

WALKERS ARE WELCOME ANNUAL REPORT 2010 for Deal

Town:Deal.....

To maintain your status as a Walkers are Welcome town, please send this report by email to the WAW Secretary andrew@andrewbibby.com by 31 March 2010.

1. Please use the space below to summarise the main activities you have undertaken in 2009 to ensure that your town/village continues to be one where walkers are welcome. *Please relate what you write to the six WAW criteria.*

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.

Deal has been fortunate enough to have several influential people who worked together to establish Deal as a town where Walkers are Welcome by using the various media they had at their disposal.

These individuals were:

Graham Smith, editor of the East Kent Mercury local weekly newspaper for Deal-circulation 12,000 - runs regular walking columns to raise the profile of walks and walking events in Deal.

Alan Sutton, Local walking group leader liaises with the local council and tourist office and other walking groups..

Jane Langstaff who owns and runs on and off line business support and Promotions Company the Best of Deal Dover and Sandwich which is part of a national franchise. 12, 000 page views per month and regular weekly events E newsletters t a vast network of locals and businesses in the area which raise the profile of Deal Walking events.

In order to obtain National Walkers Status for Deal Town, the support or local businesses and organisations was crucial.

A networking event was arranged at Deal Castle in January 2009 by the 'Best of' with over 140 local businesses and organisations attending in support of making Deal Walkers are welcome town.

We were able to collect well in excess of 1000 signatures from businesses and members of the public in order to apply for national walker's status in order to bring tourism benefits to Deal and raise its profile as a walker friendly must visit destination.

In February 2009 we were granted £1000 from the town council and £500 from Kent country Council to go towards improved signage for walkers on the

designated walking routes in Deal. Some of this funding has been reserved to pay of a designated walker's web site for Deal in addition to the free features and events listings offered by The Best Of which raise the profile of Deal walks via google searches. This council funding was also used to fund a promotional leaflet.

Strategic Partnerships have been forged with all the local walking and environmental groups in and around the Deal area which include:

Happy Walkers; White Cliffs Ramblers, White Cliffs Countryside Project; Walkers Friend. Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Deal with It ; First Light Coast and Country; Western Heights Preservation Society.

All of these organisations and their members of all ages, regularly maintain our local walking routes and footpaths as part of their educational and environmental work. They promote Walking on behalf of Deal and distribute our promotional literature. They are instrumental in offering a variety of graded walks for all ages and abilities for local people and tourists supported and promoted by our local council.

Alan Suttons Happy Walkers Group runs an annual walking festival which takes place in August supported by local tourism businesses in Deal. Our local bus company Stage Coach who run green energy buses support this event and their buses are used to transport walkers to designated walking routes in and around the Deal area.

Graham Smith has been able to raise the profile of Deal Walks considerably as a key member of the White Cliffs Ramblers who organise the annual White Cliffs Walkers Challenge. This is a 50 mile walk which attracts walkers to Deal from all over the UK and abroad for the three day event.

Graham Smith was able to use his contacts at the Mercury Newspaper to produce a DL flyer entitled 'Deal Walks' funded by the money obtained from the council and donations from local tourism businesses who make special provision in order to welcome walkers such as specific menus, opening times etc. These businesses are proactive in offering our Deal Walks leaflet to their clients as well as promotion of Deal Walks via their own web sites and have the walkers are welcome logo clearly on display in their premises.

In March 2009 Jane Langstaff launched The Tourism Network for Deal via her extensive network. This was a useful communication medium for both businesses and consumers to promote Deal town for specific activities such as walking.

Walks in Deal were promoted via this network at the annual Travel and Leisure show 2009 and 2010 at Dover Cruise Terminal organised by the Kent On Sunday Newspaper.

We had over 1000 visitors to our stand which promoted all the things you can do in Deal of which walks play a large part and copies of our leaflet Deal Walks were distributed there.

As we are fortunate enough to be a coastal rural town adjacent to excellent cross channel Links via the ferry's at the Port of Dover and Euro- tunnel crossings. We are currently in the process of developing Walking exchanges with France via our local twinning organisations which we hope to establish as regular annual events.

Due to the advantages of Deals location and the occupations of its steering group members, we are ideally placed to be able to continue to maintain Deal as a Walking friendly town. The ultimate aim is to encourage our neighbours in both Dover and Sandwich to also apply for National Walkers Status and promote the South East Coast as one of the UK's Best Walking Destinations.

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?

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*)

Declaration

We wish to apply for continuation of our status as a Walkers are Welcome town/village. We have sent a cheque for our annual membership to the Walkers are Welcome treasurer.

Name:

Organisation:

Note: Annual returns will normally be posted on the WaW website, so that others are aware of each town's achievements. Please advise us if for any reason you would rather that this form was not made public.