



WALKERS ARE WELCOME

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



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Pic. June wildflowers

This year's wild flowers seem to be the most spectacular ever.

Annual Get-Together

The programme and booking information for the Annual Get-Together in Caistor, Horncastle and Market Rasen in Lincolnshire on **Saturday and Sunday 15th and 16th October 2016** is now online. We must congratulate them for managing to arrange the weekend of events for just £35 per delegate with an **“early bird” reduced booking fee of just £25 which will apply up to 31st July 2016**. The Taste of Lincolnshire evening food and entertainment is £12.95 per person extra. There are even free buses between the three towns. [Book now](#) for the special price.

Policy Questions

Policy documents including Articles and Memorandum can be found in the [‘Reports on National Executive Business’](#) of the membership section. As the years go by we constantly review policies and whether there is a need to bring any items to the Annual General Meeting for a decision.

1. There is currently a 35,000 population limit on town membership. It has always been considered that our organisation was for small towns and villages that did not have the resources to compete as big players in the tourism market. Do you think this policy is correct or should we consider larger towns being allowed to join at an increased membership fee? **Comments are invited.**
2. Membership of Walkers are Welcome CIC is subject to the organising body being a bottom-up management committee or steering group and we check year on year with the Annual Returns that town membership isn't being run by a council or similar body however well intentioned. Policy states: *‘Gaining the status is dependent on the Executive Committee being convinced that any application is a “bottom-up” initiative from within the local community. This is to ensure that there will be*

ongoing continuity of support for the project. When applications come from Councils or other agencies, the commitment has tended to be short-term as personnel change. That is not to say that such groups cannot initiate the formation of community groups to pursue an application, and very often they provide initial funding.'

We prefer to see a separate community constituted group which has shown to be the most successful and democratic management. Should we make this compulsory? **Comments are invited.**

We are Family

We are often reminded by so many ways that help to make us a true network of likeminded towns and villages.

- Pass on a contact to help the other town in some way
- Visit a nearby town that are having a special event or just for a walk
- Publicise other towns' events and work through your own facebook and twitter.
- Congratulate another town on outstanding work
- Attend a regional Get-Together or informal meeting
- Mentor a new town
- Have a short break in another town or visit when in the area
- Send a friendly e-mail or have a chat on the 'phone
- Help out with advice or resources
- Make a new trail linking towns
- Recommend a WaW town when friends are going on holiday



The Heart of Wales Trail

Glyn Evans at Llandovery has written:

'A very interesting initiative is currently taking shape in mid-Wales regarding the creation of a long-distance walking wrail related to the Heart of Wales Railway, a line which snakes its way diagonally from Swansea to Shrewsbury, passing through some glorious countryside as it does so. This railway line is already much favoured by walkers as a means of access to mid Wales, as is proven by the popularity of the guide book 'Great Walks from the Heart of Wales Railway', and this new initiative aims to capitalise on this already firm foundation by creating this new walking trail.

Initial research suggests that the HoW Trail could bring it a number of very positive possibilities:

- to encourage sustainable Tourism in mid-Wales
- to support both existing and new businesses in proximity to the HoW Line
- to encourage the use of public transport in the area

With the support of both Prof. Les Lumsden and Alison Caffyn, a series of discussions has already taken place between the Heart of Wales Enterprise Network (Howlen) and local walking groups and local authority Rights of Way teams in order to seek advice about the details of the route to be chosen and the best options. Investigations are now being made to see if there are any funding opportunities available which might support both the development and the maintenance of the 'Trail'.

Indeed, Prof. Lumsden came down to Llandovery some weeks ago in order to meet and to sound out the opinions of Glyn Evans and Robin Barlow, both members of Llandovery Walkers are Welcome. It goes without saying that we were very responsive to this initiative, and it was therefore agreed that a number of us in

Llandovery should reconnoitre a possible route to be followed between four Railway Stations in our part of the Trail, namely from Llanwrtyd Wells to Cynghordy, from Cynghordy to Llandovery, and from Llandovery to Llangadog. This task was slow, difficult, and frequently frustrating – for example when a footbridge shown on the map across a fast-flowing stream is now nothing but a few pieces of rotting timber - but it was also extremely satisfying and well worthwhile. This initial work has all been accomplished, and Prof. Lumsden has recently walked our chosen route in person: we now await his comments and final decisions. It is quite exciting, if the truth were to be told!

If you would like to know more about the Heart of Wales Trail please [e-mail Glyn](#).

Walking and Religion

Thy Kingdom Come recommends 'Prayer Walking'; what a brilliant idea for a church or cell group. For the non-religious this idea might be interpreted to cover healing through quiet contemplation or sharing worries and health issues with other walkers on your health walks for physiological benefits. The social benefits of health walks are often as important as the exercise.

In the March newsletter we mentioned the [Ride+Stride scheme](#) which is a sponsored bike ride or walk between churches on 10th September, 2016. You might work with churches in your area to make this event, aiming to raise funds for historical buildings, a success.

With a spectacular photograph of Lindisfarne Castle, The Times reporter Kaya Burgess' article '[Churches offer B&B \(bed and Bible\)](#)' told us that, according to the British Pilgrimage Trust, about 30 new pilgrimage routes have opened in the past ten years. There has apparently been a 20 per cent increase in people undertaking a pilgrimage in the past two years. Naturally, not everyone undertaking a pilgrimage trail does so for religious reasons. There is often an interest in history, historic buildings or a love of long distance trails with a purpose or attractive scenery and the challenge presented. Many of our members have historical meeting places, ruined abbeys, holy places and churches to celebrate in a long or short pilgrimage or heritage route. This might not necessarily be the traditional Roman Catholic or Anglican Church, for example, Sedbergh are putting together Quaker trails celebrating the Friends history in their area. The [British Pilgrimage website](#) is inspiring.

The Pathways Book by Nicholas Rudd-Jones and David Stewart, 'Journeys along Britain's historic byways from pilgrimage routes to smugglers' trails' is being serialised on the Walkingworld website. This includes a downloadable '[The Pilgrim's Way](#)' traditionally made famous by early pilgrims visiting the shrine to Sir Thomas Becket murdered in 1170.

Funding

The [Discover England Fund](#) is a three year £40 million fund announced by the government last year which 'will ensure that England stays competitive in the rapidly growing global tourism industry, by offering world-class English tourism products to the right customers at the right time.' Whilst this is unlikely to be suitable for your group, you might encourage Destination Management Organisations and other local bodies to apply. [See further details](#)

Public Transport

Campaign for Better Transport have highlighted that with all the headlines about driverless cars and spaceports, you may have missed the other transport announcement in the Queen's Speech, the [Bus Services Bill](#). Resulting from combined public activities, this Bill promises to give councils new powers to better plan and manage bus services. The outcomes may be interesting as with all non-statutory services, our bus services are suffering from subsidy cuts and investment.

The Commons Transport Committee has launched an investigation into 'the rail passenger experience', looking into what needs to change so that passengers can feel that our train tickets represent real value for money. The inquiry is specifically looking at smart ticketing, part-time season tickets, passenger information and on

train facilities. This is your opportunity to tell them what it is really like to be a rail passenger. Send your information to the [Commons Select Committee](#) copying to the [Campaign for Better Transport](#) and your MP.

Park Protector Award

Following on from last month's National Parks news, the Campaign for National Parks have launched their '2016 Park Protector Award' to 'celebrate and support the fantastic work being done in National Parks.' The award is sponsored by Ramblers Holidays Charitable Trust. Nominations are open until Sunday 3 July 2016. [See further details.](#)

Just add walks

Marty Boren at [Walkmatters](#), a new worldwide walking community website, is inviting WaW members to add information and walking events free of charge. Marty is hoping that walkers will post about their adventures with lots of pictures.

The Royal Geographical Society is encouraging walks to be added to their ['Discovering Britain'](#) resource.

Walk Round the World

Nicky Stickland of PTSD Resolution has asked for WaW members support with their Walk Round the World charity event. 'Get Fit with PTSD Resolution, Raise Money and Walk Round the World!' 'Take steps for PTSD Resolution and challenge yourself, your friends, colleagues, families and children to take part in PTSD Resolution's Walk Round the World (WRTW) and raise funds for former Service men and women and their families who are struggling from the trauma of conflict and help them get back to a normal life.'

They are 'collectively aiming to walk or run as many kilometres as possible in order to achieve a circumnavigation of the world, or even better, multiple trips around the world.' See [further details.](#)



Member News

Ann Jurczynszyn at **Meltham**, West Yorkshire tells us that members of Kings Lynn Ramblers were visiting their area and looked at the Meltham Walkers ae Welcome [website](#) for ideas. "They requested some information from us and we offered to accompany them on our 10 mile Wessenden Way route. It was so good to be able to show visitors our gorgeous countryside and it's also great that people access the WAW websites for information. It's also given us the motivation to organise a walking festival in the future." (*pic. above*)

Baildon are displaying the national Wall Hanging at **Baildon** library from 10 to 24 June to coincide with their Third Annual Walking Weekend and Open Day [celebrations.](#)

'Over three days in late September 2015, **Haslemere**, Surrey's only WaW accredited town, hosted its first walking festival. Blessed with fine weather, local walkers and those from further afield, came together to enjoy a variety of walking experiences. Beautiful open spaces, historic buildings, notable trees, Nordic walking and even bat watching were some of the walks on offer. **Haslemere's** Visitor Information Centre is currently working again with local walking groups to plan an even bigger and better Walking Festival this year to be held over the weekend of 23rd, 24th and 25th of September.'

Whitchurch, Hampshire held a Fun Family Ramble see 'Walking, pub racing & plentiful barrels of beer!' News report on the [website](#). You may also be interested to read [Llandoverly WaW walks for charity](#) and [Liskeard walkers let the train take the strain](#) all in the news.

Snaith has been awarded £1,000 towards the cost of new signage for their Heritage Walks by the Ramblers Holidays Charitable Trust. Congratulations.

When in Wales on a recent visit, our Chairman, Sam Phillips saw a powerpoint that **Corwen** put together about the benefits of being a Walkers are Welcome town. We now have a copy if anyone is interested particularly if you are planning a similar event.

If you have a facebook page, don't forget to like the [Walkers are Welcome page](#) and keep up to date with WaW member news posted there



Bananas

[The Guardian](#) reported that the John Muir Trust, which protects so many wild places in Scotland, has had something to say about walkers leaving banana skins in the countryside. Apparently they take 2 years to biodegrade and they have estimated that there already 1,000 bananas skins on Ben Nevis. It sounds like we should all be campaigning to take your fruit debris home. Can anyone think of a suitable slogan?

Bird Song

Cumbria Wildlife Trust are offering bird song experiences on their [website](#). There is a live stream of birdsong from their wildlife garden or a pre-recorded dawn chorus to listen to.



So now that the May blossom is out,
even in the north of England,
how do you "cast a clout"?

Enjoy the countryside,

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