

LDWA Lakeland Group 13th Annual General Meeting
Stonecross Manor Hotel, Kendal 11.15am Sunday 25 October 2026

Member Attendees:

Tom Sellers (Chair), Nicky Wood (Secretary), Tony Willey (Treasurer), Robin Sykes (Walks Secretary), Ian Dyer (Committee), Mark Hawker (Committee), Lisa Spratling (Committee) (Online), Bernice Blundell, Mark Blundell, Kevin Burge, Yvonne Casselli, Julie Collins, Gordon and Debbie Everard, Colin Firth, Gordon and Jackie Furness, Jo Jackson, Graham Lightowler, Anna Maciejkowicz, Ruth Nelson, Margaret Parker, John Pollard, Helen Rawlinson, Caroline Roy (Online), Ian Scott, Richard Tait, Ann-Marie Verner, Sonia Woods, Ken Wyles & Jenny Wyles (Online),

Apologies of Absence

Wendy Dodds, Teresa Douglas, Clare Edgar, Karen Goodyear, Alan Jones, Robert Nutton, Katherine Padgett, Alan Parker, Gina Perryman, Alan Ousby, Garry Richards, Colleen Roberts, Fred and Helen Stubbs, Barry Utting,

2 Minutes of 2025 AGM

Minutes agreed as an accurate record by the attendees. Proposed Debbie Everard, Seconded Ian Dyer.

3 Matters Arising No matters arising other than items which will be discussed in our main agenda.

4 Chairman's Report

Tom introduced the meeting by inviting members to comment on highlights of their walking year. Ann-Marie Verner and Jo Jackson completed the Coast to Coast over 19 short sections and 6 months. A lovely slow and steady way to enjoy this route. Jo is doing a write up for the Wainwright Society magazine and was invited to post it on our website.

Tony Willey completed the last of the 20 National Trails this month – a project which has taken him 36 years.

Nicky Wood commented that her highlight was the pleasure of taking members of the group for a holiday in the Cotswolds, her childhood home.

Anna Maciejkowicz recently took part in the Signpost Challenge and recommends this to anyone who has not done it. Based on the outskirts of Manchester it offers attractive and hilly scenery and is well organised.

Mark Hawker decided to report on the 'lowlight' of his year, which was the extremely hot Hunnypot 100, from which he was forced to retire because of the heat. And he complimented Robin Sykes for completing the event.

Yvonne Casselli has recently rejoined us on the Wednesday group and enjoyed exploring the Haematite trail.

Margaret Parker enjoyed the evening walk from the Riflemans Arms to celebrate our 50 years of being a group.

Tom concluded that this demonstrates neatly the cross section of walking which we have enjoyed as a group – something for everyone.

5 Secretary's Report

Nicky summarised her written report. The group has enjoyed 13 weekend walks attended by a total of 179 people. We have also had 14 Wednesday or evening walks and 5 weekend or midweek trips away on holiday. 13 different leaders have been involved. 1074 members now receive our bulk emails. Highlights have included: further Wainwright Wander walks lead by Ian Scott, two walks exploring the Eden and Mallerstang Valleys, a joint walk with West Lancs tackling the Silverdale Circuit and our Kendal Gathering 50th Anniversary walk and meal in September from Oxenholme. Our holiday trips included Edinburgh for Part 2 of the John Muir Way, Sections 1 – 5 of the Swale Way and finishing off the Wednesday Group's epic Lakeland Way with two stages from Ravenglass and Wasdale. Nicky hinted at plans for another LDP for the Wednesday Group in 2027 – Blackburn to Haystacks on Wainwright's Way.

6 Social Walks Secretary's Report

Robin reviewed our social walks from 2026. He concluded we have had a good mix of weekend and Wednesday walks and a few evening walks following a similar pattern to previous years. We have also experimented with two joint walks with West Lancs which were well attended – especially the Silverdale Circuit led by Lisa and Robin which attracted 36 walkers. Robin reminded us we have two more walks this year – a November Walk from Ulverston and a December walk with mince pies from Arnside. Plus there will be extra Wednesday Walks.

Robin touched on the 2027 walks programme with walks now booked in until April. Wednesday walks are to be introduced to the programme as we go along. Please email your ideas for social walks to lakeland@ldwa.org.uk and Robin will fit them into the programme at a time to suit you and the group.

Walks booked so far include:

10 January	That's Lyth Marshals Walk
06 February	Staveley Loop One of the Staveley 50 (the one that got away)
06 March	Swale Way Part 6 (Keld to Kirkby Stephen)
19 + March	Wye Valley Way Group Trip Away
17 April	Wainwright Wander from Ambleside
26 27 June	Wainwright Weekend in Wasdale

Robin then reviewed the group's activity visiting Challenge Walks around the country this year. We had a large presence at the Cracoe Cracker event organised by West Yorkshire. We also attended the Two Crosses, the Pentland Hills Challenge for South of Scotland 40th Birthday, the Marsden Moors Marathon and Open to Offas in Wales. The aim is to help break down the perceived barriers to attending challenge walks and encourage more to come along. There is always the chance to socialise at the end of the day, and in some situations we have/will try to organise accommodation for a mini break around them. A by-product of attending is to encourage people to be confident tackling ultras such as the 50-mile routes and have a go at the LDWA's flagship 100. We had a good initial turn out for the Hunnypot Hundred in Kent, but the heat was a challenge for everyone. We hope to get a few more having a go in 2028 when the hundred moves closer to home in the Peak District.

Robin then outlined plans for attending challenge walks in 2027 which include: The Anglezark Amble on 13 February, the Malvern Midsummer Marathon on 19 June, the Birmingham Canal Canter on 1 August and the Signpost Challenge in October. We will email round when we know opening dates – Anglezark is open now. A couple of people are entering the Roundhay 50 in February. Robin encouraged those who are interested in completing a 50 in 2027 to decide on the event they would like to do and enter soon after entries open, as places fill fast. He noted that anyone interested in entering the 2028 100 will preferably need to complete a 50 in 2027 so plan ahead to secure a place.

7 Finance Officer's Report

Tony presented our audited accounts to the 30 September 2026. Income for That's Lyth and Spring in Lakeland brought in £4160 net of costs this year. Our total net income was £4772. This money also funded Donations, group equipment, subsidised the AGM and we still had a gain of £1180 for the year. Our reserves are a healthy £7559.33.

Our Challenge events (That's Lyth 2027 and Spring in Lakeland 24/50 2027) are bringing us a £20,000 income. This will give us sufficient funding for both events. (Spring in Lakeland will cost more than usual with the additional costs associated with the 50-mile route including car parking/shower/sleeping facilities for entrants and additional checkpoints). We do need our reserves because if we had a crisis (such as event cancellation due to a weather warning at the last minute) we need money to pay the unavoidable costs after refunding entry fees.

Nicky mentioned that we are mindful as a committee of the increased costs of fuel. Tony reminded members that if they volunteer they are most welcome to claim out of pocket expenses if they wish after an event.

Charitable donations for 2025-26 amounted to £750:

£200	Kendal Mountain Search and Rescue (as match funding to the fundraising campaign below)
£150	North West Air Ambulance
£150	Duddon Mountain Rescue
£150	Fix the Fells
£50	Red Squirrels
£50	Heron Mill

In addition to the above, we fundraised for Kendal Mountain Rescue Team after they helped with a rescue of one of our members on 1 April 2026. Lisa Spratling co-ordinated a fundraising campaign during our Spring in Lakeland 2026 event and between entrants, local members and our match funding of £200 noted above, we raised £1106.

The accounts were approved as an accurate record. Proposed by Jackie Furness and Seconded Margaret Parker.

8 Nominations and election of 2026/27 Committee Members

Tom reported that the current committee are all happy to stand again.

Tom Sellers – Chair	Nicky Wood – Secretary
Tony Willey – Treasurer	Robin Sykes – Walks Secretary
Ian Dyer – Committee Member	

Mark Hawker – Committee Member (Team Lead for Spring in Lakeland 50 and Chair for Wainwright 100)

Lisa Spratling – Committee Member (Coordinating HQ for the Wainwright 100)

We voted on block for them all: Proposed by Debbie Everard and Seconded by Richard Tait and a show of hands.

Tom asked if anyone else would like to join us on the Committee. No-one offered but we confirmed anyone who fancies joining us will always be welcome.

9 Spring in Lakeland 50 Mile Challenge – 10 and 11 April 2026 (Marshals 26/27 March 2026)

Mark Hawker updated us about the plans for the 50. He is our team lead for this event working with:

Lisa Spratling – co-ordinating volunteers

Ian Scott – developing and refining the route

Nicky Wood – catering manager & assistant checkpoint co-ordinator

Robin Sykes – transport co-ordinator

Tom Sellers – entries secretary

Tony Willey – finance officer

Mark Hawker/Nicky Wood/Ian Dyer – Equipment co-ordination

Mark explained we had looked at the Spring in Lakeland 50 Route devised from Staveley, never used due to covid cancellations. We decided that rather than reinvigorate this it would be better to combine a 50 with our existing 24-mile route but with Coniston as our base. Loop one visits Ambleside and Elterwater and incorporates a change of route via Loughrigg Terrace. Ian Scott has devised an attractive 26 mile second loop visiting Walna Scar, Seathwaite, Broughton in Furness and Water Yeat, returning by Beacon Tarn and the Cumbria Way alongside Coniston Water. The route description is now available on Lakeland LDWA website under the challenge walks section. We welcome constructive feedback from anyone taking a walk round the route.

In Coniston we have hired John Ruskin School for registration, car parking, and camping/showers. Coniston Institute will then become our HQ providing luggage drop, checkpoint food/equipment co-ordination and catering at the end of both loops.

Entrants will have 24 hours to complete the 50. Walkers will start 8am and runners at 10am to mitigate against checkpoints being open for excessive hours. The event filled in one day. We have 225 entries on the 50 miles and 175 on the 24 miles. We have a healthy waiting list. Bernice commented that it is impressive that the price includes trackers for those on the 50 as many events charge £20 for these. We are using the same company as the LDWA uses for the annual hundred which means we receive a favourable price (£8 per head this year).

Tony commented that we were worried we pitched the price too high, but clearly not. The price includes car parking for those who need it. Sonia commented that amongst her running community she has heard positive feedback. Richard Tait commented that the more events charge the more people sign up. Kevin asked if we were charging enough and we explained we want to be competitive within the LDWA community and not for profit. Robin commented that the help we get from our volunteers helps to keep the costs down.

Mark extended his thanks to those who have volunteered to help so far and confirmed we have nearly got all positions covered. We also extend our thanks to neighbouring groups who are helping us namely: Cumbria, East Lancs, Northumbria, West Lancs, West Yorkshire. Marshals will be able to park at the John Ruskin School as well and come and go as required during the hours of the event.

Mark explained that initially this was to be a one off 50 in 2027. We will not organise it in 2028 as there is a prominent bi-annual event (Y Sir Fynwy 50) organised by South Wales with whom we are alternating. If all goes well in 2027 we are considering it again for 2029. If the event is held in 2029 it will represent a qualifier for our Lakeland 100 in 2030.

Nicky confirmed that all halls are booked. Except for Elterwater we can provide reasonable indoor facilities – important in early April for entrants and volunteers alike..

Rules regarding giving lifts to retirees have changed. Insurers now consider this to be 'hire and reward' which is not covered on Social Domestic and Pleasure or Class One Business Use for car insurance. Robin has found a solution. We can hire the Westmorland and Furness Council Community Bus as we are a not-for-profit organisation. We will use it for That's Lyth and Spring in Lakeland and it is also something we can hire for social walks. We will also be hiring an ordinary van to transport food, equipment and rubbish around the second loop of the event (the first loop being catered for by checkpoint lead officers).

Spring in Lakeland 50 Marshals Walk will take place on Good Friday and Saturday 26 and 27 March. We anticipate about 20 people max on this but will need a few marshals to help provide basic checkpoints. We have a few volunteers already but need a few more. Email lakeland@ldwa.org.uk if you still want to take part in the marshals' event or if you can volunteer on 26/27 March.

10 Wainwright 100

Mark explained that we are hosting the event in 2030 and gave a brief update. Since the last AGM we have been given formal approval by the NEC to host the event and we have been given permission by the Wainwright Society to use their name to call it the Wainwright 100 (it is strictly NOT Lakeland 100 as there is another event by that name).

Ian Scott has designed several routes so far for the event. We are looking to hire the Windermere School on Patterdale road and are awaiting their formal quotations. Once this is booked we are looking at Keswick for a breakfast stop at around 55-60 miles. The route will return via Pooley Bridge, Patterdale and Troutbeck.

There will be more work towards this event in 2027 – especially once the Spring in Lakeland 50 is completed. We will be back in touch with those who have volunteered to help at that stage.

John Pollard asked what price this event is likely to be. Mark assumes in the region of £150 as it currently sells at £135. We anticipate a sell out as the event has not been hosted in the Lake District since 2003. Nicky congratulated the group on its success getting to this stage with a group that at one point looked set to fold. It is a credit to us all that we can in a position to bid for the hundred.

Sonia asked what dates it would be. Mark explained the hundred is always on the Spring Bank Holiday at the end of May with the Marshals event over the May Day weekend. We will have groups from all over the country helping us for the main event and some for the marshals' event.

Mark explained the way qualifiers for the hundred work – you need one before you enter and usually obtain your qualifier in the previous year. Nicky confirmed each LDWA Hundred has its own dedicated page on the LDWA website and they always clarify there which 50-mile events are qualifiers. Spring in Lakeland 50 is a qualifier for the Jurassic 100 in 2027 and for the 2028 Millstone Hundred in Derbyshire.

11 Motions requiring a vote There were no motions requiring a vote.

12 Topics for Discussion

Charity Donations

We had four suggestions for charitable donations:

1. Teresa Douglas asked us to consider the Cure Usher Syndrome Charity. This charity is close to her heart as it affects two grandchildren. They experience hearing loss and have had hearing aids since a few weeks old, but also potentially may lose their sight at the onset of adolescence. The charity is working hard to find a cure for Usher Syndrome Type 2.
2. Tony Willey has been approached as Treasurer by the Lake District Calvert Trust who are celebrating 50 years of providing life changing outdoor adventure opportunities for people living with disabilities. We have supported them in the past and they are reaching out for further help.
3. Tony also suggested the Cumbria Wildlife Trust who are asking for donations to plant a tree at their Skiddaw Forest Landscape Project.
4. Bernice Blundell is raising money for Alfie's Squad, a charity which supports children and their families who have been bereaved by suicide. Bernice has a just giving page and is taking part in several marathons including the London Marathon in 2027. She would appreciate the motivation of a little financial support.

We took a show of hands to ensure all members were happy with these suggestions (they were).

Action: Committee to discuss at next meeting and action and feedback to Teresa and Bernice.

13 Any other Business

Mark raised a discussion about weather warnings. He wondered if we should have a policy to automatically cancel social events in the event of an Amber or Red weather warning. The discussion suggested people thought this sensible. Jenny Wyles thought it should be a decision at a National level for all groups.

Action: Nicky to Raise this at the Local Group Reps Meeting in November.

The meeting was closed at 12.45pm. It was followed by lunch and a talk about Ladakh by Tony Willey