



WALKERS ARE WELCOME

Towns and villages with something special to offer all walkers
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Newsletter May 2016

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Pic: A bluebell wood in Loftus

[Marilyn Elliott](#)

It is with much sadness that we have to announce the death of Marilyn Elliott.

Members will not be aware of the considerable support provided by Marilyn, a member of Moffat's Steering Group, who passed away suddenly on 2nd. May. Moffat became the second member of the network in 2008 and Marilyn was involved from the start when she worked as an office assistant for Moffat Community Initiative who initiated the application for membership. As with other groups Marilyn supported she became interested in their activities and became involved above and beyond her paid duties. Since the demise of the Initiative she has continued to provide support to our Treasurer, Geoff Kitt on a weekly basis and in sending out the network mailings.

Although handicapped in her movement she did manage to attend a northern get-together last year and was so pleased to put faces to many people she only knew by name. She had hoped to attend at Boroughbridge also. Marilyn will be sorely missed by a great number of local groups as well as those who have relied on her for supporting our network becoming friends over the years.

[Boroughbridge Get-Together](#)

On a warm sunny day, Monday 17th May, delegates from 20 northern towns, all members of the Walkers are Welcome towns network, descended on the pretty village of Great Ouseburn in the Vale of York for their regional get-together.

The day was organised and hosted by the Boroughbridge WaW group and was attended by over 45 people from town teams throughout the north of England.

Delegates enjoyed a 'Walk with the Brontes' in lovely sunshine. Listened to two presentations on 'designing, setting up, and funding a new walk' and the WaW national website. Conversations along the way and in response to information provided in the presentations resulted in discussions on a vast range of subjects from members' immense experience.

After an enjoyable buffet lunch, there was a presentation entitled 'The Importance of 2026 the saving of our public footpaths'. This talk was given by the well-known solicitor and campaigner Jerry Pearlman MBE, an expert on countryside issues, especially rights of way, for over 40 years with a wealth of knowledge, expertise and passion about this subject. See our fact sheet '[Re-opening and claiming paths](#)'.

And in between all this, the representatives talked to one another and picked up many ideas to take home with them. Thank you Boroughbridge, another brilliant event.

Ruth Coulthard

Ruth who is Chairman of Abergavenny and works for the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority has been a member of the national committee since 2012. Regrettably, Ruth has resigned due to time commitments. However, we are delighted that she has agreed to continue in her social media role for the organisation. Have you liked us on [facebook](#) and followed us on [twitter](#). Ruth will be pleased to spread your news.

Thank you Ruth for everything that you have done over the years and continue to do. If you are at all interested in joining the national committee even in a limited role we will "welcome you with open arms".

Outside Industries Association



Walkers are Welcome CIC recently joined as a member of the Outdoor Industries Association (OIA). We also had the opportunity to showcase what WaW is all about, when Chris Prescott attended the OIA's annual conference in March, leading a walk for delegates and fronting a display stall (see photo) to spread the message about what WaW does as an organisation.

Pic. Jennie Price with WaW stand

Attending an event such as this is extremely useful as it enables WaW to rub shoulders with the real movers and shakers in the outdoor arena and to be part of an organisational network which can influence key decision making at a national level. It was notable at the event that the CEO of Sport England (SE), Jennie Price, addressed the conference to talk about the broader remit of her organisation, with every prospect that in the future walking will become a mainstream activity under SE's umbrella.

If you want to find out more about what OIA does, watch a [compilation video](#) of the action at Harrogate and the OIA UK [website](#).

National Parks

The Campaign for National Parks is celebrating 80 years of fighting for National Parks and coincides nicely with the 188 square miles of [Boundary Extension](#) of the Yorkshire Dales National Park which is effective 1st August 2016. To mark this historical year the charity have a survey for you to tell them how you feel about National Parks which will help to shape their future. The [survey](#) is available in Welsh and English.

Have you seen the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, Environment Agency and Natural England's new '8-Point Plan for England's National Parks (2016 to 2020)', published March 2016? [downloadable pdf](#). This documents also has links to other government policy e.g. 'Rural Productivity Plan' and the 'Five-Point Plan for Tourism' all of which may affect your walking tourism offer.

National Walking Month

Wimp.com also tell us 'What Hiking Does to the Brain Is Pretty Amazing'. In this report [Michael W. Pirrone](#) explains that according to a study published last July in 'Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences', a 90-minute walk through a natural environment had a huge positive impact on participants. Just another fact to add to all the evidence.

May is also '[National Walking Month](#)' again this year with Living Streets saying that they will 'show you 20 fun and easy ways to fit 20 minutes walking in to your day'. This campaign is generally aimed, as you will have realised, at encouraging the less active to take 20 mins exercise per day. Perhaps a good opportunity to raise awareness for your local health walks.

There was an Early Day Motion tabled on 25th April by Greg Mulholland, MP:

'That this House recognises that walking can improve heart health and blood pressure, burn calories and increase metabolism, boost mood and enable people to discover their local community; notes that Living Streets National Walking Month takes place during May 2016 and is asking everyone to #Try20 and fit 20 minutes of walking into their daily routine; and calls on the Government to support walking by ensuring meaningful numerical targets for general walking and walking to school are included in the final Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy when it is published.'

Members of the national committee are attending regional consultation meetings on this new government strategy. This does appear to be based mainly on towns and cities getting residents more active using less car journeys and possibly of little interest to most of our more rural members but we felt it was important to take part in consultations.

Walking Festivals

Many new members immediately work towards running walking festivals as soon as they are accredited. These festivals promote a great place to walk, give residents an event to enjoy and often have economic benefits for both local businesses and the Walkers are Welcome group. One of the items at the Lincolnshire Get-Together will be 'Walking Festival Success – a step-by-step workshop'. The full programme will be available shortly, have you 'Saved the Date' 15th and 16th October 2016.

If you can't wait until October for walking festival advice there are a number of [fact sheets](#) on the website to download, the North Pennines Walking Festival handbook, Walking Festival Toolkit and Walk Leader Planning. As part of training for your walk leaders, please remember to think about first aid training, we have a [new fact sheet](#) which lists some of the people that offer FREE first aid training.

You may find that once your town is established as a great place to walk you will consider not offering a walking festival and may deliberate that your energies are best served with promoting your town for all year walking and filling your accommodation every week and not just for a weekend or week once a year. If you are truly successful in your endeavours, your town's accommodation may be too full to have the space for a walking festival in season. Or before you plan to organise a walking festival, you may decide that there are so many walking festivals out there that there is no guarantee of filling your walks and all that hard work might be better used for other promotions or regular walks.

Walking festival skills are very similar to those needed for regular walks, although not quite so intense concentrated into a short period, and should include careful planning, risk assessment, registers and booking, advice sheets, walk leader and walk back-up training including first aid suitable for the terrain and of course, [insurance](#). There is no such thing as walking at your own risk if there is a leader or a planned route.

Maypole of support

Looking back at last year's May newsletter, we had a brightly coloured maypole showing elements that might be involved in your groups' activities. The ribbons were Constitution, Bank account, Networking, Guided walks, Media, Logo, Fundraising, Website, Walking festivals, Leaflets, Disabled access gates, Footpath repairs, Health walks, Twitter and the maypole represented the Walkers are Welcome Network. Obviously feeling artistic that month. If you have any time to spare, [past newsletters](#) are available on the website.

In the April newsletter we mentioned the Walkers are Welcome logo in connection with websites (**keep your nominations coming in**). Reminding us all that having gained your accreditation you should not hide the fact and you might also consider how obvious that accreditation is when entering and walking around your town.

Judith Bradbury showed us the familiar logo on shops and businesses in **Winchcombe** during her recent visit shown on [Walks with a View](#). (this television showing actually resulted in a surge to the website). Some members have banners at the entrance to towns or on railway stations. Some, like **Camelford** have even managed to persuade the Highway Authority to let them have road signs declaring 'Walkers are Welcome'. It is imperative that at least a selection of businesses and retail are working in partnership to welcome walkers in your town and demonstrating their support with the WaW stickers as evidence. You can replenish your [window stickers](#) stock, [details on the website](#). All use and promotion of the logo raises awareness.

Member News



Bingley and **Burley-in-Wharfedale** have prepared their squares for the Walkers are Welcome Wall Hanging. Every square of the Wall Hanging is so different and shows off the town's individual personality to perfection. If your town hasn't made a square yet, see the instructions '[Embroider a Quilt](#)' on the website. If you would like to borrow the Wall Hanging to display there is a '[Policy and Use Document](#)'.

The beautiful image at the top of the page that sets our colour scheme for this May newsletter was used to publicise 'A Bluebell Walk through **Loftus** Woods' that took place on 4th May. **Loftus** are also organising monthly heritage themed walks throughout the summer. [Website entry](#).

Baildon and **Bingley** jointly organised a Canal Heritage Walk from Saltaire to Bingley on 16th April to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the completion of the Leeds Liverpool Canal. This charming canal walk finished at the remarkable Five Rise Locks with lunch in the café.



The **Meltham** team received a "Pride of Meltham" award at the Mayor's Civic reception for their voluntary and community work. Ann said it was a lovely evening and she thought they all scrubbed up quite well although Christine did wear her walking boots under her posh frock.

Chesham Chairman, Phil Folly, has been made an Honorary Freeman of Chesham. To quote the Mayor: *'I cannot think of a more deserving person to honour from our community and I had no hesitation in sponsoring Phil Folly for this title. Phil has been volunteering in Chesham for as long as anyone can remember for a number of local groups. He literally encapsulates what it means to volunteer, to be community minded and to put others before himself.'*

Congratulations Phil, well deserved.

Rosedale Abbey are including 'Little Boots', a walk for children on Sunday 26th June as part of their [walking festival](#). The walk will be led by Rosedale Abbey School and aimed at children up to eleven years. They are exploring a Faerie Folk Trail on a hunt for clues left by Fairies, Pixies and Elves, leading to the inevitable pot of gold. Children must be accompanied by an adult which is an important child protection issue if you are organised a walk for young people under 18.

Fairies may also be seen at **Brampton's** Talkin via the Gelt and Greenwell [walk](#) on Sunday 12th June. Midsummer's Eve is obviously beckoning in this year of the 400th anniversary of the death of William Shakespeare.

Fascinating to see Samuel Taylor Coleridge joining **Chepstow** for [Coleridge in Wales walks](#).

Moffat have been awarded £1,500 by Ramblers Holidays Charitable Trust towards new leaflets. If you would like an application form, just e-mail us.

Great new [newsletter](#) from **Wellington**, excellent guys, so busy.

On Saturday 25th June, at the **Otley** Walking Festival, our Patron Kate Ashbrook will officially open the Welcome Way. This newly created 28 mile long distance walk will link Walkers are Welcome towns **Otley**, **Burley-in-Wharfedale**, **Baildon** and **Bingley**. See further information on our [website news](#). If you fancy linking neighbouring member towns with a long distance trail yourselves you could start with our fact sheet '[Creating Long Distance trails](#)'.

Congratulations to our newly accredited members **Dover**, Kent and **Dereham**, Norfolk so different but both equally brilliant applications and we look forward to learning of their progress. Have you seen the new members' [website page](#)?

Sayings

Two sayings that appear appropriate for this month:

The old proverb: 'Ne'er cast a clout till May be out', certainly seems to apply this year.

And 'Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take but by the moments that take our breath away' attributed to Hilary Cooper.

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