



Furthering the interests of those who enjoy long distance walking

April 2021

Julie's Journal – Thoughts from the Chair

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My First Newsletter

April 1st didn't seem to be the most auspicious date for my first newsletter as Chair! Also, it crept up very quickly following my appointment at the LDWA AGM and I wanted to think more about what I wanted to say. So, a little later than usual - here is the April Newsletter!



Getting Back Out

After so long it has come as some relief for the NEC to have been able to provide advice and guidance on how groups can recommence their social walks' programmes and I'm delighted that as I write this so many groups have already been back out walking. I think we can now say that the light at the end of the tunnel is not the oncoming train.

In the meantime it was good to see the Virtual Challenges showcasing two of our local groups. First, thanks to Nicky Wood and the Lakeland group in February - I think those Herdy keyrings are going to become collectors' items. Then North of Scotland in March with a mixture of history, culture and whisky. Between all of the participants some hefty mileage was clocked up! As we entered April and further easing of restrictions the Factoid Challenge was in full swing before the virtual challenges take a break for the summer. If you and your group would like to showcase your area in the Autumn, please get in touch with me or Karen Pickersgill and let us know. We'll be happy to help you set things up.

It was also great to read about the first LDWA social walk of the year around Windsor led by Richard Ireson – very fast out of the starting blocks having worked with us on the regulations and knowing them inside out!

Working with the Team

I spent the first couple of weeks following the AGM getting to know my colleagues on the NEC in one-to-one meetings. Even though I had worked closely with many of them over the five years I had spent as Local Groups' Officer it is odd how having a particular portfolio on the NEC can make one quite blinkered in some ways and see people only with their respective 'hats' on. Having a catch up individually with each of the team has helped me understand much better what everyone's role is and where they see themselves as part of the team and of the wider Association. It also gave me much food for thought and I am looking forward to working with them over the next few years.

Focus for my Term of Office

The first NEC meeting following the AGM crept up very quickly but having had some time to think about my role and what I wanted to focus on as Chair, it gave me the opportunity to present my thoughts to the others. I decided that my focus will be on several areas:

- Working with the Team – working smarter not harder
- Valuing our volunteers
- Inclusion and Diversity
- Working in partnership with walking related organisations
- Supporting the improvement of communications within, across and outside LDWA using a variety of media
- New Business System and website
- Building awareness of LDWA
- Project 50 – the Anniversary year

Over the coming months I will expand on my thoughts and activities in relation to each of these. I will also be pleased to hear from anyone at any time on any aspect of our work in these areas. After all, having served as LGO I completely understand that the Association can do nothing without the support and commitment of our Local Groups and our members.



Some Personal Objectives

All work and no play as they say! So I also have two personal objectives that I will strive to achieve over my term. First, I plan to walk some very long distances – exploring some of the fantastic routes in our Long Distance Paths database and perhaps developing a couple of my own too. And secondly, (something I had

wanted to do as LGO but two operations and a year of lockdown rather got in the way) and that is to walk with every local group at some point – either joining them on a social walk, attending an AGM or entering one of their Challenge Events. I'm especially looking forward to doing this.

And looking forward to the 100 (or am I?)

Another reason this newsletter is later than planned is the time it takes to train for a 100-mile event! Every weekend for months now I have been walking with my 'team', fortunately all in the same 'bubble', to recce our planned route around Loch Ness (and several other lochs too – no surprise there for those that know me!). I'm thinking that this might be my best chance at being able to complete the event - being able to sleep in my own bed, set off when I want, start from my own front door, eat and drink what and when I like (albeit from the boot of a car) and not spend 2 days travelling to and from wherever the event is held. I usually end up walking by myself at Challenge Events so actually having a few others join me on my planned route will be a novelty. And with it being local my daughter has decided to try it too, aiming for 54 miles and qualifying for next years' event, but giving the 100 a good go too.



As I write this the number of entrants for the Virtual Y 100 Sir Fynwy has just crept up over 400 and many have already been exchanging news and views and encouraging each other on the associated Facebook and WhatsApp Groups. Wouldn't it be great if we could reach the magic 500 that we attract most years to the actual event? If you are thinking about entering there is still time and at the end of the day, what do you have to lose? You might even surprise yourself! And I for one am looking forward to seeing everyone's photos and comments of their version of the Welsh mountains. You'll find all the details you need on the SiEntries website and at <https://www.ldwa.org.uk/2021Hundred>

And finally . . .

Having been a member for some 30 years I didn't dream then that I would ever be so closely involved with the Association. I am enormously proud to be leading the Association as we approach our 50th Anniversary and as we face new and different challenges. I am looking forward to working with the NEC, the Local Groups and you, our members and volunteers over the coming years.

So, until next time, enjoy your walking, however far that may be and wherever you can get to. Keep checking in on our LDWA Website or on Social Media for the latest news and events.

Julie Cribb

If you'd like to get in touch you can contact us through the website at [LDWA](#).

Contact details for [Officers](#) with particular responsibilities are listed.

We are also on social media.

Like our [Facebook Page](#) or join our [Facebook Group](#)

You can also follow us on [Twitter](#) and on [Instagram](#)