**Monthly Update June 2020**

Dear All,

I can't believe a month has gone by and its already time for another update. There's still no programme of social walks to let you know about, but at least following the easing of lockdown restrictions a few weeks ago, we can now walk a bit further with some social-distancing company.

The latest statement from the LDWA NEC was issued on the 19th May.  I've copied the full wording here, but you can keep  up  with  all the latest news on the  [LDWA website](https://ldwa.org.uk/index.php) as well.

**The National Executive Coronavirus (NEC) sub-committee monitors the guidance provided by the Governments of England (UK), Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and meets every Monday to review the advice provided to LDWA members.**

**It appears to be the case that LDWA activities are going to have to adhere to a ‘new normal’ in the short, medium and perhaps long term. In order to protect the very good reputation that the LDWA has developed over many years both at a national level and in the local communities in which it operates, the NEC will consider various aspects relating to our activities. This will include things like social distancing, food hygiene, car parking, meeting places and even the width of paths that we walk on.**

**Please be reassured that the NEC is considering how to mitigate the associated risks and is considering when social walks and challenge events might be allowed to resume. These are difficult times for all involved in the LDWA and the NEC is acutely aware of the distress that a loss of LDWA activities is causing for many of our members. We are grateful for your continued patience.**

**David Morgan**
**LDWA Chair**

The Essex and Herts Committee have met via Zoom a couple of times now to discuss our upcoming challenge events. Sadly, the Hertfordshire Hobble was cancelled a few weeks ago. Entrants have all been notified via SI Entries and Georgie has been in touch with the marshals.

And at a meeting earlier this week, we made the decision to cancel this year's Three Forests Way which was due to be held over the 5th- 6th September. Unfortunately, there are too many uncertainties at the moment, particularly around social distancing, food hygiene and cleaning procedures, to allow us to commit to running an overnight walk in a few months’ time.  All being well, we will be able to hold the Three Forests Way in September 2021 instead.

**Social walk listings in Strider**
We have been asked for feedback about whether to continue with the social walk listings in Strider - this is the message we have received from the Strider editor, Graham Smith:

**Group walks have always been listed in Strider since our magazine started in 1977. These days, of course, all groups have websites, where all the walks are listed, and in recent months one or two group secretaries have contacted me to say they are having difficulty meeting Strider deadlines for group walks submissions. In fact, because of the deadline issue, one group is actually not giving group walks details to Strider, but instead just referring people to its website with its Strider listing. Just about every group refers to its website in its Strider listing anyway.**

**So, I would just like to know how your group would feel if the group walks listings were not included in Strider. This is an important issue and let me assure you that if the group walks listings were not to appear in Strider, the group listings would continue to include relevant contact details, group logos and other key information. Also, the challenge walks listings – compiled for Strider by Events Secretary Tim Glenn – would remain.**

**Graham**

All our social walks would still be listed on the Essex and Herts website, in our newsletter, on our Facebook page (as Events) and promoted on Twitter. In addition these monthly updates which are sent to most  primary and associate members (a few have opted out of receiving them)  have more details about the walks in the coming month -  for example parking,  places of interest passed,  breaks and lunch  stops and the leader's on the day contact details.

Graham would like responses by the end of June, so  can  you send any thoughts to  me (essexandherts@ldwa.org.uk) in the next couple of weeks and I will  collate and pass them on to  Graham.

**May wouldn't be May without the 100 of the LDWA!**

So normally I would be congratulating all our members who had successfully completed the 100-last weekend (and hopefully not dishing out too many commiserations to those who didn’t quite make the full distance) and thanking all our marshals for their hard work in running yet another successful 100 checkpoint. Sadly, it wasn't to be this year, but the LDWA came up with a couple of fantastic ideas to keep the spirit of the Hundred alive.

**LDWA Coronavirus 100 Challenge**- this challenge has been taking place throughout May with participants recording the distance covered during one hour's walking per day to reach 100 miles. Lots of Essex & Herts members took up this challenge - our faster walkers are now resting on their laurels, while us slower plodders are about to reach the finish line.

**Virtual Y 100 Sir Fynw**y - last weekend walkers were set off by Phoebe Smith and Cerys Matthews on a virtual 100-mile walk with a live tracking system and virtual checkpoints (Essex and Herts were at Usk, just as we would have been on the real event). With a dedicated Facebook page there was a lot of fun and banter throughout the weekend - Andy shared his virtual Kentish Huffkins and Gypsy Tart with us from the Kent checkpoint while we joined Gill and BBN around their virtual campfire.  Congratulations to all our finishers - there were some seriously impressive virtual times!

For most of us this was a virtual event, but at least one of our members walked 100 real miles over the weekend. Congratulations to Richard on achieving yet another 100 in extraordinary conditions!

This brings me nicely on to an idea I've had for the October Newsletter.  When social distancing and lockdown were introduced back in March it had a profound effect on our walking and it would be good to capture for posterity how we have coped walking-wise so far and continue to  cope as restrictions are gradually eased.

For example, have you discovered any new places or paths while walking locally?  Or did you set yourself any challenges? For example, walking a marathon around your garden or on the treadmill, or climbing Ben Nevis on your stairs?  Or even walking 100 miles like Richard? In my case I set myself the challenge of visiting all the outdoor sculptures in Harlow on my daily walks during May and I am aiming to virtually walk a National Trail during June.

Please send me a few words and/or photos of what you have been up to for the October newsletter and let's have a great record of the experience of Essex and Herts LDWA members  during the Covid-19 Pandemic .

Stay safe and well everyone!

Jackie

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