**Kent Group LDWA AGM - Minutes**

**Date: Sunday 28th Jan 2024. Venue:** Godmersham and Crundale Village Hall.

**Attendees – Poppy Norley, Penny Southern, Cathy Waters, Robert Woodward, Keith Warman, , Dale Moorhouse, Brian Buttifant, Neal O’Rourke, Jan O’Rourke, Nicola Foad, David Thornton, Helen Strong, Michael Headley, Eve Richards, Peter Jull, Stephanie Le Men, Jim Briggs, Sheilah Briggs, Andrew Melling, Andy Clark, Sophie Butler, Mike Pursey.**

Apologies for absence – email all apologies of absence to secretary.kent@ldwa.org.uk– Apologies sent from Mike Attewell, Neil Higham, Dave Sheldrake, Rex Stickland, Jill Green, Jim Catchpole, Sarah Turner, Claire Evans, Caroline Richards.

1. Minutes of the 2023 AGM have been approved by the Committee in accordance with the Constitution. N.B. Any matters arising should be brought up under item 11.
2. Chairman’s report – Peter opened the meeting by thanking the leader for the morning’s walk (he thanked himself). Thanks to Eve, Jan and Poppy for the catering. We had our usual challenge events, and were involved in the checkpointing on the EBB 100 and the reciprocal arrangement for a CP in Sussex on the Sussex Stride.
3. Treasurer’s report and accounts (we hope to issue to attendees ahead of the AGM) – Jim remined the attendees we run as a not for profit organisation. He presented the accounts – the revenue for the challenge events was ranked – Sevenoaks making the most. However, the performance and numbers of entrants for the White Cliffs have prompted a rethink by the committee on the event moving forward.

Some of the surplus funds was used to subsidise the Christmas lunch and the raffle prizes. We also purchased some equipment this year needed to run the events. Jane Bates from Sussex group has checked and signed off the accounts for the year. One new outgoing this year was the payments made to our volunteers through the new expenses system. We also have a new card reader to use on events for the sale of badges and mugs.

Michael Headley commented that he preferred the old style of Christmas raffle but thought the surplus money used to subsidise the cost of the meal was an excellent idea. Jim replied that the committee welcomed feedback on the Christmas raffle this year.

1. Group Secretary’s report – Helen reminded all that she was stepping down after 3-plus years as Secretary. She discussed how this year she made a big effort to engagewith new members on social walks. She and David would be organising the Kent group 50th anniversary event at Ryarsh Village hall. Feedback on that event welcome.
2. Membership Secretary‘s report – David offered some more statistics on the historical data on the group’s membership, which was growing…In 2012 we had 2 new members, 2013 – 16, by 2019 – 36. In 2021 – 49,and 2022 –This year 57 new members joined the group and 61 left – we don’t know why…but we now have 397 primary members.
3. Election of Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer –Peter was proposed by Andew Melling, seconded by Brian Buttifant, Jim Briggs nominated by Peter, and seconded by Andy Clarke, Peter thanked Helen for her last three years of service as Secretaryand Penny was proposed by Peter (Penny mentioned that she and Nicola would be sharing the role – but with Penny as the named Secretary) and this was seconded by Neal. All votes carried unanimously by the attendees.
4. Election of Committee Members – Helen said she was staying on the committee, with David, Nicola, Cathy, Stephanie, named and nominated by Peter, seconded by Helen. Peter mentioned that there were two spaces on the committee if members would be interested in joining – they could also be co-opted through the year. Unanimous vote by the attendees. Committee elected as before.
5. Challenge Walks– “Wye Cliffs” – Peter told the attendees that the attendance on the White Cliffs Challenge has been going down year on year – the Committee had discussed this and it was felt that the lack of public transport to the HQ and the date in the middle of the bank holiday (to coincide with the walking festival – now defunct) may have been factors in this. The idea was to move the event to Wye and the date to the second Saturday in October (12th). There would be three routes, with plenty of variations on what can be offered each year. The year that we hold a 50 we propose that this would be based back on the coast – as we have a good venue for HQ at Bettsihanger. Working title – Wye Downs Challenge.

Sevenoaks Circular –17th March – from West Heath School.David thanked Neal and Jan for checking the RDs again this year. Three new routes this year– two indoor checkpoints. We have a maximum of 225 with HQ venue – the event nearly full already 195 entries. We usually have a waiting list. Marshals walk two weeks before (supported by Helen), finally David thanks those who are helping on the day.

High Weald – Stephanie mentioned the event is being held from Langton Green, on 13th July, with three new routes, she is currently working on the RDs.

1. Social Walks– Peter mentioned that the NEC is currently reviewing feedback on an email that was sent out by the Local Groups Officer on the planning and execution of LDWA social walks. He believed it was linked to the NEC/organisation needing to comply with the desires of the insurance companies. He encouraged the membership to come forward with walks for the diary.

A discussion was held about liability of the walk leaders for any incidents – and the need for risk assessments. It was reported that there were many aspects of walk leadership concerning which the email had roused members, and that LDWA members had taken to vent their views on Facebook – both positive and negative.

1. Future Hundreds–Peter mentioned he is going to help on the Scottish 100 as a volunteer. Keith said that there were 9 Kent members on the main event. Stephanie reported that in 2025 Kent will be manning the CP at Sudbourne67 mi - a major CP – but it is a long way from local shops. Open 03:00 – 20:00 the following day.

Peter continues toliaise with Cobham Hall Girls school - the preferred HQ for 2026. He asked if anyone wished to be involved on the Kent 100 Committee to get in touch. Helen has already agreed to be the Entries Secretary. He sent round a few pages which describe the roles needed to fill the positions on the organising committee. He is still firming up some of the CPs, as there are severalhalls and venues who are not responding to his emails which is frustrating. Raynet – he has been in touch with Colin.

1. Any other business – please send all AOB no less than 48 hours in advance to secretary.kent@ldwa.org.uk.

Peter reported that the NEC had recently circulated a new model constitution – in which there is some scope for Local Group modifications. This includes increasing the time Group Officers are allowed to hold their position. Peter proposed that we change our constitution to allow Officers to hold posts for five years. This was seconded by Helen. A vote was held on this and it was unanimously passed by the attendees.

Penny reported on the volunteers expenses policy work she had done for the group – to recognise the work that our volunteers do for the organisation. She set out to define the criteria, then design the claiming process which included the element of confidentiality. She thanked Jim for his help and those outside the committee– including members from other groups who had shared their practice with her. This helped her to gather information. She later shared her work with Karen Pickersgill at the NEC – with a wish that the work be sharedwith other groups to put this into practice themselves. In our group during the last year there have been19 claims, and £1,248.85 has been claimed so far – though some of this was from the 100 and had been reimbursed to the group from the EBB 100. She encouraged everyone to claim, and any feedback would be gratefully received. Andy gave thanks on behalf of the membership to Penny and the Committee for the moves to get such a policy in place and for sharing this good practice outside the group.

Newsletter – Cathy reported that there had been an issue (August) missed in 2022 – and that the subscriptions had been put on hold until this year – but from now on all payments to go to Jim. She also talked about the idea to have a 50th anniversary edition of the Newsletter and all contributions gratefully received. Andy led the members in giving thanks to Cathy for the high quality of the Newsletters, which he thoroughly enjoyed.

Keith asked whether the Ryarsh party will be a 50th anniversary and post hundred party – to which Helen said it would be though we have yet to firm up the details.

Neal mentioned that he preferred the old style of bringing a gift to the Christmas meal for the raffle. Peter and Penny responded that the committee had changed the format this year but welcomed his feedback.

Peter closed the meeting.