

AGM 2026 - Fixtures Secretary – report

The Club has continued to have a full programme of events :

- In early November, we held our first Sarum Wessex Night League event – North Salisbury – based in the Old Castle Harvester and using the nearby Country Park;
- Followed by our second Wessex Night League event in Amesbury – using some part of our now huge map and, basing ourselves in the very friendly New Inn as our base;
- The Sarum Saunter was held in early March 2025 at Fonthill, one of our privately owned areas. We didn't manage to put on our usual Army event after this as the owner was not keen;
- Late April 2026 saw us with an Urban event in Tisbury – a daylight event for a change which put a different perspective on the town – which we have often run around at night! ;
- The Club Championships were held in July, using Larkhill, which we are rarely able to use and was great fun!
- We are now heading for our Autumn Level C event in early November, as part of the annual SW Orienteering League, using Bulford Ridge, another Army area. We were going to use Grovely Woods, West of Salisbury but could not realistically find enough parking for the event

As for Schools events, we again assisted with the Salisbury heat in Dinton Park in mid March and then in early July, we assisted with the Wiltshire & Swindon Schools Games being held at Dauntsey School, West Lavington again.

My thanks to all the hard work put in by everybody involved with all of these events

Future activities in 2026/2027:

The following events are in the calendar for the rest of 2026/27 with fingers crossed that we can get permissions for the proposed areas – which is now the big issue!

- Our first Sarum Wessex Night League event is going to be held in Warminster in mid-November, hopefully based in a friendly pub with food;
- Our second Wessex Night League event is planned for Martin Down in late January;
- The Sarum Saunter is planned for early April 2027 using Sidbury Hill, another Army area. We would like to host an Army event soon after this, if we can get permission;
- Our Urban event at the end of April is in Durrington on our brand new map!
- The Club Championships is hopefully in July/ August 2027 – area/ date to be decided?
- We are hoping to head back to Shearwater / Cannimore for our SW Orienteering League event in early October;
- A Level B UKOL/ UKUL is planned for early November 2027 in Central Salisbury, linked to the November Classic which should be exciting!
- We are hoping to hold the Sarum Saunter in 2028 in Great Ridge
- We have been asked if we could host the Compass Sport Trophy heat in 2029 – this could be instead of the Sarum Saunter that year – possible back in Fonthill.

Activities in Autumn 2026 and beyond!

- ✧ Parking continues to be a big problem everywhere, with long walks to the Start becoming the norm!
- ✧ We will also continue to have problems with access in many of our areas due to shooting activity (birds and deer) plus nesting birds & dormice with Natural England and Forestry Commission requirements. The New Forest now will not allow any Night Orienteering at all nor access for orienteering after January. The limited access all of this causes makes the events calendar very full in a few months and it is quite difficult finding dates that don't clash with something else – locally or Nationally!

- ✧ The Forestry Commission (Forest Enterprise) have published their latest charges, which have greatly increased for all levels of events and permissions are not easy currently and take a long time to be granted.
- ✧ We will still attempt to use various Army areas but permission is now very difficult as activity on the Plain has increased considerably; even if we get permission, we can't guarantee that the event will go ahead. There can also be permissions issues with Natural England plus the DIO (Defence Infrastructure Organisation) fees have just been raised to a new high level!
- ✧ Of late, we have been trying to use areas that are privately owned eg Martin Down; Fonthill; Great Ridge, as permissions are often easier to obtain. That said – Vernditch has had a little Coaching activity and the map partially updated but more work needs to be done here before we could use it; Stonedown Woods hasn't been visited at all recently – both Forestry Commission run woods. They both need someone to go over and have a run around to see what the terrain is like currently – there have been forestry operations in there in the past 3-4 years – their maps will require quite a bit of updating since it is some years since they have been used. They would be useful for any upcoming small event activity with our newly qualified coaches! We have yet to see if access to Hamptworth might be possible since the RSPB took over the area – a work in progress.
- ✧ We have continued to get great support from Salisbury Council for the use of all of their parks and open spaces and they continue to support us with our Junior Club and other activities.
- ✧ We hope to resume more Junior Club activity when our new Coaches are qualified in the New Year.

British Orienteering information:

British Orienteering's Major Events schedule - the annual programme of events seems to increase and permissions are getting tricky to obtain for some regions – SWOA, for example, has pulled out of organising the JK in 2027 due to uncertainty of available regions and parking concerns – this is now pencilled in for 2032. If any one has a strong interest in discussing its format, venues, staffing etc. Rob Mills, the SWOA Fixtures Secretary, is planning on hold a working party to research suitable options in the future. Please contact Rob via email on robmills372@gmail.com to express an interest.

It is hoped to encourage new Planners and Organisers to help plan and organise events, possibly in pairs and it is hoped that they will continue with these new skills and step up to organise & plan more events in the future, to share the load! We are hoping to hold a Planners course in October so, if you are interested, please contact me straight away! Also, if anyone would like to have a go, just let me know and we can get you to understudy someone or have a mentor!

My thanks to those who have organised, planned, mapped and controlled & helped at events
Any suggestions for other activities/ venues also welcome – just let me know.

Liz Yeadon
Fixtures Secretary
October 2026