

SOA Development Conference

'How to win club of the year'
Anne Hickling (Gramp)

- 'You've got to be in it to win it'. Not many clubs apply (only 3 last year) so if you think your club's had a successful year, go for it. Benefits of winning are a modest cash prize and the opportunity for some good local publicity.
- The application form focuses on 3 areas – people (existing members and attracting new people), programmes (regular events and 'outreach' in the community) and partnerships (with other groups in the community)
- Gramp's particular successes last year were:
 - o very busy programme – 47 events, plus various special sessions for schools, guides etc
 - o 56 new members over the year
 - o summer series (weekly May – September) – 19 events, 400+ participants, 1300+ runs
 - o great club spirit, especially at 6-Days
- Our development programme focuses on:
 - o involvement
 - o networking
 - o innovation
 - o communication
- Involvement
 - o Everyone needs to understand that orienteering only works because the participants run the sport
 - o More than 20 members have some defined role in the club (apart from planning, organising, controlling)
 - o Organisers are encouraged to ask newer members to get involved in helping at events
 - o New planners and organisers are offered a mentor to help them
 - o A coach or experienced club member is on hand at every event to welcome new people and help them get started, explain basic skills etc
 - o Summer series is opportunity for recruitment, training and new planners
 - o Help people to improve skills through coaching – children, adults, beginners and improvers, technical, schools, informal coaching at events, weekly fitness training sessions
- Networking
 - o Strong neighbouring club Maroc gives big programme of local events; joint working on night series, junior league; exchange of controllers; sharing kit; working on joint mapping project
 - o FCS – joint programme of monthly come and try events; shared publicity; permanent courses
 - o Active Schools – not expected to result in new club members but a valuable contribution to the community, may sow seeds for future involvement
 - o Corporate events – team building sessions, ActivityMix corporate decathlon
 - o Aberdeen City Council – we have achieved accreditation through the Grampian ClubCap scheme
- Innovation
 - o Need to bring on new ideas, fun events, attract new groups
 - o Corporate events – may require new formats

- o Urban-O – 3 events in this year’s summer series
- o MTBO events last year
- o Hill run/O challenge with local hill running club
- o Coming up – Grampian Mountain Challenge (2 day mountain marathon/orienteering mix)
- o Lunchtime orienteering close to corporate centres
- Communication
 - o Essential to maintain club spirit and to raise awareness of orienteering in the community
 - o With members – club magazine, website, email news, talking! Social events
 - o With the outside world – website (needs to be able to meet needs of members and people looking for orienteering), the media (a real challenge in a city environment)