

# **CLUB DEVELOPMENT OFFICER ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

## Purpose

To increase CLOK's membership by attracting people in their 20s and 30s – including those with young families – to join the club and get involved in club activities. At least initially, the focus will be on those people who have the means and time to access orienteering events distributed across our region.

## Approach

We believe that in order for people in the target demographic to get sufficiently interested in orienteering to “get hooked” and make it one of their main activities:-

- (a) They need to be presented with frequent opportunities to experience high-quality orienteering activities. This essentially means proper orienteering events in good quality terrain with an element of competition. For many of the people likely to become interested in orienteering, the desire to improve their performance in relation to their peers will be a powerful motivation.
- (b) They need to have frequent contact in an orienteering context with people they can relate to. In particular, this means people of similar ages and social backgrounds.
- (c) They need to be made aware of the orienteering opportunities available to them.
- (d) They need to have a sense of making progress in terms of improving aspects of their orienteering performance. This can be either in terms of running fitness or (particularly) navigation.

At present:-

- (a) The programme of orienteering events within reasonable travelling distance does not offer sufficiently frequent opportunities for enthusiastic newcomers to experience high-quality orienteering events. Someone who has a positive initial experience of orienteering and wants to do more is likely to become frustrated by the delay before their next opportunity to go orienteering. (One newcomer to orienteering talked about how much she was looking forward to her “weekly fix” of the sport.)
- (b) The majority of orienteers whom newcomers are likely to encounter are in the 50+ age range.
- (c) Orienteering does not have a high profile in the target demographic. We believe that the CLOK web site does a good job of providing information about events, but the club does not have a significant presence on social media.
- (d) There are very few opportunities for novice and ‘improving’ orienteers to get technical training to help them to improve their navigation, route selection, etc.

The main role of the Club Development Officer (CDO) will be to drive improvements in these four areas.

## Objectives

1. Provide frequent, high-quality orienteering events within reasonable travelling distance of the main population centres in CLOK's area.  
The CDO will organise additional events to supplement the existing programme of events. The additional events will comprise a mixture of forest and urban events. Some may take place on mid-week evenings.  
As CLOK does not have enough good areas to support this frequency of events, the CDO will – with support from the CLOK Committee – work with neighbouring clubs (e.g. NATO, NN and EBOR) to get permission to use their maps.

The CDO will draw on CLOK volunteers for support, but will need to do a lot of the planning and organisation himself or herself. Previous experience with CLOK's Summer Series of evening events has demonstrated that it is possible for an enthusiastic and energetic person to put on high-quality orienteering events on a 'one man band' basis.

2. Enthusiastically encourage people who already enjoy other outdoor sports to try orienteering and provide support to ensure that they have a positive and enjoyable experience when doing so.

The targets include people who are already involved with local clubs such as walking, mountain biking, fell racing and running clubs. Publicise and demonstrate that orienteering is an excellent route into adventure sports, particularly those that require navigation skills.

The CDO will organise and, where appropriate, deliver technical coaching sessions for new and improving orienteers and, as and when appropriate, will provide additional personalised coaching for individuals or small groups.

3. Attract, involve and retain new club members in the target demographic by using social media, information technology and other electronic communications in relevant ways to publicise CLOK's activities and other local orienteering opportunities and to. Make full use of existing materials and, as and when appropriate and with the mentor's agreement, commission additional materials.
4. Investigate and/or devise other, innovative ways of attracting people into orienteering, make proposals to the CLOK Committee and, where appropriate, lead the implementation of the selected ideas.

Examples of innovative ideas might include offering newcomers their first event free, producing and publicising promotional videos, identifying and encouraging "onward sellers" (recent converts to orienteering who are so keen on their new sport that they become "super-promoters") and/or interviewing newcomers after their first orienteering experience (what did they enjoy, what did they not enjoy, what surprised them, what would encourage them to repeat the experience, etc.)

5. Understand – and make best use of – the very capable and competent orienteering volunteers in CLOK. For example, draw on CLOK volunteers to provide technical aspects of coaching, establish contacts with local authorities and land owners, etc.
6. Identify other successful tactics and strategies to attract people into our sport by networking with other Development Officers, relevant bodies and groups from both within orienteering and other relevant outdoor activities.
7. Generate more income for CLOK by leveraging more membership, involvement and participation by the target demographic.

Where more funding is generated we can consider the option of increasing the size of this contract and/or making the role self-sustaining after the Orienteering Foundation funding finishes. Income could come from a range of sources, including additional membership fees, higher membership fees (justified by more club activities being organised), higher event income (from increased event entries) and / or services provided to local schools and colleges.

### Targets

1. Ensure that there is a high-quality orienteering opportunity within 1½ - 2 hours' drive of Middlesbrough / Stockton / Guisborough / Darlington every week during May – July and September.
2. Once there is sufficient interest, arrange technical coaching sessions for new and improving orienteers at least once per month.
3. After the first three months, encourage a new young family or couple to join on average at a rate of one per month. (Equivalent to a rate of 2 young adults / month).
4. A stretch target would be to that after two years there would be as many CLOK members in the 20 – 40 age range as in the 50 – 70 age range. This would effectively involve doubling the club's membership, with the great majority of the new members being in their 20s and 30s.

### Timing

- 7<sup>th</sup> October 2020 This document finalised for circulation to Orienteering Foundation Board members and CLOK membership.
- 13<sup>th</sup> October 2020 Orienteering Foundation Board meeting. The Board agrees to support this pilot project.
- 15<sup>th</sup> October 2020 CLOK AGM. CLOK members approve a proposal to use the club's reserve funds to support this new Club Development Officer role over the next two years.

The post will be on a two-year contract with a three-month probationary period. After 18 months CLOK and the CDO will review the situation and consider whether it might be appropriate to renew / extend the contract.

The start date will be decided once a suitable candidate is available. The preferred target would be for the contract to start towards the end of the first quarter of 2021, hopefully once it is clear that COVID-related restrictions will be relaxed sufficiently to make it possible to put on the proposed programme of orienteering events and activities during May – September.

### Funding

The proposal is that the CDO will be funded 50% by the Orienteering Foundation and 50% by CLOK. The Orienteering Foundation will make either quarterly or six-monthly payments in advance into the CLOK bank account. CLOK will pay the CDO monthly in arrears, on the 25th day of each month.

### Budget and Contract

The CDO will work on a self-employed basis. It is envisaged that the contract for services will be for £6,000 / year plus reasonable travel expenses. It is estimated that delivering the objectives may require the CDO to work for an average of 12 hours per week for 48 weeks per year (excluding travelling time), but the CDO will be expected to vary his or her working hours as required to deliver the project objectives.

### Management

The CDO will report to a suitable mentor appointed by the CLOK Committee, and the two will meet (via Zoom if appropriate) on a regular basis – at least monthly – to review activities, achievements, ideas, plans, need for support, etc.

The CDO will provide a monthly briefing to the CLOK Committee.

CLOK will give the Orienteering Foundation progress reports after 3, 9 and 15 months. One aim of these reports will be to ensure that this pilot project captures ideas, learning and successes and failures for use elsewhere.

### To be added later (if the proposal successful)

- Skills, experience and competences expected of potential candidates.
- Strategy for seeking candidates, including where and how to advertise the role.
- Selection process and criteria.
- Contract details, including travel expenses.

**Caroline Mackenzie**  
**CLOK Chair**