



## LONG DISTANCE WALKERS ASSOCIATION

furthering the interests of those who enjoy long distance walking

[www.ldwa.org.uk](http://www.ldwa.org.uk)

### LDWA Chair's Newsletter: June 2020

Welcome to the June 2020 LDWA Chair's Newsletter. Despite the fact that 'normal' LDWA activities have been suspended since the COVID-19 lockdown in March, it's been wonderful to see that many of our local groups' committees are keeping in touch with their members via their newsletters. I am an associate member of every local group and I am fortunate that I get to read the newsletters that go to associate members and I have been entertained by the creative writing and informative facts written by some of our newsletter authors. Newsletters are a great way to keep in touch with local members and several encourage two way communication to encourage local members to keep in touch and not feel isolated during these particularly difficult times.

May was actually a busy and productive month for many of our members. The NEC set up two events and both proved to be very popular. The first one was a challenge to record the first hour's mileage on a daily basis for the month of May and record the details on our shared spreadsheet.

The second was the 'virtual' Y 100 Sir Fynwy, an event that required considerable imagination, an ability to not take anything too seriously as well as access to Facebook where the photographs and videos of members having fun were posted.

I am personally grateful to two NEC members in particular. Julie Cribb and Julian White worked so hard in May to deliver both events, more of which can be read about to the right!

Happy 'Long Distance' Walking!

David Morgan

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#### Coronavirus 100 – May Challenge

When the Coronavirus 100 challenge was advertised last month, we never expected the amount of interest that it invited.

The NEC was aware that we would not be able to reach all members as not everybody opts to receive emails, reads the LDWA forum or uses the various social media accounts that the LDWA now has.

The idea of recording the first hour's mileage on our daily exercise was very popular and 354 members actively participated. Many, but not all, managed to reach the 100 mile target and from members' feedback it was clear that the challenge had been perfectly timed. Many members advised us that the challenge had been the perfect incentive to go out and walk every day. I was particularly touched by one member's comments that as an octogenarian, they had walked every day and their fitness levels had increased accordingly. If we ever needed a reminder that walking is good for us, then that was it for me! The NEC is currently considering a project for July that will encourage members to get involved. More information will be sent by email as the plans mature.

When Julie Cribb introduced the idea of a virtual challenge event to the NEC in April there were a few raised eyebrows including from 'Yours Truly'! How would the event work? Did people actually walk 100 miles? How do you pass through a checkpoint? How do the marshals get involved? It is fair to say that there was some scepticism!

The NEC shouldn't have been worried as the virtual event was enthusiastically received by so many of our members and the weekend of the 23-25 May was highly successful. Members just embraced the concept and posted hundreds of photographs of themselves getting involved. I laughed out loud at many of the photographs and comments made by members and it was a highly entertaining weekend. To cap it all, at the end of the weekend I was advised that some members had actually walked 100 miles and all within the respective lockdown rules for the country in which they live. Julie has authored an article that will be published in the next Strider magazine and I know that it will make great reading!



The NEC Coronavirus sub-committee continues to meet every Monday. It is currently working on guidelines that might see social walking reintroduced in England in the near future. Local Group Chairs and Walk Secretaries will receive information in the next few weeks which will outline how social walks might commence.

There will be limitations on the number of people that can walk socially and the sub-committee is aware that not all our members will always be able to participate. The process will be challenging but by providing guidelines, there will at least be an opportunity for people to start walking together. The guidelines will alter as the Government advice in the four nations is updated.



With regards to the IT Development Fund I can report that the two virtual events generated circa £2500 from members' donations. One lady was so impressed with the work undertaken that she donated £300 in memory of her mother who loved long distance walking. Essex & Herts have donated £152 in lieu of the cancelled Herts Hobble and South Pennine £200. Thank you to everyone who has been so generous during these difficult times!