

LDWA London AGM 8th March 2018: Challenge Events Reports

Report of the 21st Founders Challenge Saturday 14th October 2017

167 people started (2016 = 137; 2015 = 130) and 161 finished: 40 completed the 16 mile walk, 78 the 27 mile walk and 43 the 27 mile run. Their ages ranged from 11 to 72 (both on the longer route. Quite a feat for the youngster!) We had 11 entries on the day and only 16 No Shows.

Times ranged from 4 hours 7 minutes to 7h17m for the shorter route. For the 27 miles there was remarkably little difference between those classified as walkers and runners! 5h24m - 9h50m for the walkers and 4h58m - 9h53m for the runners. The key issue for the organisers is that participants arrive at checkpoints when they are open which almost everyone did.

Feedback so far has been very positive, thanks to the 30 marshals who helped on the day. Here's a typical comment:

The only feedback I have is that there should be PROSECCO! If not at all CPs, then at the end. Besides that, I loved the event! Check in was easy, the food and lemon squash was spot on. Any failing in the route description was mine alone - and my team told me so! Loved the food at the end. Hope to do 27 miles next year :)

Special mentions go to Tony Cartwright and Mary Dumble from the Surrey Group who led on PACER, the electronic monitoring package that made times available so fast at the end and also made sure we didn't lose anyone. They were assisted by Janet Chapman, also from LDWA Surrey, and Andy Shoesmith who welcomed people back to HQ and made sure they received their certificates.

And particular appreciation to John Penniford who voluntarily shouldered the responsibility for coordinating the catering. This is no mean task! It involved a complex spreadsheet of assumptions about how many 50 gm slices of cheese go into a loaf of bread and how many sandwiches come out of a tub of hummus or peanut butter. He was ably supported on the day by his wife Fiona and a team clad fashionably in new LDWA London logo'd aprons.

Sincere thanks go to the Friends of the Hurtwood who keep miles of forest in splendid condition for our enjoyment and maintain the car parks that we use in Peaslake, Surrey Wildlife Trust for use of car parks at Guildford Lane and Friday Street as checkpoints, to Tanners Hatch Youth Hostel for the checkpoint there and the National Trust for permitting access there for our cars. All these organisations either charged for access or will receive a donation from LDWA London.

The following gave lifts to marshals and participants arriving at Guildford Station: Aga Geborek, Hannah Gray, Sophie Ravenscroft, Tim Bedwell, Gary Allen and Andy Humphrey. Thanks to them and to those who also offered lifts but were not needed. All those who needed a lift out of Peaslake also got one – at least there was no one left when we locked up at 1945!

Car parking was managed by Hazel Stokes, Helen Franklin, Colin Saunders, Don Newman and Nigel Barraclough.

Catering and Hospitality: John and Fiona Penniford, Susan Cannell, Jackie Fox, Lonica Vanclay, Joelle Gérin, Peter Aylmer, Colin Saunders, Ron Williamson, Cathy Phillips, Jeff Golland, Dave Williams and Deborah and Andy Shoesmith.

CP1: Hazel Stokes, Joelle Gérin, Ken Fancett, Steve Garnsey, Andy Shoesmith, Jeff Golland and Peter Aylmer.

CP2: Paul Lawrence, Helen Franklin, Linda Pan, Dave Williams, Peter Russell, Melissa Butcher and Simon Trott.

CP3: Nigel Barraclough, Tara Williams, Mary Dumble, Fabrice Leistner, Hazel Stokes and Cathy Phillips. Tara and Fabrice swept back to Peaslake very quickly but all had finished before they arrived!

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The following helped to clear up in record time: Don Newman, Hazel Stokes, Colin Saunders, Dave Williams, John and Fiona Penniford, Paul Lawrence, Andy and Deborah Shoesmith, Peter Aylmer, Joelle Gérin, Nigel Barraclough and Lonica Vanclay. Several of these people were at the Hall in Peaslake before 7 a.m. and did not leave until 7.45 p.m.!

It's great having such a good team: my job becomes easy! Thanks to everyone.

The **22nd Founders Challenge** will take place on Saturday 13th October and the **Marshals Walk** on Saturday 29th September: that's a HINT!!

No changes are currently planned for the routes, fees, entry process, etc.

Gordon Parker *on behalf of LDWA London*
October 2017

Update on the 2nd Capital Challenge 7th April 2018

Preparations are in full swing: we consulted the runes to set the date on the first Saturday after the clocks change, avoiding Easter and West Ham home fixtures! So it is a month after the AGM.

The Committee decided to double the entry limit and at the time of writing (12th Feb) we have 189 entries. We'll be showing off our city to people from across the country, from Crediton to Scarborough via Caerphilly and Paris.

The Route and the Checkpoints are unchanged. 25 Marshals have offered to help; 1 or 2 more in the afternoon could be an asset!

The Marshals Walk is on Sunday 18th March.

Jean O'Reilly is helping me coordinate the event this year with a view to taking responsibility for it in 2019.

Gordon Parker
Organiser on behalf of LDWA London
February 2018

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Report of the 1st Capital Challenge Saturday 1st April 2017

LDWA London agreed at its 2016 AGM that we would organise a new challenge walk in London. We hoped for a walk that would showcase both famous and hidden parts of London and would be relatively mud-free. Judging from the comments received from participants in the event, our aims were achieved. As Coordinator, I was delighted to feel that this was truly a group-led event with many people contributing to its success.

- Entries were limited to 100 people in order to test the catering and route capacity. By the eve of the event there were 104 active entries; on the day, 8 people did not start.
- The **96 starters** (including 87 LDWA members) came from all over England with 2 from Wales and 1 from Germany (see table at end of report on the website). One retired during the event.
- The route worked well and many thanks are due to Susanne Waldschmidt who led throughout the route planning and wrote the Route Description. She was accompanied on recesses by Adam Dawson, Douglas Robinson (and Duke) and Peter Aylmer. Bathurst Mews, the Pergola and Abney Park cemetery seem to have been the stand-out, perhaps because unexpected, highlights. The Route Description had been tested several times including the Marshals' Walk and Ron Wilkinson's Pop-Up walks.
- Douglas negotiated the checkpoints at the Start (BFI, South Bank), Paddington Station, Hampstead Heath, Finsbury Park Café and Nature's Throne in the Middlesex Filter Beds. Gordon dealt with the ViewTube café (now The Common) at the Finish. On the whole, all worked well.
- There were plenty of volunteer marshals: their enthusiastic help was greatly appreciated by me and participants, both on the day and afterwards. Gratitude is due to Hazel Stokes for the energy and skill she put into buying and distributing supplies. Thanks also to Sherry Hallmond for use of her car at CP2.
- Here's some typical feedback:

I just wanted to write, having completed the Capital Challenge yesterday and say thank you for a fantastic event. It was brilliant to be part of the first ever challenge. I was part of a group of five who live 50 miles South of London. We all have spent time in our Capital but nothing prepared us for some of the places we passed through. Bathurst Mews and the Pergola in particular stopped us in our tracks. For me personally it's ignited a new love of London and I can't wait to go back and revisit some of the route. I will also be going back to travel around the capital ring, I never knew it was there! I also wanted to say how wonderfully cheerful and helpful your volunteers and marshals were. They were so friendly and really made the day. Not to mention the chocolate brownie at the end! Congratulations on a fantastically successful and enjoyable day.
- Monitoring and timing the participants using PACER worked very well. Results were available instantly so that certificates could be produced; during the event the last-known location of everyone was available: having good mobile signals at all checkpoints was a previously unknown bonus! Thanks to Adam Dawson for setting it all up and to Tony Cartwright and Mary Dumble for supporting London beyond the call of duty.
- Godfrey O'Callaghan and his former design studio workplace colleagues did a brilliant job on the certificate awarded to finishers.

Gordon Parker
 Organiser on behalf of LDWA London
 April 2017

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Checkpoints on the Hundred

North York Moors, 27-29 May 2017: the Volunteers' weekend Report by Susanne Waldschmidt

The weekend began, on the Friday evening, in the Lord Rosebery Scarborough. We were astonished to discover that this was a Wetherspoons pub.

On Saturday morning, after seeing off our London champions, we were transferred to Fyling's Hall School surely the most beautiful checkpoint in the UK. From a garden terrace of roses and clipped hedges we had extensive views of the North Yorkshire Coast. The weather seemed more like the Mediterranean than the North Sea. It was great for us but perhaps not for the walkers. We wondered if they too would appreciate the lovely scenery.

We had a free afternoon and fortified by Adam's Kit Kat bars, the 8 of us set off for the 10 miles along the coastal path to Whitby. It made a nice change from the footpaths of Surrey and Kent. Dracula was hard at work though. As we approached the Abbey unearthly sounds of thunder engulfed us and the heavens opened with a mighty deluge which drenched us. After 15 minutes the sun came out and dispelled the demons and we avoided their wrath a second time by diving into the Abbey tea rooms.

In the evening it was back to the checkpoint and time to start work.

Never having done the breakfast baggage stop before, we were learning on the job. The new PACER checking in system all looked so straight forward when we tested it with Adam in London. Unfortunately the school wi-fi decided that the LDWA website was definitely dodgy and to be blocked at every opportunity. Luckily though, unlike BA we had a tried and tested pencil and paper system.

As Sunday progressed, we had a lacerated leg, a lost bag, heat exhaustion and of course a googleplex of blisters. Toilet paper was about to run out and not a single toilet brush was to be seen. However our lovely London volunteers coped magnificently with every challenge. It was great to cheer on our London Champions as they arrived one by one exhausted after 62 miles.

In the late afternoon we enjoyed another social walk, at the end of which was the final challenge. The beloved leader had blearily read the Saturday bus timetable. It was soon agreed that throwing her off the nearest cliff would not get us any nearer to Scarborough. Thus we ended an intensively packed weekend with a comfortable taxi ride, that didn't cost an arm and a leg, and most unusual of all a meal in a lovely fish restaurant, overlooking the harbour that did not bear the name Wetherspoons.

Thanks Maria, Isobel, Paul, Paul, Colin, Dave, Rob for being such a great team and helping to make this such an enjoyable if exhausting weekend.

A special thanks to our two conscripts Tony (from somewhere north of the Humber) and John from somewhere else up North. Without their help we would have been somewhat overwhelmed.

A big thank-you to the Lancashire Group, who fed us endless breakfasts at all hours of the day and night and ensured there was a constant stream of hot tea and coffee.

Finally thanks too to the anonymous man and his dog, that both seemed happy to sit for hours in the sunshine, acting as an invaluable human/canine signpost for confused and exhausted walkers.

The Cinque Ports 100, 26th to 28th May 2018

LDWA London has responsibility for Checkpoint 3 at Wittersham Village Hall, Kent TN30 7EA which participants will reach after nearly 19 miles.

Maria Cascellas has taken charge of the CP's organisation and 16 people have volunteered to help her use PACER, serve hot and cold drinks and snacks and provide the required amount of TLC.