Information for Event Organisers 2026

Summary Checklist

For new organisers – Don't hesitate to get in touch with me (Mary) or the controller of your event with any questions which come up.

Look on the British Orienteering website if you need to check the level, date and venue of the event.

Contact the planner and identify location of start and finish. This is all you need to know about the courses themselves – the planner and controller will take responsibility for these.

Visit area to assess car parking and where download will be.

Send information to Peter Firth for the flyer (preferably 2 months before the event).

Contact the teams – start, finish/download and first aid (when you know the location of start and finish).

Send event form to SIentries

Make arrangements to pick up signage etc. from Paul Boyles

Assess risks and fill in risk assessment form.

Liaise with the planner regarding printing of maps and loose control descriptions.

This information is also available on our website under Documents.

Initial actions

Remember: more experienced club members are always happy to answer questions. Ask Gwenda Cavill (Volunteer Co-ordinator Gwenda352@gmail.com) for contact details of team leaders and other key members. People who have organised a previous event on the area may have valuable information.

1. Begin by making contact with the planner. When they have decided where the start will be you can think about car parking and facilities.
2. Check with Paul Boyles that he has permissions from the landowners and whether you need to contact any of them prior to the event.
3. A site visit is useful when making decisions and to flag up any issues re access or safety.
4. You will need to know if the planner is using SI boxes or punches. If it is punches you won't need to plan for download in the same way. The planner will sort out this equipment for themselves.

5. As soon as you have initial details of the event send these to Peter Firth. It is worth asking Peter if he has flyers from previous events at this area as these will have information you can make use of. Ideally, he would like basic information for your event 2 months beforehand so these can be added to the website flyer.

Facilities

Somewhere undercover for registration and download is preferable but not essential. If there is nowhere suitable, or for smaller events without SI download will be from a car. The club has a generator so it is not essential for mains electricity to be available at download.

If using nearby facilities for free (e.g. scout hut, working man's club, sports facilities) we will be using their electricity and someone will need to open up so it helps to offer something in return.

Larger events in more remote areas may need tents for registration and download. Paul has these.

Toilets

You will need to let people know where the nearest available toilets are. In Newcastle 'Use Our Loos' on *<https://www.getintonewcastle.co.uk/city-info/use-our-loos>* is a useful resource. Don't advertise toilets in places such as nearby leisure centres, unless permission has been granted to do so.

In a rural area the club chemical toilet and tent can be used. (Ask who has the toilet stored in their garage. Toilet paper, hand sanitiser, chemicals should be along with it.) You need to plan for emptying the toilet after the event. You could do this at home or if there is a suitable location at the event you could dig a hole for disposal. Alternatively you may be able to persuade a nearby caravan site to let you use their chemical toilet disposal point.

For larger (usually National or Major), more rural events it is likely that you will need to hire commercial chemical toilets. The club generally uses Nixon Hire (details available online). See Notes on Insurance below concerning leaving toilets out overnight. Organisers generally use long gripples (ask Paul for these) to lock them shut and to secure them (e.g. to trees).

Car parking and Road Crossings

If using a public car park it is worth finding out how much it costs and how busy it is likely to be on the day of the event. If you are using off road parking you should also think of an alternative in case of wet conditions. For rural locations you may also need to discuss parking with the landowner. (Paul Boyles will have contact details.)

If parking is limited or otherwise not straightforward you will probably need to find volunteers to marshal car parking, particularly for the start of the event, when most people will arrive. You can ask Peter Firth to send an email to all club members.

If there are road crossings (apart from small estate roads) between the carpark and the Start or on any courses run by Juniors you will need to organise marshals to oversee under-16s. (You will need more than one so the volunteers have a chance to get a run.)

Flyer/Publicity

Information on the following should be sent to Peter, preferably two months ahead of the event. Peter sometimes has flyers from events held previously at the same area which are useful to see. You will need to ask the planner for some of this information.

- Event level - see British Orienteering site if unsure
- Location - postcode and grid reference
- Travel - explain how to approach parking site and where it will be signed from
- Fees and Times - these are fairly standard across events
- Punching - SI or punch cards
- Courses - names but no need for lengths. These can be confirmed later.
- Map – scale
- Terrain- e.g. country park, open moorland, urban
- Risks - briefly mention any risks specific to the area
- Names of officials – Organiser (with contact details for enquiries), Planner and Controller.

Start/Finish Teams

Contact Paul Boyles (finish and download). He will need to know details about where download will be held. A finish team is not usually necessary except where there is a remote forest or moorland finish.

Contact Joanne Field (start team). The start team will need a map showing the route from registration to the start.

SIentries

A few weeks before the event Mary will send the Event Form for you to fill in for SIentries. Further information about SIentries will be sent at this point.

Risks

[a covid risk assessment is included in the template]

Ask Katherine Brown for a risk assessment template to fill in. You will need to bring copies of the risk assessment to the event, one to be signed by the controller, another to leave at registration. Current regulations ask for a copy of the risk assessment and the route to the nearest medical facilities (minor and major injuries) to be displayed at registration.

Think about likely risks;

- to participants - e.g. tick bites, road crossings, exposed conditions
- to the public - e.g. collision, frightened horses
- to the officials - e.g. traffic, overhead powerlines (tents, feather banners)

Discuss risks with the planner as you will not know what terrain the courses cover. If necessary you can alert participants to specific risks by including them in the flyer (see above), putting a notice at registration and/or by asking the start team to mention them.

If the event is taking place in an exposed moorland area (eg Ray Demesne, Beanley, Simonside) contact Mountain Rescue to let them know it is taking place (Northumberland National Park Mountain Rescue).

Lost Runner Plan

If an event is taking place in a 'serious' area e.g. Ray Demesne, Slaley, Thrunton, Kielder, Beanley, Simonside the organiser and planner should discuss a lost runner plan. You should make sure a number of physically fit club members are staying to the end of the event (e.g. to collect controls). This could also involve asking forestry commission for use of keys to locked gates or taking note of road access to other parts of the area.

In the event of an emergency, the emergency services should be informed at once.

Signage

Think about access to the event. Where will you put signs? Will you need the "Caution Runners" signs? Will you need to sign/tape the route to the Start?

Signs, the stakes to tie them to, tape etc. are held by Paul between events.

First Aid

Make sure that there is a qualified first aider at the event and that they agree to provide event first aid cover. At present this is Katherine Brown, who also has the First Aid box.

Map Printing

You will need to tell the planner the map numbers because you will have numbers of entries through SIentries. .
Map printing is usually the planner's responsibility but sometimes the organiser takes this on. The important thing is that someone does it!

The planner should send the pdf maps to maps@bmlprint.co.uk (Tel: +44 (0)1794 518518 Mob: +44 (0)7766 478209) on the Thursday 10 days before the event. It's useful for BML to cast their eyes over the maps and to let them know what the work involves.

On the Monday morning prior to the event **you will need to tell the planner the entry numbers so that they (or possibly you) can send these to BML** along with the map files. BML will invoice Joanne separately.

The planner (or you) should order a couple of extra maps for each course and a few All Controls maps to use when collecting controls. It is also important to order separate **loose control descriptions.**

The planner (or you) should have the maps sent to an address where they can be delivered to someone in person. They usually arrive on Wednesday or Thursday.

Control Collecting
This is the responsibility of the Planner to arrange. Controls are not to be collected in until there has been a competitor check via Download.

Communications

It is important that there should be good communications between the Organiser, Planner, Controller, Start, Finish, Download and First Aiders). Consider setting up a WhatsApp group for the event to assist with this.

Post-Event

All being well the event will run smoothly on the day and you will have a chance to participate!

After the event, email the start team, registration, download and marshals to thank them.

Please arrange for equipment to be returned to Paul Boyles.

The signed risk assessment should go to Katherine.

Should the need arise you will be responsible for sending an accident report to British Orienteering. The form can be downloaded from the club website.

For a Regional level event and above the organiser and/or the planner may wish to provide notes on what went well and any feedback they have received for the results page on the web site.

Notes on Insurance (see separate document on this website for full details)

Toilets

You will need to contact the club's insurers (see below) ahead of time to inform them that toilets are being left overnight. Portable toilets are covered overnight but must not be left unsecured in "exposed" places such as open land, lay-by or public forest track. Preferably use a farmer's field or a concealed location. These units are more attractive than you might think. In the event of security being marginal the units must be locked and secured.

SI Boxes

Controls can now be covered if put out overnight, subject to (i) prior advice to Richard Weston Limited (ii) placed in remote locations only, i.e. off paths or public spaces and (iii) only put out the day before the relevant event.

Unexplained loss is not covered so you must ensure that all incidents involving theft are immediately reported to the Police, however bizarre that may seem to them!

Contact details for questions: Heather Copestick (Richard Weston Ltd) preferably by email info@richardweston.co.uk or tel. 020 8543 6166

Quote British Orienteering clubs all risks – Newcastle & Tyneside Orienteers