

SOUTH WEST ORIENTEERING ASSOCIATION

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MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING Tuesday 3rd March 2026

PRESENT:

Christine Vince KERNO (chairman); Helen Kelsey BOK (secretary); Steve Robertson QO (treasurer); Rob Mills WIM (fixtures); Arthur Vince KERNO (cttee); Julie Astin WSX (cttee); Kevin Pickering WIM (cttee); Ian Jones NGOC; Roger Hargreaves KERNO; Richard Hudson BOK.

1. Apologies. Neil Fraser (cttee); Rich Jackson (cttee); Liz Yeadon SARUM
2. Chairman's update. – nothing to report at this stage
3. Approval of minutes of meeting held on 6th January 2026.
4. Matters arising not elsewhere on the agenda. - none
5. Treasurer and Membership Secretary's report. –(see *appendix 1*) Steve Robertson reported present situation as predicted, currently have over £11,000 in the bank, with very little activity since last meeting apart from levies coming in. Grants are recorded per calendar year rather than financial year and in 2025 we had 12 juniors chosen for tours, 11 of whom applied for grants and 8 juniors were chosen to represent the country, 6 of whom applied for grants, in total we issued about £3,900 in grants. This amount is actually less than we have received so far in this financial year in levies, so we continue in a healthy situation. Our usual allocation of grant funding is 50% of the total costs.
6. Fixtures secretary's report
 - General update: a new fixtures bulletin was issued a few weeks ago, all the information is in there. Important points are that there is an event scheduling group meeting on 10th March and as we work 18 months in advance, any events that would like National status in second half of 2027, need to be put to that meeting. Currently the only one is day 1 of Caddihoe requested by DEVON. Southern Champs in 2027, QO have requested a change of date from 24th January to weekend of 10/11th of April, hoping to make a weekend of it by adding an urban event on the Saturday. (24th January is being kept in reserve in case of any issues with new dates) Steve Robertson is currently working with DEVON on permissions and logistics for the car parking for weekend of 10/11th April. CSC qualifier – only offer has been from WSX at Agglestone for 2027 so that will go ahead..
 - Most urgent needs now are an event for the Yvette Baker Final in 2027 and the British Schools orienteering and score championships for 2027.
 - Proposal to add a Very Short Green course to the SWOL. Arthur pointed out that a Short Green is supposed to be .33 of a black course, whilst Very Short Green is 0.28, so there is actually very little difference in length, and as many events require a long walk to start (and sometimes back from the finish) that difference becomes even less as a proportion of the distance covered. There are very few people who opt for Very Short Green when it is offered – intended usually for W75+ and M85+ so not enough to make the course competitive. Christine thought that many older people are happy to do a yellow or an orange if the Short Green appeared to be too long. Roger reiterated these points and said that we may be a little premature in thinking

about offering this at SWOL events and maybe in 5 years there will be more SW members for whom it would be appropriate at the moment it is probably just adding extra work for the planners, for very little uptake. Helen commented that after the club reps report to clubs she had had two comments both saying that they would support introduction of Very Short Green, both saying they didn't need it yet but would like to know that it would be available for when they do. Kevin pointed out the extra work for planners as often the short but technical courses are the most difficult to get right. He also suggested that we look at the statistics from the army events where there seems to be quite a good uptake for Very Short Green and agreed to get some stats together for the next meeting. It was suggested that all clubs should canvass the opinions of those in the relevant age classes i.e. W75+ and M85+ **Action: HK to add to report to clubs.**

- Richard Hudson (BOK) reported progress with the British Sprint Championships in June: entries have not yet opened and event not yet publicised because we are no longer able to use Bath Spa Uni due to building works. So now proposing a Plan B, which will be relays on Saturday afternoon at Uni of Bristol halls of residence and the Sunday individual sprint at UWE. This has been agreed verbally by UWE, now just waiting to have that in writing.
- JK 2028. Christine had a second meeting with BOF that afternoon. Current situation is that the management of Forestry England is keen that we use the Forest of Dean for this event. However BOF needs to talk to the local foresters and is planning to discuss with the SW FE contact – we are all aware that the people on the ground are really struggling and are not keeping up with the paperwork concerning event permissions. Mike Forrest has provided a list of suitable areas in the Forest of Dean with parking requirements and possible solutions along with possible event centre venues. Also a list of South Wales venues as a fallback if FE will not agree to use of their areas. Major roles cannot be allocated until a venue and date have been agreed.
- Volunteer exhaustion. There has been some discussion about the concern that it is getting increasingly difficult to attract volunteers, and this has also been raised in connection with the staffing of JK2028. Helen commented that at the recent British Championships, when entering there was a box to tick if willing to help, consequently there were volunteers from all over the country supporting SBOC with the running of the event. Similarly for the relays, a request went out to all those who had entered for help on the day and again SWOC were supported by volunteers from many different clubs, which indicates that a lot of people are willing to help, even when it's not their own club, however these are just minor roles, helping for an hour or two, not the major officials. Major roles are often more difficult to fill and there is a need to train up more people to do these so that it's not always the same people being called upon every time and there have been no courses asked for in SWOA for some time. It may be that some people would help but feel they need to be asked. Christine suggested that we ask all clubs what their experience was and whether they had particular strategies that have helped to recruit more volunteers. Julie said that she has run a 2 hour Zoom course, several times about organising an event and Gavin has run a similar course on planning and WSX are beginning to get more people who are willing to take on the major roles particularly in the smaller low key events, with mentoring from those who have more experience.

On subject of volunteer exhaustion Arthur noted that after one more year he will be giving up his role of maintaining the SWOL trophies and is looking for somebody else to take over this role, this is an annual job involving collecting in the trophies getting them engraved and then agreeing with organiser of a the first SWOL event of the following seson, to have them presented. **Action HK to ask clubs to report how they attract new volunteers, and also to ask for a volunteer to take over the SWOL trophies from Arthur next year.**

7. SWJOS report.

SWJOS have continued training every month with a 3-day residential in the south-east a couple of weeks ago that included a day's training with SCJOS and SEJOS. We have 6 people selected for the Interland team, bizarrely making up 5/6ths of the travelling reserves

8. Recorder of Controllers' report

Andy Stott of NGOC has applied for a grade C licence. He has met the requirements of BOF and the committee approved his application.

BOF Office has emailed all controllers, together with club & regional association chairs, secretaries & fixtures secretaries. The information in the message can be summarised as follows:

2.1 As from 2nd March club officials can search the BOF website using an event postcode to find a list of controllers who live in reasonable proximity to it. Controllers have been asked [deadline was 27th February] to check & update their details. The default setting is Inactive which must be changed to Active if that is the case by logging in to their BOF website and using *My Account/Controller profile*.

Arthur will update the list on the SWOA website to show only active controllers.

He also reiterated that those wanting to apply for a Grade C licence or upgrade to Grade B should apply directly to me for a form, *after* having made sure that they satisfy the conditions set out in Appendix B of the BOF Rules.

This avoids wasting time with unnecessary emails.

Steve Robertson put forward Nicholas Maxwell as controller for the Southern Champs in 2027 as Chris Kelsey is moving away and will no longer be able to do it. This was agreed.

9. AOB

- Christine had been talking to Graham Pring of KERNO who had identified children who are home schooled as a group for whom orienteering is likely to be an attractive option as it doesn't have to compete with all the possible school activities that might run over the weekend and also provides a good social experience for them. Often one home schooled family may know of others and bring them along to try out the sport. It would be interesting to know of other clubs with home schooled children attending regularly.
- Helen is planning to move away from the South West area in the next few months, so a replacement secretary for the SWOA committee will need to be found.

10. Club reps report to clubs

- Please canvas the opinion of W75+ and M85+ orienteers in your club about whether they would be keen to see a Very Short Green course in the SWOL
- We are looking for an event for the Compass Sport Cup qualifier in 2028
- “Volunteer exhaustion” – what methods are working for your club to encourage more people to take on the major roles at events?
- Home schooled children – do you have home schooled children attending events regularly? If not, can you identify contacts to advertise orienteering to home schooled families?
- SWOA is looking for someone to take on the role of maintaining the SWOL trophies from next year. It is not an onerous task, it involves collecting them in at the end of the season, getting them engraved and arranging a venue for them to be presented.

11. Date of next meeting: Tuesday 19th May 2026

Appendices

Appendix 1 Treasurer and Membership Secretary’s report

SWOA Summary by Account 2025-2026 Feb-26

ACCOUNT DETAIL

				<u>Income/Expenditure</u>	<u>Summary</u>
				<u>Detail</u>	<u>Level</u>
<u>INCOME</u>					
Levies	BOK DEVON KERNO NGOC N WO QO SARUM WIM WSX Other			£ 745.66	
				743.82	
				134.32	
				1,121.13	
				285.89	
				324.99	
				201.25	
				386.40	
				544.87	
				<u>0.00</u>	
				£ 4,488.33	4,488.33
Other Income	Interest			£ <u>25.83</u>	25.83
Total				£ 4,514.16	4,514.16
<u>EXPENSE</u>					
Grants	Junior Squad Representation	Junior		£ 0.00	
				(682.00)	
				0.00	
	Tours/Training	Junior		(1,645.00)	
				0.00	(2,327.00)
Courses	Individuals Clubs Other			0.00	
				0.00	
				0.00	0.00
English OC				(887.00)	(887.00)
Website				(225.40)	
Expenses	Committee Competition			0.00	
				(286.81)	(512.21)
Misc.				(14.97)	(14.97)
				£ (3,741.18)	(3,741.18)
Total					

<u>SUMMARY</u>				<u>Income/Expenditure</u>	
	Levies			£ 4,488.33	
	Grants			(2,327.00)	
	Courses			0.00	
	English OC			(887.00)	
	Other Income / Misc.			(501.35)	
	Total			£ 772.98	

CASH BALANCES

		Current	Deposit		
		Account	Account	Total	
Opening Balances		5,335.48	5,111.81	£	10,447.29
Transfers	Deposit	0.00	0.00		0.00
	Current	0.00	0.00		0.00
Transacts	Credit	4,488.33	25.83		4,514.16
	Debit	(3,741.18)	n/a		(3,741.18)
Closing Balances		6,082.63	5,137.64	£	11,220.27
Period Change		747.15	25.83	£	772.98

SWOA Financial Status -- Year to Date 2025-26 Feb-26

Financial Status January 2026

	Year to Date		Versus	
	Jan 3rd		January	
	<u>2025-26</u>		<u>Status</u>	
Levies	£	4,488	£	1,193
Grants		(2,327)		(382)
Courses		0		0
English OC		(887)		0
Other Income/Expense		(501)		(66)
Total	£	773	£	745
Total Funds	£	11,220		

Explanation of Change versus January report

Levies

Levy income has continued at a steady level, £1,193 since January report.

Grants

Only two grants :

Lyra Medlock pre-JWOC Training Camp, and Ceci Knight Interland. As expected few grant requests were received at the end of 2025 and will recommence towards the end of the 2025-26 financial year.

Other Income / Expense

Website and bank charges/interest.

Summary

As expected, limited activity apart from levy receipts. The same pattern is expected until towards the end of the financial year when grant requests for the 2026 Junior Tours are received. Total funds are £1,500 higher than 12 months ago.