

Increasing Participation Update



FOCUS Clubs

6 months have passed since the selection of the 5 'increasing participation project' clubs. All of the clubs (excluding BARRO who have already achieved this) have been working towards establishing a weekly base for orienteering activities in populated areas ('Community O').

The main challenge faced by the clubs has been finding a suitable and affordable location that is close to a populated area. It was decided that each club needed a facility that provided both indoor and outdoor areas for Orienteering activities and if possible an area for people to socialise before/during or after each club night e.g. cafe or bar area to create a friendly atmosphere.

Facility options and possibilities were discussed between club committees and the participation manager in order to make the best decision for a club base. Local council Sports Development Officers were also contacted to help provide options.

Below is a list of the facilities selected by the 'increasing participation clubs':

Barrow and District Orienteering Club: Hawcoate Sports and Social Club *

South Ribble Orienteering Club: St Thomas School Ripley

Southdowns Orienteers: Blatchington Mill School

Southampton Orienteering Club: Wide Lane Sports Pavilion (Southampton University)

Wessex Orienteering Club: Bournemouth Sports Club

* Barrow Orienteers were already using this facility on a weekly basis before being selected for the increasing participation project.

Week nights from 6:30pm will be the choice for the clubs to run their weekly session for 1hr to 2hrs with a variety of activities taking place. All clubs have received copies of the new 'Club Activity Guide' that will be used to plan Orienteering activities as well as group runs, circuit training and team games.

Publicising and Marketing the new weekly sessions has been a challenge for the clubs particularly as they want to attract as many new members as possible without overwhelming the coaches with too many people at the sessions. Clubs plan to advertise the session to their current members and then start distributing flyers to local schools, leisure centres, universities and youth groups etc. A number of the clubs are also looking to put a number of low key 'Come and Try it' events at their club bases to help attract people. An example of this is Wessex Orienteering Club that plans to run a few Saturday morning activity sessions before introducing newcomers and beginners to the club activity night.

British Orienteering has developed a new online flyer package that can be used by clubs to purchase flyers without having to worry about the hassle of design work. There are a number of templates to choose from complete with images and art work all that is required is for clubs to input the text details they want to include. The flyers will be sent out directly to wherever the person wishes and the prices

include all postage and packaging. The 5 'Participation Clubs' now have access to these and they will be made available to all clubs within British Orienteering once demand, usage and feedback has been provided.

Southdowns, Southampton and Wessex have all had members attending level 2 coaching courses this summer to enable an adequate number of coaches to be available for the club nights. Wessex will have 5 level 2 coaches by the end of August. Volunteers obviously play an essential part in ensuring the success of club nights; Barrow and District Orienteering Club are planning to use sports students from the local college to assist them in delivering club activities. These sport and P.E. students regularly require volunteer hours in order to gain some of their qualifications so volunteering for a local club is ideal. The British Orienteering Young Leaders Award and the new UKCC Level 1 Coaching Award in Orienteering provide an ideal starting point for these students to become club volunteers.

The participation clubs all hope to have their weekly club sessions running from early September and it is hoped that the next addition of FOCUS can highlight some of their successes.

An example of a successful 'Community O' project is the South Ribble Orienteering Club participation project Autumn 2007-Spring 2008:

- Autumn 2007: Saturday afternoons (12noon – 2pm) in Lancaster parks and small woods in and around the city
- Awards 4 All and British Orienteering grant funding used for publicity, equipment and new maps
- Much local publicity in newspaper, shops, library, large employers, hospital, university, schools etc
- Series of 'Try Orienteering' sessions with Young Leaders and coaches to welcome and help newcomers
- Numbers of participants rose from 90 in week 1 to 182 in week 4 with over 70% being newcomers
- After 4 weeks over 50 new members had signed up to join the club and British Orienteering
- The club gained 22 membership units as a direct result of the ozone, representing 60 actual people.
- Spring 2008: follow on series of sessions
- 1 of the new participants is now on way to qualifying as a Level 2 Coach (May 2008)
- Autumn 2008: plans for weekly training at a fixed venue in Lancaster

Funding

Some of the clubs have requested funding to varying degrees. Through development funds we have been able to support them with the following:

Wessex - Marketing and Publicity Person and Equipment (Compasses, Sport Ident Set, Base Stations)

Southampton – None as of yet

Southdowns – Initial venue hire costs, New Club Logo, Updating POC at their new facility.

Barrow – Petrol costs for a mini bus taking children to local events.

South Ribble – Initial venue hire costs.

Club Activity Guide

As previously mentioned in the summer edition of FOCUS the 'Club Activity Guide' is now available to clubs currently practicing localised (Community 'O') activities or aiming to start them. The guide has been produced to provide a resource for clubs aiming to provide orienteering activities and training exercises for current club members and newcomers to the sport of orienteering.

The guide contains over 30 indoor and outdoor activities and a guide to setting up Street-O. It hoped that the guide can be used to increase participation within the sport and offers clubs the opportunity to provide more regular activities that may be more accessible to newcomers and beginners to the sport before progressing into more traditional orienteering events.

The following clubs now have a copy the 'Club Activity Guide':

- Barrow and District Orienteering Club *
- Dartford Orienteering Klubb
- Eryri Orienteering Club
- Derwent Valley Orienteers
- Harlequins Orienteering Club
- Lincoln Orienteering Group
- Mole Valley Orienteers
- Nottinghamshire Orienteering Club
- Saxons Orienteering Club
- Southampton Orienteering Club *
- Southern Navigators
- Southdowns Orienteers *
- South Ribble Orienteering Club *
- Swansea Bay Orienteering Club
- Wessex Orienteering Club *
- West Cumberland Orienteering Club

*'Increasing Participation Project' Clubs.

All of British Orienteering's Regional Development Officers also have a copy of the guide.