

WALKERS ARE WELCOME TOWNS NETWORK

Towns and villages with something special to offer walkers

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

Happy New Year

to all our member towns and villages



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Annual Returns

The first Annual Return received for 2014 was **Guisborough** on 15 December. We are seriously hoping that we can get them all in this year by 31st January, please make this your priority. As soon as they are all received, read by mentors and any support given as required, we can move on to other projects rather than chasing up late Annual Returns or subscriptions. Many thanks to all in anticipation.

Open Spaces Society

This year is the 150th anniversary of the Open Spaces Society. It was founded in 1865 as the Commons Preservation Society and is Britain's oldest national conservation body. In its early days it saved commons in and around London from development and enclosure. Now it campaigns throughout England and Wales to protect common land, village greens, open spaces and public paths, and people's right to enjoy them.

General secretary, Kate Ashbrook (also our Patron), says:

'A century and a half ago no one would have thought that today there would be at least 2,212 square miles (an area roughly the size of Lincolnshire) of common land in England and Wales. This is because of the campaigns led by the Open Spaces Society to ensure that commons and commoners' rights were protected and that a right of public access there was secured. 'During its anniversary year the society will keep up its tradition of campaigning for people's places,' says Kate. 'We shall focus on securing new green spaces and better laws to protect them.'

The society plans a number of events during the year. It is issuing a 'tweet of the day', a daily bulletin of one of the society's many achievements over its 150 years. Look out for the hashtag **#saveopenspaces150** and for the stories on the society's website [here](#).

It is also running a photographic competition. The closing date is 30th September 2015 and there are various categories. See [Photographic Competition 2015](#).

Charter of the Forest

Later this year we will commemorate 800 years since the Magna Carta (*the Great Charter of Liberties*) was signed at Runnymede on 15 June 1215. The charter gave rights to the people and particularly the Barons. Many will argue that some of these rights have been eroded and we will, no doubt, hear calls once again, for a new constitution for the peoples of the United Kingdom. A lesser known agreement is the [Charter of the Forest](#) (*Carta de Foresta*) 1217, a companion document to the Magna Carta which was introduced after the Barons' War. This document re-established rights of access to the royal forests for free men that had been eroded by the Norman dynasty. Whilst the King's right to hunt wild animals in these forests was repealed in 1971 under the Wild Creatures and Forest Laws Act, other rights for commoners' access, grazing and collecting firewood still exist in Royal Forests and many parcels of Common Land once belonging to the Lord of the Manor.

The public have the right of access to all common land under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and it is important that this and historical rights are not endangered working with and not against the public and commoners interest in the protection of some of the most beautiful often designated lands. The Open Spaces Society play an important role in the protection of commons and don't forget 'Finding Lost Commons' as detailed in our December newsletter.

Geocaching

Gillian Mauger at Horncastle has contacted us about Geocaching:

'Horncastle is in the process of developing a series of geocaches on a circular walk around our town to encourage families and young people to get out walking.'

'We have a very enthusiastic young person who is helping us with the project and at our last meeting we discussed the idea of putting a 'trackable' in one of our geocaches which has the mission of travelling to geocaches in other WAW towns.'

'If we are going to do this we really need to know how many other WAW towns have set up their own geocaches.'

For those that are not familiar with this concept, it is just like a treasure hunt using GPS either as a mobile device or using a GPS enabled mobile 'phone. I know a few of you already have your own Geocache sites or have others in your areas. We think this is a fantastic idea and would love to hear from you if you are interested in taking forward, either a network of WaW geocache hiding places or WaW trackables,

For initial information about Geocaching see their [website](#). There is a 75 second introduction film '[What is Geocaching](#)' More detailed information is available on becoming a 'cache maker' and '[hiding a geocache](#)' Please do not overlook obtaining landowners' permission particularly if you are making a trail.

Geology walks

Themes add interest to any guided walk, walking festival programme or self-guided publication. Having lost its stuffy boys' grammar school image, the fascinating study of geology is becoming increasingly popular. Not only in rural areas though. The stones used in buildings can provide a fascinating insight into old ways of working and living, many exhibit excellent fossils.

In Martley, Worcestershire, walking groups can avail themselves of a geology interpreter to go along and explain the local landscape, how it was formed, the underlying rock types and how they influence everything from buildings to agriculture.

The success of this initiative is worth passing on, so if your local group thinks it a good idea, why not plan one of your trips with a geological theme? Remember this is aimed at non-geologists as an introduction. The walks are not geology field trips!

If you want to pursue this, contact John Nicklin, Parish Paths Warden for Martley, our 13th WaW village, and Secretary of the Teme Valley Geological Society. Further details are on the NEW Geology Walks factsheet available to [download](#).

Snaith & Cowick advertising



'East Riding Councillor and Snaith & Cowick Town Councillor, John Barrett has, along with the help of the East Riding Council, designed an advert for Snaith & Cowick which includes its walks and Walkers are Welcome logo.

The Town Council have fully backed the enterprise and along with some businesses, are paying for the full page advert to go in the Visit Hull & East Yorkshire, Wolds and Beyond tourist magazine which can be picked up free in libraries and Tourist Information Centres this year, throughout Yorkshire and is free of charge.'

A brilliant example of partnership working to get the message out there.

WaW logo



I have been looking through lots of wonderful Walkers are Welcome member's websites. They are so varied and many very enticing and colourful. If you do not already do so, may I ask you to include one of the Walkers are Welcome logos as appropriate to your website and organisation. It is important that we all try to publicise the logo to raise public awareness. Additionally, if any of your partnership accommodation providers wish to use the logo on their website, which would be brilliant.

Often no one thinks of adding this logo until after the website is complete and so it gets left off.

December update

In the December newsletter we gave you a few thoughts that might be of interest when you have some spare time on these miserable dark days. Safe winter walking information, claiming your lost common, writing good news articles, sending Walkingworld your 'Hidden Britain' and Sidmouth Get-Together funding.

2016 Get-Together

Have you ever considered hosting a Get-Together? Applications for the 2016 Get-Together are now being invited. You can download a bid form at the bottom of the 2014 Get-Together page. Applications must be received before 15th March. If you would like to know more about what is involved, please ask.

And finally, if you have any suggestions for the monthly WaW newsletter in 2015, please let me know.

secretary@walkersarewelcome.org.uk