**Permanent Orienteering Courses in Devon: A Wealth of Opportunity!**

One of the ways we can exercise and orienteer during these coronavirus times, as well as improve our skills and physical fitness, is by use of a Permanent Orienteering Course. (Indeed, once events and activities resume, POCs will continue to provide a valuable resource for club members and for the public.)

British Orienteering are seeking to raise the profile of POCs and have produced a leaflet, about to go on Devon’s website and Facebook page, to highlight what is available across the country. The leaflet has space for five POCs to be promoted in this way, although Devon has others which can also be found on the British Orienteering website, with links from Devon’s website.

The great thing about permanent courses is that you can go at a time, place and pace to suit yourself, your family or friends. They also act as an excellent way in which children and adults can try out the sport.

<https://www.britishorienteering.org.uk/pocs>

<https://www.devonorienteering.co.uk/poc>

**Maps and Courses**

In most cases maps can be downloaded, free, from the BOF portal listed above. In a few cases, maps need to be obtained locally; details are on the BOF website. Most of the POCs offer a range of courses from easy to hard, many of which are available as traditional colour-coded courses.

Other options:

* Use the POC All Control Map, where available, for your own Score Course, perhaps allowing 45 minutes or 60 minutes to visit as many controls as possible.
* Devise your own short Star exercises, perhaps visiting three controls from a central point, returning and then visiting a further three controls from that point etc.
* Use a course to improve particular orienteering skills such as pace counting, relocation or the use of attack points.
* Record your run on Strava, to compare your performance on a particular course to others who may have previously run and recorded their time.

**Access**

The current position (27th May) is as indicated below, but further opening of facilities is expected soon. Check on the relevant website. Please follow the latest government guidance regarding social distancing and all other good, current, practice in order to stay safe.

* Haldon Forest Park: The car park is open. The toilets and other facilities remain closed.
* Killerton, Knightshayes, Saltram: “We’re working hard to reopen many of our places where it is safe to do so, however …… is closed.
* Castle Drogo: Limited car parking for Teign Gorge walks, other facilities closed.
* Parke: Limited car parking for walks, other facilities closed.
* Plymbridge: Open, but limited car parking
* Seaton: Call EDDC on 01395 571500 Monday -Friday 9.00am -5.00pm for info.
* Sidmouth (The Byes), Exeter Riverside, Plymouth Central Park: Open public space

**POC Volunteer Co-ordinators**

As stated above, within Devon we are fortunate to have a range of permanent courses across the county and, with one exception, we have a team of people who are acting as POC co-ordinators, monitoring their local course to check on it’s condition and liaise with the local landowner or manager to help ensure it is in a fit state.

If you find a post or a plaque is damaged or missing, or you have any other comments about a particular POC please make contact in the first instance with one of the following club members listed below. Alternatively contact myself at access@devonorienteering.co.uk

Remember, however, that permanent courses are the responsibility of the landowner or local manager. Some need additional TLC and updating. Also, a few of our volunteer co-ordinators have only just taken on the task!

Castle Drogo (National Trust): Ian Thomas

Exeter Riverside (Exeter City Council) (limited due to engineering work): Roger Green

Haldon Forest Park: Wilf Taylor and Bryan Smith

Killerton (National Trust):  Roger & Jill Green

Knightshayes (National Trust): Damian Wilson

Parke (National Trust and Dartmoor National Park): Dawn Williamson

Plymbridge (National Trust): Steve Edmonds

Plymouth Central Park (Plymouth City Council): Needs updating. Co-ordinator required. Support available from College of St Mark and St John. Offers welcome!

Saltram (National Trust) Steve Edmonds

Seaton (Town Council and Seaton Wetlands): John & Ruth Chesters and David Harper

Sidmouth The Byes (Sidmouth Town Council): Ben Chesters, Martin Yeo and the Keenan Family

If you have any additional comments, please let the club know.

Enjoy your run!

Bryan Smith access@devonorienteering.co.uk