

WALKERS ARE WELCOME CIC ANNUAL RETURN FOR THE YEAR JAN TO DEC 2017



To maintain your status as an accredited **Walkers are Welcome** town it is necessary to show how you have continued to meet the required criteria in 2017.

Please complete this report electronically and send it by email to: secretary@walkersarewelcome.org.uk by **31 January 2018**.

As you will be aware, it was decided at this year's Annual Get Together that any town or village not submitting an adequate Annual Return and making payment of the subscription by 30 April would automatically lose accreditation. This has been done to avoid the need for Committee members to spend a lot of time chasing returns. This is not an invitation to delay your returns until April: please make every effort to complete all actions by the end of January, but if you do anticipate or experience problems, please advise us as soon as possible.

Please answer every question and provide the fullest information, the form expands to allow additional information. It is always wonderful to learn of your achievements and share innovation as evidenced by the recent National Survey.

Town or village name: Dereham

Name of group or organisation: Dereham Walkers are Welcome

Population: 18609 (Dereham Town Council website, accessed 3 January 2018)

2018 subscription paid: cheque sent 2 January 2018

Achievements & innovation 2017

Shout about your group's main achievements this year and anything you have done that you consider to be innovative.

We took a decision to arrange a walk in each public holiday period, and to aim to do something a little different from what other walking groups do.

We started 2017 with a New Year's Day Bolo Rei* walk - a 2-3 hour walk ending with tea/coffee and cake at New Flavours, a Portuguese café in the town. We had 25 people on the walk, some from well outside Dereham. (*Bolo Rei is a traditional Portuguese seasonal cake served over the Christmas period; the name translates as 'King Cake'.)

During the rest of the year we arranged the following walks

- Easter Saturday (15 April) - ending with Simnel Cake at Dereham Windmill (photo 1)
- Spring Bank Holiday (29 May) - using local bus service to reach an outlying visit, with a walk back to Dereham, stopping *en route* for coffee and cake provided by a WaW committee member operating a 'chuck wagon' (photo 2)
- Late summer Bank Holiday (28 August) - again using the local bus service to enable a walk to a local café where we had arranged the usual 'coffee and cake', with added discounts for those wanting lunch (photo 3)
- 1 October - a walk ending with a garden party at the house of a committee member
- Norfolk County Council Cycling and Walking Festival (25 October) - although we did not formally enter the walk in the Festival (on account of the onerous bureaucratic requirements), we did arrange a walk in the Festival period, taking the heritage railway out of Dereham, with a walk back, and refreshments at Dereham station (photo 4)



In addition, on Easter Monday (17 April) we arranged an event for children and families - Walking in Wonderland - essentially a Treasure Hunt involving a walk round The Neatherd, a large open area on the edge of the town. It attracted entries from 32 children.

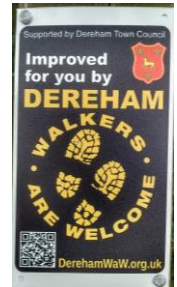
In May we proposed and then participated in a reciprocal walk with Cromer WaW, inviting people from Aylsham and Swaffham in the hope of assisting these groups to (re)gain WaW accreditation. This ended in a lunch with useful discussion between all present.

In June, we held an Annual Public Meeting to publicise our activity. Attendance was sadly low, so this will be reconsidered for the future (it is included in our Constitution).

In the middle of the year, we took delivery of a number of 'Improved for you' plaques. These were designed by us and paid for by Dereham Town Council. We have been using them to mount on posts to indicate locations where we have undertaken maintenance or improvement work.

In the autumn, we started distributing customised Dereham 'stickers' (we have purchased some which peel off without leaving a residue). By the end of the year, we had 21 on display, with more still to approach.

In June we led a walk for The Conservation Volunteers, as thanks for their assistance in clearing numerous tree stumps from the surface of what had been an overgrown Restricted Byway. (Clearance of major growth had been made by ourselves the previous year.) This relationship was taken further by a second event in October, when The Conservation Volunteers helped us to cut back a hedge which was forcing walkers into a ditch.



before



during



after

In November, we arranged the loan of litter picking equipment from Breckland District Council to tidy up a number of identified locations of litter on our public rights of way.

During the year, we have built up a list of 54 email addresses of people (several of them couples) who want to be informed of our work. We email regularly, as well as keeping our website (www.DerehamWaW.org.uk) up to date.

Also during the year, we took over the pack of 'Dereham walks' guides prepared by the Town Council and Footpath Warden and initially funded by Breckland District Council grant. 3000 copies were printed and distributed free of charge, the last ones going early in 2017. This pack started with 4 walks, and was then extended by 2 using the Mid-Norfolk Railway, prepared by a different person and in a different format. We took the decision to extend the pack to 14 walks, and bring all into an improved common format. Alongside this work, we applied for funding, and succeeded in securing £750 from Dereham Town Council and £1390 from Tesco's *Bags of Help* fund. The packs are being printed as this report is written, so will soon once more become freely (in both senses of the word) available. They will also be available for download from our website. Of the 14 walks, 3 use the Mid-Norfolk Railway and 4 the local Konect bus service.

The year ended on a similar note to its start, with planning for our 2018 New Year's Day walk.

Addressing the criteria

1. Demonstration of continued local support for the concept

Detail here other groups or partners you are working with to meet your aims.

We have set out quite specifically to work with other groups and organisations in the town wherever possible.

During the year we have worked with Dereham Town Council, Highways England, Natural England, Norfolk County Council, Norfolk Wildlife Trust, The Conservation Volunteers (Norfolk) and The Ramblers (Norfolk), all

concerning path maintenance and improvement issues (reported below).

Our walks have included partnership working (and shared income) with Dereham Windmill, Konect Bus, Yaxham Waters café, Mid-Norfolk Railway and The George Hotel.

We are currently exploring working with the Dereham Antiquarian Society and Norfolk Industrial Archaeological Society, to (1) revive a town trail previously published by Dereham Antiquarian Society, but long out of print, and (2) to arrange a day's town walk, if possible including Dereham Windmill and Mid-Norfolk Railway.

Although it has not been very active this year, we are still involved with four partners in Visit Dereham, an initiative to attract people to visit the town (which has vestigial tourist information only). To this end, we also supported overlapping ideas from the Friends of Dereham Memorial Hall, who ran a 'fringe festival' bringing together community groups to establish collaborative working: we continue to attend the meetings which followed from this this, with a view to generating more publicity for the town, to its residents and visitors alike.

We have contacts in Norfolk County Council and Breckland District Council, and copy them in to all relevant email exchanges; although little comes back, we seek to make more specific approaches where appropriate.

2. Evidence of continued endorsement by your local council

A formal Motion or Minute is not necessary but other evidence of support or collaboration.

On 12 May 2015, Dereham Town Council formally resolved "to work with those responsible to ensure that all public rights of ways are kept in good order at all times" and has since supported Walkers are Welcome in a variety of ways. As part of our application for accreditation, our Town Council contact at that time (Kate Millbank) stated "My fellow Town Councillors and I are all in agreement in our support for this project."

The Council provides a councillor presence at our committee meetings (Kate Millbank was replaced by Linda Goreham when Kate became unable to attend), and close contact with the Town Council is maintained both through this representation and by virtue of the voluntary Footpath Warden (Ken Hawkins) being a member of the WaW committee, reporting on matters to each meeting of the Heritage and Open Spaces Committee. This involvement has enabled input on planning applications affecting the footpath network in the town, in addition to the many more routine matters of path maintenance and usage. Our own website has a link to the Town Council website, and their site has a page on footpath issues, including a link back to Dereham Walkers are Welcome.

The Town Council also allows us use of a meeting room (free of charge) and has funded our 'Improved for you' plaques as well as equipment to support path maintenance (saws, hedge trimmer, strimmer).

We have been actively consulted as the Town Council has worked to develop its Neighbourhood Plan.

3. Indicate a commitment to ensure that the local public path network will be maintained in good condition

Give examples of how your group has been involved in monitoring and improvements to your PROW network.

Our Chair, Ken Hawkins, is also Footpath Warden for the Town Council, and has undertaken to monitor all of the public rights of way in the town. In this, he is regularly supported by his wife Catherine (also a WaW committee member) and further occasional support from other committee members as required. During the year, we started tracking the work done in this way, and the results from late February to the year end are that some 110 hours of work and 41 further hours of monitoring has been undertaken. Norfolk County Council values path monitoring work by its volunteers at £20 per hour, and on this basis, we have completed work to the value of over £3000.

Last year, we and The Ramblers worked closely with the Town Council which submitted claims to have routes in the town recognised as Restricted Byways. These claims are currently awaiting determination, but the only objections to the orders have been from The Ramblers and the Town Council, concerning inadequate widths being sought; there have been no landowner objections, so positive results are expected.

In part connected with these claims, but also separately, planning applications have been monitored which might impact on the town's network of paths, and comments submitted wherever necessary.

3b. And other facilities

This might be actions to save public toilets or a car park, boot cleaning or other innovation.

In response to a consultation by Norfolk County Council on funding for local bus services, we have submitted comments pointing out the value of those services for walkers.

4. Ensure adequate marketing of WALKERS ARE WELCOME status.

You have worked hard to become accredited, how do visitors to your community recognise this? Give examples of where WaW window stickers are displayed and examples of the logo in print and online. Have your activities been mentioned in newspapers or magazines? Have you a website and do you use social media?

As reported earlier, we currently have 21 Walkers are Welcome 'stickers' on display in the town.

The logo is used on all of our published material (mainly walk documentation and press releases) and as part of our email signature, as well as on our website.

We regularly prepare and submit press releases both to advertise and report on our activities, though these are not always published.

We purchased our own 'Dereham Walkers are Welcome' banner, which has been displayed on a number of occasions.

Our new walks pack will provide publicity to all individuals taking copies. We have also approached all neighbouring parishes through which any of our walks pass, inviting them to take packs and/or feature walks on their own websites: most of them have replied affirmatively.

We believe that our website is as good as any in the movement, and our webmaster works hard to keep it interesting and topical. We have discussed using social media, and consider this would be a useful addition to our publicity work, but have so far not identified anyone who would take this on for us, the existing committee members all feeling they already have enough to do.

4b. National WaW

How are you promoting the national brand and how are you getting involved? What actions are you taking to promote the network nationally and/or regionally? e.g. attendance at meetings, mentoring other towns, exchange visits, national press releases etc.

National: We ensure full reference to the national organisation on our website, and with information always presented at the bottom of our press releases (from where it has sometimes been picked up). Our Chair has this year become a member of the national committee. Both he and another committee member attended the Annual Get Together.

Regional: Prior to any involvement with the national committee, we were seeking to make contact with other Norfolk locations interested in WaW membership. We have asked Norfolk County Council (which has a policy of supporting Walkers are Welcome, though sadly this appears to be reactive rather than proactive) to keep us informed of others who express interest.

We have long had good working relationships with Cromer, with whom we exchange committee papers. We have also made numerous offers of support and help to Aylsham and Swaffham, though sadly these have so far come to nought (even after the day when we walked with Cromer WaW, with representatives of Aylsham and Swaffham).

5. Show how use of public transport has been encouraged.

How are you promoting the use of public transport e.g. developing bus or train walks. If you have little or no public transport, are you looking for opportunities to improve or lobby for better the services?

Dereham is not on the main rail network, though does have a heritage railway - the Mid-Norfolk Railway - which provides a seasonal and limited connection. In addition to local bus services, it also benefits from an express bus service which runs between Peterborough and Lowestoft (and also links other rail connected towns). We have included full reference to these services in our walks pack.

We have also used the railway and the bus as an integral part of 7 of the walks in the new pack, currently in production. We have not merely used and mentioned these services, but have actively established relationships with relevant personnel in those operations.

- develop links with neighbouring parishes

Records Update

Please help us to keep our records up to date. We require two contacts which will be used for contacting your organisation and on the mailing list. This information will be protected for the use of the National Committee and Mentors only. In future it will be possible to update this information on the new website.

Main contact name: Ken Hawkins

E-mail: ken-hawkins@tiscali.co.uk

Telephone: 01362 691455

Second contact name: Dorothy Sneesby

E-mail: dorothy.sneesby@btinternet.com

Telephone: 01362 694654

Group postal address: 26 Hillfields, Dereham NR19 1UE

E-mail contact for other member enquiries: ken-hawkins@tiscali.co.uk

Your Website link for the website: www.DerehamWaW.org.uk

Your twitter: none

Your Facebook: none

Last but not least – Have you completed your profile on the new website? **Yes**

Your Chair has been sent login details. Each town is responsible for adding their own details and updating them at least annually for data protection purposes. <https://walkersarewelcome.org.uk/>

Declaration

We wish to apply for continued status as a Walkers are Welcome town/village. We will pay our annual subscription to the Walkers are Welcome Treasurer in January 2018.

Geoff Kitt, 2 Tyerman Court, Heathhall, Dumfries DG1 3RA treasurer@walkersarewelcome.org.uk

Name: Ken Hawkins

Position: Chair

Organisation: Dereham Walkers are Welcome

E-mail: ken-hawkins@tiscali.co.uk

WaW Mentor if known: Don Davenport, Cromer WaW

Please email to: secretary@walkersarewelcome.org.uk by 31 January 2018.

If you would like information or assistance on any particular subject, please advise us on this form or by separate e-mail. We are here for you.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP AND SUPPORT

Note: Extracts of the annual returns may 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 information was not made public. Personal contact details will not leave the organisation.

Dec. 2017