

Introduction to the Whole Sport Plan 2009/13

The Whole Sport Plan (WSP) is British Orienteering's strategic plan for a four year period. It will be developed after wide consultation with Associations (and through them Clubs) and will outline the priorities, key projects and associated budgets for orienteering in the UK.

The WSP is important because it reflects the first stage of planning beneath British Orienteering's vision ("More People, More Places, More Podiums"). It sets priorities for the period April 2009 to March 2013. It is also used by relevant Sports Councils who normally require a plan as a condition of awarding grants; the WSP is often used to assess which elements of development and progress in orienteering that funding partners will support.

British Orienteering has such a plan for the period ending April 2009; however it is now time to develop the plan for 2009 to 2013 as it will be submitted to UK Sport, Sport England and potentially the other Sports Councils early in 2008.

The WSP is an important opportunity for associations, clubs and members to help shape the direction of British Orienteering in the years ahead, and to ensure that local priorities are reflected in the Plan. By involving partners, such as the Sports Councils and other bodies in the development of the Plan, British Orienteering is raising awareness and understanding about the sport of orienteering in addition to applying for funding support.

What's new about the WSP for 2009-13?

There are three main new aspects:

1. For the first time, it will be the development and expansion of an already agreed vision for orienteering which should help achieve coherence for the plan, rather than it being a set of rather disjointed goals and associated programmes.
2. The WSP will reflect the local priorities of British Orienteering's constituent associations and clubs.
3. One major funding partner, Sport England, is changing the way in which it provides funding and will be distributing two-thirds of its funds through Regional Agreements rather than the National Agreements currently in place.

The timetable for the WSP development

Date (2007)	Action
20 Sept	Issue of the Outline Plan to all associations, clubs and partners to enable them to review it, plan how they will frame their response and plan how they will determine and submit their Performance Indicators
26 Sept	Deadline for individuals who have seen the Outline Plan to input their comments to National Office. It is recognised that consolidated views, by associations and clubs for example, are unlikely to be achieved by this date, but it will be very helpful if individuals feedback their personal views on the Outline Plan
5 Oct	Changes to the Outline Plan are made and a draft WSP is circulated back to clubs, associations and other partners; clubs continue to develop their performance indicators
6 Oct	Council considers the Draft WSP at its autumn meeting
End Oct	Deadline for clubs and associations to submit their performance indicators
23 Nov	Deadline for associations and clubs to input their comments on

Date (2007)	Action
	the Draft WSP to National Office
End of Nov	A Final Draft WSP to be circulated to clubs, associations and partners for final comment
End December	Final version distributed to Council for final comment and ratification via email
11 Jan	Whole Sport Plan submitted to Sport England and the other Sports Councils as they seek funding submissions; copy placed on web for members

Why does British Orienteering need funding?

Currently British Orienteering raises £190k from membership fees and event levies; the remaining funding is from funding agencies and includes:

- £212k from UK Sport
- £375k from Sport England (there is also up to another £160k for specific Sport England initiatives)
- Various funding from other Sport Councils which is normally made available directly to the country Orienteering Association (NIOA, SOA and WOA)

A brief glance will tell you that only 25% of the available funds are raised through the membership and if the funding agencies change their levels of funding or their criteria it will have a significant impact on the activities of British Orienteering.

Are there changes anticipated to funding?

The governance of Sport in the UK is becoming more focused with all the government's (inc Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales) QUANGOs clarifying roles and responding to the changing sporting environment that includes London 2012 and the role of sport in education.

This is creating a change in funding mechanisms and criteria particularly in England where Sport England have committed to increasing participation of the 16+ age group. Sport England are changing their funding for the period from 1 April 2009 to deliver 65% or more of the funds against regional programmes of work. This means that even if they continue to fund at the same level as in 2007 (doubtful as they themselves have £50m less to invest in sport), British Orienteering will have a maximum of 35% of £375k (£131k) to spend at national level. The remaining 65% of the funds will be spent in the Sport England regions that, hopefully, will have agreed plans of work with orienteering. The funds may well still be processed through British Orienteering but spend will have to be within specified regions.

Sport England has built a network of County Sports Partnerships (CSPs) to link resource providers (Local Authorities, Education sector and Health sector) to sports development at a local level. For orienteering in England this will mean that clubs will benefit by building relationships with CSPs and associations will benefit from building relationships with Regional Sport England contact managers.

You can see that these changes and potential changes will significantly impact on the funding of British Orienteering and the way in which it operates.

Are there implications for clubs and if so what are they?

For the first time British Orienteering has a Vision and Values statement that has been agreed through consultation with the grass roots of the sport before being adopted at Council. Clubs will be asked to look at their current situation and identify areas of their work that can impact on delivering aspects of the Vision. Clubs that have achieved club accreditation status have remarked on the benefits of establishing a club development plan.

We hope that each club will consider the benefits from working within a coordinated British plan that has been agreed with a variety of partners from local through to national. Ultimately this should make the British Orienteering strategic plan for the period 2009 to 2013 (called the 'Whole Sport Plan 2009/13') far more meaningful at club level and strengthen the ability of clubs to talk with local bodies to facilitate not just funding but also other support for coaches, other volunteer roles, mapping, land access and other resources.

Clubs will be given a summary of their position in 2006 and asked to provide indications of where growth is possible in the 4 years between 2009 and 2013. Clubs will also have opportunity to identify other projects that might increase growth in participation, or the club more generally, and to tell us about any significant barriers to development.

Once completed, the Whole Sport Plan will become a more meaningful Plan than in the past with clubs and associations having greater ownership of the Plan – however Clubs will be required to commit more fully to delivering on the Plan and the targets that are agreed.

Orienteering is in direct competition with every other sport and leisure activities and the Whole Sport Plan will be an opportunity to light the imagination of our partners in regard to orienteering. To compete successfully orienteering has to be bold and daring – the timid conservative approach is unlikely to attract funding or support from partners. Orienteering still has a lot of converts to win over!

Are there implications for associations and if so what are they?

In addition to building relationships with the Sports Councils at national (SOA, NIOA, WOA) and regional level (English Associations), associations will play a significant role in facilitating discussion about how the development of orienteering in the region should progress and in discussing the collated information provided by their clubs.

Associations will also play a direct role in developing the Talent Pathway which the national squad structure in SOA, NIOA and WOA and the English regional squad structure underpin. Hopefully the talent pathway will be eligible for funding bids within the Associations.

Are there implications for British Orienteering at national level and if so what are they?

In the present climate of focus on London 2012 there is inevitably going to be a funding deficit and addressing this will be a priority. British Orienteering is likely to need a degree of re-shaping in several respects:

- Delivery of the development of orienteering (and particularly increasing participation) will be focused at club level
- Delivery is almost certainly going to be focused in areas where there is a strong commitment from a club, the association, CSPs in England and funding partners. The recognition that there has not been equitable funding and support across the associations (ie SOA, NIOA, WOA) and clubs and this situation is likely to become more fragmented with the English associations being funded at different levels – how will the governing body deal with this shift of funds from a national level to a regional/association level?
- Gathering information from Clubs and Associations, collating it and preparing the Whole Sport Plan 2009/13 will be a major piece of work BUT will probably provide clubs and associations with far more ownership of the Plan than has been true in the past
- Establishing and maintaining a regional network of contacts with Sports Councils, CSPs in England and other bodies will become a priority – and a major challenge

- The staffing structure will have to be adjusted to meet the new circumstances and delivery mechanisms

In summary there will be some significant advantages to the future system to resource sport. Everyone involved in sports development that is reliant on external funding streams is going to have to align with these changes. We, British Orienteering, our associations and clubs have a tight timescale in which to agree the Whole Sport Plan (by the end of 2007) and, whilst there are no guarantees, if we can rise to the challenge in a positive manner there is the opportunity to deliver on the benefits.