



Wiltshire LDWA AGM Minutes

Sunday 7th December 2025 @ 1500hrs

Peppermill Town Hotel and Restaurant, 40 St John's Street, Devizes,
SN10 1BL

33 Members in Attendance:

John Walker, Tony Rothwell, Alan Voyce, John French, Clare Staff,
Bruce Barclay, Phil Henghan, Simon Clarke, Lucy Robins, Paul Hopkins
David Purdy, Roger Swift, Frederik Folkestad, Di Cross, David Scott
Virginia Pawlyn, Suzanne Pavey, Richard Hickman, Clive Frankham, Caroline Longley
David Longley, Malcolm Christie, Sharon Greatrex, Graham Instrell, Struan McDonald
Beatrice Therin, Angela Johnson, Mike Willis, Victoria Reeves, Andy Todd
Adrian Crocker, Sheena Findlay, Carole Holmes.

1. Welcome (Andy)

2. Apologies for absence (Sue)

Jon Bateman, Guy Vowles, Karen Bruff, Alison Radevsky, Janette Armstrong

3. Approval of last year's AGM minutes (Sue)

These were approved.

4. Matters arising

No matters arising.

5. Reports

The reports attached below were presented.

- a. Chair **(Andy)**
- b. Secretary's report **(Sue)**
- c. Treasurer's report **(Dave)**
- d. Walks Secretary's report **(Lucy)**

The reports raised some questions and discussion.

Paul Hopkins commented on the short notice of walks, and that they are not always on regular days. He made the point that more notice ie 3 to 4 months would lead to greater attendance and would encourage membership. He noted there was no difficulty getting volunteers when he was walks secretary and wondered what had changed.

Andy's view is that life has changed with most people making plans with shorter notice. He noted that many groups are now using WhatsApp to plan walks. This requires investigation.

The decline in numbers for the PDA was discussed, and John French suggested that more marketing was required. Despite the decline in numbers it was still making a good profit for the group. Andy responded by noting that there were a lot more similar events now and that there was no prospect of hitting 300 entrants as was the case a few years ago. Bea Therin was in agreement for a sub-committee for the PDA.

Clive commented that communication from the committee was non-existent and that it was not good enough for the only communication between committee members and members to be on walks. He questioned why no walks were yet scheduled for next year, emphasising that the communication with volunteers was a high priority. He also questioned the use of Meetup and its cost, stating that we needed to recruit at least 13 new members to break even each year.

6. Elections of Officers (Sue)

One nomination was received by the required deadline of 28 days prior to the AGM, for Clive Frankham for the position of Chair. This was proposed by Paul Hopkins and seconded by Bruce Barclay. A note from Clive was circulated with the agenda and is included below. Before approval by the members present, John Walker spoke on behalf of Andy, that the committee should be congratulated on its success, including putting on 42 social walks this year including two 50 mile ones. He emphasized that Andy first became chairman, 4 years ago when Covid had led to a reduction in member numbers and Andy had been encouraged to be chair. John suggested Andy be left in the position of Chair to complete the maximum 5 years in a committee position.

Clive's nomination was ratified by 17 of the 33 members present, 50% being required.

Nominations may be taken at the Annual General Meeting for any posts for which nominations have not been duly received. The remaining committee positions were proposed by Phil Heneghan and seconded by Frederik Folkestad, and were approved by the members present.

7. Motions (Sue)

No motions had been received before the meeting.

8. Any Other Business (Sue)

No other business was discussed

9. Close

The meeting was closed by Clive.

CHAIR'S REPORT

We have reached the end of another year, and have to start by thanking the rest of the committee for their work. Hopefully you are now all full, as Dave has a bill to pay! As chair I have always been of the view that the role is to enable the rest of the committee to undertake their roles with the minimum of hassle, a realistic ask, and to enable them to put their take on each of their roles. This take is important, and something ingrained within the LDWA, and its maximum term policy.

I think (Lucy will correct me) that we have had our busiest walks programs ever. That walks program has been achieved by being flexible in taking a walk when volunteers offer them, both when on date, and when in time. I remember from my time as walks secretary how difficult it was (and getting more so, almost impossible) to fill a walk program when it was being set upwards of 6 months in advance. We would not have had the program we have had if it was not for being flexible. With a walks program as a group we will survive, without one we won't.

That flexibility puts additional workload on the walks secretary, and there is a limit on what they can reasonably be asked to do. This is particularly the case with the current LDWA systems which require considerable effort to use. I do not consider it a reasonable ask for a walks secretary to have to manually email out every time a late walk is listed. Because of this we are using other tools which make the ask viable. I fully understand that some people may choose not to use those tools, or like them, but we do need to make the ask reasonable. Looking forward some tools will continue, some will grow, some will decline. With next year's redevelopment of the LDWA systems there will be an increasing change, and new tools. I will reiterate that one of the key roles of the chair is to ensure that the ask on each member of the committee is reasonable. In the case of walks secretary that does mean that to deliver the walks program members do need to engage with tools that make that ask reasonable, the alternative, we do less.

Walks provide an excellent opportunity to discuss with members where the group is and what we should do. Questions get asked, and answers (where known) given. The walk is where we are a group, and where we should be as a group. The walk is what is important, not the meeting or the email. One of those questions I have been asked is what is happening with Bristol & West and their area. The answer to the first is that unfortunately "Bristol & West are folding", for reasons that are long, complex, mired in an ingrained history, and not for this report. The answer to the second is that we made a counter proposal to the NEC based on their initial proposals, unfortunately they have not taken that on board and we have just been asked to take the area that they initially proposed. We now need to work out what that means.

The PDA went well this year, and brought in the cash which allows us to do things. Thank you all for your efforts (particular to Janette, who is currently off on yet another holiday). Delivery wise it probably went as well as it has ever gone (despite a power cut in Avebury). Unfortunately we are seeing a consistent decline on numbers, for reasons that are not entirely clear. We do not have a good way to advertise, at a time of year which it is very busy with events. Historically much of our attendance was from people (particular runners) wanting to do the same event year after year, this market does appear to have reduced. We do need to open the discussion as to how we move forward, I am unconvinced that the status quo is sustainable in the longer term. Certainly we don't want to get to a point where the PDA suddenly stops making the income we as a group need, or potentially even starts making a loss.

I recently attended the LDWA Local Groups weekend, an interesting weekend. Historically this has been the 'Group Secretaries Weekend', Sue was not available. This is an expensive exercise for the LDWA to undertake, and it was good to meet and chat with people from other groups. It was interesting to talk to other groups and understand that they have similar issues. Attendance was from across the roles in local groups, and one of my takes is it is vitally important that the attendance of this is spread around the committee as much as possible (sorry Sue that means not just the secretary). I am glad that I have attended one Local Groups weekend. With these things it is always sensible to do some form of report, the key topic for the weekend was volunteers, enabling and rewarding. Many of the delegates from other groups that I talked to commented that they are moving to shorter and shorter notice on walks. With several saying (particularly from more upland areas) saying that they were increasingly moving to later notice so they could plan according to the weather.

Four years ago I was walking on a street in London, on one of the Capital Challenge routes, and was offered (by John) what I thought was a 3 year 'life development opportunity' to take over the soon vacant chair of this group, and generally that has been an honour. This was an opportunity that I expected to last at most for 3 years. As a 'volunteer', and dealing with volunteers I will always be of the view that the most important thing to remember about any volunteer is that they are a volunteer and the easiest thing for them to do is say no.

Unfortunately it appears that part of the group believes the world should be different to what it is, and they preferred the past. The past is a place of reference, not a place of residence. The LDWA exists because it is not aiming to achieve the lowest common denominator (be that long, short, hard or easy). If the group takes that direction it will be a pity, and apparently one that some have now decided that you now need to consider.

Regrettable, if that is the route the group decided to take then it is not a route I can justify, support, or enable. So, if you take that approach, then particularly given that I only have one year regardless as chair, and an exit path is available, it seems, quite frankly, sensible to take the opportunity that affords me.

(As an aside, if you take that path, then on a better note it also means I might actually get to walk the PDA as an entrant next year. Not something I have had the option to do for many, many years!)

Andy Todd
Chair of the Wiltshire LDWA

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Members The group has currently 231 Primary members, with emails circulated to a total of approximately 580. This includes Associate members.

Pewsey Downsaround Entry numbers were down this year, 230 from 287 in 2024. Pre-Covid the maximum of 300 was being reached. It was thought there was too much competition for runners and also there was a clash with a Devon and Cornwall event this year. They have confirmed to me that they will not be running an event next year that will clash in 2026. The PDA will take place on Sunday 26th April. It has been advertised well in advance this year, on the Wiltshire LDWA website, in

this month's Strider and entries can be made at the SiEntries website. The Avebury Social Centre has been booked for the Avebury checkpoint instead of having to use the Chapel as this year.

Bristol and West The communication from central LDWA confirming the details of the closure of this group was received on 20th November, with an apology that it has taken so long to resolve. This requires that all primary members of the group will be allocated a new group according to postcode. The majority of the current B&W members live in codes which will be automatically allocated to Heart of England, these are all the BS and GL postcodes. Wiltshire will be allocated members in the BA1 to BA6 and BA11 postcodes. Of course any member can change their membership if they wish to be the Wiltshire group, as is likely for some of those in the BS postcode areas.

Suffolk 100 and HunnyPot 100 A checkpoint was manned jointly with Dorset for the annual LDWA event in Suffolk in May this year. It went well although more people would have helped. The Hunnypot 100 is taking place on 23rd to 25th May 2026 in Kent and Janette is organising volunteers to help at a checkpoint. There has been a very encouraging response to a call out for volunteers so far. The checkpoint will be jointly manned again with Dorset, hopefully with sufficient volunteers to have two overlapping shifts.

Suzanne Pavey
Secretary of the Wiltshire LDWA

TREASURER'S REPORT

The following accounts have yet to be audited
Wiltshire LDWA Accounts Summary – 1st November 2024 to 31st October 2025
Opening Balance: £9,731.37
Closing Balance: £10,067.12
Change in Balance: £335.75

Item	Income (£)	Expenditure (£)	Net Income (£)	Comment
PDA 25	3,712.42	1,176.23	2,536.19	Down on last year £402.06
PDA 26	0.00	25.00	-25.00	Dep. Avebury
Stripe	395.20	0.00	395.20	Difficult to untangle
AGM 24	0.00	952.70	-952.70	Final Amount
Flags	0.00	512.34	-512.34	For checkpoints
New phones	0.00	292.58	-292.58	Shared with RW40
AGM 25	175.48	150.00	25.48	Including Deposit & Stripe
Ice cream walk	0.00	44.50	-44.50	

River Colne Trail	0.00	251.00	-251.00	
Lambourn Open	0.00	165.00	-165.00	
LDWA 100 25	500.00	878.00	-378.00	Assistance
Total	4783.10	4447.35	335.75	

David Purdy
Treasurer of the Wiltshire LDWA

WALK SECRETARY'S REPORT

I would like to thank everyone who has led a walk for us this year and encourage more people to do the same for next year.

Some statistics:

We were able to put on 42 social Walks this year and also run the PDA and Ridgeway challenge events. This is the highest number ever. We have included some shorter walks to suit everyone. I am happy to continue to offer walks of any length as long as we don't lose the longer walks too.

22 of our walks were on Sundays, 12 on Thursdays, 8 on other days including two 50 milers.

We have had a few special walks, including the Lambourn walk visiting the stables, led by John French. Bea led us on a group walk around the Cotswold Challenge route. We also enjoyed a rather warm day out following the 33 miles of the Coln River Walk.

We have been lucky to have 17 different leaders, mostly longstanding members, but a few new ones too. Andy has led the most walks this year (6) with John Walker, Simon and Roger not far behind.

Most of the walks have been well attended, generally the more notice people get the better for attendance.

We have been using Meetup alongside the LDWA website for advertising the walks, this has brought along a few new members.

I hope we are able to continue with similar success for the next year and a full and varied programme.

Lucy Robins
Walks Secretary of the Wiltshire LDWA

A NOTE FROM CLIVE FRANKHAM ON HIS NOMINATION FOR CHAIR

I wish to nominate myself for the position of Chair of the Wiltshire LDWA. When I left the Secretary role last year, I had hoped that the Committee would act on at least some of my parting comments. At the time I said that the views I expressed were shared by other members of the group. A growing number of group members are now so disillusioned with the lack of communication, openness and organisation, they have asked me to stand as Chair. Of those, Paul Hopkins has agreed to propose my nomination, with Bruce Barclay seconding me.

Since the last AGM, the group's walks programme has continued to be populated on a month-by-month basis. I also understand the current Chair has decreed that the monthly newsletter should cease; taking names of those attending walks should stop; and the membership does not need to be informed of what is discussed at committee meetings. The closure of the Bristol & West group is the latest issue causing anger amongst those wanting change. At the last AGM attendees voted to instruct the committee to keep its members fully informed of developments. We've heard nothing.

I have developed the following 'manifesto':

- I will ensure the committee communicates with all group members on a regular basis. The monthly newsletter - which was well received - will be reintroduced, and will include all the usual features.
- I will ensure the committee is transparent with the membership, e.g. we will publish committee meeting minutes, and include highlights in the newsletter. I will chair the committee properly, listen to my fellow committee members, and ensure we operate democratically in the best interests of the group. The group will also be represented at the LDWA's annual Local Groups Weekend.
- The walks programme will be based on - but not exclusively - a regular drumbeat, i.e. 1st and 3rd Sundays, and the middle Thursday. Hopefully the latter will include the popular pub lunch, which so many of us remember fondly.
- The walk leaders' volunteers list will continue to be passed around for completion at the AGM, after which it will be published in the monthly newsletter, so we can watch it filling up throughout the coming year.
- I am committed to hosting the Pewsey Downsaround annually, on the same weekend as the Bath Beat. All four distances, i.e. 10, 17, 26 and 35 miles, will continue to be supported. There will be a separate PDA sub-committee, which will report to the main group committee. One of the tasks of the sub-committee will be to look at the best system for recording entrants' progress.
- The group currently has in excess of £10K in the bank. All those volunteering at the Hundred will receive a financial 'thank you' for taking part. Those volunteering at the PDA will get their expenses paid and will continue to get a discount on their xmas meal. Members will be invited to submit ideas for how we spend the excess. Those ideas will be shared to all members, before any decision is reached.
- Whilst Meetup appears to bring out new walkers, more needs to be done to ensure it is used to benefit the Wiltshire LDWA, i.e. all walk details must include 'the LDWA is a membership organisation. Walkers may attend 3 walks, before they are expected to join'. We also need to better manage the expectations of our members and those joining us, by including more detail about the walks we offer. Meetup should be used in support of our own walks listing.
- We will collect the names of those attending walks. Not only do I think it is still a requirement of the LDWA, but it is also useful to understand the health of the group. We need to know who our active members are, as they are potentially our walk leaders, committee members and volunteers of the future.

As Chair I would be delighted if Sue Pavey, Dave Purdy, Lucy Robins and Janette Armstrong will agree to continue in their respective roles. I would, however, respect any decisions to stand down.

I joined the LDWA in 2012, and have served two terms as the group's secretary since 2017. Whilst in the role, I attended four Local Groups Weekends. I've enjoyed the social walks immensely, and have completed a number of equally enjoyable challenge events. I also published over 60 newsletters to ensure members were kept informed about the group and its activities. Unfortunately 'the lean' has prevented me from completing others. The opportunity now exists for me to volunteer at challenge events which I'm very much looking forward to. On the subject of volunteering, I'm still an enthusiastic Rambler. I'm pleased to have recruited some of my North West Wiltshire Ramblers friends into the Wiltshire LDWA in recent years. I also lead my local weekly Wellbeing Walks; I marshal at Parkrun most Saturday mornings; I've been guiding a visually impaired walker recently; and I'm a Water Guardian.

Regards

Clive Frankham