**London LDWA Dorset 100 Volunteers Weekend, Friday 27th to Monday 30th May 2016**

15 people – leader Susanne Waldschmidt

The weekend got off to a splendid start when London LDWA volunteers and some walkers descended on the Swan, Weymouth (Wetherspoons of course) for a last supper and final drink before their respective challenges.

Saturday morning dawned warm and sunny.  Our sandwich makers were commended by the organizers for their skill and efficiency in preparing hundreds of sandwiches ahead of schedule.  At 10am we watched the masses set off. We would not see them again until the next day.

We were now free to explore the Dorset countryside and we set off for a walk. First the huge and impressive Iron Age Fortress Maiden Castle, whose mighty ramparts and Weapons of Mass Destruction (stones from Chesil beach) had foiled all attempts at invasion until the Romans. We then followed the Inland Route! of the Dorset Coast Path. Next the landmark Hardy Monument (he of Kiss me Hardy fame).  A caravan, by some National Trust picnic tables, provided a delightful Dorset afternoon tea, 'en plein air' with homemade cakes all served with floral china teapots and cups.  This surely was much more enjoyable than slogging 100 miles over hill and dale, merely enjoying the Hardy Monument from a distance. We walked on to Abbotsbury and viewed its three most important buildings, the Abbey Church, the Tithe Barn and of course the pub (another Swan but this time not a Wetherspoons!) before setting off to walk the final 7 miles of the 100. This seemed hard enough at the end of a 20-mile walk let alone at the end of 100 miles.

Working at Headquarters we enjoyed hot showers, proper meals cooked by our Dorset hosts and a quiet dormitory. Soon though it was payback time. We had to earn our keep.  Meeting and greeting returnees, pointing them to the correct loos and above all dispensing cups of sweet tea and loving care. We worked in shifts and this allowed a few volunteers to enjoy a second 10-mile walk round Portland Bill led by Paul. This proved to be most rewarding and they didn't even get lost!  (See report of walk below)

As Sunday night wore on there were triumphs and disappointments, blistered feet, stiffened limbs, heat exhaustion, severe cases of confusion (not sure which was ladies and which was gents) and lots of hugs and camaraderie. Why do people subject themselves to this ordeal?  Maybe it's an addictive drug. Three of our volunteers said they could hardly wait to join the 'Madding Crowd' and walk the 100 next year. They were clearly hooked.

If you ever get the chance to volunteer at one of these events (or even to participate) I'd highly recommend you take it. Anyway we will need more volunteers to pour out tea and sympathy for our future London champions.

**Portland Bill (London LDWA Marshals for Dorset 100), Sunday 29th May 2016**

5 walkers, 9 miles – leader Paul Lawrence

There's been a good group of LDWA London members down in Weymouth this Bank Holiday weekend to support the LDWA Dorset 100 challenge walk.  We have been working in shifts since Friday evening so today five of us took advantage of a gap in the rota to make best of the good weather and complete a quick circuit of Portland Bill.

The weather was superb and the scenery spectacular.  Great walking over springy, dry, limestone turf with expansive views inland over Chesil Beach and out to sea over the Channel.  Interesting sights along the way, including the Tout quarry complete with sculpture park and work by Antony Gormley, and the spectacular lighthouse right at the end of the Bill.

We didn't rush, as the going was so good, but had to draw to a close mid-afternoon to get back in time for the 6pm - 2am and then 2am - 10am shifts.

Despite the long hours, the camaraderie is great and if you ever get the chance to volunteer to marshal at one of these events (or even better to participate) I'd highly recommend you take it.

Photographs by Adam Dawson