



WALKERS ARE WELCOME TOWNS NETWORK

Towns and villages with something special to offer walkers



Newsletter August 2014

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Chepstow Get-Together 18/19 October

Thirteen squares for the **Walkers are Welcome** quilt have now been received in Chepstow. There have been photographs on twitter and in local press with members taking the opportunity to promote their town. Many are beautifully quilted or embroidered but don't let that put you off, this was suggested as a fun project, a 'Lasting memory of all the groups representing **Walkers are Welcome**'. Rules for the square are at the bottom of the [Annual Get-Together 2014](#) webpage. The closing date to send in your square has been extended to **18th September**, plenty of time to make your contribution.

Pictured: Market Weighton's unusual printed square

Have you booked your place and accommodation in Chepstow yet?

Marketing & Walking Festivals

Last month we mentioned a little about marketing. A wonderful example of best practice is in the Cambrian Mountains of Wales where Llandoverly, Devil's Bridge and Bro Tregaron are organising a month long regional walking festival aptly named 'STEPember'. Dafydd Wyn Morgan's enthusiasm shines through all their innovative marketing. Have a look at some of their publicity materials. [Cumbria Mountains website](#) [flipbook](#) [film](#) [vine](#) [flickr gallery](#) [programme](#) Plenty to inspire.

Whilst on the subject of walking festivals, the [Walking Festivals/Events](#) advertising opportunity on the **WaW** website is only for members. So if there is a walking festival in your region and you are not part of the organising or guided walking, we regret we will not be able to advertise the event. We would expect to see the **WaW** logo or at least the member group mentioned.

Walking festivals are not compulsory for members but can generate income and raise the area's profile if you have the manpower and capacity to take it on. Partnership working certainly spreads the load.

The two logos above in black and yellow or black and white plus other language versions are available for members to download and use from our [resources page](#).

Cycle Paths

The [Cycle Tracks Act 1984](#) allows for suitable footpaths to be converted into cycle paths where there is no resistance. Any opposition triggers a public enquiry however, many residents are often not aware that there is a proposition for conversion. The biggest anomaly is that if the conversion takes

place, the footpath is removed from the definitive map. This is because there is no category under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 section 56 for a Public Right of Way that allows for cycles and walking. If the cycle path is no longer required, the footpath will return to the definitive map. Many highway authorities have insisted on Bridleways only or not taken advantage of this act but others have.

The Ramblers Association would like to see new classes of Public Rights of Way that allow for cycle paths to be included on the definitive map (with or without a footpath). David Rutley MP as co-chair of the Mountaineering All-Party Parliamentary Group has agreed to take this matter up with Defra (Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs).

Cycling is becoming increasingly popular with participants seeking new off road routes. Many walkers are also cyclists and share facilities. Another category is a landowner giving permission for a footpath to be used by cyclists. This may cause damage to the surface or even accidents with the landowner being responsible. Action to encourage the creation of this type of permissive cycle path is being encouraged by CTC (Cyclists' Touring Club).

We would all wish to see cyclists and walkers co-exist happily but we are aware that there can be conflict. If you are experiencing any problems in your area or indeed have some innovative solutions, we would love to hear your stories which can be used to highlight issues and solve problems nationally.

Re-opening and claiming paths

Our Patron, Kate Ashbrook mentioned last month the Deregulation Bill which hopes to speed up the process for claiming paths for the definitive map. We have prepared a new fact sheet 'Re-opening and Claiming Paths' available on the resources page.

Don't forget to foster a close relationship with your Countryside Access Ranger and Rights of Way Authority who can be invaluable in offering advice and enabling you to keep on top of maintenance and long term improvement plans. County councils and unitary authorities have had their budgets cut drastically so it is even more important to find partnerships to solve problems in your area.

Funding

There will be a workshop included in the Chepstow Get-Together programme covering the subject of 'Generating Income'. By way of an introduction, we have prepared a fact sheet 'Steps to Successful Funding – an overview' which covers the basics for making your organisation fit for external funding. Again see the resources page where you will also find **WaW** newsletter back numbers.

Norfolk

Many will recall that we went to Swaffham, Norfolk last year for our Annual Get-Together. Several nearby Norfolk towns expressed an interest in becoming members. **Cromer** have just completed this process and have this week become an accredited member with an excellent application. Welcome and good luck.

I hope it is warmer where you are than it is "up north".

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