EckO - Club Development Report 1st March 2020 Jan Kersel

For several years now EckO having been investigating the possibility of employing a club development officer to look at and promote club development. We originally applied for funding two years ago but unfortunately we were knocked back which was very disappointing considering the amount of effort that had gone into the application.

In consultation with SOA, the opportunity arose in Autumn 2019 to employ someone to look at the process of club development and apply for a Direct Club Investment grant from SportScotland.

As a single tender contract of 6 hours/week starting November 2019 until the end of March2020, I volunteered to undertake this.

The objectives/duties were very specific and as follows:-

* At the outset, draw up an action plan of focused development projects that are in line with the above objectives and with ECKO Development Plan, ensuring full approval by the ECKO committee before they are implemented.
* Build partnership with Active Schools, Sports Hubs and other relevant bodies including exploring if a steering committee would be appropriate for the future development of the project.
* Prepare application to DCI and other fund bodies as appropriate
* Work towards the uptake of Teaching Orienteering courses for interested parties with a view to supporting after school clubs and encourage participation in wider club activities.

To date, I have successfully submitted the DCI funding application and it has progressed through the regional meeting stage and is now at the national meeting stage. The application will be discussed on Wednesday, 4th March, 2020 where we will find out whether we have been successful.

This will enable ECKO to employ a club development officer for 4 years, 14 hours/week (7 hours/week for Year 4), for 40 weeks/year. The post will be advertised and go out to interview.

Since November, I have undergone the initial part of my Level 2 coaching award and along with the support of other EckO members have held several coaching sessions directed at both for juniors and adults throughout the Autumn and Winter.

I also trained as an IntrO tutor which now enables me to deliver IntrO training to adults.

I have established links with Active Schools and LiveArgyll Community Sports hub and we were able to offer an IntrO course to interested teachers and parents of the local cluster Primary Schools. We now have 12 adults trained to deliver IntrO. We were over subscribed so plan to run a further course as soon as possible at Oban High School. The schools are now cascading the orienteering basics to their children (P4-P7) up until Easter either as part of the curriculum or as an after school club.

I then intend offering 4 sessions of coaching and development for interested children/ parents/ teachers at a common venue Easter as an afterschool activity.

This will be followed up by an orienteering competition and festival coinciding with World Orienteering Day/Week in May with a view to encouraging schools to enter the Scottish Schools Championships and further competition.

As a result of all the above activity, we have already seen an increase of almost 30% in membership.