

LONG DISTANCE WALKERS ASSOCIATION LTD
MINUTES of the 11th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of LDWA Ltd
held at 10am on Sunday 14th March 2010
at the Rendezvous Hotel, Skipton, North Yorkshire
Approved at the 2011 AGM, 6 March 2011.

PRESENT

129 members whose names are recorded in the Attendance Register and are listed, in alphabetical order, at the end of these Minutes.

Notice of Meeting

The formal notice convening the meeting was read by the General Secretary.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Sir John Johnson, Quentin Blagg, Nicole Carbonara, Isobel Falconer and Avril Stapleton.

2. Minutes of the 10th Annual General Meeting of LDWA Ltd held on 8th March 2009.

The Minutes of the meeting were contained in the AGM booklet which had been supplied to those attending the AGM.

The minutes were accepted as a true record and this was **AGREED**. The minutes were signed by the Chairman.

3. Matters arising

There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere on the Agenda.

4. Accounts

The accounts for the period ended 30th September 2009 and the reports of the Directors and Accountants had been supplied to those attending the AGM. The full Directors' Report and Unaudited Financial Statements and Report of the Accountants were incorporated in the AGM booklet.

John Sparshatt said he had nothing to add to his report but would take questions.

Tony Willey congratulated John on his excellent control of the finances and asked for clarification on the investments shown. John explained that a Business Bond with Santander had been taken out for £50,000 at 3.2% - a one year Bond. The remainder of the money was lodged with the Nat West and John asked members to let him know if they knew of any low risk Business Bonds paying a reasonable amount of interest that could be investigated as it is so difficult to get such accounts that are open for businesses to use. The Chairman commented that we had already passed the point where we would be better off if we even cashed in the bond while paying the interest penalty for early redemption.

It was proposed by Geoff Saunders, seconded by Les Maple that the accounts should be accepted and this was **AGREED**.

5. Accountants

The Accounts are no longer audited because of the Small Companies Audit Exemption but R F Miller are still doing a similar job for the organisation in compiling the accounts.

It was proposed by Tony Willey, seconded by Les Hewitt and **AGREED** that R. F. Miller, Chartered Accountants and Registered Auditors, Bellevue, Princes Street, Ulverston, Cumbria LA12 7NB, be appointed Accountants for the year ending 30th September 2010 and that the Executive Committee be authorised to fix the remuneration of the Accountants.

6. Annual Reports

The reports listed below had been supplied to those attending the meeting. Paul Lawrence, from the Chair, proposed and it was **AGREED** that the reports be taken as read and that each of the committee members should introduce their reports in turn followed by questions, if any, on each report.

6a) Chair – Paul Lawrence

Paul apologised for an error in his report which had implied that Fiona Cameron only had one year left to serve on the Committee when she has two years left. Peter Haslam will be finishing at the end of the coming year so if anyone felt they could take on this job they would be very welcome.

Edith Moran referred to the issue of ballots for entry to the Hundred Event mentioned in Paul's report. Paul asked the meeting if this could be taken under the Open Forum Session and this was agreed.

6b) General Secretary – Katie Hunt

Katie had nothing to add to her report and there were no questions.

6c) Membership Secretary – Peter Haslam

Peter said membership numbers were increasing and the current membership was 5,973 and this is the highest number for this time of year that Peter has known since he became Membership Secretary. 687 so far have not renewed. The April Strider print run will be 7,000 copies. Peter gave some figures to show how membership is increasing.

December 2007 to March 2008 – New Members 262

December 2008 – March 2009 – New Members 266

December 2009 – 8th March 2010 – New Members 394.

Direct Debits were now being used by 3,350 members, 939 paid on line with a credit card and 1,656 still used cheques.

April's Strider was coming out to members slightly differently using the Mail Sort system but members should have it by 1st April.

Peter also showed the members a new design of membership form which was more eye-catching. This was available for Groups to take away.

6d) Editor – Ken Falconer

Ken said April Strider should be with members by 1st April. He is happy to receive contributions for the magazine to inform or entertain other members. Guy Vowles said that he recommends people to join the Association just to get the benefit of Strider as it is such an excellent publication.

6e) Local Groups – Nicky Wood

Nicky had nothing to add to her report. However she did want to express her support and empathy with Local Groups who had had to take difficult decisions about postponing, moving or cancelling events over the past few weeks because of the extreme weather conditions. She acknowledged that these decisions are hard to take, but safety must be the first priority so she thanked Groups for the decisions they had taken.

6f) Group Programmes Co-ordinator for Strider – Nicole Carbonara

Nicole had submitted a report but was unable to attend the AGM to answer questions. Hazel Bound asked if the system was still that walks had to be on the website to get anything into Strider. Paul confirmed that there would be no change in the system.

Paul informed the members that it was expected the above two roles would be combined on the new Committee – reverting back to the system that operated a few years ago.

6g) Internet – Reg Chapman

Reg said that the new look website would be going "live" on 22nd March. On that day there would be a bit of time when the system would be changing over so may not work 100% as it should, but should be up and running on that day.

6h) Events – Fiona Cameron

Fiona had nothing to add to her report and there were no questions.

6i) 100s Co-Ordinator – Gail Elrick

Gail reported on the Hundred Event:

2009 Wessex Hundred had been a successful event.

2010 Gail asked John Stewart for a report from the floor. John said that there was still snow on the route. Paul Hatcher would be keen to hear from anyone else who could help on the main event. The route had changes slightly but there would be very few stiles. The event is full with a waiting list.

2011 Housman Hundred is being planned

2012 Olympic Event - Gail was pleased to tell the meeting that the formal approval had now been given to the event based on exactly the same rules as other hundreds. Five groups would be running the event – London, Kent, Surrey, Thames Valley and Beds, Bucks and Northants. They were forming a committee to take the planning forward now that the formal approval had been given.

Tony Rowley asked that more information be given about the arrangements for the 2012 Hundred as early as possible so that people can plan travel and accommodation etc. Gail said that it was hoped to provide parking in Windsor and then providing transport to the start but these decisions would be taken by the new committee which will be meeting soon to start the detailed planning and members would be informed about arrangements as soon as this was available.

Suzanne Waldschmidt said that as there were so many members in the London area, it may be possible to arrange accommodation with members in the area. She herself could provide accommodation for some people.

2013 – Cornwall and Devon Hundred would run West to East - Wadebridge to Teignmouth and would be called the Camel-Teign 100 (to take in the two rivers) .

6j) LDPs – Paul Lawrence

Paul had nothing to add to his report, other than that the Consultation on OS Mapping needed to be submitted by 17th March and we would formulate a response. Graham Hemsley said that he was very concerned that the move to free mapping would take away the funding from OS and this may result in the withdrawal of paper maps which were so important for people to take out walking with them. Paul confirmed that this would be a main point of the LDWAs submission, and if members wanted to see the response formulated by the Ramblers, this was available on their website and they were making very similar points.

6k) Publicity – Catharine Pember

Catharine had nothing to add to her report except that another piece of publicity would be appearing in the May issue of Country Walking with John Sparshatt being interviewed about the Six Dales Trail and the LDWA would be mentioned.

6l) On Line Entry/External Contacts

Tony Deall had submitted a report and had nothing to add.

6m) Merchandise – Tim Glenn

Tim said that the Handbook had been doing really well and he recommended members to buy one. He has a number of items for sale for £1 in the shop of old items and he was even giving away bumbags to anyone who would like to take one. Tim also promoted the roll bag which is the perfect size for the breakfast stop on the Hundred Event.

Simon Townson asked about whether the car stickers would be re-introduced. He thought there were good advertising but a few members thought it was advertising that a car parked up would be left there for some time as the owner had gone for a long walk. An informal vote was taken and there was a good majority against having the car stickers.

Guy Vowles asked about the feasibility of having an LDWA Calendar with some of the wonderful photographs that are being taken by members. The new committee would look at the possibility of this.

Paul Lawrence reported that the Handbook had now sold more than the previous edition sold in the whole first year of issue, around 2,300. There was a profit on sales and royalties and, although money had been spent in getting the Handbook together, the profits were beginning to come in with a royalty payment of £2,400.

6n) Environment – Paul Lawrence

Paul had prepared a report as no individual committee member was dealing with Environmental issues. It was hoped that the committee could formulate the equivalent of a company environmental statement but we really need a member with experience and an interest in this area of work who would be willing to take the role on.

Jill Green's article in Strider was always good to read on environmental matters and it is hoped that one or two offers to take on this article will lead to the reintroduction of a regular piece in Strider.

7. Election of Officers

There had only been one nomination for the post of Chairman – Paul Lawrence. Paul stood down from the Chair to allow Barbara Blatchford to take the chair for the election. Barbara declared that Paul had been duly appointed Chair of the Executive Committee and of LDWA Ltd.

Paul then resumed the Chair.

Single nominations had been received for the positions of General Secretary, Treasurer, Editor, Membership Secretary, Internet Officer and six nominations had been received for the other six Executive Committee positions by the due date. It was suggested from the Chair that the nominations be taken en bloc and accordingly the following persons were declared to have been appointed to the positions shown and consequently as Directors of LDWA Ltd.:

General Secretary	Katie Hunt, proposed by John Whitlam, seconded by Bobbie Sauerzapf
Treasurer	Ian Beveridge, proposed by Reg Chapman, seconded by John Sparshatt
Membership Secretary	Peter Haslam, proposed by Reg Kingston, second by Tony Clark
Editor	Ken Falconer, proposed by Fiona Cameron, seconded by Julie Welch
Internet Officer	Reg Chapman, proposed by Lew Hewitt, seconded by Glenys Kirkpatrick

Executive Committee Members

Fiona Cameron	Proposed by Nicky Wood, seconded by Ken Falconer
Abigail Elrick	Proposed by Don Bolton, seconded by Nicky Wood
Tim Glenn	Proposed by Jerry Gould, seconded by Linda Gould
John Phillips	Proposed by Margaret Williams, seconded by Andy Tordoff
John Sparshatt	Proposed by Brian Winn, seconded by Ken Wyles
Madeleine Watson	Proposed by Geoff Holburt, seconded by Ken Wyles

The three new members, Ian Beveridge, John Phillips and Madeleine Watson were introduced to members and welcomed to the committee.

8. Subscriptions for the Membership Year 2011

John Sparshatt proposed that there be no increase in subscription in 2011 and this was AGREED.

9. Honoraria

It was AGREED to authorise the Committee to determine honoraria payments in accordance with past practice.

The Chairman declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 11.17am

10. Open Forum and Discussion

10.1 Hundreds Ballot

Edith Moran asked if the system for having a ballot for entry to the Hundred needed to be re-considered as many members now thought that it was fairer to have a system of first come, first served. Tony Willey said that the system of ballot entry had been arrived at in 1994 after problems in 1993, but technology had come a long way in that time and there would be no problem now having a first come first served system. With on line entry members the administration is much easier. Members without access to the internet themselves would normally be able to ask a friend to download the application forms etc. to get the entry in on time. Tony felt that the time period involved in 1994 now no longer applied and the need for a ballot was no longer necessary. As long as members are informed, then the first come first served system would be preferable.

Linda Ashwell said that she felt that the system should go back to a first come first served system and could see no problem with it. Carol Coyne also supported Tony's suggestion and also said that for members who still wanted to enter by post, perhaps there could be a certain number of entries that were ring-fenced for postal entry so that they are not put at a disadvantage.

Julia Greenwood asked how many had not got a place for 2010. 25 people are on the waiting list but it is felt that the nearer we get to May, people will drop out through being unable to take part and that the people on the waiting list will probably be able to be offered a place.

Reg Chapman said that he had been instrumental in the discussions in 1994 to introduce a ballot. He said that the situation had not changed – if 600 people want to do the hundred, you are still going to have 100 disappointed people no matter what system you use. But it is fairer to have a ballot because some members may not be able to get their entry in on the opening date for entry due to illness, being on holiday or in hospital or for any number of reasons. He could not see a reason for changing the system.

Jenny Kolot said that the first come, first served system meant that the keen ones get in and the administration of a ballot would be unnecessary.

Andy Hicks asked why it was necessary to ask for a qualifying event from someone who has completed a number of hundreds in the past. If someone has done 10 Hundreds, they should automatically get a place whether they have an official qualifier .

Bob Mills asked for clarification on non members going into the ballot and it was confirmed that members get priority.

Janet Chapman said that if people are encouraged to join just to get a place on the Hundred Event, this gives the Membership Secretary even more work sending out reminders to people who only wanted to join for one year to get a place.

Ken Falconer explained some of the history behind why the ballot was introduced and at one point two hundred events were run in one year, but neither of them had anywhere near the 500 entry and some people did both events. If people do not get into the official Hundred event, if they want to do their own self supported event with a suitable witness, then this can still qualify for the 10 Hundreds badge. For example they could do the same route of the Hundred but on a different weekend as long as a suitable witness confirmed that the route had been completed.

Janet Chapman said that on the Wessex Hundred around 6 people were doing the event on the same weekend – coming in to checkpoints but not taking food or water etc. but this is not to be encouraged.

Peter Haslam noted the difficulties inherent in having parallel postal and online entry in a situation where the event is oversubscribed, where a ballot enables members to be prioritised and all entries to be validated before a ballot. He questioned whether having both postal and online entries was possible with a first-come-first-served system.

Gail Elrick said that the National Committee had considered the issue of the ballot and had decided to retain the ballot for the 100 LDWA Flagship Event. This meant that everyone had equal opportunity to get into the event and there may be many good reasons why someone could not get their entry in on 1st December and the ballot system was fairer.

The meeting was asked to take a vote so that the National Committee could get a sense of the feeling from the meeting so that the matter could be discussed again. The vote was:

24 – to retain the ballot

68 – to change to a first come first served system

13 – abstentions

Edith Moran asked how long it would be, should a ballot be needed, before the results of the ballot could be known but this could be done quite quickly.

Ted Marsh said that it should be possible to ensure that anyone who does not get a place in the ballot could be offered an automatic place the following year.

10.2 10 Hundreds Badge

At the Local Groups Meeting John Walker had raised an idea that the meeting wanted to be raised at the AGM. As John was not present, Gail Elrick put forward the idea. If any person wanted to qualify for a 10 Hundreds Badge, they should prove that they have helped or marshalled at a Hundred Event in the past. This would mean that they could still do the Hundred – but do the Marshalls Event instead at least once. This would prove that they were giving something back to the Association. Whilst this may be a good idea, it may be difficult to monitor.

10.3 Future AGM Meetings

Andy Hicks asked if future venues could be asked to provide a microphone system for the AGM so that people can hear what is being said. This would be taken forward.

10.4 Runners

Peter Grayson said that he is a member of a running club and he knows that many of the longer fell races have very tight cut off times for checkpoints and this puts a great deal of pressure on runners. In his experience he knows that a lot of runners use the LDWA events to give them a much more welcoming experience of fell running with a more relaxed cut off time and that runners very much appreciate the events that LDWA put on, and that the LDWA is providing a valuable service to runners.

10.5 On Line Entry

Geoff Saunders said that some groups are using Pay Pal rather than Sport Ident but there needs to be some way to connect into Pay Pal and return the user to the event site. With the developments on the website, these changes may be able to be built in and reviewing the template upgrade process will be the opportunity to add in these things that groups want.

10.6 Widening Participation

Peter Russell asked what was being done to widen participation in LDWA events to people of different socio-economic groups, ethnic origin etc. The problem in answering this question is that the facts are not known as statistics are not kept. One noticeable move is that with new members recently it is close to 50/50 men and women. Historically the membership was 70% men. Catharine Pember said that the articles appearing in Trail Magazine would be read by a much younger age group and this would hopefully lead to a younger group entering our events etc. It may be that the organisation not only needs an environmental statement, but also one on inclusion and outreach and sustainability. Minority groups needed better visibility in say photographs on the website.

Ted Marsh said that when he was Publicity Officer he used to try to reinforce to members that each member was able to use their own day to day contacts to publicise the organisation. Tony Rowley said that he hands out membership forms or the little LDWA business cards to people he meets when he is out walking and Catharine said that she had a supply of these cards if members would like to take some.

10.7 Kit Check for Runners

Ron Brown said that the Essex and Herts Group had asked him to raise the issue of whether runners are carrying the correct kit on events as they seem to only have small bum bags and it did not seem to be possible to get all the kit required in such a small bag when walkers have a large rucksack, and that perhaps walkers are being penalised. Gail said that you can be quite creative in getting everything into your bag and if runners have the kit required and can produce it at the kit check, then there is not much that can be done. They must carry everything on the mandatory kit list.

10.8 AGM Organisation

Reg Kingston thanked members for being patient with him during his first year of organising the AGM weekend and thanked Geoff Saunders for guiding him through. 144 people had attended the Gala Dinner. He thanked John Sparshatt and all the Walk Leaders for all the work they did to prepare the walks for the weekend and then leading so well on the Saturday. Their work was greatly appreciated. It is hoped that next year the AGM will be held in the Cotswolds area – and if members have any hotels to recommend, Reg would appreciate any contacts.

11. President's Address

Sir John Johnson had unfortunately been unable to attend the AGM this year due to being on holiday. However, he had sent a message to be read out and Barbara Blatchford delivered the address on Sir John's behalf. Sir John expressed his pleasure at receiving the new National Trails Handbook and congratulated those who had worked on it. He also said how pleased he was to receive his National Trails Certificate. Sir John informed members that he is standing down from the Chilterns Conservation Board and he hopes to have more time for the LDWA and for walking generally.

Sir John finished by thanking those who organise the LDWA and especially thanked the editors of Strider who have given so much pleasure over the years.

Barbara Blatchford then thanked the Committee for their work. She also thanked Reg Kingston for organising a really great AGM weekend and all the Walk Leaders who had done so much to organise some great walks for members to do on Saturday.

The meeting closed at 12.10am.

The following members signed the Attendance Register:-

Avril Allen	David Allen	Ken Andrews	Pat Andrews	Linda Ashwell
Chris Bancroft	Mark Beaumont	Trevor Beeston	Ian Beveridge	Jim Bispham
Barbara Blatchford	Barrie Blenkinship	Jean Bobker	Hazel Bound	Terry Bound
Hilary Brown	Ron Brown	Mike Buckley	Linda Burrell	Fiona Cameron
Susan Cannell	Helen Cavanagh	Lynne Caygell	Ron Caygell	Janet Chapman
Reg Chapman	Linda Connor	Peter Cowlyn	Carol Coyne	James Crockett
Tim Crosby	Tim Dawe	Tony Deall	Dina Dixon	Dennis Doyle
Graham Ellis	Abigail Elrick	John Elrick	Ken Falconer	John Fleming
Laurence Foe	Daphne Forrest	Peter Forrest	Tim Glenn	Michael Godfrey
Chris Graham	Peter Grayson	Chris Greene	Eileen Greenwood	Julia Greenwood
Chris Grogan	Tony Grogan	Peter Haslam	Graham Hemsley	Madeleine Hemsley
Phil Heneghan	Patricia Hesford	Les Hewitt	Andy Hicks	Ian Hilditch
David Hough	Arthur Howcroft	Katie Hunt	Malcolm Hunt	David Jacques
Katharine Kent	Reg Kingston	Jenny Kolot	Paul Lawrence	Vivien Lee
Les Maple	Ted Marsh	Joan McCormack	Bob Mills	Joy Mills
Edith Moran	Rob Myers	Enid Parr	Jeff Parr	Catharine Pember
John Phillips	Michael Ratcliff	Jenny Reed	Tony Reed	June Reeder
Allan Roberts	Ian Robinson	Jill Robinson	Tony Rowley	Gordon Rushton
Sandra Rushton	Peter Russell	Geoff Saunders	Marjorie Sawley	Ann Sayer
Hilary Scott	Chris Seddon	Ann Smith	Geoff Smith	Louise Smith
Neil Smith	Ron Smith	John Sparshatt	John Stewart	Chris Stockton
Norman Thomas	Simon Townson	Mary Varley	Mike Varley	Guy Vowles
Susanne Waldschmidt	Margaret Waller	Robert Waller	Angela Walton	Tony Walton
Andy Ward	Madeleine Watson	Ray Watson	Wendy Watson	Judi Webster
Nigel West	John Widdowson	Susan Widdowson	Jill Wilkins	Susan Wilkinson
Tony Willey	Dave Williams	Cyril Williams	Nicky Wood	

Signed:
(Paul Lawrence, Chairman)

Date: March 2011