

Minutes of WMOA Committee Meeting 14th September 2026 at 7-30 pm

via Zoom

Present: Ian Gamlen, Carol Dredge, Martin Piggott, Tom Lewis, James Thomas, Rod Postlethwaite, Barry Elkington, Karen Thompson, Lorna Fizor, Marian White, Andy Yeates

1. Apologies: Richard Lewis, John Leeson, Mel Elkington, Adam Bushnell

2. Declaration of Interest: None

3. Acceptance of Previous Minutes: Minutes of 8th June 2026 accepted

4. Matters Arising: None

Tom welcomed Lorna Fizor to the meeting in her new role as WMOA newsletter editor.

8b. JK 2028 – Andy Yeates (Andy had another meeting to attend so agenda rejigged)

Prior to the meeting Andy had circulated an update on JK 2028 and was part of meeting to answer any questions about this.

Andy explained that there would be no profit share agreement but would probably be super levy based. The region shouldn't be liable for loss as led by BOF.

Currently looking for organisers and planners in the region – maybe work with other people. Club reps to take back to clubs for any interest in the roles.

Potential for different clubs to lead each day dependant on manpower. BOF creating a volunteer database to add to this if needed.

MP suggested POTO would not be able to run the sprint on their own or find an organiser or planner for this.

There would be also be a Trail-O – potentially on Days 1 and 4. Graham Urquhart to be involved in this.

Vouchers on the day for volunteers rather than reduced entry fees as easier to control.

Update on embargoes- discussion with council re Sherbrook not progressing well. Still permissions to put in place for all areas except Keele which is now signed off. No back up areas.

Rod P to remap Keele. Rod also happy to map Cosford if needed.

Di Jacks- entries secretary. Lesley Brown potential organiser for Cosford and Eric Brown Safety Officer.

Andy Y left the meeting at 7-55pm.

5. Correspondence: a) Emails from BOF and Andy Yeates re JK 2028.

b) BOF- summary of 2026 AGM.

6. Chairman's Report – No report.

7. a) Treasurer's Report –IG

Annual account shows a deficit this year largely due to paying out for the JIRC'S accommodation for 2027.

£8,360 in WMOA account and £3,100 in WMJS account. Mapping course to come out of this - in excess of £2,000.

Brian Laycock has agreed to inspect the accounts prior to the AGM.

b) Projects for spending WMOA funds-

JL suggests another mapping course as more interest shown. Need to ensure those who have been on course use their new skills to produce new maps.

Wrekin suggest reduction in levy if have excess money. IG- less events each year so less levy coming in.

LF does WMOA or BOF have a marketing budget? No but BE suggested that if there was a good marketing plan for the region money could be found

8. a) Fixtures -JT

Fixtures Report – September 2026

West Midlands League

The WML events will be picked up again next month with four more events for 2026.

Several of the rounds for 2027 have now been put into place with the 1st half of 2027 looking balanced (with additional one from WRE for the YBT). 2nd half of 2027 should be reviewed in October.

2026

5	05/10/2026	Sun	WRE	Wrockwardine Wood
6	08/11/2026	Sun	OD	Pooley Country Park
7	29/11/2026	Sun	HOC	Clent Hills
8	13/12/2026	Sun	WCH	Hednesford Camp

2027

1	24/01/2027	Sun	WCH	TBC
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2	21/02/2027	Sun	OD	Sutton Park
3	07/03/2027	Sun	HOC	Kinver Edge
4 or 5	TBC	TBC	WRE	TBC (YBT Round)
4 or 5	11/04/2027	Sun	OD	Bentley Woods
6	16/05/2027	Sun	POTOC	MorrIDGE
TBC	05/12/2027	Sun	OD	Brandon Woods
TBC	12/12/2027	Sun	WCH	Shoal Hill

West Midlands Urban League

The West Midlands Urban League calendar has concluded with the Lichfield event being cancelled and no further events scheduled for 2026.

The 2027 calendar will be finalised by the next fixtures meeting with the current BOF fixtures listed below.

TBC	23/05/2027	Sun	WCH	TBC
TBC	04/07/2027	Sun	OD	Kenilworth
TBC	31/10/2027	Sun	OD	Stratford-upon-Avon

Other West Midlands Commitments

Unfortunately, neither the WM Schools nor the WM Relays happened this year and both will need to be discussed in detail at the next WMOA committee meeting.

For 2027, commitments have been distributed to the relevant clubs and dates/venues have not yet changed.

2026

Date	Event	Hosting Club	Venue
13/12/2026	WM Champs	WCH	Hednesford Camp

2027

Date	Event	Hosting Club	Venue
01/01/2027	Laurie Bradley	POTOC	TBC
07/02/2027	CSC Rd. 1	HOC	Croft Castle
11/04/2027	WM Champs	OD	Bentley Woods
TBC	WM Relays	TBC	TBC
TBC	YBT Rd. 1	WRE	TBC
TBC	WM Schools	WCH	TBC

National Commitments

Since the 2027/2028 national are well understood. I'll advise the latest further afield. As the JK in now happening on Cannock Chase in 2028 I've requested that the WMOA no longer hosts the British/British Relays as well. Since the WMOA was scheduled to host the JK in 2031, I suggested to Mike Cope to put the British/British Relays in WMOA for that year instead. This would mean areas like Brown Cleve would be suitably available and could form part of a SinS weekend (all be it the early May Bank Holiday), this would need to be approved by the WMOA committee for me to suggest this to the ESG Group.

In 2029, HOC will be hosting the British Nights and have selected one main area (Bodenham Arboretum) and a backup (Eymore). This is because the two year embargo will be starting soon. The National Event on the day after can be decided at a later date as this is a one year embargo. HOC would prefer another WMOA club to host this event (maybe on a HOC area like Dudmaston (Comer Wood), Burlish Top)

Also, the Midland Champs are scheduled for 2029 as well .OD have come forward with an offer of Bentley Woods. My feeling with regards to everything else going on is that we should accept this offer from OD.

For 2030, the WMOA is earmarked for the SHI's.

Comments-

Wrekin may not be able to host YBT so may need to be part of HOC event at Kinver – outside time frame for YBT?

UKUL applications need to be in place by October. SinS- Shrewsbury urban – good for UKUL?

WRE planning urban for Bridgenorth – no date as yet. HOC planning to put on at least one urban in 2027.

Laurie Bradley 2027 – POTOC – Bathpool.

BE suggested Brampton Bryan may be suitable for the British Relays. Need a big urban event on Monday after British Champs/ Relays.

HOC/ WRE happy to replace SIN'S with this?

c) Future of WMOA Relays

All clubs keen to retain these but need to change format and reduce number of courses. Discuss at AGM changes to relay based on B. Bryant's simplified version.

d) Future of WMOA Schools

Feedback from clubs- **HOC** – should it be at weekend or in week? May not be ideal time – exams.

WRE-Currently run 3 events, supported by Schools Partnership and National Trust, that have a good turn out. Could WM Schools be added on to this? Final held on weekday – very local- only Primary not Secondary. Unless teachers willing to take children not very viable.

JT suggested county level competitions but need to be on a weekday. Issue – no parents there so limited potential to get new members from these.

OD/WCH- WMOA schools not viable at the moment.

Retire WMOA schools for the moment potential to revisit at another time.

e) Update on JIRC'S 2027 – IG

Need response on permissions for Cannock Chase before decide on which day is held where. Planners and Organisers need to be sorted for event on Chase- do Chasers want to do this?

9. a) WMOA website update-MW

Needs to update winners of WMOA Urban League to website. Archive section to be added to website.

MW happy to hand over / share this role if someone has interest.

b) WMOA newsletter and publicity- LF

Plans to publish first edition of newsletter by the end of the month. KT- remind Juniors of need for Tour reports and photos for newsletter.

10. Development

a) **Mapping Course**- Current course in progress.

b) **Organiser's Course**- 3rd October- 7 people have signed up for this but space for more.

c) **Controller Upgrades**- John Leeson HOC and Clive Richardson WRE attended Level B controllers course and have shown they have completed other additional requirements – WMOA agreed to upgrade to Level B controller. CD to notify BOF.

All clubs urged to audit their lists of current organisers and controllers.

11. Coaching Coordinator

TL- Do we still need one? KT- struggle to get coaches for Junior Squad activities. TL- Do we need to spend money on this area?

Orienteering Foundation coaching courses later in year are open to all.

12. West Midlands Junior Squad –KT

We are looking forwards to a busy Autumn term at WMJS.

Since the last WMOA meeting we had a 'sprint' training session at Warwick University (joint with EMJOS) in June & we thank OD for help with gaining the permissions for this.

Going forwards we are planning two training sessions in the autumn (25th October & 6th December) thanks to the support of Iain Stamp & Alex Hudson. We have asked WRE to help find an area for the 6th December, but we are still looking for an area for 25th October.

We'd like to organise a cake sale if we can find a suitable WML event – we've provisionally asked if we can support one at the HOC Clent event in November (permissions pending).

We've scaled back the Zoom meetings – while we find suitable presenters, but we will be doing technical prep Zoom meetings ahead of the main weekends such as JIRC's & the O Foundation, thanks to volunteers e.g. Alistair Landels who is helping with the JIRC's one.

Our next 'big event' is the Junior Inter-Regional Competition (JIRC's) organised by East Anglia at the end of September – we have a squad of 14 going (9 boys & 5 girls), accompanied by Iain, Alex and Karen.

Travel will be by minibus (thanks to Alex Hudson's school (Queen Mary's Grammar School, Walsall)).

This will be followed by two weekend events in November.

20-22 Nov – Forest of Dean, for Orienteering Foundation training & NGOC events (inc Interland selection)

27-29 Nov – JROS 'Castle Head' (Lakes) for the MW16s

In the summer we had seven athletes participating in JROS training camps & by all accounts, the experience was as amazing as always – thanks to the volunteers who support these events.

The Talent Squad selection for the 2026-2027 season has recently been made and we are pleased to hear that Craig, Jonah, Fraser, Eden & Seb have been invited to join. Others were narrowly below the standard.

As usual, we would welcome any more juniors who are of TD4 standard or on their way there, and at least M/W12. We are inviting siblings of existing squad members & one new family to our Autumn trainings. If clubs have juniors who could be approached, please share parent/guardian details.

13. AGM

Papers for the AGM have been circulated to club reps by CD. Can you please ensure these are passed on to all club members?

CD away from 2nd to 11th October so all requests for Zoom link, apologies, AOB etc if possible before then.

13. Club Round-Up

OD- BE

Club currently struggling to find organisers and planners to run planned events.

Series of MapRuns, local events and WM League events coming up.

Retired people are being lost as moving to other areas better for orienteering.

POTOC- MP

Park Hall score event and picnic had to be cancelled due to fires on area.

Last 2 local events only had entries of mid 20's – worryingly low – need to boost numbers. Running clubs/ families/ social media but low budget to do this.

Series of MapRuns in the Autumn.

WCH – CD

Short series of terrain training held over last few weeks but number curtailed by JK Embargo.

Fortnightly MapRuns, open to all, begin next week.

13th December- WM League event incorporating WMOA Champs- Hednesford Camp.

HOC- IG

Winter evening events and MapRuns are scheduled also Beginners and Families Score events.

WRE- RP

Long-O event next Sunday. League event at Wrockwardine Wood on 5th October.

Urban weekend held in July – 5 controls taken on day one. May become a biennial event in non SINS years.

Held 3 MapRun events- well attended and 3 beginners events with lots of Juniors.

14. Any Other Business

LF – queried whether Newsletter needed to be approved prior to being sent out. Agreed to send first one to TL and CD prior to publication.

15. Date of Next Meeting- AGM-Monday 12th October by ZOOM.

Next committee meeting- Monday 7th or 14th December by ZOOM.

Meeting finished at 9-50pm.

Thanks to Barry Elkington for coordinating Zoom Meeting.