

LDWA WEST LANCASHIRE GROUP

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

11th November 2024

Meeting opened 19.00 hrs

Members Present: 17

	Apologies: Hot Pot was served from 19.00 and at 19:30 Chair, John, welcomed all members. Apologies received: Mike and Kate, Ann, Stan and Shirley, Pat F, John F and Hilary B. The meeting opened with a Minutes silence to reflect Armistice Day.	ACTION
1	Approve the minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting. Minutes of the 2023 AGM, which had been sent to members, were passed as a true record. Actions from the Previous AGM's 1. 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. 2. AOB 2019, a request from a member for a Peak and Northern Footpath sign, to be placed somewhere on the Amble route. Following the sad death of Jeff Parr, a memorial plaque to him has been agreed. An ideal site is to replace the plaque on the Trig point at Darwen Tower.	Agreed by John Clarke and Ian Wardle Action: to source a suitable metal plaque for Darwen Tower.
2	Annual Reports of the Committee 2024: The Chairman's, Secretary's, Challenge Walks Organiser's, and Walks Secretary's reports were all circulated to members prior to the meeting for their perusal and comments. No comments were received from members. These Minutes are a summary of discussion, further information, if needed, is available within the reports. The Chair, the Secretary, Challenge Walks Organiser & Walks Secretary briefly went through their submissions. Chair's Report This was John's first meeting as Chair. He summarised his comments. First of all he talked about how the Tuesday's short walk programme he introduced has been massively successful, allowing members to 'reconnect' with the group. There had also been a flow of new members, some of whom had taken on challenge walks. There had been some walking based trips, notably Hadrian's Wall in August, where 29 people had enjoyed all that Northumberland had to offer. Kate and Mike had been away in April to Spain and had another great walking week with some members. Neil had co-ordinated a longer weekend walk along the Nidderdale Way. There has been social events, the Pudding Plod last December, a visit to Mountain Rescue, Fish and Chip walks, all well attended by members, old and new. This year's plod is another new venue, The Cross Keys at Whitechapel. Bookings so far are good. John highlighted the Amble, which received fantastic feedback from all those entrants who enjoyed the day. Looking ahead to next year, it is the 50th Amble event, a milestone in the history of the Club.	

Financially, the Club is highly solvent, and John thanked the Committee and members for their support. He felt there was huge positivity going forward, with a core walking group, who had a strength of knowledge, he felt that it was going to be a fantastic 2025. A discussion took place with how to increase or encourage ‘younger’ active membership? It was reported that the Club had had a surge of new members, particularly in October, where 70 had joined. This could be due to some events, like the Lakeland 50 having a link to the LDWA website, to join as there was a precursor to the event initially ‘open to members’ only. We discussed that one member had seen a poster in the library. It was discussed whether there was scope to put an advert in town chats, ie in Lytham and Kirkham guiding people to the website, or to consider a leaflet drop with existing magazines that are distributed? It is known that there a number of Meet-up groups across our area and there was consideration, but no decision, as to whether it was feasible to attend these groups with a LDWA card, with our details on? It was discussed that we had taken cards before to walks but this strategy did not produce any members. There was plenty of discussion, but no firm answers. Gaynor reported on the Club’s Facebook page Gaynor puts on a copy and paste of the week’s walk and regularly updates the Facebook page with photo’s and other information. There are now over 100 members, some of whom do comment on the walks or features. Although the Club’s website should be the first point of call for the walk programme, it was felt that some members look at Facebook most days and it is a quick way of identifying what is available. Gaynor was thanked for her efforts. Equipment Mike commented that all the equipment is ‘good to go’. Amble Report Ian commented that some key members have pulled out or are not available and this is disappointing. It could mean that fewer people are doing more. The question was asked, as members are getting older, what can be done to future-proof the event for the coming years? Several ideas were put forward, it was agreed to put out an SOS on Facebook, also for Ian to contact all primary members. One of the main time-consuming issues so far this year has been the completion of new forms for Natural England. This is needed because we use Slipper Lowe as a refreshment point and we need the barrier opening for refreshments to take place. It is also acknowledged that some of the route is in areas of SSI, Ian is keen that none of these areas will be subject to a route diversion. On a positive note, the crumbled path on route to the tea rooms has been fully renovated to a high standard. Other forms have had to be completed for the Woodland Trust as the route passes through Rivington gardens, even though these are on tracks, a form, with the route, has had to be completed. Ian summarised the attendees so far, 244 entries with 209 on the long route and 35 on the short. It is estimated that there will be 300 by the end of November. The meeting agreed that entries should be increased to 350, to take into account non attendees, which are usually between 40 and 90. Catering Ian thanked Dave and Sheila for coming forward to do the refreshments at Entwistle. We discussed co-ordinating the catering across the Hall and checkpoints with a meeting to be arranged. It was acknowledged that participants liked jam butties, ginger biscuits and jaffa cakes, with half bananas and oranges. The hall will provide soup and bread, potentially rice pudding and peaches, plus tray bakes. It was discussed whether some celebration cakes should be provided. Costings to be undertaken. A wholesale bakery had been sourced. Morris Quality Bakers at Coppull. Pricing to be confirmed in the New Year. One final note, there is a note on the Amble entry ‘Those who do not enter are not welcome’, this is deter those who turn up and have not entered, but still take food. Extra scrutiny will be needed at checkpoints!	Action To be considered
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	The Barbondale Round was not uploaded as a virtual event this year. A reminder for 2025. Secretary’s report: It was reported that the Club have 308 Primary members and 366 Associate members. The discussion throughout the night had been about membership, whether it was on walks or helping on the Amble. As an active Club we need to try and secure more active membership, to support the walk programme and most importantly the Amble. The Walk Programme Neil had sent extensive statistics before the meeting for members to look at and comment on. On the night he summarized the walking year in great detail, the short version is For 2023 / 2024 81 walks Which includes 55 Tuesday walks and 23 Weekend walks (including Hadrian’s Wall) Walkers accounted for 14.9 % average for Tuesday walks dropping to 8.3 % at weekends. Numbers on walks accounted for 1,012 this year, which is slightly down on 2023 which was 1,097. Areas covered: Chorley (14) Yorkshire Dales (12) West Lancs (7) Preston (5) Pendle (4) Lakes (4) and Ribble Valley (4). There was a surprise in that Pendle did not seem a popular walking destination. Leaders John C led the way in the number of led walks – 12! and Neil on 9! Well done. Weather 77% of walks were dry ie 60 out of 78 walks had dry conditions. Neil thanked all walk leaders and asked for suggestions for next year. There was a suggestion for the ‘Alternative Morecombe Bay walk’. Financial Report. Ann had sent through the accounts which had been verified by the auditor Andrew Whittaker. The current balance is £8,611.97. There were no questions about the financial report. The meeting agreed to accept the report and appoint Andrew as the auditor for 2025. Ann was thanked for the succinct reports.							
3	Election of Committee members As there were no changes to the Committee, the meeting agreed that all Committee members should be appointed for the next year. There is one vacancy which Si Jones put himself forward for. Gaynor nominated and this was seconded by Ian. <u>Officers</u> <table><tr><td>Chair</td><td>John Clarke</td></tr><tr><td>Secretary</td><td>Karen</td></tr><tr><td>Treasurer</td><td>Ann</td></tr></table>	Chair	John Clarke	Secretary	Karen	Treasurer	Ann	
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	Equipment Officer Mike Challenge Walks Organiser Ian Walks Secretary's Neil Web Master Ian Social Walks Co-ordinator Steve Committee Post 1 Gaynor Committee Post 2 Andy Webster Committee Post 3 David Committee Post 4 Si Jones	
4	AOB There was no AOB. John again thanked everyone for their attendance and was looking forward to the next walking year. Meeting closed at 9pm.	