

Wellington Walkers are Welcome

Fourteenth AGM, 18th August 2024

Secretary's report

Committee/Membership Matters:

Since the last AGM, the management committee has met 6 times for full meetings, plus 2 single issue meetings. All meetings have been on Zoom. The (virtual) minute book is available for inspection. Last year we welcomed 2 new members to the committee, Carol and Diane.

We now have 180 members, including 14 patrons. Of these, 91 declare they are from Wellington itself, 134 total from near Wellington and 161 total from all of Telford and local villages. (16 of the remaining 19 have declared Shropshire, although I know at least 2 of these live in Telford, as does at least one person who lists "other") I have sub lists for patrons, for members and for committee/helpers (there are 22 on this latter list). In addition, our monthly emails go to another 71 people (disappointingly, 17 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 twelfth Wellington Walking Festival in September 2023.

Many of the events were fully booked.

We were very pleased to welcome Amanda Graham and Carol Round onto the planning group. Again one of the events, Walking with Giants, was part of the Heritage Open Days Event and hence of the national Walkers are Welcome themed events.

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

There were 15 new events among the 33, together with 3 events returning after a gap. 10 of the new events were "Telford Coronation Walks" see below.

We again marked the start of the Festival with 4 walks starting at the same time outside Wellington Leisure Centre, and finish with the opportunity to meet for tea or coffee in the Orbit. Both of these again worked well and are being repeated for 2024.

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

Planned the 13th Wellington Walking Festival for September 2024.

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

This year 11 of the events are part of the Heritage Open Days Event (theme of networks) and hence of the national Walkers are Welcome themed events.

Also, as above, one of the events is on the Shropshire Way Festival programme. The route has been changed for this year and now follows the Shropshire Way from Coalbrookdale to Wellington, having started at Telford centre.

There are 11 new events, and among the 31, together with 2 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.

Continued to keep the website and Facebook page up to date and advertise our events on Twitter.

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.

Supported the national network

I have continued as a Walkers are Welcome mentor, again appraising the annual reports of the other Shropshire WaW towns. Wellington has featured in two editions of the outward facing Walk this Way newsletter <https://walkersarewelcome.org.uk/walk-this-way/>. 3 committee members attended the AGT in Whitchurch, Shropshire in November. I am still a director of Walkers are Welcome CIC and sit on the national committee. I am particularly active on the National Events and publicity subgroup. I look after the news items, the newsletter pages and the national events page on the national website.

National Events

We supported “celebrate your local waymarked path in May “ by ensuring all the new Telford Coronation walks were included in Telford Walk week and in addition, we entered a team in the T50 Relay Challenge.,

We supported the SlowWays Way check, see below

We have 11 walks on the Heritage Open days programme.

Training

We are very grateful to Amanda for an excellent basic first aid training including CPR attended by most of the committee.

Two of our committee, Pam and Carol, attended first aid training hosted by TGSP

Malcolm attended tool training hosted by TGSP

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 (Walking for Health)**, **the Friends of the Telford T50 50 Mile Trail** 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 (new last year), Spring into St Georges at Telford Town Park, Wellington Midsummer Fayre and, also new, Wellington Green day. Throughout 2023, 3 of our committee, plus another of our members, were very active in developing the **Telford Coronation Walks** <https://www.telfordt5050miletrail.org.uk/tcw>. The guidebook for the walks of South Telford is about to be published, we hope the northern one will follow soon.

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 contribute a walk to the Shropshire Way walking festival (noted above).

We have continued our activity with **Slow Ways**, ensuring the verification of the Newport to Telford, and Broseley to Telford routes, as well as posting one favourable on Wheaton Aston to Telford. We are now just 2 reviews away from having Telford fully connected.

I have continued to be the link for WWaW to the **Telford Green Spaces partnership** (TGSP), there was one general meeting this year, which I couldn't attend but Eve and Pam did. In addition, there have been information exchanges via email, and see above for training.

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

New this year we have been publicising the local events for **Climate Action Hub**, Telford and we had a stall at Wellington Green day which they organised.

Also new this year we have been provided 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.

Also new this year we supported **Shropshire and Telford Hospital Trust (SATH)**'s Big Green Week initiative, We provided 7 lunchtime walks between between 10th and 14th June which attracted a disappointing 4 walkers. In addition, we have provided links to 7 short routes from PRH on OS Online Maps, and PDF copies of each map for SATH to use in future, or publish on their intranet.

The next year (August to August) :

We are holding our **13th Wellington Walking Festival** in September 2024

We will send at least two delegates to the annual **WaW get together** in October in, Llanwrtyd Wells, Powys.

We would hope to take part in the **national themed events** (Heritage Open Days in September (already organised), Celebrate your local themed path in May and possibly something in collaboration with Railways 200. (<https://railway200.co.uk/>))

We will continue attending local publicity events.

We intend to plan our **14th Wellington Walking Festival** for September 2025

We will of course, continue our practical and other work on the footpath network.

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 16th August 2024