

## Permission required to use the map for group activities

Permanent course maps are designed to be used by individuals and families. The maps do not give you rights to use the land for group orienteering. Before taking a group onto the site, group leaders must apply to the landowner, e.g. Bradgate Park Trust, Forestry Commission, Leicestershire County Council for Country parks or the Woodland Trust.

The landowner may refuse permission. They may charge you for training events or group activities. You may need to supply your safety assessment before being given permission.

Landowners are generally supportive of your activities but they might need to advise you of safety or environmental issues which you need to take account of. Eg forestry works.

To help you a table of landowners for many of the areas is shown at Appendix A.

There is also some advice for group leaders on page 4.

## Completing an Orienteering Course

### Choose your courses

The courses available are from the racing colour range, few areas have a full range:-

Course name/ Colour	Level of difficulty	Typical Length (km)	Typical number of Controls	Time guide (mins)
White	Easy, Suitable for beginners and young accompanied children	1.5	10	20-30
Yellow	Easy, Suitable for beginners and young accompanied children. Harder than White.	2.0	10	25-40
Orange	Suitable for novice adults or children with some experience	3.0	12	25-50
Light Green	Hardest possible.	3.5	15	35-60
Green	Hardest possible.	4.5	15	40-75
Blue	Hardest possible.	6.0	18	55-90
Score	Suitable for all ages with controls ranging from easy to as hard as possible	45 minutes	25	45

Except for the Score course, you must visit the controls in the order specified. For a score course you have a time limit to find as many as possible, with penalties for being late; typically losing one control for each minute late.

### Understand the Map

Orienteering maps are drawn to an international standard using specific colours and symbols and unlike most maps, use white to show woods which are easy to run through. Darker shades of green are used to show that a wood is harder to run through. Most maps show a legend but in some locations there is not room on the map, so if you need a copy of the international standards, get one from [www.maprunner.co.uk/map-symbols/](http://www.maprunner.co.uk/map-symbols/). Also available on the Leicestershire web site.

Orienteering maps are detailed and usually drawn to a scale of 1 to 15,000 or 1 to 10,000. A map drawn at 1 to 10,000 is where 1cm on the map represents 100m on the ground. For the urban courses a scale of 1 to 5,000 is typical. There are parts of the map which are out of bounds, so keep out of homes and shops.

### Look for the Control markers and the Control descriptions

The start and finish points are marked by a triangle on the map and the finish by concentric double circles.

In the terrain look for these plaques:



A list of the controls used for each course is printed on the map and this has a description of the feature where the control is located. The course descriptions show a number which should correspond to a number which will be found on a plaque on the post. Each plaque has a letter which should be written down in the appropriate box on the Control Card. This can be used to check that the correct controls have been visited. If you want a list, ask the POC Co-ordinator, [leipoc@ntlworld.com](mailto:leipoc@ntlworld.com) to provide you one.

The plaques you need to find are mainly of a new style but some are of an old style.



**New style**



**Old style**

Some landowners have variations and may have a letter instead of the control number.

Some City Council parks use posts painted red and white and the numbers and letter are painted on. The Check letter is on the back

Brocks Hill Country Park the check letter is on the red triangle.



**City Council**



**Brocks Hill**

Burbage plaques are sometimes rotated so numbers and letters are on different colours.



**Wakerley**

**Burbage**

In urban areas, plaques are often fixed to lamps posts at head height. The markers are 10cms square and can be difficult to see from all directions.

### **Following the course**

Orienteers keep the map "set" so that features on the map are lined up with features on the ground. For example, this means that when going south, the top of the map (north end) will be closest to your body. A compass will help to keep the map set by ensuring that the north lines on the map point towards magnetic north. However, you should be able to complete White to Orange courses without the need for a compass providing you follow the map carefully. You will need to keep the map and compass horizontal. A good technique to learn is to use your thumb to point the way you are going and to show your location. You might need to fold the map to do this.

Bear in mind that permanent posts can suffer from deterioration and / or vandalism so some posts may be missing. In addition, some of the posts might be obscured by long grass or undergrowth during the summer period. Do inform the Permanent course co-ordinator using the feedback form so we can put a warning notice on our web site.

## **Safety**

Most courses start near at a car park – so watch out for vehicles. A full risk assessment should be carried out having regard to the abilities of the people undertaking the courses and the need for appropriate supervision. Neither Leicestershire Orienteering Club nor the landowner can accept responsibility for any accident, loss or damage incurred by any person undertaking these courses.

As a prompt, these are the some of the risks you need to consider if using Beacon Hill. Note:

- to avoid moving traffic when starting and finishing around the car park
- routes involve mixed usage tracks so beware of horses and mountain bikes
- rocky outcrops which can be several metres high
- a herd of long-horned cattle and occasionally pigs graze Beacon Hill and may be on the route.
- To avoid damage to the walls, please use the crossing points.
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## **Further information**

The Leicestershire Orienteering Club (LEIOC) website [www.leioc.org.uk](http://www.leioc.org.uk) has details of forthcoming events and activity evenings. Anyone may participate. The club organises more than 40 events per year which are open to non-members and beginners are welcome. Information on Orienteering in general can also be found on the British Orienteering website [www.britishorienteering.org.uk](http://www.britishorienteering.org.uk)

Our club nights run during the school term at Groby, Ashby-de-la-Zouch and in the winter at Glenfield and are open to beginners.

## **Feedback**

We would welcome any feedback on the courses or on this information particularly if you find posts vandalised or missing. There is a feedback form on the LEIOC website.

## **INFORMATION TO HELP TEACHERS & GROUP LEADERS PREPARE THEIR GROUP FOR ORIENTEERING**

**Footwear:** Forests can be very wet and muddy under foot. Wellingtons may be advisable under these conditions, and a change of footwear and clothing is recommended.

**Clothes:** Trainers, tracksuits/jogging trousers. (Shorts are not allowed at competition events - a rule of the sport - for safety. Jeans may not be considered suitable for running.) Long sleeved T-shirts may be worn if it is a hot day. Hooded waterproof jacket may be needed if rain is likely.

**Pen or Pencil:** Each competitor will need a pen or pencil to write down the control codes on their control card.

**Compass:** Not essential for the easier courses and should only be brought if the group has been taught how to use it to 'set' the map using the red end of the needle.

**Watches:** Older group members who own watches should be encouraged to wear them so that they return to their group leaders at their appointed time!

**Whistles:** It is also a good idea for each person/pair to carry a whistle and to be given instruction on when and how to use it.

**Pre visit work:** It is advisable that all group members who are visiting a new area for orienteering should have done some preliminary work in the classroom, school hall or grounds so that they understand the following:

- (a) a map is a pattern of shapes:
- (b) symbols are used to depict features on the ground;
- (c) when following a route on a map it is essential to keep the map 'set' so that one always faces the direction of travel.

**Permissions:** If you intend to take a group orienteering, it is essential that permission is obtained first as other activities may be taking place there on the day you intend to visit. Possession of a map does not imply right of access. Forestry Commission may charge for groups to use the forest using the National scale of charges.

**Safety:** You should be aware that most Forests are part of a working forest, and that there are a number of potential hazards. These include fallen trees and branches (which can be very slippery when wet), uneven ground once you are off the main tracks, fences, water features, etc. Forestry operations may be taking place. Please observe any safety or warning signs. The ground can also be very muddy after periods of heavy rain. You should complete a risk assessment form for your own organisation.

### **Upon arrival:**

- Sort out the group into pairs. (It is not advisable to send out larger groups together as we find from experience that more than two will argue or chat and lose concentration.)
- Give each group member a map.
- Check that everyone who sets off from the start knows which post(s) they are going to and that they have talked through with one of the helpers which way they are going.
- Extra helpers can be placed around the area to ensure safety.
- It is advisable that group members should try at least some of the star controls first.
- Continue with short courses. You may want to make up slightly longer courses for those who are more experienced or who 'catch on' quickly. However a navigational problem such as going from the start to a far away post is regarded as far too difficult and requiring too many 'decision' points for group members. (Group members can navigate a far more complicated course in their own school grounds than they can in an unfamiliar area, so only give longer or harder courses, to those you are confident can tackle them and only after they have completed the easier tasks.)
- If you progress at a steady pace, all should succeed. It is better that everyone leaves with the idea that orienteering is fun and easy; not that it's about getting lost - in fact, don't even mention the possibility!

### **Suggested Exercises:**

**Map walk:** It is always advisable to do a short map walk when visiting a new area. During the walk the map should be orientated or 'set' at all times and you should stop and point out the different paths, features, trees, etc to familiarise the group with the map.

Example. You could walk from the start to the first control pointing out the various features on the way. Show them a control so that they can see how it is marked. It is best if the walk is done in manageable groups.

**Beginners courses:** Start with the White or Yellow course and progress from there.

**Harder courses:** Do not attempt the more difficult courses until your group have a degree of competence. The Light Green course is hard, and occasionally takes participants off paths and into rough ground. The Green course is very hard and takes participants well away from paths and into some very rough terrain.

## Appendix A

<b>Location</b>	<b>Landowner</b>
Beacon Hill Country Park Martin Wood	Leicestershire County Council Woodland Trust
Bosworth Country Park	Leicestershire County Council
Bradgate Park	Bradgate Park Trust
Brocks Hill County Park	Oadby & Wigston Borough Council
Donisthorpe Woodlands	Leicestershire County Council
East Carlton Park	East Northamptonshire Council
Foxton Locks	Canal & River Trust
Irchester Country Park	Northamptonshire County Council
Martinshaw Woods	Woodland Trust
The Outwoods	Charnwood Borough Council
Ratby Woodlands	Woodland Trust
Sence Valley Forest Park	Forestry Commission
Snibston Country Park	Leicestershire County Council
Watermead Country Park North	Leicestershire County Council

You can usually find contact details on the Landowner web site.