

Minutes of the SMOC Annual General Meeting 2026
on Thursday 24 September, 7.30pm via Zoom

Present: Joanna Mee (chair), Ros James (secretary), Dorien James (treasurer), Ann Harris (safeguarding and welfare officer), Keith Downing, Helen Nisbet, Don Nisbet, Freya Askham, Debbie Charlton, Anthony Smith, Davey Averill, Rosie Shaw

Apologies: Ian Byrne

Review of the last AGM minutes

- There was a minor amendment to the 2025 mapping report raised by Freya. 'Completely new map of Howe Park Wood' should have read 'Completely new map of Caldecotte'. The minutes of the 2025 AGM were approved subject to this correction (proposed by Joanna; seconded by Freya).
- There were no further matters arising from last year's minutes.

Treasurer's report

The club incurred a deficit of £55 on 2025 activities, including recognition of Stowe Regional costs incurred in 2024.

SMOC BALANCE SHEET

2025

As at 01-Jan-26

	1-Jan-25	1-Jan-26
<u>SMOC</u> Deposit	4,930.76	4,982.23
<u>SMOC</u> Current	2,304.10	2,686.10
Future costs prepaid/(income <u>rec'd</u> in advance)	(970.48)	0.00
Cash Float	50.00	50.00
Total <u>SMOC</u> Funds	7,774.26	7,718.33
Movement on Club Funds for the Year		(55.93)

We continue to lose money on Club Nights and the majority of Keyne-O local events, and have invested in improved mapping technology, SI boxes and bibs, funded by significant income from our Regional events and the Greensand Ridge Relay.

Category	Sum - Amount
01 MEMBERSHIP AND OVERHEAD	37.20
03.1 LOCAL EVENTS – GREAT LINFORD	4.49
03.2 LOCAL EVENTS – STANTON LOW	16.87
03.3 LOCAL EVENTS – CALDECOTTE	(163.52)
03.4 LOCAL EVENTS – MAPRUN SERIES	(97.10)
04.1 REGIONAL EVENTS – STOWE	700.92
04.2 REGIONAL EVENTS – GREAT LINFORD	447.34
04.3 REGIONAL EVENTS – RUSHMERE	(128.76)
05 GREENSAND RIDGE RELAY	1,303.00
06.0 MAPPING – GENERAL	(547.43)
07 CLUB NIGHTS	(256.96)
08.1 SUMMER SOCIAL	(192.00)
09.1 TRAINING DAY – FIRST AID	(315.00)
09.2 TRAINING DAY – ELITE SKILLS	(50.00)
10 EQUIPMENT	(571.98)
11 CLUB TEAM EVENTS	(253.00)
12 CLUB KIT	10.00
Total Result	(55.93)

Outlook for 2026 is a much greater deficit, with investment in anniversary souvenirs, new computers, unused mapping of Silverstone, and losses on all small events, with only one Regional event to provide significant income.

Dorien James

Comments: Helen raised the question of our out-of-pocket expenses in early work for the cancelled Midlands Championships, some of which we may be able to claim from the region. Dorien agreed to look into this.

Chair's report

Since our last AGM in September 2025, whilst on paper it may seem as though the club has had a quieter year than in the recent past it has proved to be increasingly sociable. Due to calendar clashes, our Keyne-O series will now finish next month and it will be interesting to see how that affects participation. The first two events earlier in the year were well attended, attracting old and new faces alike. Thanks go as ever to all those who helped on the day as well as our planners and organisers: Ian, Debbie, Jaya, Sandra and Sofia and of course to Dorien for all his help on the technical side.

We have had two 'big' events since our last AGM. Last November we found ourselves on a beautifully crisp autumn morning at Rushmere for a well attended event on a revised and extended map drawn up by Steve and Freya. Brilliantly organised as ever by Ros. Planned by Steve and controlled by Freya, who both created courses as challenging as we could possibly make them in our area, which were very much enjoyed by everyone who managed to get round!

This summer took us back to Milton Keynes, for our now regular fixture of the SMOC Summer Urban. Over to the lovely setting of Howe Park Wood, where orienteers overwhelmed the café and thoroughly enjoyed socialising in the summer sun after enjoying their courses. With Dorien taking the organisational lead on this one and Ros planning, it was another triumph, with over 200 runners on the day. We had a good number of new faces turning up and so many volunteers we were able to ensure everyone who wanted had time for a run, and newbies were well supported by the enquiries team. Thanks again to everyone involved from mapping to delivery.

Socialising has been a theme this year; aided by the warmer than ever weather, our Thursday night club meets have been very well attended with a regular group of runners, both club members, nearby club members and local runners enjoying a series of different challenges throughout the summer

months. Lots of club members have been involved with delivering these and we continue to encourage all club members to have a go at putting on a Club Night, as they are such an easy way to begin learning how to plan and simultaneously improve your own orienteering skills. Freya has led this initiative, which thanks to her, has gone from strength to strength this year! Freya also ran another much appreciated summer series of events in Aspley woods, alongside the other runs, and this went down very well again. As mentioned in previous years, MapRun continues to be a draw and certainly helps us encourage new faces to join us.

Continuing the theme of socialising reminds me that we started the year with what I believe may have been one of our best CompassSport cup results ever. We still didn't qualify for the final but we certainly had fun. We WERE NOT LAST! We scored 1,197 points in total from a full contingent of 13 scoring runners. Well done to everyone who came and ran, and thank you to Dorien for being a great Team Captain and rallying so many to join in. The final next year is at Wendover Woods, so extra incentive for us to qualify as it's, for once, no distance at all and our nearest heat – on 7 February – will be at Ashridge!

On the subject of travel, once again the SMOCies have gone international, from trips to Sweden in the snow and sun, to Italy and all across Europe for urban races. I'm afraid I haven't been able to keep up with everyone's adventures, but I know they've been good, as there are so many more planned for next year!

Major events at home were also well attended, although the JK less so than usual as it was up in Scotland. A good number of club members made it to the major championships as well as the Lakes, with some notable performances from a number of club members, particularly Helen and Rosie and of course, Don's sprint finish race against a rabbit!

The Greensand Ridge Relay was a triumph again this year. I cannot thank Richard and Dorien enough for all their hard work in organising the race. An enormous thank you to all who are roped in on the day to make it work and, of course, to our runners who make it so much fun. This year we had several entrants go off-course, so it just goes to show, whilst it might not be orienteering, a bit of map reading is very helpful! We entered two teams again this year and I would encourage anyone who hasn't had a go to get involved. It's a fun event and the other runners are incredibly supportive.

Our summer was rounded off with a brilliantly organised party (thank you again Freya!) to celebrate the club's 40th anniversary! It was a wonderful afternoon full of faces old and new. There were two fun courses to choose from, which Steve had kindly planned, and he brilliantly combined the old with the new – we traced out our own courses from a master map, then used MapRun to register our times. Personally I miss the old course tracing – having returned to the sport, I think we've all realised that this was the bit I was actually any good at!

The party was a great reminder of what we as a club do so well – forge friendships, laugh, make a lot of noise and eat a lot of cake! Sport is so much more than the results we achieve and I think SMOC really embodies participation. Thank you to everyone who attended and everyone who made it such a success.

Unfortunately, we did have some bad news this year in the form of quite a blow to our future plans, when Forestry England abruptly cancelled our access to Silverstone. This was incredibly disappointing given how much hard work had already been put into our planned event there by Steve, Freya and Dorien. Talk led to how we could continue as a functioning club without being able to host large woodland/countryside events, and we decided to have a quieter year, regroup, enjoy orienteering and only take on projects we WANTED to do rather than felt obliged to organise. It is increasingly clear across not just our sport, but most areas of volunteering, that a very small number of people are shouldering the bulk of the work. The year ahead will, hopefully, give our most involved members a well earned rest, a chance to orienteer, rediscover their passion for our sport, socialise and if we decided to plan an event then we will share the load accordingly. We'll still be encouraging Keyne-Os and Club Nights but only if the will is truly there to do this. The main focus for next year will be all about having fun.

Joanna Mee

Welfare report
Ann Harris reports: There have been no reports of welfare or safeguarding issues either within the club or at our events. BOF continues to prioritise the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, supported by training modules, etc. It now also has a QR code, which anyone can use to raise safeguarding concerns. We now include this code on our Safeguarding poster, which we display at our events.
Mapping report
Freya Askham reports on behalf of the mapping team: Lots of our efforts this year went to updating the map of Silverstone, which had been intended for the 2027 Midlands Championships, but which cannot now be used due to a landowner permission issue. Other projects have included updates as needed to Aspley Heath (for our summer series), and Howe Park Wood (updated to latest specification for our Regional urban event). We also continue to update our other Keyne-O areas, some of which need extensive revisions. Comments: as we are now very short of forest areas, Keith suggested we could investigate using Brogborough (Holcote and Reynolds Wood, last used in 2014), which may not present the same permission issues as the areas run by Forestry England. Ros will put this on the agenda for our next committee.
Election of officers
Jo (Chair), Dorien (Treasurer) Ros (Secretary) and Ann (Welfare Officer) are all to remain in their roles for a further year.
AOB
There were no further items of business.
Date of Next Meeting: Next committee meeting is proposed for November. Ros to circulate choice of dates.