North of Scotland LDWA AGM

14:00, 4th October 2026

The Stable Room, Blairs Loch, Moray.

In Attendance:

Rikky Beck (Chair); Bea Jefferson (minutes); Mark Wallington; Sally Kendall; Lorna Sproates; Judith Binney; Angela Mitchell; Alison Collins; Michael Milsom; Roger Boston; Jan Adamson; Teresa Walker; John Henderson; Pete Mitchell; Ros Wright; Jenni Coelho.

Apologies:

Karen Meikle; Els Freshwater; Claire Hamilton; Diane Saywack

1. **Approval of the minutes of the 2025 AGM and matters arising**

The minutes of the AGM on 26th October 2025 were agreed as a true record.

All maters arising have been actioned (following discussion of alternatives, we did not change who we bank with).

2. **Chair's Report**

Most of the group's activities during the year are covered by other reports.

Attending the national LDWA AGM had been a useful experience, although the NEC had not taken on board feedback provided by our committee that the current system of providing printed copies of 'Strider' as a default should be rethought.

The Chair thanked all the committee members, walk leaders and other supporters and volunteers who had contributed during the year. Particular thanks were given to those standing down from the committee, Mark for updating Facebook and Angela for stepping in at the last minute to lead walks.

The meeting thanked the Chair for her contribution.

3. **Treasurer's report**

Our current bank balance is £3,254.

We made a healthy profit on the Laich O'Moray challenge walk, and that supported our other activities during the year – meaning we broke even overall.

There are likely to be no challenge events in the coming year – hence, we expect the balance to fall as we may wish to do things such as subsidise walks involving minibus hire. We have previously committed to retaining at least £1,000 in reserves.

4. **Social walks report**

During the year since the last AGM we had:

- 22 walks planned (excluding challenge walks and joint weekend)
- 19 took place - Cancellations due to illness, injury, weather, wildfires
- Distances 7m to 31m – average 14
- Participation 3 to 14 – average 9

We have had good coverage across our geographical area.

75% of participants have been female. 83% have been members – many of the guests we have welcomed have subsequently joined.

Walks further away from Moray and Inverness sometimes struggle to attract people – but otherwise it is difficult to predict which walks will be popular.

The National LDWA has approved new guidance for social walks. This encourages walkers to carry emergency contact details rather than submit them when booking a walk, as this group has done historically.

One way of doing this is to put emergency contacts on mobiles where they can be found without unlocking the phone.

Action: Bea to send round instructions on adding emergency contacts to phone in next email newsletter (iphone and android).

5. **Laich o'Moray 2026**

This year the Laich o' Moray challenge walks took place over the August bank holiday weekend of the 29th and 30th of August. We decided to make a few changes this time with a new start and finish point at the Rafford Village Hall and we also moved the event date to late Summer to avoid the cooler weather and shorter daylight hours of Autumn. As well as a new start point, we also introduced a shorter distance option of 30 miles. This helped to encourage more participants to take part and allowed some walkers to opt out of the 50 mile challenge and do the shorter route at the last minute.

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On the day we had 15 participants on the 30 mile route, all of which completed the route, not forgetting the 9 Marshals that also completed the LoM30 at the beginning of August. For the Laich o' Moray 50 mile challenge, 54 participants started and 45 managed to complete the challenge.

We were about £850 in the black, so many thanks to all the 32 volunteers that helped to make it the success that it was.

There were a few lessons that we need to take forward to the next Laich o' Moray event relating to:

- Catering
- Checkpoint closure procedure
- Retiring unwell participants at checkpoints
- Ensuring we have sufficient volunteers at Rafford through the night
- Tide Times

It is uncertain when we will be able to hold our next Laich o' Moray challenge event as this will not happen until someone fills the challenge walk coordinator position.

It was agreed that documents which would be of use for a future event should be stored on the OneDrive storage accessed via the 'secretary' Microsoft account so that they would be available to a future challenge walk coordinator.

Pete was thanked for his hard work in making this event happen.

6. **Election of committee officers and other committee members**

The following officers and committee members were elected:

Rikky Beck – Chair

Lorna Sproates – Treasurer

Pete Mitchell – Social Walks Coordinator

Bea Jefferson – Secretary

Other committee members: Ros Wright, John Henderson

The position of Challenge Walk Coordinator remains vacant.

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Jan Adamson, Roger Boston, Karen Meikle and Alison Collins stood down from the committee. They were thanked for their contribution.

The constitution allows for coopting further members during the year.

7. **Open forum for views from members**

'Pop up' walks were discussed. In the past, these have been late notice walks circulated on WhatsApp. These aren't included in our walk stats as they have been 'informal' invitations for friends to join a walk rather than held in accordance with LDWA social walks policies. It was noted that short notice walks can be popular as we can take account of weather – and these could be done more formally (i.e. adding to the website and submitting a register) even if last minute.

Members were thanked for their attendance.

The meeting closed at 14:53.

The meeting was followed by an informative and enjoyable presentation by Roger Boston on his experiences walking the Te Araroa Trail.