

Delivering the Scout Method through peer education - adolescent personal & leadership development

Introduction

In accepting the WOSM Constitution, NSOs sign up to Article III, the **Scout Method**:

'a system of progressive self-education through:

- a promise and law
- learning by doing
- membership of small groups (for example: the patrol), involving, under adult guidance, progressive discovery and acceptance of responsibility and training towards self-government directed towards the development of character, and the acquisition of competence, self-reliance, dependability, and capacities both to cooperate and lead',

This statement describes the Patrol System, the process of peer education promoted by Baden-Powell, and probably the main reason for the success of Scouting in developing as a world-wide Movement.

However, peer education requires a sensitive facilitative style of adult leadership, with decisions taken by the young people, not the adults. This contrasts with the more usual controlling role of the teacher, and does not come easily to all adults. Leader training is usually required.

In order to deliver an effective 'Scout Method', each NSO needs to have developed a clear educational rationale to explain how its programme encourages the intended empowerment of young people to develop the social and leadership skills necessary for them to take control of their lives, successfully implement the decisions they take, and be able to contribute to their community.

The activities used by Scouting have developed differently throughout the world, but where it has been most successful the principles have remained the same - especially peer education, which is now recognised in many educational systems as a powerful developmental tool. Unless the Patrol System operates successfully, Scouting can degenerate into just another activity led and controlled by adults. This may seem easier and safer, but it does not produce the same personal development results. It is not Scouting as envisaged by B-P!

The ideas which follow have been developed during 18 years as an HM Inspector of Schools youth work specialist in the UK, responsible for monitoring and promoting effective work with disadvantaged and disaffected adolescents, and later as an Education Consultant working nationally with over 100 local authorities and voluntary agencies. They are offered as the basis for others to develop their own detailed educational rationale and methodology to deliver effective Scouting for the adolescent age range.

While these ideas are offered to stimulate discussion, they are only an introduction to how these programmes can be developed and promoted, for example, through leader training. Further papers to support these approaches are available on request, in particular those from the training handbook 'Priority Steps to Inclusion'. If you would like to enter into an exchange of ideas based on these papers please contact me at: johnhuskins@netgates.co.uk

The Leadership Development Model

1. My work with difficult adolescents led to demonstrating how all young people could become empowered to take control of their lives and progressively develop the necessary personal social and leadership skills, representing this through the Leadership Development Model (LDM).



Though this was originally designed for work with 'challenging' young people who may not have the socialising skills necessary to work harmoniously with other young people, it can be applied to Scouting, in that all new recruits will go through a first meeting (Stage 1), if they want to join attend again (Stage 2) for assessment on both sides, and if accepted (missing out Stage 3), join a Patrol at (Stage 4).

2. The difference is that with a broader group of young people, some may not have the necessary socialising skills and not be accepted by the Patrol immediately, but may be ready to join a Patrol after Stage 3 where they are helped to develop the necessary 'priority social skills' (see below). For example, where Scouting operates through schools in some countries, some young people may not be ready to work harmoniously in Patrols with a young Patrol Leader straight away, but could after a carefully planned Stage 3. In this way a wider range of young people can be helped to benefit from the peer education approach intended for Scouting without creating too difficult a task for the Patrol Leader. Similarly, if a Scout's behaviour deteriorates, instead of exclusion he could return to Stage 3.

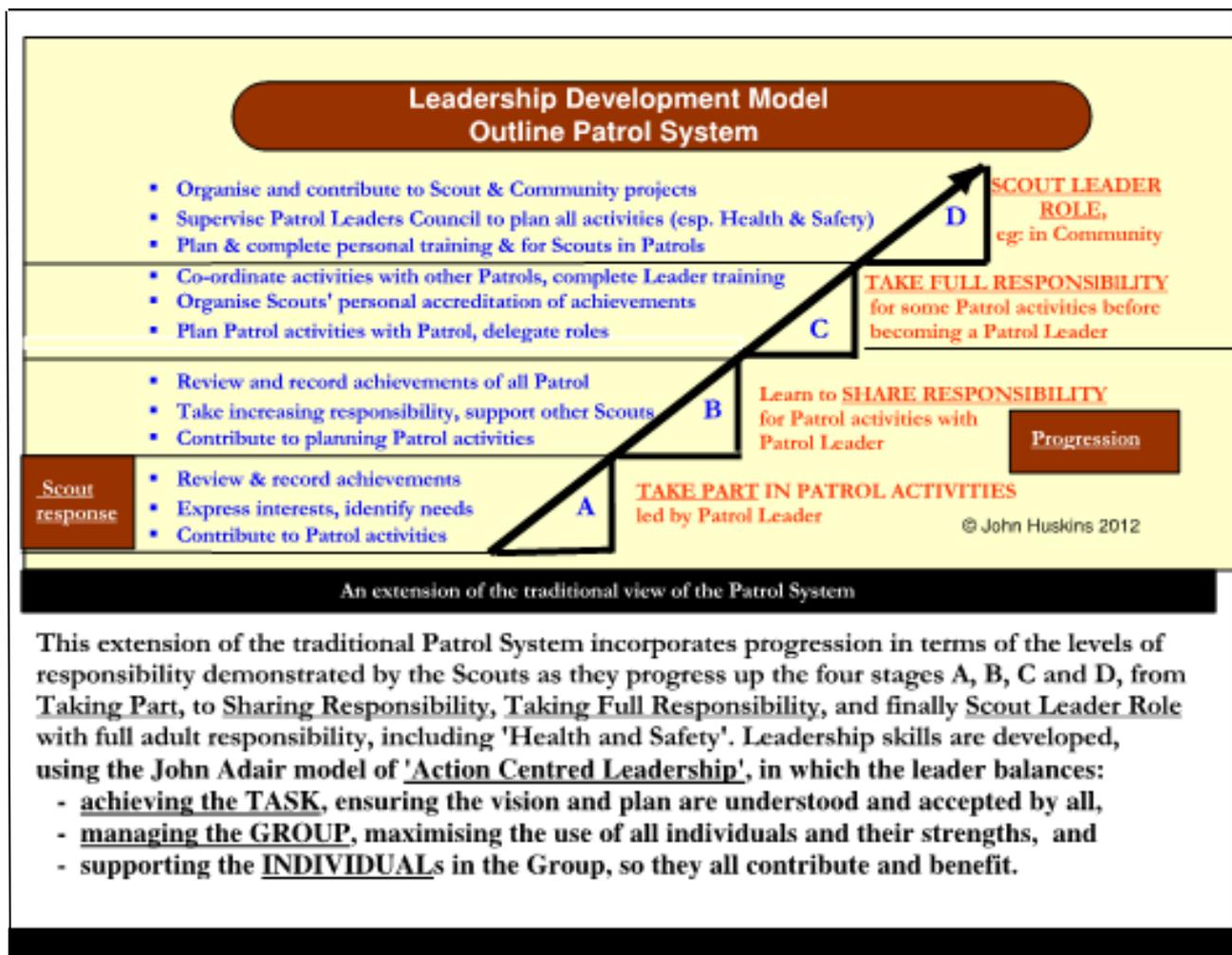
3. The **Priority Social Skills** necessary here are the minimum levels of these socialising skills required to successfully participate in Patrol activities and benefit from and contribute positively to the activity, ie: a necessary level of:

- **self-esteem** (eg: a positive life view, a commitment to control and change their life)
- **recognising and managing feelings** (eg: impulse and anger control, defer gratification, develop alternative strategies for addressing conflict)
- **understand and identify with others (empathy)** (eg: to recognise the feelings, needs and points of view of other young people and adults),
- **values development** (to identify, understand and explore alternatives to current values, beliefs and behaviour, and their consequences, particularly in relation to the Scout ethos).

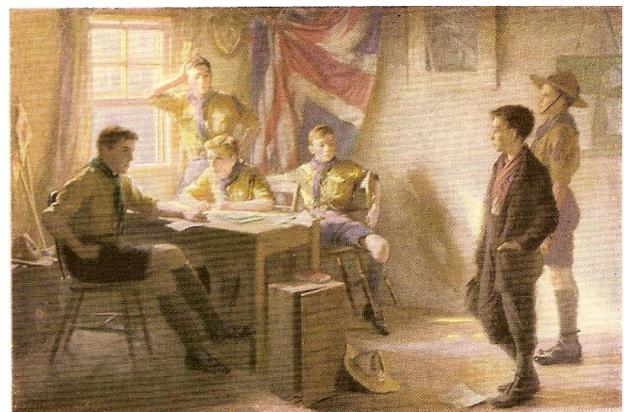
When some Scouts lack the priority social skills, then Stage 3 is a role for the Scout Leader acting as 'mentor', to organise 1:1, group work, ice-breakers etc., enjoyable activities designed to encourage the development of these skills. For some young people this will happen quickly, for others it may take longer! But they need to complete this before moving on to LDM Stage 4 and later LDM Stages 5-7 if the Patrol Leader's task is going to be manageable. Guidance on developing these Priority Social Skills is provided in additional papers.

The Leadership Development Model - adapted

4. The Leadership Development Model (LDM) can be adapted for Scouting, assuming that all Scouts move to joining a Patrol with the necessary socialising skills, to explain how their personal and social development can be promoted through peer education and progression up the four stages of increasing levels of responsibility shown:



5. The importance of the Patrol System to B-P's Scouting is illustrated by this Ernest Carlos idealised painting of London Scouting in 1914: 'Raw Material'. Giving the Patrol Leader responsibility for running his Patrol and trusting him with support is at the heart of Scouting. The progressive levels of responsibility outlined above, leading to 'Action Centred Leadership' through which the leader balances the needs of the three elements, the Task, the Group, and the Individual, provide the range of experiences necessary to develop the social and leadership skills through which personal empowerment is achieved.



An educational rationale for personal & leadership development through Scouting

6. LDM Stages 4 - 7 (or A - D depending on the LDM used) represent how Scouts can develop the social and leadership skills necessary to become empowered to take control of their lives. Ten important social skills are:

The Priority Social Skills, (a minimum level required if the Scouts are to work together harmoniously)

- self-esteem
- managing feelings
- empathy with others
- values consistent with group norms

Other social skills:

- communication skills
- interpersonal skills
- problem solving skills
- negotiation skills
- planning skills
- reviewing skills.

It is suggested that all these skills can be developed progressively through taking part in activities as the Scouts progress up the LDM Stages, by being encouraged by the Scout Leader and Patrol Leader acting as 'mentors' (see below) to:

- at **LDM Stage 4 (A) Take Part** in activities, develop team building by working closely together
- at **LDM stage 5 (B)** encourage them to increasingly **Share Responsibility** for activities
- at **LDM Stage 6 (C)** begin to **Take Full Responsibility** for activities (but not health and safety)
- at **LDM Stage 7 (D)** take on the **Adult Leadership Role**, including health and safety.

7. Leadership skills are developed progressively within the members of the Patrol as they increasingly share in decision making and develop their social skills, with the mentor support of the Scout Leader and Patrol Leader. For example, using the John Adair model of '**Action Centred Leadership**', in which the leader balances:

- **achieving the TASK**, ensuring the vision and plan are understood and accepted by all,
(Planning, Reviewing, and Problem Solving skills)
- **managing the GROUP**, maximising the use of all individuals and their strengths,
(Interpersonal and Negotiation skills) and
- **supporting the INDIVIDUALS** in the Group, so they all contribute and benefit.
(Self-esteem, Communication skills, Empathy, Values, Feelings).

Thus Leadership skills are developed through this empowerment process, with mentor support.

8. Clearly all this does not happen by chance! The Scout Leader's role as mentor is crucial. The papers which follow will endeavour to explain in more detail how this role should develop if the Scouts are to gain maximum benefit from their progression up the LDM. For some leaders this will be too serious and academic, and should be interpreted accordingly. But others, especially trained teachers, will welcome this detail, especially if working with more 'challenging' young people.

How these leadership roles are developed through the 10 social skills is illustrated below:

Action Centred Leadership through using the ten social skills

9. The three key leadership roles are delivered through the same ten social skills developed through participating in the four stages of the progressive Leadership Development Model.

Achieving the Task - applying and developing the relevant social skills, for example:

Planning skills:

- define the task, including purpose and outcome to motivate the group
- develop a working plan, broken down into component parts
- allocate individual and group tasks, check they are understood and accepted
- with the group, set and agree progressive targets and standards
- agree the general approach and methods to meet targets

Reviewing skills:

- regularly check progress against agreed targets
- revise targets as necessary, including methods
- assess roles of individual group members to ensure strengths and weaknesses taken into account

Problem solving skills:

- when difficulties arise, explore and assess alternative strategies with the group

Managing the Group - applying and developing the relevant social skills, for example:

Interpersonal skills:

- encourage and motivate group members
- maintain group standards
- create team spirit

Negotiation skills:

- identify and resolve differences of opinion of group members

Supporting the Individual - applying and developing the relevant social skills, for example:

Self-esteem:

- use praise to encourage each individual, build confidence

Communication skills

- keep everyone informed on progress
- listen carefully to each individual's opinion
- be aware of individual's difficulties (eg: literacy) and support sensitively

Empathy

- ensure each individual feels accepted
- help them to accept and support each other, if necessary, despite differences

Values

- ensure each individual is meeting group norms of behaviour, with sensitive support if needed

Feelings

- be sensitive to each individual's feelings,
- make them feel good about themselves and the task

The Scout Leader's role as mentor

10. Implemented properly, Scouting, through the Patrol System, can **empower** Scouts to take control of their lives and achieve their full potential. To achieve this they are encouraged to progressively take increasing responsibility for their activities, their learning, themselves, and each other, develop the social skills needed to successfully implement their life decisions and then the leadership skills necessary to contribute positively to their communities. The Scout Leader has a number of roles in managing the Scout Troop or Explorer unit. But his most important role is to act as 'mentor' to the Scouts to promote their personal development.

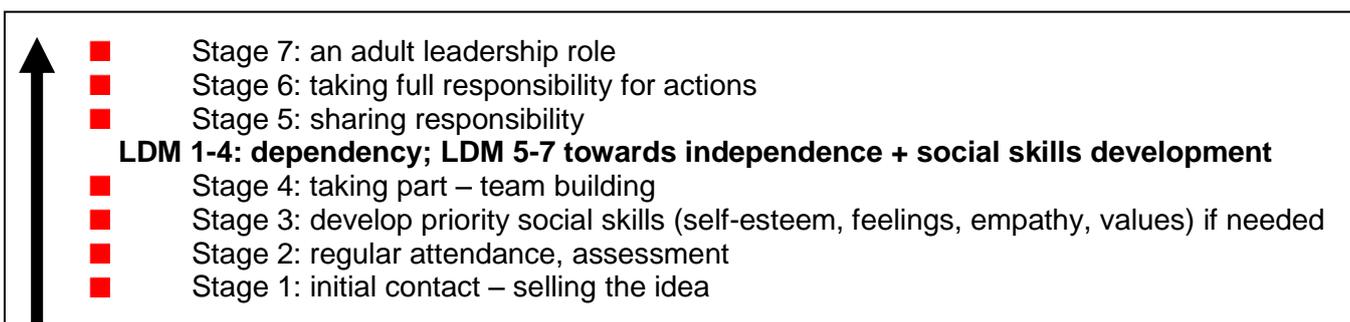
11. As mentor he is responsible for ensuring this progression through identifying individual needs, and then (if appropriate) preparing, progressing and assessing Personal Development Plans with each Scout (these personal development plans can be very simple or complicated depending on the needs of the Scouts and the skills of the Scout Leader).

All mentors need support and training in their role, so that they can:

- **Identify needs, (and, ideally, prepare Scouts' personal development plans)**
- **Provide a safe environment**
- **Engender a sense of belonging**
- **Listen to their perception of reality**
- **Provide space for risk taking & discovery**
- **Engender trust & acceptance of young people as they are**
- **Build confidence and self-worth (self-esteem)**
- **Encourage to explore feelings & hopes for future**
- **Help to empathise with experiences of others**
- **Recognise & explore the values they are living by.**

Guidance on how this support and training can be provided is available in papers taken from the training handbook '**Priority Steps to Inclusion**', see separate list of resources on request.

12. This **Leadership Development Model** illustrates the intended progression up the seven LDM Stages (using the full LDM). Starting at Stage 1, the Patrol Leader manages each young person's progression up the LDM depending on their background behaviour & their aptitude for developing the appropriate social skills.

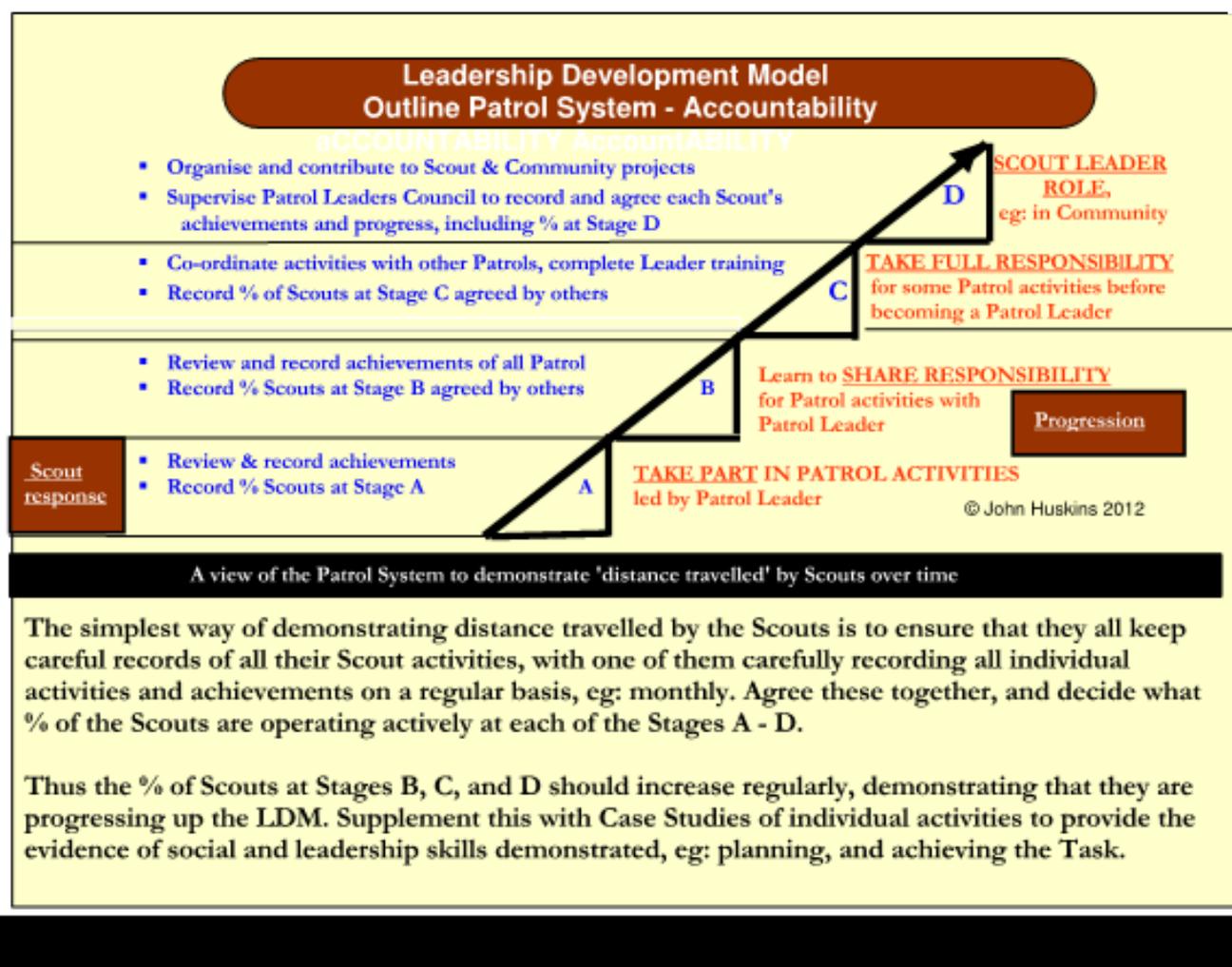


13. This progression is managed through sensitive mentor support (see above), developing trust and identifying individual needs, and preparing in partnership a personal development plan, which can be very general (eg: long term goals) or very detailed depending on individual needs and resources. LDM Stage 3 is very important, with the focus on ensuring that each young person has the necessary level of **priority social skills** (see above) before moving on to team building at LDM Stage 4. From LDM Stage 4 they move on to progressively take increasing responsibilities for their activities, in the process developing further the social skills necessary to successfully implement the decisions they take for their lives.

Demonstrating outcomes - accountability

14. Regularly recording the % of Scouts at each LDM Stage to demonstrate progress.

To justify the financial support you receive, you need to be able to demonstrate successful outcomes, ie: how far young people have developed, learning outcomes evident from changed behaviour and achievements. Thus your rationale for your members' personal and leadership development must lead to measurable outcomes of the distance travelled while they have been with you. This need not be complicated and difficult, and should be managed by the young people themselves.



The best way of illustrating what Scouts are achieving through their activities is through Case Studies. If every activity is described against a checklist of the 10 social skills (self-esteem, managing feelings, empathy, values, communication, interpersonal, problem solving, negotiation, planning and reviewing skills) with evidence of these skills being demonstrated highlighted, it will bring the case studies to life, and be further evidence of the progress made by individual Scouts as they progress up the LDM.

There is considerable evidence that progression up the LDM is correlated with social skills development leading to leadership skills. This should be clear from your case studies over time. It can also be demonstrated that this development of social skills and progression up the LDM are correlated with a reduction in risk behaviours, including school failure, drugs misuse, risky sexual behaviour, depression leading to suicide attempts, and crime.

Accreditation

15. Traditionally, Scouting has recognised achievements through badges for activities, but, based on the **Leadership Development Model**, an alternative accreditation of progressive levels of responsibility is possible: the **Scout Challenges** for under 14's, and the **Scout Leadership Awards** (SLA) for over 14s. Only a possible outline is given here, assuming that each NSO will develop its own forms of accreditation appropriate to the particular situation, while retaining the important elements of progressive levels of responsibility & peer assessment by the Scouts themselves, ie: the NSO will decide how many Challenges of what length will be necessary at each Stage.

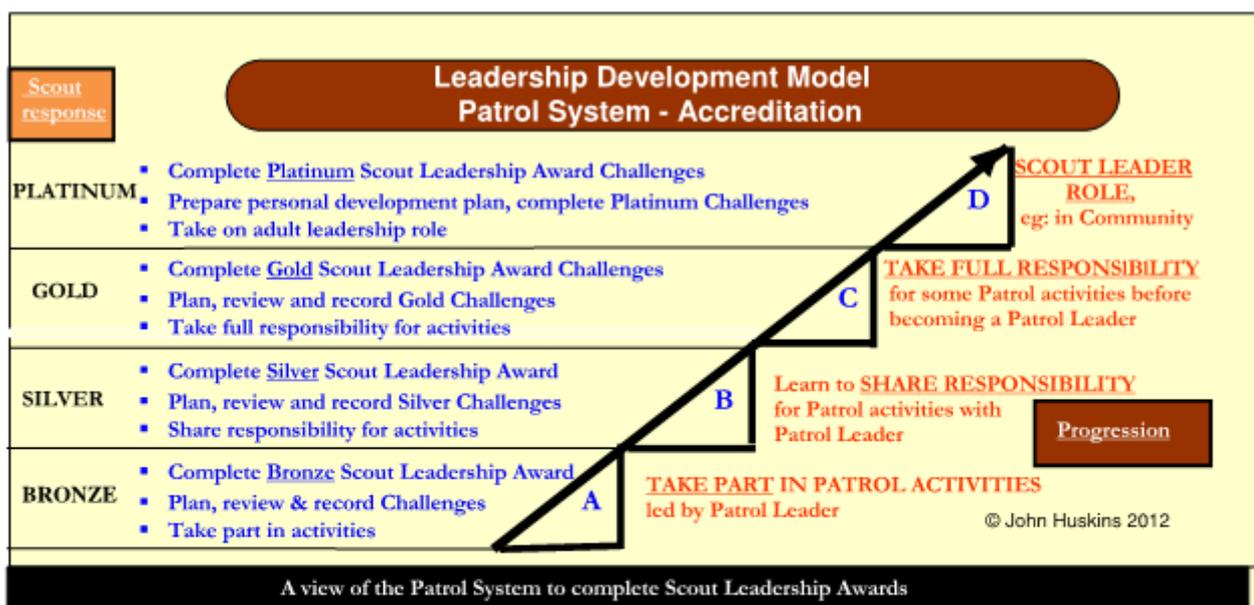
The Scout Challenge and Scout Challenge Extra (for under 14s) accredit a number of activities at **LDM Stages A and B**, eg: ? activities of ? hours each, which can then count towards Bronze and Silver Leadership Challenges later (using the 4 Stage LDM illustrated below)

The **Scout Leadership Awards** recognise and accredit Challenges at LDM Stages A - D,

- The **Bronze Award**: recognise & accredit **Taking part** at **LDM Stage A** (eg: ?x? hours)
- The **Silver Award**: recognise & accredit Challenges **Sharing responsibility**, at **LDM Stage B**
- The **Gold Award**: recognise and accredit Challenges taking **Full responsibility**, at **LDM Stage C**,
- The **Platinum Award**: recognise and accredit an **Adult Leadership** role at **LDM Stage D**.
(eg: Personal Development Plan, adult leadership training, adult leadership in practice).

In addition, the Awards should be monitored and assessed by the young people themselves, a peer education approach. Ideally the Awards should then be moderated externally to ensure standards are being maintained. The two important features of these Leadership Awards are:

- 1) that they recognise and accredit progressive levels of responsibility which have validity universally, irrespective of the local culture and particular activities undertaken, and
- 2) they are assessed by the Scouts themselves, peer education in practice rather than by adults.



The Scout Challenge and Scout Challenge Extra (eg: for under 14s) accredit a number of activities at **LDM Stages A and B**, which can then count towards Bronze and Silver Leadership Challenges later.

The **Scout Leadership Awards** recognise and accredit Challenges at LDM Stages A to D,

- The **Bronze Award**: recognise & accredit **Taking part** at **LDM Stage 4** (eg: 4x15 hours)
- The **Silver Award**: recognise & accredit Challenges **Sharing responsibility**, at **LDM Stage B**
- The **Gold Award**: recognise and accredit Challenges taking **Full responsibility**, at **LDM Stage C**,
- The **Platinum Award**: recognise and accredit an **Adult Leadership** role at **LDM Stage D**.
(eg: Personal Development Plan, adult leadership training, adult leadership in practice).

Summary

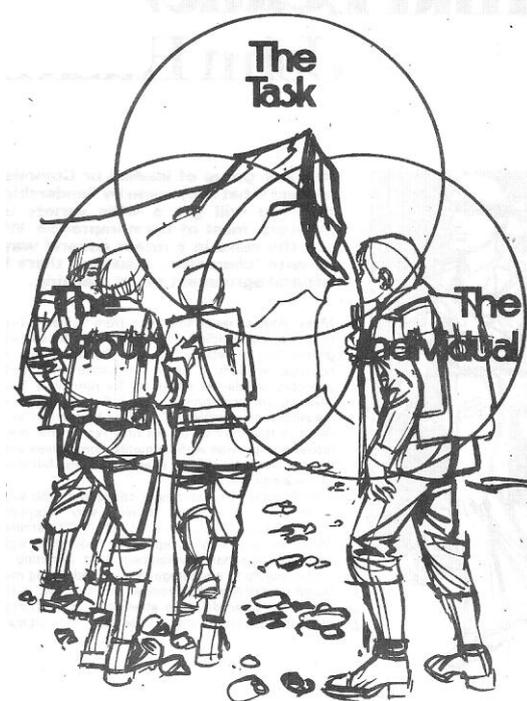
16. This paper has attempted to demonstrate how Baden-Powell's proven Scouting method of the Patrol System can be used to provide an effective educational rationale for young people's empowerment to take control of their lives and contribute constructively to their society through their personal and leadership development. By taking progressively increasing responsibility for their activities as they progress up the Leadership Development Model, through this approach to peer education, they can develop the ten social skills which form the basis for the leadership skills expressed through the Action Centred Leadership model.

17. This empowerment depends on the quality of adult leadership provided, described here as effective mentoring, which in turn depends on the Scout Leader's support and training. Outline guidance is provided here, but this can be supplemented by other papers on request, many taken from the training handbook 'Priority Steps to Inclusion'.

18. Accountability and accreditation are important elements of any Scouting programme. Guidance is provided here on how these might be provided, based on the Scouts doing it themselves through a peer education approach. Based on these principles, each NSO should determine the practical details of its own means of accreditation.

19. These papers are provided for guidance. Feel free to adapt, translate and use them in the ways that suit your particular culture and environment. These principles are universal and the results of your efforts should then be owned by you as your method of helping your Scouts to be empowered and successful individuals and citizens.

20. If you want to comment on any of these papers, or exchange ideas, feel free to communicate with me through my email address: johnhuskins@netgates.co.uk



Action Centred Leadership