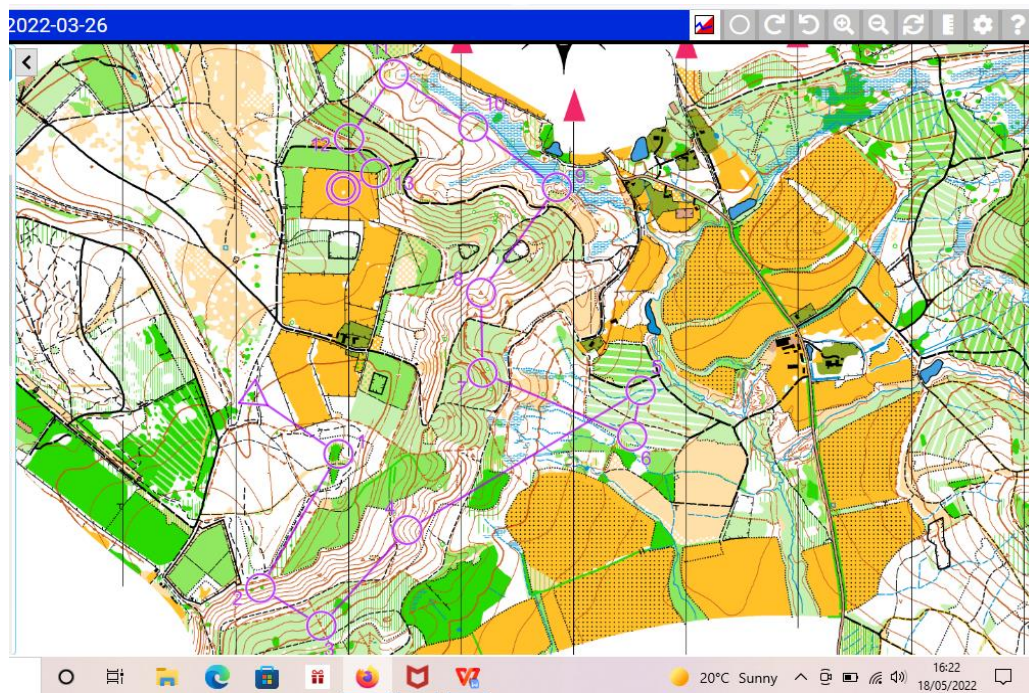


British Long Distance Champs March 2022

The British Long Distance Champs was at Golden Valley and Cognor Woods this year. I did the W60S course. I wasn't expecting much, I haven't done much running for a few months now and I felt like I was really slow over the ground. On a more positive note, the weather was fab, in complete contrast to the torrential downpour we endured at the British Longs last year at Braunton Burrows. My run/walk was steady and I didn't make any major 20-30 minutes errors, which I'm quite capable of doing. I was so laid back about my run that I didn't even wear my beloved Garmin watch.

The course was long and there was a LOT of climb.. about 50 metres per km. There was much moaning and groaning back at base camp, and the finishing times were slow on all courses. I know this was the British LONG Champs, but it didn't need to be that long! I came into the finish and didn't really think I'd done that well, having taken 74 mins for 4.1k. This would normally put me well down the results, but apparently all the other W60S ladies had found the course long and tiring. I managed to hang onto first place, much to my surprise. This is my course:



Although I was slow over the ground, this meant that I took time to check where I was on the map and so I managed to avoid making major errors. I think that not wearing my watch took off some of the pressure I put on myself. It has taken me 35 years of orienteering to realise that I do this for fun, and it really doesn't matter where I finish as long as it's enjoyable. However, I'm not going to lie, it feels good when you do win!

Debbie Charlton
British Champion W60S