



WALKERS ARE WELCOME

Towns and villages with something special to offer walkers
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February 2016 - Innovation Special
Contents this month:

Forging more Links with Japan



Winchcombe Walkers are Welcome entertaining some WaW friends from Nakama City, Japan.

Annual Returns 2015

Baildon, Bollington, Bromyard, Camelford, Chepstow, Chesham, Corwen, Cromer, Denby Dale, Devil's Bridge, Dufftown, Hebden Bridge, Kington, Kirkby Stephen, Knighton, Leominster, Lynton & Lynmouth, Monmouth, New Mills, Prestatyn, Snaith, Tadcaster, Bro Tregaron, Wellington, Winchcombe.

Around the regions with a smile –

Farming Talk
Boroughbridge
Crickelhowel
Invisible Fencing Project Epping Forest
Wild Plant Monitoring
Government funding for rural communities
OS Maps
More for Children
English Tourism Week – Wales - Scotland
Yarn Bombing and Guerrilla Knitting
Dialect and Accents
Inspirational Videos

Pic: February tour of the north Cotswolds with

Members Handbook and Wall Hanging
Winchcombe Walkers are Welcome
Southern Get-Together Saturday 19th March

Annual Returns 2015

Thank you to everyone that has sent in their Annual Returns for 2015 and their 2016 subscriptions on time. For anyone that has not already done this, please give this your immediate attention as this formality should have been completed by 31st January and is necessary for your 2016 accreditation.

From the Annual Returns we hear of some extraordinary work going on in our member towns. Many have Walking Festivals, new leaflets and walk publications and website based downloads. Walk groups including health walks some linked to health centres, mental health or disabled. Footpaths are being monitored, surveyed, cleared, repaired and improved with new furniture and stiles replaced with gates. Websites built, facebook promotion and twitter, local newspaper and community newsletter articles, some success with national publicity, TV and radio.

And so the fantastic work of welcoming walkers to our towns and villages goes on.

Whilst the basics of meeting the criteria are all important, it is often the unusual and quirky that make your town stand out and visitors flock. Here are some of the more unusual details for inspiration:

Baildon – Purchase of WaW logo T-Shirts and high-viz jackets for members on active duty.

Bollington – Producing a report for the town council on the local toilets and their current viability and possible future with relation to tourism needs. Successful fundraising hot chocolate and hot dogs after the ghost walk.

Bromyard – Successful dog walk for Hearing Dogs for the Deaf Charity with supportive publicity.



Camelford – Getting the new Highways “Welcome to Camelford” signs up with Walkers are Welcome on it on the main Atlantic Highway route to Cornwall.

Chepstow – Programme voluntary litter management alongside Keep Wales Tidy and Transitional Chepstow.

Our Memory Walk raised £375 for the Alzheimer’s Society and we helped host the “Walking with the Wounded”. [Photo competition.](#)

Chesham – New leaflets specifically for the use of public transport called ‘[Station to Station](#)’ each starting at a local underground or mainline station and terminating in Chesham.

Corwen - We ran a navigation workshop at Cotswold Outdoor Chester store which participants were then invited to a practical hill day putting into practice the classroom sessions. We now have walking related t-shirts available for two popular walks from the Town (‘I have walked to Liberty Hall’ and ‘I climbed Moel Fferna’).

Cromer – Our website now also provides [direct button](#) access to relevant departments for reporting problems.



Denby Dale – For one walk as part of the 3rd East Peak Outdoors Festival, a local craft group adorned trees etc. with guerrilla knitting to the delight of children & grown-ups alike. (see photo and below)

Devils Bridge - We have come a long way over the last two years. <http://www.pumlumon.org.uk/walking/>

Dufftown - The creation of whisky walks around Dufftown, hundreds of people enjoyed these in 2015 with great feedback received on Tripadvisor.

Hebden Bridge – The [Hebden Bridge loop](#) on the Pennine Way launched in April 2015.

Kington – The opening of the [Wyche Way](#) by our Patron, Kate Ashbrook during our Walking Festival plus ‘The Goulash Evening’.



Kirkby Stephen - Planned a walk for [Christopher Somerville](#) published in The Times. Ran the Boots2Garden project again this year encouraging businesses and residents to welcome walkers with planted boots. Promoted the second Boot Tree (see photo).

Knighton - Our “[Walking Weekends](#)” are promoted using the WaW banner. A series of regional meetings to emphasise the importance of walking to the regional economy, along with sharing of best practice and new ideas.

Leominster - Leading a group of visitors from the Kremlin Museum in Moscow, including the daughter and granddaughter of Yuri Gargarin (the first man in space).

Lynnton and Lynmouth - Getting design agreement and funding for a statue of a walking man to be erected at the end of the Coleridge Way.

Monmouth – We installed a ‘boot washer’ in the pub garden of the Robin Hood in the town, this received [local media coverage.](#)

New Mills – From people who are interested in either volunteering to do footpath clearance work or just wanting regular updates, we have built a data base of 98 interested people.

Prestatyn - We established “Walkers are Welcome” reference library in the [Artisans Group](#) situated in the old Library. 100 walking books were donated together with maps and guide books.

Snaith – A new bench on one of the new heritage walks.

Tadcaster – A roundel at the bus station contains posters promoting the walks and WaW. The steering committee is promoted by an annual competition launched at the town’s Christmas Market.

Bro Tragaron – Walk leader trained to drive the community bus. Promote the re-edited [Weatherman Walking](#) series with reference to WAW.



Wellington - We have collaborated with the author of the Bradt Guide, Shropshire (Slow Travel) to produce a section of this new book which will be published in February 2016.

Winchcombe – We produce promotional ‘business cards’ every year to promote our next [Walking Festival](#) on one side and our Facebook page on the other. (Last year’s festival was Silver award winner in the ‘Tourism Event of the Year’ category of the Cotswolds Tourism Awards 2015) We were approached by Julia Bradbury’s TV company to contribute to her forthcoming series on ‘Walks with Views’ which will be screened in February 2016.

Around the regions with a smile



Farming Talk

The farming talk [facebook page](#) often posts some amusing or thought provoking images, here's a recent one most suitable for rural walkers. What to do with your old wellies?

Boroughbridge

Following up on the article last month about partnerships with walking holiday companies, Mal Brass in [Boroughbridge](#) tells us that [Sherpa Van](#) sponsor their [Easter Festival](#).

Crickelhowel

There are many towns in the UK that are trendsetters, full of very active and imaginative volunteers supported by inspirational councils and local organisations. Most of these are also Walkers are Welcome towns. You may have seen the [headlines](#) that [Crickelhowel](#) in Powys has decided to take their whole market town 'offshore' in a protest at the paltry UK tax paid by some big businesses and have set up their [Fair Tax Town](#).

Invisible Fencing Project Epping Forest

A successful project taking place in the Epping Forest is the innovative [invisible fencing](#) which has enabled the re-establishment of free-range cattle grazing across the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) without the need for cattle grids and traditional fencing with obvious aesthetic and financial benefits.

This scheme could be very useful on common land and keeping livestock away from sensitive areas without the use of ugly fencing and gates that also limit walking in open access areas.

Wild Plant Monitoring

The [National Plant Monitoring Scheme](#) is a habitat-based plant monitoring scheme where individuals take on the role of surveying a 1km square. The idea is to collect data to provide an annual indication of changes in plant abundance and diversity. You can look for a square near you and full resource materials are provided.

Perhaps just look at a local square yourselves for a wild flower walk leaflet.

OS Maps

If you haven't looked at the Ordnance Survey products for a while, have a look at their [website](#).

Create your own personalised maps

Heart Rate monitors with free OS maps online

Add your walking festival

Finding a way to #GetOutside and pledges

Waterproof maps

Map trade in offer

And lots more

Government funding for rural communities

Up to 50 Tory MPs are preparing to vote against the government's proposed funding settlement for rural local authorities. Graham Stuart MP is chairman of the cross-party Rural Fair Share group of MPs, which is calling for a fairer deal for rural communities. Mr. Stuart said "Many MP colleagues from across the country have come together in the Rural Fair Share campaign to demand change.

The campaign has been working closely on the issue with the [Rural Services Network](#), which represents more than 120 rural local authorities.

Council settlements will not only affect our pockets but services and the amount of funding available for Public Rights of Way maintenance and improvements in the years ahead.

More for Children

[Horrid Henry's Hike](#) is probably an example of how we do not want families to experience the countryside and hardly useful encouragement however, contrast that with [Geocaching Fun in the UK](#) which turns a walk into a treasure hunt.

The '[Making tracks in Mytholmroyd](#)' featured in the website news is a beautifully illustrated booklet of walks with fun ideas and games suitable for primary age children. Anja at [Tale Trails](#) makes a walk into a story map with clues along the way and is aimed at young children. [Treasure Trails](#) are a similar idea but more suitable for older young people and adults with a treasure hunts, murder mysteries or spy missions available in many areas. Many towns have [Town Trails](#) often with historical content encouraging visitors to explore back alleys and become absorbed in your culture. So let's encourage younger walkers and give families a cheap and enjoyable activity. Remember that if they stay for an hour or two they are likely to add refreshment breaks and tell everyone about their good experience.

English Tourism Week – Wales - Scotland

Plan an event for English Tourism week 5th-13th March and it can be entered on [VisitEngland's website](#) and there are free downloadable materials. This website is also packed with information for everyone involved in tourism in England.

[Visit Wales](#) are celebrating the 'Year of Adventure' which includes 'Walking Holidays and Hiking in Wales', take a look. [VisitScotland](#) #LOVESCOTLAND celebrates the vibrant culture, spectacular heritage and everything traditionally Scottish.

Yarn Bombing and Guerrilla Knitting

Why not involve your community in a guerrilla knitting project decorating your town or a trail or a special place to create an extra family friendly tourist attraction to visit. Children can also be taught to knit in schools by adults that still remember how.

Here's some stimulus:

[Woollen Woods](#)

[Saltburn Yarn Bombing](#)

[Knit the City](#)

Dialects and Accents

Ever considered using dialect in your leaflets and publicity? Many areas of the UK still have some lovely accents and dialect words or phrases, why not use them to celebrate local distinctiveness. For instance, what do local people call a stream or gate in your area? Beck, gill, rivulet, brook, watta and lliidiart, clwyd, yat. Do you have places and lanes with local names that may have appeared on original OS maps often lost in time? Gramsceugh, Slack Gap, Potgill, Croglam. ["Ey up mi duck"](#) Why not practice your Lincolnshire for the October Get-Together.

Inspirational Videos

Just had to share these:

[Birds nesting in walking boots](#)

[Nights in Anglesey/Snowdonia 2015: Timelapse by Kris Williams](#)

[Man found an unlikely best friend in his pet squirrel](#)

[Starling murmurations are the ballet of the skies](#) [Starling survey](#)

Members Handbook and Wall Hanging

The handbook has now been rewritten and put online in the website [Resources section](#) for easy reference. The handbook is full of useful information and ideas about how your town can continue promoting the area as a Walkers are Welcome town or village. There is information on marketing, walking festivals, leaflets to mentoring, the annual Get -Together and the work of the volunteers on the National Executive.

Further down the [Resources page](#) you will find the details for the Wall Hanging. You can still send in your square for inclusion or borrow this work of art for your event and promote the WaW family of towns and villages. The policy for borrowing has just been added.

Southern Get-Together

“Now then”, you “down south” don’t forget to book your place at the [regional get-together](#) in Dursley, Gloucestershire on Saturday 19th March for great opportunities to share ideas and be stimulated all over again. Some members of the national committee and our Chairman, Sam Phillips will be there to answer your questions and help where they can.

Please RSVP by 29th February.

Hoping that we have given you a little inspiration this month for your next project.

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