

# 2020 AGM & SOCIAL WEEKEND



**Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March to Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2020**  
**The Hawkhill, Easingwold, York YO61 3EG**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2020, 10am**

# The Long Distance Walkers Association

## Annual General Meeting 2020

Annual General Meeting of The Long Distance Walkers Association (LDWA) will be held at The Hawkhills, Easingwold, York YO61 3EG, at 10am on Sunday 15th March 2020.

### Agenda

1. Apologies for absence
2. To confirm the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2019.
3. To receive the accounts for the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019 and the reports of the Directors and Accountants.
4. To receive reports as follows:
  - a. Chair
  - b. General Secretary
  - c. Membership
  - d. IT and Internet
  - e. Strider
  - f. Local Groups
  - g. Events
  - h. Hundreds
  - i. Publicity
  - j. Long Distance Paths
  - k. Environment, Risk & Data Protection
5. To note the result of the 2020 NEC election
  - a. Publicity Officer
  - b. Long Distance Paths (LDPs) Officer
  - c. IT and Internet Officer
6. To appoint Accountants for 2019/20, and to authorise the Committee to fix their remuneration.
7. To authorise the Committee to determine honoraria payments in accordance with past practice.

End of formal business

**NOTE:** Each member entitled to attend and vote at the meeting is entitled to appoint a proxy to attend and vote instead of him or her. If you will not be able to attend the meeting and wish to vote by proxy, please use the proxy form which is available on the LDWA website or by contacting the General Secretary.

### **Open forum and discussion.**

To include any matters which the membership would wish the Committee to consider during the forthcoming year. Questions can be submitted to the General Secretary by 1<sup>st</sup> March 2020. There will also be a box for questions at the Registration Desk for the AGM, which will be collected at 8am on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> March. Questions will be accepted at the meeting at the discretion of the Chair. Invitees and attendees of this meeting should be aware that the minutes of the meeting will be published on the LDWA website and available to the public.

Madeleine Watson, General Secretary (on behalf of the National Executive Committee)

## Agenda Item 2

**Draft MINUTES of the 20th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of LDWA Ltd. held at 10 a.m. on Sunday, 10th March 2019 at the Hallmark Hotel, Marlston Close, Robinswood Hill, Gloucester, GL4 6EA.**

To be approved at the 2020 Annual General Meeting.

### Present at the Meeting

The names of 97 members who attended were recorded in the Attendance Register and are listed at the end of these Minutes. In addition, 29 proxy voting forms had been received by the General Secretary.

### 1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Chris Brown, Glenis Brown, Sue England, Isobel Falconer, Brigitte Hease, Chris Hease, Les Maple, Derek Magnall, Gill Morgan, Peter Schick, Avril Stapleton, Gill Wilkins, David Wolsey and Lesley Wolsey.

### 2. To approve the Minutes of the 19th Annual General Meeting of LDWA Ltd. held on Sunday, 11th March 2018

The Minutes were proposed for acceptance by **Peter Cowlyn**(Dorset), seconded by **Hazel Bound** (Cornwall & Devon) and **APPROVED** by a vote of the AGM (103 votes for, 10 abstentions).

#### 2.1 Matters Arising.

**Sandy Gee** (Treasurer) to remove John Sparshatt's name from Santander records. *Sandy had looked into this but was unable to action as he was not one of the signatories.***Action** – John Sparshatt to action this himself.

**Graham Smith** (Editor) to include a clarification in the next edition of *Strider* to make it clear that the Dorset Group was neutral on the issue of a Dorset National Park.*Clarification was included in Strider No. 141, page 47 (August 2018).*

**Graham Smith** (Editor) to review the listing of social walks in *Strider* by geographical areas. *The alphabetical listing was restored in Strider No. 140, pp. 41-69 (April 2018).*

**Graham Smith** (Editor) agreed to liaise with **Julie Cribb** about the presentation of social walks in *Strider*. *Graham Smith had liaised with Julie Cribb and agreed to keep the social walks in Strider.*

**Sandy Gee** (Treasurer) to follow up whether the insurance covered equipment used by volunteers on LDWA events. *Sandy confirmed that this was covered.*

### 3. Accounts and Reports

The accounts for the year ending 30 September 2018 and the Report of the Directors had been circulated. **Sandy Gee** (Treasurer) said that the accounts, as forecast in last year's report, showed a deficit of £21,851. He went on to explain the reasons for the deficit which were increases in the cost of administrative expenses, increases in the website spend and one-off costs of legal fees, mainly in respect of updating the LDWA's Articles of Association.

**John Widdowson** (Dorset) asked for further details about the legal costs. **David Morgan** (Chair) said the work required to write the new constitution was complex and needed to be done by experts in order to ensure that the LDWA was compliant with the Companies Act. Madeleine, hard working as she is, was not an expert on such matters and it was necessary to employ the services of solicitors to ensure that the new constitution was legally sound.

BWB (Bates Wells Braithwaite) were chosen as the Association's solicitors for this process for the following reasons.

1. BWB are listed by Sports Recreation Alliance as a legal firm that the LDWA could use.
2. They are known as a legal firm that provides expertise in constitutional issues.
3. They are a not-for-profit organisation.

The AGM in 2017, following a presentation by Gail Elrick, agreed that work should take place to modernise the constitution and to ensure it complied with the Companies Act.

The work had to be completed within twelve months in order that the constitution was ready to be presented to the AGM in 2018 for inspection and ratification.

The LDWA has been through a previous constitutional change. That took place in 1999 and the legal fees cost approximately £12,000. Taking inflation into account, according to the Bank of England calculator, that £12,000 is now equivalent to £20,428 in 2019. The 2019 legal fees are £21,750 and therefore comparable to the fees paid in 1999.

The accounts were proposed for acceptance by **Ian Beveridge** (Wessex), seconded by **Mike Buckley** (Heart of England) and **APPROVED** by a vote of the AGM.

### 4. Reports from National Executive Committee Members

The Reports had been circulated.

#### a) Chair

**David Morgan** (Chair) opened by giving a tribute to Sir John Johnson, President of the LDWA from 1996 to 2016, who had died during the year.

He thanked the committee who had supported him during the last year and in particular the three NEC members who had come to the end of their tenure and were stepping down, as follows.

1. Steph Carter for working as Environment and then Membership Secretary for a total of 7 years. In that time he has overseen a culture change to how our members now pay. Direct Debit reduces the work of the Membership Secretary and I know that we are all grateful for his efforts in recent years.
2. Sandy Gee who has kept our accounts in order for the last five years ensuring that we account for our spending and ensuring funds are used to the benefit of the

LDWA. He has also worked hard with our insurance broker and queried at length the criteria that they require of the LDWA in order to be insurable.

3. Christopher Hedley who has been our Environment and Risk Officer. He has liaised with the Information Commissioners Office at length and has worked incredibly hard with the introduction of GDPR to ensure that the LDWA is compliant. He has also written a risk register for the LDWA and this is useful in guiding the NEC on where attention is required to ensure that we mitigate those risks in advance of them occurring.

All of them will be missed but I know that they are being replaced by passionate members who are willing to work hard on behalf of us all.

David then presented a small gift to each retiring NEC member.

**“We are all here to pursue our love of Long Distance Walking. The association will not survive without progress.”**

***Roger Michell in 2000.***

David said that he believed that comment is still appropriate 19 years later - particularly as we enter the next ten years. And it is essential that thanks go to those who ensure that the LDWA provides the services to our members.

All organisers of local groups who provide not just an array of social walks across the UK, but also provide challenge walks that we know are the envy of so many others -incredible value for money, great food and volunteers who are willing to give up their time for others.

The Hundred Organisers who have stepped up to commit themselves to years of planning so that we who enjoy walking the 100 can continue to do so.

The LDWA can only continue with the active support and encouragement of its membership. Long may our ethos of non-competitive walking in an environment of support and encouragement continue.

There were no questions.

## **b) General Secretary**

**Madeleine Watson** (General Secretary) thanked everyone who had taken part in the logo workshop on the Saturday afternoon of the AGM weekend. The result of the workshop was a selection of 10 logos which were displayed on the wall in the meeting room and which would go forward for a vote of all members in the April *Strider*.

There were no questions.

## **c) Membership Secretary**

**Steph Carter** (Membership Secretary) updated the AGM on his Report. There had been a decline in membership but this was not critical. New joiners had reduced.

He said membership numbers become “real” on 1<sup>st</sup> March each year when all non-renewed members become lapsed. (Up until 1<sup>st</sup> March Membership is a combination of already renewed members, new joiners since 1<sup>st</sup> October, and those members who have not renewed)

1<sup>st</sup> March 2018: 8550 Memberships

1<sup>st</sup> March 2019: 8399 Memberships - a decline of about 1.8%.

2018 growth was 4%, so there was a negative 'swing' of 5.8%

The last time membership fees increased - 2006 the situation was similar (indeed a little worse). *The Story So Far* tells us that 2005 saw 2% growth, but 2006 a 7% decline (so a negative 'swing' of 9%)

New Joiner numbers are a cause for concern:

1<sup>st</sup> Oct 2017 - 1<sup>st</sup> Mar 2018: 970 new memberships

1<sup>st</sup> Oct 2018 – 1<sup>st</sup> Mar 2019 about 770 new memberships - so 200 down on previous year. It is this that is the reason for our decline, rather than members not renewing.

Joiner Gender: Of the new individual joiners this year 259/616 are female, so 42%.

**Anushka Howell** (Thames Valley) said that the price differential for challenge events meant that people join but are not then active. **David Morgan** (Chair) said that today's runner was tomorrow's walker, and that all members were welcome, and Local Groups should do all that they could to encourage and welcome new members.

**John Widdowson** (Dorset) asked how many people had quoted the logo as a reason for not renewing their membership. **Stéph Carter** replied that there were less than a dozen.

#### **d) IT and Internet**

**Adam Dawson** (IT and Internet Officer) said that he would be giving a presentation later, in the Open Session, about the IT work, including future plans and a live demonstration of the new "re-skinned" website.

There were no questions.

#### **e) Editor**

**Graham Smith** (Editor) had nothing to add to his Report. He thanked everyone for their contributions and asked that members continue to send him contributions and to encourage others to do so too.

There were no questions.

#### **f) Local Groups**

**Julie Cribb** (Local Groups Secretary) thanked everyone for their input from Local Groups. The highlight of her year was the Local Groups weekend, held in November 2018 in Kent. She said that she was involved in several sub-groups. One on a tool kit for Local Groups to use, bringing together all useful information into one place, and also one developing a Volunteering Strategy. Members would be updated on the work of these sub-groups over the coming year.

There were no questions.

## **g) Events**

**Tim Glenn** (Events Secretary) had nothing to add to his report.

There were no questions.

## **h) Hundreds Co-ordinator**

**Alan Warrington** (Hundreds Co-ordinator) thanked everyone for attending the workshop on the Hundred on the Saturday morning of the AGM weekend. He would consolidate all the responses, brief the NEC in April and then communicate to all members shortly after that.

**Colin Wormald Cup** - The Cup is held for a year by the organisers of each Hundred and then passed on so members of the 2018 Cinque Ports Hundred group duly handed the Cup to members of the 2019 Hadrian's Hundred organising group.

## **i) Publicity**

**David Holland** (Publicity Officer) said that it had been 4 years since he started as publicity officer. At that time publicity was mainly posters. Now it is much wider, involving a range of platforms. He is investigating whether he can set up some reciprocal arrangements with other like-minded organisations. **Deirdre Flegg** (Dorset) said that there was an impressive display of publicity materials available for members to view and take away in the room next door. **David Morgan** (Chair) said that the NEC had agreed that publicity could have a budget of £3,000 to use on targeting the audience of outdoor magazines.

## **j) Long Distance Paths**

**Neil Rawlins** (LDPs Secretary) had nothing to add to his Report.

There were no questions.

## **k) Data Protection/Environment/Risk**

**Christopher Hedley** (Data Protection, Environment and Risk Officer) said this topic was boring but very important. The social walk register lists were contentious but were needed for insurance purposes. Last year there had been issues with the National Trust. Progress had been satisfactory, but there is a need to keep it under review. Christopher reported that he had been in touch with **Ian Beveridge** (Wessex) about a request Ian had received for payment which was contrary to the arrangement in place. Christopher had advised Ian not to pay it.

Insurance - Sandy Gee has been getting quotes from other insurance companies as the insurance is due for renewal. All brokers and insurance firms are saying that they require a register of all walkers. This also affected other organisations (such as Ramblers, U3A)

**David Allen** (South Manchester) asked how many incidents there had been in the past which might have led to the requirement for a register being introduced. **David Morgan** (Chair) responded that there were none.

**Janet Chapman** (Surrey) asked how Local Groups should record the information. **David Morgan** (Chair) said that all Local Groups had been sent details. One person in each local group should store the information on a password protected area of their computer. A central repository is being developed by the NEC and should be available later in the year.

**John Sparshatt** (West Yorkshire) asked how privacy issues for individuals was being addressed. **David Morgan** (Chair) said that it was summary information that was being collected, not personal information. Only one person in each Local Group would have access to the area where the information was stored.

**Nick Gardiner** (Bristol & West) asked if walk leaders needed to have any official training. **David Morgan** (Chair) said that guidance was available on the LDWA website “Sharing the Way - Guidelines for Social Walks”.

**Paul Lawrence** (London) said that the Alpine Club also require people to sign up when going on any of their walks.

## 5. Election of Officers to the National Executive Committee

**David Morgan** (Chair) said that 11 of the NEC posts were not contested. The following candidates were therefore declared to have been elected as Officers:

<b>Position</b>	<b>Candidate</b>	<b>Proposed by</b>	<b>Seconded by</b>
Chair	David Morgan	Andrew Clabon	Shirley Hume
General Secretary	Madeleine Watson	Gill Myers	Ian Sanderson
Membership Secretary	Julia Warman	Karen Pickersgill	Madeleine Watson
Editor	Graham Smith	David Thornton	Marshall Elliott
IT and Internet Officer	Adam Dawson	David Morgan	Madeleine Watson
Local Groups Secretary	Julie Cribb	Stephen Cribb	Madeleine Watson
Challenge Events Secretary	Tim Glenn	Steph Carter	Alan Warrington
100s coordinator	Alan Warrington	Steph Carter	John Henderson
Publicity Officer	David Holland	Amy Randall	Kay Rees
Long Distance Paths Coordinator	Neil Rawlins	Louise Rawlins	Madeleine Watson
Environment, Risk and Data Protection Officer	Stuart Bain	Andrew Clabon	Gerry Jackson

David welcomed Julia Warman as Membership Secretary and Stuart Bain as Environment, Risk and Data Protection, Officer.

There were 2 candidates for the post of Treasurer. There was a vote of all members. Three tellers - Ken Falconer (Heart of Scotland), Tony Willey (Lakeland) and Julie Welch (London) managed the election. There were 515 valid votes (436 electronic, 79 postal). The total number of votes cast for each candidate was as follows: John Elrick 396, Robin Richmond 119. Therefore **John Elrick** was duly **ELECTED** to the post of Treasurer.

## 6. To appoint Accountants and authorise the National Executive Committee to fix their remuneration

**Sandy Gee** (Treasurer) proposed that the existing accountants R. F. Miller and Co., Bellevue, Princes Street, Ulverston, Cumbria, LA12 7NB should be re-appointed for the year ending 30th September 2019 and that the National Executive Committee should be authorised to fix their remuneration.

Proposed for acceptance by **Peter Cowlyn** (Dorset), seconded by **John Sparshatt** (West Yorkshire) and **APPROVED** by a vote of the AGM (118 votes for, 1 abstention).

## 7. Honoraria payments

**David Morgan** (Chair) asked the AGM to approve a proposal for the National Executive Committee to authorise and determine honoraria payments in accordance with past practice.

The motion was proposed by **Richard Denby** (Bristol & West), seconded by **Brian Buttifant** (Kent) and **APPROVED** by a vote of the AGM (121 votes for, 1 abstention).

## 8. Special business: Revised By-Laws

**David Morgan** reminded members that the constitution had been changed last year and this year the ByLaws had been updated.

**Gail Elrick**(London) said she was very pleased that the follow-on work had been done. She wanted to comment on the grievance procedure where a grievance was raised to the General Secretary (or Secretary of Local Group). She suggested that an alternative person should be available for someone to lodge the grievance with in case the General Secretary was involved in any way. **Madeleine Watson** (Secretary) said that although the General Secretary or the Local Group Secretary does make the initial decision on whether there is a case to be heard, thereafter an independent panel would review the detail of the case. There is also a right of appeal over the initial decision. Gail was happy for the By-Laws to be approved as proposed. **Action** - **David Morgan** agreed to review the wording.

**Beatrice Therin** (Wiltshire) asked whether there had been any thought given to the use of mediation services for grievances. **Madeleine Watson** (Secretary) said that it would be a possibility if the panel deemed it appropriate.

The resolution was proposed by **David Jacques** (North Yorkshire) and seconded by **Peter Cowlyn** (Dorset) and there was a vote of the AGM (121 for, 3 against).

The Special Resolution was therefore **CARRIED**.

## 9. Special business: Ratification of the appointment of Phoebe Smith as President of the LDWA

**David Morgan** apologised for the announcement in June 2018 of Phoebe Smith as President, prior to gaining formal ratification at an AGM.

**Nick Gardiner** (Bristol & West) asked if Phoebe would be using her work as a writer in various magazines to promote the LDWA. **David Morgan** (Chair) said that, if her appointment was ratified, he would be meeting with her on 6<sup>th</sup> April when she would walk the Capital Challenge with him and he would raise it with her. He was also looking for her to start the Hadrian's Hundred in May, and to be part of the team on the Cowshill checkpoint at 78 miles.

The resolution was proposed by **Hazel Bound** (Cornwall & Devon) and seconded by **Nick Gardiner** (Bristol & West) and there was a vote of the AGM (120 for, 2 against).

Phoebe Smith was therefore **RATIFIED** as President of the LDWA.

## 10. Any Other Business

There was no other business. **David Morgan** (Chair) declared the Annual General Meeting closed at 10.59 a.m.

### Open Forum and Discussion

#### Volunteer Awards

**David Morgan** was very pleased to be able to recognise some of the volunteers from the LDWA. He presented certificates to Joy Davies (Kent), Deirdre Flegg (Dorset), Michael Godfrey (Wessex) and (in absentia) Peter Schick (South Manchester). This is the first year that such awards have been made and there are likely to be more with different categories next year. The citations were as follows:

#### 1. Joy Davies of LDWA Kent. Nominated by Brian Buttifant

For more than ten years Joy has organised and served food at the headquarters of our Group's challenge events- Sevenoaks Circular in March, High Weald walks in July and White Cliffs Challenge in August. She also did this on our Triple Challenge in Surrey and Sussex. Joy, who is in her 80s, shows no sign of slowing down and 2018 she was insistent on heading the catering team on the Cinque Ports 100, organising the checkpoint menus as well as the headquarters food and, of course, serving meals throughout the event and marshals' event.

She has catered at our checkpoints on a number of hundreds and will be at the Hadrian's 100.

So it is no surprise that in Kent Group she is known as the magnificent Joy Davies.

#### 2. Deirdre Flegg, Dorset. Nominated by Robert Powell

I would like to nominate Deirdre Flegg of the Dorset group. Yet again over the past year, Deirdre has been a stalwart, not only for her local group, but also nationally as well. Nationally she updated and revised significant changes for the Safeguarding Policy for the NEC. In the latter part of the year Deirdre has been closely supporting Sue Widdowson in the organisation of the venue for the 2019 national AGM in Gloucester. The Dorset group ran an excellent checkpoint at Folkestone on the Cinque Ports 100, with Deirdre taking the lead role. She also ably assisted on a checkpoint on the Wye 50 last April. As the Dorset group celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2018, it was just another year in which Deirdre excelled and deserves to be recognised for her many hours of work and for her commitment to the LDWA.

#### 3. Michael Godfrey, Wessex. Nominated by C J Manning

I have known Michael Godfrey since 2006 through participating and more recently marshalling for the New Forest Marathon Challenge (NFM). Michael Godfrey, Chairman from 2014 – 2018, organised fourteen NFMs and nineteen successful weekends-away for the Wessex LDWA Group. He is an exceptional man. His quiet caring organisational abilities and leadership have inspired the Wessex Group to ensure the great success of the NFMs in all weathers. He is a great encourager. One year the weather was atrocious and map reading was difficult with glasses. Finishing just before the deadline, what a welcome I received from him! Michael always thanks the whole Wessex team and is delighted when all walkers are accounted for and willingly organises search parties for the lost. Unreasonable demands do not cause him to lose his cool! His wife Lesley has supported him and she is to be found cleaning tables and keeping the hall tidy. Michael and Lesley make a wonderful

team and a joint commendation as “Unsung Heroes of the LDWA,” would be appropriate. It gives me great pleasure to support this commendation.

4. Peter Schick, South Manchester. Nominated by David Allen

I wish to nominate Peter Schick for a volunteer award. However more of a lifetime award for helping with the results compilation on more Hundreds than I can remember. At 75 he has completed over 30 Hundreds, many of which have been on the Marshals because he was helping on the main event. The Marshals can be a lot lonelier and an even bigger challenge.

#### **Presentation on Operating system and website Adam Dawson (IT and Internet Officer)**

**Adam Dawson** (IT and Internet Officer) gave a short presentation on the work of IT team. He gave an overview of the different sections of the current website including : Membership system, the events (challenge and social walks), the comprehensive Long Distance Paths database, library of information, member areas containing electronic versions of Strider. He mentioned work which has happened over the past year (including text/photo editor upgrade, security enhancements to be GDPR compliant, resolving bulk email/spam issue, membership operating system upgrade to allow for direct debit discount rate) and major projects which are in currently underway, including further development of the PACER system and development of new Walks Planner and Database.

He demonstrated the new look website. This is a “re-skinning” so the underlying content and structure of the website will not change, but it will look different. The user experience from mobile devices in particular will be much improved. There are various stages of testing still to do within the IT team and then the NEC and Adam said that he will also be looking for volunteer members to test. He would welcome photos to be included on the home page. He is looking for the new site to be available in Summer 2019.

**David Jacques** (North Yorkshire) asked if it is possible to have a rolling set of pictures on the home page? **Adam Dawson** said that it would be possible, and he would consider this along with other options such as changing the photo every few weeks.

**Mike Childs** (Dorset) asked whether there were plans to change member/ non-member areas? **David Morgan** (Chair) said there were no plans to change.

**John Sparshatt** (West Yorkshire) asked how the LDWA would be able to afford to spend £200-300k on the website? **David Morgan** (Chair) said that they had started thinking about the work to be done and more thought was needed around how much redevelopment of the present content would be needed. Some parts of the website are not used much and it may not be cost effective to retain them but this would involve some hard decisions. The money to fund the work could come from a number of sources. Increasing membership subscriptions is one option but one that the NEC is keen to avoid if at all possible. There have been some initial ideas proposed, such as imposing a small levy (eg £2) on each entrant in Challenge Events run by LDWA Local Groups.

The NEC has been told that a former member has left part of his estate to the LDWA. The exact amount is not yet known but is likely to be a 6-figure sum. The obvious way to spend that money would be on the operating system and website project.

Other ideas, to be discussed over the next year or so, would be shared widely with members, possibly by a series of “roadshows” around the country.

**Tony Willey** (Lakeland) said that Lakeland Group may be a bit different from other Local Groups in that a large proportion of entrants on their challenge events are non-members but

they do have a price differential in place in order to encourage people to become members. For future events, they are considering increasing both prices, having a larger differential and donating the differential to the LDWA. That way the LDWA would either benefit from the membership subscription or the price differential.

**Sara Down** (South Wales) commented that the LDWA should keep gpx files available to members only as an incentive for people to join.

## Questions

Q1. **John Widdowson** (Dorset). At the Dorset Group AGM we discussed the NEC's proposal to change the LDWA logo. We did not discuss the logos, but the process adopted by the NEC to force change. A substantial majority of the Group agreed that the process was flawed in that for such a major change of policy the proposition should have been put before the membership at a General Meeting (Annual or Special).

A1: **David Morgan** (Chair) replied that it is the view of this executive committee, elected to ensure that the LDWA continues to operate efficiently, that change is necessary and keeping the old logo would undermine our ability to be a modern looking organisation. The decision not to include the old logo was taken at the NEC meeting in Nottingham in October 2018 and was agreed unanimously by all members present.

The logo change is not a constitutional issue. However, the NEC has been at pains to communicate the process, following feedback at the 2018 AGM when a discussion took place regarding the prospect of a logo change.

In the August 2018 *Strider*, the 'Case for Change' was published. Rather than use other forms of communication, the NEC took the obvious decision to use the one medium that all members receive so all had the opportunity to read what was being proposed.

The article outlined that no logo would capture all that the LDWA does:

1. Social Walks
2. Challenge Walks
3. The 100
4. Long Distance Paths
5. Hill Walking and National Trail Registers

Examples of logos from other organisations were provided to demonstrate that other logos don't pictorially show what their association stands for. An organisation becomes associated with a logo in time.

The LDWA logo is little known outside our organisation. It is not a famous brand and changing it to something that is more modern looking is not going to affect the business of the LDWA. But, if used properly, it could have benefits.

In the 'Case for Change' a process was outlined that would involve the membership, ie voting for one of two logos chosen by the NEC. In hindsight, this was a mistake. The NEC should have given the membership the opportunity to look at all logos but the decision taken was an honest view that if several logos were included, membership participation would have become more complex and protracted if members were presented with an overwhelming and potentially confusing array of logos.

The *Strider* article only attracted 7 letters of which the majority said that they supported the process and change. At this point, if the process was flawed as outlined in this question, why

did the membership not write to the Editor or any other NEC member outlining their concerns?

After the *Strider* article the NEC then waited with bated breath because had been an outpouring of constructive feedback then an alternative route could have been pursued. But there was none. It would therefore have been illogical for the NEC not to have proceeded with the December *Strider* magazine article and the two logos that had finally been chosen in the October meeting.

Following the feedback received after the publication of the December *Strider* magazine including 78 emails/ letters (out of a membership of nearly 10,000) stating that they did not want change or to notify a spoiled ballot paper, plus emails from members advising that they accepted that change was necessary but just not with the logos provided, plus knowing that over 1000 people HAD voted for one of the two logos, the NEC found itself in a position where it was aware that the case for change was accepted by a high proportion of our members, but just not with the two logos on offer. It was also aware that a very vocal number of people were very unhappy with the decision taken.

Rather than plough on regardless, the NEC sought to offer an olive branch and seek a new way forward. Members were again invited to submit logos with the same criteria applied to the professional designers. Over twenty potential new designs were submitted by members.

The NEC still believes that change is necessary. That view hasn't altered and yesterday members attended a workshop where all logos that might be used were viewed and the workshop chose the logos they wanted to see go forward.

Q2. **Dave Allen** (South Manchester). In the interests of safety will the LDWA join the lobby for open access to any mobile provider in rural/ mountainous areas?

A2. **David Morgan** said that the NEC is aware of a consultation on this subject issued by OFCOM. **Action:** David Morgan to write expressing our support.

Q3. **Dave Allen** (South Manchester). South Manchester is already having difficulty recruiting younger leaders. Having to register participants is putting even seasoned leaders off continuing. At the AGM we just had to register our membership number. If LDWA is serious it should require all members to register emergency contacts on their profile available on the national database. In that case we would just need to note the membership numbers at the start of the walk. Then in an emergency just access the national database.

A3. **David Morgan** (Chair) responded by saying it is unfortunately not something that we can avoid, being a requirement for insurance purposes. Several local groups have found ways to manage the process of registering walk participants to minimise the disruption to walks and these ideas will be shared with all local groups. There is guidance on how to lead a social walk and this will form part of the local groups' tool kit. The NEC recognise that there is a need to nurture members to become walk leaders both at a national and a local level. The Volunteer Strategy which we are developing will also assist in this area.

Q4. **Dave Allen** (South Manchester). Contact in Emergencies. There needs to be a national policy in the event of a serious accident. Mountain leader training indicates that any contact with relatives in a serious situation should be done by the police. Comment?

A4. **David Morgan** (Chair) said that as an ex-police officer he recognised that there are times when it is helpful to have the police involved, and other times when it is best to involve other people. The decision should be made depending on the particular circumstances.

**Nick Gardiner** (Bristol & West) commented that he had joined the LDWA in 1988, when he was one of the youngest members amongst his local Group. Almost 30 years later, he is still one of the youngest members! He said that there were bigger issues than the logo and let's get on with walking!

**The Open Forum and Discussion closed at 12.05 p.m.**

**David Morgan** (Chair) thanked:

- Sue Widdowson and Deirdre Flegg for agreeing to and then organising the AGM weekend.
- To the walk leaders from Bristol & West, South Wales, Wiltshire and Heart of England Groups who had organised the walks and trips.
- The quiz team led by Steve & Pearl Smith.
- Keith Warman for compiling "The Story So Far" as well as continuing to look after the Hundred Database.
- Mary Dee for the compelling talk she gave yesterday evening on the four months she and Tony Cartwright spent in 2016 trekking the length of TeAraroa, 'The Long Pathway'.
- Tim Glenn for running the merchandise shop.
- Madeleine Watson for compiling the minutes.
- The hotel staff for their service. A collection would be made at the end of the meeting.
- Everyone for coming.

**Vice-President's Address**

**Barbara Blatchford** (Surrey) said that on behalf of all the members she would like to thank the National Executive Committee for the huge amount of time and effort they put in to ensuring the Association runs smoothly.

Signed .....**David Morgan** (Chair)

Date 15 March 2020

## NAMES OF THOSE WHO ATTENDED THE 2019 LDWA AGM (97 names)

Gillian Aitken	Richard Denby	Paul Lawrence	Helen Smith
Avril Allen	Sara Down	Gwyneth Littlejohn	Graham Smith
David Allen	Gail Elrick	Bill Milbourne	John Sparshatt
Harry Archer	John Elrick	Bob Mills	John Stewart
Stuart Bain	Ken Falconer	Joy Mills	Christine Stockton
Lesley Bellis	Deirdre Flegg	David Morgan	Beatrice Therin
Michael Benison	Nick Gardiner	Elaine Oddie	Lisa Thomas
Ian Beveridge	Sandy Gee	Roger Owlet	Andy Todd
Barbara Blatchford	Tim Glenn	Virginia Pawlyn	Mary Varley
Jean Bobker	Michael Godfrey	Simon Pickering	Mike Varley
Barry Boddy	Fiona Gosling	Paula Pickersgill	Jane Varley
Terry Bound	Peter Grayon	Amy Randall	Susanne Waldschmidt
Hazel Bound	Jill Green	Louise Rawlins	Roger Wandless
Lawrence Boxall	Christopher Hedley	Neil Rawlins	Caroline Wandless
Mike Buckley	David Holland	Tony Reed	Julia Warman
Brian Buttifant	Alison Howat	Jenny Reed	Ralph Warman
Steph Carter	Anushka Howell	Rob Richardson	Alan Warrington
Jim Catchpole	Shirley Hume	John Roberts	Madeleine Watson
Janet Chapman	David Jacques	Lucy Robins	John Widdowson
Mike Childs	Richard Jasper	Tony Rowley	Susan Widdowson
Peter Cowlyn	Graham Jones	Ann Sayer	Susan Wilkinson
Julie Cribb	Philip King	Chris Seddon	Tony Willey
Joy Davies	Alex King	Steve Smith	Jason Winney
Adam Dawson	Sian Knight	Pearl Smith	Joan Wortley
Mary Dee			

### **Agenda Item 3 - Hon. Treasurer's Report**

**(to be read in conjunction with the 2018-2019 accounts)**

**NB the accounts presented in this booklet are abbreviated to save printing costs. Full accounts are available on the LDWA website]**

The 2018-2019 LDWA accounts reflect how the NEC addressed strategic priorities in the period as outlined in the LDWA Business Plan, as follows:

- One reason for increasing members' subscriptions was for the NEC to be able to spend more money on developing the LDWA web site. Along with our IT contractor, Mobius Media, the NEC worked on the refresh of the web site which was launched in Summer 2019. Although web site costs increased from £27,328 in 2017-2018 to £42,513 in 2018-2019, the refresh was achieved without running up a substantial deficit. This was partly due to the extra subscription income received in the period which offset the contractor's fees and partly due to the substantial voluntary input from the IT Team (headed by Adam Dawson) and other LDWA members.
- As part of the NEC's strategy to raise the LDWA's profile and gain new members, the NEC increased publicity without significant spend. We did this by advertising the LDWA in outdoor magazines and offset this spend by obtaining income from adverts placed in 'Strider' by bodies such as Cicerone. Hence, whilst our own advertising costs increased from £237 in 2017-2018 to £4,513 in 2018-2019, we also obtained £2,300 income from 'Strider' adverts (increased from £1,250 in 2017-2018).
- During 2018-2019 the LDWA received a £75,000 bequest from the estate of Neville Mitton, deceased, who had been a long-standing LDWA member. This money, shown in the accounts as a Donation, has been used to start an IT Development Fund. The Fund will be used to accumulate money over the next few years to address what the NEC see as a strategic priority, which is a rebuild of the LDWA web site. This project is essential to keep the web site functioning in the future. The NEC is looking at a range of options for building up the Fund, including a further increase in members' subscriptions and obtaining charity status for the LDWA.

Other transactions in the accounts to note are:

- Honoraria paid – £7,000 was paid in 2018-2019.
- Donations made - £2,000 was paid in 2018-2019.
- Loans made - £4,000 was paid in 2018-2019 to the 2020 and 2021 Hundred Organisers.

**Report of the Directors and  
Unaudited Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 September 2019  
for  
The Long Distance Walkers Association  
Limited**

**The Long Distance Walkers Association  
Limited**

**Company Information  
for the Year Ended 30 September 2019**

**DIRECTORS:**

D Holland  
N C Rawlins  
D G Morgan  
A J Dawson  
J R Cribb  
G L Smith  
A Warrington  
T Glenn  
S Bain  
J M Warman  
J Elrick

**SECRETARY:**

L M Watson

**REGISTERED OFFICE:**

Bellevue  
Princes Street  
Ulverston  
Cumbria  
LA12 7NB

**REGISTERED NUMBER:**

03719756 (England and Wales)

**ACCOUNTANTS:**

R F Miller & Co  
Chartered Accountants  
Bellevue  
Princes Street  
Ulverston  
Cumbria  
LA12 7NB

**The Long Distance Walkers Association  
Limited**

**Income Statement  
for the Year Ended 30 September 2019**

	Notes	2019 £	2018 £
<b>TURNOVER</b>	3	231,960	136,360
Cost of sales		<u>55,385</u>	<u>52,112</u>
<b>GROSS SURPLUS</b>		176,575	84,248
Administrative expenses		<u>103,140</u>	<u>107,186</u>
<b>OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>		73,435	(22,938)
Interest receivable and similar income		<u>1,519</u>	<u>1,087</u>
<b>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) BEFORE TAXATION</b>		74,954	(21,851)
Tax on surplus/(deficit)		<u>289</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR</b>		<u>74,665</u>	<u>(21,851)</u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

**The Long Distance Walkers Association  
Limited (Registered number: 03719756)**

**Balance Sheet  
30 September 2019**

	Notes	2019 £	2018 £
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Stocks		120	120
Debtors	5	5,598	7,891
Investments	6	85,914	85,766
Cash at bank		<u>158,326</u>	<u>75,665</u>
		249,958	169,442
<b>CREDITORS</b>			
Amounts falling due within one year	7	<u>41,300</u>	<u>35,449</u>
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<u>208,658</u>	<u>133,993</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<u>208,658</u>	<u>133,993</u>
<b>RESERVES</b>			
Income and expenditure account	8	<u>208,658</u>	<u>133,993</u>
		<u>208,658</u>	<u>133,993</u>

The company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 30 September 2019.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 30 September 2019 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for:

- (a) ensuring that the company keeps accounting records which comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and
- (b) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Directors on 11 December 2019 and were signed on its behalf by:

J Elrick - Director

D G Morgan - Director

The notes form part of these financial statements

**The Long Distance Walkers Association  
Limited**

**Notes to the Financial Statements  
for the Year Ended 30 September 2019**

**1. STATUTORY INFORMATION**

The Long Distance Walkers Association Limited is a private company, limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales. The company's registered number and registered office address can be found on the Company Information page.

**2. ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

**Basis of preparing the financial statements**

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" including the provisions of Section 1A "Small Entities" and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

**Stocks**

Stocks are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value, after making due allowance for obsolete and slow moving items.

**3. TURNOVER**

Turnover is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable net of VAT and trade discounts. The policies adopted for the recognition of turnover are as follows:

**Sale of goods**

Turnover from the sale of merchandise is recognised when significant risks and rewards of ownership of the goods have transferred to the buyer, the amount of turnover can be measured reliably, it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the company and the costs incurred or to be incurred in respect of the transaction can be measured reliably.

**Rendering of services**

When the outcome of a transaction can be estimated reliably, turnover from memberships is recognised by reference to the stage of completion at the balance sheet date. Stage of completion is measured by reference to subscription dates.

Where the outcome cannot be measured reliably, turnover is recognised only to the extent of the expenses recognised that are recoverable.

**Interest receivable**

Interest income is recognised using the effective interest method.

**4. COMPANY STATUS**

The company is a private company limited by guarantee and consequently does not have share capital. Each member is liable to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 towards the assets of the company in the event of liquidation.

**5. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR**

	2019	2018
	£	£
Other debtors	4,000	1,000
Prepayments and accrued income	<u>1,598</u>	<u>6,891</u>
	<u>5,598</u>	<u>7,891</u>

**6. CURRENT ASSET INVESTMENTS**

	2019	2018
	£	£
Unlisted investments	<u>85,914</u>	<u>85,766</u>

continued...

**The Long Distance Walkers Association  
Limited**

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued  
for the Year Ended 30 September 2019**

**7. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR**

	2019	2018
	£	£
Tax	289	-
Accruals and deferred income	<u>41,011</u>	<u>35,449</u>
	<u>41,300</u>	<u>35,449</u>

**8. RESERVES**

	Income and expenditure account £
At 1 October 2018	133,993
Surplus for the year	<u>74,665</u>
At 30 September 2019	<u>208,658</u>

**The Long Distance Walkers Association  
Limited**

**Detailed Income and Expenditure Account  
for the Year Ended 30 September 2019**

	Notes	2019		2018	
		£	£	£	£
<b>TURNOVER</b>	1		231,960		136,360
Cost of sales	2		<u>55,385</u>		<u>52,112</u>
<b>GROSS SURPLUS</b>			176,575		84,248
Administrative expenses					
Administrative expenses	3	101,294		105,321	
Finance costs	4	<u>1,846</u>		<u>1,865</u>	
			<u>103,140</u>		<u>107,186</u>
<b>OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>			73,435		(22,938)
Finance income	5		<u>1,519</u>		<u>1,087</u>
<b>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) BEFORE TAXATION</b>			<u><u>74,954</u></u>		<u><u>(21,851)</u></u>

**The Long Distance Walkers Association  
Limited**

**Notes to the Detailed Income and Expenditure Account  
for the Year Ended 30 September 2019**

	2019 £	2018 £
<b>1. TURNOVER</b>		
Subscriptions - ordinary	150,016	131,503
Donations	75,353	130
Handbook royalties	85	16
Merchandising sales	1,582	1,580
Hillwalkers register	141	164
Commissions receivable	557	547
LGWE Group contributions	800	1,086
Advertising income	2,300	1,250
Other income	<u>1,126</u>	<u>84</u>
	<b><u>231,960</u></b>	<b><u>136,360</u></b>
<b>2. COST OF SALES</b>		
Opening stock	120	120
Purchases - Merchandise	790	1,040
Strider costs - production	35,238	33,487
Strider costs - despatch	<u>19,357</u>	<u>17,585</u>
	55,505	52,232
Less:		
Closing stock	<u>120</u>	<u>120</u>
	<b><u>55,385</u></b>	<b><u>52,112</u></b>
<b>3. ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES</b>		
Honoraria	7,000	6,000
Publicity	4,513	237
Licences and insurance	6,485	9,274
Hillwalkers register expenses	2,452	2,548
Committee costs	15,872	14,955
Local group meetings	4,727	4,430
AGM	5,469	4,373
Membership	7,054	8,459
Website costs	42,513	27,328
Sundry expenses	26	26
Trade subscriptions	975	935
Accountancy	2,208	2,124
Legal fees	-	24,132
Donations	<u>2,000</u>	<u>500</u>
	<b><u>101,294</u></b>	<b><u>105,321</u></b>
<b>4. FINANCE COSTS</b>		
Bank charges	<u>1,846</u>	<u>1,865</u>
<b>5. FINANCE INCOME</b>		
Deposit account interest	<u>1,519</u>	<u>1,087</u>

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements

## Agenda item 4- National Executive Committee Reports

### a) Chair's Report

2020 has been a busy year for the National Executive Committee and it has been a privilege to work with my eleven hard working colleagues. I will refer to the Business Plan for the bulk of my AGM report.

Under Key Area 1 (promote and preserve the future of the LDWA) the "re-skinned" website was launched after several months' detailed work by Adam Dawson (NEC IT Volunteer). The website now looks engaging, modern and clean. The process of re-skinning has however highlighted significant issues with our current website.

Adam and I presented to the AGM in March 2019 in relation to the challenges ahead and progress is being made in relation to putting a balanced financial plan together to enable a future NEC to purchase a new website and electronic system when required. The LDWA is not currently equipped to raise the funds required for such a major overhaul of its IT. As outlined below, creative revenue streams are being explored to raise the funds for the overhaul. Once these funds are sourced, it would be my recommendation that a percentage of the membership fee should be set aside for long term capital projects in addition to budgeting for the association's annual IT needs.

In order to raise the funds needed for the major IT overhaul, two workshops have consequently taken place. Every LDWA member was invited to a workshop in Nottingham that took place on 05.10.19 (entry in Strider 144 page 52) to review and contribute ideas in relation to fund raising and members who attended the local group representatives' weekend in Sherwood Youth Hostel also contributed. One idea that has emerged from the contributors is to have a levy on non-members who attend LDWA challenge events with the additional levy being transferred to the IT fund. The idea that was trialled in Lakeland LDWA area saw non-members pay a 50% surcharge on the normal member entry fee – this additional levy was donated to the National IT fund. 'That's Lyth' had an entry fee of £8 per member and £12 for non-members and with the additional £4 per non-member received, nearly £900 was transferred to the IT fund. Imagine how much could be raised if all groups agreed to contribute via this method?

IT is so important to the LDWA. As well as providing a website that is a recruiting ground for new members, IT also ensures that our membership process runs smoothly and all personal information relating to members is securely stored. Local groups benefit from IT in the following ways:

1. Local Group website
2. Access to the membership system to enable groups to understand how many and who lives in their area.
3. Access to the bulk emailing system thus ensuring groups comply with GDPR.
4. Access to the LDWA server where social walks are uploaded.
5. Access to the LDWA server where challenge walks are uploaded.
6. Access to advertising in Strider / website for both social walks and challenge walks.

I am aware that a proportion of members question whether the NEC is heading in the correct direction in relation to the funding of IT. I am aware that some members think that the NEC should identify what sort of online presence the LDWA should have prior to fund raising. With technology changing so rapidly the current NEC believes that it would be impossible to

determine the answer to that question now. The analogy I will use is the purchase of a new car. In five years' time I know I'll need a new car. I don't know what type of car will be available for me. Will my new car's engine be electric, hydrogen powered or a hybrid? Will I have a cabriolet? I don't know, but I know that I need funds to buy a new car so will start to save. That's what your NEC is seeking to do now.

The Publicity Strategy that was developed by David Holland (NEC Publicity Volunteer) is now bearing fruit. The LDWA has a very healthy membership growth rate ensuring that Julia Warman (NEC Membership Volunteer) is being kept very busy. In 2019, during the summer, a time that is traditionally quiet in relation to new members joining, the LDWA saw new members joining in particularly large numbers. It is probably not a coincidence that this was at the same time as our new adverts were placed in various walking magazines.

The LDWA now has a significant presence on four social media platforms. Facebook remains the most successful to date with 7800 members and now has a small dedicated team of administrators. Instagram has a new team of volunteers and this platform reaches out to a younger audience. Twitter remains very interactive with a number of NEC members now also promoting their portfolios to the wider walking community. The main Twitter LDWA page has now grown to 3200 followers. Finally, the LDWA has a presence on YouTube.

Under Key Area 2 (furthering our interests) a very productive meeting took place between The Ramblers and LDWA. The Ramblers were very interested in the Long Distance Paths database and will be highlighting its usefulness to members. Graham Smith (NEC Editor Volunteer) is now working closely with Natalie Hoare (Ramblers Walk magazine Editor) and sharing features that benefit members from both organisations.

Our plans to celebrate the LDWA's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary have been reviewed by local group representatives and Julie Cribb (NEC Local Groups' Volunteer) will be sharing details of the ideas in future Strider magazines. To give you a taster, one idea that received considerable support was a continuous walk from John o' Groats to Land's Ends via every local group area.

Under Key Area 3 (support and develop our local groups) we can now report that the 'toolkit' that I referred to in the March 2019 AGM is now being populated.

Under Key Area 4 (preserve, develop and extend our range of challenge walks) a draft volunteer strategy has been written by former Chair, Gail Elrick. It will be further developed by Julie Cribb during the next 12 months.

Under Key Area 5 (rationalise and develop our LDP database) the NEC is aware that we have work to do to comply with GDPR. Neil Rawlins (NEC LDP Volunteer) has been working closely with Stuart Bain (NEC Environment & Data Protection Volunteer) to ensure that we have a compliant process for new long distance paths whilst finding a solution to manage the existing long distance paths. The GDPR issues relate to the information that the LDWA both stores and publishes on walk providers and it is essential that the LDWA complies with the new law.

Looking to 2020 / 2021, as well as seeing the IT development fund being successfully implemented, work on an Equality Policy will take place to ensure that the LDWA solidifies its commitment to promoting equality and diversity.

Finally, Neil Rawlins, David Holland and Adam Dawson are leaving the committee after many years' service for the LDWA. It has been a privilege to work with them and I thank them for the service and number of hours that they have given the LDWA on behalf of us all. Thanks also to Sue Widdowson and Deirdre Flegg for organising the AGM weekend, and to all volunteers across the association who do the unseen work. Without you, there is no LDWA. Thank-you!

**David Morgan, Chair**

## **b) General Secretary's Report**

I have continued with my role of providing advice to the NEC Board/Committee, and, when appropriate, individual members, on aspects of LDWA business and also providing administrative support for NEC Board/Committee meetings and the AGM.

During the early part of the year I oversaw the second vote for the new logo. This was announced in the August 'Strider' and is being implemented in a phased way throughout the LDWA business. Many thanks and congratulations to Rachel Cornish who provided the design which we have adopted.

I am sorry to say that a lot of the year has been spent on reviewing grievances lodged by members, including one against myself and another member of the National Executive Committee. This certainly presented challenges as it would be inappropriate for me to have reviewed that grievance, as highlighted by the previous Chair, Gail Elrick, at last year's AGM. I am very grateful for the support of past NEC members and local group officials in their work in this area. The grievance process was originally set up to handle issues arising from entrants on events and not for any other purpose and so the intention and wording will now be reviewed.

**Madeleine Watson, General Secretary**

## **c) Membership Report**

Since taking over this role in March 2019 I am quite staggered about how much of my day is spent carrying out this role to the best of my abilities, every day I learn something new; everyday I learn how to deal with issues a little bit more efficiently. It has certainly been a steep learning curve but a challenge that I am relishing. One of my main concerns when taking over the role was why quite a lot of our existing members had not renewed in 2019. I therefore undertook a survey and emailed those members who had chosen not to renew. The results showed that most of our membership were of an age where they no longer undertook long distances or family commitments meant they had not renewed. There were only a few negative responses eg blaming the Logo; increase in subs.

New members joining in the calendar year 2019 has increased since 2018 (1655 –v- 1413) so this is extremely encouraging and I hope this is a trend that continues. In addition we also have a great majority of loyal members, some of whom may not walk long distances any more, but still support the Association in other ways – eg helping out on checkpoints and some just like to receive their Strider – but are still supporting us with continuing to pay their subscriptions – so thank you.

At the time of preparing my report membership stood at 9746 as at the end of December but I am aware that this number will have changed by the time of the AGM.

As membership secretary my Inbox is never empty and I am always pleased to hear from members. However, a lot of my emails are from members who can't remember their passwords, don't know how to update their personal details on the system; are having trouble renewing etc. This is another argument for updating our Website making the members' area a lot easier to navigate.

The Membership website is creaking a little now with having so many members and holding so much data and obviously complying with the GDPR regulations. We want to ensure all of our members' existing data is safe and ensure a smooth transition when new members join or existing members wish simply to update their details.

I have received some lovely emails and letters thanking me for my time carrying out this role and some are extremely heart-warming – they are not only directed at me but the whole committee. These kinds of acknowledgments do make all the hard work worthwhile. Thank you all for your continued support.

**Julia Warman, Membership Secretary**

#### **d) IT and Internet Report**

##### Introduction

The LDWA's IT and Internet infrastructure underpins all five key areas of the Business Plan, from promoting the LDWA (area 1), to furthering long distance walking (area 2), supporting Local Groups (area 3), preserving Challenge Events (area 4) and developing LDPs (area 5). Specifically, area 1d targets the website as a key area for investment.

Meeting our users' high expectations in these key areas puts significant pressure on our IT systems and in fact 2019-20 turned out to be a pretty tough year for the IT team. Innumerable bugs arose and had to be tackled, and we were plagued with spam and phishing email problems. Despite these setbacks, the new-look re-skinned website was successfully launched in June and progress was made in developing new walks database functionality and a "re-skin" of the Local Groups websites. All this took a considerable amount of IT volunteers' time and incurred higher than budgeted expense from our IT supplier.

It became clear during the year that our current IT platform (i.e. National and Local Group websites, bulk email systems, etc.) is so complicated, large and old now that it has become unstable. The case for a complete rebuild is becoming stronger every day.

##### Achievements during 2019-20 vs. priorities set at 2019 AGM:

(Priorities set at last AGM are \* bulleted, progress since then is *italicised*)

- Launch of the new, re-skinned, website  
*DONE in June 2019*
- Introduction of the Walks Planner and Database function  
*UNDERWAY but re-scoped and not complete as at mid-January 2020*
- Roll-out of the PACER app  
*CANCELLED because anticipated (considerable) cost was not balanced by projected (marginal) benefit*

- Upgrade of the way that the electronic version of “Strider” is displayed on the national website  
*DONE and included in June re-skin*
- Refreshment of the bulk email system so that our bulk emails are easier to read on mobile devices with small screens  
*DONE and included in June re-skin*
- Construction of new admin functions as requested by LDPs, Challenge Events and other teams  
*DONE as needed*
- Management of inevitable operational issues with no interruption to service  
*DONE though at time of writing some unresolved bugs still remain*

Other achievements for 2019-2020 (since the last AGM):

- An emergency upgrade of the LDWA web hosting server had to be carried out in June, alongside the website re-skin, because we unexpectedly ran out of space (our website is now a massive 320GB) and as a result, backups were failing. The huge size of the site meant a manual migration to a new, larger and faster, server had to be carried out, which introduced some bugs and additional unbudgeted cost. The new server is already 80% full so we may have to migrate again during the course of 2020
- Following the re-skin launch and server migration, around 100 bugs were identified, some of which (e.g. incorrect event dates and failure of results list display) had to be rectified immediately
- It was decided to refresh the Local Groups websites to emulate more closely the look and feel of the National site, and to create coherence between the sites. At the time of writing (mid-Jan) the new look was not yet ready for testing. Current status will be reviewed at the AGM
- Significant progress was made in developing a social walks database based on the system successfully developed by Gerry Jackson in South Wales Group. It has however proven more difficult than expected to shoehorn the functionality into our existing website, and the planning function has had to be removed. The latest update on status will be discussed at the AGM. The system will be launched as part of the Local Groups refresh
- A number of bugs in the PACER event tracking system were diagnosed by Tony Cartwright, in Surrey Group, and limited progress has been made in resolving most of them
- A new Events Register system was built to allow social walk administrators to record logs of Local Group walk attendees
- A new bulk email system (“Mailgun”) was purchased and implemented to try and help reduce the problem of LDWA bulk emails being treated as spam. It seems to have successfully eliminated most “domain level” rejections, but there are still sporadic problems with user-level rejection resulting in our emails being delivered to junk folders
- The new logo was implemented on the website in early August
- Minor changes requested by Members at the last AGM (e.g “tappability” of walks on maps on mobile devices) have mostly been implemented
- Critical failures in parts of the Membership system, Challenge Events administration system and Local Groups Social Walk admin system were fixed (although there were still issues with social walks as at the time of writing)

- Some 120 other bugs (many of which were actually groups of several separate bugs) and minor changes have been reported to and fixed by our IT supplier in the last 12 months. This is in addition to the 300 or so minor change requests and technical queries handled by the IT team volunteers in the same period

#### Priorities for 2019-20 (to the next AGM):

- Launch refreshed Local Groups websites (as soon as possible, if not already done by the time of the AGM)
- Launch the new Social Walks database as part of the Local Groups refresh
- Fix all known outstanding bugs
- Once these steps are complete, “lock down” the website apart from emergency bug fixes and very minor enhancements, reject all proposals for functionality changes, and drive IT spend for the rest of the year, and subsequent years, to an absolute minimum
- Focus on saving enough money to replace the website completely in 3-5 years time

#### Financial position

Total IT spend in the financial year October 2018 to September 2019 was £43k (including VAT) versus a budget of £30k inc VAT. The overspend was caused by the unexpected complexity of the website re-skin, the sheer volume of bugs that had to be fixed, the un-budgeted server replacement, and development of major new functionality including the Events Register. The budget for 2019-20 is £20k and spend to date (mid January) has been £13k. As outlined above, the aim is to complete outstanding work as quickly as possible, then to lock down the website and minimise spend for the remaining part of the year.

The majority of our budget is spent with our IT supplier, Mobius Media, though a smaller amount goes on website hosting (Heart internet) and on software licences.

#### New IT and Internet Officer

The current IT and Internet Officer, Adam Dawson, is stepping down at this AGM and as at mid January, no successor had been identified. The NEC is reviewing options for ensuring continuity of coverage.

#### More information

The current IT and Internet Officer will be available throughout the AGM weekend to discuss the IT agenda with any interested parties.

#### A note on the case and process for completely replacing our IT and Internet systems

Since the presentations by the Internet Officer and the Chair at the last AGM, the NEC has gone to considerable lengths to promote to the whole Association, the need for a complete rebuild of our IT infrastructure.

It is perhaps regrettable, but entirely understandable, that the need for, and the cost (probably £200-300k excluding VAT) of this replacement are matters for serious concern to many of our members.

However, over the last 12 months, it has become increasingly clear to the IT team and NEC that to keep running with our current system is unsustainable, as the catalogue of bugs, issues and problems outlined in the previous sections clearly demonstrate. Unfortunately,

when we do eventually bite the bullet and upgrade, it is inescapable that there will be a significant cost associated with doing so.

The IT team are getting bug reports and “how do I?” questions at the rate of about 1-2 per day *every day* and in line with the NEC objective of responding to correspondence in a timely manner, best efforts are made to ensure that every one of them is answered and ideally solved within 24 hours. This is on top of any development work that we are trying to do – the website refresh and events register in the recent past, and the walks database and local groups refresh at the moment.

We’re getting so many bugs, and making changes is so difficult, because our website is ancient, complex, bespoke, massive (320GB) and unstable. Whenever we make changes, completely unforeseen bugs crop up in different places (whoever would have thought, for example, that changing the font when the website was refreshed last year would prevent challenge events being downloaded from the admin system?).

One practical consequence of this is that if at some point in the future, we had to change IT supplier, even this theoretically simple task would be rendered almost impossible by our website’s intrinsic complexity. It is unlikely we would find a good, affordable supplier willing to take it on, and it would take at least two years for any new supplier to figure out how on earth it all works and for them to become competent.

To carry on as we are is simply not an option. It’s only a matter of time before something goes seriously wrong, which is why, to minimise the risk of this happening, we are ruling out making any more changes to the functionality we offer (and it will be hard work get the Walks Database and the Local Groups refresh launched in a timely manner and without anything major going wrong in the process).

So we will have to build from scratch a completely new system which ideally should be assembled from bought-in off the peg standard modules, wherever available, which would fall into four main groups of functionality:

- “Core” (i.e. retained from current systems)
- “Peripheral” (i.e. maybe not needed)
- “Satellite” (i.e. probably keep but not on LDWA main website)
- “New” (maybe app based)

As far as possible we should use standard off the peg modules to do this, so the responsibility for making sure they work properly, are kept up to date, and don’t interfere with each other, is the module developer’s, not ours. To use standard modules, however, we might have to accept changes to our business processes. All these issues will have to be worked through and agreed. We should avoid, if at all possible, the temptation to write our own bespoke code, as this will just recreate all the same problems that beset our current architecture.

The challenges will be in:

- specifying what functions we want
- identifying whether ready-made modules actually exist that we could buy to deliver that functionality
- deciding what the whole thing should look like
- writing new content (a lot of our existing material is way out of date – there may be several hundred pages that need re writing)
- tendering for a suitable competent IT supplier to build it all once we have fully decided what we want

- stringing it all together
- migrating to the new system
- testing the new system
- launching the new system, educating all users in what to expect, and retiring the old system
- de-bugging post launch

The last five sections are the bits that most people think of when you say you are building a new website, but they are actually probably the easiest and cheapest sections of all.

It is highly likely (and probably very desirable) that the LDWA will need to buy in an expert to manage all this for us, and the cost of that person (say 1-2 years at £50kpa) will need to be added on top of the cost of buying the modules, commissioning new content and paying a developer to build it all for us. So £200-£300k (ex VAT) is if anything likely to be on the low side. It's a big job and IT projects the world over have a tendency to over-run (think of the NHS as an example). So it would be prudent to build some contingency into the budget too.

In terms of when this needs to happen – it depends on the LDWA's appetite for tolerating the risk of major failure, and on how long LDWA is prepared to wait before it can introduce any new functionality. We've said 3-5 years but even 3 years might be starting to test our patience.

As a side-note, if we want to build an app to do things like building personal walk / map collections for use offline on a mobile phone, we should be very wary of anyone who says you can do it for £2000. Experience suggests that for a decent app we should budget £50-£100k to specify, design and build it, and a further budget of at least £10k per year to keep it working properly because each time IOS and Android are updated, the app would have to be partially or completely rebuilt to make sure it remained compatible with the latest (and all previous) operating systems.

For the short to medium term, work is proceeding as fast as our IT supplier can manage, to try and implement the Walks Database and Local Group Websites refresh, and to fix all known bugs, before or as soon as possible after the AGM. Thereafter our IT systems should be reasonably stable and low cost, until such time as the complete rebuild is started.

**In the meantime, LDWA would be wise not to make any more changes to the current website and to focus on saving enough money to enable its complete replacement to happen sooner rather than later.**

**Adam Dawson, IT and Internet Officer**

#### **e) Strider Report**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many members of the LDWA who have sent me their offerings for Strider over the past 12 months.

I am very grateful for the news stories, regular columns, photos and challenge walk and social walk listings I receive, often on a daily basis. Strider is a magazine for LDWA members and written by LDWA members. My job is, basically, twofold – to put all the material into a coherent order to try to ensure the quality of Strider is as good as possible, and to ensure Strider hits its deadline so that our magazine comes out on time. I have always felt it a privilege to edit Strider, and to put to use whatever professional experience I have for our magazine. The LDWA is a wonderful organisation which has done so much for

me over the years, and editing Strider is a way of putting something back.

If there are ever late changes to be made to stories or walks listings, then I will always try to accommodate them – providing they are within deadline! If there is a mistake in Strider, then I will endeavour to put it right in the next edition. And I will always try to ensure that reports of LDWA events and group social walks get good showings – after all, one of the functions of Strider is to showcase our fantastic association.

So many thanks to everyone for your contributions. Without them, there would not be a Strider.

**Graham Smith, Strider Editor**

#### **f) Local Groups Report**

This has been my fourth year in office and during this year I am delighted to have got to know more of you individually as well as part of our group network. I have found that being able to chat through issues and matters of interest one-to-one with people gives a different perspective sometimes not picked up when group responses are invited. I also hope that some of these friendships will last beyond my tenure in this role.

I continue to be impressed and amazed at the number, variety and quality of walks that I go through every few months checking and releasing for Strider. I also note how many new names I come across as walk leaders, which is a positive thing for some groups when many still have the problem of attracting new folk. Volunteering in general is so important for the continued health of our association and to this end I plan to play an active part during my last year as Local Groups' Officer in supporting the development of a Volunteer Support Strategy.

As always, the Local Groups' Weekend, held in November each year, is a major event in my calendar, but in 2019 this was for quite different reasons. The development, preparation and programme of the weekend was based on the same successful format as in previous years, i.e. the topics covered throughout the weekend were all proposed by the delegates attending to ensure that the areas covered were the most relevant for groups. These were addressed in a variety of formats including information exchanges, informal specialist groups, guided discussions, workshop sessions and of course the formal Sunday morning meeting. But due to injury preventing me from attending at short notice, this weekend was truly an event for the Local Groups run BY the Local Groups. A number of volunteers chaired or ran each session and worked with over 30 individuals representing more than 20 local groups, from tea-time Friday almost constantly through to lunchtime on Sunday ensuring that the weekend was not only enjoyable but very productive too (as I fully realised when typing up the output!). My grateful thanks must be recorded not only to those volunteers, but to everyone who participated to make the event work so well. The full output packs have been sent to all delegates, all Local Groups and has been uploaded to the LDWA website for anyone interested in what goes on at these events. November 2020 will be my last Local Group Representatives' Weekend and I hope we can make it special and have representation from as many Local Groups as possible.

I am pleased to be able to report this year that the Toolkit initiative, started by delegates at the 2018 weekend, was developed during the year and the pilot live version demonstrated at the 2019 weekend. A lot of work has been put into this development, which it is hoped will be a valuable resource for Local Groups, Officers, Members and Volunteers and which will continue to be developed through 2020 as more content becomes available.

Finally, progress is being made on Project 50, the activities and events to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of LDWA in 2022. Suggestions have been whittled down from over 60, through

a series of workshops and consultations to a shortlist of 16 which will now be looked at more closely in terms of complexity, finance and commitment. Prior to more detailed planning during 2020. I hope to continue work on this project through to 2022 when my Local Groups role will be over.

**Julie Cribb, Local Groups Secretary**

### **g) Challenge Events Report**

Twelve months on (where does it all go?) and I am enjoying the role even more than I did this time last year, having got my feet firmly under the challenge events coordination table. I am now even more familiar, more comfortable, more knowledgeable about the operation, helped by the personal creation of a system that allows me to process challenge events as soon as they arrive and immediately incorporate them within a master copy, which then requires only a minimum of attention after the deadline has passed. This means that only events coming in close to the deadline require processing and so the Events Diary for each issue of Strider magazine is despatched at its earliest convenience. This in turn pleases me, the editor and our printer. It is not, as they say, rocket science, but functions really well within its efficient simplicity.

Reminders are sent out to the organisers of unregistered events a month in advance, followed by a subsequent prompt approximately 10 days before each Strider deadline. I have not worked out how many self-registrations took place in 2019, nor 2018 for that matter, and have no desire to, as I feel it would be disrespectful to print such figures. People kindly register their challenge events with LDWA for the benefit of our organisation and the membership using a method that suits their needs. Self-registrations are very helpful, but I am grateful on behalf of LDWA for every registration received for the three editions of Strider and the challenge events website.

The Walking Festivals category on the challenge events website, which was scheduled to be converted into and re-introduced as Alternative Events for a trial period during 2019, in the end, has had to be put on hold due to the involved nature of the LDWA website refurbishment project. If not before, this initiative should be part of the next, replacement LDWA website.

The re-written web version of Guidelines for Events that was timetabled for 2019 is now on schedule to be published in 2020. In other areas, the Events Diary introduction piece from April will be a little shorter, but no less effective, while past event pieces and event articles in general presented in the three issues of Strider during the year help inform, inspire and further promote organised challenge events.

NEC duties and commitments have been undertaken and within my role an immense amount of communicating has, once again, taken place, but all to good effect. In total, LDWA promoted 166 (+8 from 2018) challenge events in 2019, of which 72 (+2 from 2018) were organised by our local groups, with over 35,000 words of text used in Strider; even more on the website! Challenge events come and challenge events go, but mainly they stay, so we are much obliged, year on year, to all of those organisers and helpers who give so much of their time and effort to help create the wonderful world of challenge event walking. That was 2019. Thank you very much indeed.

**Tim Glenn, Challenge Events Secretary**

## h) Hundreds Co-ordinator Report

[NB this report is much shorter than normal due to illness]

In 2019 the Hadrian's Hvdred was successfully organised by Northumbria Group.

Future Hundreds will be

- In **2020** the event will be organised by South Wales Group. **Y 100 Sir Fynwy** will be based on the county of Monmouthshire.
- The Trans-Pennine 100 will be organised by Vermuyden Group in **2021**.
- Events during **2022**, the LDWA's 50th anniversary year, will include the **Elephant, Bear and Bull 100**
- North West Grampian Group will organise **The Speyside 100** in **2023**. It will be based in the Inverness/Moray area.

Revised rules were introduced following a workshop at last year's AGM weekend.

**Alan Warrington, Hundreds Co-ordinator**

## i) Publicity Report

This AGM sees the end of my 5 years of office. All gone very quickly and in many ways I am sad to go but it is time for new blood and new ideas.

When I joined the NEC there had been no Publicity Officer for some years. There was no Publicity strategy, no real job description and just a few old outdated posters. The role of Publicity Officer had to be created.

I am very pleased that Julian White has stepped forward to take over from me at this AGM and am even more pleased that I can leave to him a real ongoing documented job. I wish him well. In very brief terms our current Publicity activity and documents are as follows:

- Document 1. This is a written strategy based on our Business Plan.
- Document 2. A comprehensive document detailing all the work that I do along with contact details, artwork and generally everything to assist a new Publicity Officer.
- Document 3. Thoughts and details as to how Local Groups can undertake Publicity.
- We now have an updated suite of hard copy promotional material including a double sided A5 flyer and a business card to be used anywhere and everywhere.
- At long last we are advertising our existence. We have booked until the Autumn a series of advertisements, particularly in The Great Outdoors and Trail and Trail Running magazines.
- We are trying to create nil cost win / win opportunities with other organisations.
- We are examining liaising for mutual benefit with other organisations. At the present time we are considering possibilities with Ramblers.
- Facebook, Twitter and Instagram are very successfully operated for us by member volunteer teams. Videos and YouTube are planned.
- Challenge Events. Now with our new A5 Flyer I am contacting all Challenge walk organizers to provide them with promotional literature to use on their events.
- Numerous other diverse ways that there is insufficient space here to describe.

**David Holland, Publicity Officer**

## **j) Long Distance Paths (LDPs) Report**

This is my final report as LDP co-ordinator some five years in the role. This has been a period of steady growth to the LDP database with the continuous addition of new routes and publications. Just when you think no more long distance paths could be created within our small collection of islands, every hill ascent has been recorded or every stretch of coastline has been mapped and walked, a new route is created or a book is written and our small team of volunteers add it to our database of long distance paths. The three Striders in 2019 covered 15 new LDPs, adding 1,350 miles. By the end of 2019, some 1,221 LDPs routes of at least 15 miles were listed on the online LDPs pages, in total some 81,600 miles of described walks. As a result of the data auditing, we began to remove from the public screens some older routes no longer promoted.

Trackfiles for the British trails we list are available only to LDWA members as free downloads, along with many PDF route descriptions offered publicly to help route promoters and potential walkers. This provides a unique resource to UK trail walkers as they make increasing use of mobile technology and digital items. In 2019 almost 15,000 such LDPs files were downloaded, with about 8,000 as trackfiles. The trend has continued for new routes not to have a traditional paper book publication (i.e., one with an ISBN number) and out of the 15 new routes in the 2019 Strider editions, only four had an ISBN book. Whilst the paper guidebook or map may never quite disappear, increasingly the way routes are presented is in electronic format. At the end of 2019 we added a link to a video documentary of walking the Basingstoke Canal. As we move into the third decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the way routes and what we still call 'publications' are presented will move increasingly away from the paper format, particularly as younger members and the wider public wish to record and create their own long distance routes and paths in different and more technologically advanced ways. As an organisation, the LDWA needs to be alive to these changes and increasingly parts of the wider website have responded to this, as local groups can blog their social walks as well as having an increased presence on social media.

The LDP offering is rightly referred to as the LDWAs 'Jewel in the Crown' by the current Chair, and its content is second to none. At its inception it was almost unique, but as the internet age has grown and developed, imitators and potential rivals have appeared, and our offering now stands amongst many others. With the LDWA website needing a complete rebuild within the next few years, it will be an opportunity for the LDP webpages to be refreshed, with exciting new ideas and formats to be added which appeal to a younger generation of users, whilst at the same time still offering the staples of our current offering: free to members GPX files to download, links to publications which can be purchased on Amazon, over 850 LDP publications (trail guides, maps etc), with the LDWA receiving a small commission (so if you are thinking of purchasing online any walking publications or maps, please consider going to Amazon via our website), as well as the vast amount of information which has been collated and updated over the years by the small team of volunteers in the LDP team.

The main work of the volunteer LDPs team has been on the ongoing major data audit that is a very large task for volunteers. This proceeds in two stages, with LDPs publications checked first based on their supplier, and then the other information for each path is reviewed - to qualify for our listings a path must have a current publication either in paper or digital format. This process has prioritised the LDPs that are of most interest to the online users, measured by page-views on each LDP that is logged by our website data analytics package. There are over 1,200 of these publication suppliers databased who provide over 5,400 publications (apart from the trackfiles and OS maps and the services from trail support companies we also list). By the end of 2019 checks and updates had been done on some 94% of all these suppliers representing 96% of these publications, so this first stage is almost completed to the credit of the volunteers involved and as a result our online users are

seeing higher quality data. As a result of these checks, about half of the data required substantive updating.

The LDP's team's core members in 2018 were John Sparshatt, Julie Brownhill, Victoria Morris and Paul Lawrence, with contributions from Peter Grayson, Paul Nellist, Andy Clark and Lynn Jackson, Peter Toghil and Iain Connell. David Kearns (librarian) and Jeff Parr (new routes intelligence) also make valuable inputs and the ongoing IT support is vital for this project. I would like to personally like to thank them all for their efforts in 2019 and during my term as LDPs coordinator and NEC member and I look forward to handing over to Andy. It has been a pleasure to have been the LDP coordinator and I would like to thank all those NEC members past and present, as well as members of the wider LDWA community for their support and help during my tenure.

It is because of the continued efforts of our volunteers that we are able to update and add new routes, answer all sorts of walking and non-walking enquiries from members of the public, maintain the data we already hold on our database and publish information on new routes and publications in Strider. However, with plans for a new website and the continual addition of new information and updating of the existing webpages, new volunteers are always needed and welcome to join the team and to shape the future direction of the LDP offering to members of the LDWA and the wider public. If you feel like you would like to help, particularly if you have some IT skills and a few hours a week to spare, please speak to any of us at the 2020 AGM.

**Neil Rawlins, LDP Officer**

#### **k) Environment, Data Protection and Risk Report**

Within my environment role I have sought to strengthen relationships with the following third parties where their own objectives are aligned to ours and can help promote long distance walking in a sustainable way.

- British Mountaineering Council (BMC) - Mend our Mountains campaign.
- Open Spaces Society - Protecting our rights of way access and identifying footpaths not on the definitive map (prior to 2026).
- Refill.org.uk - access to free drinking water, reducing the need for single use plastic.
- Keep Britain Tidy - raising awareness around litter collection.

Challenges still exist around 'charges' for using public rights of way for challenge events. My predecessor Christopher Headley resolved problems with challenge events on rights of way across National Trust land. A similar issue has been escalated to the NEC regarding the Dartmoor National Park Authority. I will continue to work with other stakeholders to try and resolve.

#### **Data Protection**

The implementation of GDPR has now been embedded within the association and clarity on specific issues has been provided over the last year including:

- A common sense approach to taking group photo's;
- Holding data within the LDP database in compliance with GDPR; and
- the requirement to have registers for social walks.

## **Equality and Diversity**

It was identified by the NEC this year that the LDWA does not have a documented equality and diversity policy. Work remains ongoing, in conjunction with other members to document and establish an equality and diversity framework.

## **Risk**

The risk register has been maintained and is due for an annual review by the NEC after the AGM.

## **Stuart Bain, Environment, Data Protection and Risk Manager**

### **Other reports: Merchandise Report**

LDWA merchandise continues to roll on and now with the new logo looking particularly resplendent on the garments it has decorated since being introduced at the end of 2019. Sales figures for last year are available in the LDWA Treasurer's report.

Our Leeds based supplier continues to serve the LDWA's needs brilliantly, matched only by their personal service and desire to please at all times.

The web shop has received several updates during the year, none more so than for the incoming new logo and rejuvenated website. It is hoped in 2020 to put images of garments displaying the new logo on to the website shop listings. The shop is now also a donation point for those who kindly wish to help the LDWA with special projects.

Each issue of Strider magazine promotes LDWA merchandise. This helps general awareness, while a web only facility, information and also inspiration, hopefully.

Once more, there will be merchandise at an LDWA AGM, but it will almost certainly be the final time for the simple reasons that we now have a new logo and that stock levels of items with the previous design are virtually depleted. At this year's AGM weekend there will be samples of merchandise embroidered with the new LDWA logo.

Looking ahead, a two-colour embroidered badge of the new logo, in either two, three or even four versions, will be readily available later in 2020.

**Tim Glenn, Merchandise Officer**

## Agenda Item 5

Short Election Statements for NEC Candidates

### **Publicity Officer: Julian WHITE**

*Proposer:* Stephen Matthews *Seconder:* Jane Edgar

I am currently the chair of Norfolk & Suffolk LDWA and previously held the communications role at Norfolk Area Ramblers.

### **Long Distance Paths Coordinator: Andy CLARK**

*Proposer:* David Thornton *Seconder:* Brian Buttifant

I have been a member of the LDWA since early 2018 and regularly take part in Group Walks with both the Kent and Essex & Herts Groups. I have also taken part in Challenge Walks in various parts of the country and have helped out on checkpoint duties on Challenges organised by my local groups.

Earlier this summer, I volunteered to help with the LDP team and have been involved with the “featuring lesser known footpath projects”. Hopefully I can be of use to the LDWA in this position as we move towards the next phase of the website development.

#### Notes:

1. As at mid January 2020 there were no nominations for the post of IT and Internet Officer. This will remain vacant until such time as the NEC can identify someone suitable who can be co-opted into the role (and subsequently elected at a future AGM).
2. The remaining NEC members were either elected at the 2019 AGM for a period of 4 years, or are part way through their term of office according to Bylaw 5 (transition arrangements).



# BUSINESS PLAN



## ACTION PLANS: DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES 2018-2020

Our objectives are:

- Furthering the interests of those who enjoy long distance walking
- Managing and preserving the long term future of the LDWA
- Keeping it LONG

To achieve these objectives, the association's National Executive Committee proposes five key areas for development:

- 1 To promote and preserve the future of the LDWA
- 2 Furthering the interests of those who enjoy long distance walking and keeping it LONG
- 3 To support and develop our Local Groups
- 4 To preserve, develop and extend our range of Challenge Walks
- 5 To rationalise and develop our LDPs database to meet future needs
- 6 Financial implications

## Key area 1

### To promote and preserve the future of the LDWA

The LDWA currently maintains a healthy membership but its volunteer base is in decline. Local groups report that only a small proportion of their members actually participate in group activities. Many of our Challenge Events are increasingly used by non-members to the extent that on some events non-members exceed members. If the LDWA is to continue as a volunteer run organisation, it needs to either encourage existing members to participate in the organisation and/or to get new members who will be willing now, or in the future, to become involved.

**Ia. What we want to do:** Raise profile of the LDWA to encourage more of our existing members become involved and to attract potential joiners.

**How can we do it?** Revise and renew our appearance as appropriate. Produce a new look website and logo and documentation. Develop our Publicity Strategy (see Ie.)

*Lead Officers:* All NEC members.

**Progress update:** National website has been refreshed and new logo has been launched. Publicity strategy has been drafted.

**Ib. What we want to do:** Develop links with outside organisations that can help champion the LDWA.

**How can we do it?** Identify Ambassadors (adventure walkers, presenters etc) who may be suitable and make approaches.

*Lead Officers:* All NEC members.

**Progress update:** Phoebe Smith has been appointed President. Very positive meeting held with Ramblers, and a plan of action has been produced that will benefit both associations.

**Ic. What we want to do:** Provide an integrated approach on social media. This will produce an effective platform for promoting the LDWA but will be a better service offer for members/non-members. This will involve better integration of the currently separate social media accounts into one and to set up better links with other methods of communication, including website and *Strider*.

**How can we do it?** Officer with overall responsibility for Social Media needs to be appointed, providing a single point of contact. He/she could establish a team to manage social media on a rota basis.

*Lead Officers:* Chair, Internet Officer, *Strider* Editor.

**Progress update:** Michael Jones has been appointed as lead officer for social media. Facebook has been brought under LDWA control and there are teams in place for Facebook and Twitter. We are building teams for other platforms such as Instagram.

**Id. What we want to do:** Target website as key area for investment. The website is a key area for both recruitment and retention.

**How can we do it?** Mobius Media is now in post providing web support and a refresh of the site. If this is successful, consider a more extensive programme of updating.

*Lead Officer:* Internet Officer.

**Progress update:** Website has been refreshed. Content revision, Local Group modernisation work and Walks Planner in progress (for launch by March 2020). Other features will be incorporated into a new website if funding is available.

**Ie. What we want to do:** Develop a robust publicity strategy that can be used throughout the LDWA.

**How can we do it?** Initial plan produced by Publicity Officer resulted in production of new publicity materials and campaign to recruit new members on Challenge Walks. A second stage plan, integrating the development areas now identified is needed.

*Lead Officer:* Publicity Officer.

**Progress update:** A publicity strategy is now in place.

**If. What we want to do:** Review the LDWA constitution so it can meet the needs of the future.

**How can we do it?** A revised constitution, compliant with the Companies Act, will be submitted to the next AGM for approval.

*Lead Officer:* General Secretary.

**Progress update:** New Articles of Association and ByLaws approved. Some further revisions to the ByLaws are in progress.

**Ig. What we want to do:** Develop Equality Policy for the LDWA.

**How can we do it?** A new Equality Policy will be written to ensure that the LDWA aims to protect the nine characteristics as identified by Equality Act 2010.

*Lead Officer:* Environment & Risk Officer.

**Progress update:** This is in progress.

## Key area 2

### Furthering the interests of those who enjoy long distance walking and keeping it LONG

There are many other organisations promoting and providing walking opportunities. However the LDWA offers something unique. It offers a range of opportunities focused on walking which is LONG and can be CHALLENGING. Moreover the LDWA has the special status of being the governing body for long distance walking. In promoting this, where appropriate, it can create positive opportunities for the promotion of the organisation

**2a. What we want to do:** As part of our publicity strategy emphasise our unique offer and particularly the LONG.

**How can we do it?**

*Lead Officer:* Publicity Officer.

**Progress update:** An initial advertising campaign proved to be a success and is to be continued and a 12 month advertising programme is under way. All our promotional literature has been redesigned and modernised and hard copy material for use by Local Groups is under way.

**2b. What we want to do:** Develop the routes of the LDWA's 100 mile Challenge Events into national trails.

**How can we do it?** Working with authors of the routes and other volunteers to organise waymarking and publication of the routes as trails. Funding needed. Initial discussions have begun with a view to making the 2018 Cinque Ports 100 a trail, but this project is at a very early stage.

*Lead Officer:* 100s Coordinator.

**Progress update:** Work has not commenced on this idea. There are significant challenges in relation to local authority liaison and the work to progress is far more than originally envisaged.

**2c. What we want to do:** Develop better links with other organisations (Ramblers, BMC, Open Spaces) and consider the potential for joint working developing joint projects.

**How can we do it?**

*Lead Officer:* Publicity Officer.

**Progress update:** Links with Ramblers and BMC in progress. Others will follow. Ramblers was particularly productive with joint projects in place to promote each other's activities.

**2d. What we want to do:** Consider new initiatives with commercial providers which may help to raise our profile.

**How can we do it?** Investigate opportunities for joint projects with suitable commercial companies. Advertisement appeared in December *Strider* and this needs to be evaluated.

*Lead Officer:* Publicity Officer.

**Progress update:** Adverts in *Strider* have proved to be successful by providing income with very little adverse comment from members. Work is progressing slowly with other commercial opportunities and might include adverts on the website.

**2e. What we want to do:** We aim to develop a strategy to celebrate the LDWA's 50th anniversary in a meaningful way.

**How can we do it?** Suggestions are currently being compiled by the NEC. Sub-group required to implement strategy.

*Lead Officer:* Local Groups Secretary.

**Progress update:** Project 50 has been established as a project to oversee work. An initial set of proposals was discussed at the Local Groups weekend in November 2019. This will be further refined at the workshop at the AGM weekend.



It is hoped the Cinque Ports 100 route can become a trail. ►

## Key area 3 To support and develop our Local Groups

Our local groups are the backbone of the LDWA. This area suggests methods of support and development to assist with service provision and the development of a more corporate approach while preserving the unique nature of each local group

**3a. What we want to do:** Provide a greater range of support for Local Groups, including Toolkits and development of support networks.

**How can we do it?** The NEC has begun consultations with Local Groups as to the kind of support which will be most useful for them and work has commenced in their production.

*Lead Officer:* Local Groups Secretary.

**Progress update:** The framework of the Toolkit is now in place and has started to be populated.

**3b. What we want to do:** Provision of a Volunteer Support and Development programme.

**How can we do it?** We are aware that volunteer recruitment and retention is key to the survival of Local Groups. A volunteer support programme is under development.

*Lead Officer:* Local Groups Secretary.

**Progress update:** Work has been completed reviewing what other similar organisations do. A first draft has been written. Work now progressing with volunteers to develop further.

**3c. What we want to do:** Support groups in developing social media.

**How can we do it?** Many Local Groups have indicated that they require support in developing social media. This support needs to be integrated with developments proposed in 1c on page 2 and the website refresh 1d.

*Lead Officer:* Chair, Internet Officer.

**Progress update:** 'How To' guides have been written for Twitter and Instagram. They will be added to the Toolkit. Further work to take place with Facebook when possible.

**3d. What we want to do:** Provide a vision for what constitutes a social walk.

**How can we do it?** Local Groups have indicated this would be useful and it can be provided.

*Lead Officer:* Local Groups Secretary, Publicity Officer.

**Progress update:** Revised guidelines on how to lead a social walk have been produced and will be shared with Local Groups in November 2019.



Members of North West Grampian LDWA line up lochsides during their annual weekend meet in April.

## Key area 4

### To preserve, develop and extend our range of Challenge Walks.

Challenge Walks are a key activity for the LDWA and are a very important area for recruitment of new members. However some events have disappeared from the calendar because there are insufficient volunteers to run the event.

**4a. What we want to do:** Provide support for groups wanting to set up new Challenge Walks. This will include guidance information in key areas, provision of standard documents and advice on use of social media.

**How can we do it?** We have commenced a review of existing guidance notes and propose some new ones (e.g. **3a** Toolkit).

**Lead Officer:** Chair, Events Officer.

**Progress update:** Revision to the guidance for organising a challenge event is well under way.

**4b. What we want to do:** The Volunteer Support and Development programme (**3b**) will also cover those participating in Challenge Events.

**How can we do it?**

**Lead Officer:** Local Groups Secretary

**Progress update:** As **3b**.

**4c. What we want to do:** Encourage higher participation in walks by LDWA members.

**How can we do it?** A pilot study is proposed to evaluate the potential for restricting access to members only on Challenge Walks.

**Lead Officer:** 100 Coordinator.

**Progress update:** Pilot for 'members only' event was deemed successful and is one option available to Local Groups to consider.

In addition, significant price differentials have proved successful as non-members are encouraged to join the LDWA. A further idea that is proving successful is by making entries for an event members only for a set period and then opening up to anybody thereafter. The annual LDWA 100 is now only available for members to enter.

All information added to Toolkit.

**4d. What we want to do:** Continue to pursue National Trust and other organisations on matters of charging for access by Challenge Walks.

**How can we do it?** A strategy has been developed to challenge these issues and is proving successful.

**Lead Officer:** Environment Officer.

**Progress update:** This work started positively and NT was keen to engage. Disappointingly, the contact in NT has moved on and no-one else has picked up the reins.



London LDWA chair Ali Pretty, left, LDWA President Phoebe Smith and national 100s coordinator Alan Warrington at the Capital Challenge.

## Key area 5

### To rationalise and develop our LDPs database to meet future needs

The Long Distance Path Database is a well-respected and heavily used facility. As well as providing a popular service to members, it is also a key area for recruitment of new members. However it relies on volunteer input to keep it up to date which, given the complexity of the system and the growth in the number of new paths, is becoming increasingly difficult.

**5a. What we want to do:** We want to continue to be a prime provider of information on LDPs. We have begun a review of how the provision can be provided differently without compromising the service offer.

#### **How can we do it?**

There are two stages to this:

- 1) As part of the website review some initial improvements are being investigated:

*Lead Officers:* Internet Officer, LDP Officer.

- 2) A major review of the provision is currently under way.

*Lead Officers:* LDP Officer, Treasurer, General Secretary.

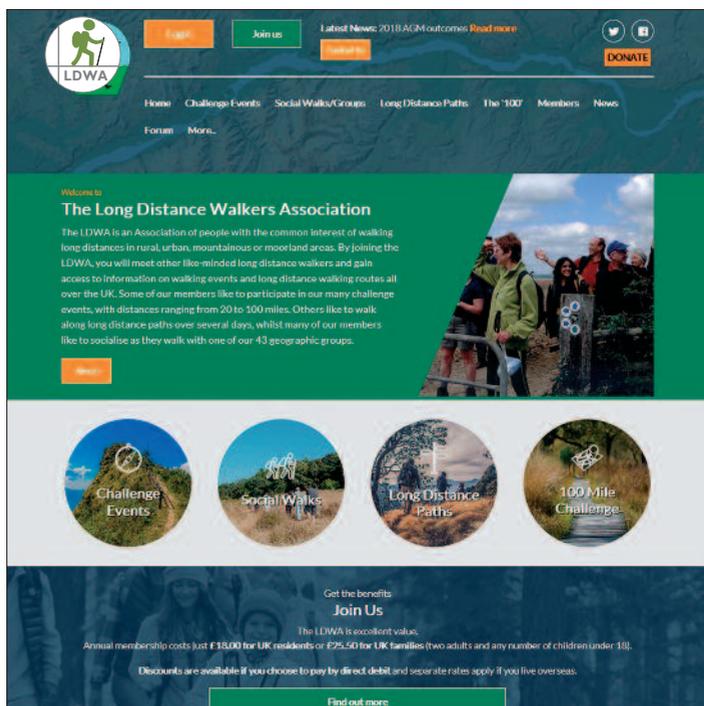
**Progress update:** There has been some work done to look at what the LDP provision should be. This will be developed further to feed into the new website design.

Part of the Nidderdale Way. ▼



# Financial implications

The work that has been completed to date has mostly been incorporated within general management of the LDWA. A budget of £3,000 for adverts was agreed for 2018-19 financial year and this has been spent. In 2019-20 the budget will be £6,000. £2172 was spent on the new logo designs, and there has been a small amount of additional expenditure in incorporating the new logo into the website, merchandise and other material. The major expense to follow will be the website. A separate document has been produced outlining the need for the new website, with options about how the funds could be raised. There will also be costs associated with some of the Project 50 ideas which will be considered as part of the project. This is a major milestone for the LDWA and, while all the activities should fit in with the overall aim of the Business Plan, it will in itself be a source of a lot of publicity and interest from outside the organisation.



The LDWA needs a new website, and this is likely to have significant costs.



## Weekend activities

### During most of the weekend

**'Freecycle'**: bring your old maps, books, bits of gear etc., for sale, raising money for charity. Pay as much as you want for those treasures given by someone else.

**Merchandise**: open over the weekend.

### Friday evening

#### Workshop A: Project 50

Julie Cribb, Local Groups' Secretary, will lead a discussion on Project 50- a selection of activities to celebrate the LDWA's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2022. She has been collating lots of ideas from members. The workshop will look at how local groups can get involved.

#### Workshop B: Current issues for the LDWA

A chance to discuss issues of national importance and to hear from Julia Warman, Membership Secretary. She will discuss the large workload involved in managing membership, and seek ideas about how to streamline it-or at least, how we might tackle some of the most common time-consuming problems.

#### Workshop C: Operation Owl

Sergeant Stuart Grainger of the North Yorks Rural Crimes Unit will speak about 'Operation Owl'. This multi-agency initiative led by North Yorkshire Police is designed to raise awareness of illegal raptor persecution across the county, especially in the Yorkshire Dales National Park, North York Moors National Park and the Nidderdale AONB. It has now expanded into a national campaign coordinated by Sgt Grainger. Stuart is encouraging non police organisations to get involved, especially groups who get out into the countryside regularly.

The workshops will be timed so that it will be possible to attend more than one.  
Details at registration.

#### Quiz

Led by Steve and Pearl Smith

## Saturday

### Choice of 3 walks of varying lengths

**Walk A:** Beacon Banks. 24 miles. Led by North Yorks LDWA. Leaving 8.00 a.m.

North into Easingwold, then to Husthwaite, Angram Grange, Walden Grange, and Kilburn. Then to Byland Abbey, Coxwold, Beacon Banks, Oulston, and return to hotel via Easingwold. Packed lunch needed.

**Walk B** Beacon Banks 18 miles. Led by The Irregulars. Leaving 8.30 a.m.

North into Easingwold then to Husthwaite (6miles), with extensive views of the Kilburn White Horse ridge. After a morning coffee stop (from a pub or your own flasks on the green), we continue East to Oulston (9miles) via Beacon Banks. Here we pick up the Foss Walk to Crayke (12 miles) for a lunch stop at the Inn (purchased light snacks) or overlooking the Castle (packed lunches required). From here we return to Easingwold and the Hotel. A mixture of field edges, footpaths, green lanes & quiet country roads with roughly 1000' of ascent.

**Walk C** Beacon Banks 14 miles. Led by The Irregulars. Leaving 9.00 a.m.

North into Easingwold then onto Husthwaite (6miles), with extensive views of the Kilburn White Horse ridge. After a morning coffee stop (from a pub or your own flasks on the green), East to Oulston (9mile) via Beacon Banks. Lunch stop on the village green (packed lunches required), then onto the Foss Walk, returning South. A mixture of field edges, footpaths, green lanes & quiet country roads with roughly 800' of ascent.

### Coach outing

Led by Caroline Wandless, N Yorks LDWA, to see some of the magnificent sights of York.

### Evening after dinner talk

Colin Utting, Dorset LDWA, will speak about the process of managing personal change in the switch from nuclear engineering to mountain leadership and mentoring young people.