

# **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 Area Co-ordinators**

Southdowns Orienteers events are split into three geographical areas North, East and West. Each of these areas has an area co-ordinator whose primary role is to support you through the process of putting on the event. Your area co-ordinator should contact you at an early stage in the process. If you have any questions throughout the planning process, generally contact your area coordinator 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. Each SO area has a nominated person who liaises with the landowner and gets 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 are 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 the 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 in the 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 area co-ordinator may also be able to help. Some areas will involve 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, or via your area co-ordinator. 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. In recent years all of our SOG events have been planned electronically using the program OCAD, although we have now moved over to 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 area co-ordinator. 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 area co-ordinator during the planning process and they will arrange for someone to 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 mapping co-ordinator, both the course and map files should be sent to him ideally at least 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. 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 manuals mentioned above.

You are responsible for printing the control descriptions and cutting them to the appropriate size. Purple Pen gives you the option of printing descriptions containing both written and pictorial forms and this option should be used for the yellow and orange courses. Green and blue printed control descriptions should be pictorial. The descriptions on the map can then be pictorial for all courses. The numbers of maps/descriptions to print will depend on expected attendance but typically these might be:

Blue – 70

Green – 60

Orange – 25

Yellow – 20

All controls – 5 (for safety, control hanging & control collection)

Blank maps – 2 (to be placed beside the clear unit at the start)

As per the maps at the start section 11.6, the planner should provide control descriptions to exactly match the number of maps since this allows us to know when we are running out of maps. Control descriptions are provided to competitors at map sales as proof of payment of the entry fee.

All yellow course maps are held at maps sales and are handed out to yellow course competitors at this point, along with yellow course control descriptions.

The planner should also provide an orange, green and blue map to be held at map sales. These can then be used to help competitors who are uncertain as to which course to enter. This will probably tend to be a parent checking that they believe that their child can take on a higher level

course and/or newcomers working out, with assistance, which course to enter.  
All control descriptions should also 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”

## **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 [events@southdowns-orienteers.org.uk](mailto:events@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
- Finish banner

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

### **9.2. General Kit**

This is obtained as required from your area co-ordinator or equipment officer:

- Larger road signs, including runners crossing signs
- Red and white tape
- Bibs
- Parking money bucket
- Map boxes for the start
- Barbed wire fence crossing protectors

## **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 will allow contactless punching. To allow this units should be turned on with a normal dibber on the morning of the event.

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.

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 in the registration tent 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 area co-ordinator 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. Map Sales / Dibber Hire**

One or two helpers needed in car close to registration. The following items are needed:

- SOG fee card (provided by planner)
- Course details sheet – A4 (provided by planner)
- Control Descriptions (provided by planner)
- All yellow maps (provided by planner)
- One each of orange, green and blue maps (provided by planner)
- Hire dibbers (from the SI computing team)
- Hire forms (from the SI computing team)
- Cash float (£10 - £20 can be provided by the treasurer if given advance notice)
- Pen

For insurance purposes, it is really important that the names of all people participating as a group, or shadowing a junior are captured on a dibber hire form, even if a dibber is not hired. Please ensure anyone helping on map sales is clear on this and assists with the filling in of the dibber hire form.

### **11.4. 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 AutoDownload 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 registration/download tent.

At the end of each event, all hired dibber forms, including those completed by adults shadowing juniors on their own dibber, need to be handed to the SOG Treasurer, the SI computing team will collect all forms from competitors hiring dibbers as they register and will pass them on at the end of the event. Also, a record needs to be kept of any non-participating volunteers and also passed onto the SOG Treasurer.

### **11.5. 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, a second person at map sales or an appropriate SO person who is around at the point when needed.

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

Since the 2015 SOG Series orange, green and blue maps are only available after starting instead of at map sales. This following procedure should be applied:

- Yellow maps will be given out when payment (free for SO Juniors!) is made i.e. no change to old process
- Orange, green and blue maps will be available after the start. Each course should have a separate tray (part of SO equipment), with a map placed under each tray for ease of pick up by the next starter
- A blank map should be placed beside the clear unit to help competitors to familiarise themselves with the area/terrain, potentially locate the start and to check the map scale
- Control descriptions will be handed out at map sales in exchange for their payment. Control descriptions will be used as a receipt of entry and as a means of keeping a count of entries made vs maps available. This means the Planner should print and make available the same number of control descriptions as there are available maps for each course – see section 11.3 Map Sales (NB if someone turns up at the start and says they've forgotten their control descriptions, we can take it on trust that they've paid)
- One full set of maps should be left at registration and these are available for anyone who wants to check whether a course is suitable before entering
  - At the start any course map is available, on request, in pre-start and the planner/starter will be supportive of this (someone may want 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
  - If maps run out for a particular course, then this will be both anticipated and known at map sales, as control descriptions will be running out. In these circumstances, the person manning map sales should ideally recruit a helper to recycle maps from early finishers to meet demand and get those maps taken to the start, so that these later starters get the same maps-after-the-start experience. These later competitors can either use the descriptions on the map, or they can seek to recycle from others who have finished. (if no helper is available, then individual competitors can be directed to obtain recycled maps, and to then take these to the start)
  - There will be no distinction in the results between those who had sight of the course map in advance or who requested their map in advance, and those who didn't.

## **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 mapping co-ordinator will normally print you a number of (typically five) maps with all the controls on to aid collection. 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 appropriate person or passed onto 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. The treasurer will liaise with you regarding the map sales money. Don't forget to claim for your expenses incurred in putting the event on.

### **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 20p per mile, which is based on the AA's calculation of car running costs. It is straightforward to claim expenses from the SOG Treasurer on the day of the event.

#### 12.5 Relax!

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

A suggested timeline for planning a SOG will be added as an appendix  
eg when to start armchair planning, when to visit the area, send map files to printer etc etc  
This can also serve as a checklist

#### List of current contacts

Equipment officer	Neil Crickmore	<a href="mailto:n.crickmore@tesco.net">n.crickmore@tesco.net</a>
Mapping co-ordinator	Mike Gammon	<a href="mailto:mgammon@toucansurf.com">mgammon@toucansurf.com</a>
Safety co-ordinator	Karen Ashworth	<a href="mailto:karen@karenashworth.co.uk">karen@karenashworth.co.uk</a>
Computing team co-ordinator	Ralph Phillips	<a href="mailto:mazralphips@virginmedia.com">mazralphips@virginmedia.com</a>
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