



## Environmental Policy

Orienteering Ireland (OI) and its associated members are committed to minimising local and environmental issues arising from their use of terrain for orienteering purposes. OI recognises that it has a duty to act responsibly to ensure that orienteering events do not have an adverse effect on the terrain in which they are held. OI expects each of its clubs and event organisers to acknowledge the individual nature of each area to be used.

Competitor numbers in Ireland are generally low with typically 100 participants competing per event. Some events can attract larger numbers, in excess of 300 participants. Competitors at events are divided onto different courses and are started at time intervals, so the footfall from an orienteering event is not really discernible on any area being used. Therefore events in Ireland have a negligible effect on the countryside. Orienteering in European countries has, however, proven that events with competitor numbers in excess of 10,000 can be organised and executed with minimal impact on the local environment.

OI recognises that consultation with local parties and landowners should serve to inform the event organisers of any environmental issues associated with a particular area. Without reliable access to areas there is no future for the sport. OI encourages all its members to promote good relations with landowners and interest groups associated with orienteering areas to minimise the impacts of all orienteering events on the environment.

In the past event organisers have, after consultation, altered the dates of events to avoid use of orienteering areas during sensitive times such as nesting seasons. Orienteering courses should be routed around isolated sensitive areas to eliminate the risk of any damage to the local environment and ecology. Competitors at events are divided onto different courses, they are started at time intervals and there is no defined route.

Course planners should plan their courses to minimise the effects on local flora, fauna, farmland, archaeological sites and any sensitive areas identified. Event planners should use control locations that keep competitors away from these areas. Where this is not practical, sensitive areas should be ruled out of bounds. These boundaries are marked clearly on competitors' maps. Competitors who fail to observe these boundaries will be disqualified. Course planners and event organisers can also specify compulsory crossing points of walls and fences to minimise the adverse effect of competitors traversing these obstacles. Maps can also be altered to remove the sensitive area from the map to ensure that runners do not stray into sensitive areas. The Finish should be located in a stable/durable area.

Orienteering Ireland is also a member of Leave no Trace Ireland and supports their principles in relation to the environment and how OI and its actions impact on it.

The Seven Principles of Leave No Trace provide an easily understood framework of minimum impact practices for anyone visiting the outdoors. Although Leave No Trace has its roots in the countryside, the Principles have been adapted so that they can be applied anywhere — from remote areas, to local parks and even in your own neighbourhood. They also apply to almost every recreational activity. Each Principle covers a specific topic and provides detailed information for minimising impacts.

**The 7 Principles are:**

1. Plan ahead and Prepare
2. Be Considerate of Others
3. Respect Farm Animals and Wildlife
4. Travel and Camp on Durable Ground
5. Leave What You Find
6. Dispose of Waste Properly
7. Minimise the Effects of Fire

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