

## Xplorer- British Orienteering

**Aim: To engage families in fun, navigational challenges**

### Project Summary

Xplorer is a navigational challenge aimed at primary and pre-school children along with their parents, grandparents and guardians. Participants have to find colourful markers placed around a park using a map. With no competition or time constraints, families are encouraged to work together to find the markers, identify what is pictured and in some cases answer questions.

British Orienteering developed Xplorer as a simple, accessible form of orienteering that enables more families to experience orienteering close to home in a fun and engaging way.

Since 2013, British Orienteering has provided equipment, training and ongoing support to 154 partners delivering Xplorer events across the country. British Orienteering works with a wide range of organisations to deliver Xplorer from local authority sport development teams, children's centres, friends of park groups, wildlife reserves and scout groups. These organisations are asked to:

- Promote and run Xplorer events.
- Provide access to parks and other green spaces for Xplorer.
- Provide staff or volunteers to deliver Xplorer events.
- Provide participation numbers and continuous feedback from customers.

In return, British Orienteering provides:

- Xplorer kit including challenge markers, answer sheets, registration sheets, certificates, stickers and wristbands for the participants and promotional Banners.
- Maps of parks and other green open spaces with an online planning tool.
- Access to professional marketing materials and targeted national promotions.
- Ongoing support.



## Impact

Xplorer has grown from nothing to deliver over 55,000 participant runs in three years and it continues to grow in 2016. Participation is broadly split 60% female 40% male in contrast to the sport of orienteering where the ratio is reversed. Feedback from participants revealed that 98% of people who took part in Xplorer would recommend it to friends and family.

Xplorer has been a success with a wide range of volunteer bodies due to its simplicity; including 21 volunteer-led organisations, and many others who work with volunteers.

Partners have valued how Xplorer engages local families in multi-generational outdoor physical activity and increases footfall in parks, house grounds and other open green spaces. Debra Marden, Physical Activity Manager at Central Bedfordshire Council, said: "We have seen an increased amount of usage of the park since we have been running the Xplorer sessions. During the summer, we have been really successful in attracting more people to the park and this is as a result of the Xplorer sessions. The numbers attending Xplorer sessions have increased year on year over the 3 years we have been running the Xplorer sessions and this has raised awareness of the park facilities to local residents."

## Key learnings

- Listen to the customer, whoever that may be. Xplorer has developed, grown and evolved as British Orienteering has learnt more about how its partners are using the programme and how they are interacting with the public. Participant feedback led to the creation of holiday marker sets.

## Future plans

British Orienteering is constantly reviewing the Xplorer project. With the current funding model in question, British Orienteering is exploring new ways to continue to deliver and expand Xplorer across the country. In the meantime, British Orienteering will continue to provide Xplorer as an offer for delivery in open spaces across the country and welcome contact with partners who are interested in becoming a Xplorer partner.

## Further information

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## Key facts

Target audience	Young families, children aged 0-12 and their parents, carers and grandparents
Setting	In parks and other green spaces across England
Length of the project	2013-ongoing
Funding	Sport England
Number of participants	10,000 in 2013, 20,000 in 2014 and 55,000 in 2015

