

Long Distance Walkers Association

ESSEX & HERTS GROUP



NEWSLETTER No. 136 October 2020

www.ldwa.org.uk/essexandherts
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Front cover: Jill and Jim enjoying ice creams on the Isle of Wight

Chair's update

Well.... that's the summer gone, and what a strange summer it's been for us all. As we head into autumn and the mud gets ready to suck at our boots, it's a good time to reflect on how we've all managed to keep going and keep in touch as a group.

Walks Day was well attended (virtually) and the updates from group members on the Facebook page inspires me to don my boots and get back out. I have to admit I've mainly been running or going to the gym (apart from the dog walks) but I'm going to start exploring some new tracks in my area.

Autumn is a lovely time to walk, and there are still opportunities to walk (in small groups) with us, or to appeal to other members for walking company and routes if you'd like to get started. Don't be afraid to reach out to the network we have here.

I think we've all missed the challenge events, and who knows when they'll be up and running again, but there are virtual challenges held by other LDWA groups and clubs if you need some motivation. There's also examples of members taking on some long distance paths as a personal challenge. Thanks for sharing the photos!

So... as we face an autumn and winter of this 'new normal', I wish you all well. Keep safe and keep walking!

Deb

Annual General Meeting

Our next AGM is due to be held on Saturday 6th February 2021 at Hatfield Broad Oak Village Hall. However, if we are unable to go ahead with this meeting as planned due to Covid-19 restrictions, we will endeavour to hold an on-line meeting instead. Details will be confirmed in our January monthly update and on our website.

It's always good to have some new faces on our committee: if you are interested in joining the committee please get in touch with Deb or Jackie

On Garry's Monk Street Meander after social walks restarted in August



Walk Secretary's Report: June – October 2020

Mmm. What can I put in my report for the past four months? Not much was my first thought! But that is actually not true – Essex & Herts LDWA members have been rather busy despite Lockdown and the restrictions imposed due to Covid 19.

All group/social walks were cancelled at the beginning of the crisis, but since then we have slowly returned to something approaching a new 'normal'.

July saw the One & Only (hopefully) Virtual E&H Walks Day where members set out with one or two others – or even just by themselves – to complete a walk, eat some cake and share their photos on Facebook and What's App.



Gill & Steve's Walks Day birthday cake

After the go-ahead to begin limited walks was given by the LDWA National Executive Committee, we tentatively put on four social walks with restricted numbers during August. These proved successful and we have followed on with two walks in September, two walks in October and another two planned for November.



Tea break at Stock on Gill & Rob's 'Back to the beginning' social walk

Due to hard work by the NEC, our group walks are now classified as 'official organised outdoor activities', and provided a simple risk assessment is completed, up to 30 people are permitted on a social/group walk. We realise that this is probably far too many for most people to feel comfortable with, so walk leaders can set their own limits and if less than six in total a risk assessment is not compulsory (although recommended). Invitations for the walks are sent by email to E&H primary members and after giving them time to respond, if there are still spaces, it is opened up to associate members or members of other groups. All those who have volunteered to lead walks deserve a big, big thank you.

A number of our members have joined together informally with partners and friends to form small, 'bubbles' of fewer than 6 walkers who have enjoyed walks in both Essex, Herts and further afield, as demonstrated by lots of fantastic photos on Facebook. These of course are not classified as LDWA walks, but it is hoped that as members grow more confident they will open up these walks to a few others and make them 'official' walks.

Peter & Mike social distancing by a redundant gate on an E&H 'bubble' walk



So, looking forward, it will soon be Christmas. In previous years we have greatly enjoyed many Secret Santa celebrations organised by Mick Dodge (and assisted by friends) at The Shed near Henham. However, The Shed is rather 'cosy' and not suited to social distancing, so this year we are planning something different. We want to get as many E&H members as possible out walking on the same day and maybe even wearing their Santa hats. To achieve this we need as many walk leaders as we can muster, putting on walks all over Essex and Herts, so that everyone can find a walk they would like to join. Experienced walk leaders, first time walk leaders, and friends in 'bubble' groups can all help to bring more of our members together to participate in a (socially distanced) celebration.

Further details will follow, but whether you would like to lead a walk or would like to join in with a walk make a note of this date: SUNDAY 13th DECEMBER and keep it free for our special Secret Santa.

Rita Williams (Walks Secretary)

Email: essexandherts.walks@ldwa.org.uk



Rita, Georgie & Peter socially distancing with the Gilston Bear

Dogs

Recently in our village we had a case of vandalism on a stile that has been in place for over ten years. Somebody had taken a saw and neatly cut away part of the bottom rail to allow passage for a dog. We also found that the wire fence adjoining the next three stiles had been cut, presumably for the same reason. I am sure that most of us have our views on the subject of dogs on footpaths but delving into the legal position came up with the following information from The Ramblers that I thought you might find interesting.

“Since dogs have been taken on highways since time immemorial, it’s generally assumed that they can be considered a ‘natural accompaniment’ (a term used in a 19th century court case to describe things which might normally be taken by a walker) and that therefore dogs can be taken on public rights of way.

Despite the fact that a dog is a ‘natural accompaniment’ to users of rights of way, the law doesn’t require stiles to be ‘dog friendly’ as it’s the dog’s keeper who has the right of passage, not the dog. Stiles with ‘dog latches’ can however be provided and can often be seen in popular dog-walking areas.

*There’s no law which says that a dog must be kept on a lead when using a public right of way, but local authorities can make orders under Section 27 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 to make it a requirement on specific paths. Like its owner, a dog should remain on the line of the path – an act of **trespass** may be committed against the landowner if it wanders away from the official route.*

Walkers with dogs should take particular care when crossing fields where animals are being grazed. Section 1 of the Dogs (Protection of Livestock) Act 1953 makes it an offence for a dog to be at large, ‘that is to say not on a lead or otherwise under close control’, in a field or enclosure containing sheep.

It’s also an offence for dogs to attack or chase livestock and farmers are allowed to shoot dogs that are worrying, or are about to worry, farm animals. This is set out in Section 9 of the Animals Act 1971, which also states that the farmer isn’t liable to compensate the dog’s owner in such circumstances.”

Essex Highways website states *“Dogs under close control are allowed on all PRow’s but only along the line of the path and not on the private land to the sides. We advise that dogs are kept on a lead especially near livestock and other users. Dogs of any size or nature can be very intimidating to some people and particularly to livestock with young.*

Also please remember to clear up after your dog everywhere you go including out in the countryside.”

Of course, the main problem is that while most dog owners might be responsible there is a significant number who do not know the legislation and don’t care anyway but for more information the full Ramblers document can be found online at,

<https://www.ramblers.org.uk/advice/paths-in-england-and-wales/enjoying-the-countryside/animals-and-rights-of-way.aspx#dogs>

Brian Martin

My first LDWA walk by Judy Nickerson. (Judy Wheeldon in those days)

My first LDWA was not with Essex and Herts but with BBN. It was in January 1997. The walk was led by Peter Bearne from a lay-by near the Northamptonshire/Rutland border not far from the village of Collyweston. We soon crossed the border and headed into Rutland in the direction of Rutland Water.

I went armed with the OS map 1:50000 as I was terrified I would be left behind. At least with the map I could find my way back to the car – no GPS in those days. My map reading skills were rather limited, so this was probably wishful thinking.

However, the map was not needed as I managed to keep up. I can't remember much about the walk. John Nickerson was on the walk and had just returned from working in the USA. He was entertaining everybody with his life there and returning for the weekend to do the 1996 100!



Judy & John at the Heart of Scotland 100

I can't remember who else was on the walk, I think a sheep was rescued that had got caught in a barbed wire fence. My most memorable moment was stumbling down off a stile and landing in a bramble bush. John Nickerson pulled me out. We were married 13 years later!!

You asked for news of walking activities over the lockdown. I have been supporting a friend who has balance problems (due to Ataxia) and bad arthritis. She has needed someone walking with her every evening at a 2 metre distance in order to remain safe. We decided to add to the fun by joining in the 2.6 challenge. This was a fundraiser to partially replace money lost by the cancellation of the marathon.

We walked a whole marathon 2.6 miles per day. We wrote up a blog. This starts with a description of the section of the marathon course we would have been walking followed by a description of where we walked. We included pictures of Hackney landmarks which we felt corresponded with the main landmarks on the marathon course. Thus it was that the Lea Bridge was identified as the sister bridge to Tower Bridge.

This is the blog:

<https://mylockdownmarathon.wordpress.com/2020/05/24/epilogue/?fbclid=IwAR2tdJ8MFg8ois3gm8ILblYeX6-IFOB9ipQnRnteZGERiTFCbBhrY4mCxxw>

Minna Graeber

Zoomba



In these strange times whilst stranded indoors, we thought you might like to hear of a new group, the Long Distance Talkers Association. The members are from Tring, Cambridge, Hemel Hempstead, France and Framlingham. They claim also to be seasoned members of something called the LDWA.

We have been meeting, virtually, every week during lockdown. We have, of course, established some important ground rules to ensure the health and sanity of all participants, reflected in the joining instructions and route description below.

If there are any other members of your association who have similar interests, we would be delighted to hear from them.

John Manning (LDWA 27518)

1st LDTA Challenge Talk

Joining Instructions

Welcome to the inaugural event of the newly-formed Long Distance Talkers Association. There are three routes - long distance, short distance and social distance.

Kit requirements - bring your own mug, preferably alcohol-filled; full body cover, none of those dodgy Hawaiian shorts below table level; tin cans and string in case internet breaks.

Route(r) description

L - Laugh **R** - roll your eyes

TL - turn lights on **TR** - turn radio off **TIO TIO** - turn it off and turn it on again

FR - fork out of mouth **FU** - feet up on table **FN** - furlough your nose

SIS - spouse in sight **CIS** - cat in sight **SHIS** - shelves in sight

NKGT - no-kissing gate **X** - cross room to refill mug with alcohol

WIFI - where is the ***** internet?

1. 0.00 mins Leave sofa and head to kitchen table. Turn on phone. Discover there is no signal. Turn on tablet. Discover it's out of battery. Turn on desktop. Continue relentlessly until connected to the internet.
2. 10.00 mins Arrive at internet connection. Check in to Zoomba video meeting. Discover you are the only one there. Make Amazon purchases. Play Candy Crush. Eat cake. Keep going until others join in.
3. 18.21 mins Zoomba meeting starts. Everyone agrees it's a challenge to get going. "Can you hear me" "You're on mute" "Turn your camera on" "These staggered starts are a nightmare!".
4. 18.22 mins Zoomba video freezes
5. 18.23 mins Retrace steps 1-2
6. 36.00 mins Zoomba meeting starts again
7. 40.00 mins Zoomba session terminates mid-conversation about relative frustrations of Fallonfacetime, Googlebox, Skypestheimit, Allroundthehouseparty.....

The (Virtual) TGO Challenge

Last year I took part in The Great Outdoors Challenge, a cross-Scotland backpacking event held every May for the last 40 years. I had a great time and as soon as I got back planned my 2020 entry. All that anticipation and then cancellation.

Thankfully the TGO Challenge organisers ran a virtual challenge on Facebook instead.

It didn't need to involve actual walking, though most of us did something most days. My first wild camp was due to be beside Loch Monar on Saturday 9th May, after a 16 mile walk possibly involving the Munro of Maoile Lunndaigh. Well, I did the 16 miles, on a nice circular from my home in Sheering via Hastingwood, Magdalen Laver and Matching; maybe not quite as much climbing, but I thought the 2,182 decimetres of ascent was pretty impressive!

All followed by an overnight pitch in my garden which was rather fun (even the bit when some creature came snuffling round at about 4am).

For posting every day, a combination of reminiscence from last year and the challenges of Essex walking, I can proudly display my certificate.

Peter Aylmer



Wallaby or muntjac?

A number of good walks start straight from my doorstep, but it is difficult to escape the distant roar of traffic. So, apart from a few favourite training circuits, I tend to venture further afield. That, of course, was not an option in the early stages of the Covid-19 lockdown when everyone was confined to home territory. At that time, deserted roads brought blissful tranquillity to the countryside but I nevertheless soon tired of my usual routes.

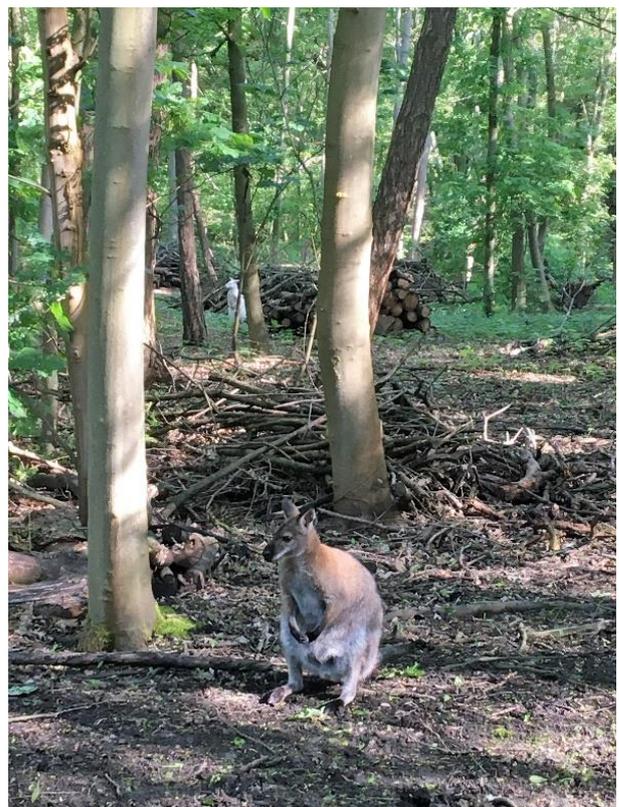
So, I started to explore paths ignored previously as they didn't lead anywhere I would normally want to go. I quickly enhanced my knowledge of the immediate vicinity, making unexpected discoveries like a recently established nature conservation area beside a solar farm, and a useful cycle track with its own motorway underpass. I was pleasantly surprised to find some delightful tracks that could be linked together to form new circular walks, thereby enlarging and enriching my local repertoire.

A dog walkers' track near the village of Essendon was familiar but, being a law-abiding citizen, I hadn't tried it previously as it obviously led into private woodland. My reticence disappeared when I spotted a sign indicating it was now a concessionary footpath. It descended into a deep hollow with a wooden bridge. Conveniently, this had a step at just the right height for sitting to enjoy the view with a thermos of tea. Next, a steep slope stretched up to an ugly chain fence. I followed this and was amazed to see a wallaby scratching around for food on the other side. Further along, a notice read 'United Nations Global Compact. 5 year wildlife and woodland restoration programme in progress' but it gave no additional explanation. The UNGC describes itself as the 'World's largest corporate sustainability initiative' but how keeping a few wallabies on a small patch of English woodland might promote this aim is unclear. Failing to find any on-line information specific to this locality, I sent an e-mail to a knowledgeable friend who lives in the village. 'What do you know about those wallabies near you?' I asked. He replied: 'I've never seen any wallabies around here, Dennis. I think you must have been looking at muntjac deer – they're about the same size.'

Have I stumbled upon Hertfordshire's best kept wildlife secret?

Dennis Jacobs

Wallaby or muntjac? You decide.



Five got to Suffolk East

As lovely as it is having direct access to open countryside, by June we were looking for something a little more adventurous than Hylands Park and the environs.

One evening, flicking through a booklet of walks from railway stations in East Suffolk, a plan emerged. How easy it should be to link a few together to form a couple of decent day walks accessed by train. After some discussion we settled on walking the main spine of the railway line from Brampton to Woodbridge with detours to Snape Maltings and Sutton Hoo if time allowed. The 'Infamous Five' were born – Ginny, Heidi, Gill, Rob and Steve.



Four of the five at Saxmundham Station (on an Essex & Herts photo shoot?)

Part 1 took place on 27th June when we met at Ingatestone station at 05.50 hrs to catch the early train to Brampton - a little nervous as this is a request stop. It stopped! We ate our 'packed breakfast' on the train (tricky wearing a mask) and were ready to walk at 08.20. It took us a while to get into our stride as we tackled some early challenges, not least of all reading instructions in reverse order from a publication several years old. So just like the weather, things started a bit damp but brightened up as the day progressed. It soon emerged that Ginny and Rob were the masters of route reading, so the rest of us fell reverently into step behind them, melting into the background during the occasional dispute over where to go next! Although the route touches every station along the way, most of the footpaths meander both east and west through beautiful countryside, riverbank walks, pig farms and picturesque Suffolk villages.

After a photo opportunity at Halesworth station we walked on to Bramfield where we ate our packed lunch in the churchyard next to the thatched church with its separate tower and nearby Crinkle Crankle wall. Passing through Darsham station (our virtual tea stop) we finally arrived at Saxmundham station some 22 miles later to catch the 16.50 train home.

Part 2 took place on 1st August with a sense of déjà vu as we congregated to catch the milk train up to Saxmundham to resume our adventure. It was hot even at that early hour and we had a lot of walking planned. From Saxmundham we decided to take the alternative route to Wickham Market via Snape Maltings, passing through rural countryside and woodland before approaching the site of Benjamin Britten's famous concert hall alongside the estuarine salt marshes.

What a difference a few weeks make as the coffee shops were open and a farmers' market was in full swing. Refreshed, we struck back inland towards Wickham Market station through agricultural land – potato and asparagus fields and paddocks of sheep and cattle. The station proved to be a hidden gem, so after eating our lunches in the park across the way, we stopped for ice creams in the station café garden- delicious! Our next stretch to Melton took us along the beautiful Deben Valley which we joined close to Ashe Abbey- and although it was well into the afternoon by the time we reached Melton, we decided the loop out to Sutton Hoo was a must do, Although little remains to be seen of the Anglo-Saxon burial mounds (and the Visitors' Centre was closed) the site is hugely significant in terms of our human history. As it was way past closing time we had it completely to ourselves.

Time waits for no man - and neither do trains! Back to Melton in record time for the final 1.5 miles of brisk walking along the riverbank to Woodbridge, stopping briefly to snap a few pictures of the barges and the picturesque Tidemill. We fell exhausted, hot, but happy into the 18.20 to Ipswich having completed an astonishingly pleasant 26.4 miles!



Gill, Ginny & Heidi and the Crinkle Crackle wall

East Suffolk Line Walks can be found by visiting eastsuffolklines.co.uk

Gill Struthers

Blackwater Marathon

On the 21st June, the five of us met at Heybridge school to walk the 2017 Blackwater Marathon. On a different day it would have been six, but Mick couldn't make it as it was Fathers' Day. With no cafes, shops, pubs etc open due to the virus, we obviously had to carry our grub and drink.

I had the 2017 route description and Richard had it highlighted on the OS map. What could go wrong. Answer nothing, it must have been luck.

The walk to Checkpoint 1 was rainified and windy and we all had waterproof tops on. The rain stopped early on, but the sea wall section was a bit breezy. However, the tops were off before Goldhanger, and we were in summer wear.

Seven miles into the walk we arrived at Goldhanger where we took advantage of the seating in the churchyard to have a 15 minutes stop.

The six "getting hotter by the minute" miles to Tollesbury were fields and roads. The fields were a little bit different from October when the marathon is held. The crops encroached onto field edges and indeed walking between fields on occasions was a battle. We arrived at Tollesbury Marina Clubhouse, although closed, it had tables/chairs outside. They were kindly utilised for our second 15-minute stop.

Leaving the marina, we had about two miles of sea wall walking, with the saltmarshes to our right catching the eye, before we headed inland. Our final stop, near Little Totham Hall, went via Tolleshunt D'Arcy and Little Totham. To get there we bypassed Frame Farm which was the actual checkpoint 3 in 2017. Must mention passing Sains Hall on our last leg.

I recorded 25.7 miles not 26.4 which the route description says it should be. Why, because we cheated. We couldn't see the point in walking 200 yds to Goldhanger VH and back to the church then later at CP2 walking 400yds to Tollesbury Activity Centre and back when there were no happy/friendly E&H marshals to welcome and feed us. So we saved 1200 yds.

Thank you Peter O'Donnell, Mike Wheatley, Richard Rose and last but certainly not least Kim Howard for your company.

Eddie Short



Hopping down to Kent

The White Cliffs of Dover walk we took on. Starting from the Dover marina and ferry port area we walked to Deal and beyond towards Sandwich before turning back. The walk took us across cliff tops, meadows, villages and beaches. The very sunny day made the wildness and ruggedness of the white cliffs look stunning. France was clearly visible - this on the day we were due to go to France for our summer holiday hiking in the alps before cancellation!... The route took us past South Foreland lighthouse, beautiful St.Margaret's bay, Kingsdown village, Walmer and Deal. We explored this very historical town, walked the pier and then partially along the sea wall towards Sandwich. To finish a delightful walk we had a drink in "The Norman Wisdom", a Wetherspoon pub named after the comedian who spent some of his early life there.



Liz & Steve and The White Cliffs

The Unofficial Essex Walker Challenge

I really wanted to walk the Essex Walker on 19th April but alas it didn't fit with my shift pattern at Ingatestone Station. Nevertheless, I volunteered to do some advertising for the event by displaying posters and flyers on the station notice boards and mentioned it to a few people I thought might be interested. In return, Gill kindly promised to walk me round the long route one day soon. Well, it turned out that the event sadly wasn't to be! However once meeting up and walking in twos was allowed, Gill kept her promise and we headed out to enjoy the challenge on the 24th May and it was a good deal drier than the day the marshals walked it I hear!

Well a lot had happened on the course since Gill and others had walked it a few months earlier, as fields and bushes change shape, develop and take over, including footpath signs!. The beautiful Norton Mandeville church area Gill did not mention before so as to not spoil my surprise when we arrived. What a delightful peaceful area. On route we hit a large newly mole - drained triffids field of oil seed rape !. So we looked at each other with the same expression on our faces!..Where do we go???.... Well we came across some posters from the farmer saying work was being done at the exact time we were there, so we realised what was going on and we criss-crossed this area and eventually got back on route.

Thankfully we finished the 28.6 mile route (30.0 miles with our detours) with time to spare from the allotted time of ten hours.

The demon duo enjoyed our unofficial challenge and really hope that in 2021 the event goes ahead. There are some lovely places to see and rest stops along the way at Highwood, Galleywood and Norton Mandeville'

Steve Wills

Stort Valley Way

Like so many people reading this newsletter, much of my walking activity is based around the LDWA - not just going on walks but planning them and doing the recces. How to fill the time when, as for so much of this year, the LDWA is not there?

The Stort Valley Way runs through my home village of Sheering and I've been aware for some time that it has no up-to-date guidebook. That's a tempting prospect for a guidebook writer - as many of you will know, I have the Cicerone guides to Essex and London under my belt. So with my wife Barbara I set about writing it up, with a view to self-publication. It's waymarked,



but erratically, and both the LDWA website and OS maps don't get the route quite right, according to the original leaflet - and in any case passage of time means that the odd route revision is called for. The Way is 30 miles long so for many reading this it's a good day out!

*Barbara on the Stort Valley Way,
Nazeingwood Common*

We've since turned our attention to the Forest Way and the Three Forests Way. The plan is to have the Stort Valley guidebook published in November and the others to follow soon after. I'll put details up on the Essex & Herts Facebook pages, amongst other places, when they are ready.

I've also had the opportunity to work with Mark Richards, author of the Fellranger series of guides to the Lake District, on his Rivercast series of podcasts. These centre on how water influences the landscape, a particularly rich feature of Essex, with its great estuaries and the boundary rivers of Lea, Stort and Stour. There was so much material for an Essex podcast that we ended up with two! Again, these should be out before Christmas, and I'll let my fellow walkers know how to access them.

Peter Aylmer



*On one of the hottest days of the summer
(over 30° for most of the day) Richard,
Maggie, Philippa, Carol, Georgie & Jackie
tackled the 30-mile Stort Valley Way.*

*John Burnett kindly provided us with this much
needed pop-up drinks stop near the A414
underpass in Harlow.*

First Essex Walker Revisited

One fine day during the Covid-19 lockdown I decided to go for a ride on my cycle. I popped over to see John Mountain to find out how he was and how he was coping with the present situation. Whilst chatting I asked if he had any old challenge route descriptions that Mick Lane and myself had walked out for him in the past and he said he would have a look - so leave it with him! I thanked him and moving the conversation on, asked how Anita Stamp was as I knew she had been quite poorly after having a couple of falls. He said they had seen each other (socially distanced) on the Promenade at Maldon and she was now on the mend. It was time to go so I thanked him and said how good it was to catch up after not seeing him for some time.

The following day, I found he had dropped off a couple of local (Maldon area) routes for me. Many thanks John and hopefully see you soon.

On Saturday 20th June, the longest day of 2020, Mick Lane, Gill Struthers and myself decided to re-walk the 'First Essex Walker Challenge' originally conceived by John and Anita back in 2007 and taking us some 14 miles through and around Maldon. The original route was a mile longer but we were unable to start from Langford Village Hall as it was also in lockdown! So we started out from the track leading to Maldon Golf Club instead.

From there the route took us via the River Chelmer to the Promenade Park, seeing the statue of Brythnoth who was Ealdorman of Essex and died in the year of 991 at the battle of Maldon.

From there we made our way along the sea wall, skirting around Maldon and onto the disused railway line on the west side of the town before heading in a northerly direction towards Woodham Walter.



Mick & Gill social distancing with Brythnoth

Using paths that we had not walked in many years we went on through the local countryside to join the Chelmer and Blackwater Canal just across the from the beautiful Ulting Church. After a slap-up meal consisting of an apple and bottle of water at Hoe Mill Lock, we continued along the towpath to picturesque Beeleigh Falls and the end of the walk.

I can't think of a finer way to spend a midsummer morning than revisiting a challenge walk from bygone days with a couple of mates from Essex & Herts LDWA.

Ginny Powell

The LDWA Virtual Challenges

It seems a long-time ago now since we were first in lockdown and could only leave our homes for limited reasons, including exercise once per day. Thankfully as restrictions were eased over the months we can now walk for longer distance and further afield.

To help motivate us to keep walking during this difficult period, the good folk that make up the LDWA NEC devised a series of virtual walking challenges with associated Facebook groups. Plenty of Essex and Herts members took up these challenges and the following quotes and pictures have been lifted from Facebook.

So thank you to Sarah, Matt, Dave, Veronica, Mike C, Mark, Bernard and Anjane (and anyone I have inadvertently missed from the list) - you may well recognise your comments and/or pictures here.

“Thank you so much for organising this. April for me had quite a few down spots, so this really got me motivated to get out there”

“Completed my 100 Challenge with a distanced walk of 20 miles round Mersea Island with my friend J! Hoorah! 😊”

“Completed Friday. Let the sheep sing!!! 🐑. Haven’t done a 100 since Chilterns 2005this was definitely much less painful 🤔 It’s been wonderful seeing all the photos, a great reminder of our superb countryside and wildlifeand that there are many who appreciate it. Well done everyone!!”

“Last miles needed had dappled sunshine through the woods, wafts of honeysuckle and roses, hot sunshine, the call of Lambs and nightingale.....not bad for mid-Essex!
(Also a welcome few minutes under the garden sprinkler at the end)”

“Lovely day out walking yesterday passing through the vineyards, a definite shame that we couldn’t do any tasting on the way through, a nice glass would have gone down a treat”

“Had 2 little friends out on our 3.7mile walk (Tinker Teddy the little rocket pocket and little Nick on his scooter...first time he heard a cuckoo and didn’t know what it was”

“Today I walked the 13 mile section of the Essex Way from Mistley to Harwich..it was a beautiful day and I was so pleased I was able to share the experience with my wife and our dog 🐶”

“The last 10 days in May has brought so much hope as so many people have been inspired by the virtual challenges. I have been walking locally as I am lucky to live in the Chiltern and the Ashridge Estate and sometimes, very early morning, where I work. The timing is up and down but I have been clocking the first hour distance. Hope the photos inspire you all, who are not feeling 100%, to try the outdoor. Keep walking [#LDWAcoronavirus100challenge](#)”

“I went out early (for me) but temp rose rapidly and to keep the sun off I used my timeworn home-made kepi first used on the 1992 Invicta 100. Salt encrusted, but breathable in the old-fashioned way....”

“Let the journey begin... yesterday...Manningtree Mountains, tough ascent of 150 feet!”

“Has been great to see so many photos through this challenge, well done to organisers and participants alike!!”



Y 100 Sir Letchworth.

During the early part of lock-downed May with the exercise restriction of one hour a day it was possible to partake in the challenge of The LDWA Coronavirus 100. Later with the one-hour limit lifted the Virtual Y 100 Sir Fynwy over the late bank holiday weekend created a further challenge.

I decided that I would attempt to add virtue to this virtual event by covering 100 real miles during the three days while the virtual event was running.

I didn't really fancy any unsupported overnight stages while also running my self-catering checkpoints.

Having made up a good supply of sandwiches I started at 09:00 on the Saturday morning, which would have been my start time for the real event, by logging on to the virtual online send-off then heading out to link up with the Stevenage Outer Orbital Path.

By using the STOOP I had a ready-made route for my first day target of 37.6 miles to reach a virtual Check Point 4. The Bryn.

After finding a convenient water trough at the six mile "water & light refreshment" stop it was onward to CP1 11.2 miles.



Here a seat by the pretty River Beane was spoilt only by a few refreshing minutes of horizontal hail but of course we had been promised that it would not rain.



CP 2 Foresters Oak at 17.6 miles came up appropriately in a forest, or a least a wood, Mardley Wood and a rather drafty construction of branches and twigs.



CP 3. Usk at 27.4 miles would be the important one under the care of Essex-Herts.

This turned out to be a field near St Ippolyts with only a few sheep in attendance.

I tried to enlist this little chap as a pack animal but without success.



To finish Day one a further 10 miles would bring me to The Bryn CP 4.

As I neared home I realised that the mileage might end up a bit short so I added some creative meandering towards the end. A rainbow without any rain was a nice bonus.



Day 1: 37.6 miles. 2,939ft ascent. 77,229 steps.

Kettle on, feet up.

Day two target. To reach CP10 Tredam at 70.9 miles.

Refreshed after a night's sleep in a comfy bed, fully breakfasted and resupplied I was off again. This time starting out on the Letchworth Greenway with I have to admit a rather hazy plan after that.

The CP5 mileage came at a rather uninspiring point so I delayed my snacking and moved Abergavenny a mile or so further on to the memorial garden at the former Fairfield mental hospital site.



Moving on from the virtual Abergavenny took me over the Herts border into Bedfordshire.

This spot seems to be a popular local picnic site near Arlesey but my next venue had to wait.



CP6 Cwmyoy 49.7 miles turned out to be a field corner.

Shortly after this and now halfway round I joined tracks familiar as part of the Herts Stroller event. With the day now becoming hotter the divining rod started searching for a water top up eventually located outside the village hall in Pirton. This became a stand in for CP7 at Llanthony. 54 miles.

Heading back towards Hitchin the Stroller route was abandoned in favour of the Hitchin Outer Orbital Path and a feeling of heading towards home for the day. Conveniently CP8 Longtown, 59.6 miles coincided with a seat in a play area on the edge of Hitchin.

Shortly after this it became tricky to distinguish between the HOOP the STOOP or the Greenway LOOP. But as it didn't really matter, I choose Willian Church to be CP9 Pandy. 65.2 miles.



The final leg for the day passed one of Letchworth's major landmarks. The first roundabout (or traffic gyratory system) in the UK dating from 1903.



With more forethought I could have just done more circuits of this to make up the mileage and avoided the later diversion through the industrial areas.

The day concluded at CP10. Tredam 70.9 miles.

Day 2. 33.3 miles. 2026 ft ascent. 70964 steps.

Last day and just less than 30 miles to go!

Back onto the Greenway reversing parts already trod to give a bit of variation.

CP11 Monmouth overlooked the previous days diversion through the Fairfield hospital site (now housing) 82.3 miles totalled.

CP12 Redbrook 85.7 miles had the potential to be the most luxurious checkpoint yet

This may have been a typo for CAR PARKING!



CP13. Trellech 90.8 miles found me back at my front door again for tea and biscuits then out for the last loop of the weekend.

Weston Church stood in for Tintern Abbey and CP14. 95.5 miles. I looked at the Grave of Jack 'o'Legs the nine-foot-tall giant and envied the length of stride.

The last five miles concluded the day and the weekend.

Day 3. 29.8 miles. 2195 ft ascent. 63299 steps.

Compared to the real Y100 I managed to get the mileage done with only half the ascent and the equivalent of two breakfast stops.

I wonder how far I would have to walk in Essex or Herts to get closer to the 14,000 ft of ascent?



The Start, Finish and Checkpoints 4,10, & 14.

Richard Haynes

LDWA NEC

In March 2021, three NEC office-holders come to the end of their period in their roles, the Chair, the Groups Officer, the 100s Co-ordinator and we also have the IT role to be filled.

We're looking for potential applicants for these roles, but we're also keen to understand why some people might be deterred. We think they're exciting opportunities and we know that NEC members have really enjoyed fulfilling their roles and getting involved with running the organisation.

So, please contact Julian White at publicity@ldwa.org.uk if you have any questions or comments on the roles or this process. What would encourage you to consider standing? Are there members who secretly want to hold a role but are nervous for any particular reason?

You can also contact any of the current post holders for further information.

But don't delay - think today - completed nomination forms must be in by **Saturday 31st October**.

Essex and Herts clothing

Don't forget we have a great range of Essex and Herts branded clothing available.

It's easy to order - just follow this link to see our range:

<https://customsportskit.co.uk/walking-groups/essex-and-herts-ldwa-group/>

Newsletter

Photo credits for this issue: Gill & Rob, Ginny, Steve, Suzina, Richard R., Richard H., Jackie & John, Dennis, Heidi and Peter Aylmer

Next Newsletter: February 2021. All contributions to Jackie by **10th February** please.



And finally, a blast from the past: Peter, Georgie, Ginny & Mick enjoying the view from Ivinghoe Beacon during the Ashridge Boundary Walk, February 2008