**2016 AGM local group representative report**

**Peter Simon**

The 2016 local group representatives meeting was held November 18-20 at the Stratford-upon-Avon youth hostel. Here are my subjective takeaways from the sessions.

* **First aid training for events** - What is the current situation on a group-by-group basis? What is the position with respect to insurance? Do we have sufficient trained marshals? If not, who would be able to provide the training? If someone has an accident and no first aid trained marshals are available, do we expose ourselves to liability if an untrained person attempts to help? The Essex and Herts group has received training and could recommend someone.
* **Data protection** **(1)** - The national LDWA has issued a policy on data protection that states that local groups should use the LDWA National Database "wherever possible" for bulk mailings to members. At present, we are not doing this. One of the issues that has delayed us in doing so is our wish to restrict bulk mailings to members who have paid the £1 administration fee. Other groups seem to have figured a way around this. It was recommended that we contact either Dennis Jacobs of Essex and Herts Group or Adam Dawson of London Group (neither of whom attended the meeting) in order better to understand how this may best be done. It sounds interesting to me. Might it be worth exploring?
* **Data protection (2)** - More generally, the NEC has published a briefing note on data protection and policy that is available to anyone that is interested, in particular, challenge event organisers, group secretaries and other group level officials. I have a copy. Of particular interest is the following: "All LDWA Groups should identify a member of their committee to be the person responsible for ensuring compliance with the Association's Data Protection and Privacy Policy".
* **Insurance of group assets** - The issue here is the sort of insurance cover that groups may have to cover property that is stored when not needed for events. Do we have cover? Do we need cover?
* **Charges to use national parks, National Trust land etc. on events -** Although individual ramblers are free to use public rights of way or to cross access land on their own, the same does not necessarily apply to participants in organised events. The national parks and the National Trust have contacted event organisers with demands that they pay a fee for permission to cross their properties, sometimes a fixed fee and sometimes a charge per entrant. Gail Elrick, the NEC chairman, looking further into this. Has BBN encountered any problems in this regard?
* **PACER** - The PACER system for managing events was demonstrated. It was first used live at this year's Founders' Challenge. Some bugs were encountered, with the result that a version 2 is in preparation and due for completion next month. The response to the system has been favourable. Challenge event organisers are under no obligation to use PACER.
* **Business Plan 2017-19 -** The NEC is discussing putting out a Business Plan for 2017-2019. There are no firm action points at this time.
* **LDWA LDP Survey -** Neil Rawlins, the LDP coordinator at national level, is preparing a questionnaire that would go out to members, surveying their views on the long distance paths pages on the LDWA Website. There was discussion on what the questionnaire should contain.
* **Social media for local groups** - The NEC is interested in feedback on how local groups use, or could use, social media such as Facebook, Twitter etc. to promote their activities.
* **Rules for 100s** - Formal rules for the organisation of Hundreds are in preparation. This is a 6-page document. Since BBN is not planning to organise another Hundred in the immediate future, this is not relevant to us. By the time that we do get around to organising another Hundred, the rules most likely will have been altered.
* **LDWA and the definitive map of rights of way in England** - Dorset LDWA prepared a briefing on a project that is being undertaken to identify and reclaim lost footpaths that do not appear on current definitive maps. This must be done by January 1, 2026. There seemed to be a general consensus that this is not something for the LDWA to get into. Although it is an admirable project, the Ramblers are the more appropriate group to get involved.