

WALKERS ARE WELCOME ANNUAL REPORT 2010

Town:

.....LLANGOLLEN.....

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.

We now have a well established Llangollen Walking Group which has evolved from the Walkers are Welcome Steering Group which was originally formed to try to obtain Walkers are Welcome Town Status. The Group consists of interested locals, keen amateur walkers, professional Walking Guides and members of the Town Council.

We undertook our first Walking Festival in September 2009. We decided not to be too ambitious to start with but arranged a varied number of walks including some where the local steam railway was used to take people out to starting points from which they could then return to Llangollen. We were fortunate enough to have a number of walk leaders available and the numbers of walkers we attracted over the two days was far greater than anticipated. So we regarded the event as very successful.

We have now begun planning this year's Festival on the last weekend in September once again.

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.

The nearby Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and 11 mile stretch of canal and buffer zone has been awarded World Heritage status and as a result will be promoted widely once infrastructure issues have been addressed - such as improved car parking capacity. However the existing site would attract walkers and we anticipate that this will significantly increase the number of visitors to the area. Not only to walk the 11 mile stretch of canal but also to use the many other walks available in the area. Local bus services can be used to transport walkers to start or finishing points along the 11 mile corridor.

The use of the Llangollen Railway to ferry walkers to various stops in the Valley seemed very popular and this will feature in our publicity for this year's Festival. The Trains run regularly throughout the year so could accommodate walkers at any time and not just during the Festival.

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?

We have established the Llangollen Walking Group and created a bank account for the organisation. The Town Council provided a donation of £100 to get us started and we were successful in obtaining a grant from the County Council to assist with organising the Walking Festival.

We are represented on the local Chamber of Trade & Tourism so that everyone is aware of our Group and that Llangollen is a Walkers Are Welcome town. We are still trying to persuade businesses to offer discounts/benefits to walkers and our constant reminders at monthly meetings will in due course provide some positive results. The current economic situation is not helpful. It is therefore too early to assess what economic benefits are being derived to the local economy.

The Royal International Pavilion is under new management and major refurbishment is taking place. The use of the site is being considered for use as an 'Outdoor Activities Centre' which will offer cafe, toilets and changing facilities and could be regarded as the ideal base for a Walking Centre with relatively cheap parking facilities.

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*)

Two of our members attended the Conference in Church Stretton and we benefited from the experience of Alan Garner who has organised the Walking Festivals in Church Stretton. Alan sent us a copy of his presentation to the Conference which was very useful. We also took away a number of brochures/leaflets on other areas which we have distributed to our members.

Once our Walking Festival is fully established we hope to expand the number of walks and include a Nordic walk and a long distance 'Llangollen Round' using the existing North Berwyn Way and Dee Valley way to the north and south of the River Dee.

We also hope to start to arrange mutual visits to and from other Walker Are Welcome Towns, starting with those in North Wales.

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: Ian Parry (Secretary)

Organisation: Llangollen Walking Group 01978 861345 07785 541445
26.3.10