



Scouts

Minster District

**Giving young people skills
for life**



District Development Plan
2023-2026



Scouts

Situation and background

Minster District was without a permanent District Commissioner (DC) for a few years, largely relying on acting and temporary DCs. As a result and through no fault of those few willing volunteers, it has lacked consistent leadership, a sense of direction and a plan for the future.

Following a very challenging couple of years, which included the hampering of Scouting activities and successful development of a vision or strategy by the COVID-19 Pandemic; Minster District now aims to prepare an innovative 3-year development plan.

Following a period of uncertainty, a new District Commissioner joined Minster in January 2022; with Deputies to assist, covering Appointments, Training and Programmes (and Group support). Much of the first year has been very reactive and the District now wants to become more proactive in the development of Scouting across our wonderful city.

Most importantly, at the heart of everything we do should be the purpose of Scouting:

“Scouting exists to actively engage and support young people in their personal development, empowering them to make a positive contribution to society.”

Now that the District Leadership Team has been in place for over 12 months, it is important to set our vision for the District. There have been a number of successes so, after laying out the vision, this document will outline some of the successes achieved during 2022 before going on to detail the plans for 2023 to 2026.

Minster District Vision

Minster District wants to be known for being a supportive, inclusive organisation that delivers an inspiring programme, which is shaped by our young people, supported by amazing well-trained leaders and makes a big positive impact on our communities. In line with County’s strategic objectives, we aim to Grow, Be Inclusive, ensure we are Youth-Shaped, enhance our Community Impact and maintain a positive image across the City of York.

District Priorities

For Minster to achieve its Vision, we will focus on three key priorities, which also encompass a number of changes on the horizon as part of the Scout Association’s Transformation journey:

1. **Young People First**
2. Recruitment and Retention of Adult Volunteers
3. Community Engagement and support

Key Achievements in 2022

Before detailing the key actions planned to support these objectives; it's important to recognise some work that has taken since January 2022:

1. Appointment to some key roles within the District –
 - a. District Commissioner (DC): David McDowell
 - b. 3 Deputy District Commissioners (DDCs): Nathan Bargate, David Ingledew and Matthew Larkin
 - c. District Youth Commissioner: Stefan Palmer
 - d. District Scout Network Commissioner: Harry Pomfret
 - e. District Secretary: Katie Gilpin
 - f. District Appointments Chair: Jacqui Tankard
 - g. District Appointments Secretary: Alison Stockdale
 - h. District Explorer Scout Commissioner: Gary Gelissen
 - i. New GSL at Stockton on the Forest: Carley Ray
 - j. DofE Coordinator for the District – Dave Petty (GSL at LMO)
 - k. District Special Needs Advisor: Katie Gilpin
 - l. Training Advisors (TAs) – progressed on appointing new TAs; currently, six people at varying stages of appointment/readiness
 - m. First Aid Trainers: potentially, we now have two willing volunteers that need 'onboarding'
 - n. District Nights Away Assessor: Dave Petty
2. Following the sad loss of our dear friend, Kath Shapcott, our only District Nights Away Assessor (NAA); we had some support from Kathryn Dunn (Ebor's NAA) but Dave Petty kindly agreed to fill the role and with Dave's Support, we are making good progress in this area
3. Creation of a third Explorer Unit in the District
4. Membership growth across adults and young people of nearly 20% (much higher than the national average); putting us back to between 80 and 90% of pre-pandemic figures; this has made a significant contribution to County's growth of around 9%
5. Some great work behind the scenes, led by Nathan Bargate and Katie Gilpin on training and compliance; taking us from being the least compliant in the County to the most compliant
6. A pool of 8 District Appointments Advisory Committee members to support the Appointments Chair and Secretary; along with some support from Dave Thorne (Ebor's Appts. Secretary); making great progress on our appointments backlog
7. Established GSL Forum, with quarterly meetings
8. District Leadership Team now on Microsoft 365 and has ownership of District email system/addresses
9. District now has access to website for updating (still ongoing)
10. Online Out of Hut Form launched and in use (online Nights Away Notification imminent)

Action Plan for achieving Priorities

Across the three different key District Priorities, there are a number of actions that have already taken place, are currently underway or will be developed over the coming months. An overarching theme that touches on all of our priorities is Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; for example, ensuring that young people and adult volunteers are fully supported, including reasonable adjustments for any additional needs, whether physical, mental or emotional.

Young People First

Young People should always be at the heart of everything we do; from all of us simply “remembering why we’re here” to involving young people in developing our programmes. The Youth Commissioner will lead in taking this forward, with support from all members of the District, particularly GSLs and SLs across all sections. We want to see Growth in all areas but particularly in our 14-24 provision (Explorers and Network); focus on the upper age groups will hopefully help to build our Young Leader programme and also feed our ambition to recruit more adult volunteers.

Recruitment and Retention of Adult Volunteers

We do want to see an increase in the number of Adult Volunteers but it is not just about recruiting new members. Alongside that, it is essential that they all feel welcomed, supported and valued, and that they have fun, whilst gaining new skills. Clearly, Scouts exists for young people and we are keen to put “Young People First” but it is also important that our adult volunteers have an exceptional experience, during their Scouting journey; however long or short that might be. Some of the main considerations in this area are around an improved Appointments process (and effective onboarding), Training, Recognition/Rewards (including Awards), accessible resources, better communications and that there is support readily available.

Community Engagement and Support

Our young people and adult volunteers all belong to communities and it is important that Scouting has a positive image, as well as being seen to support and develop young people. In order to grow Scouting in Minster District, we need to think about our local communities; both from the point of view of meeting their needs but also what support we need from them. As a District, we want to raise our profile and improve our messaging; connecting with local people, York businesses, other voluntary organisations and social enterprises, and developing relationships to benefit all. For instance, many companies have Corporate Social Responsibility policies and local Scouting is a great way to deliver on these – from supporting staff to volunteer to sponsorship and help with funding or delivering specific projects.

Next Steps

In order to translate the Minster District Vision and Priorities into tangible actions, we will follow a detailed SMART Action Plan, as detailed on the following pages. This will be a living document that will be regularly reviewed and updated, as necessary.

The table below shows the ways in which we hope to achieve these priorities. We plan to review this on an ongoing basis at Section/Group/District meetings.

Priority	What we need to do?	Who is responsible?	Who is helping?	Review Date	Estimated Completion Date	Complete (yes/no)
Young People First	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District Youth Forum Development of exciting, varied programmes; shaped by our young people Support for those with additional needs 	Youth Commissioner, Programme Team Leader, Special Needs Advisor	DC, DDCs, SLs, GSLs			
Recruitment of Adult Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved Marketing and Communications (Social Media, etc.) Marketing materials for use by District and individual Groups Targeted recruitment Partnership working Community Engagement 	(New) Marketing & Comms Manager; DC; GSLs and SLs for their local areas	DDCs, SLs, GSLs			
Improved Appointments Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smoother and more welcoming process A better onboarding journey, with clear guidance and helpful resources Accessible resources – an onboarding pack, available online and hard copy, if preferred Better Communications – using a variety of media, based on individual preferences 	Appointments Chair and Secretary; Appointment Committee Members	(New) Marketing & Comms Manager; DC, DDCs and GSLs/Line Managers			
Retention of Adult Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved appointments/onboarding processes Support available – buddy system, GSLs and District Team 	Appointments Chair and Secretary; Appointment Committee Members; all Line	GSLs and District Team; TAs; (New) Awards Team			

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where not already in place, moving towards a team-based approach, to share responsibilities and ensure no single volunteer is overburdened • Training – more accessible, clearly defined 'learning journeys' • More Training Advisors across the District, including specialists (i.e., First Aid Trainers) • Recognition/Rewards – from simple thank yous to postcards and Christmas Cards? • Awards scheme 	Managers				
Community Engagement and Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved Marketing and Communications • A calendar of community events/engagement 	(New) Marketing & Comms Manager; DC, DDCs and GSLs	District Secretary			