

## **Wellington Walkers are Welcome Fifteenth AGM, 3rd August 2025 Secretary's report**

### **Committee/Membership Matters:**

Since the last AGM, the management committee has met 9 times for full meetings, plus 1 single issue meeting. All meetings have been on Zoom. The (virtual) minute book is available for inspection.

Last year we welcomed 1 new member to the committee, Richard. Richard resigned on 20<sup>th</sup> July. Also in July, Julie stopped being a formal representative of the Town Council, but has remained as a committee member.

We now have 190 members, including 18 patrons. Of these, 98 declare they are from Wellington itself, 44 from near Wellington and 27 from Telford (total 169). 17 of the remaining 21 have declared Shropshire (although I know at least 2 of these live in Telford, as does at least one person who lists "other"). We also have 28 "helpers", including most of the committee, whom we can call on to lead or back mark. 16 of these are involved in some capacity in the festival. In addition, our monthly emails go to another 78 people (disappointingly, 20 of these state they live in Wellington, but at least 2 don't, living on The Rock and in London).

### **Other Matters:**

Since last year we have continued to attempt to raise our profile and have a voice in the town and the area. In order to do this, we have:

#### **Delivered the thirteenth Wellington Walking Festival in September 2024.**

Many of the events were fully booked.

We estimate that, across the 30 walking events, 258 participants accrued 435 attendances on walks, covering a total of 2372 miles.

In 2024 11 of the events were part of the Heritage Open Days Event and hence of the national Walkers are Welcome themed event. There were so many because the theme was networks and the 2 festivals dates largely coincided.

Also, as is tradition, one of the events was on the Shropshire Way Festival programme.

There were 11 new events among the 31, together with 2 events returning after a gap.

We again marked the start of the Festival, by a speech from the deputy mayor, then 4 walks started at the same time outside Wellington Leisure Centre. The finish was marked by an opportunity to meet for tea or coffee in the Orbit. Both of these again worked well and are being repeated for 2025.

57 feedback forms were received, these were overwhelmingly positive. We have tried to act on the comments received.

#### **Planned the 14<sup>th</sup> Wellington Walking Festival for September 2025.**

Bookings are coming in well, with some events already fully booked.

This year just 3 of the events are part of the Heritage Open Days Event (theme of architecture, and only starts on the Friday). We have also arranged 7 events to fit in with Railway 200, the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of passenger railways.

This year two of the events are on the Shropshire Way Festival programme.

There are 11 new events among the 34, together with 9 events returning after a gap.

### **Held 2 regular walks each month.**

These are on the first and third Sundays. we have continued to make them booking preferred. They either start from Wellington or somewhere nearby. In the latter case transport is offered from Wellington. We again held a Snowdrop walk to Eyton Hall and used some of the Telford Coronation Walks.

### **Continued to keep the website and Facebook page up to date**

The Facebook group is continuing to function as we hoped with communication from members. We are also frequent contributors to the inward-looking Walkers are Welcome Members and the outward-looking Walkers are Welcome Towns Facebook page. We decided to terminate the Twitter/X account.

### **Supported the national network**

Wellington has again featured in two editions of the outward facing Walk this Way newsletter <https://walkersarewelcome.org.uk/walk-this-way/>. I attended the AGT in Llanwrtyd Wells in October. I have continued as a Walkers are Welcome mentor, again appraising the annual reports of the other Shropshire WaW towns. I also look after the news items and the newsletter pages on the national website.

### **Training**

None this year, but 3 committee members are booked in a TGSP First Aid course .

### **Links**

We have good links with **Love Wellington** , in particular they give us publicity in “This is our Wellington”

We support **Plastic Free Wellington** and advertise our support on the Festival programme.

We have maintained links with **Ramblers Wellbeing Walks Telford and Wrekin** , the **Friends of the Telford T50 50 Mile Trail**, **Mid Wales and Marches Rail Rambles** and the **Telford and East Shropshire Ramblers group**. We continue to work very well together as the Friends of the T50 trail. We have had several joint stalls with both Ramblers Wellbeing Walks and the Telford T50 including Ironbridge Coracle regatta , Spring into St Georges at Telford Town Park, Wellington Midsummer Fayre and also Wellington Green day .

We also contributed 2 walks as WWaW to **Telford Walk Week** .

We continue to work with the **Shropshire Way association**, some of the committee are path champions and we are contributing 2 walks to the Shropshire Way walking festival (noted above).

Our activity with **Slow Ways** this year has been confined to the Walking Festivals. We are still just 2 reviews, of Telford To Wheaton Aston 2, away from having Telford fully connected. We look forward to the new platform which will allow users to create nodes. I have continued to be the link for WWaW to the **Telford Green Spaces partnership** (TGSP), there have been no general meetings this year/ There have been information exchanges via email.

Malcolm is our representative on the **Local Access Forum (LAF)**.

We have continued to publicise the local events for **Climate Action Hub**, Telford and we have a stall at Wellington Green Fair which they organised.

We have continued to provide fortnightly walks for **Shropshire Supports Refugees** for local asylum seekers. The attendance has been very variable due to the shifting population of the hotel and the weather. This year we have been able to arrange several longer walks for this group. Pam is our lead on this.

### **The next year (August to August) :**

We are holding our **14<sup>th</sup> Wellington Walking Festival** in September 2025

We will send at least two delegates to the annual **WaW get together** in Bingley in October which celebrates the 2025 Bradford Year of Culture .

We will continue attending local publicity events.

We intend to plan our **15<sup>th</sup> Wellington Walking Festival** for September 2026  
We will of course, continue our practical and other work on the footpath network.  
It would be good to get the slow way mentioned above verified.

**A reminder:** We are still members of the **Ramble Worldwide Walking Partnership scheme** and we receive money whenever one of our number goes on one of their holidays and nominates us.

Naomi Wrighton 24<sup>th</sup> July 2025