



# WALKERS ARE WELCOME TOWNS NETWORK

Towns and villages with something special to offer walkers



Newsletter May 2014

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**Finally .....**

## Charitable Incorporated Organisation

This month's **big story** is that **Walkers are Welcome** are about to apply to the Charities Commission to register as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). In simple terms, this is a new legal form for a charity which incorporates the Limited Company framework without the necessity of applying to be a Charity and a company as well for trading purposes. We are applying with an "Association" model constitution which is for a charity with a wider membership including voting members, in addition to charity trustees. Members may also be involved in the work of the CIO and can apply to be a trustee.

We have had to make slight variations to fit the WaW constitution into the charity framework which has been quite time consuming but we think we are there now. The application document/constitution together with the trustee application form can be seen via our National Executive Business Reports [page](#)

Please read and give any comments you may have before 30 May, 2014 as the application is being sent to the Charities Commission in early June. Should you be interested in becoming a trustee or have any queries regarding this suggestion, please do not hesitate to contact us.

## Tourism in Wales

A Welsh National Assembly committee has begun an enquiry into support for the tourism industry in Wales. The Executive & Business committee will look at the effectiveness of the Welsh Tourism brand with the performance of "Visit Wales" also being examined.

You are invited to contribute to the enquiry. For further information see the [webpage](#).

## Scotland's Town Partnership

Professor Leigh Sparks is to take up the role of Chair of Scotland's Towns Partnership (STP) which is the collective partnership and support body for Scotland's towns. This organization comes from the Centre for Scottish Public Policy's (CSPP) Towns Group and is now going independent. For news of this and other Scottish town initiatives see the Towns Alive [website entry](#).

## And England

Towns Alive, mentioned above, is the new identity for Action for Market Towns (AMT) with a viewpoint for taking as its 'inspiration and foundation a track record of working across towns as a whole to share inspiring solutions and shape long-term solutions'. Current topics include keeping up with government communities' legislation, reviving town centres and benchmarking. This is a membership organisation from £125 per annum per town which entitles you to some free information and discounted services, see their [website](#)

There are a number of new funding schemes available for town initiatives under Community Led Local Development (CLLD) with the strap line “help communities help themselves” which involves forming Local Action Groups (LAG). The Localism Act 2011 brought new powers for local governance. Getting your head round some of these initiatives may well require seeking advice from Towns Alive or local community development organizations which are often free locally.

Members of the national executive have been invited to attend the ‘Future of Rural Tourism in England Debate’ with James Beresford CEO of VisitEngland. The information gained is to be used to revise national strategy in ‘The Strategic Framework for England’ This debate is said to be looking at what will ensure that rural tourism continues to thrive and contribute to the growth and success of English tourism. As the majority of our members are involved in rural tourism, we see it is essential to be part of this initiative. If you have any particular thoughts we would love to hear from you by the end of the month. James is pictured on the front page of the **WaW** [website](#) where he is quoted:

*“On behalf of VisitEngland, I would like to recognise the fantastic work of **Walkers are Welcome** Towns Network and the national executive in encouraging a community led approach to developing towns and villages with excellent walking facilities. This initiative presents a framework for destinations to develop a coherent walking offer that in conjunction with destination organisations can further grow the local visitor economy. VisitEngland looks forward to working with Walkers are Welcome in the future”.*

## Choosing a GPS

Not quite so dry, but perhaps a technical nightmare to some, is the subject of which Global Positioning System (GPS) to choose. David Stewart of Walkingworld.com has kindly said we can circulate his most interesting [article](#) on this subject.

Have you discovered Geocaching? This simple brilliant idea is great for easy additional entertainment and is fun for families, whether residents or visitors. The scheme is based on a treasure hunt or more precisely the letterboxing game, invented in 2000 when GPS became more accurate. You can highlight sites already in your area or make your own, even adding a theme. If you don't already know about Geocaching have a look at the official [website](#). There is now a similar freemium scavenger hunt that uses QR codes called [Munsee](#) using Smartphone technology.

## QR Codes

Most of you will be familiar with the sight of the Quick Response Code (QR Code) invented by the Denso Corporation in Japan in 1994 for the automotive industry. (See top of page left) This is a two dimensional barcode similar in principle to all those one dimensional bar codes invaluable to supermarkets today. The use of QR codes has become very popular in consumer advertising as Smartphones can act as QR code readers.

The simplest idea is to convert your **Walkers are Welcome** group's web address into a code using one of the free online converters. This can then be printed onto labels, programmes, leaflets and signs etc. where it might be seen in your area and you are able to use it. (No illegal bill posting please) Naturally, because you can't read it unless the code is scanned and de-coded, the curiosity is aroused and people scan the code to be taken to the website if mobile reception permits.

More advanced QR code trails and images can be made using this technology in an area with good wi-fi coverage or by installing a town booster. Imagine being taken to an image of a Roman centurion near your Roman archaeological site or a dinosaur to amuse young people, this is termed as object hypo linking. The applications are as numerous as your imagination and the connection speed.

QR codes may also be linked to a location to track where a code has been scanned. Either the device that scans the QR code retrieves the geo information by using GPS and cell tower triangulation (aGPS) or the URL encoded in the QR code itself is associated with a location.

## **Chepstow Get-Together 18-19 October**

The annual Get-Together is a fantastic place to meet like-minded people and learn what other towns are up to, we are primarily a network and it is an important part of your membership to make contact with other towns and interact with the national committee so we all benefit from each other.

Do remember to keep these dates free, the booking form and further information will be added shortly to the Annual Get-Together 2014 [page](#) and in the meantime don't forget to make your quilted square.

Finally, on the website there is a list of [WaW Towns](#) and within the membership section a list of member [Towns Contact Details](#) for membership purposes. Now and again we ask members to check these details just in case someone has forgotten to tell us any changes.

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