

LOC Family Project report

This month we reach the end of the LOC Family Project. The project began in September 2022 and we've had an exciting three years developing new initiatives to raise the profile of orienteering and make our events more attractive to families with the aim of lowering the age demographic of the club.

A range of strategies were used, including:

- Designing and delivering new free Family Fun Workshops with a variety of map-reading games and courses in familiar parks during school holidays
- Introducing Family Adventures events with White, Yellow, Orange and Score courses in familiar family-friendly locations with good facilities
- Festive town centre shop window trails with small prizes
- Presence at local events within the outdoor community
- Developing our usual club events programme to make sure that families and newcomers are always catered for with beginner courses offered at all events and some locations included within each series with particular consideration of the needs of families
- Creating a Novice Course League alongside the League Table for the technical courses
- Adapting the BSOA badge scheme to create our Explorer Awards encouraging juniors to attend a wide range of club events with certificates and badges awarded for finding kites
- Including Junior Club and Skills Awards alongside club coaching sessions
- Designing a large number of novice Maprun courses across parks, woodland and fell areas (all now available via the Go Orienteering website) and promoting these through Summer Challenges and Maprun Meet-ups.
- Developing and launching new Permanent Orienteering courses for all abilities at Fell Foot Park
- Designing welcome leaflets, social media information for beginners and map tips
- Offering free LOC membership for juniors and a free membership trial for adults
- Free LOC junior entries to all LOC events
- Introduction of club kit in small junior sizes

- Strong social media presence, sharing lots of photos and event information in a beginner-friendly way, local newspaper articles, local radio interviews, information sharing with local groups, regular email contact with families following up their participation at our events
- Designed and introduced our new LOC Saturday Series which continues the Family Adventures offer for new families alongside the new Junior League and School League for juniors progressing to running independently.

It has been a real pleasure to lead the club in this project, but strong volunteer support from club members has been absolutely essential to the delivery all these activities and initiatives and to give families a warm welcome - it's been a real team effort.

We have introduced orienteering to literally hundreds of local families! We've made great progress in attracting younger members to the club and hopefully this trend will continue into the future with the family-friendly adaptations we have made.

Thank you to everyone who has supported the LOC Family Project in any way and to all the families who have come along and taken part.

Kath