

**MINUTES OF 2010 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
OF WALKERS ARE WELCOME TOWN NETWORK
HELD ON THE 24TH OCTOBER 2010 AT COLZIUM
HOUSE, KILSYTH, SCOTLAND AT 2.30 P.M.**

- 1 Those in attendance were as per the attached registration sheet.
- 2 Apologies for absence were received from:-
Amanda Bloomer of Kingsbridge.
- 3 The Chairman, Kate Ashbrook, welcomed the delegates and thanked them for their attendance.

Minutes of 2009 A.G.M.

- 4 These had been circulated prior to the meeting and were approved.

Matters Arising

- 5 Kate Ashbrook advised the meeting that no part-time administrator had been appointed due to lack of funds, nor had we been able to pursue charitable status.
- 6 There were no other matters arising.

Chairman's Report

- 7 Kate Ashbrook began by advising that two more towns had gained accreditation at the committee meeting held on the 23rd October 2010, namely Bromyard and Pocklington, thus bringing the number of member towns to 55 from 24 the previous year.
- 8 Kate said that the success of the organisation is due to the hard work of the member towns promoting the ethos of Walkers are Welcome and to the mentors encouraging applicant towns.
- 9 The growth is also in part due to the growing popularity of walking in the current financial climate.
- 10 Kate went on to emphasise that all the work is on a voluntary basis and that the new committee will need fresh blood to maintain the impetus of the network.
- 11 Further, Kate felt that the organisation must ensure the brand is used to its full potential but also must be safeguarded.
- 12 She had met the environment minister Richard Benyon earlier that week and he had made it clear that the government does not consider public access, rights of way and recreation to be a priority. Local authorities were cutting their rights-of-way budgets, and Natural

England and the Countryside Council for Wales were also downgrading paths and access. The Walkers Are Welcome Towns are well placed to demonstrate the economic and health benefits of walking, to persuade government and local authorities that they must invest in paths and access for the public's benefit, but it would be a challenge in these stringent times. However, with so much enthusiasm from the towns, Kate was confident that our network would grow and flourish.

Secretary's Report

- 13 Andrew Bibby, in his final report to the AGM, said he was also pleased with the growth of the network and hoped that this would be maintained in the ensuing year.
- 14 He advised delegates that the committee was the driving force and he thanked them for their work over the last year, attending the telephone conferences of which there were six during the past 12 months plus one face- to-face meeting in spring at Hebden Bridge.
- 15 Andrew also thanked the mentors for assisting new towns in gaining accreditation. This was helped by the mentors taking on specific areas to look after.
- 16 The recent inception of an insurance scheme was proving to be popular with most towns and represented a saving of circa £200 to each town. Towns wishing to take advantage of the scheme can access Tennyson Insurance Brokers by following the links on the website. The policy is underwritten by Zurich plc a well-respected insurance company.
- 17 Mention was also made of the Annual Reports that were submitted by the member towns. These enabled the committee to monitor how member towns were progressing and what the impact accreditation has on towns.
- 18 Andrew asked that next year's reports be submitted promptly along with subscriptions. Andrew thanked Peter Corkill for all the work carried out by him reading the reports and advising the committee accordingly.
- 19 Andrew was also pleased to advise the conference that media awareness of Walkers are Welcome was growing and he cited articles that had appeared in various magazines and national daily newspapers. In addition there had been a piece on national BBC radio on "You and Yours".
- 20 Andrew also advised that it was hoped to get better access to the branded goods as worn by the delegates from Market Weighton.
- 21 Andrew thanked Sheila Talbot for undertaking the editorship of the newsletter. He was certain that she would ensure that there was a

regular publication for members, and he asked delegates to assist by submitting articles.

Treasurer's Report

- 22 Geoff Kitt gave a resumé of the audited accounts, attached hereto, which were approved.
- 23 Geoff advised that the expenses of the committee members were low, thanks to some members not claiming for the telephone conferences.
- 24 Geoff also advised that subscriptions for member towns will remain at current levels.
- 25 The meeting approved the accounts.

Constitution

- 26 Sam Borman proposed the adoption of the revised constitution. Together with his wife Wendy, Sam had done a great deal of work in assisting to draft the constitution to replace the current constitution, Sam advised the meeting that there were a few very minor changes and that the changes that have been made would enable Walkers are Welcome to gain charitable status if required.
- 27 A couple of other minor points from the floor were clarified by Sam.
- 28 The Chairman then asked meeting to vote.
- 29 The motion was carried by the necessary two thirds majority.

Election of the committee for 2011

- 30 The following stood for election to the committee all of whom gave a brief C.V. to the conference (other than Amanda Bloomer):-
 - Kate Ashbrook
 - Amanda Bloomer (Kingsbridge, Devon)
 - Sam Borman (Pickering, North Yorkshire)
 - Nigel Botting (Market Weighton, East Yorkshire)
 - Geoff Kitt (Moffat, Dumfries and Galloway)
 - Sam Phillips (Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire)
 - Ann Sandell (Kirkby Stephen, Cumbria)
 - Sheila Talbot (Winchcombe, Gloucestershire)
 - Malcolm Wilkinson (Prestatyn and Meliden, Denbighshire)

All nominees were voted in unanimously.

- 31 Kate told the meeting that Andrew Bibby was standing down both from the committee and as secretary, and Peter Corkill was standing down from the committee. She warmly thanked them both for all the hard work that they had put in over the last four years.

Election of Officers

- 32 Kate Ashbrook advised she was willing to stand as chairman for one more year.
- 33 Andrew Bibby put the motion to the meeting and Kate was re-elected unanimously.
- 34 Amanda Bloomer had volunteered to stand for Secretary. The motion was put to the meeting. Amanda was appointed Secretary unanimously.
- 35 Geoff Kitt advised he was willing to stand as Treasurer. The motion was put to the meeting and Geoff was re-elected unanimously.

Open Forum

- 36 Andrew Clark of Chesham asked if it would be possible to get towns to submit a link to Google map.
- 37 Kate Ashbrook said she had picked up a number of action points from the conference which the committee would discuss. These included producing a statement to clarify to prospective towns the benefit of being accredited Walkers are Welcome town; and adding a short sentence to the logo to explain the concept, which should be included on every town's website with a link to the main website.

Conference 2012

- 38 The Chairman said that the committee would shortly be inviting towns to submit bids for hosting the 2012 conference.

A.O.B.

- 39 There was no other business.
- 40 The Chairman thanked delegates for their attendance and formally closed the meeting at 3:20 p.m.