

WALKERS ARE WELCOME ANNUAL REPORT 2010

Town: ...Haltwhistle.....

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.

Week long Walking Festivals held Spring & Autumn 2009 designed, organised and run by volunteers.

New : 'The Haltwhistle Challenge' held in May 2009 with over 100 entrants (to be repeated this year for both walkers and runners with up to 300 entrants)

New website launched with online booking facility for Walking Festivals and Challenge as well as downloadable self-guided walks.

Website illustrates these and other activities – www.haltwhistlewalkingfestival.org

Regular weekly walks – choice of long or short, open to all comers, free and guided, advertised widely normally attract 30-40 walkers many of whom are local residents.

3. 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.

Because of restricted car parking at the event, Hadrian's Wall Heritage Ltd., asked us to walk visitors up to the 'Illuminating the Wall' held on 13 March 2010 (an internationally acclaimed event) – 18 leaders and back-ups, at short notice, led parties up to the Roman Wall from the town centre – 120 individual visitors in all. We had to turn away a similar number. Very good reaction from participants – see our Website for details.

The first Haltwhistle Challenge was very successful though it took a great deal of organisation and commitment, (other towns beware) it should get easier to run each time we do it. This year we are allowing a limited number of runners to take part.

Launching the website and online booking has been useful.

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?

Northumbrian Water has been very supportive with assistance in distribution of Festival brochures and leaflets.

Local businesses have been supportive with adverts for the Walking Festival Brochures and some local employers have made a cash donation towards running costs of the Festivals. Both the Chamber of Trade and the Tourism Association have given financial support as both organisations see the benefits of attracting walkers to Haltwhistle and its surrounds.

Feedback from local food and drink providers shows that there has been an increase in walking visitors to the town, both for the festivals and self-guided, since Walkers are Welcome status was achieved. Indeed one takeaway establishment has adopted the WaW logo and included it in their door panel!

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*)

Budgetary constraints and travelling distances have so far prevented participation or attendance at conferences.

Walk leader Training has been offered to Hadrian's Wall Heritage Ltd. and the Kielder Partnership.

Many retail businesses have embraced the Walkers are Welcome concept from footwear and outdoor clothing providers to cafes, takeaways and B&Bs offering packed lunches for walkers staying in the town. Most premises display the window stickers and make good provision for walkers.

The Haltwhistle Partnership promotes WaW on its website and offers a collection of Ring Walk guides which, when updated and reprinted in 2010/11 subject to funding, will use the WaW logo as part of its advertising.

More generally, even residents who are not walkers themselves are aware of our Walkers are Welcome status and welcome walkers with friendly advice for visitors wishing to explore the landscape around Haltwhistle.

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 Jon Pickering

Organisation: Haltwhistle Partnership

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.