GMOA Chairman’s report for 2020/21

This GMOA year started on April 1st 2020. Covid restrictions on outdoor activities had started just two weeks earlier and continued throughout the year. So how has a Covid year affected GMOA?

My report to the 2020 AGM ended with the hope that this year would prove that POCs have a valuable role to play in the world of orienteering. The map sales have been remarkably higher than ever before, so we have to assume that orienteering on a POC (alone of course) has provided welcome outdoor exercise for a large number of people. This has consequentially meant that Dave McCann has had a lot of work printing and sending out all the waterproof maps requested. Thanks Dave for this and for other work such as the finances.

The other noticeable thing this year has been the time available to sort out the POCs and website.

John’s report tells of his 119 visits to parks for maintenance. He has met the target of virtually every control site having a QR code on it so that the POCs look well maintained and professional.

I have been round two thirds of the POCs during the year and have been impressed by how good they look. Thanks John for all this work as well as all the other things that you mention in your report.

We have also been looking at all the information on the website, checking and correcting everything from post codes to sales points, and making sure that website, BOF POC site, our maps and our leaflet agree. The only thing I have failed to check is the contact person for every park. Perhaps they were all working from home.

As usual, Phil Ellis has been making posts and plaques, Peter Ross has sorted out the MapRun courses, and our many postwatchers have continued to report on the state of the POCs. Many thanks to them all.

We have had only one committee meeting in the year, on zoom, to make some necessary decisions such as removing TrailO and two discontinued POCs from the website, including Green and Blue courses at Clowbridge, discontinuing sales points at all but a few parks and closing down map purchase by post.

I reported last year on the video project initiated by Sarah Brown. The videos were made in August using the POCs at Queens Park Bolton and Woodbank Park. Sarah B and Ian GIlliver have contacted a large number of organisations about them, with a positive response. News has even reached Canada.

Peter Ross and John have produced a teaching aid for Wythenshawe Park, with courses designed to follow up the skills introduced in the videos.

The new leaflet which gives facilities at each park is ready for distribution. We hope copies can be put in all Visitor Centres, libraries, etc, once such places are open to the public again.

Please can I ask once again for people to offer to help John by taking over the maintenance of a few POCs. It would make an enormous difference to the long term and continuing success of GMOA.

Looking forward to a more normal orienteering year to come, and hoping that those who have discovered the joy of POCs continue to make good use of them.

Sue Birkinshaw