



LONG DISTANCE WALKERS
ASSOCIATION
SOUTH WALES GROUP



MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 4th NOVEMBER 2006

1. PRESENT:- George Baugh, John Cunnane, Carl Edwards, Carol Elcock, Dan Hadfield, Jean Hadfield, Rod Hollands, Gerry Jackson, Rosemary Jackson, Robert Smith, David Williams, Malcolm Winney, Wendy Winney, Hugh Woodford.
2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:- Tim Gronow, Claire Murray, Bob Smith, Ann Stevenson, Peter Stevenson.
3. MINUTES OF THE LAST AGM (on 26 Nov 2005):- These were agreed and adopted.
4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT (by John):-
 - (a) Thanks were given to the committee members, to the walk leaders and to everyone else who had supported the Group over the last twelve months.
 - (b) The Caerphilly Summits Challenge held in August was successful despite the change of date from the traditional first Saturday in July. Some of the entrants gave positive feedback. There were 142 entries compared with 139 for 2005, 100 for 2004, 121 for 2003, 64 for 2002 and 185 plus 205 bikers for 1998. Thanks were given to all those who had helped.
It was agreed that we would hold the event again in 2007 but that we would revert to the traditional first Saturday in July, i.e. 7 July 2007.
5. SECRETARY'S REPORT (by Dave):-
 - (a) We have been able to have two walks every month thanks to those who had agreed to lead walks. In 2006 there will have been 27 walks altogether with attendance varying between a high of 14 and a low of one, when only the leader turned up. Average attendance to date remains low at 6.
 - (b) Support for our experimental mid-week walks has been very disappointing but we may continue to include a few walks in the hope that more people will come along.
 - (c) Walks leaflets to advertise our programmes have been put on display in libraries, Tourist Information Centres, etc and given out on Ramblers and BBPS walks but they didn't attract new members so the exercise has been discontinued.
 - (d) The South Wales membership list is regularly downloaded from the LDWA website and welcoming letters are sent to new members, inviting them to join us on our social walks. A few have responded to say they intend to come but nobody has turned up yet. Some new members appear to be runners who join for the challenge events only. At present there are about 110 members in our area but only 20 or so are regularly seen on social walks.
Rosemary suggested that we write to the "invisible" members to try to find out why they joined, why they don't come on social walks, and what would persuade them to do so. Carol also suggested that we might contact the mountaineering clubs within colleges where some students might be interested in joining us. It was agreed that this would be considered at the next committee meeting.
 - (e) The next walks programme which will appear in the December 2006 edition of Strider was sent to regulars in September and Dave has copies if anyone wants more.
 - (f) The offers to help with next year's Cant Canolbarth 100 and the marshals walk had been forwarded to Tony Walton who had sent his thanks. Tony will get in touch with the volunteers with his proposals early next year.
 - (g) Gerry was thanked for redeveloping our website which is more and more becoming the focal point for people seeking information. Over 1500 people have visited our website since January.

(h) In a growing litigious culture, Insurance and Health & Safety issues are becoming more important to safeguard our members. For the Caerphilly Summits this year, we needed to make a Risk Assessment which Malcolm volunteered to prepare.

If anyone has an accident on a walk, the leader must in future report details to Dave please so that he can record the facts in the Accident Book; and if there is any possibility that a claim for compensation will be made, Dave will also send an Incident Report Form to the LDWA.

Dan had thoughtfully copied some notes about Insurance from the Surrey Group's Newsletter and they were read out. (The notes are reproduced at paragraph 10 of these minutes.)

6. TREASURER'S REPORT (by Malcolm):-

(a) The Profit & Loss Account for the Caerphilly Summits Challenge on 5 August 2006. The accounts were adopted.

(b) The Group Accounts for the year to 30 September 2006 were also presented. The accounts were adopted.

(c) Malcolm proposed an increase in the entry fees for next year's Caerphilly Summits to cover the cost of the proposed purchase of a few picnic tables and chairs for the event, and the subsidy for the weekend away, so that our capital would be preserved at its present level. Wendy also pointed out that Tongwynlais Primary School was having a new Head Teacher in January and a decision on whether we can use the school again will depend upon him/her. If the Head says we can't use the school, we will have to find an alternative venue which might be more expensive.

Dave expressed the view that the Caerphilly Summits was renowned for its value-for-money and that an increase in the fees might discourage some people from entering. He said that before deciding to increase the fees, we should first examine the possibility of reducing expenditure; e.g. about £100 was spent this year on the issue by post of entry forms to the 313 past entrants but only 44 people used them. Such a small response was not cost effective and next year we could just send forms to those for whom we have an e-mail address at no cost.

After the 2006 event, there were 414 past entrants of whom 34% had given us an e-mail address. And of the 142 entrants in 2006, 41% were on forms downloaded from our website so the importance of "paper" forms is diminishing.

Dave also said that he did not think that a non-trading mutual concern such as ours required a large contingency reserve, because there was no likelihood of any claim being made against our funds. We can easily afford to subsidise weekends away and one-off purchases out of capital, and should do that for the benefit of our members; rather than maintaining a disproportionately high level of capital which will benefit no-one.

Opinion was evenly divided so it was agreed that we would reconsider this again at next year's AGM. In the meantime, the CSC entry fees would remain unchanged, the picnic tables and chairs should be purchased, and the weekend away should be subsidised.

7. WEEKEND AWAY REPORT (by Wendy):-

Wendy has booked The Old Rectory overlooking Newport Bay in the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park for 3 nights on Fri 16, Sat 17 & Sun 18 March 2007. The cost for 12 people is £550 and 10 places have already been taken, and a deposit of £150 has been paid.

One of the walks will be linear and it was agreed that a minibus should be hired.

8. ELECTION OF OFFICERS :-

(a) Chairperson – John's offer to continue in this post was unanimously accepted.

(b) Group Secretary – Dave said he was happy to continue but offered to step aside if anyone had a burning ambition to become Secretary. The offer was ignored and he was reappointed!

(c) Treasurer – Malcolm's offer to continue in this post was unanimously accepted.

(e) Website Manager – Gerry agreed to continue with this work.

(f) Committee Members –

Wendy agreed to continue in this post.

Andrew Alford has been unable to attend recent committee meetings for family reasons but he has not formally resigned and will hopefully be able to resume his valued contribution at some future date.

George kindly agreed to join the committee.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:-

(a) Gerry said that our Website Domain was coming up for renewal. He will pay the fee over the Internet using his credit card, and Malcolm will reimburse him with a cheque from the Nat West account.

(b) Wendy suggested a Group Christmas dinner – too late for this year but possibly for 2007. She also suggested regular get-togethers at varying locations as some other Groups do. These were thought to be good ideas and it was agreed that we would discuss this further at the weekend away next March.

(c) Robert asked what had happened about the proposal to reactivate the St Peter's Mountain Challenge and Dave recapped on what was said at last year's AGM when there had been little enthusiasm to take it on. At today's AGM a bit more interest was shown and it was suggested that we might take it on after all, and perhaps alternate it on a year-in, year-out basis with the Caerphilly Summits. The route would need to be altered a bit to provide easier access to refreshment stops, but the use of Llanbedr School had already been offered by the Parent Teachers Association. It was again agreed that we wouldn't make a decision now, but that everyone would give the matter further thought and come to next year's AGM with some formulated proposals.

10. INSURANCE – Notes From Surrey Group's Newsletter:-

"Members, walkers and walk leaders might be interested to read the following pointers provided by the LDWA's insurers for our "information and protection".

1. Any group walks/activities published in Strider or shown on the Website are covered by the LDWA insurance.
2. A guest is covered if their names are recorded at the start, which walk leaders should do. However, after three walks, they will only be covered if they join LDWA.
3. Dogs that come on walks are not covered by the LDWA insurance, nor are any incidents they are involved in, so are the owner's responsibility on a walk. If a dog trips someone, LDWA insurance does not provide cover and the owner would be considered responsible/liable.
4. Any incident or accident during a walk should be mentioned to the leader who will notify the Group Secretary, who notes it in the accident book and informs the insurer.
5. Generally, any young people under-18 should be accompanied by a responsible adult. We should be supportive and positively encouraging of them at all times and avoid comments like "we all get sore feet so get off your butt and walk the last ten miles" which could be considered abusive."

Dave Williams

5 Nov 2006