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| **Steppingley StepSunday 17th November 2019** |
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We have three SS events, Shillington Shuffle, Sundon Saunter and Steppingley Step, taking it in turns annually in November. Although each event starts from Barton-le-Clay, the routes are different and each event has a choice of three distances, 26ish, 18ish and 12ish miles. This year it was the turn of Step Step, completing the third cycle organised by the current team.

In early October, we reached our entry limit of 300, with subsequent entries going onto a waiting list. Mike Hyland, our entries secretary, is really enthusiastic about getting 300 people to turn up on the day by encouraging people to let him know if they can’t make it, so releasing a place to someone on the waiting list. Eventually 47 withdrew and we expected 292 on the day; only 15 people didn’t turn up, that’s just a smidge over 5% no-shows. Entries came from 20 different LDWA groups.

All routes go up Sharpenhoe Clappers, getting the lungs working early on, and with good views of the trees in autumn colours. Routes also visit Harlington, Steppingley, Flitwick, Pulloxhill, with the water tower that features on the event badge (this year with added birds and balloons) and Ampthill Park, with checkpoints at Westoning, Flitton and Ampthill. All routes have mud.

We’re very lucky to have a good bunch of volunteers including some on car park duty who then go and do the event, some who come once a year to help, one who went for a cycle ride then donned the marigolds and a family who look after one of the checkpoints. Many thanks to all of them and particularly Lynn Yorston, who is leaving the organising team after 9 years arranging the refreshments; she’ll be back next year to serve the beer….yes, we have a barrel of Malt the Brewery beer; this year it was Moderation, 3.4%.

Those who complete all three SS events, any distance, in any order, are presented with a special certificate and badge, with accompanying fanfare. 64 people qualified this year - 25 their first triple, 22 their second and 17 their third. Those 17 have completed every SS event so earned two embellishments and extra fanfare. Very silly, but all good fun.

The entry fee for the SS events is £7 for LDWA members and £10 for non-members. We hire a van, have a barrel of beer, don’t charge for badges, make a donation to Air Ambulance, give the non-member supplement to the LDWA and make a small surplus. A few years ago we used the surplus to buy 100 sets of metal cutlery in IKEA for £60 and had intended to buy plastic plates and bowls at the same time but have managed to gather sufficient from members, friends, families and the Brownies. We’re now looking to buy a couple of pairs of marigolds in BBN burgundy, if you can help, please get in touch.

Beds, Bucks and Northants Group