

## WALKERS ARE WELCOME ANNUAL REPORT 2010

Town: Winchcombe

*To maintain your status as a Walkers are Welcome town, please send this report by email to the WaW Secretary [andrew@andrewbibby.com](mailto: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.*

### **February 2009**

- Approached the Town Council to suggest that Winchcombe should become a Walkers are Welcome town.

### **March – July 2009**

- With backing from the Town and Borough Councils, the steering group set about meeting the six criteria necessary for full accreditation. WaW status was awarded in July.
- Worked with local businesses and residents to get their backing for WaW

### **August 2009**

- New website launched – [ww.winchcombewelcomeswalkers.com](http://ww.winchcombewelcomeswalkers.com)  
Designed to give walkers all the information they need to plan a visit to the town and enjoy the facilities.
- Launch event consisted of:
  - a day of free guided walks
  - a stand at the popular Winchcombe Country Show, including presentation of our WaW certificate by a locally well known author
  - media coverage ranging from local newspapers, Cotswold Life magazine and local radio.

### **September 2009**

- Developed new walk routes to download from the website

### **October 2009**

- Three steering group members attended the Walkers are Welcome Conference in Church Stretton

### **November 2009**

- Started planning our first walking festival for May 2010
- Sent in numerous applications for funding

### **December 2009**

- Erected WaW signs on the entrance roads to Winchcombe
- Continued to develop and promote the website
- Started giving talks to local groups
- Started to act as a mentor to other towns

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 following may be of interest to other towns:

- Produced attractive business cards to promote our website.
- Linked with the local Fair Trade Group to fund new road signs on the entry roads to Winchcombe, promoting FT and WAW
- Started giving talks to local groups such as the WI and Round Table
- Produce a colourful and informative Newsletter every few months. We email to our contact list and print a few copies for the TIC
- Arranged for the TIC to allocate Winchcombe Walkers are Welcome some display space in the local office
- Had a stand at Winchcombe Country Show, promoting Walkers are Welcome, Walking for Health, the Cotswolds AONB and the Cotswold Way National Trail
- Interviewed twice on Winchcombe Radio and three times on BBC Radio Gloucestershire
- Worked with local journalists to get Winchcombe and the Walkers are Welcome network mentioned in the Independent on Sunday and the Express
- Work in partnership with the Cotswolds AONB, the Cotswold Way National Trail team, the Walking for Health leaders and Gloucestershire Ramblers to promote each others events, website addresses etc.
- Obtained permission to erect a WaW display in an empty shop window, however, a week later the lease was let and a new shop opened instead.

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 obtained the following funding and support:

- General funding
  - Winchcombe Town Council
  - Tewkesbury Borough Council
- Walking festival
  - Gloucestershire Market Towns Forum
  - National Grid (we found out that a new gas pipeline is being laid in spring 2010 which will affect the routes of some of our planned walks)
  - Winchcombe Cycling Club
  - We are awaiting a decision on two other funding applications from local charitable trusts
- Sponsorship in the form of goods and services for the walking festival from local businesses
  - Micro brewery providing reduced price beer for the barn dance
  - Travel company providing minibus transport
  - Outdoor clothing outlet providing prizes
- Website sponsorship
  - Annual £25 payment from businesses for an enhanced entry on the website
  - 28 businesses signed up so far, bringing in £700pa (enough to make the website sustainable)
- Distributing walking guides to local outlets for a publisher
  - We receive a percentage of profits for each book sold

At present we do not have any evidence that Walkers are Welcome status has benefitted our town, but it is still early days. We have seen people out walking with our new walk guides and visitor numbers to our website are gradually increasing. The local Walking for Health Group have reported a significant increase in members. A Herefordshire walking group has contacted us for walk and lunch stop ideas.

We plan to ask walkers at our festival to complete a survey form and we plan to develop a survey form to leave in the local B&Bs.

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*)

- Three members of our steering group attended the annual conference at Church Stretton and we plan to attend in 2010
- We have agreed to mentor other local towns and villages. So far we have given advice to Longborough, Newent and the Stanleys.
- We have had considerable success at getting Winchcombe mentioned in the local and national press. We always mention the Walkers are Welcome network of towns.
- We give talks about Walkers are Welcome to local groups and give interviews on local radio.

#### 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: Sheila Talbot (Chair)

Organisation: Winchcombe Walkers are Welcome

*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.*