



LONG DISTANCE WALKERS ASSOCIATION

furthering the interests of those who enjoy long distance walking

Website: www.ldwa.org.uk

LDWA Chair's Newsletter: October 2018

The last NEC meeting took place on 20.10.18. During that meeting, a discussion took place in relation to the logos that had been produced by graphic designers on our behalf. Two designs have been chosen by the NEC and will be presented in the December Strider with details on how to vote for your favourite logo.

This month I'm focussing on Key Area 1 (To promote and preserve the future of the LDWA) of the Business Plan, and in particular focussing on an issue that has highlighted the need not to be complacent with our website.

Thanks must be extended to Kingsley Lambert who has volunteered to take over as Discounts Officer from Norman Corrin having read the August newsletter. Good Luck with the new role Kingsley. I'm already looking forward to saving money on any new discounts that can be achieved!

Hot Off The Press!

Steph Carter our Membership Secretary has advised the NEC that our association grew by 4% in 2017/18. We're into a new membership year now and on 30.09.18 we had exactly 358 more members than the previous year. Happy 'Long Distance' Walking!

David Morgan
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Our website – www.ldwa.org.uk – which we all know & love, is getting a bit long in the tooth now. Whilst it has served us brilliantly for many years, it's beginning to show the stresses of strains of middle age.

As an example, modifications to the website to allow the introduction of new membership fees at the beginning of October, & a new discount feature for those of us (most I hope!) who pay by direct debit, required enormous effort by our IT & Membership teams (all volunteers) & our IT supplier, Mobius Media. This included lengthy onsite & phone meetings between our Membership Secretary (Steph Carter) & Mobius, followed up by extensive testing by both the IT & Membership teams. Then actually to "go live" on 1 October required an overnight stint by Mobius & Steph, to make sure everything went well.

The introduction of a new image management system in March – essential for the safe & secure operation of the website, but completely invisible to the outside world, was even more complicated. This entailed over 100 hours of volunteer time in testing & significant (& relatively costly) development work by our supplier. Some of these time & cost implications would be same with any website, but because ours is getting old, & relying in many cases on bespoke software, it's getting harder to make these sorts of changes & upgrades.

So whilst we will be giving our website a much needed refresh & spruce-up in the next few months, in the longer term this won't be enough. We will need to do something more radical to give us the safe, secure & effective on-line platform that is expected for a high-profile modern organisation such as ours. Our next challenge, which will probably run into the 2020s, will require all of us in the NEC, & more widely, to start thinking about what functions we really need our online presence to deliver. Alongside this, we will be looking to our IT supplier to advise us what new technical platforms we could be using, to give us a future-proof infrastructure which will serve us at least as well as our current system has.

For now, watch this space for further news. Please bear with us as we do our best behind the scenes to keep www.ldwa.org.uk operating securely & looking suitably chipper, ready to meet both the needs of our Association, both now & well into the future.



Elephant, Bear & Bull 100 - 2022

I'm really rather pleased (and relieved!) to report that at the NEC meeting in Nottingham on 20.10.18, an application to organise the 2022 '100' was approved. Following my April Newsletter when I asked for members to consider organising the annual 100, Michael Jones considered the request and has worked tirelessly with considerable enthusiasm to bring a team together that will organise the event. The 2022 100 will focus on the Warwickshire area of the country and will visit Birmingham and Coventry making use of the extensive canal network.

The LDWA has been aware for some time of the need to update and modernise its safeguarding policies. I must highlight the outstanding work undertaken on behalf of the association by Deirdre Flegg. Over the last nine months, Deirdre has pulled together a very comprehensive safeguarding document that will ensure that the LDWA is fully compliant with regarding what our association must do in relation to safeguarding both adults and children. The document will soon be shared with all local group Chairs and will be discussed with local group representatives at the meeting in November. It will also be available in the library section of our website.

