

**LONG DISTANCE WALKERS ASSOCIATION DORSET GROUP  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2020 (ONLINE) - MINUTES (draft)**

Sunday 8 November 2020

**Members present:**

Phil Bardswell, Kathy Bingham, Anne Brown, Ian Brown, Richard Brown, Sandra Brown, Martin Callow, Mike Childs, Rachel Christopher, Pat Clifton, Patricia Dashwood, Deirdre Flegg, Heather N Giles, Richard Lang, Tracey Lang, Alan Mattison, Debbie Murphy, Chris Pitt, John Ponsford, Robert Powell, Ted Tupling, Colin Utting, Jan Williams

**1. CHAIR'S WELCOME**

Chris Pitt welcomed everyone to the 2020 AGM of Dorset LDWA Group and thanked them for joining via Zoom. He explained how the meeting would run and how the votes would be taken.

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Sue Ponsford

**3. AGM 2019 - APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion: To approve the minutes for the AGM 2019  
Proposed: Deirdre Flegg; Seconded: John Ponsford

The minutes were approved unanimously.

**4. AGM 2019 - MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising from the AGM 2019, other than those already on the agenda for this meeting.

**5. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE**

The agenda listed the following nominations, for officers and ordinary members of the committee, which had been received by the deadline of 11 Oct 2020:

Officers:

- Chair - none received
- Group Secretary - Pat Clifton (Proposed: Anne Brown; Seconded: Robert Powell)
- Treasurer - Robert Powell (Proposed: Chris Pitt; Seconded: Pat Clifton)
- Walks Secretary - Anne Brown (Proposed: Ian Brown; Seconded: Martin Callow)
- Events Secretary - Richard Lang (Proposed: Martin Callow; Seconded: Pat Clifton)

**Other Committee Members:**

- Martin Callow (Proposed: Patricia Dashwood; Seconded: Keith Nicholson)
- Ian Brown (Proposed: Martin Callow; Seconded: Robert Powell)

No other nominations were received by the deadline.

Chris Pitt said that he had been chair of the group for 4 years and in line with our constitution he should be leaving that position. He said there should be a turnover of officers for the good of the group and that next year the office of treasurer would be available and that of secretary in 2 years' time. As no one else had come forward to chair the group, Chris said he was willing to stand for another year, so the following nomination was made:

Chair - Chris Pitt (Proposed: Pat Clifton; Seconded: Martin Callow)

A vote was taken to indicate those in favour and the result was unanimous.

Martin Callow said that it was great Chris Pitt was willing to stay for another year but he felt the group is just delaying the problem. He pointed out this difficulty is going to arise for all the committee members, who can't remain in post forever. He emphasised that we need new people to come forward to join the committee.

Chris Pitt then proposed that the AGM could vote en bloc for the other nominations listed above. There was no objection to this, and the subsequent vote to approve the appointments of the nominated committee officers and other members of the committee was unanimous.

## **6. REPORTS FROM OFFICERS**

- **Group Secretary (Pat Clifton)**

Pat Clifton gave the following information on the group membership:

The Dorset Group currently has 247 primary members, which is the same number as last year, but not all the same individuals. The group also has 441 associate members, making a total of 688, 7 fewer than last year. Since the last AGM, on 1 Dec 2019, 47 primary members and 102 associates had joined the group, therefore similar numbers must also have left.

Since the change in policy regarding the Dorset Group Email List all new primary members have been added to this list and none have opted out, despite being given opportunity to do so via the email which is sent to welcome them to the group. There are now 131 members on this email list, which is used to update them with changes or additional information regarding walks.

Pat Clifton continued with the following information about the committee meetings:

Since the last AGM there has been one committee meeting held in person, on 9 Jan 2020, and 5 online meetings, spread throughout the year.

According to our constitution, all primary members can attend committee meetings as an observer and may speak at the committee's invitation. This also applies to online meetings. Anyone wishing to do so should let the committee know in advance, so they can be sent a link to the meeting.

Pat went on to say that group members would be aware from her emails that the committee is short of members, with presently 3 vacancies. She appealed for any member to let the committee know if they could think of joining them.

Deirdre Flegg thanked Pat for being Group Secretary.

Phil Bardswell asked who the associate members were and whether they lived locally. Pat said she did not know, as she hadn't looked at their addresses. Chris Pitt thought they are from all over the country.

Pat and Chris explained that the Dorset Group Email List is different from the Primary Members Email List because we have many primary members not interested in coming on social walks. Therefore, an opt-in list had been created for those interested in receiving the information about walks. Colin Utting suggested an email could be sent to all primary members asking if they wish to be on the Dorset Group Email List and Pat agreed to do this.

Action: Pat Clifton

- **Events Secretary (Chris Pitt)**

Chris Pitt explained that both the challenge events planned for 2020 had to be cancelled due to the Covid 19 pandemic and that the committee had already cancelled the Cerne Giant in 2021, due to similar safety issues. He said this was being replaced by an 'Anytime Challenge' event.

Chris continued that group and challenge walks were being discussed nationally and that there was a detailed document being prepared with regard to the running of challenge events. He gave a few examples of the recommendations it will contain, when published. With regard to the 100 he said there is still much uncertainty as to whether, and in what form it, will go ahead.

- **Walks Secretary (Anne Brown)**

Anne Brown gave a short PowerPoint presentation containing the following information:

Last winter social walks continued as previously with varied weather conditions and some big groups. Between December 2019 and March 2020 there were 18 social walks, covering 275 miles. There was also a New Year's Day party, hosted by Deirdre Flegg, with excellent food and company.

Then in March everything changed with the introduction of rules and recommendations to reduce the spread of Covid 19. For several months members could only walk alone or with members of their domestic 'bubble', or meet up outside for socially distanced picnics. A small group completed the 32 mile St Edward's Way in one day, walking from Wareham to Shaftesbury. It is hoped that other group members will be able to do this, as two linear walks, sometime next year.

In June social walks were allowed to resume, initially with no more than 6 participants and later with a maximum of 30, provided a risk assessment was completed of for each walk and social distancing was maintained. From June to November there were 22 walks covering 330 miles, making a total of 40 walks and 604 miles for the year.

In September, after much reorganisation, a small group of members went with Colin Utting to North Wales for a group holiday, walking and scrambling. It is hoped that this will be repeated next year.

Anne included a slide naming the members who had lead one or more walks during the year, some of them for the first time. Anne then went on to say that it is amazing what has been achieved over the year and this is down to the walk leaders. She thanked them for their support and said members should continue to plan walks for after this current period of lockdown. She said there had been a number of requests for more walks in the west of Dorset.

Anne said she will be standing down from being Walks Secretary at the next AGM and Chris Pitt thanked her for all the work she has put in this year, with all the difficulties and changes caused by the pandemic.

Colin Utting confirmed that the accommodation for next year's trip to Wales had already been booked and Jan Williams thanked him again for this year's excellent holiday.

- **Treasurer (Robert Powell)**

Robert Powell said his task is to report on the accounts for the year ended 30 September 2020. In addition, he will report on the outturn for the two cancelled challenge events that the group was due to hold in the financial year and update the membership on the financial implications of the motions approved by the AGM in 2017.

Robert thanked to Colin Utting for his inspection of this year's annual accounts and for confirming that they are a true and accurate record of our financial dealings. He said that the matter of the examiner of the accounts for the current year will be discussed under item 8 on the agenda.

The accounts show that group funds decreased by £750 in the year, to leave a balance of £10,418.

Robert showed on screen a spreadsheet of the accounts for the year and continued with the following information:

When the Cerne Giant and Dorset Duddle challenge events were cancelled, entrants were given the opportunity to either have a full refund, which the group was compelled to offer, or to make a donation, once incurred group costs had been defrayed, to the Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance in respect of the Cerne Giant and LDWA IT Development Fund in respect of the Dorset Duddle. As a result, £591.46 was donated to the Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance, and £574.60 was donated to the LDWA IT Development Fund. This means neither event resulted in a deficit nor surplus and therefore the group funds were unaffected.

Payment of £60 for the hire of the hall at Buckland Newton for the Cerne Giant main event wasn't refunded. This was going to be used for the event in 2021, but post year-end that event has been cancelled and a refund is being sought.

Similarly, payment of £94 for the hire of the hall at Swanage for the Duddle headquarters wasn't refunded but instead will be used for the hall hire for the event next year.

The group received £70 from Ramblers Holidays as a result of members mentioning the group when booking their holiday. Robert thanked to those who did that.

The treasurer's report continued as follows:

The group effectively adopted a strategy three years ago, at the 2017 AGM, to reduce the funding held by the group in a controlled manner over a number of years. The motions passed at that time each had a direct financial implication and the committee was tasked with reporting back to the membership on these motions. Robert said that he was doing this here in respect of any expenditure during this financial year and that later, on the agenda, there are proposed motions reflecting what follows for the years going forward.

*a) The purchase of a sail banner at an approximate cost of £160.*

It is intended to purchase this, should approval be given under item 13 on the agenda for a new group logo.

*b) Grant of a per capita subsidy towards breakfast for participants in a summer or winter solstice walk, subject to a maximum of £150 per solstice event.*

£95.34 was spent on the 2019 winter solstice. The 2020 summer solstice event did not take place.

*c) Grant of a provision of £3,000 to reimburse all reasonable out of pocket costs (excluding time) incurred in supporting group challenge or challenge marshal events. Allowable costs shall include travel to determine if premises are appropriate for a group challenge walk or for the purpose of writing and checking the route for a challenge walk. Expenditure shall be monitored by the committee and the committee shall review the scheme as these funds become exhausted, or at any other time at its discretion.*

Expenditure of £61.16 was incurred in the year ended 30 September 2020 despite both our events being cancelled, this was in respect of route and hall checking

prior to the Cerne Giant. The cumulative total spent in respect of the past three financial years was £1,065.40.

The net amount of expenditure, in respect of all the motions approved three years ago to reduce group funding, was £3,605.28.

Robert asked if there were any questions and there were none. He then mentioned that, in accordance with the constitution, the coming year would be his fourth and final year as treasurer. He said the group accounts and the associated electronic and paper records are in very good order and that anyone interested in taking over in a year's time should get in touch with him, so that a thorough handover could be given. Robert went on to say that a financial qualification is not needed, just an ability to use a simple Excel spreadsheet and pay attention to detail.

Colin Utting then made a short statement regarding the auditing of the accounts for the year ended 30 Sept 2020. He said they were in very good order, although confusing due to the cancellation of challenge events, which had led to some discrepancies between event and general expense summary totals. He invited anyone wishing to see the auditor's statement to ask for a copy.

## **7. ADOPTION OF ACCOUNTS**

Motion: To adopt the accounts for the year ended 30 September 2020.

Proposed: Phil Bardswell; Seconded: Anne Brown

The motion was carried unanimously.

## **8. APPOINTMENT OF THE EXAMINER OF THE ACCOUNTS**

Colin Utting said that he had asked at last year's AGM for someone to take over the auditing of the accounts. Sue Phillips had agreed to do this, provided she could shadow Colin when he audited this year's accounts. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic and the need for social distancing, she had been unable to do this. Therefore Colin has agreed to audit the accounts for the year ending 30 Sept 2021, with Sue to shadow, so she can then take over the following year.

Motion: Colin Utting to be appointed auditor of the accounts for the year ending 30 Sept 2021.

Proposed: Deirdre Flegg; Seconded: Richard Lang

The motion was carried unanimously.

## 9. MOTIONS

Robert Powell explained that a number of the motions passed at the AGM 2017, three years ago, require updating. To do this he has submitted motions 1 to 5, listed on the agenda. He then went through these motions as follows:

**Motion 1:** To grant approval for a per capita subsidy towards breakfast for group members on a summer or winter solstice walk, subject to a maximum of £100 per solstice event.

Proposed - Robert Powell  
Seconded - Pat Clifton

Robert said the decision to propose a reduced limit of £100 had been taken because of the amounts claimed on previous occasions. Richard Brown queried whether matters of this detail needed to be raised at the AGM or whether it would be better for the committee to decide them. Robert said that there is a fine line between the powers of the committee and what needs authorisation at the AGM and that in raising the motions we were erring on the side of caution. Some discussion of this followed, which concluded with Chris Pitt saying he understood the points being made but that he was happy to keep the motion as listed for now.

The motion was passed unanimously.

**Motion 2:** To grant approval to subsidise a summer barbecue, subject to a maximum of £150 per annum.

Proposed - Robert Powell  
Seconded - Ian Brown

The motion was passed unanimously.

**Motion 3:** To grant approval of a provision of £500 per annum to contribute to members' reasonable out of pocket costs (excluding time) incurred in supporting Dorset Group challenge or challenge marshal events. Allowable costs shall include travel to determine if premises are appropriate for a challenge walk, or for the purpose of writing and checking the route for a challenge walk. Expenditure shall be monitored by the committee and the committee shall review the scheme as these funds become exhausted, or at any other time at its discretion.

Proposed - Robert Powell  
Seconded - Martin Callow

Robert Powell said that this had been in effect for 3 years and had worked very well, allowing for appropriate expenses to be paid. There were no other comments or questions.

The motion was passed unanimously.

**Motion 4:** To grant approval of a provision of £800 per annum to reimburse members' reasonable expenses when supporting checkpoints on events not organised by the Dorset Group. Events qualifying for reimbursement shall be pre-approved by the committee. The contribution from Dorset Group funds shall have regard to any donation received from another group. Expenditure shall be monitored by the committee and the committee shall review the scheme as these funds become exhausted, or at any other time at its discretion.

Proposed - Robert Powell  
Seconded - Martin Callow

Robert said that all LDWA events supported by Dorset group members in the past had given donations to the group, but these were not enough to cover the expenses incurred. He said it is important to continue to support other groups with challenge events and that it was reasonable to reimburse the expenses, mainly for travel, of those doing so. Mike Childs asked for clarification whether only LDWA events are included in this. As an example he said that he and Deirdre Flegg had helped on the Spine Race, which is not a LDWA event. Robert replied that the motion does not specify LDWA events and therefore other events could be covered, if pre-approved by the committee.

The motion was passed unanimously.

**Motion 5:** That the Treasurer report annually on the above items to the AGM through the group accounts.

Proposed - Robert Powell  
Seconded - Martin Callow

The motion was passed unanimously.

The AGM then turned to the other two motion on the agenda:

**Motion 6:** To grant approval to rename the 2021 Dorset Duddle 'The Bill Peach Dorset Duddle' and gift the event surplus to Bill's nominated cancer charity, Cancer Research UK. Should the event fail to make a surplus of at least £500, or should the event be cancelled, the group will make up the shortfall from group funds.

Proposed - Anne Brown  
Seconded - Chris Pitt



Anne Brown said that it was important to recognise how much Bill Peach did for the group, particularly with the organisation of the Doddle. Chris Pitt agreed, saying that Bill was very generous with his time and it would be great to mark this. Deirdre Flegg said that she had discussed the idea with Sue Peach and that she was very happy with it.

The motion was passed unanimously.

**Motion 7:** To grant approval to remove the current levy charged to non-LDWA members who enter Dorset Group challenge events (equivalent to half of the annual membership fee) and replace it with a flat £10 charge on top of the members' entry fee. After each event and subject to the approval of the committee, £5 of each non-member's entry fee would then be donated to the National IT Development Fund.

Proposed - Chris Pitt  
Seconded - Martin Callow

Chris Pitt said that the IT fund had been discussed extensively at the last AGM and that most groups were making donations from funds raised by their challenge events. He said he would like the Dorset group to make donations in this way. There were no other comments or questions.

The motion was passed unanimously.

## 10. FORTHCOMING CHALLENGE EVENTS

- Cerne Giant Anytime Challenge 1 Mar - 5 Apr 2021

Martin Callow said that when the committee cancelled the Cerne Giant 2021 they decided to make it an 'Anytime Challenge' for the period 1 Mar - 5 Apr 2021, in order to include the Easter weekend. The route description will only be available to those entering the event through SI Entries and there will be no checkpoints or marshals. The entrance fee will be £3 and entrants will be able to submit their time results, to be entered on a list so they can compare how they do with others. He said that a similar event had already been run by the Norfolk and Suffolk Group with over 100 participants. With regard to publicity, Martin said he will be writing a short article for Strider about this event and that otherwise there was not a lot to do with regard to preparation, apart from checking the route for changes on the ground.

Colin Utting asked if useful information, such as where water and refreshments might be obtained, could be added to the route description. Martin agreed this is possible and highlighted that Anne Brown had already negotiated some discounts with local businesses, the details of which will be

supplied to entrants. Richard Brown asked if the £10 supplement for non-members, agreed in motion 7, will be charged and Martin said it will not. There followed some discussion regarding the merits of opening the event to non-members and the possible difficulties this might cause. It was agreed to make the event for LDWA members only, who will need to apply through SI Entries and confirm their membership when doing so.

- Dorset Duddle - 22 Aug 2021

Chris Pitt expressed some doubt as to whether the Duddle will go ahead and said that opening the event to entrants has been postponed until at least 1 Apr 2021. The committee will need to review the event nearer the time.

## 11. SOCIAL WALKS PROGRAMME

Anne Brown said it is difficult to see what will happen after the current lockdown and that it is probable we will be sticking with the system of booking places with the walk leaders. Walks will be for up to 6, or more if the risk assessment is completed. She said this is quite simple to do. Anne appealed for leaders to continue planning walks and said that with the small number of participants allowed on many walks, it would be good to have at least two options on most Sundays. Pat Clifton asked if leaders should be setting dates for their walks and Anne replied that, it is not practical to do so at this stage. Colin Utting expressed an interest in planning a solstice walk. There followed some discussion, instigated by Jan Williams, regarding members booking a place on a walk and then not turning up on the day, without letting the leader know. It was generally agreed that this is unacceptable and if an individual does this repeatedly the committee would have to decide whether they should be excluded from booking in future. Anne said she would remind members to let the walk leader know, as soon as possible, if they can't make it for their walk.

Action: Anne Brown

## 12. GROUP SUPPORT FOR EVENTS BEING RUN BY OTHER GROUPS IN 2021

The Wellington Boot 17-18 Apr 2021

The Sir Fynwy 100 29-31 May 2021

Chris Pitt said we have agreed to help on the two events above, but due to uncertainty as to whether they will take place, this is only 'pencilled in' at present. He said the committee will be asking for support from members, if the events are confirmed.

## 13. THE NEW DORSET GROUP LOGO

Chris Pitt showed the 5 options (A to E) that the membership had been asked to vote for and said there had been a clear winner - option C. Of the 41 members who voted, 69% chose this design as their first or second choice. All designs are

available for members to see on Dropbox, with a link supplied in the bulk email dated 7 Oct 2020.

#### **14. RECOGNITION OF CONTRIBUTIONS AND ACHIEVEMENTS**

Anne Brown revealed that John Widdowson (and of course, Daisy) had led the most walks this year, making him Walk Leader of the Year. John will receive an enamel mug bearing the new group logo.

Anne then went on to say that the Dorset group have another member to congratulate, as Heather Giles has won the Membership Card Photograph Competition, with a picture she took on near Spetisbury.

Robert Powell thanked Colin Utting for auditing the group accounts once again and Colin expressed his thanks for the wine he had been presented with and went on to say that he thought the committee's contribution to the group should be recognised. There followed a short discussion, with no clear conclusion.

#### **15. DATES OF 2021 COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND AGM**

Chris Pitt stated that only the date of the next committee meeting had been decided so far. This is planned for 3 Dec 2020.

#### **16. AOB**

Rachel Christopher asked who had designed the new Dorset Group logo and Chris Pitt said that the designer has chosen to remain anonymous.

Chris Pitt then asked each member present if they wished to say anything and the responses were as follows:

- Richard Brown thanked Chris Pitt for steering us all through the AGM.
- John Ponsford thanked Deirdre Flegg for the inventory of all the group equipment she holds and appealed to other members to have a look for any items they might be storing and to let him know.
- Pat Clifton asked for anyone who finds they have one of the group first aid kits at home to let her know.