Minutes of the 45th Annual General Meeting

Date: Monday 29th June 2026 @18:30

Online meeting via Teams

Attendees:

Clive Allen (SN), Duncan Archer (LOC), Graham Batty (HAVOC), Howard Blackman (Staff), Charles Bromley Gardner (BAOC), Peter Brooke (CEO/ SELOC), Michael Chopping (RAFO/ NOR), Scott Collier (KERNO), Barry Elkington (OD), Andrew Evans (DFOK), Cecillia Fenerty (MDOC), Ian Gamlen (HOC), Ruth Geddes (RR), Stephen Gilmore (LVO), Gracie Grant (Staff), Kay Hawke (Staff/ PFO), Alison Howe (Vice Chair/ Sax), Toby Heppell (WCOC), Alex Hudson (HOC), John Hurley (DVO), Carol Iddles (RAFO), Philip James (MV), David Jolly (HALO/ RAF), Jane Kaley-Burgess (DVO), Ed Lines (SO), Simon Ling (MV), Barabara Lugton (GO), Keith McCarthy (NGOC), Steve McKinley (SN), Andrew McMurtie (MAROC), Joanna Mee (SMOC), Jonathan Molloy (FVO), Dave Murphy (CLOK), Viv Murphy (CLOK), Helen Nisbet (SMOC), Mike Pedley (EPOC), Helen Pedley (EPOC), Iain Phillips (LEI), Richard Powell (WAOC), Andy Robinson (Treasurer/ LOC), Debbie Robinson (SN), Elizabeth Rocke (LOC), David Rosen (Director, SROC/ LOK), Stephen Round (SELOC), Terry Smith (SOC), Ian Tait (SARUM), Andy Thornton (BOF), Paul Turner (SELOC), Mike Walker (INVOC), Helen Wheelwright (SOC), Alan Wallis (SN), Gary Waters (SBOC), David Wathey (MDOC), Angela Whitworth (BL), Keith Willdig (Director/ OD), Rob Woods (Chair/ RAFO), Andrew Yeates (WCH),

(55 members)

Minute Taker: Peter Brooke

Apologies:
Pauline Tryner (Director/ SYO), Zac Randell (Independent Director), Justine Albert (Independent Director), Gregg Peers (Independent Director), Drew Vanbeck (SMOC),

1. Welcome and thanks

The Chair, Rob Woods, welcomed members to the AGM. He explained that the AGM is an important part of British Orienteering's governance, providing an opportunity to report on the past year, present the financial performance, make key decisions, and enable members to hold the Board to account.

The Chair thanked members for responding to his recent call to engage with the AGM, noting that participation and voting had more than doubled in the week leading up to the meeting, although he encouraged continued improvement in member engagement.

He outlined the meeting arrangements, including the 90-minute time limit, the online voting process, and the role of the CEO and voting assistants in supporting proceedings. Members were reminded to keep contributions respectful, constructive, and focused on the published agenda, with opportunities to ask questions on each agenda item.

The Chair emphasised that the AGM was a formal decision-making meeting and not the appropriate forum for introducing new business or holding extended discussions on matters outside the agenda. He advised that any wider issues requiring further debate would be taken outside the meeting and thanked members in advance for helping to ensure the meeting was conducted efficiently and effectively before inviting the CEO to continue with the agenda.

The Chair led a moment of pause and reflection in memory of those we'd lost from within the sport over the last 12 months.

The AGM, Annual Report and Accounts focussed on activities in 2025.

The CEO confirmed that there was a quorum. Under Article 43.6, *"fifty Voting Members present in person or by a proxy shall be a quorum".* This threshold had been exceeded as 578 Proxy Votes had been submitted via Mi-Voice and with those present it represented 8.0% of the membership.

The Chair thanked all the members for engaging in the process.

The Chair informed the meeting that all proposals will go to ballot.

Request for AOB Items

The CEO asked the meeting to register if there were any items of any other business.

Two items of business were raised ahead of the meeting covering British Orienteering's approach to schools and progress since the employment of the university officer which will be answered at the end of the meeting.

No other business was raised.

2. Minutes of the 44th Annual General Meeting held on Saturday, 17th May 2025

No matters or comments were arising from the minutes of the above meeting.

The adoption of the minutes was proposed by Keith Willdig (OD) and seconded by Barry Elkington (OD).

The minutes of the 44th Annual General Meeting were approved.

3. Chair's Report

The Chair reflected on his first year in the role, describing it as a positive and encouraging year for British Orienteering. He thanked the many volunteers, clubs, Board members, headquarters staff, external partners and Sports Councils whose commitment, expertise and support continue to underpin the success and sustainability of the sport. He recognised that British Orienteering is built on the dedication of volunteers and acknowledged the significant contribution made by clubs in delivering events, coaching, mapping and supporting participants at every level.

The Chair reaffirmed that the Board's primary responsibility is to ensure that British Orienteering remains well governed, financially resilient and sustainable for the long term. He noted that this requires careful judgement and, at times, difficult decisions, but that these are made in the best interests of the sport. He highlighted the Board's continued focus on sound governance, effective financial oversight, risk management and accountability to members.

The Chair reported that steady progress had been made during the year across participation, athlete development and organisational development. He highlighted the achievements of British athletes competing at the highest international level, particularly junior athletes at the European Youth Orienteering Championships and Junior World Orienteering Championships. He recognised the dedication of athletes, coaches, parents, volunteers and clubs in supporting these successes and stressed the importance of continuing to invest in future generations.

A key theme of the report was the need to strengthen participation and encourage more young people into the sport. While acknowledging that clubs vary in size, volunteer capacity and local priorities, the Chair encouraged every club to consider taking at least one additional step to introduce new participants to orienteering. He emphasised that collective action across all clubs would help secure the long-term sustainability and growth of the sport.

Looking ahead, the Chair acknowledged the ongoing challenges facing British Orienteering, including volunteer recruitment and retention, financial pressures, and increasing expectations around governance and safeguarding. He also recognised the opportunities presented by growing public interest in outdoor activity, health and wellbeing, and nature-based sports, noting that orienteering is well placed to benefit from these trends.

The Chair concluded by reaffirming the Board's commitment to supporting clubs and volunteers, widening participation, investing in athlete development, maintaining strong governance and financial discipline, and continuing to listen to and work collaboratively with members. He congratulated the year's domestic champions and award recipients before closing by thanking the entire orienteering community for its dedication, commitment and collective efforts throughout the year, expressing confidence in the future of British Orienteering.

4. Treasurer's Report

Andy Robinson, Treasurer, referred to the annual accounts, which had been available on the British Orienteering website.

He informed the meeting that in 2025 we recorded a deficit of £21K, this was a modest deficit and had been a desire during his time as Treasurer to reduce the large excess over the amount required by the reserves policy.

British Orienteering reserves are still above the levels required but have come down and are approaching a level close to the reserves policy requirement, whilst leaving some funds available for investment when appropriate.

In comparison to the deficit in 2024 of £61k this is on a par as £40k had been provided to WOC 2024.

Andy thanked the Sports Councils for their continued and generous support of the sport and highlighted that the next round of funding from Sport England was due from April 2027 and we currently were unaware of the amount of funding we may receive, although we had received an update stating that we should receive a one year rollover agreement.

Andy concluded by thanking the staff and in particular Kelly Perryman (Financial Manager) at British Orienteering for their support.

4.1 AGM to receive the accounts for 2025.

The Chair presented the accounts for acceptance by the AGM and asked for any comments or questions.

There were no questions or objections raised.

5. Chief Executive's Report

The Chief Executive Officer welcomed members to the Annual General Meeting and thanked clubs, volunteers and members for their continued commitment and support over the past year. Reflecting on his first year in post, he commented on the positive engagement he had experienced while visiting clubs and events across the country and thanked members for their ideas, feedback and willingness to work collaboratively to develop the sport.

The CEO provided an update on external funding, explaining that British Orienteering, together with other National Governing Bodies, had been awaiting confirmation of the next funding cycle from Sport England. He advised that organisational changes within Sport England had delayed the process and that a 12-month rollover funding arrangement had now been confirmed while longer-term funding arrangements are developed. Although the level of funding has yet to be confirmed, this provides greater certainty for the coming financial year and will enable planning to continue while preparations begin for the next funding application. He also acknowledged the valuable financial support provided by Sport Northern Ireland and Sport Scotland, recognising the important contribution this makes to the delivery of activities within those nations.

The CEO reported that participation had increased compared with the previous year, reflecting the significant efforts of clubs and volunteers in delivering events and attracting new participants. He thanked everyone involved in organising events and supporting local activity, recognising that the continued growth of the sport is driven by the commitment of volunteers across the country.

Looking ahead, the CEO advised that work is underway to develop a new strategy for 2027. He explained that this would build on the existing strategy rather than replace it, representing an evolution of current priorities. Members and stakeholders will have the opportunity to contribute through a consultation process before the strategy is finalised and launched.

The CEO highlighted the importance of maintaining consistency and focus within both British Orienteering and its affiliated clubs. He acknowledged that resources are limited and stressed that concentrating on agreed priorities would enable the organisation and clubs to achieve greater impact than attempting to deliver too many initiatives simultaneously.

He outlined a number of significant achievements during the year, including the development of the new Coaching Instructor Award, recognising the substantial contribution made by staff and volunteers in delivering this work. He explained that the award would provide a clearer entry route into coaching, strengthen support for new participants and improve recognition of coaching qualifications within the wider outdoor sector.

The CEO also highlighted the success of initiatives such as the Quid Games, which have introduced orienteering to new audiences and demonstrated the sport in an engaging and accessible way. Positive feedback from participants reinforced the value of these initiatives in changing perceptions of orienteering and encouraging new people to become involved.

Further updates were provided on the work of the Performance Team, coach development, governance, safeguarding, webinars and partnership development. The CEO praised the commitment of staff, many of whom continue to deliver work beyond their contracted hours, together with the extensive contribution made by volunteers in supporting these programmes.

In concluding his report, the CEO acknowledged that, whilst significant progress had been made over the past year, there remained considerable opportunities for further development. He reaffirmed British Orienteering's commitment to supporting clubs, growing participation, investing in people, strengthening governance and continuing to work collaboratively with members to ensure the long-term success and sustainability of the sport.

The Treasurer asked the CEO if in 12 months' time we may know what the funding award from April 2028 would be? The CEO said this was unlikely as he didn't believe the awarding and application process would be rushed.

6. Resolutions:

The Chair introduced the resolutions to the meeting.

6.1 Ordinary Resolution 1: To AUTHORISE the Board to appoint the auditors for the 2026 accounts and to fix their remuneration. which was proposed by the Board of Directors

The Chair outlined that the Auditors had now completed two audits and both parties were happy with how the process was conducted. British Orienteering is not required to have a full audit but we choose to do one to demonstrate the correct running of the organisation.

There were no questions from the floor.

The Resolution was **approved**

For the motion – 563, Against – 3, Abstain – 31

6.2 Ordinary Resolution 2: To APPROVE the member and club affiliation fees from 1st January 2027

The Chair introduced the Resolution.

He informed the meeting that there was a planned small increase to senior membership fees with a vision to increase these gradually in the next couple of years in line with a review.

Club affiliation fees were also to see an increase.

The proposed fee structure, to have effect from 1st January 2027 until amended, is as follows:

Membership & Affiliation Fees		
	2026 Fees	**2027 Fees**
Senior	£17.00	£20.00
Junior	£5.00	£6.00
Young Adult	£11.00	£12.00
Family	£39.00	£46.00
Club affiliation	£95.00	£120.00
University Club affiliation	£25.00	£25.00

There were no further questions.

The Resolution was **approved**.

For the motion – 527, Against – 42, Abstain – 28

6.3 Ordinary Resolution 3: To APPROVE the levy fees from 1st January 2027

The Chair introduced the Resolution.

The proposed fee structures put out to the membership, to have effect from 1st January 2027, is as follows:

Levy Fees		
	2026 Fees	**2027 Fees**
Senior Member Levy	£1.85	£2.00
Senior Non-Member Levy	£2.80	£3.00
Junior (Member and non-member) Levy	£0.60	£0.65

Debbie Robinson raised a question as to why non-member rates were going up when we no longer provided insurance. The CEO explained that at the 2025 AGM the option was given to members to retain the non-member levy and vary the rate between members and non-members or reverse to a single rate levy. The membership voted to retain the differential rate.

Stephen Gilmore asked if the part year fees can be published. The CEO confirmed this will happen. As a rule of thumb these are usually two thirds at the first price point change and one third at the second point.

**Post AGM note: the rates new members joining in 2027 are:*

Membership & Affiliation Fees			
	2027 Fees	**From 1st May**	**From 1st Sept**
Senior	£20.00	£13.00	£6.00
Junior	£6.00	£4.00	£2.00
Young Adult	£12.00	£8.00	£4.00
Family	£46.00	£34.00	£16

Andy Thornton raised an observation which didn't need an answer now, that when looking at the participation figures, it would suggest £55,000 of uncollected levy payments. Andy Thornton also echoed Rob Woods opening comments about the importance to attract newcomers. His request was that the BOF Board have a look again at the levy scheme that puts newcomer attraction and younger people front and centre of what we do.

The CEO confirmed that the details regarding potential uncollected levies would be checked and a response provided. In relation to the levy structure, he noted that the Board remains open to considering alternative models in line with the strategy where well-developed proposals or new ideas are put forward by members or the governing body team. Any future model would need to be simple to administer, equitable and appropriate for the sport.

**Post AGM note: regarding potential uncollected levy payments:*

In 2025 all levies have been collected in accordance with the policy. The perceived gap is due to a number of reasons:

- *Participation figures include all those at the events. For example, a group of three running together will count as three in the statistics but will only pay one levy. As per the established guidelines, the levy is based per group/ individual result. Therefore, levy paying runs will be lower than the participation runs.*
- *Multiday events of at least 5 days receive 50% of the levies returned to the region specifically for development purposes.*
- *Major events pay a super levy agreement and appear in a separate line.*

Debbie Robinson asked if British Orienteering was looking to make a profit next year instead of a deficit. The CEO responded that we are forecast to have a deficit again. Beyond this, once the Sport England award is known we will be able to make clearer protections for future years.

There were no further questions.

The Resolution was **approved**.

For the motion – 494, Against– 76, Abstain – 29

6.4 Ordinary Resolution 4: To APPOINT the President of British Orienteering

The Appointment of Steve Cram CBE to be President, was proposed by the Board of Directors.

The Chair provided an update on the proposed appointment of the President, advising that discussions with the preferred candidate had taken longer than anticipated. Following recent contact, the candidate had confirmed they remained interested in the role but wished to ensure it was the right fit. The Chair explained that further discussions would take place shortly and emphasised that the Board was seeking an active and engaged President who could make a meaningful contribution to British Orienteering. Based on the positive discussions to date, the Chair remained optimistic that an appointment could be agreed and invited members to consider this context when voting on the resolution.

The **Appointment** of Steve Cram CBE as President was **approved.**

There were no further questions raised.

For the motion – 494, Against – 13, Abstain – 26

6.5 Resolution 6: To Elect Directors

The Chair informed the meeting that two of the serving elected directors had reached the end of their second and first terms of office respectively.

Duncan Birtwistle (OD) has opted to not stand for a third term. The Chair thanked Duncan for his six years of service and valuable contribution to the Board.

Alison Howe (SAX) is seeking re-election and had been formally nominated. Two other nominations for the elected director position had been received, John Leeson (HOC) and Rob Lines (SO)

The Chair informed the meeting that the role of a Board member is an important part of governing the sport and thanked the Board for all their hard work.

As there were two vacancies and three nominations, the two successful candidates receiving the most votes will be elected.

The voting was as followed:

- Alison Howe – 451
- Rob Lines – 361
- John Leeson - 329

The CEO welcomed both Alison and Rob to the Board and thanked John for coming forward to be a director.

6.6 Ordinary Resolution 6: To APPROVE the updated Articles of Association
The CEO introduced the resolution and explained the updates included updates to language used throughout the articles and a shortening of some of the AGM timelines.

The **updated** Articles of Association was **approved.**

There were no further questions raised.

For the motion – 554, Against – 5, Abstain – 39

7. Any other Business

Two questions had been raised ahead of the AGM by Andy Thornton.

1. Does British Orienteering have a published strategy and delivery plan for schools and youth organisations across the UK? If so, where is it published and what are the key priorities? If not, what are the reasons and what actions are planned to address this gap?

The following information was provided in response:

- Work within schools falls primarily within the Strengthen Lifelong Pathways strategy strand. The strategy shifted our focus towards 16-40's and club-led development.
- Developed a range of resources for the education sector
  - Introducing Orienteering (primary/ secondary), Young Leader, Instructor - eLearning
- Recognised delivery partner scheme
- Links to Association of PE and YST
- Various work across webinars and sharing best practice.

The schools environment has changed significantly in the last 20 years and our focus has been providing the resources for teachers to deliver quality experiences.
There was a reminder in that the consistency of the offer and delivery of events = greater engagement.

2. Following the appointment of the British Orienteering (BO) University Officer in July 2025, please could you provide an update on the work done so far in this sector? Please could you also advise what the BO strategy and plan is for developing orienteering in University (and other Higher Education) institutions in the next 12 months and beyond?

Gracie Grant (University Development Officer) provided an update on her work within the sector in response to this question.

The work within the University's Development Programme has focused on engaging both existing university orienteering clubs and students who are new to the sport. Research and engagement activities have been undertaken to better understand the needs of university clubs and to inform future development work.

As a result, a new University Club Development and Guidance Pack has been launched, providing resources on affiliation, club development, membership growth and effective social media engagement. This has been complemented by a University Club Training Pack and template training programme, designed to help clubs introduce beginners to the sport using low-cost, accessible activities. These resources are now available through a dedicated university hub on the British Orienteering website.

The update highlighted increased promotion of university activities through social media and the successful delivery of university taster sessions, where more than two-thirds of participants were new to orienteering. Feedback from participants had been very positive, with valuable learning identified to inform future event delivery.

Progress has also been made in strengthening relationships with the British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS) organisation. This has included the re-establishment of the BUCS Orienteering Event Management Group to review and develop the university competition programme, with the aim of ensuring it remains aligned with the wider orienteering competition structure and reflects student feedback.

Looking ahead, further university engagement events are planned for the new academic year, particularly in the North East, with a focus on increasing awareness of the sport and attracting new participants. Continued priority will also be given to strengthening communication with university clubs and providing the resources and support needed to promote their long-term sustainability and growth.

Kay Hawke (Partnerships Manager) added that a lot of great work had been going in the background to support changing the culture within universities. There are additional challenges in setting up a University club and this can take a significant amount of time. But we are now progressing into universities that have never offered orienteering before.

There was no further business raised.

8. Closing of Meeting

The Chair thanked everyone for attending the AGM.

The Chair closed the meeting at 20:05.