

South Wales Long Distance Walkers Association

Minutes of Annual General Meeting

Zoom videoconference Sunday 25th October 2020 19:00

Those attending: Alwyn Nixon, Andrew Clabon, Pete Lamont, Jill & Rob Richardson, Jo Johnstone, Claire Murray, Grae Yeandle, Gerry Jackson, Jason Winney, David & Gill Morgan, Ange Williams, Simon Pickering, Judith Fox, Tony Alcock, Sara Down, Cheryl Llewellyn, Guido & Nisha Szamocki, John Roberts, Laura Turner, Andrew Blackmore, Shirley Hume, Rhys Pippard.

1. Welcome from Jason.
2. Apologies from Ferne Davies.
3. Confirmation of 2019 AGM minutes and matters arising – the minutes were agreed and accepted. Proposed by Shirley Hume and seconded by John Roberts.
4. Chair's report – see attached
5. Treasurer's report – see attached
6. Walk secretary's report – see attached
7. Group secretary's report – see attached
8. Election of officers –

Chair – Jason Winney, proposed by Simon Pickering, seconded by Judith Fox

Treasurer – Judith Fox, proposed by Rob Richardson, seconded by Jill Richardson

Group secretary – Simon Pickering, proposed by Judith Fox, seconded by Rob Richardson

Walks secretary – Sara Down, proposed by Simon Pickering, seconded by Pete Lamont

Challenge walk co-ordinator – no nominations received

Jason thanked the outgoing group secretary for his hard work.

David Morgan described the concept of virtual challenge walks. Entrants would pay a fee to access a route description to undertake a walk either on their own or within a small group. Part of income could be directed to the IT fund.

9. Charitable donations & LDWA IT fund – the topic was debated at length. In conclusion it was agreed that 25% of the group's surplus funds (including £1000 loaned to Y 100 Sir Fynwy), ie £900 would be donated as follows: £450 to the LDWA IT fund, £225 to Wales Air Ambulance & £225 to Brecon Beacons MRT.

In future a 50% levy will be added to entry fees for group organised challenge events as a donation to the IT fund.

10. Appoint independent examiner of accounts – Gerry Jackson kindly agreed to examine the accounts.

11. Substantive motion (see below) – this was agreed by a majority.

12. AOB – David Morgan offered to produce a quarterly newsletter containing items of general interest to the group similar to the Essex and Herts group. Members would be invited to submit articles. The proposal was agreed by a majority of those attending the meeting.

Gerry Jackson raised the subject of a successor to act as an administrator for our website. Sara Down offered help, which was accepted.

Gerry proposed creating a local walks book which could be sold to raise money for the IT fund. It was agreed this was a good idea and approved by those attending.

Rob Richardson asked whether the group Facebook page should continue and if so, was anyone willing to take over from him as administrator.

Jason Winney offered to take over the role.

13. Close – the meeting closed at 20:33.

Substantive motion proposed by David Morgan, seconded by Rob Richardson:

'In recent years the South Wales LDWA group has made great efforts to involve itself with the wider LDWA family. For example, for 7 of the last 8 years, the South Wales LDWA group has run checkpoints on the annual 100mile walk, and on the other year, organised the event itself! Committee members have attended the Local Group Representatives' meeting that is held in November and have taken advantage of the fact that National Executive Committee (NEC) has paid for their accommodation and travelling expenses.

The LDWA Annual General Meeting is not as well supported by members from the South Wales LDWA Group and this is understandable to a degree. The LDWA NEC cannot afford to pay for every group to attend and so relies upon members paying to attend the weekend themselves. The AGM weekend is a very useful event and enables members to

network, share ideas and learn more about what is impacting upon the national organisation and the challenges it faces in the future.

Many of the members who attend the LDWA AGM weekend are funded by their local group and they then represent their group at the weekend. They return to their local group and update members on what they have learned. In order to ensure that the South Wales LDWA Group is represented at the LDWA AGM weekend, I propose that the Group pays for the accommodation and travelling expenses for one member to attend every year. That member might be a committee member with knowledge of South Wales LDWA business or a keen member who has an interest in both local and national LDWA matters. The South Wales LDWA group committee would make the decision on who would attend the national LDWA weekend on behalf of its members.

With a surplus that far exceeds the annual turnover of the Group, the Group can afford to pay what is likely to be circa £250 per annum, and once COVID related matters are resolved, the income of the South Wales LDWA group will return to pre-COVID levels.'

Chair's report 2020:

Nobody saw the Corona virus pandemic coming in 2019. 2020 has been a very tough year for a lot of us, our club the South Wales LDWA has been a real asset to us, especially now, for both our mental and physical health. The introduction of the WhatsApp group has meant we can share some fun posts, information and what we're individually doing with ourselves. It's times like this where our club generates its own strengths, and it is this that helps us as members to reach out to each other and keep in touch.

I'd like to take the opportunity to thank the members for making our club the lovely family it is, I for one take advantage of this.

Our club continues to grow and thrive, in years to come we shall look back with fondness how we pulled together and got through this terrible year.

There will no doubt be many challenges set before us in 2021/2022, but it's the fact that the LDWA is what we love being a part of, and it's this that will help breakdown those challenges.

The club has quietly persevered with the 100, and the outcome to this is still ahead of us, either way, we still have our club, friends and future adventure's.

I look forward to joining you all on a walk soon.

Jason

Group secretary's report 2020:

As of 18th October we had 258 (292) primary members and 361 (376) associate members (2019 numbers in parentheses)

32 (53) new primary members have joined since October 2019.

There have been 5 committee meetings, the last 4 being virtual meetings. This format has proved very successful and negated the need for

committee members having to travel (good for the environment and wallet!). I suggest the next committee continue to use the virtual format for their meetings.

Thank you to the rest of the committee for their support in what has been an unusual and memorable year.

I leave the secretary's role in the capable hands of Simon.

Rob

Walk secretary's report 2020:

As for so much of society, it has been a challenging year to be a walking club. We've experienced a winter heavily punctuated with rain and floods that led to several walks being cancelled, and no one will need reminding of the disruption (to much more than walking) that the current pandemic finds ourselves in.

None the less, the show has gone on. A quick review of the records shows that the South Wales Group still managed 23 official walks between the respective AGMs of 2019 and 2020 ranging in length from 14.5 to 28 miles. Walks were led by Hugh and Heather Woodford, Rob Richardson, Dave Morgan, John Roberts, Jason Winney, Mike Batt, Tony Alcock and Simon Pickering. I name them here because they are the lifeblood of a walking group and have my sincere thanks. New walk leaders are always welcome and there is help readily available from more experienced practitioners who would be only too happy to see the ranks swelled. It is pleasing to see a number of members expressing interest recently in leading walks, and I look forward to seeing their walks come forward on to the programme in the coming months.

Given these unusual times, I think it is also worth mentioning the cancelled walks. The winter storms and other factors claimed three in the early part of the year, while Covid added a further 15 – surely, an unwanted (and hopefully unrepeated) record.

Covid, of course, has also led to a change in the ways that we have had to do things. For the time being, walks are restricted to primary South Wales group members only with only limited information being provided in advance. This is aimed at ensuring compliance with the new Regulations, and is hopefully something we can move away from in due course.

If there has, perhaps, been one positive aspect of Covid it is that it has highlighted a number of resources that the South Wales group has access to. Our fantastic walks database (www.southwalesldwa.org/wp/?page_id=561) introduced by Gerry Jackson (and now being introduced across the LDWA family) has provided a readily available library of routes for members having to find an alternative to a social walk, while social media (such as our new WhatsApp group) has enabled members to keep in touch and maintain friendships forged through the group. I would also highlight the photo library available through links from the Past Walks listings on the website (www.southwalesldwa.org/wp/?page_id=1131&period=2020) as another great resource, both to gain an insight into a particular walk and to reminisce about previous adventures (remember when we always used to stand together for the obligatory

group photo!). These are great resources, but they do require some time to maintain – I would encourage people to find a bit of time to assist in this way if they can.

This is my last year as Walks Secretary, so I would like to thank all the people that have helped me in the role over the last couple of years, particularly the walk leaders!

See you on the trail - solvitur ambulando.

Simon Pickering 18th October 2020.