

# WALKERS ARE WELCOME CIC






## MEMBERS' ANNUAL RETURN FOR THE YEAR JAN TO DEC 2024

Your Annual Return and subscription are both due by 31 January 2025. **Please complete this report electronically and send it as a Word document to [secretary@walkersarewelcome.org.uk](mailto: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.

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

<b>Key to comment colours:</b>		<b>Well done, criteria met.</b>
		<b>Some concerns, your mentor will offer guidance and monitor progress.</b>
		<b>Criteria not met.</b>
<b>Mentor's feedback summary:</b>		<b>Overall Assessment</b>

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<p><b>Achievements &amp; innovation this year</b> Shout about your group's main achievements this year. Please include innovation and projects that go beyond the criteria that you are proud of.</p>	<p>We held a very enjoyable and successful Walking Festival this year, 31 events, 11 Heritage Open Day themed walks and 1 associated with the Shropshire Way Festival.</p> <p>We collect extensive statistics from the bookings and feedback forms, so that we can make comparisons from previous years and quantify how we are doing.</p> <p>There were 13 new walks in the Festival eg a 'French' Walk; Benchmark Walk; Slow Ways walk; Coalport Ferry disaster themed walk.</p> <p>116 new people booked, 26 more than last year. Of the 17% of walkers who filled out feedback forms, 11 were from people who lived outside Telford and 2 were a couple from London.</p> <p>All walks are free which our committee feels is an essential principle, although we do ask for voluntary donations which many walkers are very willing to do.</p> <p>We are liaising with Shropshire Supports Refugees to lead a walk for local asylum seekers twice a month, a new venture.</p> <p>Despite 2 members of the committee not being fit during the festival because of ill health, we still managed to rearrange leaders and lead all the walks on our Festival programme.</p> <p>And when one of our guest leaders contacted us a few hours before the start of their walk to say that due to an emergency they were not able to lead, we managed to lead the event ourselves (it was actually the 2 members who were not fully fit) by contacting all those that had booked, most were willing to come to this scaled down event, and it turned out to be a complete homemade success.</p>
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<p><b>The six criteria are:</b></p>	
<p><b>1. Demonstrate popular local support from the community and local businesses for the concept</b> 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 a growing number of local groups. New ones are the local hospital, who asked and we led lunchtime walks for staff (unfortunately poorly attended); The Telford Climate Action Hub; Plastic Free Wellington, our Festival leaflet urges people to use reusable items and avoid single use film; the newly opened Half Way House. The links to the regular groups we have been involved in (at least 18 ) are all being maintained. Local businesses continue to support us by placing adverts in our Festival leaflets and this covers the cost of producing the leaflets.</p>
<p><b>2. Demonstrate that the local council formally endorses the application for Walkers are Welcome status.</b> 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>One of our committee members is a Wellington Town Councillor and is extremely supportive of what we do and enjoys our Walking Festival enormously.</p> <p>The Deputy Mayor opened our Walking Festival this year and is most complimentary about what we are doing. He says he would be happy to do the same next year when he will be Mayor.</p>

<p><b>3. Demonstrate a commitment that the local public path network will be maintained in good condition.</b></p> <p>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>Our Path Maintenance and Footpath Secretary superbly manages keeping the local footpaths in excellent condition. He walks the routes regularly to check on them and follows up on any that are reported to have a problem. He keeps a close eye on problems that have been reported to the authorities, keeping the pressure up to get issues resolved. The twice monthly path maintenance sessions continue, despite this Secretary becoming ill and forcing him to rest. Other loyal helpers continued the work that needed to be done.</p>
<p><b>4. Demonstrate that there is adequate marketing of the town's Walkers are Welcome status.</b></p> <p>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 regularly writes articles to the local newspaper about our activities. She spoke on Radio Shropshire about our Walking Festival. We ensure that our free leaflets about walking routes and the Festival are available at a number of locations around Wellington. Our Secretary sends out monthly emails to those on our mailing list, letting them know about walking events in the area and information about our twice monthly Sunday walking routes. She keeps the website up to date as well as our Facebook and Twitter entries. We worked on a new design for the sign at Wellington Station (the old sign has faded a lot). It says "Wellington a Walkers are Welcome town" with a QR code and WareW logo. The project is on hold until funding and the rail service agree the next step. We have a stall at local events eg Spring into St Georges at the Town Centre; Wellington Midsummer Fair; Wellington Green Day and Ironbridge Coracle Regatta. This is where we promote what we do and our Walking Festival.</p>
<p><b>5. Demonstrate how the town encourages the use of public transport.</b></p> <p>This can be demonstrated, for example, by including clear public transport advice on marketing leaflets or lobbying for improvements.</p>	<p>During our Walking Festival, 17 train journeys and 123 bus journeys (10 more than last year ) were made. Our Festival leaflet includes the bus or train information for those getting to an event by public transport. Most of the Festival walks start at the Leisure Centre, which is close to the Bus and Train Station, as do all our twice monthly Sunday walks.</p>

<p><b>6. Demonstrate the mechanisms in place to maintain Walkers are Welcome status.</b></p> <p>This can be demonstrated through having a well-balanced and committed Walkers are Welcome steering group from within the community.</p> <p>Please list your current committee or organisation members and state how their roles support the group continuing.</p>	<p>We have an able committee that meets every 4-6 weeks on Zoom.</p> <p>Chair - Eve Clevenger. Writes the Annual Reports, thank yous to Festival walk leaders; and grant applications when needed. Keeps links with local organisations, and helps at stalls.</p> <p>Secretary - Naomi Wrighton. Manages the website, Facebook and Twitter. Sits on a number of local committees, helps at stalls. Writes the monthly updating email to our members. Leads walks.</p> <p>Treasurer - Sheila Jones, does the job most efficiently. Back marks and leads walks</p> <p>Path Maintenance and Footpath Secretary - Malcolm Skelton, I've already detailed the magnificent job that he does in 3. He also manages the online booking system for the Walking Festival and keeps the statistics. Leads walks.</p> <p>Publicity Secretary - Jean Escott, writes articles and talks on the radio about what we are doing. Leads walks.</p> <p>Wellington Town Councillor - Julie Pierce, supportive and will bring up any issues for us, if the need arises.</p> <p>Minutes Secretary - Pam Hill, writes up the Committee meeting Minutes. Liaises with the local Ramblers Group. Leads walks.</p> <p>First Aid training - led by Amanda Graham, committee member. A nurse who has access to a Resusci Annie. Ran a very useful refresher course on CPR and First Aid. Back marks.</p> <p>Carol Round - Leads and back marks walks</p>
<p><b>Records Update – Website Profile</b></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 has been checked and is correct.</p>
<p><b>Priorities 2025</b></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 plan to put on an event to mark Railways 200.</p> <p>We plan to send delegates to the Annual Get Together.</p> <p>We are starting to plan our Walking Festival</p>
<p><b>National Executive Committee:</b></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><b>Please make your suggestions here.</b></p>	<p>1 of our committee went to the AGT in 2024.</p> <p>We often post news items on the National website news page, and we supported themed events.</p> <p>Our Secretary was on the NEC and a Director until October. She remains as a monitor and helper on the website.</p>