



Interlopers' Club Development Work - Year 1

Club development is vital to ensure orienteering continues as a thriving sport for all. All clubs need a steady supply of both new participants and new volunteers as longer-standing members step back or move away.

Four-year Club strategic plan context:

- **Year 1 – establishment, experimentation and evaluation (create foundations and develop tools and approaches; generate interest, engagement, experience)**
- Year 2 – harnessing learning, adaptation and innovation for further learning (create sustainable momentum for on-going development)
- Year 3 – consolidation and scaling up, further evaluation
- Year 4 - establishing and mainstreaming activities as sustainable club delivery

What we set out to achieve with the Year 1 project:

- improved wider awareness in Edinburgh of orienteering as a rewarding and inclusive sport
- growth in participation in orienteering events by both active adults and families.

Many thanks to our funders:



www.interlopers.org.uk



What Did We Do?

The project was scoped in three phases:

1. June-July: in the lead-up to the Sprint World Orienteering Champs (WOC) held in Edinburgh in July 2024
2. August-December: in the aftermath of WOC, given activation work planned by SOA and BOF
3. January-March 2025: building on work, consolidating learning and scoping future development activity.

Key Project Activities:

- Improved marketing and local publicity to promote orienteering as a sport and participation opportunities within Edinburgh. Proactive use of social media, local posters and print media
- Re-invigorating our Permanent Orienteering Courses as useful resources for tasters and accessible follow-up activities for interested newcomers
- Outreach to the running community (already-active adults / families).
- Orienteering Tasters for a range of audiences (families, youth groups, active adults)
- Ensuring a good range of introductory O courses at events - e.g., including White and Red courses. Better branding and materials for engaging and supporting newcomers: e.g., pop-up banners, A boards with informative posters, what-next flyers etc
- Wider club engagement around development. Regular updates and web articles as well as encouraging involvement to support outreach activities



Project Activities...



1. Marketing and publicity

New club development resources created:

- pop up banners
- an image gallery
- adaptable social media materials and content
- club website content
- reinvigorated Permanent Courses (Craigmillar Castle Park and Braidburn Valley Park) and sets of introductory course maps

Local media publicity (e.g., free local magazines)

- Articles in the 'South Edinburgh Directory'
- Promoting POCs and events in 'Families Edinburgh'
- Posters on local noticeboards (POCs and events)
- What's On listings for club events



What helped??

Designated CDO capacity, and capability - particularly core skills such as:

- *Project and budget management;*
- *Technical orienteering skills: session planning; coaching; Condes*
- *Communications & marketing: Canva, social media*
- *Stakeholder engagement; Partnership development with other local clubs*

www.interlopers.org.uk



Project Activities...



2. Newcomer-friendly events:

- wider range of introductory courses
- friendly welcome and support
- quality what-next materials for follow-up





Project Activities...



3. (Free) Tasters at Community events using micro-O activities and permanent course maps for short introductory courses:

- Braidburn Valley's 'Tea in the Park'
- Craigmillar Castle Park, Family Festivals (summer, autumn, spring)





Project Activities...



4. (Free) Taster sessions for young people's groups
- Gorebridge Cub Scouts (Vogrie Country Park)
 - Greenbank Beavers (Hermitage)
 - Community Sports Hub / Community Policing 'Friday Fusion' initiative (Inch Park)





Project Activities...



5. Parkrun Volunteer Takeovers and (free) Taster sessions: Holyrood, Vogrie and Oriam





What Outcomes?

- ❏ New interest stimulated especially with adult runners
- ❏ Increased social media engagement (views, followers, likes)
- ❏ Increased participant numbers at events - both newcomers and members of local clubs
- ❏ Local partner organisation interest to support wider awareness-raising of and interest in orienteering:
 - South East Community Sports Hub (Council),
 - Community Policing (Friday Fusion)
 - Edinburgh & Lothians Greenspace Trust
 - Youth / Community groups (Greenbank / Gorebridge Cubs, Omaz's Den)
 - Bridgend Farmhouse
 - Parkruns (Holyrood, Oriam, Vogrie)
 - Historic Environment Scotland
 - Friends of Braidburn Valley Park
 - Edinburgh South Community Sports Club





What Impacts?



- Now have some of the necessary tools in place to support on-going work; the project developed new capability - e.g., in terms of club marketing resources that can now be easily adapted for future events.
- Improved external visibility of our club and our events
- Membership increase is a slow burn - one 'newcomer' but otherwise existing orienteers (younger adults moving to Edinburgh and looking for a club to join)
- Good turn-outs for events since June 2024: investing in publicity and outreach pays off
- The project so far has generated lots of learning - e.g., about engaging with members of the public to interest them in orienteering at community events
- Plenty of potential for growth now, given wider interest e.g., in Edinburgh-based organisations in the public and voluntary sectors.

BUT it is still very early days, and further on-going work is needed to build up the foundations for sustainable success - e.g., around

- developing the club website as a more engaging 'shop front' for newcomers
- developing club capacity and engage more club members as volunteers for outreach and support for newcomers.
- developing collaborative partnership working around outreach on a proactive basis with other local orienteering clubs, to make the most of resources and avoid competing efforts.



What Next??



Ideas for External-facing development:

- Develop the website as an appealing ‘shop front’ with engaging content specifically geared for newcomers.
- Continue to offer community tasters, linked to external events / festivals etc, at our Permanent Orienteering Course venues (Braidburn Valley Park and Craigmillar Castle Park).
- Undertake further Parkrun Volunteer Takeover and taster sessions, in the run-up to local club events in Edinburgh.
- Continue to build our social media presence with engaging content.

Ideas for internal-facing development:

- Develop a more robust club ‘offer’ through which to bring together club members regularly and encourage them to get involved - e.g., regular fun orienteering activities and socials.
- Put on structured family / adult coaching sessions to support progression.
- Invest in volunteer development - e.g., skills to improve succession planning for event officials etc.
- Build wider interest amongst club members in supporting outreach and development work.

We would like to express our appreciation to Scottish Orienteering, and to the Orienteering Foundation for all that it does in promoting and supporting orienteering. Thank you for enabling our outreach work and supporting our club development activities through grant funding in 2024-25.