

WALKERS ARE WELCOME ANNUAL REPORT 2012

Town: Kington, Herefordshire

We set up Kington Walks as the steering committee for WAW membership. This committee organised our inaugural Walking Festival held in September 2012. The festival consisted of 30 walks over four days. We welcomed over 300 walkers during the festival weekend. Our website is kingtonwalks.org

Liaised with Herefordshire Council over footpath maintenance and our local Open Spaces Society Representative is a member of our group.

Attended Kington Town Council meetings to ensure councillors are briefed on progress in marketing Kington as a venue for walkers.

Taken part in working party of volunteers clearing litter from verges and pathways

Organised advertising boards and established links with media to promote Kington as a walking centre.

2. If you have undertaken any initiatives which you feel are particularly innovative and which might be of interest to other Walkers are Welcome towns/villages, please give details below.

We used WAW status in our brochure and advertising. We also displayed a WAW banner on the town Market Hall which was used as an information centre and assembly point for the walkers. We were backed up by our Tourist Information centre with "on the day" bookings and further walker information.

During our Walking Festival the committee organised a photographic competition from which they extracted the best twelve photographs. These were then made into a calendar and sold locally and through our website kingtonwalks.org. After printing costs were deducted, this raised over £500 towards our next festival.

3. What funding have you been able to obtain? Have you any evidence of ways in which WaW status is helping your community, your local economy?

We have applied for and received funding from the Town Council and County Councils. We operated a community shop selling donated goods to raise funds. We also received sponsorship and advertising revenue from local businesses. All funds to develop our walking festival in 2013.

As a result of our successful Walking Festival in September 2012 we have been approached by Herefordshire Council with ideas for a walking centre to be built in Kington. This is being pursued by our Walking Festival committee and Town Council as I write.

The local businesses were pleased to see more people around the town. Local B&Bs, Hotels and Public Houses welcomed the extra trade.

4. The Walkers are Welcome principle is a 'bottom-up' one, operating on the basis of mutual support and activity. What contributions are you making towards developing the network, nationally and/or regionally? (eg: attendance at conference, mentoring other towns)

I attended the Walkers are Welcome Conference at Ross on Wye. Kington Walks members keep in touch with neighbouring towns of Knighton, Ross on Wye and Hay on Wye.

We are in contact with a group of walkers from Cheltenham who are trying to create a new national trail linking the Offa's Dyke Path with The Cotswold Way. This trail will be known as The Wyche Way, when the final route is agreed. This should increase the footfall of walkers through Kington. It will also give a link through to the Wye Valley Walk which passes through Hay on Wye.

Kington Walks have also created a link with the organisers of Hay on Wye Walking Festival.