

Fran Loots (Regional Development Officer, West) provides an update on Community Conversations and SWAT squad:-

Whilst we are awaiting more detailed information about the return to sport we have some conversations coming up and hope to restart at least with Juniors:  
Please share this with members. It's not too late to sign up.

**Monday 15th March at 7pm** sees the first of a series of **Community Conversations** looking at various aspects relating to orienteering. The first conversation looks at gender equality with a great panel lined up including Grace Malloy, Graham Gristwood, Sarah Dunn, Richard Oxlade and more. [Sign up here](#) to join in the conversation and check the link below for more information.  
<https://www.scottish-orienteering.org/news/gender-equality-launches-soa-community-conversation-series/>

#### What other topics will be covered in the Community Conversations?

We are putting together a series of discussion areas and hope to host this virtual discussion on a monthly basis, each time putting together a relevant panel and inviting member contributions. We welcome any suggestions of topics for discussion, here are what we have pencilled in so far:

- Where do our priorities lie for restarting our sport? (April)
- Do barriers exist for planners, controllers and event organisers? (May)
- How welcoming is our sport? Are we truly inclusive? (June)

It would be great to hear any thoughts for future discussions.

#### Coaches for SWAT squad

We had a very successful series of virtual coaching for the SWAT squad (Scottish West Area Team) with a regular attendance of 30 plus each week. Thanks to Roger Goddard at FVO for coordinating this.

Once guidance is available, **we hope to return to LIVE coaching**. Restrictions are expected to lift for young people and orienteering coaching should be feasible. We hope to take part in a series of Junior events - the first of which is planned for **30th May** at Auchingarrich near Comrie Perthshire.

We hope to have some coaching in the run up to that. The squads new hoodies will hopefully be ready by then. If you are looking to gain experience in coaching or to support the SWAT squad, [sign up here](#) You can also sign up [using this form](#) if you are an adult wanting to participate in coaching as once restrictions lift for adults we will also incorporate adult sessions into the coaching sessions.

Contact [Roger Goddard](#) if you have juniors at orange level and above that want to participate in the SWAT squad.

Hope to see you back orienteering soon.

Fran

Fran Loots (Regional Development Officer, West)