



WALKERS ARE WELCOME TOWNS NETWORK

Towns and villages with something special to offer walkers

<http://www.walkersarewelcome.org.uk/>



Newsletter November 2014

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Chepstow Get-Together

WOW, that was a fantastic weekend in Chepstow. The weather was brilliant, the venue and countryside beautiful, the workshops thought provoking, the company wonderful and all exceptional value. We were just sorry that not everyone was able to attend.

Perhaps you will be able to visit [Chepstow](#) some time, it is a charming town.

Thank you so much to Helen, Paul, Robin and team. There is now a report on the [website news](#) section.

New factsheets from the workshops, Generating Income and PR and Marketing have been added [here](#). A detailed best practice document for organising walks and events is being prepared from workshop notes which will follow.

You might also be interested to see this year's innovation list as prepared from the 2013 Annual Returns, some of which we discussed. This also triggered requests for factsheets on 'Prescription Walks' and 'Dog Walks' which are being written.



WaW Banner

The quilted banner was revealed, it is really splendid. Chepstow are going to be the custodians and happy to send it out to other towns for special occasions. If you have not been able to complete a square yet, don't worry, just send it to Chepstow when ready. The banner will also go on to the 2015 Get-Together.

We must give special thanks to Chris Elsbury and Judith Woodridge from Chepstow who sewed all the squares together.

Bags

You probably know that Wales introduced a 5p minimum charge for single use carrier bags in October 2011. Scotland have followed and this legislation is scheduled to be rolled out in England in 2015. How appropriate that Chepstow provided delegates with long-life shoulder bag shoppers complete with Chepstow Walkers are Welcome logo. You might be interested to obtain your own WaW town's own bags to use or sell. Chepstow ask that you mention their name if you contact [Bright Ideas Promotional Products](#) their supplier. This company also produce lots of other promotional products that may be of interest.



Off to the Seaside

We are off to the seaside for the 2015 Get-Together and John Dyson from [Sidmouth](#), Devon introduced his town to delegates. We realise that this will be quite a distance for many but such an opportunity to those members in the south and south-west of England. Accommodation is likely to require early booking so reserve the date now and why not take the opportunity for a short break in a lovely part of the country. **Saturday and Sunday 24/25 October 2015.**

Annual General Meeting

To keep you informed even if you were unable to attend, please see the draft AGM minutes, 2013 Accounts, Patron's and Chairman's Reports which will all be added to the [Executive Reports page](#).

You will note from the minutes that an increase in subscriptions was discussed and it was decided to agree a 10% increase for subscriptions due in January 2015 making £33 and £55. When Andrew Bibby, our founder, originally formed the organisation, it was never envisaged that larger communities would wish to join us however, we now have many towns joining with over 20,000 populations. It has therefore been decided to change the population boundaries from January 2016 giving those towns affected time to adjust their finances. Any increase in subscriptions will help us to keep the books balanced and do more.

Winter ahead

We have been fortunate with the mild autumn but those pretty leaves are getting wet under foot and we are being promised much colder weather. Our thoughts start to become reflective on the road to Christmas and the New Year in preparation of your own annual reports and the WaW Annual Return required in January.

The summer is so short for many it is important to try to extend the visitor season. Think about Christmas lights walks, walking round the town looking at Christmas competition windows and Christmas and New Year walks when very little other attractions are open. Continue your health walks on tarmac lanes, old railways, pavements, promenades and beaches to avoid more muddy paths that are less predictable in winter. For those fit and healthy, why not don your wellies and inspect paths prone to flooding, cut back hedges or plant trees and bulbs. There's plenty to do in the winter, why not embrace the weather and finish your walk with a hot bowl of soup in a local café while planning for the spring.

Don't forget that all authorities are planning for another round of government cuts. Watch out for consultations and have your say about cuts in spending on Public Rights of Way. At the same time, your Countryside Access Ranger or equivalent are your best friend in working together and planning to get things done.

We are loading onto the website the list of innovation that you filled in on your last Annual Returns. This was handed out and discussed at the Get-Together from which many took inspiration. From this session it was suggested that we prepare factsheets on 'Prescription Walks' and 'Dog Walks', coming soon.

View Points

Walkingworld's latest newsletter reminded us about ["our love of viewpoints"](#) Most of us will have favourite views and places that we love to visit locally. Remember to share these with visitors through your website photos, literature and information points. Something to think about for next spring perhaps.



Where's WaW Detectives

The "Detectives" have been out and about in Richmond, Deal, Chepstow, Liskeard and Ivybridge. Why not visit a WaW town near you to get new ideas and see how well they are marketing their status. Look for:



- How many WaW stickers can you see in shops, pubs, cafes and B&Bs?
 - Is there a Tourist Information Centre? If so are they displaying anything about WaW?
 - Are the TIC staff helpful and knowledgeable about walking?
 - Do they mention being a WaW town?
 - Are there lots of walking leaflets, maps and guide books on sale?
- Does any literature have the WaW logo?
- Are there any other signs of the town being active as a WaW town?

Dales Way

Congratulations to Randal Metzger from Otley who was recorded along 'The Dales Way' with Clare Balding as part of her ['Ramblings' show on BBC radio 4](#). Randal explained the Walkers are Welcome concept to Clare who said it makes such a difference, stop for a while, take your boots off, somewhere to put your boots warm and dry rather than the don't come in here look. This broadcast has already brought new enquiries.

Christmas Shopping

Thinking about your Christmas wish list or buying for friends and family, you might like to consider membership to your nearest AONB, national park or wildlife trust friends groups. They also sell cards, calendars, books, presents or something more unusual like sponsoring a tree.

Enjoy your winter walking.

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