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Consultation Paper
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Glasgow 2014 – Delivering a lasting legacy for Scotland Response by the Scottish Orienteering Association

Introduction

The Scottish Orienteering Association (SOA) welcomes this consultation and the opportunity to contribute to the Legacy Plan for the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games.

As the governing body the role of SOA is the promotion and development of orienteering in Scotland. We have 20 clubs, all run by volunteers, and it is estimated that approximately a thousand people participate in this sport throughout Scotland on a regular basis; many others experience the activity as an outdoor recreational activity often in family groups. Approximately thirty % of the GB squad are based in Scotland, or Scots living overseas for training purposes, and both the current UK Orienteer of the Year and UK Junior Orienteer of the Year are Scottish. At the recent British Championships Scotland had 11 age group winners and the winners of the elite men's relay. These Championships & the World Schools' Orienteering Championships were held in Scotland during the past month and both were planned and organised by Scottish clubs; the vibrancy of the sport in Scotland is reflected in the extensive competitions and fixtures throughout the year (465 events).

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The awarding of the Commonwealth Games to Glasgow in 2014 provides Scottish Governing Bodies of Sport, and the wider sporting sector, with an opportunity to create a step change in the sporting landscape within Scotland. It is crucial that the planning and action to ensure that the Games are a success starts now and is driven by clear political leadership and a will to make it happen. The legacy of a change in culture with respect to sporting activity is essential for the continuing development of our sport and for the health & well being of the nation.

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Scottish Orienteering Association
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Consultation

This response is based on the 4 Year Plan and 2008 Operating Plan developed by the SOA Board, published on our website and submitted to **sportscotland** late 2007. Board members have contributed to this response via email.

Key issues

The legacy of a national change in attitude to sport, with all its benefits to health and well being, is only achievable and sustainable if the infrastructure, both facilities and staff/volunteers, are in place to support the increased activity. We believe that the key areas to be addressed in order to establish and maintain this are:

- **Physical education and sport in schools**
- **Facility access and provision**
- **Volunteering, including coaching**

The enjoyment and benefit of any sport is substantially increased as fitness and technique improves. Physical fitness and opportunity to participate in a variety of sports at school are therefore seen as essential in establishing a positive attitude to sport. The role of orienteering in other areas of the curriculum e.g. mathematics & geography, are acknowledged.

Similarly, the provision and access to facilities are essential; whilst sports halls and swimming pools are important for general fitness, the specific facilities required for orienteering are simply a map of a suitable area. Traditionally orienteering has taken place in extensive wooded areas, often remote from centres of population, but much can be achieved with relatively small areas such as school grounds, local parks and university campuses; with appropriate care city streets can also be used. The provision of funds for maps and the support of local & educational authorities in allowing use of school & college grounds and parks are important factors if the majority of people are to be given easy access to orienteering.

Orienteering events are organised by orienteers for orienteers, and with an increasing demand, the training of volunteers to develop appropriate skills is essential. These skills include organising e.g. putting on events, technical e.g. planning courses, quality control e.g. checking the planned courses and coaching. As clubs grow in size, and memberships change and develop, there is a need to encourage and spread involvement. Improving the skills of club members and our partners e.g. teachers, Active Schools Co-ordinators, local authorities recreation officers & community leaders is essential if the current volunteer base is not to be overstretched.

Performance

Scottish orienteering is continually striving to improve the support that it provides to its senior and junior squads. Whilst there excellent orienteering terrain in Scotland, mainly north of the Central Belt, many elite athletes live, or spend extended periods of time overseas, in order to train in quality terrain close to centres of population and employment opportunities. For junior athletes the opportunity to spend time abroad is seen as an important part of their development and we aim to provide potential elite athletes with as much exposure to quality terrain as possible.

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We are also keen to strengthen our support so that our athletes continue to achieve high performance targets. Our intention is to strengthen sports science support for both the junior and senior squads, potentially by bringing in professionals to run athlete workshops, and by ensuring that athletes are supported by personal coaches. Looking to the future, we aim to increase the number of qualified coaches in schools and clubs thereby providing the opportunity for more people to enter the sport and develop their skills to achieve their potential.

Investment

Whilst continuing investment in our sport is important as the anticipated number of athletes increases, and as a non-CWG sport it is imperative that our activities are not marginalized, it is the political will and resources to provide basic sports facilities, that are seen as key to creating a positive legacy. Specific facilities for orienteering are mapped areas of suitable terrain for the full spectrum of activities e.g. from local parks for community sport to extensive natural woodlands for international competitions and holiday events both of which are an important contribution to tourism.

The role of governing bodies

As the governing body responsible for orienteering in Scotland we work closely with the British Orienteering Federation in fostering, encouraging, promoting and developing the sport in all its forms and at all levels. During the past twelve months a new structure of Directorships and Incorporation have been introduced which, we believe, provides a more appropriate management structure for implementing current management processes & procedures and is fit-for-purpose in developing and delivering our strategic plan.

Significant change has taken place in the past twelve months and it is recognised that further change is required to deliver a lasting legacy. We believe that this can be achieved by rolling out club initiatives that have been successful in some regions but not fully adopted by others. Examples of initiatives that we would encourage clubs to adopt include:

- Participation in the Active Schools programme to increase the range, frequency and quality of opportunity for children to participate in physical activity and sport.
- Engagement with local authorities and communities in providing orienteering opportunities in school grounds and parks e.g. permanent courses that can be used at any time.
- Provision of local series of events, at least monthly, to provide different challenges to those provided by the permanent courses.
- Provision of coaching sessions and weekly physical & technical training sessions to aid the development of basic skills.
- Continuing provision of junior training at club, region and national level
- Enhanced support for elite athletes.

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Summary

As a vibrant sport, Scottish Orienteering is keen to work with its partners in establishing a lasting legacy to the 2014 Commonwealth Games. We believe that investment in infrastructure, both physical and people, and a political will at a national & local level are required if the required change is to be achieved. Specific examples

of where support is needed and of initiatives to be adopted by Scottish Orienteering are given in the body of the response.

Yours sincerely

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Note

1. Scottish Orienteering is happy for the response to be made available to the public.
2. As Partnership Director, I am happy for the Scottish Government policy teams to contact me in the future.