

CEO Newsletter July 23



I trust you are enjoying the summer break, taking in some of the excellent Orienteering recently on offer around the country or enjoying a well-earned rest ahead of the autumn season ahead.

AGM 2023

I'd like to firstly update you on the details of our Annual General Meeting ("AGM") which we are delighted to be holding alongside the 14th annual London City Race at **15:00 on Saturday, 16 September 2023**. The AGM will be held in the race HQ which is Decathlon at 9 Maritime St, London SE16 7FU. If you are unable to attend in person you would be most welcomed to join via Teams.

Full details of the Resolutions and how to vote will be sent separately to members before 23 August 2023.

Following a membership review earlier this year where approximately 20% of the membership responded we have reviewed the membership structure and the outcome of this has impacted on a number of changes to the membership structure with a view of growing the number of members specifically young people and families and making the sport more sustainable.

Amongst the Resolutions this year, I would like to draw your attention specifically to the following:

Change in annual Membership Charges for NEW members

The Board recognise that as British Orienteering has a membership scheme that runs

from January through to the end of December each year that it is hard to persuade new members to become full members of British Orienteering in the latter part of the year.

The Board will have three membership periods for new members; those new members joining from January to the end of April will pay the full annual fee; those new members that joining between 1 May and the end of August will pay a two-thirds fee and those joining from 1 September will pay one-third of the annual fee.

The Board propose that new members should pay a proportionate fee in their first year (new members only) of membership of British Orienteering and thereafter a full fee on an annual basis.

We recognise that some clubs/Associations may have a different structure e.g. continue to have a single fee or as some clubs already do free first year and we will work with them to accommodate this.

Introduction of a new Membership category for families.

The Board recognise and support that the sport promotes itself as a family sport.

Following the membership review, and in line with the objectives of encouraging young families the Board are proposing that we introduce a new membership category of Family Membership.

The new category will cover families (two adults and unlimited Juniors (under 21)) at the same address.

If there is a single adult family the lowest charge will be made.

Introduction of a new membership category of “Young Adults” for those aged between 21-25:

The Board recognise that we need to retain those transitioning from Junior membership to either the workplace or studying. The Board also noted that identifying and defining those still in education is difficult and that a simple system would be required for the administering the system.

Therefore, the Board are proposing a reduced membership fee for all members between 21 and 25.

Some clubs do already offer a student membership fee and this will still be able to be accommodated.

Introduction of a separate levy fee for British Orienteering non-members – seniors only:

Resolution: To introduce a separate senior British Orienteering non-member levy of £2.50 compared to £1.65 for a senior member. A difference of £0.85.

While many participants who are not British Orienteering members will be new to the

sport, a significant proportion are regular orienteers who have, for whatever reason, chosen not to join British Orienteering. This includes people who have joined a club and/or association but not British Orienteering. It also includes the growing number of people, particularly younger adults, who are happy to 'pay and play' but who have no interest in joining any organised group, which is a common trend across many sports.

Since January 2020, as requested by clubs, British Orienteering has provided liability insurance for all participants at registered events, regardless of whether or not they are British Orienteering members. This means that organisers can assure landowners that all participants have appropriate liability cover in place, while removing the previous need for clubs to track how many events each individual non-member has attended.

British Orienteering's insurer considers non-member participants to be a higher risk than members and so charges an additional fee for this cover, based on the number of declared non-member participants each year. That additional fee is currently around £11,000 per year, or 54p per non-member participant when averaged across seniors and juniors. This cost is likely to increase in future, reflecting both inflation and the increasing proportion of event participants who are not British Orienteering members.

Because they do not pay the British Orienteering membership fee and currently pay the same levy, participants who are not members of British Orienteering make a smaller direct financial contribution towards the central cost of administering the sport than those who are members. British Orienteering members are therefore, in effect, subsidising the additional expense of providing liability insurance to non-members, to a total cost in excess of £40,000 over the past four years.

The Board are bringing forward this Resolution following a consultation with clubs earlier in 2023, which was sent to all club and association chairs, secretaries and treasurers in March of this year.

The responses were in favour of adult non-members paying more by 68% to 32% and overall support for non-member participants to make a greater financial contribution. An increased levy was a more popular option for doing this than a 'day membership' due to the challenges of administering this for clubs.

Only 8% were in favour of a junior levy increase.

We are proposing to set the levy for adult non-member participants 85p higher than the levy for adult member participants. We expect this to raise approximately £10,000 of additional income per year, which is less than the total additional cost of liability insurance for non-member participants.

We are not proposing any difference in the levy between member and non-member junior participants, as the consultation with clubs showed little support for this.

The Board recognises the desire from clubs to keep entry fees as low as possible, particularly at Level D events. Clubs are best placed to identify the best pricing strategy for their own unique circumstances, and we therefore believe that it is important that clubs continue to have discretion as to how they price events. Clubs may choose to pass on the additional non-member levy directly to non-member participants as part of the entry fee, or to structure their entry fees so as to use income from one particular event or group of participants to subsidise another.

event or group of participants to subsidise another.

Many clubs, although by no means all, already charge a higher entry fee for non-member participants at all levels of event. Despite this, orienteering, particularly at Level D events, remains an extremely cheap activity compared to other sports. Should clubs choose to pass on the additional levy directly by increasing the entry fee for non-members by 85p or £1, there is very little evidence that these participants are so price sensitive as for this to have a material impact on levels of participation.

British Orienteering has been consistently asked by clubs to keep the levy system simple. Clubs are already required to state the number of member and non-member participants when completing levy returns, so there should not be any significant increase in volunteer workload as a result of this Resolution.

Alternative levy models have been considered but each has their drawback. A system with tiered levies based on event levels would create a perverse incentive for clubs to artificially downgrade events; a levy system based on a percentage of the entry fee would unfairly disadvantage those clubs who have no choice but to pay large access fees to landowners and to charge higher entry fees as a result.

On balance, the Board recommends the introduction of a higher levy for senior participants who are not members of British Orienteering as the best way of ensuring that these orienteers make a fair contribution to the costs of running the sport.

This will not increase the administration for competitions, but it will impact on invoicing for the levy.

Benefit to clubs and members: Currently over £11k for non-members is subsidised from membership fees and levy. By introducing a non-member levy this will ensure that more money goes towards the growth of the sport.

Recommendation: Therefore, the Board are recommending an introduction of a British Orienteering non-member levy fee for all levels of competitions for senior athletes or

Proposed Membership Fees for 2024

The last time membership fees were increased was in 2020.

Since 2020 the rate of inflation has increased by 17.8% and British Orienteering has seen a small drop in membership and participation over many years.

British Orienteering's income has either been static since 2016 or we have experienced a sharp drop as we did during the COVID pandemic.

The Board have set a deficit budget over the next two years which will deplete our reserves and it is not sustainable in the long term.

The Board recognise the barriers to joining British Orienteering directly and has therefore made the strategic decision to recommend only increase the cost of Levies and club membership. The levies will increase by 10% for members.

From 1st January 2024 until amended, fees will be as follows in the table below.

Even after the increase, British Orienteering membership cost is one of the lowest in sector although the Board recognise that we all live in a challenging financial environment.

4

Just in case you missed it – there was a statement made by the WOC Steering Group Friday 4 August which was published on the British Orienteering website (members section).

WOC 24

We hope you are enjoying a great summer of orienteering and are looking forward to upcoming Sprint World Orienteering Championships in Edinburgh, scheduled for 12-14 July 2024. With just under a year to go until the event takes place, we wanted to provide an update on the planning for the event and seek your support in making it a resounding success.

Event Director Update

From a staffing perspective Paul McGreal, Event Director for the Championships has

From a stunning perspective, Paul McCread, Event Director for the Championships has taken the decision to step down from his role. We would like to extend our thanks and appreciation for Paul's valuable contribution to the planning process so far. Our dedicated Steering Group is actively exploring recruitment options to ensure continuity of event planning.

Seeking Community Support

Now, more than ever, we need the collective strength of our orienteering community make this event a success. We are seeking enthusiastic volunteers to contribute their skills and passion in roles across various functions. Your valuable experience in orienteering will be instrumental in making this event memorable. If you are interested in volunteering at the Championships, please contact: Nikki Howard, Nikki@scottish-orienteering.org or call 07917 718 679

Financial Considerations

With regards to event delivery planning and progress, everyone will be aware of the ongoing challenging economic context, and the pressures being felt by many across range of sectors, organisations and businesses within Scotland. The events sector is not immune to these challenges, and we too are facing some financial pressures due to rising costs and supply chain challenges. In light of this, we are actively exploring additional sources of income. Our priority remains organising an affordable and high quality Championships.

Finally, we want to assure you that our entire team of partners is fully committed to bringing the Championships to fruition. Your passion for orienteering and your involvement are integral to our shared goal of creating an unforgettable experience for athletes and spectators. Thank you for your understanding, support, and commitment to the sport. We believe that together, we can overcome any challenges and make the Sprint World Orienteering Championships 2024 an outstanding celebration of our sport.

At the last Board meeting on 8 August the Board agreed a support package to the organisers of the event subject to further discussions. If you feel that you can help in anyway please do not hesitate to contact me or Nikki Howard at the address above.

Finally, if you have any questions or points on the contents of this note, please do not hesitate to contact me on peter.hart@britishorienteering.org.uk

Kind Regards

Peter

Made with Microsoft Sway

Create and share interactive reports,
presentations, personal stories and more.

Get started

