate in Northern Ireland and in 1968 The Beaver Association was set-up to begin to create a training programme, production of literature and offer advice to anyone who was anxious to set up Beavers.

- The handbook for Northern Ireland Beavers states that the most encouraging feature about the development of Beavers has been the increasing number of adults who have voluntarily come forward to act as leaders and who have had no previous connection with youth work.
- Young people could join within three months of turning six years old.
- Decided to have a very simple uniform that was of low cost.
- Each member had a scarf.
- Ratio of 1 to 5 works best.
- One hour meetings are advised

At this time, due to the implementation of Beavers in Northern Ireland it resulted in the end of Waiting Lists for the Cub Section. They also added that a two year programme was long enough for a young person.

## **New Zealand**

### **Keas**

- In 1976 they ran a three year trial in part of the country for six and seven year old boys.
- The trial did not focus on a pre-requisite to eventual membership of the Cub section but more on boys in high density housing areas where there is a low social economic grouping.
- The meeting place had to be within walking distance of those who were recruited.
- Sections were allowed to meet in double garages, rumpus room, back yard or pre-school centres.
- The Section Leader had to be at least 17 years old with assistants at least 13 years old.
- A Ratio of 1 to 6.
- The uniform was a scarf with a badge attached on the back of it.
- In 2019 Keas runs for 5-8 years old.

## France

- At the time Scout De France were investigating Scouting from 6 ½ to 9 years of age.
- From 1976 they were planning to start ten pilot units.
- The plan was to base the programme through a story.
- From 2004 Scouts and Guides are a joint organisation. Their youngest section is Les Farfadets which is for young people aged 6-8 years old.

## Belgium

- Ages 6 to 8.
- Objectives of the programme are self-activity and self-creativity.
- Programme based around a story.
- Now known as Baladins for ages 6 to 8 or Les Castors at the joint Scout and Guide Organisation.

## Canada

- Three year trial in across 15 different councils for Beavers (ages 5 to 8).
- In the first two years 12,272 Beavers registered.
- Built in 'sharing' as part of their programme. What is meant by this is that they share and reflect on each session as well as sharing programme content to fellow leaders. The emphasis is very much on a shared leadership approach.
- Recruitment of leaders was never an issue.
- The other sections did not suffer in terms of leaders with the opening of this new section.
- The older boys did not suffer Scout burnout.
- It did not become a baby sitting service.
- 90 of the first 105 leaders recruited were new to Scouting.
- Currently Beavers operates for 5 to 7 years of age.

## Other UK Youth Organisations

### The Imps

- Church based organisation with a strong religious focus.
- Founded in 1954 and became an official movement in 1960 due to demand
- Took boys at 5 ½ and then passed them on to the Scouts or Boys Brigade when they were old enough.
- Adopted a 'play hour' approach and initially there was no uniform, policy or regulations.
- Now they are members of the Boys Brigade and known as the Anchor Section.

### Explorers and Climbers

- Explorers and Climbers is an Evangelical organisation in the Church of England.
- Climbers is from ages 3 to 6.
- Explorers is from ages 7 to 10.
- Rewarded with a badge based on a set number of consecutive attendances.
- Only meet at weekends.
- Some Churches today still operate Explorers with a wide range of ages. Some do it for young people aged 3 to 9 whilst some others do it for children aged 7 to 10.



## Appendix 4

### An investment for the future – April 1979 to April 1982

The 'An investment for the future' was a leadership development project which was funded by The Scout Association and the Queen's Silver Jubilee Trust from April 1979 to April 1982.

The aim of the project was: *'To provide the opportunities and facilities for those young people not currently involved in youth organisations and for those that are unattached and uncared for so that they may take a constructive place in their society.'*

As part of the project, 18-25 year olds was the age range that was targeted as this programme could encourage and support their aspirations.

The team spent the first six months assessing the needs, determining objectives and planning methods. Due to the slow communication of HQ at that time to the Movement, the project took a while to build momentum.

Initially it took the team fourteen months to come up with the model to use for the project. A key point was that the model was co-designed with Districts and Counties. So even back in 1979 we were co-designing projects with local volunteers and this is something we have replicated in 2019 with the Early Years Project.

In addition to this, one part of the model was the bringing together of young people. The team left this to the Districts responsibility as a test of their commitment to the project.

Two key messages came from the project of:

1. Don't forget the grassroots of Scouting when implementing any change
2. Don't forget to form an exit plan for the project early on

The Early Year Project is looking carefully at the effect this could have on local Scouting and lessons have been learned around the exit plan of the project as this is something we have in place with the twenty pilots.

## **Appendix 5**

### **Scouting and Education..... A Review – March 1984**

This review was carried out to review the progress being made in the relationship between the Scout Movement and Schools and Further Education Institutions on the back of a previous review in 1979. The review had three main aims:

1. To reconsider whether schools and colleges can and / or should be used to develop Scouting and, if so, suggest a suitable strategy for implementation.
2. To devise ways of strengthening existing relationships between the Scout Movement and the age range communities (ages ranges of Scouting 8 yrs – 20 yrs at that time), with particular emphasis on the Venture Scout age range.
3. To state ways of making the Movement better known in schools, colleges of further education, sixth-form colleges and other institutions containing young people up to the age of 20.

HQ had an Adviser on Education and their role was to advise the Association on how it might represent Scouting to educational institutions and agencies such as the Department of Education and Science, Teachers' bodies, Student Unions Principals of Colleges, Vice Chancellors of Universities and the Educational Press.

One strong comparison we can make with this review and the current Early Years Project is around Colleges and University Courses. A letter was circulated to all Colleges and Universities that do Youth and Community Courses explaining Scouting and the benefits it can bring to someone's career. This is something we briefly looked at with the University of Sunderland and their Early Years Course when we circulated a flyer and letter about the project in Howdon. This brought strong interest from one student who we are still in contact with around them volunteering at the group. Long-term Colleges and Universities could provide us with a huge pool of talent who could volunteer in an Early Years Section should this be scaled up.

The review dedicates a chapter to 'The Development of Scouting in Schools'. Two of the main concerns from this subject was around HQ membership fees and schools being able to afford this and whether successful School based Scout Groups would draw members away from groups that meet outside of School.

One final point from the review was the recommendation of Counties appointing Assistant County Commissioner (Relationships). The idea behind the role was to have someone who would liaise with schools, colleges, universities, youth service, youth organisations and the Local Authorities about Scouting locally.

## Appendix 6

### Into the Future – 1989

'Into the Future' was a forward planning group seminar that was held from the 29<sup>th</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> January 1989. It was headed up Professor W James who acted as a consultant during the seminar.

Professor James outlined three tasks for the seminar and they were:

1. To study the changing world
2. To look at the needs of young people in a changing world
3. To examine how the Scout Movement's Member programme might meet those needs

It was a radical seminar which really challenged the things that Scouting did and didn't do at that time.

It was commented that Beavers (still quite a new section at the time) was a very 'happy' section compared to the other sections and this was down to the leaders being less demanding and giving out more praise and love to the young people. On the other hand the Scout Section, where leaders were generally slow to praise, rigid and demanding of the young people.

At the time it was felt that Scouting needed diversity. Alternative approaches were required if it was to break into new territory. Obstacles needed to be lifted, although some of those obstacles were important features, which the Movement might not be prepared to sacrifice.

An interesting point was raised around the 'franchising' of Scouting. The idea would be that local Scouting would be registered with HQ, and HQ would ensure brand protection. This means that Scouting would run within certain limits and standards, and licenced to operate accordingly.

Furthermore the feeling was that District Teams were becoming too big. Too many adults were not working directly with young people. It was proposed that District Teams be limited in numbers or abolished altogether.

Uniform was also a topic for a discussion and it was suggested that in the future 'a scarf' would be the symbol of identity in Scouting and that the uniform would be abolished. It was acknowledged that this might be too radical for the Movement as a whole at this time.

The seminar was closed with a video of American Management Guru Tom Peters who believed in the three key principals of; innovation, customer relations and participation. This was then put into a Scouting context.

Innovation was a key feature of all successful organisations. It was acknowledged that Scouting needed to adapt to changing circumstances quickly.

Customer relations was the cornerstone of success. Customers (volunteers in this situation) need to be thanked, treated courteously and given apologies when they receive a sub-standard service. Volunteers needed to be seen as a sources of new ideas and that seeing things from a volunteers perspective was key to success.

And finally was around participation. This came from trusting people, giving them power and responsibility, as well as a sense of ownership.

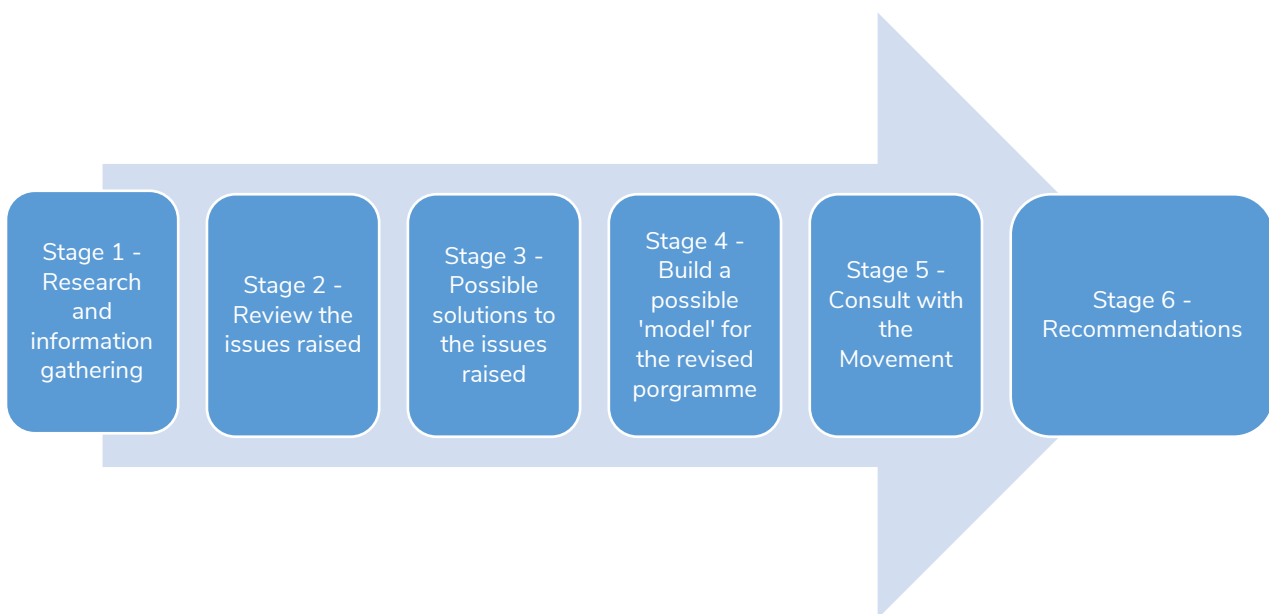
In 2019 Scouting wants people to feel 'proud, valued and empowered'. These three words are incredibly similar to what Tom Peters said in his presentation in 1989.

## Appendix 7

### Preparing for Change (Programme Review) – 2000

A Programme Review Group (PRG) was set-up in 1995 with the brief of: *'To review the Association's current 6-20 programme and to make recommendations to ensure that the youth programme achieves the Aim of the Association by the year 2000.'*

In May 2000 the PRG made its recommendations to the Committee of the Council. The Preparing for Change document highlights the changes it has made and the reasons behind this. Furthermore a timetable for implementation is also included. First of all was a timeline on the steps they took to come up with their recommendations.



Stage 1 consisted of research and information gathering. They did this in a variety of ways:

- Questionnaires – sent to every Group, District, County and Area in the UK during 1997. 34,000 response were returned and MORI processed the response and provided a report for the PRG.
- Exit interviews – interviews took place throughout the UK with over 700 young people who had left Scouting in the last twelve months prior to 1997.
- Focus Groups – held throughout the UK to consult on topics where a questionnaire format would be inappropriate and to explore in more depth some of the issues arising in the questionnaire.
- A group looked at the current social trends affecting young people, changes to the formal education system and the lessons learned from other youth organisations.
- A group looked at the experiences and learning gained by other Scout Associations culturally similar to the UK, who had changed their youth programme in the last five to ten years.
- A group looked at what Scouting wanted to achieve for young people through the areas of growth and the educational objectives that a young person might expect to achieve in Scouting.

Stage 2 was to look at the issues raised in all the information gathered.

Stage 3 was to come up with possible solutions to the issues raised. This was achieved through a number of workshops around the UK involving all members. These workshops gave the PRG a range of possible solutions from which they could begin to produce the 'building blocks' of a new programme.

Stage 4 consisted of building a possible 'model' for delivering a revised programme.

Stage 5 was to share the suggestions developed in the 'model' and consult with the whole movement. This was carried out between November 1999 and February 2000. Over 17,000 responses were received. In addition to this questionnaire, over ninety focus groups around the UK were held and consisted of different people who had attended in the initial groups in Stage 1.

Stage 6 was to make the recommendations to the Committee of the Council in May 2000. The majority of the recommendations were accepted with further work being requested in several areas. The recommendations came under the following areas:

- The Fundamentals of Scouting
- The age ranges
- Promise and Law
- The Programme
- Awards
- Activity Badges
- National Programme Initiatives
- Volunteer Structure

The Preparing for Change document also highlighted the timeline for the implementation of its recommendations. A three year implementation period was put in place from September 2000 until December 2003. Further a Programme Review Implementation Team was formed to support this work as well as each County / Area appointing someone to deal with questions and queries on the changes.

I really liked the FAQ booklet that they put together entitled 'Your Questions Answered, I believe we should start to publish more of our current FAQ's so that we are being open and transparent with the movement.

From this document there were two interesting points that I picked up on. First of all was that a number of free copies of initial resources were provided to the Counties. Should Early Years Scouting scale up then we may choose a similar approach to help get Counties and Districts up and running.

The second point was around the closing of Ventures and the formation of Explorers. The reasons that this change took place were:

- The continuing and dramatic fall in Venture Scout numbers across the UK
- There is a more natural cut off age at 18 years old
- Age ranges in the Scout Section were too broad
- In reality there were very few 18 or 19 year old Venture Scouts
- The impact of increased commitment to higher education
- The impact of increased employment and educational opportunities for 16-20 year olds.

Focus group interviews with many young people helped to shape this new way forward for the older age ranges.

In 2000, it was proposed that the symbolic framework for each section be:

- Beavers – 'The Beaver'
- Cubs – 'The Jungle Book' but this is optional
- Scouts – No symbolic framework
- The Fourth Section (Explorers) – No symbolic framework
- The Fifth Section (Network) – No symbolic framework

## Appendix 8

### Under 6 working group – February 2010

At the request of the UK Chief Commissioner, a small (4 people) working group was established in June 2009 to investigate the provision in uniformed Youth Organisations for children in the under 6 age group. The chair was Graham Haddock Deputy Chief Commissioner (Scotland) and UK Trustee.

The remit of the group was agreed:

- To explore the issues surrounding the informal provision of Scouting for 4&5 olds in Northern Ireland, research current provision, exploring legal implications, learn from introduction of Beaver Scouts, to investigate provision for age group by other providers, explore implications on such a future provision in terms of adult leadership and meeting places, consider suitable programme, determine skills needed by volunteers and determine whether WOSM has any policy, standards or guidelines for such provision.
- To determine whether TSA should formalise provision for 4 and 5 year olds.

Key points in report:

- Visited nine Squirrel Dreys in NI. They found that running with under sixes had no adverse effect on older Sections in Scouting. Some Dreys had a Waiting List
- Almost a 100% retention rate from Squirrels to Beavers
- Young Leaders very important part of this section
- Found there would be no legal issues that would have a negative impact on the establishment of an under six provision.
- Working group were concerned of the impact it would have on current groups struggling for leaders.
- Impressed with the simplicity of the Squirrels programme. However noted it should not be assumed that this could easily transfer to TSA.
- As no research had been done into the 'life' of a Scout they had assumed it would have a negative impact on older youth membership.
- They believed there could be a significant reputational risk to TSA. Significant research into attitude and practices would need to be carried out building an added burden to existing resources.

Recommendations:

- Advised against providing provision for under six year olds.
- The Squirrels section in NI has developed to address a significant local need in that part of the UK as a consequence of the strength of the Boys Brigade and the close relationships that exists between Scouts and churches in the Province. The Section works well and has much to commend it. Nevertheless, the Working Group feels that such provision is not necessary in any other part of the UK and does not recommend that provision for under 6's should be established outside of Northern Ireland.
- The Scout Association should require the Northern Ireland Scout Council to address areas of concern noted in this report in relation to the lack of clarity surrounding the process of affiliation of the Squirrels Association of Northern Ireland. Issues related to insurance, risk assessment, leader training, membership, subscription and the membership benefits need to be clearly defined.
- The Scout Association should require that the Northern Ireland Scout Council not provide support to any under 6's provision outside of Northern Ireland. Failure to do so constitutes significant reputational risk, both internal and external, to TSA.
- The Scout Association should make its position on provision for under 6's clear to line managers across other parts of the UK – namely that such provision is not condoned or supported and that, where it exists, such provision should cease.