

## Background

This paper is written to support the outline of the Strategic Approach document.

## The Changing World in Orienteering

### Personnel

Orienteering as an activity and sport continues to innovate and evolve. We continue to create new types of event and with them the need for additional rules and guidelines. At the same time our membership and the participation spectrum is changing. In the past there have been a sufficient number of newcomers to support and sustain our activities. However the broad picture is changing. Far fewer current members are between 21 and say 55 to assume future roles and official positions whilst many members 65+ are reaching the end of their active careers both as competitors and as officials.

We do not need an in-depth analysis to confirm this state of affairs as it is reflected in the results of most competitions. E&CC, through the Event Officials work, is struggling to find sufficient Level A Officials for the planned major events for the next few years. Are Clubs and Associations taking proactive approaches to recognise and act upon the situation? There needs to be an active Volunteer Development programme in Clubs and Associations in order to ensure that there will be a succession of qualified volunteers to replace the 65+ losses over the coming years.

### Forest Terrain Usage

It is already recognised that in many Regions there are very few forest or moorland areas suitable for major events. In other Regions there is an overburden on the use of the best terrain. This is created by the demand to stage so many major events and is borne out by the E&CC Planning & Publicity and Event Scheduling functions trying to find areas that have not already been used in the recent past. To some extent our closed period criteria do make it difficult but relaxing these periods could be seen as unfair.

### The Need to Prioritise

Clubs and Associations need to give thought to what the members want, what can be supported, what needs to be developed or what might be dropped from the existing range of activities if the resources of Volunteers and terrain are not available.

### Conclusion

There is a need to study the situation that is evolving and decide from the grass roots upward what is realistic to be delivered in the future by each Club and therefore each Association. Is the balance to concentrate towards the local Level C & D events and activities or are there sufficient resources and desires to continue attempting a part or the full range of programmes at Levels A & B as well?

It is understood that many members question the need for the Association tier in our governance structure. The Board believes that successful resolution of these and other issues will need the active involvement of Associations, using their local knowledge and contacts, in order to drive and co-ordinate such programmes.