

While the risk from animals is part of the generic risk assessment for O events, I will admit that swans and cygnets didn't feature on my specific list this event. However, given their charming but slightly unexpected appearance at today's event I'll definitely consider them in future. The resident family decided that the grass just by the start would be their supper table for the evening and were completely unfazed by the orienteers gathering nearby. At one stage I did think we may need to revise the start location but in the end the family moved on slightly and proceedings could get underway.

My thanks to everyone who took part this evening whether you are new to orienteering or a seasoned campaigner. My particular thanks to those of you who brought juniors along. I do hope that whatever course you chose, you found enough to challenge you, and that you were pleased with the outcome of your efforts. This event was my first attempt at planning a course and I will admit that for me, Brereton Heath has 'form'. I have found myself on previous events becoming confused by the network of paths, misreading the map and missing controls completely while all the time thinking 'it must be here somewhere'. Planning a series of courses has helped me 'get even' but there were a couple of instances while deploying the controls where the vegetation had sprung up and obscured what were previously very obvious features. In this regard my apologies to those on the Green and Blue courses who will have found the vegetation much denser than anticipated between controls 160 and 227.

My thanks to those members of MDOC who helped at any stage in the process either before, during or after the event but in particular Paul Watson, Julie Brook and Eddie Speak for dealing with a seemingly never ending list of questions from me. My thanks too to Mark, the Park Ranger at Brereton Heath, plus the Little Cow Shed staff who opened their ice cream parlour just for us. It seems to have gone down well with many of you.

Guy Lingford