

# LDWA WEST LANCASHIRE GROUP

## Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the LDWA West Lancs Group held on 7.11.2023 at the Sea View

Meeting opened 19.00 hrs

Members Present 24 (inc1 guest)

	<b>Apologies:</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
	<p>Hot Pot was served from 19.00 and at 19:30 Chair, Neil, welcomed all members. Apologies received: Peter and Sue, Sue F, Pat F, Steve and Noreen, Hilary B, Bob and Margaret</p>	
1	<p><b>Approve the minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting.</b></p> <p>Minutes of the 2022 AGM, which had been sent to members, were passed as a true record.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Neil reported that the Club had a new Logo, which was a big improvement. Also, the Committee had agreed to some expenditure on some new banners for the Amble and these were on display.</li><li>2. AOB 2019, a request from a member for a Peak and Northern Footpath sign, to be placed somewhere on the Amble route. Cost is £375.00. plus materials. This request is on hold at present. The above is mentioned in the Secretary's report for an action. See AOB</li></ol>	<p>Agreed by John Clarke and Andy Webster</p>
2	<p><b>Annual Reports of the Committee</b></p> <p>The Chairman's, Secretary's, Challenge Walks Organiser's, and Walks Secretary's reports were circulated to members prior to the meeting for their perusal and comments.</p> <p>The Chair, the Secretary, Challenge Walks Organiser &amp; Walks Secretary briefly went through their reports.</p> <p><b>Chair's report: Neil commenced his report by saying he wanted to start with David's report.</b></p> <p>David had previously sent his report and this was available to members. There have been 84 walks over the last year, which is slightly higher than previous years. Most notably there have been 40 'longer walks' including the 10 Manchester Ringway walks, led by Steve. The 11 longer walks on a Saturday and 8 on a Sunday have had an attendance of under 10 walkers. What else?</p> <p>There were no comments by members.</p>	

### **Chair's Report**

Neil commenced by saying he had been Chair for four and half years, with COVID in between. As a Club we have survived with an average of 17 people attending the Tuesday walks, which remain the bread and butter of the group. Going forward it is important to attract newer members, as 'all of us are getting older'. Whilst the Tuesday programme is popular, working people are not available on weekdays. It is important to have a strong weekend walking programme, whilst recognising that the Group faces competition from 'Meet Up' groups, as evidenced at Downham last week, where two Meet Up groups were at the same car park.

Neil asked the question, 'what are we about?' members attending tonight were strong walkers and leaders and Neil remembered his first walk with the Club was the 'Wainwright's Way'. Neil thanked the leaders, without whom there would not be a Club. Neil said he would do a short presentation of the three paths completed this year at the end of the meeting.

Neil felt it vital for the Club to have a strong Committee to take the vision and ethos of the LDWA forward.

Neil thanked Kate and Mike and Ann for their contribution to the social events. There had also been two fish and chip walks.

The Christmas lunch this year was booked at the Cavendish, with 37 members booked on. This is now full.

Neil briefly outlined the success of the Amble. Neil commented that John Clarke would be attending the Groups weekend in Dorset, who will report back any news from the LDWA.

Neil also thanked everyone who had completed registers and walk reports, GPX files which all contribute to the Club being part of a professional long distance walking organisation.

As this is Neil's last report, he thanked everyone for their help and support, particularly navigating through the difficult COVID period.

Stan proposed a vote of thanks to Neil.

### **Secretary's report:**

Karen reported that there were 275 primary members, 338 associate members. It is unclear from SI membership which are walker/other members. Whilst this number is healthy and we have a steady number on walks, they are mainly the same people. One member commented on why people become members, is because it is cheaper to enter events. It is clear from the LDWA stats last year that the Organisation is 'older' and male dominated! What is apparent is the competition from Meet up Groups, which are prolific in this area. It is important to attract new members who will stay with us a long time. One new member stated he was talking to someone in Lidl about the LDWA, he looked us up and has become a member!

In planning next year's walks, Doreen had mentioned the Two Toms walk, which would be ideal for Tuesday walkers.

Karen had an 'old' list from many years ago and asked Doreen about the Honorary President from 2006 – 2013, who was Charles Thompson. 'Charlie's Pole' on the Amble is named after him. Doreen confirmed that the title had 'faded away', when Charlie retired from the Club.

Karen mentioned in the past there had been Vice Chair's, a Social Secretary, Publicity, Merchandise, to name a few. Neil commented that the new Committee could appoint to some of these roles.

Karen was mindful that a number of members had had 'replacement' operations and on behalf of the Club, wished them all a speedy recovery.

**Equipment Officer's report:** Mike, on the night, commented that his equipment was in 'tip top' condition, ready for the Amble. It makes a difference when everything was put away dry. He thanked Dave and Sheila for their help.

**Challenge Walk Organiser:** Ian briefly went through his report explaining in detail the process we have had to go through for the 2024 Amble in providing Natural England with a notice of proposal to carry out an operation affecting a site of special scientific interest. After a protracted process, permission has now been granted.

Two members commented that the Chorley 4 peaks event and any other event would probably not know about the process for gaining permission.

**Action**  
To be  
considered

3	<p><b>Annual Statement of Accounts</b></p> <p>The annual statement of accounts, completed by Ann was circulated to members prior to the meeting for their perusal. Ann reported that the Club now had an ‘on line’ account which made things easier.</p> <p>Ann summarised the accounts by a spreadsheet, comparing with previous years. These showed a surplus of £564.78 in the year and funds at 30.9.23 of.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Savings Account</td> <td>£4,135.21</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Current Account</td> <td>£4,044.43</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>TOTAL</b></td> <td><b>£8,179.64</b></td> </tr> </table> <p>Charity donations           £500.00 Mountain Rescue    £200.00 Air Ambulance    £69.00 Ramblers</p> <p>Outstanding expenditure: The deposit for the Cavendish 37 x £11.95 (£442.15) Banners £135.00</p> <p>The accounts were agreed – proposed by John Clarke and seconded by Ian Wardle.</p> <p>The statement of accounts had been approved by Andrew Whittaker, who agreed to oversee the accounts next year.</p>	Savings Account	£4,135.21	Current Account	£4,044.43	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£8,179.64</b>									
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4	<p><b>Registers</b></p> <p>Andy Webster stated that there were only 4/5 walk registers outstanding from the beginning of the year, which is a lot better than the previous year.</p>															
5	<p><b>Discuss and consider any properly submitted motion.</b></p> <p>See AOB</p>															
6	<p><b><u>Election of committee</u></b></p> <p><u>Some major changes on the Committee. Neil formally retired, John Clarke agreed to stand. David Whittaker wished to stand down as walks secretary but remain on the Committee as an ordinary member. Jane Anthony wished to stand down as social walks organiser, with Neil wishing to remain on the Committee as walks secretary, assisted by Steve Martin.</u></p> <p><b><u>Officers</u></b></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td><b>Chair</b></td> <td><b>Neil retired. John Clarke agreed to stand.</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Secretary</b></td> <td>There are no nominations. Karen has agreed to stand again.</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Treasurer</b></td> <td><b>Ann Holden, no nominations Ann agreed to stand again.</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Equipment Officer</b></td> <td>There are no nominations. Mike has agreed to stand again.</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Challenge Walks Organiser</b></td> <td>There are no nominations. Ian has agreed to stand again.</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Walks Secretary’s</b></td> <td><b>Neil Harwood</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Web Master</b></td> <td>There are no nominations. Ian has agreed to stand again.</td> </tr> </table>	<b>Chair</b>	<b>Neil retired. John Clarke agreed to stand.</b>	<b>Secretary</b>	There are no nominations. Karen has agreed to stand again.	<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Ann Holden, no nominations Ann agreed to stand again.</b>	<b>Equipment Officer</b>	There are no nominations. Mike has agreed to stand again.	<b>Challenge Walks Organiser</b>	There are no nominations. Ian has agreed to stand again.	<b>Walks Secretary’s</b>	<b>Neil Harwood</b>	<b>Web Master</b>	There are no nominations. Ian has agreed to stand again.	<p>Proposed by Neil seconded by Ian</p> <p>Proposed by John Clarke and seconded by Gaynor Wilkinson</p>
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<p><b>Social Walks Co-ordinator Steve Martin</b></p> <p><b>Committee Post 1 Gaynor Wilkinson</b></p> <p><b>Committee Post 2</b> There are no nominations. Andy Webster agreed to stand again.</p> <p><b>Committee Post 3 David Whittaker</b></p> <p>Andrew Whittaker to verify the accounts on an annual basis.</p>	<p>Proposed by Jane Anthony and seconded by Ann Holden</p> <p>Proposed by Mike Motley and seconded by John Clarke</p> <p>Proposed by Andy Webster and seconded by John Clarke</p>
<p>7 <b>Any other business:</b></p> <p><b>Karen had presented that since the AGM in 2019, Jeff Parr had requested a Peak and Northern sign to be placed somewhere on the Amble route.</b></p> <p>Neil commenced a slide presentation on the 3 walks completed this year. The Comedy Way, The Sandstone Trail and the GM Ringway. Neil asked for members to consider what Trails they would like the Club to consider next year.</p> <p>John and Gaynor talked about a two day walk on Hadrian's Wall next year, 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> August. Neil to send a bulk email.</p> <p>Kate and Mike have organised a walking holiday in Spain in late April 2024.</p> <p>Presentations were given to David Whittaker, Jane Anthony and Neil Harwood for their hard work and contribution to the Club.</p> <p>As there was no further business the formal meeting closed at 9:20pm.</p>	<p>Approved</p>
<p>8 <b>John Clarke's address to the Club as the new Chair</b></p> <p>John commenced by saying that Neil and others had touched on a few pressing issues.</p> <p>Number one, that the Club should strive to increase their membership with younger members, by offering a structured weekend walking programme. Although there was a strong walking presence on Tuesday, working people could not attend these walks. The 'raison de etre' of the LDWA was longer walks, whilst West Lancs competed with at least 25 other walking organisations in the North West, there needs to be a definite walking programme, offering walks every other weekend, on either a Saturday or Sunday.</p> <p>Number 2, the question was asked where were the younger people? One member stated that he answered a walking advert in the LEP (some years ago). It was commented that West Lancs do not have an on line presence, which Meet Up relies on. It was agreed that the Club's facebook page was opened up to the general public, but this would need some management oversight. One member stated that in the past, posters had gone up in various locations and members had printed cards to give out, giving details of the Club. There has been a limited response. There was a</p>	

<p>discussion about how younger families were busier at weekends. Whilst the general membership of the LDWA was going up, this could be due to a large number of runners, who utilize SI entries. One member asked the question, where were the walk leaders for the weekend walks as well as Tuesday?</p> <p>There was a response that there had been 34 weekend walks with 26 leaders, so it was thought to be achievable.</p> <p>John felt that there might need to be a shift in the Tuesday programme to accommodate a weekend walking programme, however there was no easy solution. Other clubs have tried to encourage new members with mixed results, ie Meet Up and Boot and Brews walks.</p> <p>For further discussion. John is attending the Groups weekend and may have further information after that.</p>	
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