

# Derwent Valley Orienteers – Three Year Strategy



DERWENT VALLEY ORIENTEERING CLUB  
3 YEAR STRATEGY

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**Building a vibrant, sustainable club for everyone, and  
having some fun too!**

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## What are we trying to achieve and why do we need a strategy?

### *Where are we now?*

In 2023, backed by DVO membership and part-funded by the Orienteering Foundation, we invested in the appointment of our first Club Development Officer. The investment reflects the club's recognition that to be sustainable into the future we need to develop.

### *Why have a strategy?*

We will build on the important work already done and take it further. A strategy should help us think about and define clearly what we want to do (and what we're not going to do) and how we're going to achieve and monitor our aims and how we'll monitor how success.

The strategy is also a communication document. As we design, refine and implement it we need the buy-in of our members to take the process forward. We will need your help and we welcome your engagement, questions and suggestions.

### *Where are we trying to get to?*

We want Derwent Valley Orienteers to be sustainable into the future and show that we are a club for everyone: vibrant, inclusive, sustainable, fun.

### *What will this look like?*

Key elements of a sustainable club for everyone would include:

- greater participation, getting more people orienteering and supporting/enabling people to orienteer for longer;
- better representation of our local communities;
- and giving people the opportunity to develop (as orienteers, volunteers, coaches, event officials).

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## So what are our aims?

Where do we see the club in three years' time, and what are we going to focus on?



The sections below outline what we aim to achieve, how we mean to build on work already started and how we'll approach further development for the club in these areas.

Each section will be underpinned by a more detailed plan setting out specific actions and timeframes to fulfil the aims, as well as how we'll check back on progress and success.

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## Membership development

We're aiming to attract and retain a membership that's proud to be part of the club and where members feel they belong. We want members to be excited to be involved in orienteering and to be telling others about our sport.

Building on the work already started, we will offer development opportunities to new and existing members at all current skills levels, either from the club, the region or in conjunction with other clubs.

We'll find out what the membership wants from the club (what it likes/dislikes) and work to provide it.

Our plan will set out, amongst other things:

- how we'll programme DVO events to encourage progression along a clear, managed path
- an outline, regular, coaching programme for children, families, adult beginners and improvers
- training offered to burgeoning coaches, planners, organisers and controllers, with technical and practical support from an experienced official and a clear path through the levels of competition
- recognising and encouraging team leaders and volunteers throughout the club
- how we'll build social activities around events and hold more open meetings
- how we'll work with other clubs to share ideas, encouraging further collaboration.

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## Inclusivity

We recognise that physical impairment/reduced mobility can be a barrier to continuing involvement in the sport; and that the busyness of an orienteering event can also be a barrier to those who are neuro-divergent or who have mental health conditions. Work has started with BOF and another EM club to better understand and address challenges. We're trailblazers for the neuro-diversity work and we can help to progress accessible courses.

We see inclusivity as a key part of working for DVO's sustainability into the future. Actions we take for disadvantaged groups can send out a signal that we welcome everyone.

Our plan will set out specific targets for:

- supporting people with autism and other neurodiverse conditions to fully participate in and enjoy our events
- putting on an accessible urban course
- developing a low physical difficulty course for very senior orienteers
- collaborating with other clubs and being a leader in innovation for people who need support.

## Social value

Orienteering isn't just about having the biggest, best and fastest club in the UK. It's also about supporting the local community, whether that's at schools or with minority groups.

We'll continue to run some events with minority groups and excluded people, in collaboration with community leaders, enabling those leaders or jointly organising.

Our plan will set out how many of these events we'll put on and the locations in which we will hold them.

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## Welcoming new members

We aim to support all new members, irrespective of age, ability and experience by offering a full range of courses and activities with coaching for experienced adults and step-by-step learning for inexperienced would-be orienteers and children. DVO has robust safeguarding policies and systems for implementation.

Our plan will include:

- specific plans for a programme of events targeted at recruiting new members
- specific steps aimed at recruiting and developing juniors
- review of our website, publicity materials and communications (social media).

## High quality events

We are widely recognised as a club that puts on well planned, organised and controlled events on quality maps. It's important we keep up this reputation. Given limited (volunteer) resources, we'll prioritise quality over quantity of events.

Our plan will set out, among other things:

- a budget for investment in mapping and updating
- a budget for any further requirements to maintain or improve the quality of our events
- a framework for budgeting for level C and above events and setting appropriate entry fees
- how we'll develop a consistent template for our early publicity and final details
- identifying new areas to orienteer and developing and maintaining good relationships with landowners
- how we'll recognise volunteers and officials
- how we'll build in a social element to our events.

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## What happens next?

### *Feedback*

We'd love to hear your views! Please let us know what you think.

### *Detailed plans*

The next step will be to work up, from these initial outline ideas, firmer plans with specific targets.

### *Members' involvement*

We'll also ask small teams of members to look at specific challenges and issues, and report back to committee with recommendations. These areas will be set out in the plan.

### *Governance*

All this work will be backed up by a review of the club's governance (our organisation and decision-making structures), how we communicate with members, our publicity materials, website, database and budgeting. We'll look at areas where updating may be needed and report back to the club.

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