

Thank you for your support

British Orienteering will continue to monitor the situation and work together with associations, clubs and volunteers to resume orienteering events and activities as soon as it is safe to do so. We would like to thank every one of our associations, clubs and members for your support, and we look forward to welcoming you back to the sport soon.

We recognise the valued support from all of our members, clubs and associations, and the extraordinary commitment from colleagues who have enabled us to continue to operate during this period.

Restarting orienteering – when it is safe to do so

We understand that this has been, and continues to be, an incredibly tough time for everyone. In these circumstances, it's natural that we all feel the desire to start orienteering again and to enjoy the freedom of racing through forests, hills and urban areas.

We believe that restarting orienteering after this hiatus will be a long and gradual process. The consequences of this unprecedented global health crisis will be long-lasting and potentially unpredictable. We do not yet know what form the release of lockdown will take, but it may vary between different nations or regions of the UK. In this document, we will consider some possible scenarios, but the approach we take in reality will be led at all times by the guidance issued by the relevant government authorities.

Getting orienteering going again will present a new set of challenges for our sport, and we'll likely need to make some compromises on the form and standard of competition. By working together now, we can ensure we are prepared for orienteering to resume once it is possible to do so safely. Our initial plan is for a phased and controlled resumption of orienteering, ensuring that we continue to observe the relevant government guidance.

Our key objective will be for orienteering to resume at a local level, but only where it can take place under several principles.

1. The **health & safety of all** (both orienteers and the general public) must be paramount.
2. **Efforts to prevent the spread of the virus must be sustained.**
3. **Respect for the relevant government guidance**, noting that not all health systems are under the same pressure, and that the guidance may, therefore, vary between the home nations, or between regions.

Back to Orienteering Action Plan

It will remain essential that all volunteers and participants adhere to the latest government guidance in any orienteering events or activities.

The purpose of the document is to explore options for how clubs may be able to resume orienteering activities safely under several different scenarios. It represents some initial ideas on what measures may be required and will continue to evolve in line with government advice.

The resumption of orienteering will require compromise and flexibility from all involved, and there may be times where British Orienteering's guidelines change at short notice.

All events and activities will require a risk assessment that takes into account any current government guidance on minimising the transmission of COVID-19, such as social distancing requirements. Risk assessments may need to be updated as and when the government guidance changes and the dates of any updates should be recorded.

Key Government Advice (update when released)

With the rapidly evolving nature of the COVID-19 outbreak, information and advice from the government can change quickly.

For the latest information on COVID-19 in your area, please visit the relevant government website: [UK Government](#), [Scottish Government](#), [Welsh Government](#), [nidirect](#), and [Isle of Man Government](#).

Scenario 1 – Re-introduction of activities people can do on their own or with their household

This scenario involves a small relaxation of government restrictions which permits greater freedom of movement and activity on an individual or household basis, but which does not allow for non-essential gatherings of people from more than one household. In this scenario, clubs could help to facilitate orienteering activity by individuals or in household groups. However, traditional club events or club training sessions would not be permitted.

Action Plan

What activity can take place?

1. Promoting the use of Permanent Orienteering Courses (POC's),
2. Running courses from previous events,
3. Promoting the use of MapRun and virtual courses,
4. Mapping and planning for future events.

Recommendations

1. Promoting the use of Permanent Orienteering Courses (POCs)

Clubs promote the use of POCs

Individual recommendations

- Ensure social distancing is maintained at all times.
- Check whether the relevant landowner(s) have any restriction in place before commencing any activity.

Club actions, responsibilities and options

- Promotion of POCs through various channels, website, social media, newsletters.
- Seek agreement from the relevant landowner(s) before promoting a POC.
- The potential introduction of club 'fun' leagues. Clubs can ask members to submit their times for completing certain courses. No prizes should be offered.
- Carefully consider the impact of any activities on members of the public and local residents. Avoid using areas that are likely to be particularly busy or crowded.

2. Running courses from previous events

Clubs make available maps from previous events, primarily in parks, for members to print at home and complete on their own or in household groups at a time to suit them.

Individual recommendations

- Ensure social distancing is maintained at all times.
- Check whether the relevant landowner(s) have any restriction in place before commencing any activity.

Club actions, responsibilities and options

- Make maps available and promote their use.
- Seek agreement from the relevant landowner(s) before making a map available.
- Discourage people from different households from arranging to run courses together or at the same time.
- Carefully consider the impact of any activities on members of the public and local residents. Avoid using areas that are likely to be particularly busy or crowded.

3. Promoting the use of MapRun and other virtual courses

Cubs and members plan their virtual courses using technology such as MapRun, allowing members to complete these courses on their own or in household groups.

Individual recommendations

- Ensure social distancing is maintained at all times.
- Check whether the relevant landowner(s) have any restriction in place before commencing any activity.

Club actions, responsibilities and options

- Create several courses in various local parks.
- Seek agreement from the relevant landowner(s) before creating a course.
- Promote the courses.
- The potential introduction of club 'fun' leagues. Clubs can ask members to submit their times for completing certain courses. No prizes should be offered.
- Carefully consider the impact of any activities on members of the public and local residents. Avoid using areas that are likely to be particularly busy or crowded.

4. Mapping and planning of areas for future events

Mappers and planners visit local areas on their own or in household groups to prepare for future events and activities.

Individual recommendations

- Ensure social distancing is maintained at all times.
- Check whether the relevant landowner(s) have any restriction in place before commencing any activity.
- Stay local, and avoid overnight accommodation or travelling long distances.

Club actions, responsibilities and options

- Seek agreement from the relevant landowner(s) before members undertake any activity.
- Ensure members are only asked to complete tasks that they are comfortable with.
- Do not ask members to travel long distances.
- Priority should be placed on preparations for local events when restrictions are further lifted.

Note: Participating in activities 1-3 will constitute individual activities and not a club activity, and therefore will not be covered by British Orienteering's public liability insurance.

Scenario 2 – Re-Introduction of local club orienteering events & activities

This scenario involves a further reduction of restrictions allowing small numbers of people from multiple households to be in one place at once. This would allow the reintroduction of locally-organised club events. However, these events would need to put additional measures in place to ensure compliance with government guidance, and this would need to be reflected in the risk assessment.

Government guidelines, including any social distancing requirements, must be adhered to at all times before, during and after the event.

Action Plan

What activity can take place?

All activities covered in Scenario 1 (above), with the addition of locally-organised club events and training sessions.

How does this look?

Individual clubs will be best placed to identify what type(s) of local event will best meet the needs of their members. Some clubs will have postponed event series which can be rearranged. For others, this won't be possible, and they may need to arrange something from scratch.

A table covering aspects that may need to be considered and implemented at local events can be found at [appendix 1](#).

When planning which events to organise, clubs will need to consider any potential challenges in obtaining permission from landowners and other relevant bodies, as well as any impacts on other users of the area, including members of the public and local residents. These challenges will vary from one area to another.

An evening street/urban score league, of the sort that many clubs already run in winter, may be the easiest to arrange initially. However, careful consideration should be given to the choice of area and time of day, and whether these are compatible with requirements to maintain social distancing from other members of the public.

Alternatively, it may be possible to arrange low-key forest/park leagues in areas with landowners who the club has worked with previously. Landowners may require clubs to demonstrate that additional safety measures have been put in place before granting permissions.

Clubs should consider varying the times and days at which events take place. Coordination with neighbouring clubs could provide a variety of events for members and avoid clashes.

This may also provide the opportunity for clubs to engage additional members in volunteer roles that they may not have done previously. Resources are available on British Orienteering's website to support new volunteers. Clubs could also run online training for volunteers through their own platforms or via British Orienteering free of charge.

What can clubs do to prepare for this stage?

Clubs must be prepared to resume orienteering. Some preparatory activities for clubs to consider include:

- Discussing with members, through social media or by email, what type of local events they would prefer the club to organise when activity returns.
- Exploring which areas are likely to be available for a club event.
- Establishing a draft programme of local events.
- 'Armchair' planning to prepare for some events.
- Training and mentoring of new volunteers.
- Developing any new ideas for a short series of events.
- Planning for how you will promote your events to your members.

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Appendix 1

This table may appear to increase the amount of pre-event administration required. However, these actions will ensure the safety of volunteers and participants, while contributing to a smoother participant experience throughout the event.

Local events	
Additional measure	Recommendation/Implementation
<i>Pre-event</i>	
Volunteer plan	A clear volunteer event plan is in place. This is to ensure that all volunteers are comfortable and fully understand their roles and timings for the day, and that measures are taken to maintain the welfare and safety of volunteers and to ensure they can comply with any social distancing requirements.
Event promotion	With event size likely to be limited, events should only be promoted to existing club members. This can be through newsletters, social media and emails. But clubs should avoid paying for adverts on social media or publicising events to external groups.
Permissions	Access to land is obtained in accordance with the relevant government guidelines, and any local or landowner-imposed restrictions are adhered to.
Pre-entry only	All events should be pre-entry only, with no entries taken on the day. This will allow clubs to manage the number of participants effectively, and will remove the need for face-to-face interactions when entering at an event. You may wish to give priority to your own club members. For example, you may choose to reserve 70% of your entry limit for your members until two days before the event.
Limited number of entries	There may be a government limit on the number of people who can safely attend your event. Local or landowner-imposed restrictions may also apply. You must have measures in place to ensure you comply with these requirements, such as only allowing pre-entries. A staggered time for arrival may allow clubs to host more people, but this will vary depending on the nature of the event and of the area.
Entry form	Entry forms should require entrants to tick a box to acknowledge that they must not attend if they or a member of their household has COVID-19 symptoms. Clubs should offer a full refund to anyone who needs to withdraw their entry for these reasons, with the club to bear any admin charge imposed by the entry system provider.
Online payment of entry fees	Clubs should use online payment to collect entry fees, such as SI Entries, Fabian4, or bank transfer to the club account. This may require more administration before the event, but will reduce the need to collect and handle money on the day, or to visit a bank afterwards.

Allocated arrival/start times	Giving entrants allocated times both to arrive at the event and to start their run will help to spread out participants and avoid large gatherings of people.
Extended start times	The windows for start times may need to be extended and the interval between individual start times increased, to spread people out and avoid crowding at the start.
SI/Emit hire	If required, SI or Emit cards must be hired prior to the event, as part of the pre-entry process. Cards can be cleaned and individually bagged prior to issue at the event. A number of spare cards should be prepared as a back-up.
Event day	
Start layout	Starts will need to be arranged so that those queuing to start adhere to any social distancing requirements e.g. a formal start layout with large, clearly defined boxes.
SI/Emit card distribution	The card issue procedure must follow any social distancing requirements.
SI/Emit card hygiene	A system will need to be in place to store and clean hired cards after they have been returned. Cleaning all hired cards immediately on return with anti-bacterial wipes or cleaning fluid is recommended.
Layout of download area	Queues should be marked out to comply with any social distancing requirements, including a suitable distance between the event volunteers manning download and the participant.
Map distribution	Maps should be placed in map boxes that are appropriately spaced.
After event cleaning	Controls must be cleaned before and after use.
Car parking	Where car parking charges are required, these should be collected as part of the pre-entry process, to avoid handling cash at the event.
Hand sanitizer	Hand sanitizer should be available at enquiries, the start, download and the toilets, if the club is able to purchase it.
Toilets	If mobile toilets are used, the units should be spaced out and the queue structured to comply with any social distancing requirements. Handles should be disinfected frequently.
No results displayed	To reduce the possibility of participants congregating in one place, results should not be printed out or displayed on screens at the event. Clubs may be able to provide live results at the event by Wi-Fi.
Socials	Clubs should not promote or encourage pre- or post-event socialising between members.

Club training / coaching sessions	
Additional measure	Recommendation/ Implementation

- Clubs could set out control flags (but not electronic timing units) in an area for a specific period (e.g. a day) and make maps available for those who wish to use them for training.

Scenario 3 – Re-introduction of Regional/ larger-scale events

Regional events (as local events plus additional measures)	
Additional measure	Recommendation/Implementation
Event promotion	Government guidance on travel may make it necessary to limit events to those within a given traveling distance. Promotion of events through newsletters, social media and emails should be targeted accordingly.
Presentations / Prize-giving	No prize-giving or presentations should take place.

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