NORTHUMBRIA GROUP LDWA

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

14TH JANUARY 2023

The Bar Baa, Edmundbyers YHA

Present

Dave Clifton, Chair. Paul Nellist, Walks Secretary. Peter Ford Secretary elect. Bill Milbourne, LDWA NEC Secretary and outgoing Group Secretary.

Jim Arden, Paul Ashman, Lesley Bellis, Geoff Buckley, Julie Carolan, Roy Coltman, Brid Crowley, Len Fallick, Brian Farrell, Steve Foster, Joanne Hall, Alex Harris, Ian Hislop, Gilly Humphrey, Anja Huskens, Clare Jeffrey, Sally Lee, Steve Lee, Neil Mansfield, Donna McBride, Beryl-Anne Massey, Catherine Meek, Lynne Mickelson, Rachel Musgrove, Claudio De Natale, Michelle Orton, Annette Pantell, Ian Ramsay, Gary Robson, Vicky Robson, Karin Rossouw, John Scott, Liyang Tang, Alan Tiplady, David Thompson, Derek Widdowfield.

Apologies for absence

Sid Astbury, Gordon Barras, Josephine Hooton, Mary McEwan, Anne Palmer, Adrian Romain- Wade, Susie Romain- Wade, Ricky Scott, Jackie Stevenson.

Minutes of last AGM

The minutes of the last AGM on 15 January 2022, were circulated and adopted unopposed.

Chairman’s Report

DC firstly, extended thanks to Jim Arden for today’s lovely Edmundbyers walk and Peter Ford for arranging the AGM.

An overview of an exceptional year was given with emphasis on The Pilgrimage of Light organis

ed by Paul Nellist as Northumbria Group’s celebration of the 50th anniversary of the LDWA, which had proved immensely popular.

DC detailed Bill Milbourne’s decision to stand down as Group Secretary after 8 years and his election as National Secretary. Praise was given to Bill for his outstanding contribution as Group Secretary since 2014 and the countless hours expended to make the group one of the best run and attended LDWA groups in the country. Bill had also taken over from the groundwork performed by Ian Lauriston to become the Lead Coordinator for the Hadrian Hundred in 2019, including the marshall’s walk and through sheer hard work made the events a success. It was also recognized that Bill had been instrumental in taking the Durham Dales Challenge forward as principal coordinator, our main fundraiser, DC now undertaking this role this year.

Members had made generous contributions to organize a gift for Bill by way of a thank you and the incoming Secretary elect, Peter Ford was asked to present this to Bill, the gift comprising a signed print by local artist Ben Haslam of Hadrian’s Wall, together with a bottle of Talisker malt whisky.

In the Chairman’s awards, an outstanding highlight was the completion by Len Fallick of his 40th LDWA 100 – The Trans -Pennine in June 2022, one of only 3 members, nationally to have completed 40 such events. A legend trophy was presented.

The Chairman’s favoured walk had been organised and led by Brid Crowley, taking in Hadrian’s Wall, Haltwhistle Burn and the gorge leading to Plankey Mill, a further trophy was awarded to Brid.

The Durham Dales Challenge had been tricky to stage with a short timeframe to pull matters together with a small committee but was a great success with the help of members. Gary and Vicky Robson and their daughter Lauren were given an award for organizing and hosting an outstanding checkpoint at Middleton and Teasdale.

DC returned to The Pilgrimage of Light, the most memorable highlight of 2022, a 145 mile linear walk from Durham Cathedral to Holy Island, with a crossing of the Pilgrims Way and thanks were again extended to Paul Nellist for the well planned 8 linear walks and superb organization.

Peter Ford presented a piece of artwork commissioned from member Juliet Percival, who had earlier designed both the new group logo and a badge for the Pilgrimage walk. Juliet is a professional illustrator, and the work depicted an illustrated map of the route and description of the walks, funded by the Group and members.

Treasurer’s Report

The accounts for 2022 were circulated and summarized by Peter Ford in Gordon Barras absence, from a credit balance of £5,090.83 which included carried over income from SI entries for postponed Durham Dale Challenge events due to Covid.

The principal expenditure had concerned transport for the Pilgrimage of Light linear walks, where costs were borne entirely by the Group and totalled £1,757.

The Durham Dales Challenge had made a surplus of £1,071.30 after all deductions to include a donation of £250 to Teasdale and Weardale Search and Rescue.

The accounts were adopted unopposed.

Walk Secretary’s Report

PN gave an overview of the year’s walks with 21 leaders involved with group walks, predominately on a fortnightly basis and included the 8 linear Pilgrimage of Light walks which had been immensely successful with a large number of participants.

The mantra or analogy used for the year ahead was to “Send a Love Letter” to expand the database of walks – exploring “every inch and nook and cranny” of our area in a variety of walks with GPX Files to be held on the database.

A reminder was given of the database of walks and how to access the detail from the website and that we would continue not to advertise walks in Strider which required submission of walks too far in advance of their staging. The existing system had worked well with the also the distribution of e-mails in the week leading up to walks.

Thanks were expressed in particular to Beryl- Anne Massey for her detailed walk reports available on the website and to Peter Ford for his submissions.

Whilst our subscribing to “Meet-Up” had led to interest, it had not greatly materialized in many new folk attending walks and new members and we were opting out of the experiment.

Secretary Report

PF Interim secretary / secretary elect gave a brief report on the success of the group and the rising number of members, now totalling 244 with 45 new members during 2022. Some new members had not featured on social walks and were perhaps more intent on challenge walks and access to the LDWA long distance paths database.

PF reiterated the secretary’s role as a conduit with the LDWA nationally to ensure the aims and objectives of the LDWA are met and to answer queries.

The report on the Local Groups Weekend held in Derbyshire was given by Paul Nellist who was an attendee.

There had been a national data analysis commissioned that showed approximately 30% of members were participants in social walks , 30% in challenge walks and the remainder potentially longstanding members , no longer participating.

PN had met the NEC new communications officer Matt Parker and Chris Burrell the new challenge events representative.

Election of Officers

PF had served as Acting Group Secretary since Bill Milbourne had announced his intention to relinquish the role. Following an earlier proposed nomination of Peter, seconded and with no other nominations, Peter Ford was duly elected as Group Secretary.

All other committee members agreed they were available for re-election, which was unopposed.

A new role of Social Secretary was established, and John Scott had been nominated in this role and seconded and was duly elected.

The position of membership secretary, a new members liaison officer, had been held by Sid Astbury, however due to wider family issues, Sid expressed his wish to stand down and nominations were invited for this role.

Durham Dales Challenge 2023

DC advised this would be held on 17 June, to date there were 34 participants registered through SI entries with work to be undertaken to advertise the event, reaching a wider audience, to include the running community and universities.

DC has taken the lead organising role for the event, with volunteers needed for a variety of roles. Gary Robson has resecured the checkpoint at Middleton in Teesdale which he and Vicky will run again with assistance.

EBB 100 Checkpoint

Held on the weekend of 27-29 May 2023, Northumbria LDWA had been given the checkpoint at Solihull Scout Hut at the 92 mile stage, needing to be manned for a 24 hour period, further details would follow but volunteers would be required to work a shift system.

It was likely that Steve and Sally Lee would take the lead on running this checkpoint, located on Lode Lane, Solihull, they both originate from the area.

AOB

There were no further matters for discussion but interjections had arisen during the course of the meeting regarding confirmation that the LDWA membership system had been contracted out to SI entries to administer.

Bill Milbourne also offered out LDWA cookbooks at £7.50, a number of which were purchased.

The meeting ended at 17.00 hrs with a raffle.

Peter Ford

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Northumbria LDWA

Group Secretary