

WALKERS ARE WELCOME CIC

MEMBERS' ANNUAL RETURN FOR THE YEAR JAN TO DEC 2023



Your Annual Return and subscription are both due by 31 January, 2024. **Please complete this report electronically and send it as a Word document to secretary@walkersarewelcome.org.uk by 31 January.** If you anticipate or experience any problems completing the Return and/or making your payment in time, please advise us as soon as possible.

To maintain your accreditation as a Walkers are Welcome town or village, it is essential that you show how you have met the criteria during the previous year by completing this Annual Return. Please answer every question and provide the fullest information; it is time to shout about your achievements. *The form expands to allow additional data.*

We are always looking for evidence that Walkers are Welcome members are making a difference in their communities and it is wonderful to learn of your successes and to share innovation across the network.

Town or village name	Wellington, Shropshire
Name of group or organisation	Wellington Walkers are Welcome
Population: Source of population figure?	25,000, Source, UK census 2011
Amount of payment due, see subscription below	£110
New Subscription paid	Yes
Date paid and how <u>or</u> date it will be paid	6th January 24, by online transfer
Name of mentor	Barry Fewster

Achievements and innovations this year The breadth of skills of our committee have helped to enhance the walking experience around Wellington.

23 new walking routes were established throughout Telford by a group containing 3 of our committee - 'Telford Coronation Walks'. One of these starts in Wellington and 2 others are very close. 10 of these were walked during our Walking Festival. A journalist took a week off work and joined 7 of them. He has written a long article describing his great enjoyment of the walks and praising the dedication of 2 of our committee members, who have worked so hard on the project.

The six criteria are:

<p>1. Demonstrate popular local support from the community and local businesses for the concept Detail here how other groups or partners and residents you are working with have helped you to achieve your goals.</p>	<p>We liaise with very many local groups:- Friends of the T50;Telford and East Shropshire Ramblers; Ramblers Wellbeing Walks; Love Telford; Climate Emergency Centre; Climate Change Borough Partnership; The Orbit cinema; Bowring (park) Walkers; Friends of Apley Woods; Denso; Rail Rambles; Rodington Vineyard; Sunnycroft and Attingham (NT); Poet of Wellington, (joined our Creative Writing Walk); Broseley Walkers are Welcome; Telford Steam Railway - we liaise with many of these groups to arrange walks with us in our Festival. Many local businesses support us by advertising in our festival leaflet, and this covers the cost of the leaflets eg Perry Cycles, Little Green Pantry; The Huntsman.</p>
<p>2. Demonstrate that the local council formally endorses the application for Walkers are Welcome status. This would have been originally demonstrated by the local council (Town, Parish or Community Council) passing a resolution in support, being represented on the steering group, and making a financial contribution where possible. How has this developed in the current year?</p>	<p>A member of Wellington Town Council (Julie) is on our committee. The Council gave us the grant of £250 that we had requested. Julie remains hugely enthusiastic and supportive of what we do and is looking forward to finding out about our plans for this year's festival.</p>
<p>3. Demonstrate a commitment that the local public path network will be maintained in good condition. This might be ensuring that all the local paths were walked in the last year and problems reported to the relevant authority (or landowner in Scotland) whilst checking that faults are rectified and/or reporting the actions which your own maintenance team have undertaken.</p>	<p>Malcolm, our Path Maintenance and Footpath Secretary, does a huge amount of work with his path maintenance team, which takes place twice a month, to keep footpaths in very good condition. He posts before and after photographs for all of us to see the team's achievements. A major achievement this year has been clearing a lot of dense overgrowth at the base of the Wrekin, making it walkable again. He investigates footpath issues, reports them to the Rights of Way Officer where necessary, reports on progress on these issues and sends reminders as necessary.</p>
<p>4. Demonstrate that there is adequate marketing of the town's Walkers are Welcome status. This can be demonstrated in several ways: for example, online presence, press coverage; signs/map in the centre of town advising visitors of walks they can undertake; waymarked walks starting from the town centre; leaflets readily available; local shops encouraged to display Walkers are Welcome stickers.</p>	<p>Our Publicity Secretary Jean, submits articles to the local newspapers and talks on Radio Shropshire. Our free leaflets are available at the Orbit cinema, the library and the local supermarket and a committee member sees that these are topped up regularly. Many shops and cafes in Wellington display Walkers are Welcome stickers. Naomi our Secretary sends out monthly emails to all on our mailing list informing everyone of local walking events and details of our twice monthly Sunday walks. She keeps our website up to date as well as our Facebook and Twitter accounts.</p>
<p>5. Demonstrate how the town encourages the use of public transport. This can be demonstrated, for example, by including clear public transport advice on marketing leaflets or lobbying for improvements.</p>	<p>12 events in our Walking Festival involved using public transport, up on 9 the year before. Its estimated that 19 train journeys and 113 bus journeys (66 last year) were taken. Some people arrived on bicycles for 7 events. Most of our Festival walks start at the Leisure Centre, which is near the bus and train station. All our Sunday walks start there too.</p>

<p>6. Demonstrate the mechanisms in place to maintain Walkers are Welcome status.</p> <p>This can be demonstrated through having a well-balanced and committed Walkers are Welcome steering group from within the community. Please list your current committee or organisation members and state how their roles support the group continuing.</p>	<p>The members of our committee are:-</p> <p>Chair - Eve Clevenger, keeps links with other local organisations, writes the Annual Report, chairs Committee meetings, helps at stalls, writes local grant applications.</p> <p>Secretary - Naomi Wrighton, maintains links with many local organisations, is on the National Committee, manages the website and Facebook and Twitter. Leads walks.</p> <p>Treasurer - Sheila Jones, keeps our accounts in order.</p> <p>Path Maintenance and Footpath Secretary - Malcolm Skelton, organises footpath maintenance sessions twice monthly and monitors footpath issues. He also manages the online booking system for the Walking Festival and keeps statistics about our Festival. Leads walks regularly.</p> <p>Publicity Secretary - Jean Escott, writes articles about what we are doing and talks on the radio. Also lead walks.</p> <p>Wellington Town Councillor - Julie Pierce, supports us and is ready to inform the Council if we have any issues to raise.</p> <p>Minutes Secretary - Pam Hill, writes up the Minutes of our meetings and leads walks regularly.</p> <p>Walk leaders - Chris Jay, Amanda Graham, Carol Round, Diane Hambleton are all members of the committee who lead or back mark walks.</p>
<p>Records Update – Website Profile</p> <p>Please confirm here that you have checked that your profile entry on the national website is complete and up to date, including a photograph, and that the contacts shown are correct. If they are not, please note here updates required and say when this will be corrected.</p>	<p>Our profile on the national website is correct</p>
<p>Priorities 2024</p> <p>It is important each year to review the previous year's achievements and equally to think about the year ahead. Please indicate your specific plans/priorities for the following year.</p>	<p>We are starting to plan this year's Walking Festival and hope to continue to grow the numbers attending. Last year we had 485 people compared with 414 the year before. We hope to attract more visitors from further afield. Last year 2 people came from the USA just to come to our Walking Festival.</p> <p>We want to support local walking initiatives in Telford and will be supporting the Telford and Wrekin Council week long Walking Festival which starts in May.</p>
<p>National Executive Committee:</p> <p>We always welcome your feedback. Here is an opportunity. We also encourage participation in WaW national events and activities - please let us know of anything you have done this year.</p> <p>Please make your suggestions here.</p>	<p>3 of our committee attended the Annual Get Together .</p> <p>Our secretary is on the National Committee.</p> <p>We were pleased to welcome Kate Ashbrook to Wellington in May. She test walked the Telford Coronation Walk No . 9, which is a Wellington circular</p>