



TVOC Club Meeting: Minutes Tuesday 20th January 2026

Meeting held online at 7:30pm.

Present: Peter Riches (Chair), John Dalton (Secretary, Minutes), Janusz Holender (Treasurer), Chris Poole (Vice-chair), Pattie Beresford, Bob Beresford, Jon Wheatcroft, Paul Eaton, Peter Rose

Apologies for absence: Paul Taylor

1. Matters Arising from previous Club Meeting

a) Equipment Refreshment (John Dalton)

- In a previous meeting, Paul Eaton commented that we need to refresh our supply of high-vis "Can I Help" vests. Neville Baker confirmed we have sufficient vests and they live in the Organiser's Box which goes to all events. **ACTION COMPLETE**
- In a previous meeting, Paul commented that much of our First Aid kit contents needed refreshing and it was agreed to purchase a new First Aid Kit. Neville Baker has been refreshing the First Aid Kit. **ACTION COMPLETE**
- It was noted during the previous meeting that we have lost two SI Units. It was also **AGREED** that we should purchase additional feather banners and SI Start Stations to facilitate two starts. This will be necessary at both the Penn event in January, and at the Chiltern Challenge in January. **ALL ACTIONS COMPLETE**
- Our compasses for lending out at events have seen better days. A part clear-out of the old compasses has taken place. **ACTION COMPLETE**

a) Charity Event (Peter Riches)

Peter would like the club to consider running a charity event in 2026. A charitable donation could be made during the event itself. An urban event would be more appropriate. Given the support of the local council in Thame, this might be the most sensible location. This will be done at a future Urban event. **ACTION COMPLETE FOR NOW**

b) Christmas event and social (Paul Eaton)

Paul Eaton previously suggested we consider an annual club night. Paul apologised that he didn't have the time to get anything sorted for 2025. However, Paul does have the formations of an idea for 2026 which he thinks will appeal more broadly to members, and should induce some planning interest.

c) Nominations for 2025 British Orienteering Awards

TVOC made two nominations for BO awards for 2024. Bob Beresford was awarded the Bonington award for mapping. Mark Thompson was nominated for the prestigious Silva award, but lost out to Ian Cooper from SYO.

- Who (if anyone) from TVOC should be nominated for a BO award for 2025?
 - Which BO award should they be nominated for?
 - Who can put the necessary effort in place to write and submit the nominations?
- Some possible nominations were mentioned for possible future consideration.

ACTION: Peter Riches and John Dalton to progress

d) Planning and Controlling Courses:

Six attended the Planning course. Two will attend the Controllers Course to be held on 7th December. Whilst Peter hasn't had feedback from this yet, a recent online planning course was held for urban events. **ACTION COMPLETE**

e) 2025-26 AGM (Peter Riches)

We need to start thinking about a date, location and an associated event for our next AGM in the May / June 2026 period. Peter has discussed with Ben Green. This is likely to be late May/early June at Thame.



f) Structure of Entry Fees (Peter Riches, Alun Jones and John Dalton)

ACTION CARRIED OVER: Robin Bishop offered to do a further analysis of our entries data.

g) Membership Renewal for 2026 (Marie-Anne Fischer)

Please could members renew their BO and TVOC memberships promptly for the new year. **ACTION COMPLETE**

2. Club Clothing / Kit (Peter Riches)

Heidi provided the following input to the meeting.

Heidi has placed a new order with Trimtex. We pay after delivery at end of February. The order will be delivered to Rachel.

The order is for 10 Short Sleeved tops & 10 Jackets. We did not meet minimum order for trackpants of 5. No-one wanted long sleeved tops either.

Heidi was surprised at the cost of 150 Euros for shipping.

Given the rise in costs of clothing, it was proposed that TVOC reduces the subsidy it offers to club members when purchasing jackets. This was **AGREED**.

3. Recent Club Successes

a) Club Championships were held at BKO event at Black Park on 14th December. The winners were:

Age Group	M	F
Super Junior 12-	Timothy Green M10	Emilia Skidmore W10
Junior 14-		
Intermediate 18-	Matvei Dnestrovskii M14	Izabela Wyatt W16
Senior Open	Adam Poole M35	Aini Vuorinen W35
Veteran 45+	Ben Green M45	Magdalena Wyatt W45
Super-Vet 60+	Michael Wright M65	Helen Sharp W60
Ultra-Vet 70+	Alun Jones M70	Yvonne Hodson W75
Hyper-Vet 80+	Andrew Chalmers M85	

4. Juniors Update (Paul Taylor)

Paul provided the following items:

- Another successful year of the Junior League concluded on 13th December at the Brill Common Saturday Series event after 10 events throughout 2025. The age class winners were announced in a news article on the TVOC website (<https://tvoc.org.uk/news/final-standings-in-2025-junior-orienteering-league/>), as well as in the eNewsletter; and winners and participants have been sent electronic certificates to print off. There were over 85 individual juniors who took part in events during the year, although 49 of those only competed in 1 event each; but we did have 11 juniors who completed 5 or more of the 10 events. The M12 class was the most competitive overall.
- The 2026 Junior League commenced at the Kings Wood event last Saturday, 17th January, and will be held in conjunction with Saturday Series events through the year. More information can be found at <https://tvoc.org.uk/junior-league/>
- Paul has started planning for this year's inter-club Yvette Baker Trophy and is currently trying to work out which qualifying heat would be the best one for the Junior Squad to attend. As a reminder, we need at least 9 participants to compete in a local heat event in the Spring, to try to qualify for the national final. The final will be near Swansea in early July. Would the club again be willing to fund entries for Juniors in the YBT qualifying round (and final, if we reach it)?



It was **AGREED** unanimously that TVOC will fund entries for the YBT qualifying round (and Final if we get through).

- Proposer: John Dalton
- Seconded: Peter Riches
- The three 'local' heat options are:
 - Sun 8th March at Weald Country Park, Brentwood, Essex, organised by HAVOC. This is approximately 85 miles from Oxford.
 - Sun 26th April at Castle Hill Country Park, Leicester, organised by LEI. This is approximately 78 miles from Oxford.
 - Sun 17th May at Farley Heath, near Guildford, Surrey, organised by GO. This is approximately 73 miles from Oxford.

Going to the March & April events should mean avoiding SN in the heats! Paul will not be in the country for the May event.

Current thinking is to ask parents if there is enough availability/willingness to get at least 9 juniors to either the 8th March event or 26th April.

5. Past Events

- a) Keephill and Deangarden Woods, Saturday Series, 29NOV25 (postponed from 04OCT25)
 - Courses well-received
 - Very wet on the day
 - We had a lot of newcomers
- b) Brill, Saturday Series, 13DEC25
 - Well-attended despite tricky parking
 - Courses again, well-received
 - All enjoyed the event
 - Thanks to John Spence who, whilst no longer a member of the club, still coordinates permissions for this event
- c) Common Wood, Level C, 04JAN26
 - See below APPENDIX: Feedback from Common Wood event (from Alun Jones)
 - Entry numbers were lower than expected as CHIG, late in the day, organised their Mitre event on the same day. This was disappointing as both events suffered as a result. The event was very well received, and courses very enjoyable. We also had a good number of newcomers at the event.
 - It was **AGREED** that we offer Organisers, Planners and Controllers of our events a free run at a future TVOC event in lieu of not being able to run themselves.
- d) Kingswood, Saturday Series, 17JAN26
 - A lot of youngsters, including schools and scouts.
 - Enjoyable courses
 - Unfortunately, quite a few people were still out at Courses Close time

6. Event Diary for 2025, 2026 and into 2027:

See the TVOC web site for all events being publicised by TVOC:

<https://tvoc.org.uk/events/>

See the following new document for a list of all TVOC events planned:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1yE9dOTLr5WVte8rTLBBYlaKaPkAhkG57SiN7TguBd2s>

NOTE: The meeting should review newly appointed Planners and Controllers for Level C events. (Level B events are reviewed by SCOA).



Peter started by commenting that the 2026 programme is now very largely complete. The Mapping and Event Planning group will focus on 2027 at their next meeting. Peter said that he has had some welcome offers of help for planning and organising.

See below that the events tabled for RAF Halton have now been cancelled through failure to get landowner permission.

a) Chiltern Challenge Sunday 22nd March 2026 (Jon Wheacraft)

Jon provided the following comments:

This is our premier event of the year, one of the South's named National Events. We have a remapped Christmas Common (Mark Thompson) as well as a small new area visited by the longest courses. We have only one finish, but two starts and a map exchange. There is one road crossing *en route* to/from the start of the very longest courses. Assembly/car park is very conveniently located.

Unfortunately, the car park has a maximum capacity of 180. This is sufficient for only about 300 competitors, but we are hoping for nearer 500. So the car park space we have can barely cope with half the entries we seek. We would also like to capitalise on Mark's many hours of mapping and Nev Baker's finely crafted courses.

To increase car park capacity, Jon proposes to have two start periods. Provisionally 10 – 11am and 1 – 2pm ish with Course Closing at 4 or 4.15pm. Sunset is at 6.20pm. i.e. nobody starts between 11am and 1pm ish

Would this work? Can our teams cope?

It was suggested that lifts into the car park could be shared after parking in Watlington, or at J6 of the M40 at Lewknor (where the Oxford Tube bus stop is).

This approach was **AGREED**, and accepted as necessary under the circumstances. It was acknowledged that this gives our volunteers a long day. Some teams (e.g. Finish and Car Parking) may not have sufficient helpers without finding more.

Jon will also discussed the use of a high, £5 car fee (and reduced entry fee) to encourage car sharing. This was discussed, but was **NOT AGREED**.

John Dalton commented that he had been in recent conversation with Mark Thompson and Marie-Anne Fischer about expanding the Helper pool for the Saturday Series and helpers in the TVOC Teams.

ACTION: John Dalton to progress further with Marie-Anne,

b) Any concerns or comments about the current TVOC Event Diary?

Please give additional feedback **DIRECTLY** to Peter Riches.

Alun Jones provided the following input to the meeting:

The following comments should be read in conjunction with the TVOC Planning fixtures list <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1yE9dOTLr5WVte8rTLBBYlaKaPkAhkG57SiN7TguBd2s/edit?gid=0#gid=0>

For information

- **Saturday Series at Park Wood Bradenham** on 21 February – web page live and entries open. Note that this event also incorporates the English Universities Individual Championships.
- **Saturday Series at Hill End** on 7 March– web page being drafted. Note that this date clashes with Saturday Series held by HH and BKO
Input from Paul Eaton: In my view this is of no consequence. Hill End is far from BKO and HH, and the target audience for the event are newcomers based in and around Oxford.



- **Saturday Series** on 12 September. May be at Waddesdon rather than Uffington. Awaiting negotiations with Waddesdon.

Of concern

- **Chiltern Challenge at Christmas Common** on 22 March. Web page drafted but not yet live. Entries not yet open
- **Shotover** on Saturday 11 April. This is now a level C event. Organiser appointed, but cannot attend on day. On the day Organiser now appointed, along with controller.
- **RAF Halton** on 27 September. Permission not yet granted. At what stage do we decide to cancel this event?
It was **AGREED** during the meeting that we would **CANCEL** this event because we can't confirm landowner permission
- **Witney / Cogges Urban** on 8 November. No Organiser or Controller appointed. No council permission yet? Possibility of moving date to 15th
- **Shotover** on 7 March 2027. No organiser or controller appointed. Do we have land permission yet? Note that Southdowns have a National event planned for that day, but they have given their approval.
- **Abingdon Urban** on 25 July 2027. No council permission yet?
- **Chiltern Challenge at Park Wood and Hughenden** on 20 February 2028. No land permission and parking permission yet?

c) Feedback from Mapping and Event Planning Group (Peter Riches)
This group meets again next week.

d) Update on status of Mapping (Bob Beresford)

2026 events:

- Christmas Common – Mark is rechecking the map prior to the event in March
- Shotover – Rosie is remapping the area ready for the April event
- Cutteslowe – Ben is completely remapping the area and is making good progress for the May event
- Oxford Brookes – OUOC have been updating the map for their Uni event in February, so should be OK for our event in July
- Uffington White Horse – This event is likely to be moved to 2027 and Waddesdon substituted (awaiting permission)
- RAF Halton – Event still in limbo so no remapping started (for Sept) see above:
EVENT CANCELLED
- Witney/Cogges – Bob is continuing to update and extend (desktop) for the November event

2027 events:

- Nettlebed (to include Highmoor and Bix) – Bob and Mark have been preparing the map to be ready for surveying in Feb after shooting stops (March 2027 event)

7. Treasurer's Report (Janusz Holender)

Janusz reported that the club's finances continue to be in good shape. As expected, there is a wide variety of surpluses from different events. Common Wood had a lower than planned surplus due to the clash with the CHIG event on the same day. There are no concerns about the club's finances. The new end of financial year will be 31st March.



8. Other Officers' Reports

- a) Chairman: Nothing further
- b) Secretary: Nothing further
- c) Captain: Nothing to share
- d) Development Officer:

Paul Eaton provided the following proposals to the meeting.

Proposal 1: TVOC WhatsApp community group

Idea: To create a WhatsApp TVOC Community within which other more specific groups can be created to allow for specific event/interest.

Timeline: 3 days from OK given.

Impact: Allows the club to inform members of key information quickly and directly. It would allow for members to be able to grab each other's numbers from chats (only if the WhatsApp member chooses to display their name). Helps build club cohesion by having a more active and direct information space.

Resource: 1 person (Hannah volunteers) to set it up, 1 person to do periodic checks that the groups created are sensible and relevant.

Description: Currently WhatsApp groups are created for Level C/B events to coordinate volunteers; there is one for lifts/orienteering promotion in Oxford and doubtless others exist. The proposal is to bring all of these under one banner: the TVOC (and friends) Community WhatsApp to make them easier to find and connect the community.

WhatsApp Community groups are designed to organise and manage multiple related WhatsApp groups under one structured space, making communication easier for large groups or communities. With an announcements board, it allows for important announcements to be sent to all members, while still keeping separate topic-based groups for focused discussions. This structure reduces message overload, improves clarity, and ensures members receive essential updates without needing to join or monitor many unrelated chats.

Creating one for TVOC allows for all sub-groups to fall under one banner so that they're more accessible for everyone. It is proposed that all members be given admin rights so all can create groups, but each group can have individual settings i.e. only a select group be allowed to post on the announcement board. It is proposed a joining link be included in the bottom of e-news and on the website.

Example groups:

Chiltern Challenge 2026 volunteers - A group of all the volunteers helping out at the Chiltern Challenge. It allows everyone to have each other's numbers, and means that for any issues, awareness can be raised more quickly.

JK 2026 - Allows people to coordinate lifts, accommodation, a TVOC tent/base camp and/or social activities such as dinners or quizzes.

Oxford Orienteering Carpool - Allows orienteers to carpool when going to the same events, reducing our carbon footprint and allowing members without cars to still access all areas.

Map nerds - A group for people who either are doing mapping activities and want ad-hoc opinions on how to map certain sections, people who enjoy maps and want to discuss interesting sections of maps, or people who wish to discuss mapping points on events and how the mapping was done.

This proposal was **AGREED**

Proposal 2: Autumn night series on golf courses (Golf-O!)

Idea: To have a level D weekday evening night orienteering series in Autumn (after the clocks change) on golf clubs around the Thames Valley. Night orienteering events are put on



at many golf courses around the country. Hannah and Paul want permission to contact golf clubs to investigate the possibility of having the event on their grounds.

Timeline: Mapping activities to start in Spring 2026 for an event series in Autumn 2026 (will seek guidance from senior mappers, but it is not proposed to use already busy senior mappers as a primary resource).

Impact: To make night orienteering accessible for more members. To introduce more tentative members to night orienteering in a controlled and safe setting.

Resource: A minimum of 1 Mapper, 1 Organiser/planner, 1 Map Supervisor, 1 Armchair Controller. SI controls. Small SI printer used in conjunction with SI phone app. (Hannah/Paul are happy to do some mapping)

Description: To have a night orienteering series based around golf course grounds. The ultimate ambition is to have a series of 4/5 events. The minimum ambition is to put on one proof of concept event.

There are over 30 golf clubs in TVOC's area. It is proposed that these are ordered according to their suitability both in terms of location and orienteering potential. The top ranked courses (initially around Oxford) will be contacted to enquire about the possibility of having events there after club hours, in the dark, for one night in the Autumn. Once we have interest and tentative permissions, then the area would need mapping and a planner to volunteer to create the event.

This proposal was **AGREED**

- e) Clothing Officer: (Rachel Banham is stepping in as Clothing Officer on an interim basis)

9. SCOA (Peter Riches)

Peter reported the following:

- SCOA has been focusing on the recent updates provided by British Orienteering about Safeguarding. It is noted that the British Orienteering information is not entirely clear. We are awaiting further clarity from British orienteering
- 2029 JK: SCOA are still seeking possible areas to use for this JK.

10. Any Other Business

- a) Update on costs incurred for email marketing activities (including eNews) (Peter Riches)

The frequency and volume of our emails to members (including for eNews) is starting to exceed limits that provide us with a free service. Options to combine to databases into one were considered, but this will significantly add to the work of our volunteers.

It was therefore **AGREED** to incur the relatively low monthly cost to continue using the current email service (approx. £15 per month).

- b) Request from Compass Point to publicise support of their Compass Point Online service (Peter Riches)

Compass Point have asked if we would be happy to include mention of their web site to our members via our web site and/or through eNews. The general feeling of the meeting was that Compass Point provide a very valuable service to orienteers, and that we should support them in this way. This was **AGREED**. Peter to progress.

- c) John Spence proposed to become a LIFE MEMBER of TVOC (Peter Riches)

John is a very long-standing member of TVOC. His contribution to TVOC over many decades has been very significant. Unfortunately, he has had to give up orienteering. However, he still helps organise permission at Brill.

It was proposed that John be elected as a LIFE MEMBER of TVOC, free of charge. This was **AGREED** unanimously.

- Proposer: Peter Riches
- Seconder: Janusz Holender



ACTION: John Dalton to liaise with Membership Secretary, Marie-Anne Fischer

Date of next meeting:

Meeting confirmed as 7:30pm on Tuesday 17th March 2026

The meeting will be online. Login to be provided later.

Note that the meeting is open to all TVOC members.



APPENDIX: Feedback From Common Wood event (Alun Jones)

Common Wood event

- Beautiful winter weather, but very cold
- Disappointing number of entries, primarily due to competition from CHIG event
- Woods in excellent condition
- General feedback from competitors very positive
- No complaints about long walk to Common Wood
- Modest surplus due to low entry numbers
- The Residents' Society which owns Common Wood commented "It all seemed to go very well and you had good weather! Pleased to say I had no negative comments or concerns from anyone. Happy to host again in future."

A few issues and questions.

1. Failed control station

The station was, correctly, replaced as soon as the problem was reported. In the results, the control was treated as Optional rather than Mandatory, so no-one was disqualified by being unable to punch the failed control.

This does raise the question as to how we should treat a failed control.

- At level B, the rules require that competitors must provide evidence of having been at the control, normally by using the pin punch to punch the map. Boxes need to be provided on the map to be punched, and final details to state that this is what competitors must do at a failed control. The results team must then ask each competitor to show their punched map in order to be reinstated.
- At level D, we would just make the control optional.
- What should our policy be at level C? Should we require the same approach as for level B?

2. Process if radio control does not work

This event had a remote finish, and the radio controls failed to communicate due to poor mobile signal. We therefore reverted to using safety controls. However, our process for handling the safety controls was not ideal. In future, if safety controls have to be used, the following procedure should be used:

- 30 minutes before course closing time, the Finish team should be asked to note down the names of all subsequent finishers.
- At the same time, the safety control should be swapped and taken back to Assembly to be read

This will then ensure that, as soon as the last person has gone through the Finish, the Finish team can then pack up and personnel on standby for a search party can be released.

3. Lending out SI cards at the Start

Inevitably with a remote Start, some people arrive without their SI card, or have failed to collect their hire card before coming to the Start. It is essential that the name of the person borrowing the card is recorded. Otherwise, should that individual be unaccounted for, we will not know who they are.



In a similar vein, two competitors lost their SI cards in the forest. The Finish team reported their names to Downlaod, in case they did not report in (they both did). Finish will in future write the names down to ensure the message is not lost in transmission.

4. Signage is never enough

With two Starts, it was inevitable that some individuals would go to the wrong one. This was despite

- Descriptions in final details, including a diagram
- Jon Wheatcroft crafted some excellent signs for the exits to the car parks
- Signs en route to the Starts saying which Start they were going to

What more could we do?

5. Free runs for event officials?

Planner, organiser and controller put in a lot of work for an event, yet generally cannot run in the event. The time and effort that they put in is hugely more than helpers, who benefit from a free run, yet the officials get nothing in return apart from expenses. Proposals

1. That the **controller** be given a free run at a future TVOC event in the next twelve months. This will have a cost, but is small in the scheme of things. Note, we used to invite the Chiltern Challenge controller to our annual dinner but that has long ceased.

That the **organiser** and **planner** also be given a free run at an event in the next twelve months.

Note that most such individuals will help at events, so this proposal will only affect those who, due to family or other commitments, cannot otherwise help. The cost is therefore pretty small.