

LDWA London Group 2025 Annual General Meeting

7 p.m. 19th February 2025 at The Chapel Market Tavern, N1 9PZ

MINUTES

Present: Lonica Vanclay (Joint Secretary *in the Chair*), Deborah Evans (Webmaster), Marie Heracleous (Capital Challenger organiser), Gordon Parker (Joint Secretary), Jim Robinson (Treasurer), Ron Williamson (independent examiner of London Group Accounts), Pete Aylmer, Pete Colley, Andrew Disley, Marcus Duyzend, John Elrick, Abigail Elrick, Ken Fancett, Keith Lane, Paul Lawrence, Lucy Madisson, Ken Main, Cathy Phillips, Susanne Waldschmidt, Dave Williams, Graham Wright. *Total 21 members*

1. **Apologies:** Gavin Fuller (Chair), Jeff Golland (Newsletter Editor), Keith Mills (Walks secretary), Steve Radley (Liaison Officer with other like-minded organisations), Aase Christensen, Godfrey O'Callaghan, Jean O'Reilly, Colin Saunders, Rod Smith, Kemi Yusuph.

Lonica welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that she was taking the Chair as Gavin had submitted his apologies as he was busy bagging Wainwrights in the Lake District (his 189th today!)

She also reminded members that only the Agenda was available in hard copy; other documentation had been circulated earlier to reduce costs and wastage.

2. **Minutes of last year's AGM**

In the 3rd paragraph of Item 2 (Treasurer's Report) and the 1st Paragraph of Item 5 (Capital Challenge Report), the word '*profit*' should be replaced with '*surplus*'.

Also in Item 5, last paragraph, the phrase '*which are, in addition, public rights of way*' should be replaced with '*to which the public normally has free access*' as it emerged in discussion that there is no record of paths in the Royal Parks in particular being PROWs.

With these Corrections, those present accepted last year's Minutes unanimously.

3. **Matters Arising** not dealt with elsewhere in the Agenda.

The **new Constitution** has been Agreed and is now available on the website.

Most of the actions arising from the discussion on spending the group's surplus will be covered by the Treasurer. However, the proposed **Meet-Up experiment** did not happen. The NEC plans to conduct a national survey of groups' involvement with Meet-Up and will share the results at a future Local Groups Meeting.

Surrey declined to take on the organisation of the **Founders Challenge** as they currently organise 3 challenge events. A social walk will be led over the route of the Founders Challenge later this year and if someone comes forward offering to coordinate the event, it will be reintroduced.

No further information was received about the proposed **West of Weald 50**.

DRAFT

Ken Fancett has looked at the issue of **paying for access to the Royal Parks** on the Capital Challenge routes and has found no evidence that there are PROWs in the City of Westminster. He offered to do further research for parks throughout the routes. It appears that Royal Parks are covered by separate legislation and there are no PROWs. In any event, the Royal Parks do charge access fees and we can afford to pay them.

4. Treasurer's Report

Jim presented the Accounts for the year ending 31st April 2024 which have been examined and approved by Ron Williamson.

The meeting thanked Ron for his work and advice as independent examiner.

Jim noted that the year's surplus of £1623.16 was very similar to the previous year's surplus despite only organising one challenge event; some of the surplus from last year's Capital Challenge will appear in the next set of annual accounts.

Venue fees for this event have not changed much. Jim agreed to Pete Colley's request that venue costs and parks fees can be shown separately in future.

Donations were made to:

the Ramblers Inner London group - £500 for 6 new waymarkers on the London Loop (Emma Dowling recently posted a photo on our Facebook page of one of these near Petts Wood).

Beach of Dreams membership of £210 - see May walks programme; Lonica showed the drawing from which the group's flag is being designed.

Jim thanked Deborah and Ron for their help in producing and presenting the accounts.

Lonica noted that there had been no take-up of the suggestion in the Newsletter for spend on external First Aid and Leadership training courses.

Susanne asked why these could not be run in-house if there is interest in the future.

5. Secretary's Report

Gordon read the report that had been circulated previously.

Lonica added some information from the Local Groups online meeting that she had attended the previous week.

Data Protection Information will only in future be kept for 1 year (not 7 as previously).

Use of a **Mandatory Social Walks Register** has been introduced which specifically requires each person to say where they are carrying their ICE information, e.g. in their pocket/rucksack, on their phone, etc.

In the discussion it emerged that there is some lack of clarity as to whether the mandate is just for a Contact person information or for the full ICE card info

ACTION Committee to clarify.

NEC will use the Martyn Greaves Fund to commission **research into The Leans**.

DRAFT

Lists of **LDPs** will be circulated to local groups with a request to check them through the social walks programme.

6. **Walk Secretary's Report**

As the Walk Secretary was indisposed, Lonica read Keith's report (circulated in advance).

The 4 members who led their first walk during the year were thanked.

ACTION From the discussion it was agreed that the Newsletter should be used to encourage new leaders to come forward, offering support and mentoring.

A question was asked why there had been no mention of the Lakes Week organised by Ron Williamson.

Subsequent action: this is not an official LDWA walk; it is like any other group of members getting together e.g. people signed up for the 100 going on a preparatory walk together. It was mentioned on the Facebook page and also featured in the newsletter of July 29th.

7. **Capital Challenge** [Marie Heracleous]

The 2024 edition used the "original" north London route.

220 were registered; 198 started - 200 starters is the target as the number marshals can cope with.

2 people Did Not Finish (several just squeezed in within the time limit!)

The food bill was reduced since Covid as people no longer want "sharing plates".

Marshals will be thanked alongside other leaders and volunteers at a meal next week.

The accounts show the surplus that was achieved.

This year's event, using the South East route, was sold out in December! 220 are registered and there are 35 on the Waiting List. Those who cancel through SIEntries are immediately replaced from the waiting list.

All CheckPoints are booked and permissions have been granted.

The church in Waterloo, which has served as an excellent start point, adds 3 miles to what is already quite a long route, so a new, indoor start has been organised in Bermondsey near Tower Bridge.

Susanne has offered to update the Route Description from the new start (otherwise the CPs and route are unchanged.)

There has been quite a good response to the call for marshals.

They will be equipped with the upgraded scanners and hi-viz purchased last year.

Andrew commented that he had found all 3 Capital Challenge routes and events to be excellent.

8. **Web Report** [Deborah Evans]

There have been no major changes. There have been 2 issues:

- Phishing emails going to Committee members. This has been a national issue and requires vigilance until it is fixed as part of a website upgrade.
- Some links are broken following national updates. Notify the Web Manager and they will be fixed.

DRAFT

There have been continued problems with formatting the Newsletter but Deborah's successor will address this. **ACTION**

25% of members access the Facebook page and 65% of these are active on it.

Deborah thanked the walk leaders who reported promptly and fully, with only 1 walk report lacking required information.
She also thanked Gavin for back-up during her absences.

The meeting thanked Deborah for her service and looked forward to seeing her on walks when she can join them.

9. Committee Appointments

There were no Nominations in advance, nor from the floor for the post of Chair.
Lonica reported that Gavin has said he is willing to continue in post and the meeting unanimously welcomed this offer.

All other appointments were Agreed unanimously as below:

Post	Nomination	Proposer	Seconder
Chair			
Treasurer	Jim Robinson	Gordon Parker	Keith Mills
Secretary	Lonica Vanclay & Gordon Parker	Gavin Fuller	Jeff Golland
Walks Secretary	Keith Mills	Jim Robinson	Lonica Vanclay
Web-master	Graham Wright	Deborah Evans	Gavin Fuller
Newsletter editor	Jeff Golland	Lonica Vanclay	Keith Mills
Capital Challenge Organiser	Marie Heracleous	Jim Robinson	Gordon Parker
Liaison Officer with other like-minded organisations	Steve Radley		

For 2026 we need a new **Capital Challenge Coordinator** as Marie will have served for several years and wants to officially stand down at the next AGM.

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She is happy to support someone for the 2026 event. If a volunteer comes forward soon, it can be a supported handover from this summer, with the new person shadowing and supporting Marie to plan next year, so they do not have to plan and run their first one alone.

ACTION Committee and all members, e.g. on social walks, to approach potential event coordinators as soon as possible.

Steve Radley has held the role of Liaison with other organisations but has not found ways to be active. The Committee has discussed this and thinks there is no continued need for the post; specific issues can be addressed as they arise.

ACTION Further discussion at Committee.

The meeting **Agreed** to appoint Ron Williamson as Independent Auditor for a further year.

10. Any Other Business

a. Marshalling at the 100 [*Susanne Walschmidt*]

This year the London group will be helping at the HQ of the Flower of Suffolk 100 near Ipswich from May 24-26th. 12-15 volunteers are required and so far only 7 have offered. Susanne will ask Jeff to place another notice in the Newsletter.

Susanne asked if some nice T-shirts or aprons can be purchased for the volunteer marshals.

It was suggested that the clothing with the group logo from Peco (see the website) is used. **ACTION:** Susanne to follow up.

Susanne also asked if the limit on expenses can be raised to £30 per person. Jim **Agreed**.

b. National Eager Beaver Award

Ron Williamson was nominated last year and received the award.

c. Plans for 30th Anniversary

These are shown on the Walks Programme.

- On Saturday 6th September - the anniversary of the adoption of the group's first Constitution - Gavin, Lonica and one other person will lead 3 walks of 30, 20 and 8-10 miles from different directions in London to meet at a central destination for a celebratory meal.
- On 13th September, the group's first long weekend walk will be repeated: Kelvedon to Wakes Colne, finishing at the Chappel Beer Festival. [NB *The group's first walk took place 3 days earlier on a weekday around Wapping - it was on the group's Walks Programme in 2024.*]

The meeting closed at 20:15.