



# WALKERS ARE WELCOME

Towns and villages with something special to offer all walkers

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## Annual Get-Together and AGM

We have a good news, bad news story this month. The bad news or to be more correct, the sad news is that owing to unforeseen circumstances, the Get-Together at **Sidmouth** planned for October has been cancelled. We would like to thank John Dyson for all the time that he has put into organising this event. We wish Sidmouth good luck with their future as a Walkers are Welcome Town and we look forward to visiting in the future.

It is obviously too late to hastily arrange a new weekend Get-Together in another town so the good news is that we have arranged for the Annual General Meeting to be held at **Whitchurch**, Shropshire on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> November. This town has been selected because it is quite central for everyone to reach.

A provisional programme has been written as follows:

- 9.30 Coffee
- 10.00 Networking
- 10.30 Presentation
- 11.00 Walkers are Welcome surgery
- 12.00 **Business** and action plan
- 13.00 Lunch
- 14.00 Presentation and AGM
- 15.00 Finish

Please feel free to join the day as it suits you and your travel arrangements. There will be no charge for the event, only for the subsidised lunch at £5. Booking will go live as soon as arrangements have been finalised.

## Northern Get-Together



What a fantastic day in **Kirkby Stephen**. There were 49 delegates from all over the north of England, one Scotland and included our Chairman, Sam Phillips and his wife Thelma from Ross-on-Wye. Thank you so much to everyone who came. We know from your feedback that so many of you used the opportunity to discuss your own successes and seek advice. Very worthwhile and we look forward to another similar event.

Details will be added to the Get-Together archive on the [website](#)

Photo: Dick Capel tells some of the delegates about building the Kirkby Stephen Poetry Path standing near the March stone.

## New Committee Members

Helen Pitman from **Caister** has joined the national committee. Helen is also involved in the preparations for the 2016 Get-Together which has been booked for Friday 14<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2016 as a joint event by **Caister**, **Horncastle** and **Market Rasen**, Lincolnshire. Helen is the mentor for the east of England.

If you can spare some time to join the national management committee in any capacity, we will be more than delighted to hear from you. We need help on the committee, for specific projects, marketing and mentoring. With the growth of the network, there are never enough hours for everything we would like to do. Please make contact even if you would just like further information.

The new Walkers are Welcome CIC Business Plan 2015-2018 has been added to the [website](#). We are now working on a comprehensive action plan which should certainly keep us well occupied in the coming months. **Please help if you can.**

## Japanese Visitors

At the end of August four Professors from various Japanese universities are arriving in the UK on a fact finding mission. It all started in 2013 when Sheila Talbot from **Winchcombe** WaW toured Japan giving lectures on the benefits that walking trails can bring to rural communities. Since then Winchcombe has hosted several visits, including one in February when a Friendship Agreement was signed, but this trip is different; Sheila is also sending them around the country to see what's going on in other WaW towns. They will visit **Dursley** in Gloucestershire, **Ross-on-Wye** in Herefordshire, **Chepstow** in south Wales, then **Hebden Bridge** and **Mytholmroyd** in West Yorkshire.

The Japanese are keen to develop walking tourism and start a WaW scheme in Japan, but their visit will also help to promote the wonderful opportunities for walking in the UK to independent Japanese travellers. Perhaps we all need to start producing our walking leaflets in Japanese! Watch this space in September/October for more news about the visit.

## Town Exchanges and Visits

An area of the criteria that is often overlooked is working to benefit and be involved in the national organisation and network. By promoting the network, brand and the logo, we are all helping ourselves and each other to raise awareness of the brand profile and become a family. Have you helped another town, sent in your news, shared best practice, retweeted another towns' news or shared on facebook? Over the summer have you visited another WaW town or arranged an exchange of walks. An added bonus of visiting another town is to get new inspiration and return refreshed, you can always send in your experience to share.

I recently visited **Pocklington**, a totally unrelated visit but to enjoy The Secret Garden performed in their Burnby Hall Gardens which was very enjoyable on the summer's evening in the beautiful gardens with a picnic. I didn't have time to count WaW stickers or investigate walking but lovely to see the town and situation and I will shall return later in the summer to explore further.

Sheila Talbot told us about the visit of **Winchcombe** to **Otley** recently –

‘Over several years a friendship has developed between committee members from the two towns, after meeting at Get-Togethers and getting involved in the National Executive. Randal from Otley had visited Sheila and Rob in Winchcombe in 2014, so it was their turn to head north in 2015.’



‘After a tour of the town, spotting lots of WaW stickers and signs, they climbed Otley's local hill, the Chevin. Randal and John led a walk on a section of the Six Dales Trail which they created. It was surprising to see the finger posts being used to hang bird feeders!’

‘The trip also included exploring Wharfedale and meeting up with two ladies from nearby **Ilkley** WaW to share ideas. It was interesting to compare notes on how the two towns went about things. For instance, both have successful walking festivals, Winchcombe's is funded by walkers booking and paying to take part in walks with limited numbers, whereas Otley's walks are free, open to anyone and funded by a giant raffle! It just goes to show that there is no right or wrong way to do things and you can always learn from others.’

## Member News update

One of Shropshire's War Walks on the Home Front is called ‘Walking in the Footsteps of a Survivor’, with ‘Round about the crooked steeple’ – a celebration of the life of Simon Evans. Val Simpson, Chair of **Cleobury Mortimer** will be leading this interpretation walk. More details on our [website news](#).

A reminder that our Patron, Kate Ashbrook will be officially opening the Wynch Way at **Kington** on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> September during their walking festival which runs from 17<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> September, see [Kington Walks](#)

**Sedbergh**, Cumbria has just been accredited. This pretty town, whilst in Cumbria is just inside the Yorkshire Dales National Park in the Howgills Fells. You can discover the town on foot using the Dales Way and the Howgill and Limestone Trail long distance paths. Members are developing The Quaker Way to mark the early origins of the Society of Friends in the area.

**Kinlochleven** is the first in the Highland of Scotland to be accredited. Kinlochleven has the scenery of the Mamore Mountains to the north and the Glencose mountain ranges to the south and are on the Highland Way. We are assured of a Highland welcome and hospitality.

**Gillingham** in Dorset become our newest accredited town. Gillingham is the gateway to the Blackmore Vale, the gentle rolling countryside of Hardy's Wessex and they promise village pubs serving lunches and cream teas.

## British Food Fortnight

This annual event takes place this year from 20<sup>th</sup> September to 5<sup>th</sup> October. Some years ago we all organised walks linked to food for this organisation. So if you want an excuse to organise a “foodie” walk, here's your opportunity and they will include free publicity, see the [website](#).

## Fact Sheets

Did you know that there is a long list of fact sheets assessable by members through the website? These are a valuable membership resource that have been written from members' experience. Planning your first walking festival, starting health and prescription walks or thinking about dog walking; marketing your area or thinking about funding; there is a fact sheet for you.

If you have lost or forgotten the membership area password, just ask.

[Hoping for an Indian Summer.](#)

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