

AGM 2016 Chairman's Future Plans.

Looking forward to 2017 I am tempted to say it will be a fairly quiet year, perhaps I should say, there will be a change of emphasis.

The events programme will follow its usual pattern of winter and summer league, and events in the EMOA league and the EMOA Urban League. Other than the East Midlands Championships at Wakerley next month we have no major events in the next year so that gives us some capacity to do other things. The 2016/2017 winter league has already started with 7 events still remaining. The 2017 summer League programme will be published shortly. Our two EMUL events have been nominated for inclusion in the UKUL.

We will of course be taking part in the Compass Sport Cup, the Yvette Baker Trophy and we will have teams in the Peter Palmer Junior Team Relays.

One of the tasks identified in the Club's Development Plan is to increase club membership. To this end the Development team are running a series of Saturday events in North West Leicestershire aimed at young people and their parents. This is being developed through our schools contacts and aims to build on the work already done in the area. By involving parents there is an expectation that they will become regular orienteers and ultimately members of the club. Other clubs, notably SYO, have tried this model with a very high degree of success.

The club committee will be asked to consider other ways that we might increase membership.

Two other elements from the Development Plan that will come under the spotlight in the next 12 months are the BOOST programme and event official training.

There is a commitment within the Development Programme to change the BOOST programme from its current occasional and adhoc programme to a regular programmed activity within the club's training programme. This is an area that the Development Team will be asked to look at.

In the area of event official training, firstly early in the New Year we will be running an Event Safety and Welfare workshop for new members of the club. I would remind everybody that as of 1st January 2017 completing this module becomes mandatory for all event officials. Kevin Bradley will be organising a course for club members who want to be part of the download team at events.

There is also within the Development Plan a commitment, by the club, to maintain and develop its existing programme of Club Nights. As I indicated earlier the Ashby and Glenfield Club Nights have a dedicated group of attendees but we struggle to attract additional members to these two evenings. Why, I don't really know and it is an area that we really need to address in the coming year.

As I mentioned earlier Hannah Cox has relinquished her role as Junior Captain. After discussion with the Club Captain I have invited Anna Barber to be our next Junior Captain. I am delighted to report that Anna has agreed to take on the role.

The Treasurer has mentioned we continue to face pressure from rising costs. Whilst we are currently in a healthy financial situation the club committee will need to exercise vigilance in this area in the coming months. One area that we will have to examine is increasing income from gift aid. This is becoming increasingly important in balancing our books.

One area of concern that I do have and wish to share with you is the availability of areas for orienteering. In the past orienteering has been one of the very few users of forest areas and we have benefited from what effectively has been an open house situation. That has now changed. Many of our popular areas, Beacon Hill and Fineshade come to mind, now see other sporting and commercial activities on many weekends in the year. In some cases we are being priced out of the market with commercial companies charging double what we charge in orienteering and clearly generating a higher income. This means that these companies can afford the higher access fees that landowners are charging. We are fortunate in having the National Forest on our doorstep and an active access officer in Roy Denney and have so far have been able to cope, but if you find that events seem to be returning to the same area more often that formally this will probably be the reason.

Roy is away in New Zealand at present, but wearing his Social Secretary hat he was most insistent that I remind you that the club's Annual Dinner and Awards Evening takes place on Saturday 4th March 2017 at Kirby Muxloe Golf club.

Looking forward to 2018 it is our turn to host the Midlands Championships which is a Level A event. We have secured permission to use the Belvoir Estate on Sunday 18th March 2018. As that event is part of the UKOL we have been asked to put on a high grade event the day before, which will also be part of UKOL. The club has commissioned a map of Leicester Castle and the Newarke and the working proposition is that the Saturday event will be a Level B sprint with elite classes that have World Ranking Status. British Orienteering has agreed to recommend the event to IOF and we are now awaiting the IOF decision which will take another 12 months to arrive.

We are a very strong and successful club but even given the challenging times in which we live I am very confident that we will be able to meet the challenges of the coming years and continue to enjoy our wonderful sport.