

## LDWA Local Group Representatives' Meeting 22 November 2015 – Hartington Hall, Buxton.

<b>Attendees:</b> John Batham – East Yorkshire Nicky Wood – Lakeland Ralph Warman – West Yorkshire Julia Greenwood – South Pennine Catherine Fox – London Gloria Drury – Bristol and West Steph Carter – NEC Membership Secretary Chris Hedley – London Chris Pitt – Dorset Neil Higham – Kent Edith Moran – Cleveland Maureen Downes – Thames Valley Gail Elrick – London Phil Heneghan – Wiltshire Peter Toghill – Wessex Sue Boyles – Sherwood Steve Boyles – Sherwood Steve Osborne – South Manchester	Chris Seddon – Merseystride Caroline Wandless – North Yorkshire Roger Wandless – North Yorkshire Christine Stockton Alec Horn – High Peak Mike Buckley – Heart of England Mike Childs – Dorset Deirdre Flegg – Dorset Bill Bowers – Essex and Herts Jean Bowers – Essex and Herts Alan Leadbetter – Beds, Bucks and Northants Chris Brown – Staffordshire Glenis Brown – Staffordshire Alison Wadsworth – East Lancs Paul Wadsworth – Est Lancs Malcolm Stephenson – Yorkshire Coast David Appleby – Yorkshire Coast Terry Bound – Cornwall and Devon Hazel Bound – Cornwall and Devon Ken Falconer – Heart of Scotland
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**Apologies:** Aaron Hookway; David Morgan; Neil Rawlins.

### 1 Appointments

John Batham agreed to chair the meeting, Nicky Wood to take minutes.

### 2 Reform of Terms and Frequency of National Executive Committee member Elections

A document was circulated before the meeting by **Gail Elrick** for consultation. Gail explained that we currently have re-election every year for all posts with a maximum possible term of 3 years for Chair and 5 years for other posts. The proposal is to agree a term of three years on initial election. There would need to be a system for members who then decide to leave early or need to be asked to leave if not performing well. We were not asked to vote today – that would take place at the National AGM.

**Chris Brown** felt this would be a good idea to have a three year term but would like people to be able to stand for re-election at the end of those three years along with new members.

**Maureen Downes** thought that members should only be allowed to add one further year at the end of three so that no one is in post for too long.

**Peter Toghill** feels this proposal would be anti-democratic and would stop members being able to create a change. We manage to keep members in post for several years anyway so no need to amend.

**Ken Falconer** agrees with Peter and feels five years is about right for jobs such as membership which need time to establish and learn. He provided statistics: in 40 years, 109 people have been on the committee of which only 14 stood for one year and eight for two years but most have stood a longer term up to five. So we do retain committee members.

**Sue Boyles** thinks it is important we keep staggered terms so that the whole committee is not changing in any one year. Gail confirmed that would happen.

We took a show of hands for the proposal and there was sufficient interest in Gail taking the proposal to the National AGM with options.

### **3 Data Protection Issues**

**Chris Hedley** explained that he is the LDWA member responsible for Data Protection and has to ensure we all comply with the law. He will soon be circulating some guidelines to us all which have been agreed by National Committee as being action we need to take to comply with the law. They have kept the policy rules simple. The general rule will be if you tell people how you are going to be handling their personal data up front then you will be ok. There are two types of data:

**Personal data** – which includes all the information on a membership application form to join the LDWA – this data can be kept up to five years after membership ceases. So personal data has to be deleted from all machines and hard copies shredded after five years.

**Summary data** – this includes name, age, email address, membership number, LDWA group and list of achievements – this data can be stored for an unlimited time.

**Private lists of personal data** should not be kept on any laptops or computers and the LDWA would prefer all contacts to be made using our National Database which handles data to the data protection standards required. This is why secretaries are encouraged to email via the national system. Separate lists of names and addresses and telephone numbers are not permitted.

As our Legal Data Protection Manager Chris has to be able to say that all data is held according to the policy and if not he can't stay in this post! It is as important as that. To that end he wants to talk to each group about this during the next year. He is not expected to deal with it all overnight, but has to be seen to be making progress. Access to data has to be on a 'need to know' basis.

Photographs of people taken to put in Strider and on the internet are particularly sensitive. This should be covered on event entry forms. People should be particularly cautious about taking images of children.

Data collected by SportIdent will be managed by them. We need to clarify what happens if members download excel lists from them.

Members can request the removal of their data from our systems at local or national level and we have to try to comply. Members can request to see all data held about them and we have to provide that information. Secretaries of primary or associate members would be contacted if this occurred.

Emails should always be sent to groups of recipients by using BCC, unless you are emailing a few members who are your personal friends of course. If you are using email, generic addresses like 'chair@' or 'finance@' etc then you don't need to blind copy as the emails are not personal addresses.

For Challenge Events our Events Officer will be taking responsibility for the system for entries. We have to delete or shred all non-summary information from events within three years and medical conditions should be deleted within 1 month of the event unless you foresee an incident being reviewed.

**Chris Brown** asked would we be meeting the Information Officer of the Data Protection – Chris Hedley confirmed this is unlikely.

**Mike Childs** asked about historical data where individual members still have lists of other members' names – **Chris Hedley** said this needs to be discouraged.

**Ken Falconer** asked how this will be covered in Scotland which has a different legal system. **Chris Hedley** will investigate.

**Christine Stockton** asked about photographs. If you don't want a photo to be taken you need to say so on entry forms for challenge events.

**Chris Pitt** reminded the group that group secretary might not be the member who is handling data for events. **Hazel Bound** reminded everyone of the need to never name anyone under 18 on a website.

**Policy Guidelines will be circulated soon.**

**Action: John Batham to circulate to all group secretaries and all present at today's meeting.**

#### **4 Long Distance Paths**

**Chris Hedley** led a discussion about this on Saturday evening. There is a need to create a post for someone to project manage the up-dating of all data on long distance paths. During the discussion we agreed that National Committee would come back with proposals about the post they wish to create and further requirements for how they would like groups to help update the database.

Members raised concerns about how much walking would be involved by the groups to help with this up-dating. The task is a mixture of administration and walking. There was enthusiasm for maintaining our flagship database of information but the current method is not sustainable and we all agreed something needs to be done and there was a keenness to help.

#### **5 Should the National AGM Format be changed?**

**Gail Elrick** explained that attendance was down slightly in 2015 and Katie Hunt is exploring whether any of the format should or could be changed.

**Peter Toghill** felt the date of the AGM should be published well in advance and that other events (LDWA, although we did discuss the world cup!) should be banned on that day. **Phil Heneghan** did confirm it had been given a heads up in the April Strider on page 2, and **Steph Carter** confirmed the formal invites will be with the December Strider on our doorsteps when we get home.

**Hazel Bound** reminded us that some members travel a very long way to attend each year depending on location and it would not be so worthwhile if the full weekend were not on offer.

**Maureen Downes** felt the statistics for a dip in one year are not significant enough to cause concern. It helps if the event is in the middle of the country although **Caroline Wandless** acknowledged it is nice to take it to beautiful rather than convenient locations.

**Ken Falconer** said the price increase may have had an impact. **Chris Seddon** reminded us we always used to keep it to the second Sunday of March. If that continues people can pick out the date for themselves with no need for reminder and that would help for forward planning of walk events.

General consensus was that the current format works ok.

**The Date and venue for 2016 is: Buxton, at the Palace Hotel, 11 – 13 March.**

#### **6 Membership Issues**

**Gloria Drury** raised the question why group secretaries are no longer notified by email when a new member joins (question raised on behalf of Dave Street, Bristol and West)

Steph Carter explained it was an auto-notification function of the computer system. Because we have had to make other changes to the membership system it is no longer possible to set the system to do this. All secretaries need to do is look at the membership list from time to time to see if any new members have been added, perhaps once a month. The membership list can be ordered in date or by latest membership number which will help you spot new members.

**Mike Buckley** finds it hard to use the system, but others commented they find it easy to use. **Steph Carter** suggests anyone unable to sort in order by date should contact **Simon Leck** our IT Officer.

**Chris Brown** commented that he is able to use the system, but despite sending 11 new members a nice welcoming invite, he received no response from anyone which is baffling. Several of us agreed this happens to us too. **Glenis Brown** feels we have to accept that people join LDWA but do not want to be members of local groups.

**Neil Higham** asked if anyone uses their membership number/card anywhere. Members confirmed they use it for discounts in stores but don't usually have to show it at any event.

**Steve Osborne** commented that family members only get one card. **Steph Carter** explained he would like to put extra cards in but it affects our discounted postal rate with strider (because it creates a further small batch and small batches get charged a higher rate). He is looking into changing to a membership number per family member.

## **7 Local Groups New Model Constitution**

We have been consulting on this for most of the year and **John Batham** is keen to wrap it up. **Gail Elrick** explained that it has been designed to be flexible and is a model only so should not constrict members from change. **Ken Falconer** explained the history of why a constitution was introduced in the first place, which was largely about membership fees for individuals and keeping funds in an appropriate manner. Also it was to ensure members were not excluded from joining various groups.

**Hazel Bound** has altered the Cornwall and Devon Constitution to reflect the fact they invite all members to attend their regular committee meetings, and they get a great turn out. This is fine.

**Maureen Downes** discussed whether associates can hold committee roles. Several groups have associate members who are very active and valuable within their own groups and we do not want to exclude them in all ways. They sometimes do more than primary members.

**Nicky Wood** has altered the Lakeland version to allow associates to have a vote in **section 4.1** but not allowing them to stand on committee in **section 5.5**. **Ken Falconer** agreed it is better if members do not stand on more than one committee to avoid conflicts of interest. Nicky also commented that there might be a small anomaly in **section 6.6** which asks you to raise a substantive issue for your AGM 28 days before the meeting, but invites are only required to go out 21 days before the AGM. So members might not know in time, to raise issues. Lakeland committee were also concerned on first reading about **section 7.1** where finance needs to be spent on group objectives (ie furthering long distance walking) with no mention of charities but further reading clarified that the National Constitution does cover this under **section 5.2.10**.

**Neil Higham** asked for confirmation that we should not charge a membership fee. It was explained this cannot happen but it is ok to charge for services such as circulating a newsletter if you really need the funds.

**Action:** John to send out latest version of the constitution to all present Secretaries to get their final version back to John as soon as possible so he can wrap this up before he leaves the post in March.

## **8 How do groups invest surplus cash?**

**Hazel Bound** of Cornwall and Devon had raised this to see if a higher rate of interest could be achieved. Are members allowed to invest in their own names to do this? The answer is no to this, as per the constitutions.

The discussion moved on to how groups use funds to pay for out-of-pocket expenses. Most pay an amount per mile for marshals and sometimes walk leaders. The hundred organisers now try to send each group an amount to help cover travel costs, or bed and breakfast costs, for those attending and it is up to the groups to share the costs equally between members who have helped as it is supposed to be a thank you for the hard work. Some use it to fund a social occasion for those who have helped and this is considered to be ok as well.

## **9 Further Membership Issues**

### **a) How do groups keep in touch with past members who have done a lot for the group?**

We are no longer able to keep a database of past members and have to keep contact details for these people as 'friends' for example to invite to a party or gathering.

### **b) How do other groups keep in contact with members not on email?**

This varies, several groups do not contact anyone who is not on email and rely on members being able to find out information on the internet. Others are still happy to send information by post to anyone not using email. **Steph Carter** said this problem is gradually becoming one of the past as nearly all new members have an email address.

### **c) How can we better serve family members who like to be contacted by more than one email?**

**Steph Carter** confirmed we are hoping to have family membership whereby each member gets a card and can be logged individually, with their own membership card and email. This is being built into the system and information will come out once it is available.

## **10 How do groups cover First Aid at events and social walks?**

**Maureen Downes** posed the question and an example was given of an occasion when a first aid issue arose and there was no first aider available.

**Chris Pitt** said Dorset have used group funds to pay for first aid Red Cross days to do the basic training which would be sufficient for outdoor events – CPR, and basic 'Best Effort' course. Some members may have a first aid at work certificate which allows them to act.

**Chris Seddon** confirmed that the British Heart Foundation will do free sessions which are very thorough, as long as you provide the venue.

**Bill and Jean Bowers** said Essex and Hearts had also provided a basic course with no charge to members.

**Peter Toghill** said Wessex encourage non trained members to hand over the kit to avoid any liability.

**Sue Boyles** asked for National Committee to let us know what is covered by the LDWA Insurance.

**Gail Elrick** has taken this action point as we have recently changed insurer.

**Action: National Committee to let us know for what first aid action we are covered.**

#### **11 Generic email addresses for key positions**

Maureen Downes asked can we have 'secretary@' relevant group email addresses similar to those used by National Committee. Steph Carter confirmed that he thinks these addresses exist already. Paul Wadsworth of East Lancs confirmed they do exist as he has taken the one over for his post.

**Action: Anyone wanting to get their personal email address linked up to a generic one can contact Simon Leck.**

**John Batham pleaded for groups to keep committee pages up to date when there are personnel or address changes.**

#### **12 How do groups manage no-shows at events?**

**Maureen Downes** wanted to know how we cater for no-shows. After general discussion it seems that most groups allow for about 20% of entrants to not turn up on the day and take bookings to the tune of about 20% more than the limit. **Roger Wandless** gave an example from the Kilburn Canter where they take 175 entrants for a 150 limit and it always works out. **Hazel Bound** is planning to conduct a survey of recent no-shows to see if there are serial offenders (of a no-show nature, not Cornish murders we think she means).

#### **13 How do groups accommodate walkers who struggle with distance and pace?**

**Maureen Downes** has members who can walk a good distance, perhaps not 20 miles, but also like to take the pace slower. The faster walkers are really hard to hold back. **Hazel Bound** confirmed Cornwall and Devon take longer and shorter walks from the same location on the same day. Some groups vary their walk on the day, and others alternate longer and shorter walks in the programme. East Lancs have a plodders walk (their name choice) which have become a splinter group and walk regularly mid-week. Some groups enjoy evening walks which help keep slightly less active members coming out.

#### **14 LDWA version of SportIdent – is this possible and could we make a profit?**

This was considered at the time SportIdent first started to be used. It was decided that it would be too much workload for a voluntary organisation and the cost of setting it up would be prohibitive. Most groups are happy to use SportIdent where they save on admin by paying the small fee.

#### **15 Maps and Mapping**

**Hazel Bound** asked whether we should start to use eight figure Grid References for Strider and online. **Chris Pitt** felt it would lead to more Grid Reference mistakes if people were providing eight digit grid references for start locations etc. There was general agreement we only need six.

#### **16 Any Issues on LDWA Website**

**Ken Falconer** stated he felt the site was far better than many public websites and it was given a round of applause.

We discussed input of social walks. Once they are 'published' they cannot be changed. They can be changed when 'released'. **John Batham** explained the process he goes through is to:

- Create the document as 'released' once we first put the details on.

- Change to 'published' just before and for a short while after the strider deadline date – this is to enable the Strider editing to go ahead without us making changes during the process. At that time if you need any changes you need to contact John.
- Then a few days later John changes them back to 'released' and you can change the details in the walks.

You can also use the 'stop press' facility at the bottom of the social events entry page – for example if an event needs to be cancelled or altered in venue or start time, etc., at the last minute.

## **17 Any Other Business**

**Peter Toghill** suggested that rather than assign people to groups we should assign them to an individual path in which they are interested (as some join for this purpose only) – this would make branch secretaries easier to know if they are interested in a path. **Steph Carter** thought this a good idea and will investigate it.

**David Holland** is getting some business cards printed for those of us who would like them – LDWA generic rather than personal.

**Julia Greenwood** mentioned how hard it is to get some members to not push the pace, and recently some have walked ahead, got in their vehicles and gone home before the walk has ended. It is perfectly ok to advise groups that if any individual does this they are discharging themselves from the group walk by doing so and are invalidating group insurance.

**Thanks were extended to Chris and Glenis Brown for leading the walk on Saturday.**

John Batham was also thanked for his five years of service in the post of Local Groups Secretary.

His medal is in the post! (I need mental health treatment!)

**The meeting closed at 1pm.**