



Introduction

Shotokan Connect is now a year old in being, and 18 months old in concept. We have learnt a great deal during that short time, achieved a substantial amount, and have gone a long way to meeting the ambitions of the founder members. Nevertheless, there is much work still to be done, and with our institutional learning has come new ideas and objectives. The founder members were clear that the organisation should be a vehicle for necessary and desirable change for the better, and should not engage in change for change sake.

This strategic plan is written in the context of an organisation that depends entirely on people giving their time and effort without recompense. The plan lays out objectives and targets for the next 5 years, while recognising that the achievement of those targets requires enormous generosity on the part of Shotokan Connect's members, instructors and office holders. Shotokan Connect can only succeed if all those involved are dedicated to the principles and values of the organisation.

Membership

It was never the intention for Shotokan Connect to become a very large organisation. The organisational and operational challenges facing some organisations that have expanded quickly, outgrowing their infrastructure and governance processes, should serve as a lesson in the risks of rapid expansion. Nevertheless, Shotokan Connect cannot foster its values without its members, and without the income members provide. To date Shotokan Connect has 14 clubs and 500 members, achieved without any active recruitment, a policy we are keen to maintain. Increasing the number of clubs will help even out the current uneven geographical distribution of those clubs, enable better connections to develop between clubs and underpin the organisation and finance of more events and competitions.

Targets:

Target Date	Clubs	Members
31/12/2023	20	550
31/12/2025	30	600
31/12/2027	40	750



Finance

Shotokan Connect is a not for profit organisation, so amassing monetary reserves is not a major objective. The primary aim is to generate enough income to cover expenditure relating to organisational events provided for members. However, to ensure that the organisation is insulated against unforeseen challenges that could impact on either income or expenditure, and to support events for members that result in significant expenditure by the organisation, it should hold a reserve. The size of that reserve is debatable, but one year's average expenditure would seem to be a reasonable initial target.

Targets:

Target Date	Target
31/12/2023	Income generated between 01/01/2023 and 31/12/2023 equal or exceeds expenditure
31/12/2025	Year on year income is equalling or exceeding expenditure, and Shotokan Connect holds a reserve equalling or exceeding the average annual expenditure
31/12/2027	Year on year income is equalling or exceeding expenditure, and Shotokan Connect holds a reserve equalling or exceeding twice the average annual expenditure

Digital Ambition

One of the key objectives of Shotokan Connect was to conduct as much of the organisation, operation and governance as possible on line. In essence, a paperless organisation. To date the only official documentation that has been produced on paper has been the kyu and dan grading certificates. The ambitions of Shotokan Connect in terms of the digital activity do, however, go considerably further than being paperless. The intention was from the outset to have a central online database of members' information, course attendance and grading records that could be used by the organisation, the club instructors and the members within the boundaries of current legal requirements. While the groundwork for this objective has been laid, the current provision is still not as we would wish. The challenge has been finding a suitable provider to supply the platform. Our current platform has allowed Shotokan Connect to offer its members facilities that have not to date been offered to karateka in the UK, such as online booking and payment for events. However, the platform is not currently capable of supporting our digital ambition, and a core element of our strategic development must be to find a provider that can. Much can be learnt from the experiences of other organisations who have sought to develop a more effective

online provision, and due diligence needs to be undertaken in identifying a new provider to ensure that Shotokan Connect does not become a hostage to fortune.

Targets:

Target Date	Target
31/12/2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a strategy is in place to identify, and sign up with, a suitable and sustainable platform provider • methods to deal with current key challenges, such as multiple membership using the same email address, have been identified and taken into account in the platform provider selection process
31/12/2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shotokan Connect members are able to access a record of their course and grading attendance, grading feedback, and karate related qualifications online • Shotokan Connect club instructors are able to access the records of their members online • Shotokan Connect members are able to enter and pay for Shotokan Connect competitions online
31/12/2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • eligibility to grade is indicated in the members online record • members are prompted to attend appropriate Shotokan Connect events in order to gain eligibility to grade

Carbon Footprint

Shotokan Connect is already operating in a way that does a great deal to minimize its carbon footprint. With the exception of grading certificates, the organisation uses no paper, the vast majority of meetings are held online, and specialised events such as the performance courses and dan gradings are beginning to be moved to meet the needs of the members. This is a significant component of the planning of future events and should be a major factor in deciding where events are to take place. The general all grades training courses will always result in a significant number of people travelling, and therefore how people travel to events should be of concern to the organisation. Shotokan Connect should actively encourage car sharing and the use of public transport, and proximity of access to public transport should therefore be a consideration in the selection of venues. The approach being taken by the performance team of the coaches going to the karateka rather than the other way around, should be applauded, minimizing as it does the total number of miles travelled. Consideration should also be given to mixed mode events, which combine in person training with online streaming of the instruction, allowing groups of karateka to train at the same time, under the same instruction, but at different venues. To date we have fallen into the rather archaic practice of assessing the success of an event on the basis of the number of



karateka in the room. In the future, the measure of success should be the number of karateka engaged in the event, be it in the room, or at remote locations. Not only will this reduce our carbon footprint, but it will also support our value of inclusion.

Targets:

Target Date	Target
31/12/2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Publication of a Shotokan Connect Carbon Footprint Guide
31/12/2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shotokan Connect has a clearly stated policy, and associated rules, that minimize the organisation’s impact on the environment• Shotokan Connect training events are regularly remotely accessible• Shotokan Connect competitions are live streamed for paying spectators
31/12/2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All Shotokan Connect training courses are remotely accessible and can be accessed in both real time and post event at the same cost

Inclusion

Inclusion is one of Shotokan Connect’s core values, and we have, and will, work hard to ensure that all of our activities are actively inclusive. The concept of inclusivity requires us to provide equal access to karate for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized. This should not be the modification of our working practices and policies on a case by case basis, but the inclusion in the formulation of those policies and practices of potential challenges to inclusivity. Such challenges could be related to, for example, physical or mental ability, ethnicity, religion, age, sex, or gender. There will be limitations to what we can offer, and not everyone will be able to practice Shotokan Karate, which is a very physical martial art. Nevertheless, Shotokan Connect should do its utmost to minimise those limitations, and should offer equal access to Shotokan Karate for as wide a demographic as possible.

Targets:

Target Date	Target
31/12/2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shotokan Connect actively promotes engagement with underrepresented demographics• all members of Shotokan Connect have equal karate opportunity within the organisation
31/12/2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• issues relating to inclusivity is a standard part of all policy, process and rule development and amendment• data relating to the representation of various demographic groups is regularly considered by the Shotokan Connect Steering Committee

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shotokan Connect has an active engagement strategy, designed to improve engagement with underrepresented demographics groups
31/12/2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the demography of the Shotokan Connect membership more accurately reflects the demography of the population of the UK

Governance

Early in the formation of Shotokan Connect it was agreed that positions on the Steering Committee would not be appointed on the basis of a vote. Instead, appointments to all positions would be made on the basis of an application by the candidate, that explained and provided evidence of how the candidate met criteria specific to the appointment. Applications will be considered by the Founder Members and where necessary there will be a shortlisting and interview process to make the final appointment. In this way any member of Shotokan Connect with an appropriate set of skills and experience could play a role in the strategic planning and running of the organisation, and the organisation would capitalize on the skills and expertise of its members. Appointments are made for a maximum of two years. The current steering committee has been in place since January 2022, and so the transition to a committee of new appointees should begin early in 2023 and be staggered throughout the following 2 to 3 years in order to avoid the loss of organisational learning and to facilitate a smooth transition.

Targets:

Target Date	Target
31/12/2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shotokan Connect will have role descriptors for each position on the Steering Committee • Shotokan Connect will have a written process for the advertising, application, selection and appointment of members of the Steering Committee
31/12/2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organisation will be well versed in the appointment of new members to the Steering Committee, and any failings in the process will have been addressed • Members will be aware of the opportunities available to them to be involved in the running of Shotokan Connect • There will be new Steering Committee members
31/12/2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members are actively engaged with the organisation and running of Shotokan Connect • Successors for positions on the Steering Committee are identified from member applicants prior to the positions becoming vacant

12th September 2022