**Wellington Walkers are Welcome**

Chair’s Report for the AGM on 1st July 2018

We have had another rewarding year. The profile of Wellington Walkers are Welcome is growing and more people know who we are and what we do.

This is largely due to the hard work of all the committee members.

Naomi sends out regular emails and Facebook updates to keep our members informed of all we that we are doing, as well as keeping our website up to date. These communication links are vital.

Bob gives up a huge amount of time to attend a host of relevant local meetings, to ensure that the needs of walkers in the area and the economy of Wellington are given proper importance.

Malcolm has stepped into the role of Path Maintenance Organiser with great effectiveness. The public see the path clearing work that is done on a regular basis throughout the Wellington area and take note of the hard work and dedication of the path team.

Pam is another invaluable member of our committee, acting as walk leader and making links with Telford and East Shropshire Ramblers as well as Rail Rambles.

Dorothy gives us useful advice and support, which is always welcome.

Toni and June have been helpful with delivering leaflets and litter picking.

Kevin keeps a firm grip on the accounts.

Brian helps at stalls to publicise our work.

Our Annual Report to the national committee was very well received. They stated we were a credit to the organisation.

Our week long Walking Festival showcases the many different types of walks in the area. The date is now fixed at the second week in September - so for this year, 2018, it will run from the 10th to the 16th September. The programme is just being finalised and includes walking all of the 7 stages of the new long distance path - the Telford 50 50 mile trail - over the week of the festival; a bus walk to a local vineyard; a visit to the Eco Garden at Denso, Tub Boat Canal system; tracing Philip Larkin’s haunts; the new 50 tree trail in Dothill Local Nature Reserve; a fungus foray; a beetle drive and evening meal; a film night showing ‘Long Walk To Freedom ‘ and much more.

We continue with our Sunday walks on the first and third Sunday of the month and they seem to be much appreciated.

We are grateful to Wellington Town Council for giving us a grant this year. I collected this at the awards evening and let people know about our walks, our walking festival and our other activities.

We have run stalls at local events to publicise what we do and I have talked to nurses at the local health centre about the walks we lead, in the hope that they can encourage more people to come on the walks in our area.

I shall be attending the National Get-Together at Cromer in October to share ideas and be inspired.

So what with organising walks, leading and back marking walks, path clearing, way marking paths, creating leaflets, litter picking, preparing press releases, organising a walking festival, helping to create the new Telford 50 50 mile trail - the brain child of Naomi’s, attending meetings, reporting footpath problems and pressing for their resolution, we are a pretty busy group.

So thanks to all of you for your hard work. If anyone would like to join us by helping with publicity that would be most appreciated, as that is our greatest need at the moment.