

# So you've agreed to plan a SOG....

## 1. Introduction

SOG events have historically been organised by a single person who is responsible for both setting out the course and the running of the actual event. In recent years the numbers of competitors attending SOGs have continued to increase such that it now requires quite a few people working both in the background and on the day to make these events happen. This document will summarise the various procedures associated with putting on a SOG and who is responsible for each aspect. The planner remains ultimately in charge but a large support network now exists to help ensure that the event runs smoothly. The planner may wish to share responsibility for the event with someone who looks after the (non-forest based) organisational aspects.

## 2. The Event Advisors

Each SOG will be allocated an event advisor whose primary role is to support you through the process of putting on the event. Your advisor should contact you at an early stage in the process. If you have any questions throughout the process, generally contact your advisor in the first instance, unless the question is related to event safety and the risk assessment – in this instance please contact the safety co-ordinator.

## 3. Land Permission

You will be pleased to know that this is not your problem. SO areas have nominated people who liaise with the landowner and get permission for an event well in advance. You may though need to contact the landowner(s) directly in order to arrange access to the area. This depends very much on the area since some have public access, and can be visited at any time, whilst others are on private land and access may be restricted due to shooting etc. For some areas special arrangements may be required such as putting up notices in advance to inform the public that an event will be taking place.

## 4. Risk Assessment and Event Safety

It is a condition of our insurance policy that a reasonably thorough risk assessment is undertaken for each event. The club has a safety co-ordinator who will guide you through the process of completing the risk assessment form and will pre-complete many of the details. As part of event safety the club has an Event Safety Plan document on procedures to be followed in the case of an accident or other incidents such as a missing competitor. A copy of this document is kept with the first aid kit (held by the SI computing team) and can also be downloaded from the Club website (Organisers and Planners Resources page). You should familiarise yourself with this document before the event takes place and if you have any questions, please contact the safety co-ordinator.

The club answer phone (a mobile phone) will be kept with the SI computing team at each event. Planners are therefore requested to add this as an emergency number on each map. The number is 07526 792817.

## 5. Car Parking

The location of the car parking will usually be sorted out as part of the process for gaining land permission. Some parking areas are large enough that competitors can be left to park themselves, others will be much smaller and helpers will be required to fit cars in efficiently. Ideally you should recruit some helpers yourself, although your advisor may also be able to help. Occasionally the event may require collecting a parking fee and so a bucket or similar will be needed. These are held by the equipment officer as are fluorescent bibs that can be worn by parking marshals.

## **6. Maps and Planning**

The club's mapping co-ordinator holds the most up-to-date versions of each map and will supply you with an electronic version of the map directly. During the planning process should you find that corrections/updates need to be made to the map you should contact the mapping co-ordinator who will arrange for this to be done. Our SOG events are planned electronically using the freeware program Purple Pen. A copy of this program can be downloaded from: <http://purplepen.golde.org/> and a guide to using it for SOGS can be downloaded from the Organisers and Planners Resources page.

A guide on how to plan good SOG courses can also be downloaded from this page.

Suggested lengths for your SOG courses, which vary according to the location, are published in Southdowner and can also be obtained from the fixtures secretary or your event advisor. The equipment officer will be able to tell you which control code range will be used for your event – this will be either 67-99 or 100-132.

You should liaise with your event advisor during the planning process and they will check that your courses look OK. The person checking the courses will usually only do this as a “paper” exercise and will not actually visit the area. The checker will therefore assume that the features that you have chosen to use as control sites are actually there and are accurately mapped. However if you are new to planning, or are uncertain about a particular area, then it should be possible for someone to physically check your sites for you.

## **7. Printing Maps and Control Descriptions**

Maps are printed by the map printer, both the course and map files should be sent to them ideally around two weeks before your event. He can then post the maps to you or better still drop them off at another event. At this stage some final checks will be made to ensure that the maps look OK. All control descriptions should have the following text added as a text box at the end – “Please report to download even if you do not finish the course. Courses close at 12:30” You also need to send your course files exported from Purple Pen as an xml file to the SI computing team - information about how to do this is given in the Purple Pen instruction manual mentioned above.

The map printer will also print off the control descriptions for you although you will be responsible for cutting them to the appropriate size. Purple Pen gives you the option of printing descriptions containing both written and pictorial forms, for yellow and orange courses it can be helpful to have both on the map. Green and blue control descriptions should be pictorial. The numbers of maps/descriptions to print will depend on expected attendance but typically these might be:

Blue – 40

Green – 60

Short Green - 25

Orange – 25

Yellow – 15

All controls – 6 (for safety, control hanging & control collection)

Blank maps – 2 (to highlight last minute map changes)

The planner should provide one copy of each map, and an all controls map, to the download team. These can be used to guide newcomers through the process and also to aid any search for a missing competitor.

## **8. Publicity**

The website is the main source of information and needs to be updated with specific details for each SOG. You should do this by completing the template form that can be found on the Organisers and Planners Resources page. Once you have completed the form e-mail it to [webeditor@southdowns-orienteers.org.uk](mailto:webeditor@southdowns-orienteers.org.uk). This should be done at least two weeks before the event.

## **9. Equipment**

### **9.1. Forest Equipment**

This is obtained from the equipment officer and comprises:

- Four bags each containing 10 kites (please return them in this state)
- 33 small base plate stakes for the control units
- 4 large base plate stakes for the clear, start and finish units
- A box containing all the units, a clear dibber and an off dibber
- Assorted small signs
- Map boxes for the start
- Finish banner

The availability will depend on the timing of the preceding events.

### **9.2. General Kit**

This is obtained as required from the equipment officer and can include:

- Larger road signs, including runners crossing signs
- Red and white tape
- White stakes
- Fluorescent bibs (if required)
- Barbed wire fence crossing protectors (if required)

## **10. Putting Out Controls**

It is possible to put out everything on the morning of the event but in this case it is advisable to have at least 2 people working together particularly in winter, to avoid time pressure.

Alternatively it is possible to put some or all of them out on the day before the event, although note that the equipment at each site would cost about £100 to replace so the security of the location should be considered when considering putting out the controls well in advance. We also need to inform the insurers if equipment is placed the night before.

From January 2018 all of our SO events have allowed contactless punching. To allow this units should be turned on with a dibber (old style or SIAC) on the morning of the event. Note that if your dibber is full from a previous event then the unit may not beep when turned on – but will still turn on.

Kites should only be attached to stakes using the hook on the stake. You are supplied with two start and two finish units. One of each should be mounted on a stake with the other placed on the ground by the stake in case the mounted one fails. One clear station should be mounted on a stake just before the start. The check station is normally held by the starting official to check a competitor's dibber just before they start, and to activate contactless SI cards (SIACs).

Prior to any competitor starting, at least the clear, check, start and finish units all need to be cleared of previous event data using the Clear dibber. This is so the units can be 'read' into AutoDownload later to establish who is still out on a course. Please ensure the clear, check and start units are passed to the SI Team after the last starter.

## **11. Event Day**

Since we regularly get over 120 competitors at a SOG you will need some help to run the event on the day. Ideally you should recruit these people from other club members that you know

although if you are having problems recruiting helpers ask your advisor for assistance. Apart from putting out controls it is necessary to cover the following jobs:

### **11.1. Placing Road Signs**

Normally done by planner before putting out controls.

### **11.2. Car Parking**

Number of helpers depends on the nature of the car park area and whether a parking fee is being charged. If so, one helper (with a fluorescent jacket) is needed to collect the fee (using a bucket) and probably one other (with a fluorescent jacket) to park the cars.

### **11.3. Registration / Download**

This is organised by the SI computing team so you do not need to sort this out. They will though need to get the details of your courses from you in order to program the software. These details can be exported from Purple Pen and details on how to do this are in the Purple Pen instructions cited above. Please ensure you send the course file to the SI team co-ordinator as soon as they are ready, no later than the Wednesday prior to the event. Please also advise where you would like the SI team to set up the download tent.

### **11.4. Newcomer Assistance**

At least one person should be available to assist newcomers, particularly between 9:30am and 10:30am. This could be a nominated person, or an appropriate SO person who is around at the point when needed.

### **11.6. Maps at The Start**

Orange, green and blue maps are only available after starting. The following procedure should be applied:

- Yellow maps should be made available in the pre-start area. Competitors are free to look at the course before starting.

Orange, green and blue maps will be available after the start. Each course should have a separate tray (part of SO equipment), ideally with a map placed under each tray for ease of pick up by the next starter

- Control descriptions should be placed in the start system for competitors to pick up just before they start.
- At the start any course map can be made available, on request, if someone wants to be talked through, say, a green course if they haven't done a green many times before. Two people manning the start is recommended and will make those competitors who are unsure easier to spot and to give support

## **12. Completing the event**

### **12.1. Control collection**

Ideally four helpers (including the planner) are needed depending on the size of the area. This can be done by recruiting volunteers on the day or in advance. Start as soon as the courses close (normally 12:30) or earlier if all starters are accounted for. The map printer will normally print you a number of (typically five) maps with all the controls on to aid collection. Remind the collectors to also bring in any tapes that may have been put out to pinpoint the control locations. Once all the controls have been collected in, lay them out to ensure that they have all been collected. They should then be turned off using the Off dibber.

### **12.2. Returning equipment**

The various kit used will need to be returned to the equipment officer or passed to the planner of a subsequent event. Make sure that you know where things need to go because, as the club organises so many events, the kit is always being needed somewhere.

### 12.3. Comments

The SI computing team will process the results and post them on the club website as soon as possible. The planner normally writes some brief comments to be included with the results when they appear. It would help if this could be done shortly after the event finishes. Planner's points will also be calculated and included for the SOG League.

### 12.4 Expenses

The club will reimburse expenses that are necessary to put on the event. The largest expense is likely to be the motoring costs associated with visiting the area beforehand and on the day. For a SOG it is normal for the planner to claim for between two and four journeys. The club pays a mileage rate, which is based on the AA's calculation of car running costs. Expenses should be claimed from the club treasurer.

### 12.5 Relax!

Drive home, take a hot bath and glow with the inner satisfaction, congratulating yourself on a job well done.

#### List of current contacts

Equipment officer	Neil Crickmore	<a href="mailto:captain@southdowns-orienteers.org.uk">captain@southdowns-orienteers.org.uk</a>
Mapping co-ordinator	Chris Hooker	<a href="mailto:mapco@southdowns-orienteers.org.uk">mapco@southdowns-orienteers.org.uk</a>
Map printing	Mike Gammon	<a href="mailto:mapping@southdowns-orienteers.org.uk">mapping@southdowns-orienteers.org.uk</a>
Safety co-ordinator	Karen Ashworth	<a href="mailto:safety@southdowns-orienteers.org.uk">safety@southdowns-orienteers.org.uk</a>
Computing team leadert	Joe Barrett	<a href="mailto:si@southdowns-orienteers.org.uk">si@southdowns-orienteers.org.uk</a>
Fixtures secretary	Steve Jarvis	<a href="mailto:fixtures@southdowns-orienteers.org.uk">fixtures@southdowns-orienteers.org.uk</a>
Treasurer	Ed Forman	<a href="mailto:treasurer@southdowns-orienteers.org.uk">treasurer@southdowns-orienteers.org.uk</a>
Permissions co-ordinator	Steve Blount	<a href="mailto:permissions@southdowns-orienteers.org.uk">permissions@southdowns-orienteers.org.uk</a>