

The North West Grampian LDWA Local Group

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 15th September 2019

Venue: Edinkillie Village Hall, Dunphail

Meeting Opened: 2.45 pm

Item	Minute	Action By
1	<p>Welcome: Pete Mitchell chaired the meeting in the absence of Julie Cribb.</p> <p>Members: Peter Mitchell (Secretary), John Henderson & Bea Jefferson (Committee Members), Carrie Patterson, Christine McLellan, Roger Boston, Jan Adamson, Judith Binney, Anne Sim, May Rochford, Mark Wallington.</p> <p>Guests: Alison Fraser, Fiona (surname not recorded)</p>	
2	<p>Apologies: Julie Cribb (Chair), Rikky Beck (Treasurer), Jenni Coelho (Minute Secretary), Dave Galloway, Angela Mitchell, Rachel Mitchell, Pauline McPhee.</p>	
3	<p>Approve the Minutes of the previous meeting: The minutes of the meeting held on 23rd September 2018 were proposed by PM and seconded by JH as an accurate record.</p>	
4	<p>Matters Arising from the 2018 AGM Minutes: There were no matters arising.</p>	
5	<p>Chairperson's Annual Report: The Chair's Report was circulated to the meeting. Our primary membership is currently 82 (down from 89 last year); associate membership is 52. Participation is currently at 40%. Ways of increasing participation were briefly discussed, such as ensuring walks were on both Saturdays and Sundays and advertising where the lunch stop would be so that members could opt to join half way if feasible. The Committee are planning a survey to find out more about preferences and barriers to participation.</p>	Committee to undertake survey of members
6	<p>Treasurer's Annual Report: A summary and full transaction list were circulated to the meeting. The account balance is £1,061.94. The summary shows transactions between 12 September 18 and 15 September 19 – hence the apparent loss on the 2018 LoM challenge. Once receipts in the previous year are taken into account the loss was £200.</p>	
7	<p>Proposed Walks Programme: John Henderson went through the proposed walk programme for 2020 plus some amendments to the final walks of 2019. The Wildcat trail walk has been moved to 30th November 2019 and the Xmas meal will now take place at Hopeman Golf Club. The provisional list for 2020 was circulated. These currently mainly show walks on Saturdays, but walk coordinators could decide to switch to Sunday. The list was amended, so that the Black Isle walk will take place in March and the Glen Latterach walk in April. The Altyre/3 rivers was moved forward to Sunday 23rd Feb 2020. Any member could also put on 'pop up' walks. The possibility of organising walks to improve navigation skills was raised.</p>	

8	Proposed 2020 Challenge Events: It is proposed that the Heldon Sunset walk is run again, with some changes as a result of feedback. The option of a route from Forres to Hopeman was raised – avoiding the long road section and meaning the Forres section could be walked in daylight. The walk would start earlier in the day.	
9	Hosting of the 2023 LDWA 100 mile Challenge: There was a general consensus that 'the Speyside 100' would be an appropriate title. The event will have a separate organising committee set up.	
10	Resignations of Office Bearers: As per the constitution all of the office bearers resigned.	
11	Election of Committee Office Bearers and Others: Chairperson: Julie Cribb had indicated in advance that she was prepared to stand for a final year as Chair. Julie was proposed by RB, seconded by PM. No other nominations were made, thus Julie was re-elected. Secretary: Pete Mitchell wishes to step down. No nominations were received. Pete agreed to retain the role temporarily while a replacement is sought. Minutes Secretary: No nominations – position vacant. Treasurer: Rikky Beck had indicated in advance that she was prepared to stand again. Rikky was proposed by JH, seconded by PM. No other nominations were made, thus Rikky was re-elected. Ordinary Committee Members: John Henderson (proposed by PM, seconded by RB); Bea Jefferson (proposed by RB, seconded by JH); Pete Mitchell (proposed by BJ, seconded by CP); Jan Adamson (proposed by PM, seconded by RB) were all elected to the committee.	
11	AOCB: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Judith Binney advised the meeting that she had been asked by Moray Estates, as the organiser of a walk by the River Findhorn, to get all walkers to spray their shoes/boots with a substance to kill spores and stop tree diseases spreading. Moray Estates should be able to supply the spray required. (b) How best to ensure safety on walks was discussed, including having contact details for all walkers, and first aid kits. 	PM to contact Moray Estates for shoe spray. Committee to look at developing improved guidance for walk coordinators on safety.
12	Date and Location of Next Meeting: 20th September 2020 at the Edinkillie Village Hall	

Meeting Closed: 3.50 pm

Chair's report

Although for the past few months it has been difficult for me to participate fully with the group through injury and house moves I am pleased to say that the group itself has definitely consolidated its position in the wider LDWA family with a strong committee, good participation from members, an excellent walk programme and some exciting initiatives for the future. Looking back, I can hardly believe we have been in existence for only four years. Our group is known throughout the country for many positive features and it is great to be able to walk with members of other local groups who are interested in what we do and how we do it, being a relative newcomer on the national scene.

Membership – Our Primary membership has now settled around the 80+ figure, though many of those who have not rejoined LDWA are those members whom we had never seen, being largely those we inherited from Heart of Scotland when we were first set up. We are also attractive to Associate members, 52 at present, and a number of these have walked with us from time to time. However, we still have a challenge to convert some of our visitors and guests to members and to attract more of our members to our events on a more regular basis.

Participation – Once again our participation rate has compared well to other walking groups and over the year we have again surpassed our 50% target. This compares very well with other older, more established groups in more populated areas of the country where sometimes they struggle to get double figures on a walk out of a membership of well into the hundreds! We are also still bucking the trend when looking at the make up of our members too. Our male to female proportion is still around 40%:60% - opposite to many and many more females than some which are almost entirely made up of male walkers.

Walks – Over the past year we have managed, once again, to put on walks in all regions of our main geographical area from the Inverness-shire to Aberdeenshire and the Moray Coast to Speyside and the Cairngorm. This is totally with thanks to the number of members coming forward to lead walks in areas they know well but which is totally new to others. It never ceases to amaze me when I am led through areas completely new to me and yet they are almost on my doorstep. LDWA social walks are really a wonderful way of getting to know the area as well as meeting new folk. Unfortunately the weekend walking events didn't quite get off the ground this year for a variety of reasons but we will try with a different format next year and hopefully attract a few more people.

Challenge Events – soon after last year's AGM we ran our first Challenge event, the Laich o' Moray 50. Around 70 people entered, including 4 runners, and the whole event was very successful. We were very fortunate to have excellent weather on the day and a great team of marshals and supporters. We received some good reports and feedback and we also learned some lessons which will help us to improve on the event this year. Unfortunately a combination of factors have led to a low number of entrants this year, something which is affecting a number of other events in the LDWA calendar, but as a number of walkers had entered very early and booked travel and accommodation well in advance, the decision has been to continue with the event but with a more streamlined approach.

Our other event, the Heldon Hill Sunset Walk, was put on in association with the Moray Walking Festival, and again although only attracting a dozen entrants was thoroughly enjoyed by those taking part, especially the BBQ at the end. We could not offer these events without the support of our members helping with checkpoints, marshalling, catering and a variety of other tasks and if you feel you could help in any way, again please get in touch with any of our committee.

Social Media – Facebook has been a very important communication and marketing tool for us and we continue to use it to report on and record our events as well as promoting them in the first place, though as

we are all busy people it has been more difficult to keep Facebook as up to date as we have done in the past. We now have well over 500 followers to our page, a number which is still growing. The photograph albums on the site are well worth visiting too. We regularly get over 1,000 people following our posts, however, we do need to remember that some people do not use social media and we have made a commitment to strengthen our communications by using the LDWA email too to promote events or share important information. It is however interesting to note that with 500+ followers and over 1,000 people reading each post that we sometimes struggle to get double figures on some of our walks. This is also something that we need to consider – how to convert some of these followers to participants and perhaps even leaders in the future.

LDWA Strider – We have continued to get either an article or a walk report published in each issue of Strider, complete with photographs, which in turn has raised our profile within the national LDWA and has attracted a number of Associate members. Given that there is limited space and 43 local groups we are very proud of that.

Finance – a positive balance. As our Treasurers' Report will show from the very beginning when the Committee were paying for rooms out of their own pockets, the group now has a small but healthy bank balance which will enable us to consider a wider range of options for events in the future. A welcome addition to funds this year was as a result of 6 of our members going down to Hexham to run a checkpoint at the annual 100 mile walk. As well as gaining valuable experience and meeting many other members of the LDWA family from all around the country, this earned the group £200 from the Hadrian 100 surplus.

The Committee - It has been a pleasure to work with Pete, John, Rikky, Jenni, Bea and Dave who have all played their different parts in making this local group the success that it undoubtedly is. As well as their committee roles a number also plan and lead walks, often in addition to full time jobs and family commitments. I would like to record my thanks and gratitude to them, especially latterly while I have been out of action.

And others – Once again we were successful in recruiting some new walks leaders this year and we are very grateful to them. This not only eases a little pressure from the committee, but also take us to new and wonderful places where we had not yet ventured. We are always pleased to hear from anyone who would like to lead a walk so just get in touch with John or any of the committee if you would like to give it a go. We are always happy to support new walk leaders.

And what of the future?

We will look to review how we offer challenge events in the future to maximise numbers and make the most of both the equipment and the expertise we now have in running such events.

We have also applied for, and been awarded, the prestigious LDWA flagship event, the 100 mile walk , in 2023 and we will be setting up a separate Organising Group to manage that in the near future. It will bring 500 walkers into the area in May 2023 which will also be good for local businesses and tourism.

But we must not be complacent and to continue the success we want to hear from you what you think would help to improve the group and make us more attractive not only to our current members, but also to new ones. Please let us have your suggestions at any time.

Thank you for your support.

Julie Cribb
Chair NWG LDWA
September 2019

NWG LDWA AGM – 15/09/2019

Treasurer's Annual Report

The account balance at 12 September 2019 was £1061.94

£36.00 is held over for the next MW 5 Day event

Working balance: £1025.94

Details	Expenditure	Income	Gain	Balance
September 2018 opening balance				1245.46
2018 AGM expenses	25.40			1220.06
Heldon Hill Challenge	23.13	236.00	212.87	1432.93
2018 50 Mile Challenge	1947.92	921.1	(1026.82)	406.11
2019 50 Mile Challenge - account transactions ongoing*	25.00	398.00	373.00	779.11
Dave Galloway Corrieyairick walk	50	85	35	814.11
Dave Galloway weekends	20	67.83**	47.83	861.94
Donation for Hadrian Hundred help		200.00		1061.94
September 2019 balance				1061.94

*Cheque for £72 for forestry permit sent

**Ballater return on deposit