



Report of the 2023 North of Scotland LDWA AGM, held at Edinkillie Village Hall, Dunphail, on Sunday September 24th

The meeting started at 13:30. In the absence of Andrew Thacker, the meeting was chaired by Julie Cribb.

Attendees

Jan Adamson, Mick Banks, Rikky Beck, Judith Binney, Julie Cribb, Jenni Coelho, Alison Collins, Jo Cowie, Laura Faulkner, Dave Galloway, John Henderson, Angusina Higgins, Bea Jefferson, Sally Kendall, Lesley McBride, Pete Mitchell, Stuart Nelson, Graham Smith, Lorna Sproates, Tom Summerscales, Kasia Walker, Mark Wallington.

Apologies

Roger Boston, Naomi Cribb, Angela Mitchell, Carrie Patterson, Andrew Thacker.

Minutes of the AGM held on September 24 2022

These were accepted as a true record. *Proposed:* Alison Collins. *Seconded:* John Henderson.

Secretary's Report

It has been a very good year for North of Scotland LDWA.

A year ago, we had 90 Primary members – we now have 108. Clearly, we are doing something right. We are the youngest group in the LDWA, and one of the smallest in terms of membership, but we have one of the largest numbers of walk leaders in the association; our challenge event – the Laich O'Moray 50 – has more than double the number of entrants it attracted last year; and we are busy preparing for the Speyside 100 – the LDWA's flagship event – next year, and that is going to attract the best part of 500 walkers, plus a similar number of marshals, and many friends and family who will come up here to support the entrants.

We cover a huge area, and we are getting good turnouts on our walks, whether they be in Moray, the Grantown area or – as in the case of a walk I led in July – right up in Caithness. We also have a good mix of walks – flatter walks, hill walks, we started midweek walks earlier this year, we put on pop-up walks, and now we have Pete's stride-out walks, so we're offering our members a wide variety of walking experiences. I always quote my good friend Jill Green when she says that every walk is an adventure – and we've had plenty of adventures on our walks this year.

Covering such a huge area, we have been actively encouraging car sharing, so the car sharing Whatsapp group, set up by Alison Collins, has been brilliant, and I know that new members have found it very useful.

We are actively involved with two major walking events in our area – Moray Walking & Outdoor Festival in June (for which we put on a walk), and the Inverness Festival of Walking

& Wheeling in May (where we are an official partner and for which we also put on a walk). Getting involved events like these helps promote the LDWA and our group.

We are fostering relations with the other two LDWA groups in Scotland – Heart of Scotland, with whom we had a very successful and enjoyable joint weekend in Ballater in August and members of which group are closely involved with the Speyside 100; and South of Scotland, some members of which are coming up to help do a checkpoint for our Speyside 100.

It is sad that Andrew Thacker is standing down as chairman and has handed over responsibility for organising the Laich O’Moray 50 to Stuart Nelson (who, incidentally, is doing a fine job – and he will shortly give us an update). I’ve worked well with Andrew over the last couple of years, but he is very busy with his business, and that has to take priority. I don’t want to embarrass him, but for me one of the highlights for our group this year was nominating John Henderson for a national LDWA Eager Beaver Award, which was announced at the national AGM in March. John has been our Walks Secretary – always the most difficult job in any walking group – since 2016, and our excellent walks programme is down to him. He has also put in such immense work on our Speyside 100, planning the route, visiting checkpoints, arranging meetings with landowners, and doing much more. I have to say it’s such a pleasure to work with John, and I know all the other committee members would agree.

Lastly, I just want to thank Jenni Coelho for proof-reading the newsletter which I produce, and I must thank Pete Mitchell for putting it on the website and creating the link so that members can read it. As always, any contributions for the newsletter from people in this room will be very welcome.

So it’s been a very good year for us, and we can all be very proud of what our group has done.

Graham Smith

Treasurer’s Report

Lorna Sproates had copies of her report (which is below) and explained the figures for the meeting.

In reply to a question from Stuart Nelson, she said expenses could be reimbursed, with receipts requested.

Social Walks Report

The first ever NoS group walk took place eight years ago on November 28 2015 (led by Pete). This was a 14 mile walk from Logie Steading and following the rivers Findhorn and Divie before joining the Dava Way. This year we have provided the most ever walks with a total of 31 of which three were (non-LDWA) MMC meets. For those new to the group, any of our members can attend the monthly MMC Bus meets (but not guests).

We had one midweek walk, the Speyside Way spur, led by Graham, but most walks are either Saturday/Sunday, depending on the availability of the leader. More midweek walks could be arranged.

Pete Mitchell has arranged eight local walks, usually coinciding with monthly coffee and cake mornings at community halls etc.

Jan and Mary also led walks as part of the Inverness and Moray walking festivals. This is an opportunity for potential new members to see what the LDWA can offer, and we have had an increase of 26 new members join this year. Membership now stands at 108. There were 11 members in 2015.

In August Graham organised a joint weekend in Ballater with the Heart of Scotland group. Dave Galloway led walks on Saturday/Sunday (including the summit of Lochnagar) and in total there were seven members from NoS group and nine from the HoS group, for what was a very enjoyable and successful weekend. Our annual Laich O' Moray 50 challenge walk (October 7/8), has attracted 66 entrants this year. Twelve are from our local group, with the majority travelling from all over the UK, including two from Holland and France! These challenge walks provide valuable income for our group so that we can host these events and also purchase banners and merchandise etc.

Pete Mitchell has indicated that we can use the local Osprey Bus for linear walks and traverses etc. We have hired minibuses in the past but the Osprey bus is cheaper, and saves on car usage.

Next May we have the privilege of hosting the annual 100 mile challenge walk. More than ever, we need as many members as possible to assist in the smooth running of this showpiece event.

John Henderson

Mick Banks reported that he was inquiring about using The Bandstand Bar and Restaurant, in Nairn, for our annual Christmas lunch, at a date to be confirmed.

Graham reported that the Inverness Festival of Walking & Wheeling had been named the Paths For All Active Travel Project of the Year and the event's organisers – Jayne Preece and Marie Law – had been invited to a presentation at the Scottish Parliament this coming Wednesday (September 27). As NoS LDWA is a partner for the event and had organised a walk, Graham had been invited to accompany them, as had some other partners.

Laich O'Moray 50

Stuart Nelson, who has taken over organising the event from Andrew Thacker, gave a presentation in which he thanked John, Pete and Graham for their help. The number of entrants is double last year's number, and he estimated a good 64 walkers would start the event. The concern is the small number of marshals, currently standing at 18, so there was a desperate need for more, particularly to staff the first three checkpoints.

Of the entrants, 25 were from elsewhere in Scotland with two entrants from outside the UK, and there were more entries from over-70s than any other age group. Information packs had been sent to entrants, and packs would be sent to marshals, including the sweepers. Julie will look after catering on the event, as usual.

Speyside 100

Julie Cribb, who chairs the event's organising group, reported the event would attract up to 500 walkers, with a good 200 marshals. There are 14 checkpoints (nine indoors, five outdoors) and the route is 95 per cent complete (issues are being addressed with the RSPB and Forestry Land Scotland, and the Cairngorms National Park Authority had been very helpful). The route is currently 101.1 miles.

The event's budget had been agreed by the organising group, with entrants paying £120 to take part.

The Speyside 100 is a massive logistical exercise, and volunteers are needed.

Accommodation in some of the bigger lodges at the event HQ – Badaguish Outdoor Centre, near Aviemore – had been booked for marshals.

The organising group is meeting every month, and sub-groups had been formed for transport, the route, checkpoints, catering and HQ.

Election of committee officers and other committee members

With Andrew Thacker standing down, Graham Smith was elected chair. *Proposed:* Pete Mitchell. *Seconded:* Dave Galloway.

The vacant secretary position was filled by Alison Collins. *Proposed:* Sally Kendall. *Seconded:* Lorna Sproates.

Lorna is remaining as treasurer so there was no election.

With John Henderson standing down as Walks Secretary, Pete Mitchell was elected.

Proposed: John Henderson. *Seconded:* Jenni Coelho.

Other members of the committee – Jan Adamson, Mick Banks, Julie Cribb, John Henderson, Bea Jefferson, Stuart Nelson.

This concluded the formal business of the meeting, which ended at 14:50.

Open Forum For Views From Members

Start time of pre-AGM walk: It was agreed the current venue was ideal for the AGM, and Jan Adamson asked if, in future, the pre-meeting walk could start an hour later – at 10am – because of the distance involved for some members to travel.

Group Merchandise: Pete Mitchell suggested that, as the LoM was due to make a surplus, some of these funds could be used for purchasing merchandise such as sweatshirts, T-shirts and polo shirts. This will go on the agenda of the next committee meeting.

Car Sharing Group: Alison Collins reported there had been some very good conversations on the group's car sharing group and suggested this could be expanded to include other subjects.

Charity Half Marathon: Alison told the meeting that on October 8, Sally Kendall is running a half marathon to raise funds for the Alzheimer's Society, with which her mum suffers. A collection box was passed round for members to make donations.

The meeting ended at 14:58.

North of Scotland LDWA Statement at 24/09/2023

Transaction Date	Transaction Description	Debit Amount	Credit Amount	Balance
18/09/2023	HOUSE OF FLAGS LTD 400000001208928699 INV PQ23007719 404035 10 17SEP23 19:46	399.36		2287.34
13/09/2023	FINDHORN VILLAGE C 200000001197833035 INV 3255 LDWA LOM 800681 10 13SEP23 11:26	30.00		2686.70
08/09/2023	SIENTRIES LTD NO 2 INVOICE 649281		835.00	2716.70
18/08/2023	SIENTRIES LTD NO 2 INVOICE 648998		242.50	1881.70
21/07/2023	SIENTRIES LTD NO 2 INVOICE 648615		140.00	1639.20
16/06/2023	SIENTRIES LTD NO 2 INVOICE 648105		207.50	1499.20
21/04/2023	SIENTRIES LTD NO 2 INVOICE 647143		165.00	1291.70
07/10/2022	SIENTRIES LTD NO 2 INVOICE 644691		189.49	1126.70
05/10/2022	BURGHEAD COMMUNITY 200000001005794728 INV042 LDWA LOM 22 800891 10 05OCT22 08:47	30.00		937.21
04/10/2022	LOSSIEMOUTH BAPTIS 600000001009055291 NOS LDWA LOM 2022 800891 10 04OCT22 12:34	72.00		967.21
04/10/2022	MILTONDUFF PUBLIC 400000001014087876 NOS LDWA LOM 832006 10 04OCT22 12:24	117.00		1039.21
04/10/2022	FINDHORN VILLAGE C 600000001009047371 INV 3255 LDWA LOM 800681 10 04OCT22 12:19	25.00		1156.21
04/10/2022	RAFFORD CHURCH HAL 100000001005908073 LDWA LOM 2022 832014 10 04OCT22 08:18	126.00		1181.21
04/10/2022	FORRES CRICKET CLB 400000001013963255 LDWA LOM 2022 832014 10 04OCT22 08:16	110.00		1307.21
03/10/2022	BMIA BISHOPMILL H 400000001013443546 INV 279 LDWA LOM 800666 10 03OCT22 10:40	65.00		1417.21
03/10/2022	JULIE CRIBB 400000001013441051 JULIE LOM TESCO 608371 10 03OCT22 10:37	40.37		1482.21
03/10/2022	JULIE CRIBB 200000001004669873 JULIE LOM LIDL 608371 10 03OCT22 09:18	121.02		1522.58
27/09/2022	EDINKILLIE VH 300000001008074221 LDWA 240922 AGM 800681 10 27SEP22 15:33	21.25		1643.60
22/09/2022	Opening balance from 2022 AGM			1664.85
	SIENTRIES withheld £600			
	SIENTRIES Charges £148			