

MAR Orienteering Club

Volunteer Development Strategy

To those familiar with the sport, it's a statement of the obvious, but orienteering events only happen because people who at other times participate, take the time to plan, organise etc. as well. Without that input, the event calendar simply wouldn't be so busy. There is no simple divide between participants and volunteers; most regular orienteers do both, to a greater or lesser extent.

However, there are also a number of people on the margin of the regular local events, who could be drawn in – and would probably enjoy that. Parents of children starting orienteering, children, partners/spouses of regular orienteers, former regular orienteers who don't want to participate so often, top athletes saving themselves for the important competitions, anyone not quite at their peak of physical performance, whether as a permanent or temporary state...

Many of the tasks required to make an event happen are pretty mundane, requiring little skill beyond primary-school standards of competence with pen or stapler. People doing these tasks might like to understand the purpose of what they're doing in the whole running of the event, but they don't actually need to – so total newcomers can help hugely right from the start.

As well as at events, coaching sessions often require many additional hands, particularly those aimed at children. Names have to be collected & ticked off, coats picked up, etc. etc..

All events result in many controls needing to be collected in from the forest. The more people available for this, the faster the task is complete. It can provide an excellent training session on either the technical or the physical side, for all levels of competence. People who've had difficulty in their competition run can go and get to the bottom of their mistake by collecting in controls that gave them difficulty.

WHO are our volunteers?

- Existing club members, active orienteers
- Existing or former club members, no longer active orienteers
- Parents of child members, currently not involved in club activities
- Spouses of adult members, currently not involved in club activities

We believe that everyone should be encouraged to help in any way possible from their first contact with the club. In particular, parents of children starting orienteering must be encouraged to stay and help with simple tasks associated with running coaching sessions, rather than simply leaving them at a session and collecting them later. Beginners to orienteering can contribute a huge amount to the general running of events, even before they know much about the sport. We have no qualms about asking you to help, but of course if you'd like to volunteer for a specific role, your committee would be delighted to hear from you.

Possible strands of involvement

	Pre-requisites	Training available?	Age limitations?	Ideally suited to:
General helpers	NONE!	On-the-job guidance always offered	NONE!	Absolutely anyone!
Publicity person/people	NONE!	Some guidance available	NONE!	Anyone who enjoys stringing words together
Coaching	No orienteering skill required at outset; participation required before assessment. Disclosure.	YES	Must be over 16	Parents of child beginners; existing orienteers of all standards.
Planning	Some knowledge required through participation and training.	Mentors; courses available; document on BOF website.	No.	Orienteers with some experience.
Controlling	Usually undertaken after gaining experience as planner	YES	Usually over 18	Orienteers with some experience.
Event Organising	Some knowledge required through participation.	Mentors; organiser's manual online.	Must be over 18	Orienteers with some experience.
Committee membership & participation	None. Specialist skills helpful for some roles eg. treasurer.	Could be. Rest of committee act as mentors.	No. Junior member always required.	Anyone
Club junior squad helpers	Disclosure recommended.	On-the-job guidance available if required.	No.	Parents of junior squad members.
Scotjos helpers	Disclosure recommended.	Mentors. Minibus driving courses available.	Probably over 18.	Parents of Scotjos members.

MAROC generally operates on the principle that the club will pay for you to attend training courses that will enable you to serve the club.

What are the benefits to you, the volunteer?

- Enjoy increased social contact with other club members
- Parents understand their child(ren)'s sporting activity, and can help them develop in it
- Satisfaction of contributing to the running of events
- Planning and controlling invariably improves your mapreading skills
- Enhanced satisfaction with life by giving something back
- Youngsters in particular benefit from having positions on responsibility on their CV
- Proven expertise at a technical skill (eg. book-keeping) can enhance employment prospects
- Youngsters can count club volunteering towards "Service" element for D of E Award.

But most of all, you simply know that YOUR participation in the sport is balanced by your contribution to the running of it.

Approved by MAROC Club Committee
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