



# Orienteering Ireland

Strategic Plan 2022- 2024



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## Executive Summary

This Strategic Plan presents the vision, objectives, and strategies of Orienteering Ireland from 2022 to 2024.

The organisation's primary aim during this period is to continue to grow the sport of orienteering in Ireland. OI looks forward to the challenge of building on the successes of the previous Strategic Plan and plans to strengthen those areas where shortcomings have been identified.

This will be a period of change for the organisation, moving from an Association with a heavy reliance on volunteers to a CLG with a number of paid contractors.

The priority of Orienteering Ireland is to promote the sport of orienteering as an activity that can be enjoyed by all and to provide the club network with a support infrastructure to enable safe holding of events on a regular schedule. This objective has been broken into smaller objectives so that these goals can be realized. The specific objectives are:

- Generate greater awareness of orienteering;
- Increased promotion of the sport at all levels;
- Support the development of administrative and technical expertise within clubs and regional associations;
- Further development of the Coaching Programme;
- Support the further development of the Schools Education Programme;
- Develop courses for novices in orienteering skills and techniques as a structured introduction to the sport.

The primary objective is to increase awareness of the sport and increase the number of persons participating at orienteering events. Following this, there will be a focus on getting newcomers to the sport to come back and try it again. There will also be a concerted effort to increase the numbers doing more than one event and also increase the numbers doing four or more events.

It is common for many people to try orienteering once and never repeat the experience. International experience suggests that persons who have competed in a minimum of four events are likely to repeat the experience at some stage in the future. The organisation is targeting an increase in the numbers of participants doing multiple events.

It is clear that additional coaching and support is required to provide participants with adequate skills to enjoy the sport. Orienteering by its nature requires an initial investment in knowledge to make the sport attractive. The participant needs to understand the objective of orienteering and requires an

ability to read maps and an ability to translate that information to the immediate area in order to complete a course.

In addition, OI will continue to support the:

- Management of the national orienteering squads, both Elite and Junior;
- Mapping initiatives to provide new competition areas within the country;
- Promotion of MapRun Orienteering as a gateway to 'club' orienteering
- Building on our relationships with Local Sports Partnerships and Schools

The organisation will also continue to implement

- all child welfare directives and legislation,
- Good Governance procedures,
- Anti-doping directives,
- a culture of safety awareness.

Orienteering Ireland has good relationships with many external bodies, e.g. Northern Ireland Orienteering Association, Local Sport Partnerships and Outdoor Education Centres, etc. It is intended that we will continue to develop these relationships in the interest of increasing awareness of and fostering interest in orienteering.

## Review of the Strategic Plan 2019 - 2021

The previous strategic plan has run its course and below is a short review of the main activities of the last planning period. For two of these three years our activities were significantly affected by Covid 19, 2019 was the only 'normal' year. Despite these restrictions the organisation was very busy and a lot of important work was completed.

Some new opportunities were presented.

MapRun Orienteering has opened up many more avenues to promote orienteering to the wider public and to LSPs.

The new experience we have all had with using Online learning means we can now provide support and courses to all of the Orienteering community regardless of geographical location.

Covid restrictions meant there were no events for many months. When there was some lifting of restrictions our clubs worked hard to run events within guidelines. Schools events were severely affected by Covid and were slower to reopen. The coaching courses (RTGO and Level 1 BI) are now 90% outdoors.

A lot of work was completed on Governance and Compliance. The change to 'Orienteering Ireland' was completed in the period of the last Strategic Plan (2019 to 2021). The next step is to make the change to a CLG.

During the various lockdowns, we ran a range of courses, these were online and well attended. These included Safeguarding 1, Mapping courses, MapRun design courses and Junior Orienteering online activities, and an Introduction to Navigation course.

To further develop the sport we recruited two new contract staff. They work at a variety of activities, from Coaching to Administration to Promotion.

Orienteering Ireland has continued to promote orienteering as an activity to be enjoyed by all. The orienteering website, [www.orienteering.ie](http://www.orienteering.ie), remains an important channel for promoting all fixtures both national and local, but the use of Social Media is a significant addition to our promotion possibilities.

Orienteering Ireland has played an active role in the promotion and participation of Sport Ireland initiatives of Sportsfest, European Week of Sport, Active Schools week and Women in the Outdoors. Events have been organised and run to encourage wider participation in the sport. The introduction of MapRun has facilitated the easier operation of these events, and the possibility of people Orienteering at their own chosen time.

**OI also has a very active forum on its website that club members can share information, ask technical questions and interact socially about the sport. These channels are used in the marketing of events, staying in touch with club members and generating an added social dimension to the sport.**

**Not all of the objectives in the last Strategic Plan have been achieved, within the strange Covid environment of the last two years. The current plan is to build and further strengthen the organisation, the clubs, the structures and the knowledge required both to compete and to organise events.**

## Current Status of Irish Orienteering

Orienteering has recovered well from the impact of Covid and lockdowns but clubs have had varying degrees of speed of recovery, impacted by the age profile of their members and availability of their volunteers.

There has been significant structural change in our organisation, we have changed to Orienteering Ireland and we have taken on two extra part-time contract staff.

In 2021 we made the change from 'The Irish Orienteering Association' to 'Orienteering Ireland'. At the Irish Orienteering Association AGM in May 2021, the members of the Irish Orienteering Association voted to change the name of the association to 'Orienteering Ireland'.

There were a number of reasons for this change, including:

- Putting the name of the sport 'front and centre' so that it is clear that we represent orienteering;
- Nomenclature consistency with other sporting national governing bodies, e.g. Swim Ireland, Athletics Ireland, Cycling Ireland, etc.; and
- Many organisations referred to the association as Orienteering Ireland.

The impact of Covid and resulting lockdowns on Orienteering was devastating, the sport stopped for large periods of time. Many of our volunteers provided online training (fitness, mapping, MapRun, Junior support) to the orienteering community during those difficult times. Some positives have emerged; we are all now proficient with online learning. This has given us a great opportunity to provide training for Orienteering officials instead of a weekend course. We noticed a lot more female participants in the online courses.

The past year has been challenging on time and resources on a number of significant topics that impact directly on the future of our sport. Child Protection, Governance and GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) have been issues we have had to deal with at national governing body level but this also extends down to the Clubs and Schools events and is something that we all have to accept and deal with. The various sub committees that have been set up to deal with these issues continue to work tirelessly ensuring our ability to comply with these new regulations.

In relation to the sport of orienteering, the outlook continues to be positive. The Junior Squad is evolving and growing thanks to the continued voluntary efforts of the Junior Squad Officer and Selectors. These need the support and assistance of the parents and clubs to ensure we continue to grow.

Likewise, the senior squad continues to evolve with juniors progressing to the senior ranks. Both our junior and senior squad athletes continue to do us proud and fly the flag at the highest level internationally.

Equally important the local events continue to develop with some of the newer smaller clubs doing some wonderful work to gain a foothold for orienteering in their areas. We need to continue to support these clubs.

The highly successful 'Ready to Go Project', which was first funded by DAF (Dormant Accounts Funding) in 2017, has continued to raise the profile of Orienteering with Local Sports Partnerships, the addition of MapRun Orienteering has expanded this conversation and means LSP's can provide Outdoor and Adventure activities in their own areas.

The increased interest in Outdoor sports has meant that the demand for Orienteering support has grown significantly in the last year. While acknowledging the not inconsiderable efforts of the many volunteers, sometimes the organisation cannot meet the numerous requests received from schools/LSP's/youth groups/etc. who have different orienteering requirements (mapping, instruction, orienteering). This is a challenge that requires support to further develop the sport.

## What is Orienteering?

Orienteering is a sport for all, whatever a person's age, fitness level and experience. It is an activity that elite competitors and recreational participants, men and women, young children and persons over 90-years-of-age, can enjoy together. It is truly a sport for everyone. Participation in orienteering is not expensive, a map and suitable outdoor clothes are all one needs to get started.

The sport can be practiced almost anywhere in the world, in all kinds of terrain from parks to deserts. The terrain used varies from dense, impassable bush to treeless areas and from mountainous country to level ground. There are several different forms of the sport. The International Orienteering Federation (IOF) is the world governing body for foot-orienteering, ski-orienteering, mountain bike orienteering, and trail orienteering. Orienteering Ireland (OI) is the governing body for the sport in the Republic of Ireland. The form of the sport most commonly found here is foot-orienteering.

Competitive orienteering involves using a specialised and detailed map to navigate one's way round a course. The course consists of points in the terrain, marked by orange and white control flags, which have to be visited in a certain order. Competitors carry either a card or an electronic key that they must punch at each control flag. The winner is the person who takes the shortest time to visit all the control points in the specified order. Fast running alone does not make someone a winner. The best route between the control points must be chosen and the markers found without wasting unnecessary seconds.

## Changes in Irish Sport

One of the unexpected impacts of Covid 19 is the increased interest in Outdoor Recreation. It is seen as a safe environment for exercise and meeting up with others. OI would like to take advantage of this increased interest in Outdoor Recreation.

Orienteering Ireland aims to maintain its position as a healthy sports organisation at a time when similar groups are becoming more professional. The production of this new Strategic Plan reflects the approach Orienteering is taking. The Government has highlighted the priority policy areas as:

- increasing participation of young people in sport;
- ensuring the rights of young people are protected through an emphasis on fair play and implementation of the code of ethics for young people in sport;
- promoting equal opportunities for women to participate;
- developing sport in disadvantaged areas;
- promoting opportunities to participate in recreational sport;
- introducing a new professional approach to high performance sport;
- promoting sport for its health benefits in tackling medical conditions such as heart disease and obesity.

These are significant objectives that Orienteering Ireland welcomes.

## OI Structure and Staffing

There are currently 17 clubs affiliated to OI with a total of approximately 3,500 competitors. A 12-member Executive Committee manages the OI organisation. They are elected annually. OI has no employees. There are three people who are paid on a monthly basis for part-time work. The work undertaken by these part time contractors includes Development, Coaching, Administration, Communications, Club Support.

The current Executive Committee positions are:

- Chairperson
- Vice Chairperson
- Honorary Secretary
- Honorary Treasurer
- Development and Schools Officer
- Mapping Registrar and Environmental Officer
- Controller of Technical Standards
- Education Officer
- Junior Representative Manager
- High Performance Manager
- Communications Officer
- National Childrens Officer

Currently teams competing for Ireland compete on a 32-county basis. Orienteering Ireland along with the Northern Ireland Orienteering Association (NOI) select international teams and ratify nominations for selectors, coaches and team managers. The NIOA is completely independent of OI and is affiliated to the British Orienteering Federation. The Irish Orienteering Championships (IOC) is rotated on a provincial basis, so OI has responsibility for organising the IOC three years out of four.

In 2021, The AGM voted to support the change of the organisation's name to Orienteering Ireland. The change to a CLG is also expected to be completed in 2022.

## Administration and Finance

In a typical year there are approximately 170 orienteering events held in Ireland. The number of participants per event ranges from 50 to 250. The management of most events is very labour-intensive. Preparation for major events often commences 12 months in advance. The work falls predominantly on a small number of volunteers.

There are 17 Affiliated clubs at the moment, these are spread throughout the country, the larger clubs are in Dublin, Cork and Waterford.

## Terrain and Mapping

Maps are the basic and essential infrastructure to the sport of orienteering. The maps are highly detailed and specific to orienteering. Orienteering maps must be surveyed, drawn and produced to the international standards set out by the International Orienteering Federation. The maps are highly detailed with regard to the physical features of an area and depict the terrain in terms of height, features and vegetation.

In the past, there are broadly two types of terrain used for orienteering here - open mountain/moorland and cultivated forests. Because of its wealth of rock and contour detail much of the open mountain/moorland of Waterford, West Cork, Kerry, Connemara, Sligo and Donegal offer World-Class orienteering terrain. However, with the exception of some of the Cork/Kerry orienteering areas, this terrain is either unmapped or not mapped to international quality standards. Most forests in Ireland are cultivated on a commercial basis, and are crossed by paths and extraction tracks that simplify the navigational challenge. In addition, the contour detail of most of our cultivated forests is not very intricate. Nevertheless, some of our forested area is of sufficient orienteering quality to host major international competition.

Changes to forests, which have been mapped for orienteering purposes, can cause grave difficulties for clubs and the association. Significant felling can render a map useless and require a club to commence a significant re-mapping effort to ensure that the area can be used for competition or training. In some cases, if felling is very extensive it may result in an area being useless for orienteering for decades. It is essential that Orienteering Ireland maintains its good relationship with Coillte to ensure that the Association and the clubs are aware of any significant felling plans and that they can advise Coillte of any likely major impact on the organisation and the sport.

Land access for orienteering can sometimes be difficult to obtain. Insurance costs associated with access and public liability are also a cause of concern.

In recent years there has been a development in urban orienteering, often with maps of areas such as university campuses. This mirrors a worldwide interest in sprint and urban orienteering which is

reflected in the introduction of urban sprint races at major international competitions such as the World Championships, Junior World Championships and European Youth Championships. This discipline represents a real opportunity for Irish athletes to compete at the top international level and poses a challenge for the organisation to develop urban sprint maps and events to allow our teams to prepare for competition.

## High Performance Orienteering and International Competition

Elite orienteering demands very high levels of physical conditioning as well as specialist technical abilities developed over many years of training and competition.

The pinnacle of orienteering competition is the World Orienteering Championships (WOC). WOC is an annual event. The International Orienteering Federation (IOF) introduced a new division system for ranking nations after WOC 2013. This division system is used to determine how many runners a country has in the Middle & Long Distance Finals at WOC. The rankings are based on results from the previous two World Championships. Going forward being in a higher division is of benefit as more places improves competition amongst the squad to get one of those places. In recent years we have achieved some impressive results at WOC, with some strong relay performances in races that are getting more competitive each year. Ireland has and will continue to be well represented at the European Orienteering Championships which are held every 2 years. The results of the Junior Team are also improving with some impressive results at the Junior World Orienteering Championships.

From 2019 onwards the World Championships format changed to have an emphasis on Forest and Urban orienteering, a Forest WOC and Urban WOC on alternating years. This change in emphasis is expected to benefit High Performance Orienteering in Ireland as it will reduce costs and allow for better preparation in advance of the World Championships.

The six key determinants of international success in orienteering are:

- The orienteer training and competing in technically complex and varied orienteering terrain;
- The availability of very well surveyed maps for training and competition. Accurate maps are essential for the development of fine map reading techniques in all orienteers, and especially in our elite athletes;
- Top quality competition to bring out the best in the orienteer and accelerate development.
- Extremely high levels of physical conditioning by the orienteer;
- Support in the form of coaching, biomechanical and medical testing, medical backup and funding;
- Experience of major international orienteering competition.

To find an adequate supply of suitable terrain, excellent mapping and a high standard of competition Irish elite orienteers need to spend time and money training and competing outside Ireland.

There are currently structures in place to continue to develop the talent. There are also efforts being made to widen the base of competitors capable of competing at international level.

## Participation

The promotion and marketing of sport as a healthy, fun and attractive lifestyle choice is increasing the general public's awareness of sport. Outdoor adventure sports are also receiving a higher public profile with participation increasing in this area of sport.

Orienteering is part of the Physical Education curriculum in primary and post-primary schools. This offers opportunities for increased participation. The development of Schools Orienteering has increased the numbers participating in the sport and presents an opportunity for extending the reach of Orienteering. Orienteering is now also an optional sport for Leaving certificate PE students.

## Promotion and Communications

The promotion of orienteering is an area where Orienteering Ireland will continue to expend effort in order to raise awareness of the sport of orienteering in an attempt to attract more participants and to build on the current base. In the last few years, the emphasis has changed from website and email to Social Media Channels.

## Strategy Statement

### Vision

"To provide quality orienteering to all participants at all levels."

The aim of Orienteering Ireland is to support, promote and increase participation in the Sport of Orienteering. Including people of all ages, experience and all walks of life.

Orienteering possesses the following Unique Selling Points.

- Outdoors Activity
- All ages from under 10 to over 90 years compete.
- Excellent Gender Balance (45% female)
- Include all fitness levels (walk before you run)
- Minimal Environmental Impact (see <https://www.see-project.eu/reports> for ENOS report)
- Inclusive of all (cost is not prohibitive)
- Urban orienteering using MapRun means Outdoor Adventure Sport on your doorstep

### Areas of Strategic Focus

The executive has identified five areas for strategic focus. They are as follows:

**Strategic Area 1: Participation and Promotion**

**Strategic Area 2: Competition Standards**

**Strategic Area 3: Improving Performance at National and International Level**

**Strategic Area 4: Governance, Operations and Finance**

**Strategic Area 5: Education and Training**

There is further detail on each strategic area provided in the following sections.

## Strategic Area 1: Participation and Promotion

### Objective 1: Increasing Participation of all groups in Orienteering

In recent years, there has been increased participation in a number of sports, particularly triathlons, hill-running and adventure racing. Orienteering as a sport complements these sports and is very suitable as an alternative for active sports people. The navigation and map-reading element of orienteering also provides an extra challenge for people who like to challenge themselves and develop additional skills. However, it can have the disadvantage of putting off people who believe that they don't have and are unable to develop these skills.

The future of Irish orienteering will be strengthened by increasing the number of young people exposed to the sport and working towards ensuring that the experience is positive. Orienteering is open to all ages and abilities; it is educational and progression through different levels is possible. These factors make it very suitable for young people, particularly young people from the age of 10 upwards.

In order to increase the number of people orienteering, a communications programme will have to target both the youth and their parents particularly as the younger generation rely heavily on their parents for transport to events. In a limited number of cases, schools and various organisations provide transport to events, e.g. scout groups.

Orienteering now features on the P.E. curriculum for both post-primary and primary school children. Orienteering Ireland will seek to strengthen the links between the schools orienteering organisations and the schools.

Orienteering clubs/societies exist in many Irish third level institutions and are often the first point of contact that many young adults have with the sport. A national Students Orienteering Championships is held annually. A World University Orienteering Championship (WUOC) is held biennially. Ireland has sent teams to WUOC in the past and will continue to do so. It is intended that WUOC would form an intrinsic part of the high performance programme. The organisation will also provide support to the university clubs to hold events and to help coach new-comers to the sport.

## **Actions**

*Use Social Media Channels to publicise events.*

*Orienteering Ireland will use Social Media to contact local groups in advance of events in their area*

*Orienteering Ireland will work with Local Sports Partnerships to promote Orienteering Run an 'Introduction to Orienteering' course over a period of 6- 8 weeks to support newcomers to the sport.*

*OI will support affiliated clubs to provide events for Beginners.*

*Utilise a network of MapRun courses to give people the experience of Orienteering*

## Objective 2: To support our Affiliated Clubs

The future of Irish orienteering will be strengthened by supporting clubs in holding events and developing the skills of volunteers. This work is aimed at improving the experience of the first time orienteer.

Clubs will be offered training for Planners, Controllers and Organisers and also training in Social Media use to increase the numbers attending events.

Orienteering clubs want to learn more about how best to retain newcomers to the sport, OI will work with clubs on this.

### *Actions:*

*Clubs will be encouraged to provide a social element when organizing events with a view to providing the participants with a more positive experience of orienteering.*

*Increase presence in the relevant social media.*

*Online training courses will be provided on Planning, Controlling, Organising, Newcomers and Social Media*

*Orienteering Ireland shall provide a family-friendly environment at events.*

*Orienteering Ireland will also seek to increase awareness of the sport in all target groups.*

### Objective 3: Continue to Develop the Schools Orienteering Programme

Most major sports are played in schools - some at primary level and more at post-primary level. The top school players in these sports will have come to the attention of and have been enrolled by local clubs before they leave school.

Orienteering talent at junior level is discovered through the club rather than through the schools system. Orienteering has recently been included within the education curriculum so there is a potential demand waiting to be filled. A barrier to the development of orienteering in schools is a lack of orienteering know-how.

The Irish Orienteering Schools Group (IOSG) has developed a framework of events which are widely publicized to schools. These events have been well attended over the past three years and thousands of school-going children have been exposed to orienteering. Educational material has been available to the schools through the IOSG blog site. In addition, a video has been made specifically for schools.

The "Ready to go Orienteering" programme will continue to expand over the life of this plan. The expansion will be to include non-teachers in it's programme (youth leaders, scout leaders etc) and to include MapRun training.

Maps of many school grounds and parks close to schools have been developed. The organisation will continue to support the mapping of these areas and will make the maps available to schools in the locality for the purpose of teaching school children orienteering skills and holding schools events.

While many school-going children have had some exposure to orienteering, very few have actually participated in regular club events. Over the next three years, there will be a concerted effort to encourage school-going children to make the transition from schools events to OI club events. This will entail communicating with schools, children and their parents. As parents are normally the people responsible for getting children to events and scheduling such events into the family schedule.

## *Actions*

*OI will continue to support the “Ready to go Orienteering” programme for schools.*

*Schools will be encouraged to feed young orienteers into the club system.*

*Orienteering Ireland will promote and support the regional schools associations and will support national and provincial schools championships.*

*Orienteering Ireland will support the production of maps of school grounds and parks local to schools.*

#### Objective 4: Provide opportunities for People with Disabilities to orienteer

"Trail Orienteering" organised on paths is an event which is particularly suited to those who are relatively immobile. Points are awarded for skill in recognising the correct positions on a map of features in terrain. Wheelchair-bound people can compete on equal terms with the able-bodied. There is opportunity for people to compete at world championship level in this discipline.

##### *Actions*

*Trail orienteering events will be promoted to the general public and information will be sent to organizations that have strong links with disabled persons.*

*Orienteering Ireland will support the provision of new trail orienteering maps.*

## Objective 5: Further develop External Communications

With the proliferation of social networking, blogs and web-TV there has been an explosion in the amount of content relating to orienteering available for download, viewing and digestion in the last few years. Orienteering Ireland and all clubs have a website. Facebook has become a very useful tool to promote the sport. Clubs are increasingly establishing a Facebook presence. The Junior Squad and Elite Squad and Schools Orienteering now have blog sites. Some clubs use twitter as a way to disseminate information quickly. Orienteering Ireland are currently revamping their website and rebranding the sport with updated logos.

### **Actions:**

*Make video assets for the promotion of elite orienteering and international competition.*

*Use Website and create media to attract people to the sport.*

*Continue to produce printed promotional material to clubs.*

*Handle press and media opportunities for the sport.*

## Strategic Area 2: Competition Standards

### Objective 1: Support High Quality Mapping

Accurate maps are essential for the development of fine map reading techniques in all orienteers and especially in our high-performance athletes. Well-surveyed maps facilitate race planning and also make competition fairer for all. The use of excellent maps of both technically interesting and scenic terrain is an important factor in attracting orienteering tourism and in winning repeat visits.

LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) is a remote sensing technology, i.e. the technology is not in direct contact with what is being measured. From satellite, aeroplane or helicopter, a LiDAR system sends a light pulse to the ground. The obtained data is used to create topography maps. Orienteering Maps are one type of topography maps.

LiDAR can provide more accurate data about the terrain. Appropriate aerial photographic coverage of some areas used for orienteering already exists and is available for purchase from agencies such as Ordnance Survey Ireland and some private companies. Much work has been done over the past 3 years in establishing acquiring datasets suitable for use in mapping. This data will be made available to clubs on a structured basis to enable the clubs to update maps and create maps of new areas.

It will be necessary to invest in a number of maps over the next three years. This investment is essential and will pay dividends in providing new challenges to orienteers and helping them to further develop their orienteering skills. Training will be provided to clubs to assist them in the skills of map-making and understanding the associated technology.

#### *Actions*

*Orienteering Ireland will work closely with clubs to develop a program to build surveying skills among members*

*Orienteering Ireland will continue to procure appropriate photography, LiDAR and data for map-making.*

*Orienteering Ireland has developed and will maintain a national map register of areas mapped for orienteering purposes.*

*Survey data will be made available to clubs on a request basis.*

## Objective 2: Provide Excellent Training for Event Controllers, Planners and Organisers

Excellent work has been done to provide a system of event management, and Orienteering Ireland will continue to train and accredit competition officials. Officials receive their initial training by acting as understudy to experienced officials. Formal training courses are run annually by the organisation. These courses are now run online, which makes them accessible to a wider audience.

### *Actions*

*The schedule and quality of training courses will be monitored.*

*Orienteering Ireland will work with each club to ensure they have trained event officials, and have a development plan in place.*

*Orienteering Ireland will continue to run training courses for event controllers, planners and organisers.*

*Orienteering Ireland will continue to encourage clubs to further develop the use of 'Ór' software and "SportIdent" electronic timing system. Orienteering Ireland will continue to update the electronic timing system SportIdent.*

## Strategic Area 3: Improve Performance at International & National Level

### Objective 1: Foster High-Performance

There is a structure in place to assist the two elite orienteering squads, the Senior and Junior Squads, in developing their skills. The squads have developed blog sites to promote communication among members, along with a Senior Squad Facebook page and Twitter account.

The quantity of top-level competition in Ireland is limited. This necessitates elite orienteers, both seniors and juniors, travelling abroad for training camps and competitions to develop their skills and compete with the best in the world. Presently, there is a structure in place which facilitates the older 'juniors' moving to the senior squad as they develop the skills and confidence to compete at senior level. In addition, there will be a requirement for members of the squad seeking selection to compete in the Irish national championships or equivalent competition (as identified by the selectors) if they wish to be considered for selection for the World Championships.

#### Actions

*The process of mentoring and coaching orienteers who aspire to representing Ireland in the World Championship and in World Cups will continue.*

*Orienteering Ireland will progress young squad members by providing experience and greater competition at selected international events.*

*Orienteering Ireland continues to develop international training links with other countries e.g. UK and Sweden so that Irish orienteers can access the best international training and competitive opportunities backed up by strong support from an Irish base.*

*Talented young orienteers will be encouraged to participate in a programme of strong domestic competitions and then move through to appropriate international competition.*

*Orienteers wishing to be considered for selection for World Championships will be required to compete in the National Championships.*

*Orienteering Ireland will continue to support and assist elite orienteers to develop their skills.*

## Strategic Area 4: Governance, Management and Operations

### Objective 1: To change the organisation to a Company Limited by Guarantee

The change from an unincorporated association to a CLG will ensure a better structure for future growth of Orienteering.

#### *Actions*

*Orienteering Ireland will work with the necessary organisations to change to a CLG.*

*The OI committee will work to ensure this change of structure occurs in a managed fashion and with no impact on the everyday operations of the sport.*

## Objective 2: To Ensure Irish Orienteering Remains Free of Drugs and Performance Enhancing Substances

Orienteering Ireland does not tolerate the use of performance enhancing substances and will work to ensure that a pro-active programme of education and testing includes orienteers.

### *Actions*

*Orienteering Ireland will work to ensure that Sport Ireland's anti-doping procedures are in place.*

*An education programme for the athletes will be managed by OI where the athletes will be regularly informed of their obligations regarding anti-doping and advised of any changes to the code.*

### Objective 3: To Promote Fair Play and Implement a Code of Ethics for Junior Orienteering

Every young person participating in orienteering has the right to do so in an environment that is safe and has concern for his or her development and enjoyment. It is vital that volunteers, coaches, instructors, adults and parents are aware of these responsibilities and ensure that young people first of all have fun and enjoy their orienteering.

#### *Actions*

*Orienteering Ireland will continue to work closely with national agencies to ensure that the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport are implemented in orienteering programmes for young people. OI will continue to develop an orienteering specific Code of Good Practice for Children in Sport.*

*Orienteering Ireland will work to ensure that all young people involved in the sport will participate in an environment that is supportive of their development and appropriately trained instructors and coaches support them.*

## Objective 4: Encourage Culture of Safety Awareness

Orienteering is an adventure sport and risk is inherent in the sport. Orienteering Ireland will continue to promote safety at all levels in the sport and promote a safety first culture. It is the policy of OI to have a safety module on all planning, controlling and coaching courses at national and club level.

Subventions to clubs will require them to demonstrate that they have conducted a risk and safety assessment and taken any appropriate measures to ensure the safety of competitors, spectators and event officials.

### *Actions*

*Within the network of clubs and OECs, Orienteering Ireland will continue to promote a strong culture of safety.*

*Orienteering Ireland training programmes will continue to incorporate first aid modules.*

*Encourage clubs to have members trained in first aid.*

## Objective 5: Environmental Impact, Land Access and Quality of Irish Terrain

The impact which Orienteering has on the environment should be minimal and we will strive to reduce this impact further.

It is also important that there is reasonable access, in partnership with landowners, to areas used for orienteering, including scenic areas. Orienteers continue to be educated on the need for environmentally friendly practices and must be made aware of the rights of landowners.

The organisation strongly endorses and supports the 'Leave No Trace' campaign to ensure that participants minimise their impact on the outdoors, public areas and in particular areas used for orienteering.

### *Actions*

*Orienteering Ireland will support other national agencies and landowners to facilitate responsible land access and conservation.*

*Orienteering Ireland will monitor the environmental impact of its activities upon the environment.*

*Orienteering Ireland will develop a national campaign to ensure each club has a conservation awareness and terrain access strategy.*

*Orienteering Ireland will actively participate in land access forums and land sustainability arenas (i.e. the Wicklow Uplands Council, Coillte Stakeholder forums).*

## Objective 6: Ensure the organisation continues to work effectively

Many of the significant changes implemented in the last few years are designed to keep the organisation working efficiently and effectively. These included Fixtures Listings and Entries, Website changes, Governance changes, Policy and Procedures updates.

These changes are expected to continue in the coming years.

### *Actions:*

*Update how the fixtures are presented on the website to provide relevant information for beginners and new comers to the sport in an easy understandable way.*

*Orienteering Ireland will continue to comply with the Governance Code and update our policies and procedures as necessary.*

*OI will comply fully with GDPR.*

*Maintain appropriate financial policies and procedures.*

## Strategic Area 5: Education and Training

### Objective 1: Development of Orienteering Skills

Orienteering Ireland is committed to maintaining a coaching structure and ensuring that there are opportunities for orienteers and interested individuals to learn coaching skills. The association is also committed to ensuring that there is a coaching programme so that coaches can progress to higher levels.

#### *Actions*

*The status of coaching programmes within the clubs shall be monitored and supported as necessary. OI will ensure, with co-operation from the clubs, that all clubs will have at least one fully qualified coach.*

*Orienteering Ireland will provide places for other interested parties to participate on orienteering coaching courses, e.g. primary teachers, post-primary teachers, scout leaders and OEC staff.*

*Orienteering Ireland will provide coaching courses to orienteers to enable them to coach orienteers within the club network.*

*Orienteering Ireland will continue to develop its coaching programme in partnership with Coaching Ireland.*

*Orienteering Ireland will also work within the European framework to provide recognised coaching qualifications.*

*Introduce charters that define the responsibility and functions of coaches and instructors and the standard of behaviour required from them in the sport.*

*Ensure that every club coach has been trained appropriately to work with young people. Each coach will be screened by Orienteering Ireland and entered into a national register of Orienteering coaches and instructors.*

## Objective 2: Strengthen Links with Outdoor Education Centres (OECs)

Many people come into contact with the sport of orienteering during a trip to an Outdoor Education Centre. It is very important that a positive experience of the sport be obtained on the first exposure. Appropriate liaison between Orienteering Ireland and the OECs is necessary to ensure that OEC instructors are trained and that the orienteering activity is carried out appropriately. Orienteering Ireland in conjunction with the Clubs will ensure that the people who participate in OEC programs will be offered an opportunity to join orienteering clubs and orienteer on a regular basis.

### *Actions:*

*Orienteering Ireland will continue to liaise with OECs.*

*Orienteering Ireland will encourage the development of closer links between clubs and OECs to facilitate recruitment of OEC participants to orienteering.*

*The organisation will provide OEC staff with access to coaching courses run by OI.*

## Implementation of Strategic Plan.

### Structures

Orienteering Ireland is committed to the effective implementation of the Strategic Plan. There is a need to supplement voluntary officers with some paid professional staff to develop resources to ensure the development of Irish Orienteering at all levels and in particular to develop the skills and knowledge within the schools system. There is also a need to encourage school children to progress to the club network and participate in national, regional and local events in addition to schools events.

The Orienteering Ireland AGM, is attended by club delegates and members and is held annually to review the implementation of the Strategic Plan and matters of Orienteering Ireland policy.

The structure of Orienteering Ireland is set out below. The responsibilities of each Officer are also outlined.

<b>Appointment</b>	<b>Areas of Responsibility</b>
Executive Chairperson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Chair and co-ordinate activities of executive;</li><li>• Responsible for the implementation of Strategic Plan.</li></ul>
Vice Chairperson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fulfil the duties of the chairperson in their absence</li><li>• Assist the Chair in the co-ordination of activities of the executive;</li><li>• Responsible for the implementation of the Strategic Plan.</li></ul>
Honorary Secretary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Administration of Orienteering Ireland and its Secretariat;</li><li>• First point of contact and liaison with IOF, other Federations, regions and clubs within Ireland,</li></ul>

Honorary Treasurer	Develop policies, administer and advise on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding</li> <li>• Finance</li> <li>• Insurance</li> <li>• Sponsorship</li> </ul>
Communications and PR Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote Orienteering Ireland</li> <li>• Co-ordination of promotion effort by the other committee members and the clubs</li> <li>• Orienteering Ireland Website and Electronic communication</li> </ul>

Director of High Performance Orienteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of High Performance capacity</li> <li>• Appointment of Elite squad managers, coaches and selectors</li> <li>• Ensure that selection criteria are fair, clear and published</li> <li>• Organise team for International representative competitions</li> <li>• Manage the Elite squads budget</li> <li>• Ensure that ISC Anti-Doping policies are communicated and followed</li> </ul>
Director of Junior Representative Orienteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop programmes for improving necessary orienteering skills to enable high performance</li> <li>• Appoint Junior squad managers, coaches and selectors</li> <li>• Ensure that selection criteria are fair, clear and published</li> <li>• Manage the Junior Squad budget</li> <li>• Organise team for International representative competitions</li> <li>• Ensure that ISC Anti-Doping policies are communicated and followed</li> <li>• Ensure that the joint Code of Ethics and Good Practice is followed</li> </ul>

<p>Director of Coaching and Training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop Coaching education and Coaching awards within Orienteering Ireland</li> <li>• Liaison with Coaching Ireland</li> <li>• Provide orienteering coaching resources to OECs to standards in education</li> <li>• Liaison with other agencies with respect to orienteering coaching education</li> </ul>
<p>Development Officer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing orienteering in Primary schools and Post-primary schools</li> <li>• Implement Orienteering Ireland strategy as regards schools</li> <li>• Facilitate mapping of school grounds</li> </ul>
<p>Mapping Registrar</p>	<p>Develop policies on and advise on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All aspects of quality map production</li> <li>• Produce a Maps register and map registration process</li> <li>• Educate clubs, their members and other Irish agencies in all aspects of quality map production,</li> </ul>
<p>National Children's Officer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the implementation of COE policy</li> <li>• Assist club children's officers where required</li> </ul>
<p>Controller of Technical Standards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the Rules Guidelines and appendices of Orienteering are current.</li> <li>• Ensure development of officials.</li> <li>• Develop and maintain policy on Technical Standards</li> </ul>

## Funding

The objectives set out in this document are ambitious but achievable. Orienteering Ireland is committed to its goal of increasing the awareness of orienteering and increasing the numbers participating in a bid to widen its appeal as a sport.

There is a significant financial cost associated with these objectives. Orienteering Ireland is a small voluntary organisation with limited sources of finance with many demands being made on a small number of volunteers. The OI submission for funding to Sport Ireland contains realistic estimates of expenditure required to develop the sport of orienteering within Ireland. The organisation has received very welcome support from Sport Ireland since its inception. This support has helped the association to build the foundations that are currently in place. Orienteering Ireland is indebted to Sport Ireland for the financial support and guidance it has received to date.

Orienteering Ireland looks forward to working with its membership, clubs and outside agencies to implement this plan over the next three years.

## Acronyms

AAI	Athletics Association of Ireland
AFAS	Association of Adventure Sports
BOF	British Orienteering Federation
CISM	International Military Sports Council
EOC	European Orienteering Championships
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
IMRA	Irish Mountain Running Association
OI	Orienteering Ireland
IOC	Irish Olympic Council
IOF	International Orienteering Federation
JWOC	Junior World Orienteering Championships
LOC	Leinster Orienteering Council
MTB-O	Mountain-Bike Orienteering
NIOA	Northern Ireland Orienteering Association
OEC	Outdoor Education Centre
Ski-O	Ski Orienteering
WOC	World Orienteering Championships
FIS	Federation of Irish Sports
SIC	Sports Ireland Campus
IOSG	Irish Orienteering Schools Group