

A British Orienteering Board Consultation Paper

Aim

The aim of this Board paper is to provide a framework for consultation as part of a review of the membership and levy structures within British Orienteering with a view to presenting a formal proposal to the 2012 AGM.

The supporting paper below forms the basis of a consultation to individual members, participants, clubs, associations and committees. The consultation process, at this stage, has several clear strands: individual members and participants; committees; clubs and associations. Details on the method for this consultation are outlined in the paper below.

Discussion questions:

1. Do you agree with the **basic principles** outlined in this paper for governing the membership and levy structures?
2. Do you agree with the **assumptions** outlined in this paper for governing the membership and levy structures?
3. Do we have the right balance between income generated by members and income generated by participants?
4. Do you agree with the current ratio of income generated by membership compared to income generated by levy? What do you feel is the ideal ratio?

Why does this matter to you?

The paper that follows has been agreed by the Board as the start point for a consultation into the membership and levy structures currently in place within British Orienteering. As part of a review into their suitability and effectiveness, the Board is looking for the views and ideas of the members, clubs, associations, British Orienteering committees and staff that form the backbone of our sport. Time is tight – as explained at the 2011 AGM we would like to put a formal proposal to the next AGM in April 2012, which effectively gives us the rest of 2011 to consult and formulate the proposal or proposals that are likely to have the broadest support of the members.

As outlined above, there are 3 strands to the consultation process. Firstly, individual members and participants are asked to feedback their individual views, using the discussion questions above to structure responses, at any time to the following email address feedback@britishorienteering.org.uk.

Interested individual members and participants are asked to express their interest in being involved in a further consultation process by registering their name and email address with the National Office at info@britishorienteering.org.uk. Depending on the level of interest in this further consultation process, it is likely this will take the form of a number of groups looking into particular issues. These will be conducted electronically.

Secondly, we will circulate the paper to British Orienteering committees and ask for comment using the discussion questions above to structure responses.

Thirdly, we are asking clubs and associations to consider the discussion questions and feedback their comments in the Association and Club Conference on 15 October.

We are aiming for this initial round of consultation to take place in September with club and association delegates having the opportunity to feedback at the Association and Club Conference on 15 October.

After this conference, we will compile feedback and circulate the outcomes for a second round of consultation that will lead to the proposal or proposals that will be put to the 2012 AGM.

There are no pre-judged conclusions. The review is being conducted because the current system is not perceived to be efficient, effective or fair, but retaining the status quo is certainly not being excluded! As you will see from the scope of the review, we are looking only at the structures or mechanisms which currently result in membership and levy income and not at the amounts raised or how they are spent. Do we have the right balance between member income and participant income? Are we raising money from the right people? Are we being fair? Are our income structures the right ones for the future? Your views on these issues matter.

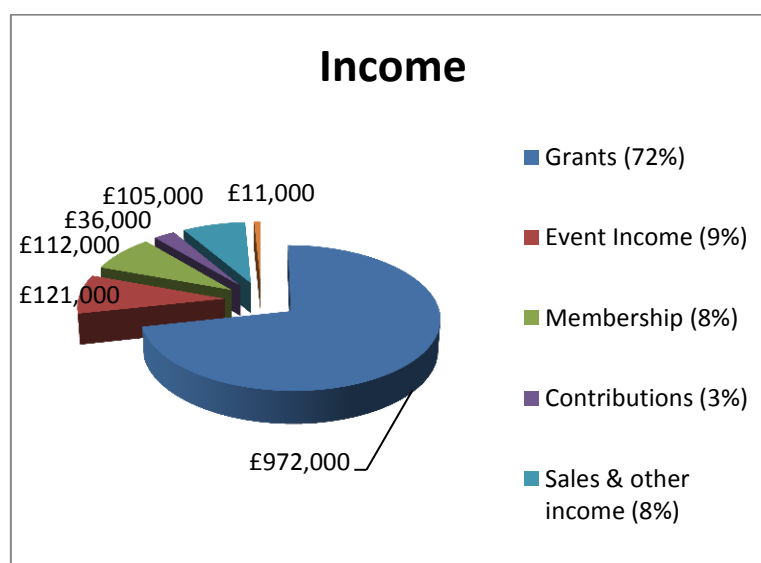
Background

The activities of British Orienteering are currently funded from a variety of sources, public and private. Income from UK Sport, Sport England and Sport NI¹ represents about 72% of the annual income and may be used only for the purposes for which grants have been offered. Income from membership subscriptions, levies and major events represents about 17% of the total and may be used for any purpose in accordance with the members' wishes. All British Orienteering income categories are shown graphically in Figure 1 below.

The current membership structure is perceived as cumbersome, expensive to maintain and, arguably, not sufficiently attractive to potential new members. The levy system is well tried, but currently more than 50% of participant runs are at events which do not contribute to the costs of orienteering through the payment of a levy of any sort. The Board therefore wishes to embark on a consultation process to review the membership and levy structures in tandem, to determine whether these structures are the most suitable for meeting likely future demands.

Within British Orienteering we have been striving for greater efficiency and transparency in the way we spend our income. The staff has been restructured over the past 18 months and its output carefully tailored to the aims of the various funding streams. There is no spare capacity in the resource that the staff represents, but there are evident gaps in the support required of it in such areas as coaching, external publicity and internal communication.

Figure 1: The 2010 income of £1.357M was generated as follows:



¹ SOA receives funding directly from Sportscotland, which is not considered here

Figure 2: The 2010 membership & event income of £233K was generated as follows:

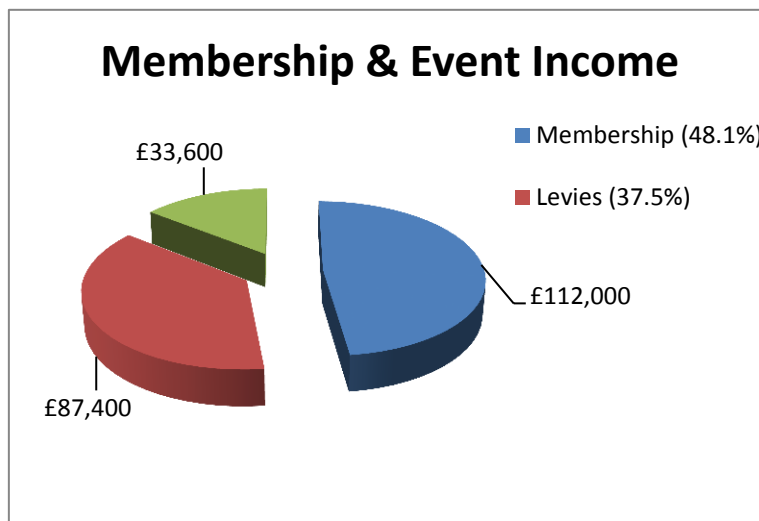


Figure 3: The British Orienteering staff is funded as follows:

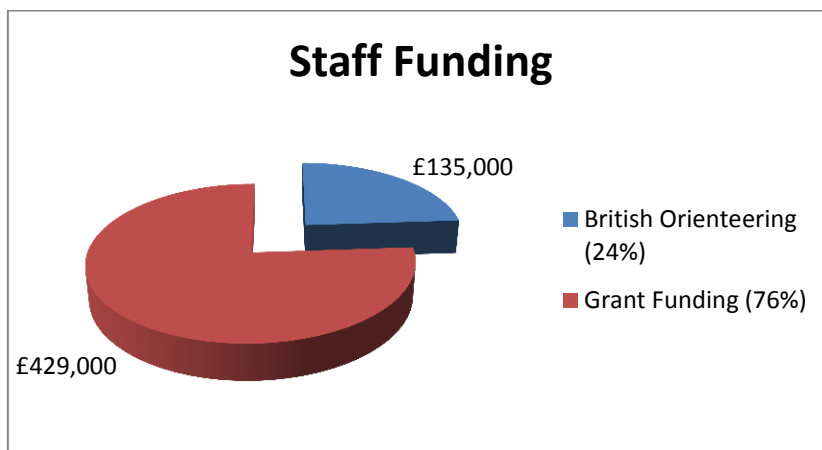
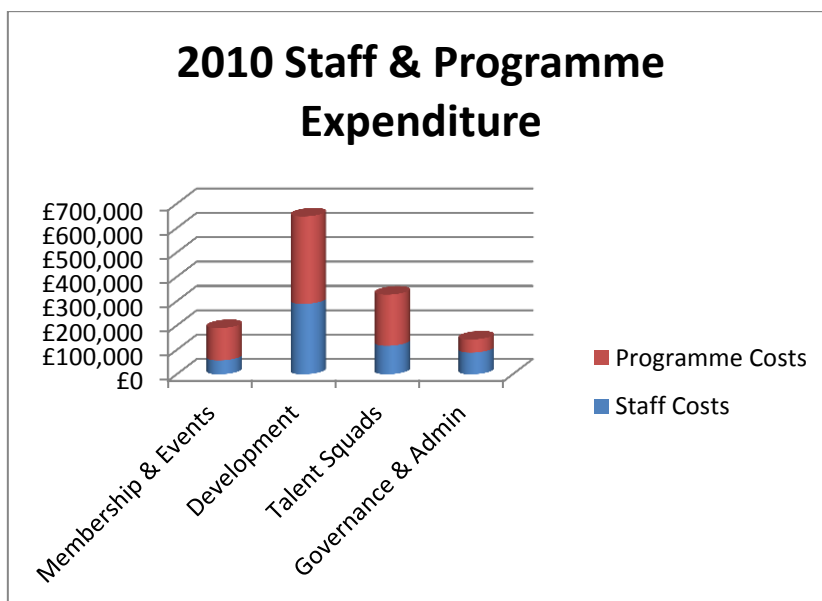


Figure 4: Staff and programme expenditure in 2010 was as follows:



Scope

This consultation process will be limited to looking at membership and levy structures only. It will not consider the totals raised or how the income is spent. It is not intended to be part of any other review into governance, management, competition, committee structure or Board effectiveness. As briefed at the 2011 AGM, the intent is to consult the membership, review the feedback and present a proposal to the 2012 AGM for implementation from 1 Jan 2013. The nature and scale of that proposal is by no means pre-decided.

Membership and levy structures will initially be considered separately. Although both bring income that is spent on support services used by members, the underlying purposes are fundamentally different. Those that wish to join British Orienteering are charged according to a membership structure based on age (senior or junior) and family grouping (individual or family subscription) in return for rights and benefits not accorded to casual participants. Participation levies are a straightforward income generation mechanism applied to all participants, irrespective of membership status. Currently the income ratio is about 50:50 membership:events, but this could be adjusted in either direction.

Income from major events (the JK, the British championships and the Compass Sport Cup Final) currently falls outside the levy structure; these events are budgeted to run at a profit, of which British Orienteering retains two-thirds. The major events income structure may be challenged as part of the consultation.

The related issues of club and Association member subscription structures will not be included. Currently a small number of Associations charge a membership fee while others charge a levy; amounts vary by Association. Club subscriptions are not uniform, in amount or collection mechanism. Once a consensus is reached on British Orienteering income structures, it may be worth examining ways to simplify and harmonise other subscription structures. The current system of club affiliation to British Orienteering will also be excluded from the review.

This paper will not consider other possible sources of income such as sponsorship, merchandise or corporate days. These are the subject of ongoing Board and staff discussions, with no sufficiently practical or affordable way forward as yet identified. Membership, levy and major events income should therefore be expected to meet the basic requirement unaided.

Drivers for Change

Membership

It is the Board view that membership is important to British Orienteering. While a 'pay-as-you-play' approach may suit many participants, our sport is largely generated, officiated and supported by volunteer participants who have made a positive decision to be members. Despite sustained local efforts to recruit new members, the overall number of members declined slightly in 2010 with the healthy stream of 1,434 new members being exceeded by the number of non-renewals (1882). The current membership structure is over-complicated, time-consuming and expensive to administrate. Its complexity is also a major barrier to increasing membership numbers. The Board also feels that it should be trying where possible to redeploy British Orienteering-funded staff away from membership duties to under-resourced priority areas such as coaching support, external publicity and internal communication which will have a positive effect on increasing membership and participation.

The Board is firm in its belief that a vibrant club structure is vital to the health of orienteering in the UK. For most that join, it is membership of the club rather than of an Association or the Governing Body that matters and it is thoroughly understood that the sport is delivered to all, members or casual participants alike, by clubs and club members. Ideally, therefore, the membership structure should be transparent to the member and should result in sufficient income for the levels of activity that the collective membership demands of club, Association and British Orienteering.

A staff review of the membership structure was conducted in April 2010. In addition to the complexity issue (and the considerable time taken explaining over the phone) it reported that:

- The structure is inconsistent, with clubs and associations charging different rates and offering different inducements to join. There is a lack of correlation between juniors in competition and junior membership, individual and within family units. It is difficult to fathom exactly how many members we have.
- Clubs do not feel ownership of the scheme and do not always market it strongly, with the Local category adding confusion and complexity.
- Members perceive a lack of benefit from membership.
- However, membership does provide an important direct link for communication between British Orienteering and members.

Although the Board feels that it is imperative that a new, attractive, consistent and simple membership structure is devised, it has no predisposition towards any particular solution and is looking to this consultation process to come up with one or more workable proposals.

Levy

The current levy structure is well established; the contribution levels are reviewed and voted on at each AGM. An analysis of the levy returns for 2010 shows that only 19% of events paid any form of levy and only 47.4% of participant runs counted for levy purposes (28% if '1st 75' are counted as non-payers). The current levy take is weighted towards large events that reach the threshold for the higher rate. With more participants choosing to 'pay and play' and an increasing number of smaller local events that contribute little or nothing by way of levy, the Board feels that there is value in reviewing the levy structure with a view to sharing the levy burden more equitably across the participant base.

Currently 'activities' (coaching sessions etc) registered with British Orienteering make no contribution to the costs of running the sport, despite drawing on centrally funded support such as insurance and the website.

The Future

The following strategic aims, desired outcome, principles and assumptions provide the framework for the first part of the consultation process. It is important to the Board that there is a good degree of consensus on the aims and principles that underpin our income structures. All of these are open to challenge and development. The lists are not exhaustive or exclusive but are offered to stimulate debate and feedback.

Strategic Aims

There are 3 threads within the Orienteering Whole Sport Plan 2009/13 which had considerable support from the consultation that preceded its publication:

- "Expanding the numbers of people aware of, participating in, and assisting as volunteers in orienteering. This will also swell the number of members of British Orienteering and its Clubs"
- "Widening the range of places where orienteering takes place – bringing the excitement, fun and skills of navigation at speed to a wider public by holding events more locally, including in or near urban areas, closer to where they live or can reach in the time they wish to devote, and with less environmental impact arising from travel to events"
- "Winning more places on the podium at international competitions – stressing the competitive nature of the sport and increasing our already creditable success by winning more medals and podium places internationally."

Inherent to these is awareness of the need to build the capacity of the sport to enable and support the above to be achieved. The membership and levy structures are fundamental to recruiting members, increasing participation and raising the funds needed to meet our agreed goals.

Desired Outcome

The outcome of the review that the Board is looking to achieve is a simple, easily understood, easy to administer and fair process to raise and collect income: one which supports our vision.

Principles

The basic principles that should govern our membership and levy structure(s) are:

- Membership structures and levy mechanisms should be easy to understand, simple to administrate and easily scalable (up or down)
- All who participate should contribute to the costs of the sport, regardless of membership status
- The costs of core activity should be funded by all members and participants, not just by Associations, Clubs and individual volunteers
- Membership should offer clear benefits to the member
- Membership structures and levy mechanisms should support the aims of British Orienteering
- Any new structure or mechanism should endure for at least 2 years before review

Assumptions

In order to focus discussion, a number of assumptions have been made by the Board:

- Juniors and students will continue to count as one-third of a senior for levy purposes in line with the decisions at the 2010 and 2011 AGMs
- The current family unit and the definition of a junior are open to challenge and amendment
- Levies (participation or membership) will not be raised on activities, only on events
- There is the possibility of introducing modest registration charges for events and activities

Consultation

Method

The consultation process will have 3 clear strands:

1. Individual members and participants are asked to feedback their individual views, using the discussion questions at the beginning of this document to structure responses, at any time to the following email address feedback@britishorienteering.org.uk.
 - a. Interested individual members and participants are asked to express their interest in being involved in a further consultation process by registering their name and email address with the National Office at info@britishorienteering.org.uk. This should be done by the end of August 2011.
 - b. Depending on the level of interest in this further consultation process, it is likely this will take the form of a number of groups looking into particular issues. These will be conducted electronically.

- c. Communication will be via email within each group. Groups will be balanced as far as possible to reflect age, gender and geographic distribution.
 - d. These electronic discussion groups will consider the consultation paper and discuss several key issues; Agree principles, strategic aims and assumptions; Consider a number of illustrative levy and subscription models to arrive at best contenders; Consider draft proposals ahead of Board formal adoption and presentation to AGM
2. As well as individual feedback, we will circulate the paper to British Orienteering committees and ask for comment using the discussion questions above to structure responses.
 3. As well as the individual and committee feedback, we ask that the paper and the above discussion questions are discussed at club and association level, with a view to club delegates feeding back responses to the Association and Club conference on 15th October.

It is anticipated that the range of views will be wide and that most will be strongly held. The Board will try to find a balanced consensus and will put forward more than one proposal to the 2012 AGM if there is strong support for appreciably different solutions.

Timetable

The timetable for this consultation will be:

Date	Action
15 Jul 11	Board agree discussion paper
August	Electronic discussion groups established (Individual members and participants register their interest)
1 Aug – 30 Sep 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronic discussion group consultation • Feedback sought from committees on consultation paper • Consultation paper sent to clubs and associations for discussion prior to Association and Club Conference
15 Oct 11	Association and Club Conference
31 Oct 11	Draft proposals circulated for feedback
1 – 30 Nov 11	e-consultation process on draft proposals
10 Dec 11	Final draft proposal to Board
Jan 12	AGM Proposal published
Apr 12	AGM Discussion and Vote

The Numbers

The consultation will use figures from 2010 to provide a common baseline. There were only 3 levels of event in 2010, which are shown as Levels A, C and D. Using these figures to quantify discussion points and any eventual proposals will ensure that comparisons can be fairly made. The key figures are:

2010 Statistics:

Ref	Statistic	Number	Note
a	Participants in levy paying events	63,656	
b	Levy paying events	390	
c	1 st 75 not levied	29,250	b x 75
d	Total levy paid	£87,400	
e	Non levy paying events	1497	Excludes major events
f	Total senior participation in all events	106,830	From table below
g	Total junior participation in all events	53,070	From table below
h	Major events income	£33,600	

Participation:

	Number	Senior Member	Junior Member	Senior Non-member	Junior Non-member	Senior Non-paying	Junior Non-paying	Total
Level A	9	4250	1320	53	60	8	122	5813
Level C	160	33532	9738	1287	981	967	1474	47979
Level D	1635	50491	16660	7506	7648	8736	15067	105962
Activities	2328	12955	7226	4529	22990			47700

Ratio of senior 'payers' to junior 'payers' is 2.67:1 or 72.7% and 27.3% respectively

Calculations:

Ref	Statistic	Calculation	Number
j	Seniors in levy paying events	a x 72.7%	46,278
k	Juniors in levy paying events	a x 27.3%	17,378
m	Senior equivalents in levy paying events	j +kj/3	52,070
n	Average levy per runner in levy paying events	d/m	£1.68
o	Notional levy needed to raise equivalent income if every participant levied in every event	d/(f+g/3)	£0.70

Membership

Members paying subscriptions in 2010 (excludes those joining after 1 Sep 10):

	Junior	Student	Senior	Family Units	Associate	Total	
Local	252	32	889	1967		3140	29%
National	253	102	2354	4976	20	7705	71%

Note: 6068 Family Units contained 10854 individuals, a total of 14736 members

Membership income amounted to £112,000.

Status Quo:

2011 British Orienteering Membership Structure:

Status	Senior	Junior/Student	Family	Note
Local	£8.00	Free	£14.00	Free for 1 st year
National	£21.50	£4.65	£30.00	

2011 Levy Structure:

Level	Number of participants	Rate
Free	0 – 64	Free of levy
Lower	65 – 209	£2.15
Higher	210 and over	£3.55

Juniors and students count as one-third senior and there no events are exempt from levy (except for the profit-share Major Events).

Summary

The Board is very keen to involve the whole of British Orienteering – members, clubs, Associations, Committees and staff – in this consultation exercise. It recognises that time for consultation is short but the timetable is driven by the need to present one or more proposals to the 2012 AGM. It is, however, confident that those that wish to engage in the consultation will do so in a positive and constructive manner, seeking to help create workable and effective structures for both membership and levies from 1 Jan 2013.