



# Thames Valley LDWA

## MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**Date: Sunday 22nd January, 2023, 14.45**

### **Lane End Village Hall**

**Agenda:** As published (summarized as headings below)

**Attendees:** S. Ahmed, A. Attard, A. Beck, , G. Browning , G. Croucher, , H. Davies, R. Doole, M. Downes, J. Esslemont, C. Harvey, A. Howell, P. Jacobs, M. Jones, N. Lawrence, L. Ledger, D. MacGregor, S. Mee, M. Meehan, A. Mograby, D. Norbury, S. Richards, D. Rossington, H. Sarachi, J. Sheen, G. Scott, A. Warrington

John Esslemont welcomed members to the meeting. S. Ahmed was thanked for the curry she provided before the meeting, together with the walk leaders, A. Howell and D. Macgregor for organizing the event.

### **Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 1):**

S. Easingwood-Wilson, A. Richards, J. Sambrook, M. Sambrook

### **Agenda Item 2 : To approve the minutes of the 2022 AGM**

The minutes of last years meeting were approved . Approval was proposed by A. Warrington and seconded by M. Downes

### **Agenda Items 3-8 : To receive the annual report of the committee and statement of accounts**

The report (Appendix 1) had previously been made available online to members and was handed out at the meeting. The Chair offered the opportunity to officers and others to update their written reports.

**Chairman:** Acknowledged the efforts of committee members over the year and stated that the main problem we were currently encountering as a group was finding leaders at anything other than short notice. This was a problem that had set in during COVID and was unlikely to be resolved soon.

**Secretary and Treasurer :** These were combined as the Treasurer was absent, though she had submitted a detailed report and accounts, which were circulated . The accounts for the year were approved without any objections. The committee had adopted a view that we had excess money, this had been earned by members and should be spent on membership benefits. As such there had been several free events in 2022, including the Christmas Party, 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary Cream Tea and the AGM, and we have budgeted for six in 2023, including four for food events on walks, with a preference for tea and cakes at churches. There was overwhelming approval for this policy, and general support for reducing our bank balance in this way, with R. Doole pointing out that we could safely half our bank balance. There was some disagreement over whether we should make any external donations. S. Mee questioned whether direct donations were being considered to

churches : D. Macgregor replied that this was not the case, we were only paying for services in the form of tea and cake and J. Esslemont stated that we merely preferred to give money to charitable causes rather than businesses. H. Sarachi suggested doing something with schools and A. Warrington a donation to Search and Rescue. Some objected to this and H. Davies pointed out that external donations had proved contentious in the past. This subject was returned to later.

**Social Walks:** It was commented that few members are volunteering to lead walks at more than a month's notice, particularly for B walks and for Wednesdays. Only circa 20 members regularly lead walks (if there was an A and B walk every weekend, over 100 leaders were needed). G. Garland had been awarded a small trophy for leading as many as 22 walks in the year. This issue was also returned to later. G. Croucher also requested content for the Journal part of the website.

**Oxon 40/20:** The event will open on February 1<sup>st</sup>. Support was sought for the event and a sign up sheet was circulated. We are likely to fill up this year : we did so last year despite it being an anomalous year when some challenge walk attendances were poor. although the no show rate was disappointing . H. Davies had stepped down from this position and been replaced by A. Beck, Huws contribution was acknowledged.

**Logistics:** A. Howell reminded members that she was now the first port of call for equipment whenever we catered for any event ourselves.

#### **Agenda Item 9: Election of Officers –J. Esslemont**

The following uncontested nominations were proposed and endorsed: Note: There were NO votes logged against the proposals and no motions had been submitted. J. Esslemont pointed out that 2023 was his fifth year in the role and he would normally step down in 2024. He was 'disinclined' to extend this period. D. Macgregor said we would like to fill some of the available Committee positions with view to replacing existing committee members in the future.

	Nomination	Proposed by	Seconded by
Chairman	John Esslemont	A. Warrington	M. Downes
Secretary	Duncan MacGregor	G. Scott	S. Mee
Treasurer	Sarah Easingwood-Wilson	A. Beck	G. Croucher

#### **Agenda Item 10: Elections of committee members – J. Esslemont**

In line with the TV Constitution, the following uncontested nominations were proposed and endorsed: Note: There were NO votes logged against the proposals.

	Nomination	Proposed by	Seconded by
Committee	Graham Croucher	M. Downes	A. Warrington
Committee	Andrew Beck	a/a	a/a
Committee	Anushka Howell	a/a	a/a
Committee	Alison Attard	a/a	a/a

There were no volunteers or nominations for any of the 3 possible vacancies on the Committee. M. Downes suggested more direct approaches when there was a clear role available.

#### **Agenda Item 11: Appointment of independent examiner:**

Nomination: Lynda Ledger

Proposed by  
G. Browning

Seconded by  
M. Downes

### **Agenda Items 12 and 13 : Open Discussion and AOB**

- D. Macgregor outlined plans for a new additional challenge walk around September to be based in Marlow, entitled the 'Marlow Donkey'. This was not intended to replace the Oxon 40 and would be a very much simpler event in a format similar to events run by South Wales and Surrey groups : a central base, two loops, no outdoor checkpoints, simple food. The remaining issue before booking the hall and confirming a date was whether we wished to give participants hot food at the end, for which volunteers were being sought. S. Ahmed had volunteered earlier that day. Marlow had been chosen as the hall was reasonably priced on a Sunday, there was day long parking available on a Sunday at £1/day and it was accessible on public transport. There was general enthusiasm for the event and no objections but some details were questioned.
  - A. Warrington and S.Mee would prefer to hold the event later in the year. R. Doole, G. Scott and H. Sarachi were supportive of late September, around the time that the Chiltern Marathon was previously run.
  - M. Downes questioned what 'simple' meant, and suggested we should very little in the way of catering, similar to the Winter Tanners, e.g. a doggy bag of crisps and biscuits at the end. D. Macgregor suggested we were thinking of another curry. It was agreed this was simple enough. It was agreed we would hire the kitchen at Liston Hall regardless.
- Following discussions above, A. Warrington proposed a donation of £250 to Berkshire Search and Rescue. This was not seconded so did not go to a vote. H. Davies pointed out again that charitable donations had proved contentious in the past. G. Scott was of the view we should spend the money on ourselves as we had earned it.
- M. Downes- enquired as to TV Group plans for the Coronation weekend in May. D. Macgregor – could be one of the subsidized events : picnic, church teas (Hambleton?) or tea room.
- Following discussions above on members being reluctant to volunteer to lead, S. Ahmed asked if a course could be run for those who are nervous to commit to leading. S. Mee and G. Browning offered to help run such a course. S. Mee committed to liase with G. Croucher to find a convenient date and this would then be advertised to potential 'mentees' .

The meeting closed at 15.55

### **Appendix 1: Committee Report for Annual General Meeting 22rd January 2023**

**Committee Report**  
**for**  
**Annual General Meeting**  
**22<sup>nd</sup> January 2023**

**Chairman's Report**

It seems that we may be destined never to return to how things were before the pandemic. In particular our leaders (including myself) continue to be reluctant to commit themselves as long in advance as previously, meaning that members have to rely on our website rather than Strider for walk details. We have had a fairly full programme of A and B Sunday walks, but Wednesday walks have been less frequent than pre-pandemic.

My own role, as Chairman, has remained minimal thanks to the excellent work of our other officers. During the year Huw Davies and Mike Meehan have retired from the committee, with Andrew Beck taking over as Oxon 40/20 co-ordinator, and we have co-opted Anushka Howell as logistics officer.

As Duncan was unavailable I attended the annual group officers' weekend in the Peak District in November. It was an enjoyable weekend and useful as an opportunity to share thoughts with other groups and to hear from members of the National Executive Committee. It seems that at the national level, as well as for groups, volunteer recruitment is becoming increasingly difficult, and structural changes are under consideration.

For the first time for several years we are running a checkpoint for the hundred in 2023, about 28 miles into the route at Henley-in-Arden. I shall be seeking volunteers to help; it is fairly conveniently situated for us, and we can expect to be on duty from early afternoon until around midnight on the Saturday (29th May).

My thanks, as always, to the committee, to our leaders, and to those who volunteer as marshals for the Oxon 40/20 which returned as a physical event in 2022 after a successful virtual event in 2021.

***John Esslemont***

**Secretary's Report**

2022 has been very much about returning to normal. Membership has remained stable over the year, now at 465, though as we know only a minority of these come to social walks. The end of restrictions and a healthy bank balance does mean we have been able to hold a number of subsidised and free social events over the year, including the 50th anniversary cream tea, church tea and cakes visits and,

for the first time, a free Christmas party. It is hoped these will become regular events over the years in the future, particularly as we have offered to subsidise or cover four tea and cakes stops over 2023. It is our impression that such walk-linked events fit our members' desires the best – but we are always willing to listen to other ideas. One of these is a weekend away – I have come across no great enthusiasm for this from those I have spoken to, but if you would be interested in something like this, let me know.

I would like to acknowledge all the volunteers who have put their names forward to help with these events. For instance, for the Christmas party, as well as the two walk leaders, we had two ladies doing the main course and another 7 members offering a dessert, as well as others helping with set-up etc. If only there was such enthusiasm for leading walks! I do try to spread the burden by having a different lead caterer for each event rather than relying continually on the same 1 or 2 people, so I am always looking for others willing to take a single event. If nothing else, such participation helps build a feeling of 'belonging' to the group.

And on that note, the committee are making plans for a second challenge event in 2023, pencilled in from Marlow in September and termed 'the Marlow Donkey' (with two ear-shaped loops). The Oxon will remain our priority: this is not a replacement, though it could form a springboard for one if problems of parking and hall hire cost at Stokenchurch get worse. For the moment, though, it is planned as a much simplified event without the same range of checkpoints or food. We reckon we need about 10-12 people to run this so again please see me if you are willing to help.

***Duncan Macgregor***

### **Treasurer's Report**

In summary the total cash balance increased by £495.42 year on year which, following a significant reduction in 2019/20, puts the year-end balance slightly ahead of pre Covid-19 levels.

The increase in funds was driven by a successful Oxon 40/20 event offset in part by subsidising a number of social events including the Christmas lunch, tea and cake walks and the AGM lunch.

Some deposits relating to the 2022 Oxon 40/20 event were paid in the prior year so were included in the 2020/21 cashflow report. The overall benefit of the 2022 event was £784, of which £1,064 impacted 2021/22 cashflow.

A stock take of badges & mugs was completed and this has been included in the report.

The main source of income of the group is the Oxon 40/20, so it is very good to see this back running as normal in 2022.

The overall Group's financial position is good and means that we have reserves in place to ensure we are financially stable and also enables us to subsidise social events.

I would like to thank Lynda Ledger for her independent review of the accounts.

***Sarah Easingwood-Wilson***

***Note:** The accounts, as approved by the independent examiner, appear on the next page. The copy signed by the treasurer and independent examiner can be made available for inspection on request.*

### **Walks Co-ordinator's Report**

We continue to offer two walks on most Sundays, and some Wednesday walks. As with last year this has been possible only because a core of leaders has been leading most of the walks, so please consider leading. I'm sure one of our experienced leaders would give help and advice if required; of course you could start by leading one of the old Oxon20 walks which have descriptions and GPX files on our web site.

The average number attending a walk this year has been 9 for Sunday A, 8 for Sunday B and 6 for Wednesday. (Last year's figures were 9, 7, 7, although there were inevitably fewer walks that year.) As Duncan mentioned, we plan to offer tea and cake walks in future, at no cost to participants.

We no longer publish our walks programme in Strider (because of the long lead time required), so you'll need to continue to monitor the website as you have been doing.

I continue to add GPX files to the LDWA Walks Database for many of the Thames Valley walks. Remember that articles and/or photos associated with a walk can also be added, so if anyone would like to contribute please let me know.

***Graham Croucher***

## Cashbook: 1.11.2021 - 31.10.2022

Summary	31.10.19	31.10.20	31.10.21	31.10.22
Stock Value	£171.50	£171.50	£158.084	£120.798
Reserve Account Balance	£2,426.22	£2,429.96	£2,430.200	£2,432.520
Business Account Balance	£4,487.95	£2,756.07	£4,315.210	£4,845.600
Cash in Hand	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>£7,085.67</b>	<b>£5,357.53</b>	<b>£6,903.494</b>	<b>£7,398.918</b>
Increase / (Decrease)	£678.54	(£1,728.14)	£1,545.964	£495.424

  

### Movement for the Year

Cash inflow	£3,418.860
Cash outflow	(£2,888.470)
Add reserve interest	£2.320
Less stock reduction	(£37.286)
<b>Total</b>	<b>£495.424</b>

## LDWA Thames Valley

Stock / Assets		
Mugs	27 @ £1.494	£40.338
40/20 Badges	54 @ £1.49	£80.460

  

Sale of items at the Oxon 40/20: 9 mugs & 16 badges, the proceeds from these of £50 are included in the cashbook

Business Account 2021/22 Cashflow		Cash Inflow	Cash Outflow	Net Cashflow
Oxon 40/20: 2022	Income received & costs paid in the 2021/22 year relating to the 2022 event	£3,258.86	£2,194.67	£1,064.19
Oxon 40/20: 2023	Hall deposits	-	£60.00	(£60.00)
Christmas Lunch 2021		£95.00	£262.80	(£167.80)
National Meeting	Deposits received	-	£45.00	(£45.00)
Walks tea & cake	Cream tea July 2022 (member contribution), Nov 2022 tea & cake (fully funded)	£45.00	£172.00	(£127.00)
AGM 2022		-	£106.05	(£106.05)
Freedom Picnic 2021	(1)	-	£47.95	(£47.95)
Christmas Lunch 2022		£20.00	-	£20.00
Other		-	-	-
<b>Total</b>		<b>£3,418.86</b>	<b>£2,888.47</b>	<b>£530.39</b>
		-	-	-

(1) The cashflow includes £47.95 relating to the 2021 Summer picnic lunch which debited the bank account post 2020/21 year end and is therefore included in the 2021/22 cashflow.

## **Oxon 40/20 Co-ordinator's Report (2022 event)**

For 2022 we returned to a more normal event format, after the anytime event of 2021. A new route was devised by Duncan Macgregor, and Trish Jacobs took the lead on catering. Much of the event planning was done during periods of covid restrictions and this caused many uncertainties. As a result the decision was made to reduce the number of entrants from the traditional 350 to 200, with an increase in entrants' fee to cover the costs. The slow sign up of entrants (which was also seen at many other LDWA events) and uncertainty over parking arrangements vindicated this decision.

202 people entered the event with 151 starting; a rather disappointing no show rate of 25%. 63 started the 40 mile route and 88 the 20 mile route. Feedback from entrants who took part was all very positive. As always there were a few lessons to learn, but all in all it was a fantastic and successful event.

A very big thank you to all those who volunteered to marshal the event. In addition to being the main fundraising event for Thames Valley LDWA, it enables us to contribute to the wider walking community, allowing members and non-members from around the country to experience walking in the Chilterns.

**Huw Davies**

### **Oxon 40/20 Co-ordinator's Report (2023 event)**

For 2023 the planning is progressing for the event on the Saturday 29th April with a provisional route taking in just two checkpoints, at Ewelme and Russell's Water.

The checkpoint halls are booked, the web page, SiEntries and Strider entries are done. Provisional car parking arrangements are completed but one car park is subject to building works being completed (expected to be completed soon). To this end the entry limit has been kept to 200 to make things simpler.

The entry fee has had to be increased to £18 for members or £25 for non-members to cover increased costs due to high inflation.

38 volunteer roles have been identified and after the Christmas lunch we have about 50% of the volunteers we need to run the event. I would like to thank all that have volunteered already, especially Trish Jacobs for leading the catering, but we need more volunteers.

To volunteer please email [tv.oxon4020@ldwa.org.uk](mailto:tv.oxon4020@ldwa.org.uk) with a rough time range of availability on the 29th April 2023 and your T-shirt size as all volunteers will get a Thames Valley Branded Technical T-shirt.

***Andrew Beck***

### **Logistics Officer**

We thank Anushka Howell for taking on this role during the year. The requirements are to keep track of the whereabouts of group property used for the Oxon 40/20 and other events, to liaise with event organisers about their requirements, and to ensure that arrangements are in place for the delivery of items to where they are needed. Anushka is not expected to store property, or to undertake such deliveries, herself.