

Minutes of WMOA Committee Meeting 9th June 2025 at 7-30 pm

via Zoom

Present: Richard Lewis, Marian White, Ian Gamlen, Kirsten Strain, Carol Dredge, Barry Elkington, Jim Cooke, James Thomas,

1. Apologies: Melanie Elkington, John Leeson, Adam Bushnell

2. Declaration of Interest: None

3. Acceptance of Previous Minutes: Accepted

4. Matters Arising: None

5. Correspondence: a) Email from Clive Richardson WRE- questioning the date of WM Relays. Why not a fixed date in the Summer? This year it clashes with a Deeside weekend which is closer for many WMOA members to get to – could date be changed? RL has replied to this suggesting difficulties fixing set date due to permissions etc. Matter passed over to JT as Fixtures Secretary to try to resolve.

b) EOC AGM Notification. RL agreed to participate in this Zoom meeting. His report follows-

3rd June 2025

On the above date I attended by means of ZOOM the AGM of the above.

These are my brief notes of the AGM and I understand full details including a financial report can be found on the web page.

The meeting was chaired by the current chair Barry Elkington and I understand all but one region was able to attend.

The Chair's report gave a detailed insight into the positive events EOC have supported and been involved in during the last year.

Discussions took place on the past and future recruitment of key selectors and team managers for the England teams in the coming year.

Anyone interested in becoming involved in Selectors or Team managers please talk to Barry Elkington.

A financial report was given by the treasurer. This in principle showed some minor losses over the past year due to travel and competitor expenses. The detail of which can be found in the official AGM reports.

The only minor change that will affect WMOA will be in the levy fee per member increasing by .15p from 0.85 to 1.00 per member, which I think is very reasonable and if my calculations are correct means a total increase of approx. £65.00 which equates to about £10.00 per club.

Taking how inflation has affected travel costs I think this is acceptable.

Again on a positive note this levy helped and subsidised 7 members of our WMOA to attend this year's Interland competition to represent England.

The election of Officers followed and all the present Officers agreed to stand for 2025/26.

Invoices to Regional Treasurers to be sent out shortly.

c) Email from BOF –summary of main points from AGM.

d) Email from Kirsten Strain re Coaching Coordinator role – to be discussed under Item 11.

6. Chairman's Report: RL

Hope this report finds you all well and having enjoyed the first nearly 6 months of the year. We certainly have had a varied selection of events both with in the region and throughout the UK.

Changes have been taking place at BOF which are well reported in BOF's monthly newsletter, and I'm sure we wish all those that have retired or moved on well and welcome the new officers to their roles

This year I managed to travel to events further afield like the JK and the British Long champs. Usually on a Sunday night I look through the fixtures list and work out which events I would like to compete at, this is based initially on the date, then the type of event/area etc. However these days my final decision to enter, is reached as this is my last year as a M70 by cost. I consider travel distance, any accommodation costs then entry fees, all added up and divided into course distance to give me a cost per km. I have to say had the JK been further away and the area not been so technically interesting I would have given it a miss. It worked out at something like £39.00 per km for my course on day 2 taking the above into consideration. The joys of getting older?

Pleased I did get to these events though, as I enjoyed both and Grizedale is still my favourite area, well done to all involved in organising.

During May POTOC took their turn to organise the WMOA Schools Orienteering Champs. This was a well organised event in a good area for this type of event- Apedale. Well done to all involved just need to get more schools within WMOA involved.

Locally we have had 5 events in our WMOA League and already HOC seem to be holding a commanding lead but still catchable by the others.

Springtime In Shropshire provided a varied weekend of events and weather from sunshine, wind to rain, but most importantly some very positive comments from competitors who enjoyed the different type of events and social gatherings.

Well done to all involved and especially to Simon Thompson HOC for being this year's coordinator who along with all the Organisers, planners and controllers made the weekend memorable and ensured the 2000 plus entries over the 3 days had an enjoyable time.

As I close this report I would like to offer my condolences to the families of 2 WMOA members who passed away recently. I'm sure many of our older members would remember Ken Broad who was a founder member of Wrekin Orienteers and also the original owner of Ultrasport.

The other sad loss is Colin Powell, again a lifetime WRE member, Colin leaves wife Judith and Sons Ifor and Alun Powell along with daughter Sophie and family members who are still competing Orienteers. Some 40 years ago the Powell Family introduced me to orienteering and WRE and had it not been for their passion and enthusiasm for the sport I'm not sure I would be involved as I am today.

Our thoughts are with you all.

Have a good summer of events and enjoy your travels and I hope to see you at some events.

Please also have a think on who you would like to be the next chair because I'm sure our AGM will come around soon and we will have to have someone ready to take over.

The recent deaths of two other long standing WMOA members were also noted- Mike Baggott and Maureen Chapman.

7. Treasurer's Report –IG

IG reported that finances were very healthy. Levy not yet in from SINS but expected to be over £1600.

WMJS subsidy still to be paid over and EOC fee.

WMJS members selected for tours have been sending in grant requests and more expected.

8. Fixtures Report- JT (not able to access his laptop so recalling information that he was able to)

WMOA Relays- not much can be done now to change the date.

BE- Important for all Fixtures Secretaries to look at events in other adjoining areas when selecting dates for WM Relays and WM Champs.

JT to discuss with National Fixtures Secretary.

West Midlands League now 10 events. 5 have taken place and 5 to come.

HOC have a league race planned for January at Lickey Hills.

West Midlands Urban League now 5 events. 1 taken place and 4 more to come.

JIRCS 2027- Beaudesert – Dave Smith WCH to liaise. Reserve area –Sutton Park. Need a coordinator for JIRCS – **MW and KS** to write a job description to put on WMOA website. Potential for 200+ participants, including team leaders etc. **IG** - Beaudesert would not be able to accommodate those numbers indoors. Need to look elsewhere for accommodation. Walton High School Stafford has been used in the past with outside caterers. **CD** to contact Chasers to find out feasibility of this as an option.

BOC 2028- Welsh areas previously suggested are now potentially being used for Croeso 2028.

Haywood Warren (early in year) and Brown Clee other potential areas.

2027 Compass Sport Cup Final looking for a host –last held in WM in 2018.

National Fixtures Meeting in October – RL to attend with JT.

BE commented if clubs want other clubs to advertise their events they need to sell them more to competitors. Make them want to enter – great area and courses! Needs to look appealing not just standard details from website.

9. WMOA Website –MW

Changes to League events need to be notified to MW.

MW received an email from Mike Farrington. He might continue with the hosting of the site but need to sort someone to do the more administrative tasks.

Ludlow Urban results not yet showing on the National League site.

Next newsletter should appear in about a fortnight's time.

10/ 11 Development and Coaching Co-ordinator – items discussed in parallel.

RL spoken to **HM** re putting on further courses – no agreement as yet. Anyone else willing to put on courses?

KS- Coaching course not been held in region for many years. We need more coaches – some people want coaching.

KS- need a coach tutor – who are qualified coaches in each club?

Vacant position for Coaching Co-ordinator. Region doesn't have a Coaching Assessor. Hilary Palmer NOC nearest assessor.

CD to obtain list of licensed current WMOA coaches from BOF.

RL to speak to Hilary Palmer after discussing needs with KS.

KS- reminder about O Foundation training days in Lakes and South Wales- coaches provided for clubs with no coaches on these days.

IG- need an Organisers Course. **CD** to contact clubs and see what take up would be for Organisers/ Planners/ Coaching/ Controllers courses.

12. West Midlands Junior Squad –KS

Since the last WMOA meeting, we have had two day trainings. In April we trained at Rough Close (OD) and this weekend we trained at Park Hall (POTOC), joint with EMJOS. Thanks to the clubs for their support with permissions, maps and activity registrations.

We have continued regular Zoom trainings every three or four weeks, either looking at race preparation for the major/selection races or more general orienteering technique. There will be two more this month and next before the summer break.

We had a cake sale at Bentley Wood WML, making £165. Barry Elkington's quiz was a great success, bringing over £500 though entry proceeds and a raffle. Thank you Barry!

We are very pleased to have six athletes selected for JROS summer training camps (Seb on Lagganlia, Fraser and Eden on Deeside and Max, Craig and Jonah on Czechia). They are being encouraged to apply to the region for financial support, as discussed previously. In addition, Adam and Olivia, having missed out on JROS selection, have been invited to participate in a Welsh squad tour in August. Two further juniors were interested in these training camps and ran in the required selection races but sadly missed out.

We have begun looking at team selection and arrangements for the JIRCs, in September in NW. It looks like the WM team will comprise 15 athletes (10 boys, 5 girls) and will be accompanied by up to 4 adults. The plan is that Isla Foffa will be the lead coach, supported by parents. We do have enough boys to fill the counting places but we will have vacancies in the girls' counting places so this will limit how highly we can place on the combined scores.

Looking ahead to the autumn, we are looking at dates and areas for our autumn trainings. We hope to include a squad weekend away as well as a series of day trainings. Options are being considered for the weekend trip – perhaps using the Orienteering Foundation training day in South Wales in November. The M/W16s will also have the opportunity to train in the Lake District with the JROS Hawkshead weekend in late November.

Isla Foffa (HOC) is keen to continue her support of squad activities and become qualified to lead training sessions. We are searching for a suitable coaching course for her to go on. She already has experience of coaching and has been helping at several training sessions already, and she is a great addition to the squad team.

As usual, we would welcome any more juniors who are of TD4 standard or on their way there, and at least M/W12. This year we've had a few new juniors join us. More would be welcome.

RL added his congratulations to all selected for tours and thanked **KS** for work done with Juniors to achieve this.

13. Controllers List-

To be carried over to the next meeting. **CD** to email BOF and get a list of current WMOA Controllers and their levels.

14. AGM-

After discussion it was agreed that this year's AGM would be Zoom only on Monday 13th October at 7-30pm.

CD requested a contact email for each club so all AGM material can be sent to all club members.

15. Club Round-Up

OD-BE

The Droober has suffered from a lack of articles so publication of this is likely to cease.

Fewer members now – c120 – how are other clubs recruiting new members? **RL**- WRE membership also declining, ill health and age. In partnership with National Trust had lots of children take part in Primary School Champs and have planned local events in Summer as follow up to bring parents along.

POTOC- JC

Morrige event took place successfully with 174 competitors.

WM Schools in May only had 66 competitors. Staffordshire Schools on a Thursday in March had 257 Competitors. Need to look again at changing date-exam season- Midweek?

New map of Park Hall for 50th Anniversary event.

Monthly local events continuing.

WCH – AB (report sent to CD)

Thanks to everyone involved with putting on a very enjoyable SINS weekend and to Henry and Brenda Morgan for staging the WM Schools Champs.

Two Chasers have been selected for the Summer JROS tours.

Chasers have held weekly training sessions over the Summer on the Chase – resulting in a few new members.

Urban league event at Etching Hill in November and two league events planned for December and February.

HOC- IG

Both days of SINS went very well.

Summer events- June Jaunter- Clent Hills and Sutton Park Gates Run.

Membership doing quite well. Merger of HOC and COBOC has been successful and brought in some Juniors.

WRE-RL

CATI events coming up in June and August.

WRE 50th Anniversary event – Concord College- 8th August.

16. Any Other Business

IG Orienteering Foundation WM Rep.

17. Date of Next Meeting- Monday 8th September at 7-30pm by Zoom.

Meeting finished at 9-30pm.

Thanks to Barry Elkington for coordinating Zoom Meeting.